

## An Càrr Dubh Wind Farm

### Online and In-Person Consultation Feedback Report November - December 2021

#### About An Càrr Dubh Wind Farm

An Càrr Dubh is a proposal for a 21 turbine wind farm. The site is over 5km to the north-west of Inveraray and over 4km to the east of Dalavich.

	No. of Turbines	Max Blade Tip Heights	Expected Installed Capacity (MW)	Estimated Generation (homes equivalent)	Community Fund (per year)
<b>An Càrr Dubh</b>	Up to <b>21</b>	Up to <b>180m</b>	<b>138.6</b> (section 36 planning application)	<b>152,000</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	<b>£697K</b> <sup>(2)</sup> Per annum

<sup>(1)</sup> Based on 21 x 6.6MW turbines, wind resource assessment and average Scottish domestic consumption of 3,393kWh pa.

<sup>(2)</sup> Fund based on £5k per MW installed per year as recommended by the Scottish Government.

If consented, value of fund determined by actual installed capacity.

The project was introduced to community representatives in May 2021 and an online consultation event, adhering to Scottish Government advice in relation to Covid-19, was held across June - July 2021. A Feedback Report for the first consultation event was circulated to Community Councils and uploaded to the project website in [October 2021](#).

A second consultation, both online and in-person, was held in November 2021. This Feedback Report focuses on the feedback received during the second exhibition period.

## Background

Community engagement is very important to us and we hold a series of consultation events for all our projects to highlight our proposals and receive feedback and input from nearby communities. We committed to holding a physical exhibition event alongside a virtual exhibition if possible in order to give residents different opportunities to engage on the proposals. As the Covid-19 restrictions eased in Summer 2021, it was possible to hold in-person physical events with suitable Covid-19 risk measures in place.

We carried out risk assessments in advance of the physical exhibition events. The measures taken at the physical exhibitions included:

- An appointment-based system to ensure the number of attendees in the hall/venue stayed within the hall capacity;
- Track and Trace in operation, with contact details of all attendees provided to Statkraft;
- Members of the Statkraft team taking lateral flow tests in advance of the exhibitions;
- Mask covering in operation and hand sanitiser available to attendees; and
- Spacing out of information material.

## Second Exhibition Period

This report presents the findings of the feedback received during and after the second round of consultation held over 1 - 21 November 2021 and included in-person and online consultation opportunities. Feedback could also be provided by phone and postal feedback forms with responses accepted until 17 December 2021.

The consultation was publicised in various ways to ensure as many local residents as possible were made aware of the second exhibition event, including:

- Advertisements in the Oban Times on Thursday 28 October 2021 and in the Argyllshire Advertiser on the 29 October 2021. This notice provided information on how to book an appointment at the exhibition events and details of the online exhibition.
- Mailing to all households and businesses (almost 1,500) in communities around the site with an invitation to the in person exhibitions, details of how to take part in the online consultation as well as providing feedback cards (which could be returned up to 17 December 2021) and freepost envelopes for those who preferred to write back rather than go online or attend an exhibition.
- Writing to host and neighbouring Community Councils, local ward members, the MSP and MP at the start of the consultation, with copies of adverts should they wish to highlight the events on social media.
- Providing details of the consultation on the An Càrr Dubh project website.

#### *In-Person Exhibition 9 - 11 November 2021*

The In-Person Physical Exhibitions were held:

- Tuesday, 9 November 2021 – Ford Village Hall, Ford. 2pm – 7pm.
- Wednesday, 10 November 2021 – Dalavich Community Centre, Dalavich. 2pm – 7pm.
- Thursday, 11 November 2021 – Loch Fyne Hotel, Inveraray, 2pm – 7pm.

On display at each exhibition were a number of information boards, covering:

- Information about the developer;
- An overview of the proposed development, including layout, key viewpoints, transport route and how the project has taken on board comments from the first exhibition event;
- A zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) of the proposed development; and
- Community benefit, construction/supplier register opportunities and shared ownership.

We also provided a fly-through visualisation of the site and animated views from local viewpoints enabling visitors to experience a more immersive representation of the proposed development.

Printed copies of the online exhibition brochure were available for members of the public to take away. Finally, feedback forms were available at the event for members of the public to fill out or take away along with a freepost envelope.

The Ford exhibition had five visitors, Dalavich had 10 visitors and Inveraray had 17 visitors, a total of 32 visitors over the three days. The majority of attendees had booked an appointment in advance. Several members of the public attended on the day without an appointment - they provided track and trace details.

Representatives of Avich & Kilchrenan Community Council, Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council and Inveraray Community Council attended the exhibition events.

#### *Online Exhibition, 1 - 21 November 2021*

The virtual exhibition, accessed via a link from the main project website, sought to replicate the type of information and materials available at the physical exhibition. This included:

- An exhibition brochure – to replace and expand on the information you would normally expect on exhibition boards, this included the layout and further details about the transport route;
- Specific information about how the proposed development had been progressed since the first exhibition;
- Community benefit, construction/supplier register and community ownership information;
- A live Q&A session held on 19 November 2021, 12pm - 2pm, to provide members of the public with a dedicated interactive online event to engage with the project team;
- A 'ring back' service to allow members of the public to have a dedicated chat with our team at a date/ time suitable to them; and
- An opportunity to leave comments throughout the exhibition period using an online feedback form.

## Summary of Consultation Responses

We received 64 (4%) feedback forms during the consultation period. In addition, we received 273 webpage views on the separate and dedicated website set up to host the online public exhibition website and five online forms were completed between 1 - 21 November.

In total, there were 125 interactions, including 32 attendees to the events, call backs, online forms, and feedback forms (not including correspondence regarding confirmation of attending the exhibitions etc.).

The results of the returned freepost forms are provided below:

Of those who provided a response to the question, 86% agreed that the country needs to generate more electricity from renewable sources. 61% agreed that onshore wind power is a good way to help achieve this, with 25% not agreeing and 13% unsure (2% did not provide a response).

In response to: 'Do you think this is an acceptable location for a wind farm?', 53% agreed, 34% said no and 13% are unsure.

52% of respondents responded yes to the question. 'We will explore the potential to assist in bringing improved broadband to the area. Is that of interest to you?' 39% were not interested and 9% were unsure.

We are open to offering shared ownership on our projects. When asked if this was of interest should the project be consented, 30% of respondents were interested, 28% were unsure and 42% were not interested in shared ownership.

72% of all respondents wish to be kept up to date on the project and we look forward to engaging with the community over the coming months.

Although the exhibition has now closed, the exhibition material is still available on the project website at [www.ancarrdubh.co.uk](http://www.ancarrdubh.co.uk)

## Key Topics from Consultation

Similar to the first exhibition, we received positive, negative and neutral comments and questions regarding the wind farm proposals. We will directly respond to all feedback/letters (in line with GDPR rules).

Below is a summary of the main themes raised with us and we would welcome further discussion with the community on these topics:

- Visual impact
- Consider removing the 5 turbines to the north west of the site the most prominent turbines to Dalavich and consider removing turbine 19 which is fully visible from Strachur
- Offshore or other renewable energy sources should be used
- Wildlife concerns
- Broadband
- Community Benefit/Shared Ownership

## Next Steps

As noted at during exhibition the application is likely to change, as a result of further studies and taking into consideration local community feedback, before it is submitted in Summer/Autumn 2022. The next steps for local engagement over this period are:

- Send a copy of this summary report to local and neighbouring community councils and keep interested parties updated on the project.
- Offer attendance to local and neighbouring Community Council meetings in 2022 to present the project and answer further questions.
- We would welcome the opportunity to speak to communities further about our commitment to community benefit and shared ownership.
- We would welcome the opportunity to explore/share our findings of the Broadband report.
- Continue to update the project website.

## Appendix: An Càrr Dubh Wind Farm

*During the November - December 2021 consultation, some questions and comments were frequently raised. Below is our response to these. (February 2022)*

### ***There are too many wind farms in this area/the turbines are too tall/can you consider removing turbines?***

Since the project was introduced (May 2021) both the proposed number and maximum height of the turbines has reduced; from 26 to 21 turbines and the maximum height from 200m to 180m to tip height. The changes were made following further studies and taking into account stakeholder and community feedback.

A layout comprising of 21 turbines with tip heights to 180 m was presented during this exhibition. Several attendees fed back whether we could consider removing, the 5 turbines to the north west of the site the most prominent turbines to Dalavich and consider removing turbine 19 which is fully visible from Strachur. It is expected the proposal submitted to planning will have fewer turbines. Following feedback at the exhibition, we are considering further design iterations for the site and will review which turbines may be removed while still achieving a design that reflects the topography, fits with surrounding wind farm projects (approved or in planning), seeks to minimise visual impact while also maximising the output of zero carbon energy.

As part of our work towards the Section 36 application, we are continuing to undertake substantial analysis into the landscape and visual considerations of the proposed development. Viewpoints and Wirelines will be produced for the proposal submitted to provide the local community the opportunity to understand what the proposed development may look like should it be consented and constructed.

The Scottish Government has a target to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. Onshore wind is expected to play a role in achieving this aim. Our analysis shows that the area suitable for onshore wind development in Scotland is limited due to a range of factors. To find out more about what makes a site suitable for onshore wind, you are invited to watch this webinar 'Location, Location – the challenges to siting onshore wind farms in Scotland' where our Head of Development explores the challenges faced in finding the best sites to maximise Scotland's excellent natural wind resources. Please visit [this link](#) to view.

### ***Wind turbines should be offshore or other renewable technologies should be considered.***

We need a mix of all types of renewable energy generation. New-build onshore wind is presently the most cost-effective way to generate new electricity, out of all forms of electricity.

### ***Wind farms are bad for the environment i.e. wildlife***

We consult with NatureScot on the scope of the surveys and we have commissioned experienced technical consultants to undertake detailed environmental surveys of the habitat, ecology and ornithology, amongst others. This information is used to inform the proposed layout of the project and we work closely with these consultants to minimise impacts as we work towards finalising our design which will be submitted as part of the Section 36 application. We commit to implementing construction and environmental management plans prior to, and throughout, the construction phase to minimise any damage or disturbance. In addition, a detailed habitat management plan will be implemented for the lifetime of the project which will aim to bring long term benefits to local wildlife and flora.

### ***Queries about Community Benefit, Shared Ownership and the Broadband Feasibility Study***

There are several ways our projects can bring benefits to the local area. Statkraft follows Scottish Government best practice guidance for community benefit funds. This means that all new wind farms will benefit from a Community Benefit Fund of £5,000 per MW of installed capacity per year and in the first instance engagement is undertaken with the host and surrounding Community Councils\* when discussions regarding the fund commence. Other than confirming the value of the fund available, £5,000 per MW of installed capacity, no decisions have been made regarding the community benefit fund.

Statkraft is not prescriptive about how the funds are set up or administered, we are open to discussing how the fund can be tailored to meet the local areas needs and priorities within the local community. It is important to note the provision, or otherwise, of a community benefit fund is not material to a wind farm planning decision i.e. whether a project gains consent.

Separate to the Community Benefit Fund, we are happy to explore the opportunity of shared ownership with the community for the proposed development. 30% of respondents were interested and 28% unsure about shared ownership and we will look to set up a meeting with Community Councils and Local Energy Scotland to provide more information on what shared ownership could look like and we will keep our website up to date in relation to this element too.

Lastly, we are finalising the broadband feasibility study which has been carried out. We require a reliable broadband service to operate our wind turbines and with this in mind we commission a feasibility study for all our projects to explore what the potential may be for improving local infrastructure as the wind farm is connected. Where the study indicates that there is the opportunity to improve internet connection the community could decide to explore this further.

\*Community Councils of: Inveraray, Avich and Kilchrenan, Dunadd, Furnace, Glenorchy and Innishall and Strachur.