

Responses to Feedback from the Final Onshore Transmission Works Consultation

Freagairtean air Beachdan bhon
Cho-chomhairle Deireannach air
Obraichean Tar-chuir Air Tìr



Energy for
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Glossary Briathrachas

Term	Meaning
THE APPLICANT	Spiorad na Mara Limited (the Project owner)
CUMULATIVE EFFECTS	Considers the likely significant effects of multiple impacts and activities from several developments.
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)	The process of evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed project or development over and above the existing circumstances (or 'baseline').
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT (EIAR)	The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) prepared to assess the likely significant effects of the Project on the environment.
EMBEDDED OR 'DESIGNED-IN' MITIGATION	Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce environmental effects that are directly incorporated into the preferred design for the Project. This can include standard practice in accordance with or without guidance. Embedded Mitigation is considered as part of the impact assessment, before effect significance is identified.
IMPACT	Change that is caused by an action; for example, substation foundation installation (action) during construction which results in habitat loss (impact).
LANDFALL	This consists of works from offshore Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD) exit pits (located below MLWS) to onshore at the Transition Joint Bays (TJB) (located above MHWS). The infrastructure and installation methods associated with the Landfall involve both onshore and offshore components.
IMPACT	Change that is caused by an action; for example, land clearing (action) during construction which results in habitat loss (impact).
LANDFALL	This is the point at which the Project transitions from offshore to onshore. The infrastructure and installation methods associated with the landfall involve both onshore and offshore components.
LANDFALL SUBSTATION	The optional onshore substation located on the west side of the Isle of Lewis. Includes the platform, buildings and associated components which allows the voltage to be increased to meet onward transmission requirements.
ONSHORE APPLICATION	The application for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

Term	Meaning
ONSHORE CABLES	Electrical and communication cables located within the Onshore Cable Corridor.
ONSHORE CABLE CORRIDOR	The area within which Onshore Cables and associated infrastructure will be located, which is routed from the Transition Joint Bays (TJB) to the SSEN Lewis Hub.
ONSHORE TRANSMISSION WORKS (OTW)/ONSHORE PROJECT	The components of the Spiorad na Mara offshore wind farm (the Project) located landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS).
PROJECT	The Spiorad na Mara offshore wind farm development. This term describes the whole development, including all offshore and onshore components.
PROJECT BOUNDARY	The 'red line boundary' encompassing all offshore and onshore components of the Project.
PROJECT DESIGN ENVELOPE (PDE)	A description of the range of possible components that make up the Project design options under consideration when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known.
SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY NETWORKS (SSEN) LEWIS HUB	This is the National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) interface. A transmission system operator substation into which the Project will connect for onward transmission through the existing grid network.

Introduction

Ro-ràdh

The final Onshore Transmission Works (OTW) Consultation for the proposed Spiorad na Mara offshore wind Project was carried out over a period of 1 month, from 24th November to 24th December 2025.

A total of 59 people attended the 3 in-person public exhibitions held in Stornoway, Borve and Barvas over the 24th November and 25th November 2025. All consultation materials from the in-person exhibitions were made available on the Project website allowing anyone to review the updated information at any convenient time over the 1-month period.

Participants in the consultation process were offered a number of ways to provide feedback, including physical feedback forms that were available at the in-person events or from the Project office in Stornoway, as well as online feedback forms and options to share feedback by email or verbally to a team member. A total of 33 pieces of feedback were recorded over the course of the consultation.

In this booklet, we have categorised and summarised all feedback received and provided responses in terms of how this feedback has been considered and addressed and/or how it will be addressed at a later stage.

As this consultation was focused solely on the OTW, any feedback received on the wider Project which has already been addressed in previous response documents of this kind has not been included here.

What we heard from your feedback

How we have taken this into consideration

GRID SUBSTATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

Mixed responses of support and concern about the new preferred Grid Substation location

Some respondents were supportive of the new preferred Grid Substation location, while others had concerns that the new location will result in a larger area being impacted, particularly as it will have new access points and will be a greater distance from other existing or proposed developments.

The new preferred Grid Substation location remains within the same Project Boundary as that presented during our second phase of public consultation in June 2025. The new proposed location remains in an area where there are other large buildings and large-scale consented and proposed infrastructure (such as Stornoway Wind Farm). The overall footprint of the Grid Substation compound remains largely unchanged from that of the previously-proposed location east of Creed Industrial Park (60,800m² now compared to the previous 60,000m²). The access road into the substation will be designed to retain the potential for shared use with the Lochside Arena and SSEN's future works, reducing the need for any further increase to the footprint.

Concerns about potential environmental impacts

A key concern raised was the potential degradation of peatland, as well as potential disturbance to hen harrier nesting sites.

One of the main reasons for the selection of the Grid Substation location was that it is located on the shallowest peat of all sites considered, meaning less disturbance.

Potential environmental impacts will be assessed within the Onshore EIAR, including potential impacts to peatland and birds.

An Outline Biodiversity Restoration and Enhancement Plan will be submitted as part of our planning application for the OTW. The plan focuses on offsite peatland restoration, machair habitat restoration, and hen harrier and corncrake habitat improvements. A full plan will be developed and agreed with appropriate stakeholders prior to the start of construction. This will be supplemented by a Bird Protection Plan and the use of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) during construction.

The Project will also submit the following outline management plans as part of the planning application for the Onshore Transmission Works, each being later developed into a more detailed plan prior to construction:

- Outline Soils and Peat Management Plan
- Outline Onshore Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

The Project continues to work with stakeholders such as NatureScot and RSPB Scotland to develop appropriate mitigation and enhancement plans.

What we heard from your feedback	How we have taken this into consideration
GRID SUBSTATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE	
<p>Request for heritage-specific assessments</p> <p>The following assets were highlighted to be assessed for potential impacts to their settings as a result of the Grid Substation: Cnoc na Croich, chambered cairn (SM6550); Druim Dubh stone circle (SM5504); and Lews Castle and Lady Lever Park (GDL00263).</p>	<p>We continue to work closely with NatureScot, Historic Environment Scotland and the Archaeology Service in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, to ensure we address their concerns as well as local concerns.</p> <p>Within the Onshore EIA, we will assess any potential settings effects at locations onshore arising from onshore infrastructure/ activities associated with the Project. These assessments are informed by consultation with all relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Repeated concern about potential risk of pollution incidents near Loch Cnoc a' Choilich and River Creed.</p> <p>As raised at the Updated Grid Substation Consultation, there is concern about potential pollution incidents to the nearby lochs and rivers.</p>	<p>We are keenly aware of the importance of local watercourses and in particular the River Creed.</p> <p>The Project has embedded a buffer zone between the River Creed and Loch Cnoc a' Choilich into the design to prevent run-off and pollution and has carried out a significant amount of peat probing in the area of the Grid Substation. The location and elongated design utilise the area of shallowest peat on the site, thereby minimising the area of disturbance to deeper peat and reducing the risk of pollution incidents.</p> <p>In addition, all work in the vicinity of these watercourses will be managed through appropriate construction methodologies, the Onshore CEMP (which will include a Pollution Prevention Plan) and best practice environmental monitoring and auditing.</p>
<p>Concern about the scale of the Grid Substation and potential impacts to Marybank residents</p> <p>Some feel the infrastructure is too large and close to villages. There is some concern that moving the Grid Substation to the west side of the A859 will mostly impact residents in Marybank with potential impacts from construction activities including traffic congestion and disruption, particularly in combination with other developments proposed on the east side of the A859.</p>	<p>The size of the Grid Substation is based on the equipment needed to safely and efficiently connect to the grid. Avoiding residential areas, to the maximum extent possible, was an important consideration in the selection of the new Grid Substation location and the minimum distance from the closest residential property is more than 350m.</p> <p>Regarding traffic, Cumulative Effects with other proposed developments will be assessed within the Traffic and Access Assessment in the Onshore EIAR. An Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan will be submitted as part of the application, in order to minimise disruption to residents around the OTW.</p>

What we heard from your feedback

How we have taken this into consideration

LANDFALL LOCATION AND LANDFALL SUBSTATION

Concerns about potential impacts to environment and local archaeology

A key concern raised was the potential impacts to the unique machair habitat and local biodiversity, as well as archaeological features in Barvas.

Potential impacts to habitats, including machair habitat, will be included in the Onshore Ecology and Ornithology assessment within the Onshore EIAR. As previously noted in this document, we will submit an Outline Biodiversity Restoration and Enhancement Plan as part of our planning application for the OTW. This plan focuses on offsite peatland restoration, machair habitat restoration, and hen harrier and corncrake habitat improvements.

The final Landfall Substation location was deliberately chosen within the Area of Search to avoid the most sensitive cultural heritage and archaeological features identified in the Barvas area. Potential impacts to the setting of nearby assets will be assessed in the Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage assessment within the Onshore EIAR.

Concerns about size of infrastructure and proposed location

Some respondents highlighted concern about the landfall substation being too close to Barvas Cemetery and local villages, with potential to impact local culture.

We recognise the sensitivity of the landfall location and it is our intention to locate the landfall substation as sensitively as possible in relation to both Barvas cemetery and other receptors, in order to minimise visual effects. A colour study will be included within the Onshore EIAR which assesses our proposed onshore substation locations (both landfall and grid) to consider how the infrastructure can blend into the landscape better, thereby further reducing potential visual impacts.

Of all the landfall locations considered and assessed, the location chosen is the most distant from local villages and residential areas.



What we heard from your feedback	How we have taken this into consideration
ONSHORE CABLE CORRIDOR	
<p>Support for the proposed route and for using underground cables</p> <p>There were some statements of support for the proposed Onshore Cable Corridor due to the close proximity to the A857 Stornoway to Barvas road, as long as disruption to traffic is minimal. Some suggestions were given including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of traffic calming measures (speed bumps/traffic lights) where the road enters Barvas/Newmarket to reduce potential impacts between Project and local traffic; and • Using the Project road in the event of a road traffic accident on the A857. <p>The planned method to install the Onshore Cables underground was welcomed to prevent long-term impacts to the Lewis Peatland and Ramsar sites which the Onshore Cable Corridor runs through/is near to.</p>	<p>We welcome the support and suggestions to minimise the potential impacts of Project construction traffic and prioritise safety.</p> <p>Construction traffic management measures will be implemented, where required. These will be set out in the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan, submitted with the application and developed further prior to the commencement of construction.</p> <p>Close liaison with the local emergency services will also form part of ongoing stakeholder dialogue during the construction phase.</p>
<p>Concern around the level of disruption and potential impacts to protected peatland</p> <p>Several responses highlighted concern about the potential impacts to peatland and water systems, particularly the designated Lewis Peatlands Ramsar site (Wetland of International Importance)/Special Protected Area (SPA)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC).</p> <p>One respondent suggested to make the onshore cable route wider going into Stornoway, to avoid flooding risk.</p>	<p>The Onshore Cable Corridor has been designed to avoid the deepest and highest ecological-quality peat areas. By aligning the Onshore Cable Corridor close to the A857 road, we also avoid the high-quality areas of the designated Lewis Peatlands. Potential impacts to the Lewis Peatlands designated sites will be assessed within the Report to Inform an Appropriate Assessment (RIAA) which will be submitted alongside the Onshore Application.</p> <p>Potential impacts on peat and carbon rich soils (peat disturbance, displacement or loss) and potential impact on peat stability is assessed within the Peat, Geology, Soils, and Contaminated Land chapter of the Onshore EIAR. Potential impacts to habitats including peatlands will be assessed within the Onshore Ecology and Ornithology chapter of the Onshore EIAR. Flood risk and potential impacts to hydrology and hydrogeology will be assessed within the Hydrology and Hydrogeology chapter and associated appendices within the Onshore EIAR.</p>

What we heard from your feedback	How we have taken this into consideration
ONSHORE CABLE CORRIDOR	
<p>Awaiting final cable route</p> <p>It was highlighted that some are awaiting the final cable route and mitigation measures to better understand the potential impact on species and habitats, as well as potential Cumulative Effects with other proposed developments.</p>	<p>The Project is using a Project Design Envelope (PDE) approach for its Onshore Application; therefore some details, including the exact cable route, are yet to be confirmed. Using the PDE approach allows for more flexibility to refine the Project proposals at the detailed design stage while ensuring that the maximum parameters are assessed within the Onshore EIA.</p>
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
<p>Concern about potential impacts to peat and from released contamination</p> <p>The significance of peatlands was highlighted, along with concerns regarding the potential impact on peat. Two respondents queried how the potential impacts of released Caesium (Cs-137) within the peat are being considered.</p>	<p>We recognise the importance of peatlands in Lewis, both for their cultural significance and ecological benefits. Potential impacts to peat will be assessed within the Peat, Geology, Soils and Contaminated Land assessment within our Onshore EIAR. An outline Peat Management Plan will be submitted as part of our Onshore Application, with a detailed plan being developed prior to the start of construction. This will be followed by the Project to ensure impacts are managed sensitively, and placement and storage are carried out appropriately.</p> <p>We are aware that there has been some concern in relation to the disturbance of peatland areas resulting in the potential re-mobilisation of historic contamination from Caesium (Cs-137) and other gaseous emissions as a result of the Chernobyl nuclear incident of 1989. A recent report from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) addresses these concerns and concludes that SEPA do not regard that potential resuspension of buried Cs-137 and other radionuclides arising from global deposition on peatlands in Scotland pose a realistic risk to human health. Therefore, following consideration within the Peat, Geology, Soils and Contaminated Land chapter, this has been scoped out of the Onshore EIAR.</p>
<p>Concern about potential impacts to birds</p> <p>Potential impacts to birds were raised as a key concern, particularly the potential impacts to nesting sites, the Ness and Barvas SPA and breeding species.</p>	<p>Potential impacts to birds, including within the Ness and Barvas SPA, will be assessed within the Onshore Ecology and Ornithology assessment of the Onshore EIAR and RIAA. Onshore Project specific bird surveys (breeding and wintering birds) have been completed as agreed with relevant consultees. As part of the Onshore EIAR, an Outline Bird Protection Plan will be submitted, as well as an Outline Biodiversity Restoration and Enhancement Plan focusing on offsite peatland restoration, machair habitat restoration, and hen harrier and corncrake habitat improvements.</p>
<p>Importance of local archaeology and cultural heritage</p> <p>There are several heritage assets to be assessed in the onshore EIA, and the importance of the archaeology and cultural heritage assessment was highlighted in the feedback received.</p>	<p>We recognise the importance of archaeological features and the island's cultural heritage. Potential impacts to archaeological and cultural heritage assets will be assessed within the Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage assessment within the Onshore EIAR.</p> <p>As the Project progresses, we will continue to work with relevant stakeholders and welcome local knowledge from individuals and organisations in relation to these important topics.</p>

What we heard from your feedback	How we have taken this into consideration
COMMUNITY BENEFIT	
<p>Supportive of the Project with funding into the correct benefits</p> <p>One respondent suggested funding into archaeological studies/projects and community benefits that will benefit east coast communities. Another respondent queried the maintenance of the cycle pathway.</p>	<p>As the Project progresses, we will continue to explore opportunities to bring benefits to more local communities, including those on the east coast, aligned with local needs. The Project will continue to work with local organisations to ensure any benefits can be delivered effectively and equitably.</p> <p>Maintenance of the cycleway/multi-use path is a topic that is being discussed, and will continue to be, with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.</p>
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	
<p>Early thought into mitigation is essential</p> <p>The importance of mitigations to reduce potential significant impacts to protected sites was highlighted to be considered in detail.</p>	<p>The Onshore EIA assesses several potential impacts, including those on protected sites such as SPAs and Ramsar sites. Working with stakeholders and subject matter experts, the EIA identifies any potential significant impacts that are likely and considers appropriate embedded or 'designed-in' mitigation measures that can be put in place. We have considered the potential impacts to protected sites throughout the design process, from scoping to current design, and will present a comprehensive suite of mitigation measures within the Outline Biodiversity Restoration and Enhancement Plan, which will be submitted as part of the Onshore EIAR.</p>
<p>Opposition to more renewable projects in Scotland</p> <p>Several respondents highlighted that they do not feel Scotland requires more green energy projects and that projects should be built in areas where energy use is higher.</p>	<p>While Scotland has made significant progress in renewable energy, continued development is key to meet both current and future needs. The Scottish Government has set ambitious targets, including achieving net zero emissions by 2045 and generating 50% of Scotland's total energy consumption from renewable sources by 2030. Spiorad na Mara and other similar projects are key to delivering these goals, ensuring energy security, and supporting a just transition away from fossil fuels. Additionally, further investment in renewables strengthens Scotland's position as a leader in clean energy innovation and creates long-term economic and employment benefits for communities across the country.</p>

What we heard from your feedback

How we have taken this into consideration

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Offers of collaboration and innovation opportunities

Some respondents highlighted their experience in relevant industries including engineering and construction, offering potential collaboration with the Project.

Others also highlighted the potential for the Project to explore innovative ideas such as hydrogen production, decarbonising heating systems and enabling data centres.

We encourage local businesses to get in touch, via the Supply Chain portal on our website, if they offer any services that the Project may require as it progresses. The Project is committed to collaborating with local businesses where possible and welcomes all interest expressed to date. Our supply chain portal remains open on our website www.sporadnamara.co.uk for businesses to register their interest, and the Project will continue to engage with these companies, and others, in the future.

It is important to note that many of the opportunities that will be available to local businesses, particularly during the construction phase, will be through the main construction contractors rather than through the Project directly.

Regarding potential future innovative energy solutions for the island, this is not something the Project is focused on, nor have any such possibilities been assessed as part of the EIA process. While we will continue to listen to local stakeholders and explore partnerships, where appropriate, the focus of this consultation process and our EIA assessment process has been on this Project only.

Suggestion to have an independent role coordinating the multiple proposed developments

A suggestion was provided to have an independent person in a role to ensure developments on the island are being coordinated properly (i.e. construction, road use, jobs, accommodation) to minimise impacts and maximise benefits.

The Project remains committed to working collaboratively with other developers and in conjunction with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, through the Major Developments Forum, to help minimise pressures on local infrastructure.

The resourcing and coordination of this work is not a matter for the Project alone, but we participate actively in all discussions on these topics.

If you have any questions or would like to arrange to speak to a member of our team, please contact:



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