



Cloud Hill Wind Farm

Pre-Application Consultation Report

August 2023

Project No.: 0669769

Page left intentionally blank

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Overview.....	1
1.2	The Proposed Development	1
1.3	The Applicant.....	2
1.4	Public Consultation Guidance and Legislation.....	3
1.5	Report Structure	3
2.	CONSULTATION MEASURES	3
3.	PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION PROCESS	6
3.1	Preliminary Community Council Engagement.....	6
3.2	Project Website.....	6
3.3	Public Exhibition Summary	7
3.4	Public Exhibition and In Person Feedback Forms	7
3.5	Website Views and Online Feedback Forms / Online Feedback Shared.....	12
4.	STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.....	14
5.	PROJECT DESIGN UPDATES	16
6.	CONCLUSIONS	22

APPENDIX 1 – DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY STANDARD ADVERTS FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS

APPENDIX 2 – NITHSDALE TIMES ADVERTS FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS

APPENDIX 3 – KKS NEWS ADVERTS FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS

**APPENDIX 4 – ONLINE ADVERTS SHARED VIA COMMUNITY COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA
CHANNELS**

APPENDIX 5 – POSTERS ERECTED LOCALLY

**APPENDIX 6 – LEAFLETS POSTED TO PROPERTIES WITHIN CIRCA 7 KM OF CLOUD HILL
WIND FARM**

APPENDIX 7 – ROUND 1 PUBLIC EXHIBITION (JUNE 2022) MATERIALS

APPENDIX 8 – ROUND 2 PUBLIC EXHIBITION (MARCH 2023) MATERIALS

Page left intentionally blank

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

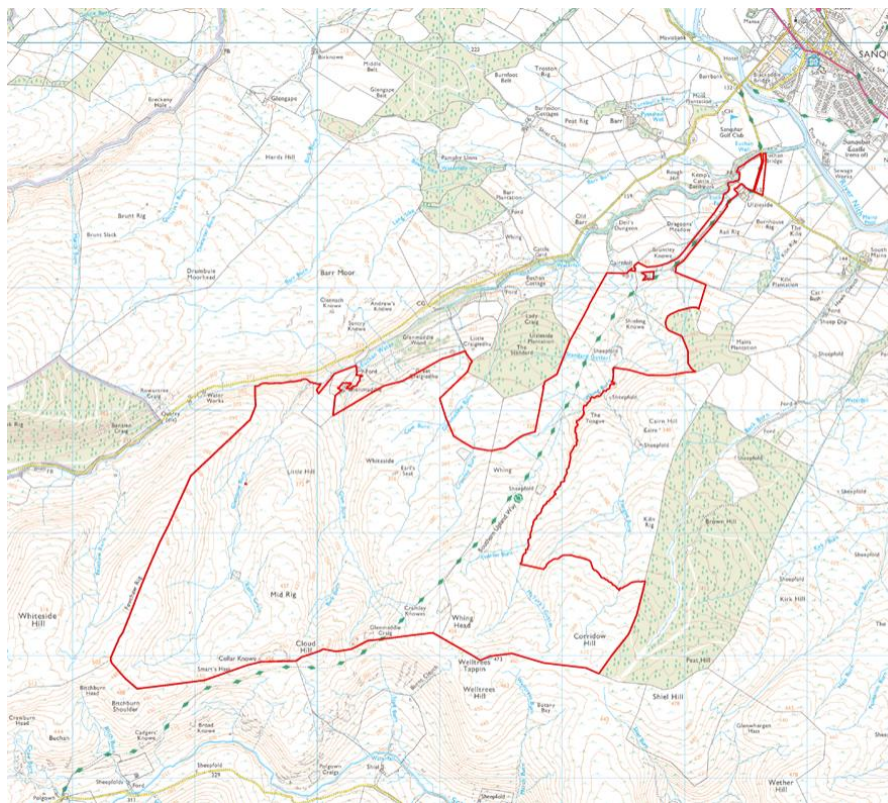
ERM and BayWa r.e. UK Limited have prepared this Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report for Cloud Hill Windfarm Limited ('the Applicant'). The PAC report accompanies a planning application ('the Application') submitted under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 as amended for the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm ('the Proposed Development'). This report details the consultation measures undertaken by the Applicant, the feedback received and how the Applicant has addressed the comments received during consultation.

The Applicant recognises that the importance of ensuring that communities close to a development are afforded appropriate and meaningful opportunities to comment on the proposals before they are finalised in accordance with good practice guidance.

1.2 The Proposed Development

The Site entrance is located approximately 0.5 km south-west of Sanquhar, with the turbines, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and ancillary infrastructure located approximately 4.5 km from Sanquhar. The Site Red Line Boundary covers approximately 805 hectares (ha) and is centred on NGR 274802, 606254. The Site is located entirely within the Dumfries and Galloway administrative boundary and shown on Map 1 below.

Map 1 – Site Location



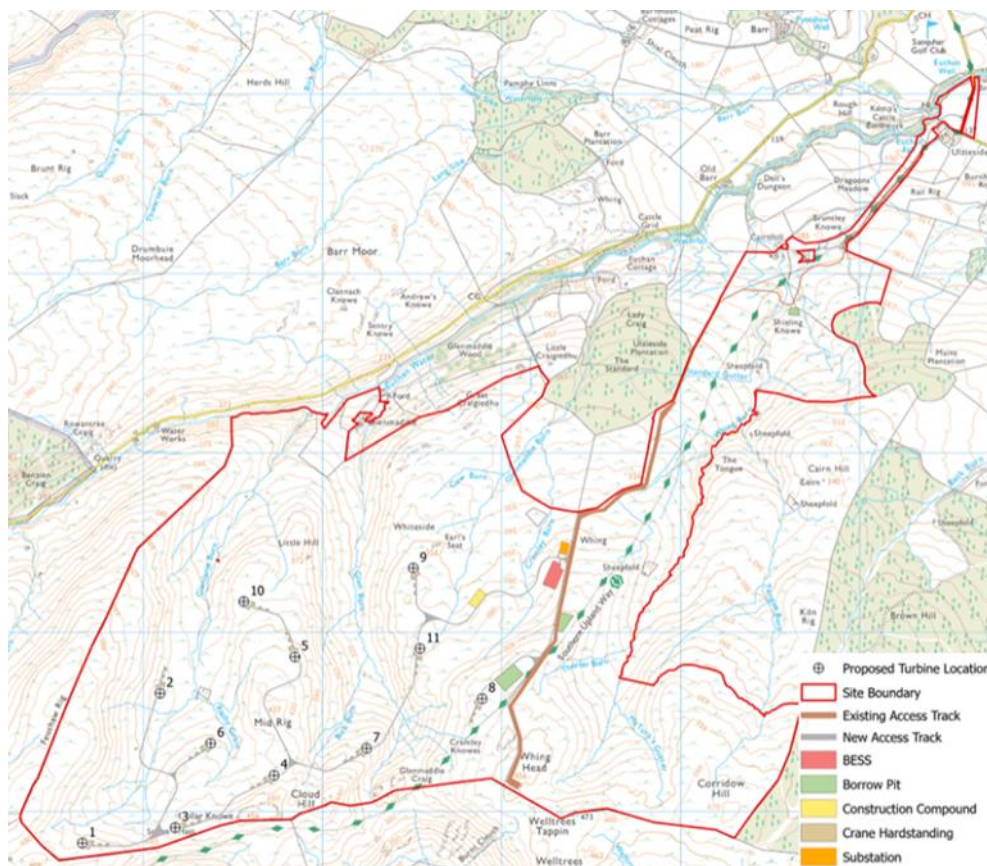
The main components of the Proposed Development are as follows:

- 11 three-bladed wind turbines with a maximum tip height of 180 m, rotor diameters of up to approximately 150 m and hub heights of approximately 105 m, and associated foundations and hardstanding areas; up to
- Access tracks (existing and new);
- BESS;

- Electrical Infrastructure (Substation and control room and underground cabling between each turbine and the substation);
- A temporary construction compound;
- Up to three borrow pits; and
- A permanent met mast (up to 100 m).

The layout of the Proposed Development is presented in Map 2.

Map 2 – Site Layout



1.3 The Applicant

Cloud Hill Windfarm Ltd is wholly owned by BayWa r.e. UK Ltd (BayWa r.e.).

BayWa r.e. is a leading international renewable energy developer and service provider with offices in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Milton Keynes and Cork. In the UK and Ireland, BayWa r.e. has installed more than 220 MW of wind energy, as well as over 350 MWp of solar energy, and is currently developing over 400 MW of onshore wind projects. BayWa r.e. UK also provides technical and commercial services and manages more than 2 Gigawatts (GW) of operational wind and solar assets. This Proposed Development, if consented, will contribute £5,000 per MW installed capacity to a Community Fund. Based on an estimated capacity with a candidate 5.6 MW turbine, this could result in an annual value of £308,000 per annum. With a 35 year operational consent, this could provide £10.8 million in community benefit. More detail on the socioeconomic benefits of the project can be found in **Chapter 14: Socio-economics, Tourism, Recreation and Land Use** of the EIAR.

BayWa r.e recognises the importance of the economic benefits to Scotland and the rest of the UK from investing in onshore wind generation. It is expected that the Proposed Development would

further economic opportunities within the region and would contribute significant income to support local services through business rates.

Based on the estimated capital expenditure of £1 million per installed MW, it is estimated that, the Proposed Development will be worth approximately £30 million to the UK economy.

BayWa r.e has invested over £400 million in renewable energy infrastructure located in Scotland and is fully committed to the Scottish and UK renewable energy sector and a net-zero economy.

1.4 Public Consultation Guidance and Legislation

The statutory requirement for a PAC is under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 (Development Management Regulations), which requires that the PAC Report is to be submitted along with a planning application that is classed as a 'major' development under the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (Hierarchy of Development Regulations). Under the Hierarchy of Development Regulations, any development for the generation of electricity with a capacity in excess of 20 MW is classified as 'major'.

As noted, the Proposed Development has an electricity generation capacity in excess of 50 MW. As such, the Application is made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Electricity Act) rather than the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, (the Planning Act 1997) as amended. Therefore, the Proposed Development is not statutorily subject to the Development Management Regulations nor the Hierarchy of Development Regulations.

Although the production of a PAC Report is not required for applications under the Electricity Act, the Applicant has elected to conduct consultation and the PAC Report is produced in line with the guidance for 'major' developments under the Development Management Regulations.

During the pre-application stage of this Proposed Development, the aim has been to enable the local community and those with an interest in the proposal an opportunity to provide comment and feedback prior to submitting a planning application. The report sets out the background and details of the pre-application public exhibition process carried out by the Applicant in the preparation of the planning application and how the feedback received has been considered and addressed.

1.5 Report Structure

Following this introductory section, the remainder of this report comprises the following sections:

- Section 2 - Consultation Measures;
- Section 3 - Public Exhibition Overview;
- Section 4 – Stakeholder Consultation;
- Section 5 – Project Design Updates; and
- Section 6 – Conclusions.

2. CONSULTATION MEASURES

The Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note (PAN) 3/2010 – Community Engagement which provides guidelines for Pre-Application Consultation have been used as a framework for the engagement activity for this Proposed Development.

PAN 3/2010 stipulates that community engagement should be meaningful and proportionate and take place at an early stage to influence the shape of proposals. PAN 3/2010 uses National Standards for Community Engagement, developed by Communities Scotland, as its structure.

It further states, "Effective engagement with the public can lead to better plans, better decisions and more satisfactory outcomes and can help to avoid delays in the planning process. It also improves confidence in the fairness of the planning system."

This provided a useful framework to help plan, monitor and evaluate community engagement in relation to this development.

Table 2.1: Overview of Community Engagement Stages

Standard	PAN 3/2010 Standard	Activities Undertaken
1	Involvement: Identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement	The Applicant identified the key stakeholders based on proximity to the Proposed Development site, and engaged with both the Energy Consents Unit and Dumfries & Galloway Council to agree stakeholders. This included host Community Council Royal Burgh of Sanquhar and adjacent community councils Penpont and Kirkconnel & Kelloholm. Tynron Community Council responded the EIA Scoping Request seeking to be included within the consultee list for the project, and they will be included on the planning application consultation list, as agreed with the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU).
2	Support: Identify and overcome any barriers to involvement	Throughout the consultation process the Applicant made a conscious effort to help all individuals and groups engage with the consultation. This included both in person events, in-person updates to community council meetings, as well as online updates and participation at virtual meetings. Whilst in-person events were agreed as being appropriate with consultees, efforts were made to create an accessible online resource to review the information about the Proposed Development. The Applicant advertised the project website and public exhibitions in several ways; notifications to community councils (Royal Burgh of Sanquhar, Kirkconnel & Kelloholm, and Penpont); notifications to local Councillors (namely: Councillor Jim Dempster, Councillor Andrew Wood and Councillor Tony Berretti); advertising in local papers including the Dumfries & Galloway Standard, Nithsdale Times and KKS news; sharing adverts online via community council social channels; posting of leaflets to every property within approximately 7 km of the site; and erecting posters locally. The consultation methods were informed by discussions with Royal Burgh of Sanquhar and Kirkconnel & Kelloholm community councils, as well as the ECU.

Standard	PAN 3/2010 Standard	Activities Undertaken
3	Planning: Gather evidence of need and resources to agree purpose, scope and actions	The consultation methods were informed by discussions with Royal Burgh of Sanquhar and Kirkconnel & Kellohom community councils, as well as the ECU. Feedback throughout the consultation process also informed the iterative consultation process. Following feedback from the first round of exhibitions in June 2022 and a request for leafleting, a leaflet drop to all houses within 7 km of the site was used to advertise the second round of exhibitions in March 2023.
4	Methods: Agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose	The Applicant used a variety of methods to consult as. These methods include in person exhibitions; uploading all exhibition materials online and allowing comment for at least 2 weeks following each exhibitions; attendance at community council meetings; updates to community councils; and advertising both online and in local papers.
5	Working Together: Agree and use clear procedures that enable participants to work together effectively and efficiently	The Applicant has engaged with the host and surrounding Community Councils prior to each round of public exhibitions From the outset of the project the Applicant has provided a direct link to the Cloud Hill Wind Farm Project Manager for all parties to access any specific information about the project.
6	Sharing Information: Ensure necessary information is communicated between the participants	The Applicant has made information easily accessible for the local community by using a variety of methods including; advertising in several local newspapers, a dedicated project webpage, letters and emails to relevant parties, and carrying out a leaflet drop to advertise the second round of exhibitions. These methods were used to communicate information about the project and the consultation process.
7	Working with Others: Work effectively with others with an interest	The Applicant has engaged with the surrounding Community Councils (Royal Burgh of Sanquhar, Kirkconnel & Kelloholm and Penpont) early in the development process to explain the plans and seek feedback on the proposed development and consultation methods
8	Improvement: Develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of the participants	The Applicant has provided a comprehensive online public exhibition webpage which contains details of the proposed development and has included direct contact details and welcomed

Standard	PAN 3/2010 Standard	Activities Undertaken
		any questions/ communications about the project.
9	Feedback: Feedback results to the wider community and agencies affected	Public exhibition feedback questionnaires and direct communication with the local communities has allowed for a transparent process of engagement to be undertaken.
10	Monitoring and Evaluation: Monitor and evaluate whether engagement achieves its purpose and meets the national standards for community engagement	The Applicant has evaluated the consultation process and has used these 10 National Standards for Community Engagement as set out in PAN 3/2010. The Applicant's live project webpage has remained live since June 2022 which has been continuously monitored and will continue to be monitored during the application process with the availability for comments to be received from the public. It is made clear on this webpage that representations on the application should be made directly to Energy Consents Unit.

3. PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 Preliminary Community Council Engagement

An introduction to the Proposed Development was provided to community councils prior to the first round of public exhibitions. This included the Applicant's Project Manager attending Royal Burgh of Sanquhar's February 2022 online monthly meeting, and Kirkconnel & Kelloholm's May 2022 in-person monthly meeting. Penpont Community Council were contacted via email but no response was received until after the second round of exhibitions.

Written updates were provided to the community councils following the first round of public exhibitions, and the Applicant's Project Manager provided further in-person updates ahead of the second round of exhibitions by attending the February 2023 meetings of both Royal Burgh of Sanquhar (in person) and Kirkconnel & Kelloholm (online).

Following the March public exhibitions, the Applicant's Project Manager attended the Penpont Community Council meeting in person in April 2023; the Royal Burgh of Sanquhar Community Council Meeting in person (June 2023) and Kirkconnel & Kelloholm Meeting in person (June 2023).

Community councils have been kept apprised of the project developments, with a further update provided immediately prior to submission of the Section 36 application.

3.2 Project Website

A dedicated project page went live in May 2022: <https://www.baywa-re.co.uk/en/wind/cloud-hill-windfarm>.

This page provides an overview of the project; details of how to contact the project team; an update of notable news items; and, when applicable, details of the public exhibitions.

Public exhibition material was uploaded to the website and available to view for a minimum of two weeks following the exhibitions. The website provided methods of contacting the project team, and

also included 'long form' feedback forms from the public exhibitions; these forms included more questions than the feedback forms available at the public exhibitions, and the results from both types of questionnaire are summarised in this report.

Following submission of the application, all planning application documents will be uploaded to the website.

3.3 Public Exhibition Summary

Two rounds of public exhibitions were held for the project:

Round 1:

- Wed 22nd June 2022, 1600-2000: The Cabin, Main Street, Kirkconnel DG4 6LU
- Thurs 23rd June 2022, 1600-2000: Sanquhar Town Hall, Sanquhar DG4 6DF

Round 2:

- Wed 15th March 2023, 1600-2000: Miners Memorial Hall, Kirkconnel, DG4 6PH
- Thurs 16th March 2023, 1600-2000: Sanquhar Town Hall, Sanquhar, DG4 6DF

The public events were advertised in the following ways:

- Advert placed in Dumfries & Galloway Standard (adverts included in Appendix 1);
- Advert placed in Nithsdale Times (adverts included in Appendix 2);
- Advert placed in KKS News (adverts included in Appendix 3);
- Online advert shared with Royal Burgh of Sanquhar and Kirkconnel & Kelloholm Community Councils (online advert and cover emails included in Appendix 4);
- Posters raised locally (poster included in Appendix 5);
- For Round 2 of public exhibitions, leaflets were distributed via post to every household within approximately 7 km of the Site (leaflet included in Appendix 6);

Community Councils were also notified via email of the upcoming exhibitions;

Direct emails detailing Round 1 of the exhibition were also sent to ward councillors; namely Councillor Jim Dempster; Councillor Andrew Wood; and Councillor Tony Berretti.

Information displayed during the public exhibition showed the Proposed Development, outlined the key environmental issues identified and assessments being undertaken, representative visualisations of the project from key viewpoints, and information on the community benefit commitments.

Images of the materials presented during Rounds 1 and 2 of the Public Exhibitions are included in Appendices 7 and 8 respectively.

3.4 Public Exhibition and In Person Feedback Forms

The number of attendees to each of the exhibitions, and summary of the feedback received were as follows:

Round 1:

- 22nd June 2022, Kirkconnel & Kelloholm – 4 attendees
- 23rd June 2022, Sanquhar – 12 attendees

During the first round of exhibitions, a total of six in person forms were completed. A summary of the feedback is provided in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: Round 1 Exhibition In-Person Questionnaire Summary and Response

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
How did you find out about this exhibition?	All respondents either found out about the exhibition via local press or through members of local groups they are part of.
Had you heard of BayWa r.e. UK before today?	Two respondents had heard of BayWa r.e., four respondents had not heard of BayWa r.e. prior to attending the exhibition.
Do you think that wind farms should play a role in generating electricity in Scotland?	Four respondents stated that onshore wind should play a role in generating electricity in Scotland; two respondents stated that onshore wind should not play a role in generating electricity in Scotland.
Are you generally supportive of windfarms?	Four of six respondents stated they were generally supportive of onshore wind; two respondents stated they were not generally supportive of windfarms.
Approximately how close do you live to the proposed Cloud Hill Windfarm site?	Five out of six respondents stated they live within 5 km of Cloud Hill, one respondent stated they lived between 5 and 10 km from Cloud Hill.
Do you think the Cloud Hill farm land is a suitable location for a wind farm?	Three respondents stated they thought the land at Cloud Hill was suitable for a wind farm; three stated that they thought the land was not suitable for a wind farm.
Please tell us why you answered this way?	Those who responded stating Cloud Hill was a suitable location cited support for green energy and that the site was '<i>ideally situated and won't be a burden on the community</i>'. Those who responded stating Cloud Hill was not a suitable location for a wind farm stated too many turbines in the area already, in particular the cumulative impact from Cloud Hill and Whiteside Hill together, and turbines being sited closer to Sanquhar when compared to Whiteside Hill.
Are you supportive of the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm?	Two respondents stated yes; Three respondents stated no; and one respondent answered no further questions beyond the previous question.
Please tell us why you answered this way?	Those respondents who answered the above question stating yes provided reasons including supporting clean energy, being good for the environment and moving the local area forward. Those respondents who answered the above question stated no provided reasons including

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
	too many large turbines in the area already, and cumulative impact from Hare Hill, Hare Hill Extension, Sandy Knowe, Sanquhar, Whiteside Hill and Twentyshilling.
With respect to the Cloud Hill Windfarm project, what issues are of most important to you?	Five respondents answered this question, with responses including 'getting this area on the map', 'cumulative impact and fair distribution of wind farms throughout the country', and 'visual appearance and polluting the water'.
Have you found this exhibition useful?	All respondents (five) who answered this question stated useful or very useful.
Do you have any further comments?	Comments received included feedback relating to cumulative impact.

Round 2:

- 15th March 2023, Kirkconnel & Kelloholm – seven attendees
- 16th March 2023, Sanquhar – 23 attendees

During the first round of exhibitions, a total of 17 in person forms were completed. A summary of the feedback is provided in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2: Round 2 Exhibition In-Person Questionnaire Summary and Response

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
How did you find out about this exhibition?	In response to this question: • Two respondents selected word of mouth • One respondent selected local press; • Four respondents selected social media; • Nine respondents selected leaflet; One respondent chose not to answer this question.
Had you heard of BayWa r.e. UK before today?	Five respondents had heard of BayWa r.e., 11 respondents had not heard of BayWa r.e. prior to attending the exhibition, and one respondent chose not to answer this question.
Do you think that wind farms should play a role in generating electricity in Scotland?	12 respondents stated that onshore wind should play a role in generating electricity in Scotland; two respondents stated that onshore wind should not play a role in generating electricity in Scotland; two respondents were undecided and one respondent chose not to answer this question.
Are you generally supportive of windfarms?	Seven respondents stated that they were generally supportive of onshore wind farms; Six stated they were generally not supportive of

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
	onshore wind farms; three were undecided and one respondent chose not to answer this question.
Approximately how close do you live to the proposed Cloud Hill Windfarm site?	In response to this question: - Eight respondents live up to 5 km from the site; - Six respondents live between 5 and 10 km from the site - One respondent lives between 10 and 15 km from the site; Two respondents chose not to answer the question;
Do you think the Cloud Hill farm land is a suitable location for a wind farm?	Three respondents stated they thought the land at Cloud Hill was suitable for a wind farm; 11 stated that they thought the land was not suitable for a wind farm; Two respondents were undecided and one chose not answer this question,
Please tell us why you answered this way?	Those who responded stating Cloud Hill was a suitable location cited: - Suitable height and making use for infrastructure; - Wind power as a preference over high carbon fuels; Those who responded stating Cloud Hill was not a suitable location for a wind farm cited the following reasons: - Height of turbines comparable to Big Ben; - Cumulative impact; - Generally not enough wind in Scotland for the amount of turbines; - Proximity to Sanquhar; - Proximity to the Southern Upland Way; - Impacts on biodiversity; - Visibility from A76; - Grid capacity. Those who were undecided stated: - Proximity to SUW; - Not clear on biodiversity impacts; Impacts on the A76;

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
Are you supportive of the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm?	Two respondents stated yes; 11 respondents stated no; and four respondents answered no further questions beyond the previous question.
Please tell us why you answered this way?	Those who responded stating Cloud Hill was a suitable location cited: • Financial support to local community groups; • The wind farm is an extension to an existing wind farm; Those who responded stating Cloud Hill was not a suitable location for a wind farm cited the following reasons: • Cumulative impact; • Access proposals; • Proximity to Sanquhar; • Proximity to the Southern Upland Way; • Impacts on biodiversity; • Visibility from A76; • Grid capacity. Those who were undecided stated: • Proximity to SUW; • Not clear on biodiversity impacts; • Impacts on the A76; Expecting similar projects to come forward.
With respect to the Cloud Hill Windfarm project, what issues are of most important to you?	Responses to this question included: • Cumulative impact; • Landscape & visual; • Dumfries & Galloway already having too many turbines; • Environmental impact; • Noise; • Tourism; • Location of infrastructure such as borrow pits; • Aviation lighting; • Community views; Wind power as a preference over high carbon fuels;

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
Have you found this exhibition useful?	12 respondents stated the exhibition was useful or very useful. Four respondents stated they were undecided if the exhibition was useful. One respondent advised the exhibition was not useful.
Do you have any further comments?	Comments received included questions related to the proposed BESS capacity; the need for local electricity discount schemes; more offshore wind farms; request for additional visualisations to those presented at the exhibition;

3.5 Website Views and Online Feedback Forms / Online Feedback Shared

The overall attendance of the website measured using a Google Analytics tool which recorded the unique page views. The total number of attendees to the website between May 2022 and end of July 2023 has been approximately 500 views of the Cloud Hill Wind Farm website.

From the date of the first newspaper advert published prior to each exhibition, until two weeks for following the exhibition (Round 1: 1st June 2022 to 6th July 2022, and 28th February 2023 to 29th March 2023), there were a combined 202 unique page views across both exhibition periods.

Visitors to the page were invited to contact the project team through the website or email address with any questions; and during the exhibition periods, were invited to fill out an online feedback form. This form was contained the same questions as the in-person questionnaire but also contained additional questions.

Three online feedback forms were received via the website, which had additional questions to the in-person questionnaires. Table 3.3 below summarises the responses received to the online feedback forms.

Table 3.3: Round 2 Exhibition Online Questionnaire Summary and Response

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
How did you find out about this exhibition?	Two respondents selected local press One respondent selected other
Had you heard of BayWa r.e. UK before today?	Two respondents had heard of BayWa r.e. and one respondent had not heard of BayWa r.e. prior to visiting the website/exhibition.
Do you think that wind farms should play a role in generating electricity in Scotland?	One respondent stated that onshore wind should play a role in generating electricity in Scotland; one respondent stated that onshore wind should not play a role in generating electricity in Scotland; and one respondent was undecided.
Are you generally supportive of windfarms?	One respondent stated that they were generally supportive of onshore wind farms; two stated

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
	they were generally not supportive of onshore wind farms.
If yes, tell us why you support windfarms	One respondent stated that generally they are supportive of wind farms but siting in the Sanquhar area is now obtrusive, and raised cumulative impacts.
If no, tell us why you are not supportive of windfarms	Responses included: • Too many in Scotland, beyond Scotland's needs; • Wildlife and habitat impacts; • Grid capacity and balancing; • Use of lithium ion in batteries; • Industrialising and depopulating of the countryside; • Properties being purchased by developers and associated agreements; • Noise and private water supply impacts; Disingenuous developers and revisions to turbine heights following consent.
Approximately how close do you live to the proposed Cloud Hill Windfarm site?	In response to this question: • Two respondents live up to 5 km from the site; • One respondent lives between 5 and 10 km from the site.
Do you think the Cloud Hill farm land is a suitable location for a wind farm?	Three respondents stated that they thought the land was not suitable for a wind farm.
Please tell us why you answered this way?	Responses included: • Cumulative impact; Proximity to Sanquhar; • Proximity to southern upland way.
Are you supportive of the proposed Cloud Hill Wind Farm?	Three respondents stated they are not supportive of Cloud Hill Wind Farm.
Tell us what you like about the Cloud Hill Windfarm project?	Two respondents advised nothing. One respondent advised that it was the only development that seemed to be including battery storage.

Questionnaire Question	Activities Undertaken
Tell us what you don't like about the Cloud Hill Windfarm project?	Responses included: • Cumulative impact; • Scale of turbines; • Noise; • Visual impact including aviation lighting; • Proximity of borrow pits to the southern upland way; and • Proximity to Sanquhar.
With respect to the Cloud Hill windfarm project what issues are of most importance to you?	Responses included: • Visual impact; • Traffic and transport; • Residential amenity; • Cumulative impact; • Impact of aviation lighting on dark skies; • Noise; • Visual impact including aviation lighting; • Proximity of borrow pits to the southern upland way; and Proximity to Sanquhar.
Have you found this exhibition useful?	One respondent stated the exhibition was useful. Two respondents advised the exhibition was not useful.
Do you have any further comments?	Comments included: • The exhibition was as expected; • Visualisations only included Cloud Hill and it would have been instructive to see the height difference between Cloud Hill and Whiteside Hill; Community benefit spend on local projects.

4. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

In addition to consultation with local communities and members of the public, as outlined above, consultation has been undertaken with relevant regulatory stakeholders as part of the application process. Full details of the consultation has been provided in the EIA Report and as appropriate within each of the associated technical chapters. A brief summary is provided in Table 4-1.

Table 4.1: Stakeholder Consultation

Consultee	Summary of Engagement
Nith District Salmon Fisheries Board (NDSFB) (June 2021)	Detail regarding fisheries and invasive species was requested and provided.
EIA Scoping Request (submitted March 2022)	An EIA Scoping Request was submitted to the ECU in March 2022, which set out the proposed approach to and scope of the EIA. A Scoping Opinion was provided by ECU on the 10th June 2022, which agreed to most of the content of the Scoping Report and provided some additional aspects to be considered in the EIA. All such additional aspects were considered and where applicable incorporated into the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report). The June 2022 scoping response was issued without any response from Dumfries and Galloway Council. Dumfries and Galloway Council subsequently responded in December 2022, with comments provided by the Council incorporated within the EIA Report. The full list of consultees consulted during scoping is included in Chapter 2 of the EIA Report.
Transport Scotland (June 2022) – Virtual Meeting	A virtual meeting to discuss the swept path analysis and recommendations for manoeuvring components from the A76 over Eliock Bridge.
Dumfries & Galloway Council Environmental Health Department (June 2022)	Agreeing methodology for noise survey and assessment.
Dumfries & Galloway Council Archaeology Department (November 2022)	Consultation agreeing extent of non-designated asset study area and receptors to be assessed for indirect effects.
Historic Environment Scotland (December 2022)	Consultation agreeing extent of visualisations required to support the cultural heritage assessment.
NatureScot (February 2023) – Gatecheck Response	Provided comments related to otter survey results and construction recommendations, and peat recommendations. These comments are addressed in Chapters 7 and 10 of the EIA Report.
SEPA (February 2023) – Gatecheck Response	Provided comments relating to NVC survey results, peat survey results and watercourse buffers. These comments are addressed in Chapters 7, 10 and 11 of the EIA Report.

Consultee	Summary of Engagement
Dumfries and Galloway Raptor Study Group (April 2023)	Confidential data regarding Schedule 1 species within 2 km of the Site was requested and provided.
Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere (February 2023)	Referred to its position statement and provided example recommendations for habitat biodiversity opportunities.

5. PROJECT DESIGN UPDATES

The final layout as presented in the EIA Report has been the subject of a number of iterations and refinements which sought to avoid, or minimise, predicted adverse effects as far as reasonably practicable via design embedded mitigation. The resultant proposal balances the environmental and technical constraints, whilst producing an economically viable project. Design changes made as a consequence of the key constraints are considered to be mitigation which is 'embedded' within the design of the scheme.

Removal of three turbines (14 to 11). This include the removal of a turbine due to location within deep peat; the removal of another two turbines to meet noise limits, and the revision of the turbine locations to minimise visual impact on nearby receptors. This includes limiting the visibility of the Proposed Development south of the site, and only siting turbines to one side (west) of the Southern Upland Way;

Micrositing of the existing 11 turbines to reduce visual impact from key design viewpoints, including Sanquhar, Kirkconnel and the Southern Upland Way.

The detailed rationale for the amendments is detailed further in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Design Rationale

Topic	Mitigation by Design Commitment	Signposting of Where Topic is Addressed in the EIA Report
Landscape and Visual Amenity	- The layout design sought to improve the layout composition and minimise infrastructure visibility from receptors represented on Figure 6.4 of the Scoping Report, whilst avoiding onsite constraints including areas of steep slope and watercourses. - The movement of the proposed temporary construction compound and BESS locations reflects efforts to utilise existing forestry blocks and an area of lower topography to reduce landscape and visual impacts on receptors to the north of the Site,	EIA Volume 1: Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Amenity provides an assessment of the residual effects of the Proposed Development on landscape and visual receptors.

Topic	Mitigation by Design Commitment	Signposting of Where Topic is Addressed in the EIA Report
	including Sanquhar, Kirkconnel & Kelloholm, properties along the Blackaddie Road, and the A76.	
Cultural Heritage	- There are no designated archaeological features located within the Site, however, there are a number of non-designated assets on Site. The most significant of these is Deil's Dyke, a boundary ditch stretching for several kilometres across the landscape and crossing the Site. There are several non-designated assets within 5 km of the Site, including Deil's Dyke. - Additionally, there are several designated assets within 5 km of the Site. Within 1 km of the Site there are two scheduled monuments and 31 Listed Buildings, primarily located in and around the settlement of Sanquhar. The Conservation Area around Sanquhar is also located within 1 km of the Site. Between 1 km and 5 km there are a further two scheduled monuments and 23 Listed Buildings. - The design has sought to avoid the on-site, non-designated features as far as possible, as well as consideration of indirect effects to designated assets in the wider area..	EIA Volume 1: Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage provides an assessment focussed on identifying the likely significant direct and indirect (setting) effects on cultural heritage assets.
Ecology	Extensive ecological surveys undertaken across the Site generally recorded few protected species or sensitive habitats. Results from the National Vegetation Classification habitat surveys show that the Site is predominately a mosaic of the following, with numerous	EIA Volume 1: Chapter 7: Ecology assesses the residual effects on aquatic and terrestrial habitats and protected species.

Topic	Mitigation by Design Commitment	Signposting of Where Topic is Addressed in the EIA Report
	transitional zones due to complex Site topography and aspect: ○ Marsh/marshy grassland; ○ Semi-improved acid grassland; ○ Unimproved acid grassland; ○ Wet dwarf shrub heath; and ○ Wet modified bog. ● Patches of blanket bog, acid neutral flush, broad-leaved semi-natural woodland and bracken were also encountered, although forming only a minor part of the habitat mosaic across the Site. Areas of blanket bog, an Annex I habitat, were treated as a hard constraint and avoided, whilst wet modified bog, wet heath and flushes were treated as a moderate constraint and avoided where possible. Following the completion of ecological surveys on Site, the following protected species buffers were used during the design process: ○ Badger setts – 30 m buffer and 100 m buffer (100 m applies if blasting or piling activities are to be undertaken); ○ Otter couch – 30 m buffer; ○ Otter holts with both 30 m and 200 m buffer (200 m applies if breeding holt - unknown at present);	

Topic	Mitigation by Design Commitment	Signposting of Where Topic is Addressed in the EIA Report
	○ Potential reptile hibernacula – 20 m buffer; and • Bat potential roost features – 50 m buffer of woodland from turbines. The planning application considers the above ecological constraints with infrastructure located a suitable distance away from these features. As part of this process the access haul road was amended at the crossing of the Whing Burn located south of Cairnhill to address engineering and ecological concerns at this location, whilst also minimising interaction with the Southern Upland Way. No notable ecological sensitivities that cannot be avoided or appropriately mitigated have been recorded. • Good practice will be adopted throughout the project lifecycle to avoid disturbance to protected species or direct effects on sensitive habitats.	
Ornithology	• Ornithology surveys were undertaken within and around the Site in line with NatureScot guidance. Surveys identified that the Site is of moderate ornithological value, with curlew and black grouse the key species identified to be using the Site. Barn owl and peregrine falcon breeding locations were also identified during the surveys; however, these are all outwith the Site boundary. • One black grouse lek was identified to the north of the Site, no infrastructure or turbines are located within 500 m of this lek	EIA Volume 1: Chapter 8: Ornithology assesses the residual effects on birds, including presenting the results of collision risk analysis. The chapter also describes the appropriate steps to be taken to avoid/mitigate impacts identified.

Topic	Mitigation by Design Commitment	Signposting of Where Topic is Addressed in the EIA Report
	(as per NatureScot guidance) and any turbines or infrastructure within 750 m will be subject to restrictions on construction works during the black grouse breeding season. The details of these restrictions will be provided in the EIA chapter and will also be included in the Breeding Bird Protection Plan (BBPP) prior to construction commencing.	
Hydrology and Hydrogeology	- The Site has several watercourses dissecting numerous undulating hills. When designing the layout, infrastructure was sited outside of 50 m buffers from watercourse channels where possible. New watercourse crossings were minimised, as much as possible, with any watercourse crossings designed in accordance with best practice and SEPA guidelines. - One section of the new track proposed is within 50 m of a watercourse. At the site entrance, new track is necessary to accommodate the abnormal vehicle loads required to construct the Development and to avoid disruption to a local uninvolved business situated near the Site entrance. Additionally, this will avoid disruption existing farming operations, which requires the existing tracks to be accessible for tending to livestock. The track itself would be circa 25 m from the watercourse at its nearest point, however new drainage and ditches will be constructed for both the construction and operational phases of the Proposed	EIA Volume 1: Chapter 11: assesses the residual effects on Hydrology & Hydrogeology,

Topic	Mitigation by Design Commitment	Signposting of Where Topic is Addressed in the EIA Report
	Development to mitigate any pollution risk. • A new watercourse crossing and 0.5 km section of new access track will be required on the access track to the north of the Site. This is due to the existing track and watercourse crossings being unable to accommodate construction traffic. A realignment of the existing track was considered however, this would result in the creation of a new watercourse crossing and a greater level of earthworks compared to a new, direct track and crossing. Additionally, significant upgrades would be required for the existing watercourse crossing. Therefore, the creation of a new access track and watercourse crossing will not result in additional impacts to water features, more so than a track realignment would. No other infrastructure elements are located within 50 m of a watercourse. • A Private Water Supply Risk Assessment (PWSRA) has been undertaken for the Proposed Development. The PWSRA aims to identify all Private Water Supplies (PWS) within a 2 km radius of the Proposed Development and seeks to confirm the location of the source water for the supplies, through consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO) and residents, along with site visits. This process informs the risk assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development on the private water supply, source	

Topic	Mitigation by Design Commitment	Signposting of Where Topic is Addressed in the EIA Report
	water, and associated distribution infrastructure.	
Traffic and Transport	- The access junction into the site has been designed to accommodate the proposed physical size of delivery loads and the number of trips predicted during the construction phase. - Locations for infrastructure were carefully selected to maintain appropriate gradients for construction and delivery vehicles as well as maintaining a coherent wind farm design and avoiding known environmental constraints where possible.	EIA Volume 1: Chapter 12: Access, Traffic and Transportation provides an assessment of the residual effects of the Proposed Development on Traffic and Transport.
Noise	- There are several residential receptors in proximity to the Site. The potential for noise emissions from the operation of the turbines to affect these sensitive receptors has been modelled. The turbine layout has been designed to adhere to noise limits for the Development through the use of noise modes as mitigation to be used during the operation of the turbines. Additionally, one property (Glenmaddie) which lies close adjacent to the northern Site boundary is financially involved. - Consultation was undertaken with the EHO to confirm the methodology and approach of the assessment in June 2022.	EIA Volume 1: Chapter 12: Noise provides an assessment of potential effects associated with construction and operational noise, including cumulative noise effects.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive pre-application consultation process which ensured that the communities in the closest proximity to the site were made fully aware of the emerging Proposed Development. The process was undertaken in accordance with the 10 National

Standards for Community Engagement as set out in PAN 3/2010, exceeding the minimum requirements for Section 36 scale projects.

The Applicant has engaged with key stakeholders and the local community at the earliest stage in the planning process which has allowed the facilitation of an effective consultation process. The engagement has allowed the Applicant to present the benefits and impacts of the Proposed Development. Where appropriate the Applicant has responded directly to questions raised by the local community and Statutory Consultees about the development.

The Applicant is committed to continuing to liaise with the local community during the application process and following consent during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.

Page left intentionally blank

APPENDIX 1 – DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY STANDARD ADVERTS FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS

APPENDIX 2 – NITHSDALE TIMES ADVERTS FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS

APPENDIX 3 – KKS NEWS ADVERTS FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS

APPENDIX 4 – ONLINE ADVERTS SHARED VIA COMMUNITY COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

APPENDIX 5 – POSTERS ERECTED LOCALLY

APPENDIX 6 – LEAFLETS POSTED TO PROPERTIES WITHIN CIRCA 7 KM OF CLOUD HILL WIND FARM

APPENDIX 7 – ROUND 1 PUBLIC EXHIBITION (JUNE 2022) MATERIALS

APPENDIX 8 – ROUND 2 PUBLIC EXHIBITION (MARCH 2023) MATERIALS

**ERM has over 160 offices across more 40
countries and territories worldwide**

ERM's Edinburgh Office

6th Floor
102 West Port
Edinburgh
EH3 9DN

T: 0131 221 6750

F: 0131 777 2590

www.erm.com