

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This document is a Non Technical Summary (NTS) of an Environmental Statement (ES) that has been submitted to South Lanarkshire Council to accompany a planning application for the development and operation of a wind farm at Glentaggart, Glespin, made by Glentaggart Wind Farm Limited (part of the Infinis group of companies and referred to in this document as Infinis).

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a means of drawing together, in a systematic way, an assessment of a project's likely significant environmental effects. An EIA was undertaken for the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm. The findings of the EIA are described in the ES.

THE APPLICATION SUBMISSION PACKAGE

This NTS is Volume 2 of a three volume submission forming the planning application submitted. The full submission comprises:

- Volume 1: Environmental Statement (ES);
- Volume 2: Non Technical Summary (NTS); and
- Volume 3: Planning Statement.

The ES provides a detailed description of the proposed wind farm development, a description of the planning application site and an accurate and objective account of the possible significant environmental effects of the proposed development based on the findings of the EIA.

The Planning Statement describes how the proposed wind farm development complies with various planning policies and other planning considerations that are relevant to the application for planning permission. The Planning Statement also describes how Infinis has consulted with the local community and other stakeholders in preparing the planning application. The Planning Statement is not part of the ES and is therefore not considered further in this NTS.

LOCATION OF THE WIND FARM

The location of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm and the details of the planning application site can be seen on the Location Plan (Drawing NTS-1) and Site Layout Plan (Drawing NTS-2).

The planning application site (shown by a red line on the drawings) is located within woodland to the south east of Glespin, with the closest of the proposed wind turbines being located approximately 3km from Glespin. The planning application site lies adjacent to the proposed Andershaw Wind Farm and the proposed Glentaggart East Surface Coal Mine that are each the subject of separate planning applications.

Road access to the wind farm would be via a private track from the B7078 at Mid Rig.

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THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The wind farm development would lead to a change in land use over much of the planning application site arising from tree felling followed by the construction of a wind farm and associated infrastructure, and establishment of a managed upland habitat.

The proposed wind farm would consist of five wind turbines, each with three blades. The height of the blade tip from ground level would be a maximum of 132m, (an approximate 80m high hub height with 52m long blades). The wind farm would have a maximum electrical output of 17 megawatts. Other components of the development include transformers at the base of each turbine, underground cabling within the application site, a proposed 80m high weather monitoring mast, tracks to allow access to each turbine, and an electrical sub-station and control room.

It is planned to operate a small quarry (a borrow pit) on site only during the construction phase for a period of around 8 months from where it is intended to extract material mainly for the construction of access tracks.

The planned layout of the proposed wind farm is shown on Drawing NTS-2.

The wind farm would export electricity to the National Grid via the planned Andershaw to Coalburn overhead line (the overhead line is subject to a separate consenting process).

The wind farm primarily has been designed to generate electricity effectively. To do this the turbines must be separated by enough space so that each receives sufficient wind to operate effectively. A further consideration is that each turbine benefits from a clear space around it to allow erection of the turbine and to decrease turbulence of the wind it receives-this has led to plans to remove most of the existing coniferous trees on the site. This was found to have less visual impact than clearing a suitable space of trees around each individual turbine.

Other environmental constraints such as the presence of nearby residential properties, ground conditions, slope steepness, watercourses, noise, birds and ecology, the presence of telecommunications links crossing the site, and the appearance of the wind farm have been taken into account in the design process to arrive at the layout shown on Drawing NTS-2. The locations of the wind turbines have been optimised to present a balanced composition in most views. The design also presents Glentaggart Wind farm as an extension to the Andershaw Wind Farm so that the two wind farms will be seen together as a single development.

CONSTRUCTION OPERATIONS

The wind farm would be constructed over a period of 11 to 14 months. During this period the existing coniferous forest would be removed over a period of 3 to 6 months, followed by the installation of the wind turbines and associated infrastructure over a further period of around 8 months.

Lorries, including long and wide loads, would be used to bring construction materials to the wind farm. The intended use of the Mid Rig access allows these vehicles to be routed from the M74 motorway to the wind farm site without passing through local communities such as Glespin and Douglas.

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The wind turbines would be erected to their full height using mobile cranes brought on site for periods during the construction phase of the wind farm project.

Stone from the planned borrow pit would be processed to form aggregate. The processing would involve the crushing and stockpiling of material on the edge of the borrow pit using mobile plant brought to the wind farm for parts of the construction period.

THE EIA PROCESS

The EIA was managed and this ES prepared by SLR Consulting Limited (SLR). SLR is a multi-disciplinary consultancy and a leading planning and EIA consultant to the renewable energy industry in the United Kingdom.

In order to identify the key environmental topics and the extent to which they needed to be studied, a scoping study was carried out. The scoping process included consultation with the following parties:

- South Lanarkshire Council;
- Douglas Community Council;
- Muirkirk Community Council;
- Duneaton Community Council;
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH);
- Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA);
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB);
- Forestry Commission Scotland;
- BAA;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- Scot Ways;
- Transport Scotland;
- East Ayrshire Council;
- Historic Scotland; and
- West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS).

The ES has been prepared in accordance with relevant legislation and associated guidance, and the advice and requirements of the relevant consultees. The following sections provide a brief summary of the results of the key assessments undertaken.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) at Chapter 6 of the ES investigates the effects the wind farm would have from the point of view of landscape and visual amenity receptors. The assessment includes consideration of effects from the coexistence of Glentagart Wind Farm with other wind farms currently operational and consented, and also with those where an application for planning permission has been submitted.

Landscape receptors are different types of landscape classified by various official bodies. They include landscape character areas which are distinct areas of a similar nature such as rolling farmland, and plateau moorland; or designated landscapes

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such as New Lanark World Heritage Site and Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA).

Visual amenity receptors are people including residents, walkers, and road users.

Receptors can only be receptors if they are predicted to have visibility of the wind farm. The LVIA uses a computer model of the wind farm layout and topography of the area to predict where the wind turbines would be visible from this is called the Zone of Theoretical Influence or ZTV. Using the ZTV a series of over 20 viewpoints was agreed with South Lanarkshire Council that gave a wide range of views covering landscape and visual amenity receptors in the area up to 35km from the wind farm. The effects of the wind turbines on views from these areas were then assessed by professional landscape architects using methods as advised by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Landscape Institute.

The main findings were:

- A moderate but not significant effect on the physical elements of the landscape on the application site itself.

Significant effects are predicted to occur in localised parts of the following landscapes:

- Rolling Moorland and Rolling Moorland Forestry where the proposed wind farm would be located;
- Plateau Moorland; and
- Upland River Valley.

No significant effect would occur on the integrity of the Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) due to limited visibility of the proposed wind farm from large parts of the Special Landscape Area where most people are likely to experience the landscape.

There would be significant effects on visual amenity from Glespin and from the Red Moss Hotel on the B7078, but otherwise there would be limited visibility of the proposed wind farm from residential settlement in the study area, and often at considerable distances.

Visibility of the proposed wind farm from the main roads and railway lines through the study area would be very limited. Significant effects are predicted for road users on the A70 around Glespin, and for cyclists and road users on the B7078 and adjacent cycleway.

For walkers making use of the many tracks through the study area there would be no significant effects on visual amenity except in views from Arkney Hill and from the Douglas-Crawfordjohn and Muirkirk to Glespin footpaths.

The wind farm would not have any effects either on its own or in coexistence with other wind farms in the area that would exceed limits in South Lanarkshire Council's renewable energy guidance.

All on shore wind farm development is likely to give rise to some significant landscape and visual effects. In the case of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm, the significant

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effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be limited in geographic extent. In terms of the landscape character of the site and surrounding area, and having regard to the existing and consented wind farms within this area, it is considered that the landscape has the capacity to accommodate the proposed wind farm.

ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

An assessment of the potentially significant impacts of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm on habitats and non-bird species of conservation interest has been completed. This is reported in Chapter 7 of the ES.

The assessment uses a comprehensive range of data, gathered through desk studies, consultation, and from specifically commissioned vegetation and protected species surveys completed between April 2009 and September 2010. Results were used to highlight ecological constraints and to inform the wind farm design process, using layout modifications to minimise impacts by appropriate location of infrastructure.

The proposed wind farm would not be located within any statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites. All designated sites in the wider area, notably Red Moss Special Area of Conservation and North Lowther Uplands Site of Special Scientific Interest, are sufficiently distant to avoid any significant effects from the wind farm development.

In terms of habitats, the proposed wind farm site mainly comprises low ecological value conifer plantation. Moorland vegetation remains (in a modified state) in the rides and un-planted areas, but only accounts for a relatively small proportion of the site. The proposed access route runs along an existing track next to a coal conveyor, within adjacent habitats mainly comprising marshy grassland and unimproved acid grassland.

As regards protected species, otter, water vole, and four species of bat were present within the survey area. However, these mainly occurred outside the wind farm development area itself and direct impacts will be limited.

A Habitat Management Plan is proposed that describes the management regime to be followed for the various habitats across the wind farm site during the construction phase and the operational phase of the wind farm. The Habitat Management Plan aims to protect and enhance key habitats

Potentially significant impacts on sensitive ecological features are restricted to watercourses and associated fish populations. In order to address these impacts, a range of best practice mitigation measures, primarily in relation to minimising the potential impact of the construction works and water pollution, have been proposed. A Habitat Management Plan is also proposed in order to encourage regeneration of moorland vegetation and more natural forest cover over the site. With these measures in place, the proposed wind farm would not result in any significant long-term adverse impacts on any designated site, sensitive habitat or protected species.

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GEOLOGY, HYDROLOGY AND HYDROGEOLOGY

The groundwater and surface water regimes at the site and surrounding area have been assessed with reference to information held by the British Geological Survey, SEPA, South Lanarkshire Council and others. This is reported in Chapter 8 of the ES. Site investigations have also been completed to characterise the nature and distribution of peat. This data has been used to inform the site design and therefore minimise the potential effects associated with development of the site. Where necessary mitigation measures have been identified.

Measures have been proposed to safeguard watercourses in the area. These include, with the exception of the proposed watercourse crossings, maintaining a standoff of at least 50m from any part of the proposed site infrastructure to watercourses and establishing a water quality monitoring programme which will be used to check for any water pollution resulting from the wind farm.

The proposed watercourse crossings would be constructed in accordance with legislation and best practice guidelines to ensure that the crossings will not pose a potential obstacle to fish migration. Existing tracks have been incorporated in the site design wherever possible, thus avoiding new water crossings and loss of habitat under new tracks (for example the existing track alongside the coal conveyor will be used to link the site with the B7078 at Mid Rig).

Measures have been proposed to manage the quantity and quality of rainwater runoff that might be generated during and following construction of the wind farm. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) have been proposed to ensure that the rate of runoff from site post development is no greater than that prior to development so as not to increase flood risk downstream of the site. The proposed SuDS measures also allow the quality of water to be managed at source (e.g. by settlement of any sediment present) prior to any discharge being made. No direct discharge of water will be made to watercourses. The wind farm site itself is not in an area at risk of flooding.

The presence of local private water supplies has been investigated and the potential effects associated with the wind farm are not significant.

The performance of the identified mitigation measures would be kept under review by a comprehensive environmental surface water monitoring schedule, based on a comparison of data during development with a baseline data set. The monitoring schedule would be agreed with SEPA and SNH prior to any works commencing on site.

Subject to the employment of appropriate mitigation measures, the wind farm is not predicted to have any significant effects relating to any geological, hydrological or hydrogeological receptors.

ORNITHOLOGY (BIRDS)

Desk based studies, consultation and comprehensive bird surveys have been undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the proposed wind farm on breeding, foraging and migrating birds. Potential impacts associated with construction,

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operation and decommissioning of the development have all been assessed. This is reported in Chapter 9 of the ES.

Over a period of 2 years, surveys were undertaken on and near the site. Particular attention was paid (through survey design and fieldwork) to assessing any bird activity connecting the site and the Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands Special Protection Area (and the North Lowther Uplands Site of Scientific Special Interest). The Special Protection Area and Site of Scientific Special Interest are important bird conservation sites.

Of the bird species recorded during the surveys, only a small number were of conservation importance. Hen harrier, short-eared owl and black grouse were the main species of note, found mainly on adjacent open moorland. Given that hen harrier occurred more frequently, and is a bird that could be linked with the nearby Special Protection Area, specific additional monitoring was carried out to improve knowledge of its local movements.

It is predicted that construction would cause minimal disturbance to birds of conservation importance, providing appropriate measures were put in place during the breeding season. The site working area would be minimised and clearly demarcated on the ground and an Ecological Clerk of Works will be employed to ensure appropriate steps are taken to protect any nesting birds.

Operational wind turbines are unlikely to have any significant adverse impacts on bird populations. This is because the current forest plantation does not support any notable bird species, and apart from hen harrier, use of the adjacent moorland in proximity to the site is relatively limited.

Collision risk estimates indicate from breeding season data that one hen harrier would collide with a wind turbine every 201 years, with an even lower figure during the winter months. Collision risk modelling for curlew also showed non-significant effects. Flight activity by short-eared owl and other species was too low to undertake collision risk modelling; it follows that collision risk in these cases will be very low.

The vegetation and habitats within the wind farm footprint (the area occupied by the turbines) would be managed to reduce their suitability for nesting and foraging hen harriers. Away from the turbines, in the southern part of the site, habitats will be managed to benefit hen harriers and short-eared owl, to help provide suitable areas in which they can forage and/or nest. These measures form the key part of the outline Habitat Management Plan that has been produced as part of the proposed wind farm development. It sets out the broad objectives that are proposed to protect and enhance key habitats.

With mitigation measures and the Habitat Management Plan in place, it has been concluded in the assessment that the proposed wind farm would not result in any significant long-term adverse impacts on important bird species.

Following detailed considerations of the implications of the wind farm on the Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands Special Protection Area, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, it is concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that there will be no adverse impact on the integrity of this Special Protection Area.

CARBON EMISSIONS

The carbon dioxide (CO₂) mass balances arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm have been assessed. These are reported in Chapter 10 of the ES.

To undertake this assessment the following were considered, consistent with the latest publications and advice provided by the Scottish Government:

- emissions arising from the fabrication of the turbines and all the associated components;
- emissions arising from wind farm construction (including transportation of components; quarrying; building foundations, access tracks and hard standings; and commissioning);
- the indirect loss of CO₂ uptake by plants originally on the surface of the site but eliminated by construction activity and tree removal;
- emissions due to the indirect, long term liberation of CO₂ from carbon stored in peat due to drying and oxidation processes caused by construction; and
- loss of carbon due to drainage and from forestry clearance.

The carbon payback time for the proposed wind farm has been calculated comparing the net loss of carbon from the site due to the wind farm development with the carbon savings achieved by the wind farm.

The calculation of total CO₂ emission savings and carbon payback time for the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm indicates that the overall payback period would, at worst, be 25 months. This means that the site would take 25 months to 'repay' the carbon lost to the atmosphere through construction of the wind farm; however the site would be in a net gain situation for the following 22 years and 11 months and would contribute to national objectives for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The net decrease in emissions of CO₂ as a result of the 25 year operation of Glentaggart Wind Farm is a positive environmental benefit.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

An assessment of the impacts on the local road and transportation network as a result of the development proposals has been undertaken. This is reported on Chapter 11 of the ES.

The principal potential impact of the development proposals in transportation terms is likely to be that caused by Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic during the construction phase. Impacts have been assessed in terms of potential effects on highway capacity and potential effects on road safety and the amenity of highway users and local residents.

A detailed assessment of baseline conditions, including traffic flows and recent accident data, has been undertaken to establish any possible impacts, and the likely scale of those impacts.

The development would require the use of abnormal loads, to transport turbine components to the site. Potential access routes have been studied in detail and a

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preferred route has been decided upon after due consideration of relevant environmental considerations. The preferred access route utilises the wider motorway network and the B7078, followed by a private access track from Mid Rig to the development site. This route avoids traffic movements through the local settlements of Glespin and Douglas. A range of traffic management measures would be employed to enable the safe movement of abnormal loads.

The development proposals would generate an increase in traffic levels on the B7078 during the construction phase. However, the scale of the impact is primarily due to the existing light traffic flow and it is considered that the road would adequately accommodate future traffic levels. Development traffic would not constitute a material impact on the M74. It is therefore concluded that the surrounding highway network would not be significantly affected in capacity terms by the proposed development.

Traffic impacts would occur during construction for a temporary period of around a year including the tree felling phase and the main construction phase, after which the proposed wind farm would generate negligible traffic volumes. Vehicle movements during the decommissioning phase would be less than those during construction and no abnormal loads are anticipated during decommissioning.

A study of road traffic accidents within the vicinity of the proposed wind farm has been undertaken. It is concluded that the development proposals would have no material impact on existing accident levels within the study area.

A number of mitigation measures have been suggested by the applicant including a traffic management plan that would be agreed with South Lanarkshire Council before construction started. With these in place, the development traffic would not have a significant adverse impact on the surrounding road network either alone or in combination with other proposed developments in the area.

NOISE

An environmental noise assessment has considered the potential for the construction and operation of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm to give rise to noise impacts at the closest noise-sensitive receptors (these are residential properties). The assessment is reported in Chapter 12 of the ES.

Background noise monitoring was undertaken at the closest noise-sensitive receptors and predicted worst case scenario construction and operational noise levels have been modelled. The modelling of noise levels has been undertaken using recognised industry methods, British Standards and technical guidance recommended by the Scottish Government.

The assessment has shown that the predicted noise levels from construction activities fall well below the British Standards assessment criteria relating to the assessment and would at worst lead to a minor, barely perceptible impact on the existing ambient noise levels at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors. With the introduction of the proposed best practice mitigation guidelines to be introduced through a Construction Management Plan, noise from construction activities should have no significant impact.

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The assessment has also shown that predicted noise levels from the operation of the proposed wind farm fall below the noise limits (calculated using established guidance for wind farms) at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors.

Furthermore, the noise generated from the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm, when considered in association with potential noise sources from other planned developments in the area would, at worst, have a minor, barely perceptible, impact on the ambient noise levels locally.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The presence, character and quality of cultural heritage (typically architectural or designed man-made features of an area which are valued for their historic, aesthetic or cultural value) and archaeological features surviving within or near to the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm have been assessed together with the likelihood of significant impacts of the proposed development upon such resources. The assessment is reported in Chapter 13 of the ES.

No significant direct effects (for example destruction) will be sustained to any cultural heritage features within the site, as the design is such that no development will occur in the vicinity of any of the features. The potential for the presence of previously unknown remains within the site is low.

Indirect effects (i.e. effects that are not due to physical damage) are limited to two scheduled monuments to the east of the wind farm – Auchensaugh Hill Cairn and Wildshaw Burn Stone Circle. Both of these monuments will have a direct view of the wind farm in the near to middle distance and they have been assessed as sustaining a moderate adverse effect from the proposal.

These 2 prehistoric sites were once prominent features within the landscape, although overgrowth and robbing have reduced their prominence. However their research value is not diminished by the presence of a wind farm in close proximity.

Historic Scotland in their consultation response to the Andershaw Wind Farm development commented that similar impacts from that development were not considered of sufficient significance to merit objection to the Andershaw Wind Farm development. It is considered that the same position applies to this current proposal for the Glentaggart Wind Farm.

FORESTRY RESOURCES

An assessment of the impacts of the proposed wind farm on forest resources and forest habitats has been reported in Chapter 14 of the ES.

The assessment considers the timber resource present, notably its species composition, age, management to date and yield class. Using this information, analysis has identified the appropriate combination of forest management to meet requirements for wind turbine operation (avoiding disruption to wind farm energy yield) while also enabling extraction of economically harvestable timber and the retention, enhancement and on-going management of appropriate moorland and woodland cover.

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Woodland on the western part of the site will be retained and enhanced, increasing the proportion of open space and over the lifetime of the wind farm, replacing conifer plantation with native broadleaf woodland. This can be achieved on this part of the site, where it will not inhibit the wind farm energy yield and will enhance habitats for key bird and ecological species.

Approximately 85 hectares of plantation will be removed before wind farm construction commences, and this will be through a combination of mulching and felling. Approximately 27 hectares of woodland would be brought into management and/or harvested during later years of the development, as described in the Habitat Management Plan. The forest currently provides little visual interest and the opportunity to restore the original open upland habitats on the site would lead to greater habitat diversity and greater visual interest. The staged tree removal strategy presents opportunities for biodiversity, conservation and landscape improvements that would provide local benefits.

Potentially significant impacts on forestry resources are restricted to watercourses and their fauna. In order to address these impacts, a range of best practice mitigation measures during construction will be implemented, in accordance with standard forest management guidelines.

With these measures in place, it has been concluded that the proposed wind farm would not result in any significant long-term adverse impacts on forestry resources.

SOCIO ECONOMICS

The potential socio-economic effects of the proposed wind farm are reported in Chapter 15 of the ES.

An important benefit from the operation of Glentaggart Wind Farm is the significant electricity output to the national grid. This renewable energy would assist in the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. The development of Glentaggart Wind Farm would contribute towards the Scottish Government achieving its ambitious renewable energy target to meet an equivalent of 100% demand for electricity from renewable energy by 2020.

The wind farm would create employment opportunities over the construction period for local workers. The initial enabling works phase would involve tree felling over a 3-6 month period, and typically 40-50 construction workers would be required over approximately 8 months following tree removal, with opportunities for local employment. There would be some indirect benefits from supply of materials and induced benefits from local spend by those construction workers employed on the site. The construction phase of the development would likely have a positive impact on occupancy rates in accommodation in the local area.

Experience at similar sites indicates that at least two full-time jobs would be supported by operational and maintenance activities associated with the wind farm throughout the 25 year lifetime of the wind farm.

During the operation phase of the wind farm Infinis would make annual community benefit contributions to The Renewable Energy Fund administered by South

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Lanarkshire Council in accordance with council planning policy. The fund can make payments to communities who are considered to be affected by renewable energy projects. This fund could be used to improve local facilities and services.

The development would therefore have no significant adverse socio-economic impacts and would offer a number of positive benefits.

AVIATION AND DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE

The potential impacts of the proposed wind farm on civil aviation and defence interests are assessed and the results reported in Chapter 16 of the ES.

There is potential for impact from the proposed wind farm on aviation and defence interests, particularly National Air Traffic Services (En-Route) Limited (NERL) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and their infrastructure. However, whilst further assessment may be required, the potential impacts on these receptors are reasonably well understood. The effects on Glasgow Prestwick Airport, Glasgow Airport and the CAA were assessed at worst as minor and will not be significant.

In the absence of implementing any mitigation measures, major potential impacts were identified for MoD Low Flying Area 20T, for the MoD seismological recording station at Eskdalemuir, and for the NERL radar station at Lowther Hill.

In common with other similar wind farm proposals, further assessment and discussion is required with NERL and MoD to fully understand the required levels of mitigation. Radar mitigation options will be explored further where required and appropriate contractual commitment made by Infinis with regard to their implementation.

Recent flight trials undertaken have indicated that in the short term, potential radar mitigation may be available for Glentaggart Wind Farm turbines using a feed in to the NERL Lowther Hill radar from either Glasgow International or Glasgow Prestwick airports. In the longer term NERL are exploring a potential wider radar mitigation solution.

As with many wind farm planning applications, mitigation is likely to be required to address the issues raised at the EIA Scoping stage by NERL and MoD. Any mitigation methods identified and successfully adopted would lead to the residual impact of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm being acceptable and not significant.

COMMUNICATIONS

The operation of wind turbines has the potential to affect telecommunications links. The potential impacts of the proposed wind farm on telecommunications facilities and television reception were assessed by analysing the proximity of the proposed wind farm to radio and television transmitters, link paths and domestic properties, and by consulting with telecommunications operators. The consideration of such potential effects is reported in Chapter 17 of the ES.

Consultees confirmed that there were potential link issues to be resolved and further detailed communication analysis has been carried out. The design process avoided wherever possible turbines being placed within the buffer zones identified by the consultees.

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Further analysis has identified that a single wireless communications link could be affected as three of the proposed wind turbines are located within its calculated buffer zone.

Mitigation therefore maybe required but Infinis will consult with the various link operators following submission of the planning application in order to understand any outstanding concerns that they may express regarding the proposed development. Any concerns which remain are expected to be readily mitigated or manageable.

Based on consultation with the BBC online service it is considered very unlikely that TV reception will be affected by the operation of the wind farm. Any adverse effects with regard to television and radio interference resulting as a direct effect of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm development will be resolved through technical solutions.

CONCLUSIONS

The potential for significant environmental impacts to occur as a result of the proposed Glentaggart Wind Farm has been robustly assessed.

The environmental design measures incorporated into the proposed development and the mitigation measures proposed within the Environmental Statement reduce the potential impacts identified to acceptable levels during all stages of the development.

NEXT STEPS

South Lanarkshire Council will now consider the planning application and the findings of the Environmental Statement. Before making a decision on the application, the council will seek further advice from consultees.

The full Environmental Statement is available to members of the public to view in the South Lanarkshire Council offices. Hard copies of the Environmental Statement may also be purchased by arrangement from the address below for £360 per copy, or £15 per CD. Copies of this NTS are available free of charge from the same address.

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