



# Dalfad Wind Farm

## Environmental Impact Assessment Report

### Technical Appendix 1.4: Forestry

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# **Dalfad Wind Farm Environmental Impact Assessment Report**

## **Technical Appendix 1.4: Forestry**

September 2026

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

| Abbreviation / Acronym | Meaning                                  |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| AIA                    | Arboricultural Impact Assessment         |
| AIL                    | Abnormal Indivisible Load                |
| ASNW                   | Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland        |
| AWI                    | Ancient Woodland Inventory               |
| BEMP                   | Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan |
| BESS                   | Battery Energy Storage System            |
| EAC                    | East Ayrshire Council                    |
| EIA                    | Environmental Impact Assessment          |
| EIAR                   | Environmental Impact Assessment Report   |
| LEPO                   | Long Established Plantation Origin       |
| MB                     | Mixed Broadleaf                          |
| MC                     | Mixed Conifer                            |
| NFI                    | National Forest Inventory                |
| NPF4                   | National Planning Framework 4            |
| NWSS                   | Native Woodland Survey of Scotland       |
| RTS                    | RTS Forestry                             |
| SP                     | Scots Pine                               |
| SS                     | Sitka Spruce                             |
| TPO                    | Tree Preservation Order                  |

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Brockwell Energy Limited (the ‘Applicant’) has submitted a Section 36 application (of the Electricity Act 1989) to construct and operate Dalfad Wind Farm (further referred to as “the Proposed Development”). The Proposed Development is located within East Ayrshire, Scotland and the Site is owned by six third party landowners. RTS Forestry has been commissioned to produce a Forestry Technical Appendix for inclusion in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report.

This Forestry Technical Appendix describes the existing forestry and woodland baseline, quantifies potential impacts on forestry assets and provides recommendations for the development of forestry impact mitigation.

The assessment has involved review of existing available databases, site surveys and consideration of all relevant guidelines. This includes the NatureScot published Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI)<sup>1</sup> which identifies Ancient and Semi-Natural woodland (ASNW) sites and the Forestry Commission Scotland published Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS)<sup>2</sup> databases for any impact on native and ancient woodland sites. It has also considered Scottish Government Policy on the Control of Woodland Removal 2009 which requires developers to address the removal of areas of woodland associated with development and includes the guiding principle that “woodland removal should be conditional on the undertaking of actions to ensure full delivery of the additional public benefits”.

This appendix also considers Policy 6 within National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). The policy intent is to protect and expand forests, woodland and trees, with the policy outcome of woodland and trees on development sites being sustainably managed. It further states that development proposals involving woodland removal will only be supported where they will achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits.

This assessment has been carried out by suitably qualified and experienced forestry specialists from RTS Forestry.

## 2. SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT AND REPORT OBJECTIVES

The Proposed Development is located approximately 4 km northeast of Cumnock and falls within the East Ayrshire Council (EAC) administrative area. The Site centre can be found at British National Grid reference NS 62781 21809, with the northern part of the Site located on the former Dalfad Opencast Mine and part of the former Duncanziemere Opencast Coal Mine, and the southern part of the Site consisting predominantly of agricultural land. The Dalfad Opencast Mine is a restored brownfield site in need of restoration betterment, with the Duncanziemere Opencast Mine in need of further restoration. Both of these former coal mines are EAC priority areas for restoration.

It is anticipated that the Proposed Development would comprise 14 wind turbines, nine of which will have blade tip heights of up to 200m, and five of which will have tip heights of 149.9 m. In addition to wind turbines there will be ancillary infrastructure including: a network of on-site access tracks and associated watercourse crossings and drainage; crane hardstanding adjacent to each turbine; foundations supporting each turbine; power cables linking the turbines laid in trenches underground; a substation compound including a control building, a Battery energy storage system (BESS) and three temporary site construction compounds. Please refer to Chapter 2: Project Description of the EIA Report (EIAR) for more detail.

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<sup>1</sup> Ancient Woodland Inventory [A guide to understanding the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory \(AWI\) | NatureScot](#)

<sup>2</sup> Native Woodland Survey of Scotland [Native Woodland Survey of Scotland | Scottish Forestry](#)

Consent is being sought to operate the Proposed Development for up to 40 years, at which point it would be decommissioned and the Site restored in accordance with a decommissioning and restoration plan, unless a subsequent application is made in order to extend the life of the wind farm.

The objective of this Forestry Technical Appendix is to:

- Comment on the Proposed Development impacts in light of the current forestry legislation in Scotland;
- Identify direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Development on commercial forestry, woodland and individual trees;
- Describe, quantify and map the woodlands and/ or individual trees affected by the Proposed Development;
- Comment on significance of the Proposed Development impacts;
- Comment on any trees or woodland identified on the register of ASNW, the NWSS, or with any other relevant interest protection; and
- Recommend mitigation of any significant adverse forestry impacts of the Proposed Development.

### **3. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

This report presents a review of the forestry implications of the Proposed Development utilising data collected from the following:

- Proposed development data supplied by the Applicant;
- National data sources available from Scottish Government Spatial Data Infrastructure, NatureScot and others;
- Aerial photographs; and
- Site surveys.

### **4. CURRENT SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FORESTRY POLICIES, LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

Scotland's Forestry Strategy, 2019 – 2029<sup>3</sup> is aimed at prevention of inappropriate woodland loss.

Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal (2009)<sup>4</sup> confirms a strong presumption in favour of protecting Scotland's woodland resources and limits forestry to be converted to another type of land use.

NPF4 recognises the importance of forests and woodlands in delivering the National Outcomes of Environment, Communities, and Economy. Policy 6 aims to protect and expand forests, woodland and trees. The Climate Change Plan<sup>5</sup> places emphasis on the fact that Scotland's woodlands deliver a wide range of benefits, including inward investment and jobs, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and the enhancement of the health and wellbeing of Scotland's communities.

### **5. BASELINE FORESTRY CONDITIONS**

The Proposed Development Area is demarcated by the red line boundary illustrated in Figures TA1.4.1 and TA1.4.2.

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<sup>3</sup> Scotland Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 [Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 | Scottish Forestry](#)

<sup>4</sup> Control of Woodland Removal [woodland removal policy | Scottish Forestry](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Scotland's Climate Change Plan: 2026-2040 - gov.scot](#)

## 5.1. Forestry Baseline within 10 km of the Site

A review of all land use within a 10km vicinity of the Proposed Development Footprint allowed the extent of existing woodland area to be determined. Please refer to Table 1 below.

**Table 1 - Woodland within 10km of the Proposed Development**

| Item                  | Area [ha] | Area [%] |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------|
| 10km buffer area      | 44,788.00 | 100.00   |
| Of which:             |           |          |
| Non-Forestry land use | 37,309.89 | 83.00    |
| Forestry land use     | 7,478.12  | 17.00    |

The National Forest Inventory 2024 data was assessed to provide further information on woodland types within the 10km buffer, and these are outlined in Table 2 below.

**Table 2 - Forestry Land Use – woodland types**

| Forestry land use            | Area [ha]       | Area [%]      |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Broadleaf                    | 933.90          | 12.49         |
| Conifer                      | 2,984.08        | 39.90         |
| Low density stocked woodland | 8.86            | 0.12          |
| Mixed species                | 225.49          | 3.02          |
| Shrub                        | 1.42            | 0.02          |
| Unidentified young woodland  | 2,448.61        | 32.74         |
| Other woodland               | 875.76          | 11.71         |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>7,478.12</b> | <b>100.00</b> |

The baseline forestry within the 10 km buffer area is illustrated in Figure TA1.4.1.

## 5.2. Forestry Baseline within the Site

### 5.2.1. Ancient and Native Woodland

There are several areas of ancient and native woodland within the Site (refer to Figure TA1.4.2). Data was obtained from the ASNW and NWSS inventories. The results are summarised in Table 3 below.

**Table 3 - Ancient woodland and Native Woodland (NWSS) – the Proposed Development Area relative to the Proposed Development Footprint.**

| AWI and NWSS categories         | Area within the Site (ha) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ancient Woodland (Antiquity 2a) | 0.1                       |
| LEPO <sup>[1]</sup>             | 16.56                     |
| Native woodland                 | 6.76                      |
| Intersected NWSS and LEPO       | 2.64                      |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>26.06</b>              |

### 5.2.2. Other woodland

There are several relatively small blocks of forestry within the Site, as described below, summarised in Table 4, below, and shown on Figure TA1.4.2.

#### 5.2.2.1. ***Mixed broadleaves (MB)***

There are several areas within the Site which support mixed broadleaf species. The largest of these is in the north of the Site and includes two smaller areas of ancient woodland (LEPO<sup>6</sup> 1750) totalling 6.85 ha. The northern MB area consist of a mix of mature and ancient woodland which are relatively sparse in some areas, denser in others (see **Image 1** below).

The condition of the younger trees can best be described as varied/ establishing, due to the challenges of establishing woodland on restoration opencast coal mines. The LEPO areas are well established mature trees. The ancient woodland habitat is also described in Chapter 6 of the EIA Report.



***Image 1: Aerial view of Mixed broadleaf area in the north of the Site (Google Earth Image, 2026)***

There are several smaller areas of MB towards the centre of the Site including a tree belt near the Dalfad open void and Duncanziemere former opencast mine and small areas around the commercial plantation in the central east of the Site (see **Image 2**, below). Part of the rectangular treeline towards the western extent of the Site is designated as LEPO (see Figure TA1.4.2).

The condition of the trees in the tree belt next the Dalfad void is poor due to the challenges of establishing woodland on restoration opencast coal mines. The LEPO shelter belt near

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<sup>6</sup> LEPO 1750 is Long Established Plantation Origin woodland sites continuously wooded since at least 1750

the Duncanziemere former opencast is longer established shelterbelt with mature trees in good condition.



**Image 2: Aerial view of Mixed broadleaf strips in the centre of the Site (Google Earth Image, 2026)**

Finally, there is an area of mixed broadleaves along part of the Glenmuir Water and its tributary in the south of the Site (see **Image 3**, below). Part of this woodland area is designated as native woodland (see Figure TA1.4.2).

These trees are growing well and are semi-mature to mature.



**Image 3: Aerial view of Mixed broadleaf strips in the south of the Site (Google Earth Image, 2026)**

In total, Mixed broadleaf species covered 26.06 hectares of the Site.

#### 5.2.2.2. Mixed conifers (MC) / Mixed broadleaf (MB)

There are some mixed tree species that appear to have self-seeded within the areas of peat (the peat was likely relocated during the former opencast coal mining operations) to the east and north of the Dalfad mining void. See **Image 4**, below. There are also some areas of MC/MB within the forestry block towards the centre of the Site. In total, MC/MB covers 13.85 ha of the Site.



**Image 4: Photograph of MC/MB (RTS Forestry, July 2026)**

#### 5.2.2.3. Sitka spruce (SS)

There are several areas of commercial forestry within the Site, all situated towards the centre of the Site. These include areas that have been planted with Sitka spruce - see Figure TA1.4.2 and **Image 5**.



**Image 5: Aerial view of Sitka spruce strips in the centre of the Site (Google Earth Image, 2026)**

Some of the SS has been planted adjacent to The Drum commercial forest which is adjacent to part of the eastern boundary of the Site. These trees were planted under Forestry Grant Scheme contract 21FGS58324 and at 5 years old are currently 2 m in height. Adjacent restocked spruce woodland is of similar age and height and in all cases are establishing well. In total, Sitka spruce covers 14.8 ha of the Site.

#### 5.2.2.4. Scots pine (SP)

There are two small areas of Scots pine present within the central part of the Site (see Figure TA 1.4.2 and **Image 4** above. Mature Scots pine is present within the 0.37 ha ‘teardrop’ shaped forestry compartment and is well established. Younger Scots pine (circa 5 years old) has recently been planted in a small section of restocked felled area to the north of the newly planted Sitka spruce. In total, Scots pine covers 2.76 ha of the Site.

**Table 4: Summary of Forest present within the Application Site**

| Species                                    | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Area of Coverage within the Site |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Mixed broadleaf (MB)                       | Generally mature (includes two areas designated as ancient woodland in the north of the Site), although often sparse. Several small MB tree belts in the centre of the Site. MB in the south of the Site follows along part of the Glen Water and its tributary.                                                                   | 26.06 Ha                         |
| Mixed conifers (MC) / Mixed broadleaf (MB) | There are some mixed tree species that appear to have self-seeded within the areas of peat to the east of the Dalfad mining void. There are also some areas of MC/MB within the forestry block towards the centre of the Site.                                                                                                     | 13.85 Ha                         |
| Sitka spruce                               | Commercial forestry species present towards the centre of the Site, most of which are recently planted. More mature trees are present adjacent to The Drum Forest which is adjacent to the east of the Site boundary.                                                                                                              | 14.8 Ha                          |
| Scots pine                                 | Planted at commercial densities, this species is present in two relatively small areas towards the centre of the Site, adjacent to the Sitka spruce plantation areas described above. Some mature trees present within the teardrop shaped compartment, with recently restocked young woodland to the north of the forestry block. | 2.76 Ha                          |
| <b>Total</b>                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>57.47 Ha</b>                  |

### 5.3. Woodland impacts

The potential effects of the proposed construction areas (hereinafter referred to as the Proposed Development Footprint), have been assessed below. The Proposed Development Footprint is demarcated by the pink line boundary illustrated in Figure TA1.4.2.

#### 5.3.1. ***Direct Loss of Woodland through Felling***

The infrastructure of the Proposed Development was sited to avoid the ancient and native woodland areas during the design stage (see Chapter 3 of the EIA for more detail). While the commercial forestry areas were also avoided wherever possible, other constraints such as topography, mining backfill areas and landscape and visual impacts informed the locations of the turbines and consequently the layout of the tracks towards the east of the

Site, with the result that some of the existing forestry within the Site will be directly impacted by the Proposed Development.

Woodland that would be impacted by the Proposed Development Footprint is summarised below in Table 5 and illustrated on the map in Figure TA1.4.2. The infrastructure felling areas have been calculated for the infrastructure footprint plus a 15 m buffer centred on the access tracks and 100 m diameter keyholes around the turbines that are to be located within forestry.

**Table 5 - Woodland impacted within Proposed Development Footprint**

| Species           | Height (m)  |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | Total (ha)  |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                   | 1           | 2           | 6           | 8           | 10          | 14          | 16          | 22          |             |
| Sitka spruce      | 0.00        | 2.66        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 2.66        |
| Mixed broadleaves | 0.33        | 0.91        | 0.31        | 0.02        | 0.07        | 0.01        | 0.12        | 0.00        | 1.77        |
| Scots pine        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.00        | 0.37        | 0.37        |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>0.33</b> | <b>3.57</b> | <b>0.31</b> | <b>0.02</b> | <b>0.07</b> | <b>0.01</b> | <b>0.12</b> | <b>0.37</b> | <b>4.80</b> |

There is a tree clearance requirement of 4.80 ha, which represents 0.06% of the total area of woodland within 10km of the Site and 8.35 % of the woodland areas within the Site. This is assessed as low impact given the components of the woodland involved are not of conservation interest (e.g. ancient or native woodland) and are well represented in the wider landscape (Section 3.5 refers).

### **5.3.2. Effects on Ancient and Native Woodland within the Site**

The Proposed Development Area and Proposed Development Footprint within, have been reviewed in relation to both the ASNW and NWSS inventories and against NP4<sup>7</sup> Policy 6.3.6.4. Whilst there is 26.06 ha of Ancient, LEPO and NWSS woodland present within the Site, careful consideration and avoidance of these during the design of the Proposed Development results in a zero adverse impact on these woodland types. A description of the design evolution and the key constraints that were taken into consideration during design (including ancient and native woodlands) is set out in Chapter 3 of the EIAR.

Please refer to Figure TA1.4.2 Woodland impacted by the Proposed Development area.

Part of the Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan (BEMP) that has been developed for the Site includes broadleaf planting to enhance and restore the ancient and native woodland areas in the north and south of the Site (refer to Technical Appendix 6.6 and Figure 6.13 of the EIA Report). It is therefore anticipated that the Proposed Development will impact positively on the native and ancient woodland within the Site through the implementation of the BEMP.

## **5.4. Assumed Overhead Line Routeing Corridor**

### **5.4.1. Background**

Although a grid connection does not form part of the Section 36 (of the Electricity Act 1989) application to construct and operate Dalfad Wind Farm, the potential environmental effects on woodland within the Assumed Overhead Line Routeing Corridor require to be assessed, in order to comment on any trees or woodland identified within the register of ASNW, the NWSS, or with other relevant interest protection.

The assumed 132kV overhead line routeing corridor has been designed to minimise impacts on woodland and is shown outlined in black in Figure TA1.4.3.

<sup>7</sup> National Planning Framework 4 – Policy 6 -. National Planning Framework 4 - gov.scot

#### **5.4.2. Approach to Assessment**

Technical Assessment 1.1 in the EIA Report sets out the approach to assessment.

The assumed technical parameters of the overhead line are set out in Section 2.3 of Chapter 2 of the EIA Report.

The assessment of likely significant effects of the grid connection within the assumed routeing corridor takes account of publicly available baseline information and assumes that embedded and standard mitigation will be applied during construction.

#### **5.4.3. Baseline**

A desk-based analysis was completed involving a review of key datasets and spatial information to establish baseline woodland conditions within the Assumed Overhead Line Routeing Corridor and identification of potential constraints, opportunities and sensitivities.

Data reviewed included:

- Proposed development information supplied by the Applicant;
- National data sources available from Scottish Government Spatial Data Infrastructure, NatureScot and others; and
- Aerial photography.

Existing woodlands within the routeing corridor are summarised in Table 6 below.

**Table 6 Woodland classification within the Grid Connections Corridor**

| <b>Woodland classification</b>                  | <b>Area(ha)</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Native Woodland (NWSS)                          | 17.94           |
| National Forest Inventory (NFI)                 | 169.65          |
| Woodland Creation (NFI)                         | 77.60           |
| New woodland creation (since NFI was published) | 9.28            |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>274.47</b>   |

#### **5.4.4. Embedded Mitigation**

The Assumed Overhead Line Routeing Corridor was designed to avoid all areas designated as ancient and native woodland, with the exception of two relatively small areas of native woodland which could not be excluded from the corridor due to other environmental constraints. However, it is expected that both of these areas would be avoided through careful routeing of the overhead line during the design stage.

#### **5.4.5. Potential Impacts**

From the baseline data, and as can be seen on Figure TA1.4.3, there are several large areas of forestry which could be impacted, should an overhead line be routed through these areas. It is assumed that forestry would require to be felled within a 50m buffer centred on the selected overhead line route (25m either side of the overhead line). It is therefore anticipated that some felling of forestry will be required, although this would need to be quantified once a route has been selected for the overhead line.

In the case where any ancient or native woodland were to be directly impacted by the assumed overhead line, consultation would be undertaken with Scottish Forestry, NatureScot and East Ayrshire Council to determine a way forward and identify potential mitigation and / or compensatory measures that could be implemented to mitigate and/or compensate for the woodland that would be lost.

#### **5.4.6. Standard Mitigation**

It is acknowledged that any forestry that requires to be felled to accommodate an overhead line will have to be compensated through compensatory planting of the same area within a geographic area and with species as determined by the planning authority.

Furthermore, removal of forestry would be done in line with the Scottish Government's policy on Control of Woodland Removal.

#### **5.4.7. Residual Impacts**

Since any forestry to be removed would be compensated for, whether on or offsite, it is anticipated that the construction and operation of the overhead line would result in no net loss of woodland. It is therefore not anticipated that potential impacts on forestry would be significant.

It is not anticipated that any ancient and native woodlands would be lost as a result of the construction and operation of the assumed overhead line, assuming such could be routed to avoid sensitive woodland areas. However, should this not be possible, an assessment of effects would need to be carried out once a route is available to determine whether such effects would be significant.

### **5.5. Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL)**

#### **5.5.1. Background and Approach to Assessment**

The report in Technical Appendix 10.1 considers the feasibility of delivering the wind turbine components to the Site. It identifies an optimum route for the delivery of the wind turbine components from King George V Dock in Glasgow to the Site.

Part of the AIL route between the A70 and A76 will require modification of overrun areas adjacent to the public road – this section of the AIL route is shown outlined in orange in Figure TA1.4.3 and has been included in this assessment in line with the approach to assessment set out in Technical Appendix 1.1 of the EIAR. Please also refer to Figure 2.14 of the EIAR.

#### **5.5.2. Baseline**

A desk-based analysis was completed involving a review of key datasets and spatial information to establish baseline woodland conditions along the 14.42 km AIL route and identify potential constraints, opportunities and sensitivities. The process was as outlined in section 3.7.2.

The proposed section of the AIL route passes several broadleaf woodlands and a large number of individual roadside trees. None of these woodlands or individual trees are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

The linear distances and woodland classification of these interactions are summarised in Table 7 below.

**Table 7 Woodland classification adjacent to AIL route**

| <b>Woodland classification</b>        | <b>Length (metres)</b> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Ancient Woodland (AWI) (Antiquity 1a) | 478                    |
| LEPO (AWI)                            | 329                    |
| Native Woodland (NWSS)                | 2,146                  |
| National Forest Inventory             | 2,107                  |
| Woodland Creation                     | 415                    |
| <b>Total distance (m)</b>             | <b>5475</b>            |

### 5.5.3. *Potential Impacts*

Use of the proposed route therefore has the potential, subject to understanding the height and width of construction required for the AIL overrun areas, to impact trees, principally their crowns and rooting systems.

It will therefore be necessary to quantify these impacts and detail mitigation measures to remove or reduce potential impacts during the design/ submission of a future planning application.

There are three scenarios in which the AIL for the Proposed Development needs to be considered:

1. The AIL works are carried out as proposed and consented as part of Hare Craig Wind Farm construction, and the works are considered temporary and removed, and the associated areas reinstated following completion of Hare Craig Wind Farm construction.
2. The AIL works are carried out as proposed and consented as part of Hare Craig Wind Farm construction, and the works remain in place, and are reused during the construction of the Proposed Development.
3. Hare Craig Wind Farm construction does not proceed, and the AIL works are undertaken by the Proposed Development (utilising the same areas and approach as has already been consented, which would imply works, if undertaken by the Proposed Development, would be equally acceptable).

Under scenario one: works will have been undertaken as part of Hare Craig Wind Farm construction and subsequently restored. Any subsequent reuse of overrun areas for the Proposed Development will involve construction within and affect already previously disturbed areas and is not expected to affect forested areas any further unless those overrun areas have been reinstated with trees, in which case these would be removed again for the construction phase and would be replaced during reinstatement. This would result in no net loss of woodland.

Under scenario two: works will have been undertaken as part of Hare Craig Wind Farm construction and remain in place; therefore, no additional effects would arise from the Proposed Development's AIL route.

Under scenario three: works will be undertaken by the Applicant for the Proposed Development. There is potential for some of the overrun areas to impact on trees in the adjacent woodland areas. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment would be required for any overrun areas where trees are within 50 m of the overrun areas. However, due to the relatively small size of areas involved, the baseline conditions as noted above and in cognisance of embedded and good practice mitigation measures and construction best practice which would be in place, it is not anticipated that the construction and use of the AIL route for the Proposed Development would result in likely significant effects on any woodland areas, either standalone or in-combination with the Proposed Development.

### 5.6. **Mitigation and Control Measures on Woodland Impact**

Tree clearance of woodland associated with the Proposed Development Footprint will result in an area of 4.80 ha being removed.

Compensatory planting of this area is required to mitigate for the woodland loss, and the Applicant is committed to sourcing an area of suitable compensatory planting within the local authority area. An appropriate planning condition regarding compensatory planting is considered sufficient to control this, detailing which tree species are to be planted.

The reuse of the existing track near the Site entrance has enabled the potential adverse effects on the ancient woodland near this location to be avoided entirely.

The existing 1.77 ha of broadleaf woodland measuring 1-16 metres in height and the 2.66 ha of 2-metre-high spruce within the young commercial woodland areas that will require

felling to accommodate the Proposed Development Footprint (Table 5), are considered wind stable with Proposed Development impacts being localised to the Proposed Development Footprint.

The removal of the 0.37 ha of Scots pine at 22 metres or more in height (Table 5), has the potential to result in wind damage to retained trees. As such, additional felling to a more wind stable forest edge (termed “Management felling”) to further mitigate for the risk of windblow may be required. The decision on this requirement will be made closer to construction, as the trees in question may be removed by the landowner prior to construction as part of planned woodland management.

To address future forest management access, crossing points will be created over infrastructure cabling within the roadside verges, to facilitate forest machinery access. The future requirement, location, number and specification of such crossings will be agreed between the developer and the landowner, prior to the commencement of construction.

To facilitate access, existing fencing will require minor changes during construction and operation of the wind farm. This can be addressed by the installation of suitable gates or cattle/deer grids across the track(s).

## 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Proposed Development Footprint does not directly impact any designated or classified sites identified within the Ancient Woodland Inventory. Therefore the **4.80 ha removal of woodland** resulting from the Proposed Development can be assessed as **not significant**, due to the scale and quality of affected woodland.

The developer’s commitment to **undertake 4.80 ha of compensatory planting** will **fully mitigate** woodland impact within the Proposed Development Footprint, complying with the Scottish Government Policy on the Control of Woodland Removal. Any plans for compensatory planting will be agreed with Scottish Forestry prior to the commencement of construction.

The Proposed Development Footprint does not result in any adverse effects on ancient or native woodland, and a positive effect on ancient and native woodland is expected with the implementation of the BEMP.

The Assumed Grid Connection Routeing Corridor has been carefully chosen to avoid designated sites, designated or classified woodland under the Ancient Woodland Inventory.

The corridor does contain areas of native woodland, recent woodland creation and woodland within the National Forest Inventory area.

Woodland impacts within the final route of the grid connection would require to be assessed at a future date once that route is known.

The section of the AIL route considered in this assessment runs adjacent to designated or classified sites under the Ancient Woodland Inventory as well as a number of individual roadside broadleaf trees.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) will be required to assess impacts and recommend appropriate mitigation, prior to the commencement of construction of the identified overrun areas, where trees are present within 50 m of the overrun areas.

Any tree removal required following the AIA, will require permission from either Scottish Forestry or the planning authority.

## FIGURES

Figure TA1.4.1: Forestry in 10km buffer from Proposed Development

Figure TA1.4.2: Woodland impacted by the Proposed Development area

Figure TA1.4.3: Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) route and Grid Connections Corridor