Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Beinneun 2 Wind Farm

Volume 1

Chapter 1: Introduction

Document prepared by Envams Ltd for Beinneun 2 Ltd

July 2025

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

This Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared by Envams Ltd (Envams) to accompany the application by Beinneun 2 Ltd (the Applicant), for consent to install and operate Beinneun 2 Wind Farm (the Development) on land approximately 5.4 km northwest of Invergarry and approximately 11.3 km southwest of Fort Augustus, Highland (the Site).

As the Development exceeds 50 MegaWatts (MW), the Applicant is seeking consent from the Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989[1], with deemed planning permission under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997[2].

Given the Development qualifies as a Section 36 application and is for a large-scale wind farm, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required under the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017[3] as amended, hereafter referred to as the EIA Regulations.

This Chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is supported by the following figures provided in Volume 2a: Figures excluding LVIA:

- Figure 1.1: Site Location; and
- Figure 1.2: Site Boundary.

1.2 THE APPLICANT

Beinneun 2 Ltd is a project company established to deliver the Beinneun 2 Wind Farm. The project is being developed by a team with extensive experience in the renewable energy sector, including the development, construction and operation of onshore wind energy projects across Scotland and the UK.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The Development comprises up to 19 wind turbines with a maximum height to blade tip of 200 metres and a generation capacity of up to approximately 140 MW. This would be supported by a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with a maximum export capacity of up to approximately 160 MW. The total export capacity of the Development will exceed 100 MW but not exceed 300 MW.

The layout of the Development has evolved via an iterative EIA Process with details of the final Development layout provided in Chapter 4: Development Description and a summary of the main design iterations in Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design Evolution.

Access to the Site will be taken from the west, via the A87, at National Grid Reference (NGR) 219586, 806801, as shown on Figure 4.1.

The main components of the Development are:

- Up to 19 wind turbines and external transformers (if required), each with a maximum tip height of up to 200 m;
- Associated foundations and crane hardstandings at each wind turbine location;
- Access tracks totalling approximately 23.8 km in length;
- Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) compound containing approximately 27 40-ft (or equivalent) battery containers;
- One meteorological mast;
- Underground cabling;
- A substation compound; and

[1] UK Government (1989) Electricity Act 1989, Section 36. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/29/section/36 [Accessed 20/02/2025].
[2] Scottish Government (1997) Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, Section 57(2). Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/section/57 [Accessed 20/02/2025].
[3] Scottish Government (2017) Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (as amended). Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/101/contents/made [Accessed 20/02/2025].

- One construction and storage compound.

Borrow pits are proposed to be used to source stone for construction of the Development.

The purpose of the Development is to generate electricity from a renewable source of energy, offsetting the need for power generation from the combustion of fossil fuels. Consequently, the electricity that will be produced results in a saving in emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) with associated environmental benefits. Carbon savings are set out in Chapter 10: Climate Change.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE EIA

As required by the EIA Regulations, this EIAR presents information on the likely significant environmental effects which may occur as a result of the Development. The EIAR informs the reader of the nature of the Development, presents the measures proposed to protect the environment during construction, operation and decommissioning, and identifies any residual impacts.

The EIA Scoping Opinion for the Development was issued by the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in February 2024, a copy of which is included as Technical Appendix A2.1 in Volume 3. The EIA described within this EIAR is based on this Scoping Opinion.

The grid connection works do not form part of this application and will be the subject of a separate application by Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. There are feasible alternatives for the means of getting turbine components to the Site; some of these may require off-site works. Any permissions required for off-site works will be sought separately to the consent for the wind farm, as required at the time of appointing contractors for the turbine deliveries.

1.5 CO-ORDINATION AND PRODUCTION OF THIS EIAR

This EIAR has been prepared and compiled by Envams on behalf of the Applicant. Envams Ltd is a team of experienced environmental consultants including Registered EIA Practitioners under the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). While Envams has had overall responsibility for the EIAR, the individual environmental assessments have been undertaken by experts with relevant specialist skills, drawing on their qualifications, and experience of working on other development projects, good practice in EIA, and on relevant published information.

1.6 EIAR STRUCTURE

The EIAR comprises of the following volumes:

- Volume 1 – EIAR Text;
- Volume 2 – EIAR Figures:
  - Volume 2a – Figures;
  - Volume 2b – Visualisations;
- Volume 3 – EIAR Technical Appendices;
- Volume 4 – EIAR Non-Technical Summary; and
- Volume 5 – EIAR Confidential Information (sensitive ecological data).

An outline of Volume 1 of the EIAR which is split into 15 separate chapters is presented below:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** – This chapter;
- **Chapter 2: EIA Methodology** – Provides an overview of the EIA process, its regulatory context and an outline of the methodology used to assess environmental effects and ensure a consistent and transparent approach to assessment. It describes the scoping and consultation process that assisted in the identification of likely significant environmental effects;
- **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design Evolution** – Summarises the site selection process and the principal alternative layouts that were considered within the design evolution process;

- **Chapter 4: Development Description** – Describes the Development including the construction, operation and decommissioning arrangements;
- **Chapters 5 – 14: Technical EIA Chapters –** Each technical chapter as shown in Table 1.1 provides a description of the baseline environmental conditions specific to the relevant topic and assesses the potential environmental impacts (positive or negative) due to the Development in line with the EIA methodology. This includes a description of any proposed mitigation or enhancement measures and a statement of predicted residual impacts; and
- **Chapter 15: Summary of Mitigation** – Provides a summary of the findings of the EIA, including a tabular summary of all residual effects and proposed mitigation.

Table 1.1: EIA Chapters and Authors

Chapter No.	Title	Main Contributor
1	Introduction	Envams
2	EIA Methodology	Envams
3	Site Selection and Design Evolution	Envams
4	Development Description	Envams
5	Landscape and Visual Impact	Abseline
6	Ecology	Gavia
7	Ornithology	RPS
8	Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	Wessex
9	Noise	Metrica
10	Climate Change and Carbon Balance	Envams
11	Traffic and Transport	SYSTRA
12	Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat	Raincloud
13	Socio-economics, Land Use, Recreation and Tourism	Envams
14	Other Issues including Aviation, Telecoms and Utilities	Envams
15	Summary of Mitigation	Envams

1.7 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

1.7.1 Planning Statement

A Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany the application. This sets out an assessment of the Development in the context of relevant planning policy, comprising the local development plan as well as national planning, energy policy, and emerging planning policies. It also considers the potential benefits and harm which may arise and concludes as to the overall acceptability of the proposal in relation to the planning context.

1.7.2 Design and Access Statement

A Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany the application.

The Design and Access Statement, focusses on the design considerations with an aim to explain the design process behind the Development, and also sets out the approach to accessibility for people with disabilities. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for a Design and Access Statement for a Section 36 application, the Applicant considers that the preparation and submission of this document would be useful to the ECU, consultees and interested parties.

1.7.3 Pre-Application Consultation Report

In common with the above there is no statutory requirement for a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report for a Section 36 application. The Applicant has however undertaken extensive consultation and engagement at the pre-application stage with a

range of statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, organisations and individuals. A PAC Report has therefore been prepared which forms part of the application submission.