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EIAR Volume 4 - Technical Appendices - TA 12.2 - Recreation and Outdoor Access Plan

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EIAR Volume 4 - Technical Appendices - TA 12.2 - Recreation and Outdoor Access Plan

Technical Appendix 12.2: Recreation and Outdoor Access Plan

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Contents

1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Outline Recreation and Outdoor Access Plan (ROAP) has been prepared in order to detail how existing public access would be managed during the construction and operation of the proposed Glentarken Wind Farm (the 'Proposed Development').

1.1.2 It demonstrates the commitment of SSE Generation Ltd (the Applicant) to maintain public access where it is safe to do so. A final ROAP would be prepared post consent with the appointed construction contractor and agreed with both Perth & Kinross and Stirling Councils, as well as all other relevant stakeholders ahead of the commencement of any pre-construction works.

2 Methodology

2.1.1 This ROAP has been prepared in accordance with NatureScot guidance[1]. This plan assesses existing baseline outdoor access provision, predicts the impacts of the Proposed Development on the existing environment, and consequently identifies how impacts would be managed and monitored.

3 Outdoor Access Baseline

3.1.1 The 'Site' is approximately 1,103 ha, located approximately 45 km west of Perth within the Drummond Estate, and approximately 2.8 km east of Lochearnhead, Stirling, Scotland. The majority of the Site is an area of heathland and moorland, or rough hill pasture. The southern edge of the Site has areas of arable land and forestry.

3.1.2 As identified in **Chapter 12: Socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation (EIAR Volume 1)** and illustrated in **Figure 12.1 (EIAR Volume 2)**, 31 recreational trails have been identified within 15 km of the Proposed Development. Four recreational routes have been identified within 5 km, these being; Rob Roy Way[2]; Killin to Ardtalnaig; Creag Uchdag from Glen Lednock; St Fillans Viewpoint circular; and Dundurn - St Fillans Hill.

3.1.3 The baseline assessment has identified one key core path, the Tarken Lodge, situated in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park (LLTNP) - Allt an Fhionn - Glen Tarken (code STFI/101), 700 m from the Proposed Development. Compared to recreational trails, which form part of the tourism offer of the local area, core paths tend to be used as walking routes by residents.

3.1.4 The Proposed Development has some recreational value with respect to outdoor activities such as walking, hiking and cycling.

4 Potential Access Impacts

4.1 Construction Impact

4.1.1 Primary access impacts related to the Proposed Development are likely to occur during the construction period. Typically, a wind farm of this size is estimated to be approximately 18 months.

4.1.2 During construction, access would be restricted to the general public on safety grounds. Access gates would normally be installed at the Site entrance to Glentarken Wind Farm to limit unauthorised vehicles

[1] NatureScot (2010). A Brief Guide to Preparing an Outdoor Access Plan'. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2017-06/B639282%20-%20A%20Brief%20Guide%20to%20Preparing%20Outdoor%20Access%20Plans%20-%20Feb%202010.pdf. [Accessed 28/4/24].

[2] This also forms part of the national cycle network – Route 7.

from entering the Site.

4.1.3 The Proposed Development would require the upgrade of existing tracks and the construction of new tracks to the turbines and infrastructure which could impact activities, such as estate activities, walking, cycling and horse-riding. Any such restrictions would be short-term and temporary. During the construction phase, every effort would be made to ensure access to existing paths would be maintained; however, to ensure the health and safety of the public, additional measures may be required.

4.1.4 Core path users and paths would be separated from construction traffic using appropriate safe methods such as barriers. The closest core paths (ID 34 & 41) are illustrated on **Figure 12.1 (EIAR Volume 2)**.

4.1.5 Where required, crossing points would be provided, with path users having right of way and temporary diversions would be provided as necessary. Temporary road signage, compliant with Appropriate Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8[3], would be provided to assist at these crossings for the benefit of all users.

4.1.6 A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been included in **Chapter 11: Traffic and Transport (EIAR Volume 1)** which outlines measures that will be implemented during the construction phase.

4.1.7 There would be no direct impact on other recreational routes or trails within the wider area during the construction phase.

4.1.8 As discussed within **Chapter 12: Socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation (EIAR Volume 1)**, the impact during construction on recreational walks has been assessed as negligible.

4.2 Operational Impact

4.2.1 Potential access impacts during the operational phase include operational site monitoring, turbine servicing and maintenance, maintaining site access tracks and bridges, maintaining drainage ditches and repairing gates and fences.

4.2.2 Additional impacts may include ice throw and lightning during adverse weather and ongoing estate activities such as stalking, shooting or agricultural estate management activities, etc.); however, SSE would liaise with the landowners to minimise disruption to estate run activities where possible.

4.2.3 As discussed within **Chapter 12: Socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation (EIAR Volume 1)**, the impact during operation on recreational walks has been assessed as negligible.

5 Access Arrangements

5.1.1 Prior to commencement of the construction works, access arrangements and appropriate warnings would be communicated to the local community via the community liaison group, website for the Proposed Development and local mailing list.

5.1.2 From time to time, short term restrictions on access may be required where there is no safe alternative. These restrictions would be communicated via the same methods.

5.1.3 SSE Renewables (the Developer) would liaise with the landowners to minimise the disruption to estate run activities where possible.

5.1.4 Where appropriate, warning signage indicating the likelihood of construction traffic would be placed at

[3] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a74adeaed915d7ab83b5ab2/traffic-signs-manual-chapter-08-part-01.pdf

regular intervals along the track (see **Plate 5-1**). Further detail on construction traffic management, including the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) is discussed in **Chapter 11: Traffic and Transport (EIAR Volume 1)** and **TA 11.1: Traffic Assessment (EIAR Volume 4)**.

Plate 5-1: Example Pedestrian Warning Sign

5.1.5 As discussed, during construction, access would be restricted to the general public on safety grounds. Access gates would normally be installed at the Site entrance to Glentarken Wind Farm to limit unauthorised vehicles from entering the Site.

5.1.6 Signage would be put in place where the Proposed Development entrance meets the A85 with a purpose to highlight to the public the risk of entering the Proposed Development.

5.1.7 In the longer term, signage would be put in place for the lifetime of the wind farm with the purpose of highlighting to the public the potential safety issues of accessing the Site during adverse weather (e.g. ice throw and lightning etc.) and ongoing estate activities (shooting etc.). See **Plate 5-2** as an example of the longer term signage that would be used.

Plate 5-2 Longer term signage example

5.1.8 With respect to the interactions between Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and horses, the following actions would be included in the Site training for HGV staff:

- on seeing riders approaching, drivers must slow down and stop, minimising the sound of air brakes, if possible;
- if the horse still shows signs of nervousness while approaching the vehicle, the engine should be shut down (if it is safe to do so);
- the vehicle should not move off until the riders are well clear of the back of the HGV;
- if drivers are wishing to overtake riders, please approach slowly or even stop in order to give riders time to find a gateway or lay by where they can take refuge and create sufficient space between the horse and the vehicle. Because of the position of their eyes, horses are very aware of things coming up behind them; and
- all drivers delivering to the Site must be patient. Riders will be doing their best to reassure their horses while often feeling a high degree of anxiety themselves.

6 Conclusions

6.1.1 The Applicant aims to maintain access (where possible) during construction of the Proposed Development, and by implementing the management strategies set out in Section 5 of this plan, it is believed that this can be achieved while ensuring the safety of the public and construction staff.