

Margree Infrastructure Layout Amendments and Tip Height Extension

**Comparative Environmental Impact
Assessment Report
Volume IV – Non-Technical Summary**

May 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

Overview

- 1.1 Planning permission was first granted for Margree Wind Farm at appeal on 21 March 2022 for the erection, 35 year operation and subsequent decommissioning of a wind farm comprising of up to nine wind turbines and associated development.
- 1.2 A Comparative Environmental Impact Assessment Report ("Comparative EIAR") has been prepared to accompany an application made under Section 42 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 by Energiekontor UK Ltd ("the Applicant") to vary condition 1 and 11 of planning permission 20/2085/FUL ("Consented Development") to allow changes to the infrastructure layout outwith the micrositing allowance and to allow a tip height increase for all nine turbines to 220m ("the Proposed Development").
- 1.3 This document provides a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of that Comparative EIAR.

Purpose of the NTS

- 1.4 The aim of the NTS is to summarise the content and main findings of the Comparative EIAR in a clear and concise manner to assist the public in understanding what the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Development are likely to be. The full Comparative EIAR volumes I and II provide a detailed description of the Proposed Development.

Viewing the Comparative EIAR

- 1.1 A hard copy of this Comparative EIA will be available for viewing during normal office hours at Dumfries and Galloway Council's headquarters. The address is: Council Headquarters, 109-115 English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2DD.
- 1.2 For additional copies, a charge of £15 will be made for a full electronic copy of the Comparative EIA on CD. Costs for paper copies are as follows:
 - Volume I – Written Text £50
 - Volume II – Figures £500
 - Volume III – Technical Appendices £50
 - Volume IV - Non-Technical Summary free of charge
- 1.3 Requests for copies should be sent to: George.Oldroyd@energiekontor.com.

The Applicant

- 1.4 Energiekontor UK Ltd is a renewable energy development company with offices in Glasgow, Leeds and Edinburgh. The company was formed in 1999 and develops onshore wind and solar farms throughout the United Kingdom. The company operates 10 existing

wind farms in the UK. EK also has a number of other wind and solar projects at various stages of the development process throughout the UK.

- 1.5 Energiekontor UK Ltd is part of the Energiekontor Group. The parent company, Energiekontor AG, was established in 1990 in Bremerhaven in Northern Germany. It has since grown to become one of the leading wind energy companies in Europe and is active in Germany, France, The Netherlands, Portugal, the USA and the UK. The company has built more than 140 onshore wind farms in Europe.

2 COMPARATIVE EIA SCREENING

Introduction

- 2.1 This Comparative EIAR has been prepared by Energiekontor UK Ltd and sets out the findings of a comparative Environmental Impact Assessment which has been undertaken to consider whether the Proposed Development would result in any additional significant environmental effects not identified in the 2020 EIAR for the wind farm. This section provides a summary of the findings from the Comparative EIAR Screening potential for significant environmental effects to occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Comparative EIA Screening

- 2.2 A Comparative EIA Screening Exercise was undertaken to assess the key findings from the Consented Development against the Proposed Development. This screening exercise sought to identify the potential for material changes to the Consented Development or a change in significance of effects as a result of the Proposed Development.
- 2.3 The topic areas assessed as part of this Comparative EIA Screening are:
- Landscape and Visual Amenity
 - Ecology and Ornithology;
 - Cultural Heritage;
 - Noise;
 - Traffic and Transport;
 - Soil and Water;
 - Forestry; and
 - Infrastructure and Shadow Flicker.

Summary

- 2.4 The Comparative EIA Screening exercise found that there were no topic areas where the Proposed Development would have the potential for materially different effects or increase in the significance of effects from those reported in the Original EIAR. However, in order to aid decision making further assessment has been undertaken in relation to forestry effects, ecological effects, ornithological effects, and landscape and visual effects. These effects are summarised below.

3 RENEWABLE ENERGY AND PLANNING POLICY

Introduction

3.1 This chapter in the Comparative EIAR provides an outline of the national and local planning policies, guidance and other material considerations that are potentially relevant to the Proposed Development.

3.2 The Statutory instrument for the determination of planning applications in Scotland is the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended). Section 25 of this Act states:

'Where, in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'

Planning Policy Context

3.3 This section of the Comparative EIAR sets out the planning policy context that is relevant to the Site and the Proposed Development. It includes the consideration of:

- The National Planning Framework 4; and
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance

3.4 Other material considerations include:

- International Renewable Energy Framework;
- UK Carbon and Renewable Energy Policy;
- Onshore Wind Policy Statement;
- Scottish Government Web Based Renewable Guidance; and
- Local Landscape Capacity and Wind Farm Studies

4 FORESTRY

- 4.1 Part of the Proposed Development is located within commercial forestry. The forestry assessment has identified that areas of forestry would require to be felled for the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.
- 4.2 Forestry is not being regarded as a receptor for EIA purposes. Commercial forests are dynamic and their structure continually undergoes change due to normal felling and restocking by the landowner; natural events, such as storm damage, pests or diseases; and external factors, such as a wind farm or other developments. The forestry proposals are interrelated with environmental effects, which are assessed separately in other chapters of the EIA Report.
- 4.3 The forestry proposals have been developed to identify areas of forest to be removed for the construction and operation of the Proposed Development; and those areas which may or may not be replanted on site.
- 4.4 The Forestry Study Area (FSA) extends to approximately 1,220.7 ha and is comprised of woodlands which are privately owned and managed. The forests are comprised largely of commercial conifers with areas of mixed broadleaves and open ground planted in the late 1990s. The crops are in the mid restructuring phase and there have been recent felling and replanting programmes.
- 4.5 A total of 97.6 ha will require to be felled to enable the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. The majority of the areas to be felled for the Proposed Development would be restocked except for land required for the Proposed Development's permanent infrastructure and land to be left unplanted for forest management; or forest design purposes.
- 4.6 On site replanting of felled areas and restoration of habitat within the woodlands results in a decrease in the area of stocked woodland. There would be a decrease in 43.1 ha within the FSA. Additional off site compensatory planting will be required.

5 ECOLOGY

Introduction

- 5.1 The Proposed Development is located primarily within commercial forestry, with the forestry blocks being dominated by Sitka Spruce *Picea sitchensis* plantations of varying ages. Outwith the forestry blocks, the habitats present include upland acid grasslands, interspersed with flushes, marshy grassland and, where peat remains areas of mire and raised bog. The three main watercourses flowing through the Site are Margree, Blackwater and Regland Burns. Several water bodies are present within the Site, including Regland Loch and a number of small ponds.

Summary of Effects

- 5.2 Table 5.1 below shows the significance of impact on any of the ecological receptors is, at most, moderate/minor adverse effect.
- 5.3 The impacts detailed for the revised Margree layout, remain the same as those predicted for the consented Margree wind farm application.

Table 5.1: Assessment of the effects on VERs of the Revised Margree Wind Farm

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Construction Phase				
Bats: disturbance of building roosts	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Bats: disturbance & loss of tree roosts	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Bats: disturbance & loss of foraging habitats	High	Minor	Short-term to Permanent	Minor
Otter: disturbance of habitats	High	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Otter: loss of general habitats	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Otter: loss of habitat along Margree & Regland Burns	High	Minor	Permanent	Minor
Red Squirrel: loss of woodland habitat	High	Minor	Permanent	Minor
Red Squirrel: loss of general habitats	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Red Squirrel: disturbance of habitats	High	Minor	Short-term	Minor

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Red Squirrel: direct harm of individuals	High	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Reptiles: loss & disturbance of habitats	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term to Permanent	Negligible
Butterflies: loss & disturbance of habitats	Moderate	Minor	Short-term to Permanent	Minor
Fish: direct harm of individuals	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Fish: pollution to downstream habitats, including increased siltation	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Habitats: loss of coniferous plantations	Low	Minor	Permanent	Minor/negligible
Habitats: Loss of NVC habitats – access tracks	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor
Habitats: Loss of NVC habitats – wind farm	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor
GWDTEs: Loss of GWD habitats – access tracks	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor
GWDTEs: Loss of GWD habitats – wind farm	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor
Operational Phase				
Bats: disturbance of building roosts	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Bats: disturbance of tree roosts	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Bats: disturbance of foraging habitats	High	Minor	Permanent	Minor
Bats: collision with wind turbines	High	Minor	Permanent	Minor
Otter: disturbance	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Otter: harm to individuals	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Red Squirrel: disturbance	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Red Squirrel: harm to individuals	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Reptiles: loss of habitat	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Butterflies: loss of habitat	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Fish: severance of watercourses for both resident and migratory species	Moderate	Minor	Permanent	Minor
Habitats: disturbance of NVC habitats	Moderate	No effect	Permanent	No effect
GWDTEs: disturbance of GWD habitats	Moderate	No effect	Permanent	No effect
Decommissioning Phase				
Bats: disturbance of building roosts	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Bats: disturbance & loss of tree roosts	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Bats: disturbance of foraging habitats	High	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Otter: disturbance of habitats	High	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Red Squirrel: disturbance of habitats	High	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Red Squirrel: direct harm of individuals	High	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Reptiles: disturbance of habitats	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Butterflies: disturbance of habitats	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Fish: direct harm of individuals	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Fish: pollution to downstream habitats, including increased siltation	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Habitats: loss of coniferous plantations	Low	Minor	Permanent	Minor/negligible
Habitats: Loss of NVC habitats – access tracks	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Habitats: Loss of NVC habitats – wind farm	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor
GWDTEs: Loss of GWD habitats – access tracks	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor
GWDTEs: Loss of GWD habitats – wind farm	Moderate	Intermediate	Permanent	Moderate/minor

6 ORNITHOLOGY

Introduction

- 6.1 This section summarises the significance of potential effects on Valued Ornithological Receptors (VORs) during the construction phase of the development.

Summary of Effects

- 6.2 The significance of impact on any of the ornithological receptors is, at most, moderate/minor adverse effect.
- 6.3 The effects of the revised wind farm layout on VORs, without mitigation, are summarised in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Assessment of the effects on VORs of the Revised Margree Wind Farm

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Construction Phase				
Whooper Swan: disturbance during construction	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Pink-footed Goose: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Teal: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Goosander: disturbance during construction	Low	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Golden Eagle: disturbance during construction	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Goshawk: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Red Kite: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Minor/Intermediate	Short-term	Moderate/Minor
Peregrine: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Merlin: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Lapwing: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Oystercatcher: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Snipe: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Curlew: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Common Sandpiper: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Black Grouse: disturbance during construction	Moderate	No effect	Short-term	No effect
Barn Owl: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Long-eared Owl: disturbance during construction	Low	Minor/Negligible	Short-term	Minor/Negligible
Nightjar: disturbance during construction	Moderate	No effect	Short-term	No effect
Common Crossbill: disturbance during construction	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Operational Phase				
Whooper Swan: displacement during operation	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Whooper Swan: collision during operation	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Pink-footed Goose: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Pink-footed Goose: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Teal: displacement during operation	Moderate	Minor	Permanent	Minor
Teal: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Goosander: displacement during operation	Low	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Goosander: collision during operation	Low	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Golden Eagle: displacement during operation	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Golden Eagle: collision during operation	High	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Goshawk: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Goshawk: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Red Kite: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Red Kite: collision during operation	Moderate	Minor	Permanent	Minor
Peregrine: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Peregrine: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Merlin: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Merlin: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Lapwing: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Lapwing: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Oystercatcher: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Oystercatcher: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Snipe: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Snipe: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Curlew displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Curlew: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Common Sandpiper: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Common Sandpiper: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Black Grouse: displacement during operation	Moderate	No effect	Permanent	No effect
Black Grouse: collision during operation	Moderate	No effect	Permanent	No effect
Barn Owl: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Barn Owl: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Long-eared Owl: displacement during operation	Low	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Long-eared Owl: collision during operation	Low	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Nightjar: displacement during operation	Moderate	No effect	Permanent	No effect
Nightjar: collision during operation	Moderate	No effect	Permanent	No effect
Common Crossbill: displacement during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Common Crossbill: collision during operation	Moderate	Negligible	Permanent	Negligible
Decommissioning Phase				
Whooper Swan: disturbance during dismantling	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Pink-footed Goose: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Teal: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor
Goosander: disturbance during dismantling	Low	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Golden Eagle: disturbance during dismantling	High	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible

Receptor & Summary of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Feature	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Pre-mitigation Effect	Significance of Effect
Goshawk: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Red Kite: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Minor/Intermediate	Short-term	Moderate/Minor
Peregrine: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Merlin: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Lapwing: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Oystercatcher: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Snipe: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Curlew: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Common Sandpiper: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Black Grouse: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	No effect	Short-term	No effect
Barn Owl: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Negligible	Short-term	Negligible
Long-eared Owl: disturbance during dismantling	Low	Minor/Negligible	Short-term	Minor/Negligible
Nightjar: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	No effect	Short-term	No effect
Common Crossbill: disturbance during dismantling	Moderate	Minor	Short-term	Minor

7 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

Introduction

- 7.1 The Comparative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) has been prepared by chartered Landscape Architects at Pegasus Group who prepared the assessment of landscape and visual effects set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) material concerning the original EIAR (2022 Allowed Appeal scheme comprising nine turbines up to 200m to blade tip).

Updates to Baseline

- 7.2 When considering updates to the baseline conditions, which mainly concerns updates to the cumulative position, any changes are not thought to be substantive. As a result, the viewpoint photography used in the production of the updated visualisations has not been updated.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 7.3 Updated ZTVs have been produced for the Proposed Development, including a Comparative ZTV to illustrate the theoretical visibility patterns of the original EIAR and the Proposed Development.
- 7.4 The Comparative ZTV (Figure 6.43) indicates the additional areas where there may be the possibility of viewing the Proposed Development compared to the original EIAR.
- 7.5 As a result of this analysis, any landscape or visual effect judged in the LVIA material prepared for the original EIAR considered to be moderate to minor or below has not been re-assessed owing to the unlikelihood of identifying a significant effect.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 7.6 As with the original EIAR, all nine of the turbines considered as part of the Proposed Development would be located in LCT 176. Having appraised the potential for the Proposed Development to give rise to a greater level of effect on landscape character than the original EIAR, it is considered that the change in height of the turbines from 200m to 220m would generally be barely perceptible when considered in the context of the scale and nature of the consented turbines, particularly from more distant locations and landscapes. It is recognised that the change in Site layout and in the height of the turbines may cast more of an influence in the surrounding landscapes, such as revealing additional blade tip rotations and/or turbine hubs above areas of landform or tree cover, where visibility of the consented turbines was previously more limited.
- 7.7 The proposed changes would only be discernible from the closer landscape receptors, therefore it is not considered that there will be any further changes to the level of significant effects previously identified in the original EIAR.

Assessment of Visual Effects

- 7.8 With regards to visual amenity, significant effects were previously identified for three of the 15 representative viewpoints included with the LVIA material for the original EIAR: Viewpoint 2. Minor road near Auchenshinnoch; Viewpoint 3 - Minor Road on Bogue Moor; and Viewpoint 4 - Southern Upland Way at Culmark Hill.
- 7.9 The original LVIA identified that in relation to properties within 5km of the Site, that there would be significant visual effects upon select properties to the north and west of the Site, including Fingland, Auchenshinnoch and Lochinvar Lodge, due to the open nature and proximity to the Site. There were however no further significant effects predicted upon other properties or upon the surrounding settlements, including from Minnygryle, which lies approximately 1.9km east of the Site along Beech Drive. Minnygryle was the only property identified as being located within a 2km radius of a Margree turbine.
- 7.10 Comparative wirelines showing the original EIAR and the Proposed Development have been produced for all 15 Viewpoint Locations. Updated Visualisations illustrating the Proposed Development have also been prepared for five of the viewpoints: Viewpoints 2, 3, 4, 5 and 12.
- 7.11 When these Visualisations are reviewed and compared with the equivalent images in the original EIAR, it is recognised that the increase in tip heights of all turbines may mean that the Proposed Development is more visible from certain locations, such as revealing additional blade tip rotations and/or turbine hubs above areas of landform or tree cover, where visibility of the consented turbines was previously more limited.
- 7.12 When considering the assessments made for the 15 representative viewpoints included with the LVIA material for the original EIAR, there is considered to be no change to the magnitude of change predictions previously identified for three of the viewpoints located within approximately 5km of the nearest proposed turbine (Viewpoints 2, 3, and 4). As in each case, when considering the proposed turbines and the consented turbines there would be no discernible change, with each scheme forming equally prominent features against the skyline in views.
- 7.13 The visualisations and comparative wirelines are considered to be appropriately representative of the other visual receptors within the study area. On this basis, it is judged that there would be no further changes attributable to the Proposed Development beyond the level of significant visual effects previously identified in the original EIAR.

Night-time Assessment

- 7.14 In the original EIAR, each turbine was proposed to be fitted with aviation lighting. This remains true of the Proposed Development, with the proposed change in turbine height as part of the Proposed Development, meaning the height of the aviation lights on all turbines is set to slightly increase. In this context, it is not considered that there would be any change to the level of effects identified previously as per the original EIAR.

Cumulative Assessment

7.15 Since the original LVIA material was prepared, the cumulative situation has further evolved and based on a new cut-off date of 25 March 2025, the following Table summarises the updated cumulative position. The schemes are also illustrated on **Figure 7.10**.

Site	Blade tip height of turbines	Number of turbines	Distance and direction from Margree Site	Landscape Character Type	Change since July 2020
Operational					
Blackcraig Hill	110m	23	0km – south-east	176- Foothills with Forest (18a Stroan unit)	No change
Wether Hill	91m	14	3km - north	178 – Southern Uplands with Forest (19 Ken unit)	No change
Whiteside Hill	121m	11	16km - north	177 - Southern Uplands (19 Nithsdale unit)	No change
Afton	120m/100m	27	14km – north-east	73 Upland Glen - Ayrshire	No change
Windy Standard I	92.5m	36	13km – north-east	177 – Southern Uplands – Dumfries and Galloway (19 Carsphairn unit)	No change
Windy Standard II	100m-120m	30	13km – north-east	177 – Southern Uplands – Dumfries and Galloway (19 Carsphairn unit)	No change
Windy Rig	125m	12	8km – north-west	177 – Southern Uplands – Dumfries and Galloway (19 Carsphairn unit)	Previously at consented stage
Hare Hill Extension*	70m/91m	35	19km - north	81 - Southern Uplands (20A East Ayrshire Southern Uplands	No change
Sanquhar	130m	9	18km-north	177 - Southern Uplands (19 Nithsdale unit)	No change
South Kyle	149.5m	50	17km – north-west	178 – Southern Uplands with Forest (19A Carsphairn unit)	Previously at consented stage
Twentyshilling Hill	140m	9	17km – north-east	177 - Southern Uplands (19 Nithsdale unit)	Previously at consented stage
Consented					
Benbrack	130m	18	17km – north-west	178 – Southern Uplands with Forest (19A Carsphairn unit)	No change
Knockman Hill	81m	5	0km – south-west	176- Foothills with Forest (18a Stroan unit)	No change

Glenshimmeroch	200m	10	0km – north-west	176- Foothills with Forest (18a Stroan unit)	Previously consented at 149.9m
Pencloe	125m	21	18km – north-west	82- Southern Uplands and Forestry (20C Southern Uplands and Forestry)	No change
Sanquhar Six**	130m	6	17km - north	178 - Southern Uplands with Forest (19 Ken unit)	No change
Cornharrow	200m	7	6km – north	178 – Southern Uplands with Forest (19 Ken unit)	Not previously considered
Troston Loch	149.9	14	0km – north	176- Foothills with Forest (18a Stroan unit)	Previously at planning stage
Fell	180-200m	9	5km – south-east	176- Foothills with Forest (18a Stroan unit)	Previously at planning stage
Manquhill	200m	8	6km – north	178 – Southern Uplands with Forest (19 Ken unit)	Not previously considered
Shepherd's Rig	149.9m/125m	17	6.5km – north-west	178 – Southern Uplands with Forest (19 Ken unit)	Previously at planning stage
Divot Hill	200m	9	0km - south	176- Foothills with Forest (18a Stroan unit)	Not previously considered
Sanquhar II	200m/149.9m	44	12km – north	177 - Southern Uplands (19 Nithsdale unit)	Previously at planning stage
Windy Standard III	125m – 177.5m	20	16km – north-west	178 - Southern Uplands with Forest (19A Carsphairn)	Previously at planning stage
In Planning					
Quantans Hill	200m	14	9km – north-west	177 – Southern Uplands – Dumfries and Galloway (19 Carsphairn unit)	Not previously considered
Lorg	200m	10	10.5km – north	178 – Southern Uplands with Forest (19 Ken unit)	Previously consented at 130m-150m
Garcrogo	180m	7	5km – south-east	176- Foothills with Forest (18a Stroan unit)	Not previously considered

*Note: operational Hare Hill Extension would be superseded by Hare Hill Repower Wind Farm, should an application be submitted, which is then granted planning consent.

**Note: the Sanquhar Six scheme was consented; although, it has since been superseded with the Sanquhar II Wind Farm scheme.

Summary

- 7.16 Overall, the Proposed Development would represent only a minor change from that of the original EIA, with the landscape and visual effects resulting from the change being highly limited in extent or nature. Indeed, from many locations, the proposed change in Site layout and the increase in tip heights of all turbines would be difficult to perceive. As a result, the proposed changes are considered as unlikely to alter the judgements on the effects set out in the original EIA in any substantive manner.
- 7.17 In that context, it is therefore considered that the same conclusions would continue to apply to the Proposed Development which were applicable to the original EIA. The identified effects on landscape character and visual amenity should be balanced against the wider benefits of Margree wind farm, as further discussed within the Planning Statement. Whilst the LVIA identifies some significant landscape and visual effects, it is noted that locally significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity are inevitable as a result of commercial wind energy development anywhere in the UK and are in line with the expectations of NPF4.

8 SUMMARY

- 8.1 Planning permission was first granted for Margree Wind Farm at appeal on 21 March 2022 for the erection, 35 year operation and subsequent decommissioning of a wind farm comprising of up to nine wind turbines and associated development.
- 8.2 The Comparative Environmental Impact Assessment Report (Comparative EIAR) is submitted in support of an application made under Section 42 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 by Energiekontor UK Ltd ("the Applicant") to vary conditions 1 and 11 of planning permission 20/2085/FUL to allow changes to the infrastructure layout outwith the micrositing allowance and to allow a tip height increase for all nine turbines to 220m ("the Proposed Development").
- 8.3 The Comparative EIAR has been prepared by Energiekontor UK Ltd with specialist input where necessary and sets out the findings of a comparative Environmental Impact Assessment which has been undertaken to consider whether the Proposed Development would result in any additional significant environmental effects not identified in the original EIAR for Margree Wind Farm.

Comparative EIA Screening

- 8.4 No topic areas have been identified as having the potential for materially different effects from those reported in the 2020 EIAR. However, to aid decision making an assessment of forestry, ecology and ornithology effects has been undertaken.

Forestry Effects

- 8.5 Felling would be advanced on 97.6 ha for construction of the Proposed Development.
- 8.6 The species composition of the forest would change as a result of the Proposed Development forestry proposals. In particular, the area of Sitka spruce (whether pure or in a mix) would reduce by 31.7 ha.
- 8.7 The area of unplanted ground would increase and, as a result, there would be a net loss of woodland area of 43.1 ha.
- 8.8 In order to comply with the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, compensation planting would be required to mitigate for the loss of woodland area. The Applicant is committed to providing appropriate compensatory planting.

Ecology Effects

- 8.9 The significance of impact on any of the ecological receptors is, at most, moderate/minor adverse effect.
- 8.10 The impacts detailed for the revised Margree layout, remain the same as those predicted for the consented Margree wind farm application.

Ornithology Effects

- 8.11 The significance of impact on any of the ornithological receptors is, at most, moderate/minor adverse effect.
- 8.12 The impacts for the revised Margree layout, remain the same as those predicted for the consented Margree wind farm application.

Landscape and Visual Effects

- 8.13 The Proposed Development would represent only a minor change from that of the original EIA, with the landscape and visual effects resulting from the change being highly limited in extent or nature.
- 8.14 Indeed, from many locations, the proposed change in Site layout and the increase in tip heights of all turbines would be difficult to perceive. As a result, the proposed changes are considered as unlikely to alter the judgements on the effects set out in the original EIA in any substantive manner.
- 8.15 Therefore, it is considered that the same conclusions would continue to apply to the Proposed Development which were applicable to the original EIA.

Overall

- 8.16 The potentially significant environmental effects associated with the Proposed Development have been considered. There are no additional effects compared to the consented project. No other new potentially significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development are predicted which have not already been considered as part of the 2020 EIA.