

Planning and Building Standards Services



## Proposed South Lanarkshire **Local Development Plan**

### Wind Energy **Supplementary Guidance**

May 2013



Community and Enterprise Resources



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# 1 Introduction and Context

## Background

**1.1** This Supplementary Guidance (SG) has been prepared under the provisions of Section 22 of the Planning Etc (Scotland) Act 2006 and Regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2006. It forms part of the Development Plan for South Lanarkshire which consists of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan 2012 (SDP) and the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan 2013 (SLLDP).

**1.2** This SG supports Policy 19 in the SLLDP by providing more detailed guidance for developers on the requirements for wind energy development proposals within South Lanarkshire. This SG will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications until such time as the Local Development Plan is adopted when it will form part of the Adopted Local Development Plan.

## Consultation Process

**1.3** This is a draft version of the SG and will be placed on public consultation for six weeks **from 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 until 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013**.

**1.4** This SG was approved for consultation by South Lanarkshire Council at its meeting on 16th April 2013. Comments are now being sought on this document. This SG will supplement the policies and proposals of the Proposed South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan. The Plan is also currently the subject of consultation.

**1.5** The preparation of this SG has been informed by Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update April 2013. The Council welcomes comments on this report which can be viewed as PDF files on the Council's website.

**1.6** This SG was also informed by technical reports (see below) South Lanarkshire Local Landscape Character Assessment 2010 and Validating Local Landscape Designations 2010 which were approved at committee in December 2010.

**1.7** Comments on this SG can be made by completing the online response form available at: [www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk) following the links to the Local Development Plan from the planning pages (this is the preferred method) or by completing a Representation Form available from:

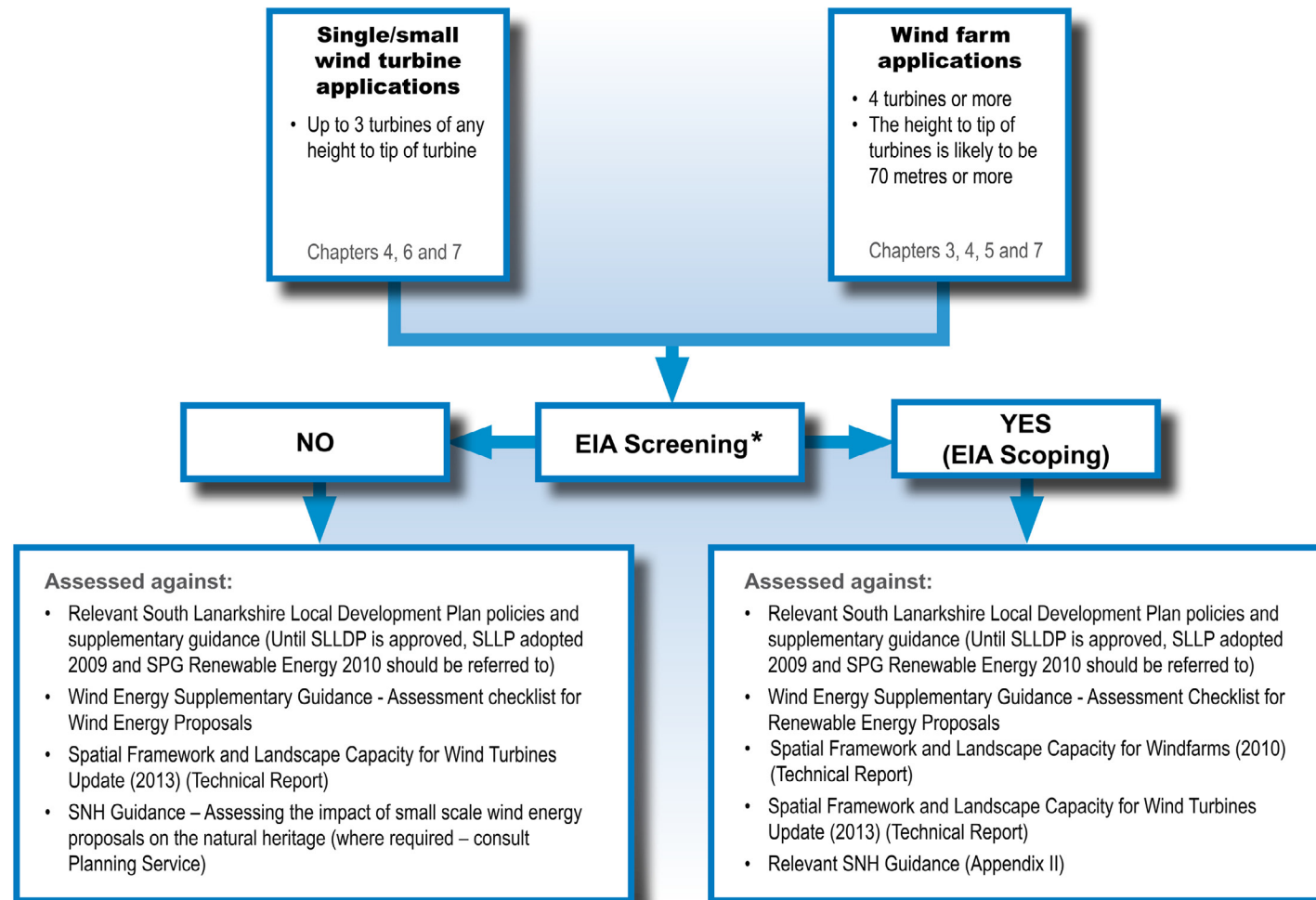
Planning and Building Standards Headquarters  
Community and Enterprise Resources  
South Lanarkshire Council  
154 Montrose Crescent  
Hamilton ML3 6LB  
Tel: 01698 454672  
Fax: 01698 455948  
Email: [localplan@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

Copies of the SG are available to view at South Lanarkshire Council offices, the Council's website and at all local libraries and Q&As.



## Introduction and Context 1

Figure 1.1 Framework for addressing Wind Energy Developments



\* Footnote: The Local Planning Authority has a statutory obligation to consider whether or not EIA is required for any wind energy project of more than 2 turbines or for turbines of more than 15m in height. The Local Planning Authority must also consider whether the proposal could have an impact on a 'sensitive area' as described in PAN 58:Environmental Impact Assessment and Circular 8 2007.

# 1 Introduction and Context

## What Happens Next?

**1.8** Following the six weeks of public consultation, consideration will be given to all comments received. A report will then be produced summarising all comments received, the Council's response to each representation, and any suggested revisions. The report and any suggested revisions will be considered by the Council's Planning Committee and will also be made available on the Council's website. The SG will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications until such time as the Local Development Plan is adopted when it will form part of the Adopted South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan.

## Further Information

**1.9** If you have any questions regarding the SG or the consultation process, please contact South Lanarkshire Council on 01698 455936 or 455943 or email: [localplan@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

## How to use this document

**1.10** This SG sets out the Council's detailed guidance and criteria for assessing wind energy developments. Figure 1.1 sets out how the document will be used to assess wind energy developments relative to the scale of the proposal. However assessment may vary in specific cases depending on the nature, scale and location of the development. For the purposes of this SG:

- **Single and small wind turbine developments** are defined as up to 3 turbines even when the turbines themselves might be quite large (SNH guidance 'Assessing the impact of small-scale wind energy proposals on the natural heritage' March 2012).
- **Wind farm developments are defined as 4 turbines or more.** The height to tip of the turbines is likely to be 70 metres or more.

**1.11** This is considered to be a notional threshold between domestic/community and commercial scale wind energy developments.

**1.12** To accord with Scottish Government policy (SPP paragraph 187-191) a spatial framework is provided for wind energy developments. This is applicable to wind farm developments of over 20MW and also to wind turbine developments of less than 20MW. To derive the framework the process below was followed in line with Scottish Government guidance 'Process for preparing spatial frameworks' (web based guidance August 2012):

### Stage 1 – Identify areas requiring significant protection

- Sites designated for their national or international landscape or natural heritage value
- Green belt
- Where the cumulative impact of existing and consented wind farms limit further development

### Stage 2 – Identify areas with potential constraints

- Consider matters relating to the historic environment; regional and local landscape and natural heritage designations; tourism and recreational interests; communities; aviation and defence interests; and broadcasting installations
- Where proposals will be considered on their individual merits against identified criteria

### Stage 3 – Identify areas of search

- Where there are no significant constraints on development
- Where appropriate proposals are likely to be supported subject to detailed consideration against identified criteria

## Introduction and Context 1

**1.13** This SG therefore set out the matters which were addressed in preparing the spatial framework, and also include general guidance for developers in respect of these matters.

- Section 2 – Wind energy in South Lanarkshire
- Section 3 – Areas of Significant Protection for wind energy developments (stage 1)
- Section 4 – Other constraints for wind energy developments (stage 2)
- Section 5 – Broad Areas of Search for wind farms over 20MW (stage 3)
- Section 6 – Single and small wind turbine developments
- Section 7 – Assessment checklist for wind energy proposals
- Section 8 – Implementation and monitoring
- Appendix I Contacts
- Appendix II Further Sources of Information
- Appendix III Glossary
- Appendix IV Community Benefit Contributions

### Mapping

**1.14** Small scale diagrams illustrating aspects of the Spatial Framework 2013 are contained in this SG. The Broad Areas of Search, International and National designations, Green Belt, Area of Significant Protection, Special Landscape Areas, Areas where cumulative impact limits further development are shown in this SG and at a larger scale on the SLLDP Strategy Map which can be viewed on the Council's website.

### National, Strategic and Local policy

**1.15** Scottish Government planning policy on wind farms is set out in the Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), published in February 2010. The SPP states that planning authorities should support the development of wind farms in locations where the technology can operate efficiently and

environmental and cumulative impacts can be satisfactorily addressed. A review of the SPP is being undertaken during 2013. In addition, further guidance is contained in the Scottish Government's web based planning advice which is regularly updated to reflect good practice.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/National-Planning-Policy/themes/renewables>

**1.16** Wind farm developments with a capacity of below 50 megawatts (MW) are determined under planning legislation. Larger wind farms of 50 MW or greater are determined under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989, and the Council as planning authority is a statutory consultee. Further information on the operation of the Section 36 process can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Energy/Infrastructure/Energy-Consents/>

**1.17** The guidance in this SG applies to both categories of development.

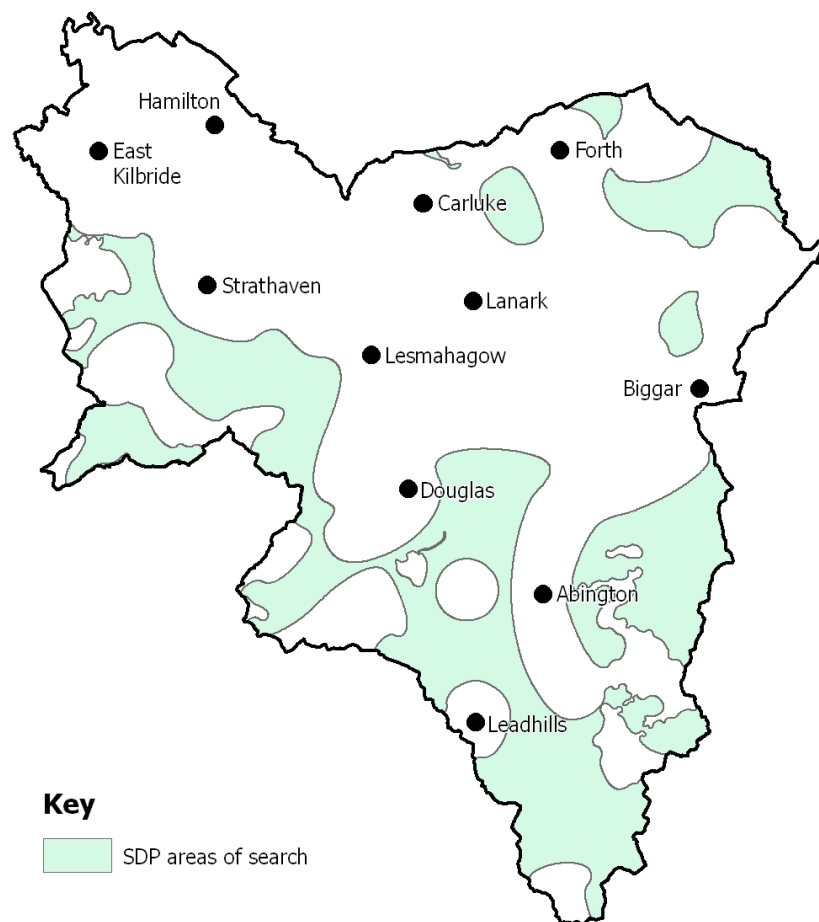
### Strategic Policy

**1.18** The Glasgow and Clyde Valley SDP was approved in May 2012. The SDP identifies broad areas of search (BAOS) for wind farms (diagram 16 in SDP) and advises that it will be for local development plans to take forward the refinement of these areas to establish their long term potential. The SDP at paragraph 4.63 sets out the factors taken into account in the identification of BAOS though it should be noted that the constraints did not address landscape capacity and cumulative impact. The SDP BAOS are therefore more extensive than those identified in the Council's wind energy SG. The Council's Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update 2013 provides the methodology and shows the Council's BAOS which are refined further than the SDP BAOS (see Figure 1.2 and Figure 5.1). A landscape capacity

# 1 Introduction and Context

assessment is also proposed for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley SDP area, this will draw on the findings of the updated South Lanarkshire assessment, and will inform the preparation of SDP2.

Figure 1.2 Glasgow and the Clyde Valley SDP broad areas of search



## Local Development Plan

**1.19** The SLLDP sets out the land use planning framework for South Lanarkshire over the next 5 years. The plan contains 19 policies which identify opportunities for new development and sets out requirements to protect the environment and safeguard local communities. Policy 19 sets out the Council's overall policy for wind energy developments.

### Policy 19 Wind Energy

Applications for wind energy developments will generally be supported subject to the following considerations:

- i. all proposals for wind energy developments will be assessed against the criteria in the assessment checklist set out in Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance ;
- ii. the broad areas of search identified on the proposals map are the preferred location for windfarms over 20MW. Windfarm developments of any scale outwith these areas will be judged on their merits but must address the key constraints set out in supplementary guidance;
- iii. windfarm developments are unlikely to be supported in the following areas of significant protection as defined in supplementary guidance.
  1. International and national natural heritage designations (see policy 15)
  2. Southern Uplands foothills and Pentland Hills area of significant protection.
  3. Green Belt (proposals over 20MW);

## Introduction and Context 1

iv. windfarm proposals in areas where cumulative impact limits further development will only be considered if they address the landscape criteria set out in supplementary guidance;

v. single and small scale wind turbine developments (less than 4 turbines) will be judged on their merits and assessed against the criteria in supplementary guidance. Particular attention shall be given to the cumulative impact and landscape capacity of these developments.

The Council will encourage operators of wind turbines/windfarms within South Lanarkshire to contribute to the Councils Renewable Energy Fund (REF) or another similar mechanism as appropriate.

Development proposals must also accord with other relevant policies and proposals in the development plan and with supplementary guidance.

**1.20** Various Supplementary Guidance is being prepared to support the LDP. These SG's will contain other detailed policies which are relevant to renewable and wind energy developments. Of particular relevance are the SG on Climate Change, Natural and Historic Environment and Development Management.

### Community Benefits

**1.21** The Council has developed an approach for assessing the level of community benefits for renewable energy developments in South Lanarkshire, and the collection, administration and management of these funds. This is contained in Appendix IV.

### Technical Studies and Assessments

**1.22** A series of technical studies and assessments informed the preparation of the SG. The technical studies are noted below.

#### **Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Farms 2010 and Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update 2013**

**1.23** The Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Farms approved in 2010 (Spatial Framework 2010) assesses the sensitivity and capacity of the various landscape character types in South Lanarkshire to accommodate wind farm development. It acts as a sieving process through which broad areas of search can be identified for wind farm developments of over 20 MW. It also identifies the spatial constraints that must be addressed in a criteria based policy for assessing wind energy developments. This work has been updated to take account of development proposals since 2010 and revises the broad areas of search and the areas constrained by cumulative impact. It also provides more detailed guidance on the landscape capacity and cumulative impact for different sizes of turbine developments, in particular for Feed in Tariff (FiT) proposals.

The Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update 2013 (Spatial Framework 2013) has been published as a background technical paper which informed this SG. The Spatial Framework 2013 is also currently the subject of public consultation from 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 until 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

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### South Lanarkshire Local Landscape Character Assessment 2010

**1.24** The local Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) was approved by the Council in 2010 and updates the 1999 Glasgow and Clyde Valley Regional LCA and provides greater detail on the local landscape character.

### Validating Local Landscape Designations 2010

**1.25** Validating Local Landscape Designations approved in 2010 draws on the South Lanarkshire LCA to identify the areas of highest landscape quality and value in South Lanarkshire. The designations approved for South Lanarkshire are six Special Landscape Areas (SLA).

**1.26** The reports outlined above will be used to inform future planning policy and decision making.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

**1.27** In accordance with the requirements of the European Community (EC) SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, this SG has been pre-screened and is deemed not to require to be SEA. Policies in the proposed SLLDP have been assessed and the SEA is included as an Annex to the SLLDP Environment Report which includes Policy 19 Wind Energy.

### Habitats Regulations Appraisal

**1.28** A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) screening exercise, undertaken in compliance with the EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC), and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 as amended has been carried out for this SG. This is included in the HRA Record for the South Lanarkshire LDP. The HRA Screening

Appraisal concludes that there are no likely significant effects from this SG on Natura sites in the area, and therefore no Appropriate Assessment requires to be undertaken.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

**1.29** An Equalities Impact Assessment of the SLLDP Wind Energy Policy and SG has been carried out and it was concluded that there are no adverse impacts on any of the community covered by equalities legislation or on community relations.

**1.30** The above technical studies can be viewed on the Council's website and are available on request from the Council.



## Wind Energy in South Lanarkshire 2

### Wind Energy in South Lanarkshire

#### Wind farms of four or more turbines

**2.1** South Lanarkshire has proved to be an attractive location for wind energy developments with eleven operational or under construction wind farms in the Council area plus a further two consented schemes, which in total could deliver an output of over 800 MW (as at February 2013). In addition there are a number of undetermined applications within the area with the potential output of over 500MW. Table 2.1 below gives details of these schemes. The operating and consented schemes alone could potentially meet the electricity needs of around 400,000 homes i.e. approximately three times the number of households in South Lanarkshire (this estimate does not include commercial and industrial users). There are also a number of other proposals at the pre-application or scoping stage, indicating the continued interest of South Lanarkshire as a location for onshore wind developments.

**2.2** The existing and emerging pattern of medium to large scale wind farm development reflects the prevalence of upland locations. With the exception of Clyde wind farm, the wind farm clusters in South Lanarkshire largely correspond with the potential areas of search identified in the current and previous development plans. However it recognised that within areas of search spacing between large clusters is required to prevent coalescence of wind farm developments.

Table 2.1 Existing and Consented wind farms (4 or more turbines) in South Lanarkshire February 2013

Name	Location	Status	Number of turbines in South Lanarkshire	Output in MW (South Lanarkshire)
Hagshaw Hill	West of Douglas	Operating	26	16
Hagshaw Extension	West of Douglas	Operating	20	26
Black Law	West of Forth	Operating	48 (total 54)	111
Whitelee	West of Strathaven	Operating	42 (total 140)	97
Muirhall	Auchengray/Tarbrax	Operating	6	18
Clyde	South east of Abington	Under construction	152	350
Dungavel	South West of Strathaven	Under construction	13	30
Bankend Rig	South West of Strathaven	Under construction	11	14
Nutberry	West of Coalburn	Under construction	6	18
Calder Water	West of Strathaven	Under construction	13	39
West Browncastle	West of Strathaven	Under construction	12	36
Andershaw	South of Douglas	Consented (subject to S75 agreement)	14	42

## 2 Wind Energy in South Lanarkshire

Name	Location	Status	Number of turbines in South Lanarkshire	Output in MW (South Lanarkshire)
Galawhistle	West of Douglas	Section 36 Application –consented subject to S75 agreement	20 (total 22)	55
<b>Output</b>			<b>383</b>	<b>852</b>
<b>Undetermined Applications for wind farms (4 or more turbines) in South Lanarkshire February 2013</b>				
Penbreck	South West of Douglas	Planning Application	6 (total 9)	18
Kype Muir	South of Strathaven	Section 36 application	26	88
Clyde Extension	North east of Clyde wind farm	Section 36 application	51 (total 54)	162
Glentagart	South west of Douglas	Planning Application	5	17
Kennoxhead	South of Glespin	Section 36 application	26	60
Middle Muir	South of Douglas	Section 36 application	17	68
Dalquandy	Near Coalburn, North east of Douglas	Planning Application	15	45
Broken Cross	Near Rigside, north west of Douglas	Planning Application	7	21
Auchrobert	West of Lesmahagow	Planning Application	12	48

Name	Location	Status	Number of turbines in South Lanarkshire	Output in MW (South Lanarkshire)
Calla	North of Carnwath	Planning Application	6	18
<b>Output</b>			<b>171</b>	<b>545</b>

### Single and small scale turbines

**2.3** Following the introduction of the Feed in Tariffs (FiT) scheme in April 2010 South Lanarkshire has become increasingly attractive for single and small scale wind turbine developments. This includes proposals related to domestic, farm and industrial premises for turbines ranging in size from under 10 metres to over 100m in height to tip. Table 2.2 indicates the number of turbines currently consented and proposed in South Lanarkshire at February 2013.

Table 2.2

Single and small scale/FiT wind energy developments	
Status	No of Turbines
Operating/consented	215
Undetermined	81
Refused	29

**2.4** The single and small scale wind turbine applications tend to be concentrated in three main areas:

- The M74 Corridor Larkhall to Douglas



## Wind Energy in South Lanarkshire 2

- The Avon Valley area south west of Strathaven
- North East of Lanark/Forth

**2.5** From the above table the single/small scale consented applications have turbines with a height to tip of:

- 106 turbines - below 25m
- 68 turbines - 25m - <50m
- 24 turbines - 50m - <100m
- 17 turbines – 100m or more

**2.6** This demonstrates that when referring to small scale wind energy developments it is in relation to turbine numbers (3 or less) rather than their height which can be a range from small to large turbines.

### 3 Areas of Significant Protection for Wind Energy Developments (stage 1)

#### Areas of Significant Protection for Wind Energy Developments (stage 1)

**3.1** This section of the SG identifies areas within South Lanarkshire that should be afforded significant protection from wind energy developments in accordance with SPP. SPP (paragraph 189) states that spatial frameworks should identify areas requiring significant protection because they are designated for their national or international landscape or natural heritage value, are designated as green belt or are areas where the cumulative impact of existing and consented wind farms limits further development.

#### International and national natural heritage designations

**3.2** In accordance with Scottish Government guidance all internationally and nationally designated sites within South Lanarkshire have been excluded from the areas of search and are identified as areas of significant protection in relation to wind farm and turbine developments of all sizes. These include:

- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)

**3.3** In accordance with the advice in SPP additional buffer zones around these designated sites have not been identified. Therefore impacts from adjacent developments will require to be addressed at application level.

**3.4** Criterion 1 in Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals sets out the Council's requirements in respect of wind energy developments in or affecting international and national natural heritage designations.

#### Green Belt

**3.5** The SPP identifies Green Belts as areas requiring significant protection for developments of generating capacity of over 20MW.

**3.6** The South Lanarkshire Green Belt as shown on the SLLDP Strategy Map is relatively large and in some areas is quite exposed, offering good wind resources and has been the focus of a number of small scale wind turbine applications.

**3.7** The Spatial Framework 2010 and update 2013, concludes that the Green Belt was not suitable for the identification of areas of search for wind farms over 20 MW, largely due to proximity to settlements. Applying a 2km buffer zone around settlements (see paragraph 4.34) effectively excludes the vast majority of the Green Belt as a potential area of search for wind farm over 20 MW and such developments are unlikely to be supported.

**3.8** The SPP (paragraph 163) advises that where a proposal would not normally be consistent with Green Belt policy, it may still be considered appropriate either as a national priority or to meet an established need if no other suitable site is available. The Council therefore considers that wind farms over 20MW would only be acceptable in the Green Belt in these circumstances. In relation to single and small scale wind turbine developments in the Green Belt, these proposals will be considered on a case by case basis.

#### Areas where Cumulative Impact limits further development

**3.9** The Scottish Government's web based guidance 'Process for preparing spatial frameworks for wind farms' (August 2012) clearly defines the factors which should be considered when defining such areas:

## Areas of Significant Protection for Wind Energy Developments (stage 1) 3

'Cumulative impacts occur when two or more wind farms are visible either in combination, in succession or sequentially. Additionally, cumulative impacts in two or more areas of search could be heightened by poorly sited or designed turbine developments in the areas between them. The proliferation of inappropriately sited wind turbine developments could create the perception of a landscape dominated by wind turbines to the detriment of its environmental quality and character.'

**3.10** The guidance notes that it may be appropriate to plan for the clustering of wind farms within areas of search. Spaces between clusters may need to be identified as areas requiring significant protection in order to achieve a coherent pattern of wind farm development, avoid coalescence between them, and minimise the potential for adverse cumulative impacts.

**3.11** The Spatial Framework Update 2013, has considered the existing and consented pattern of turbine developments in South Lanarkshire in relation to the local landscape character and sensitivity to change. This has enabled the identification of areas where cumulative impact limits further development. These areas fall into two categories, each is taken in turn below:

- i. **Areas where there are already multiple existing and consented wind farm and wind turbine developments and are reaching capacity**
- ii. **Undeveloped areas which prevent coalescence between existing clusters of wind farms and wind turbine developments**

**3.12** Guidance on the first category is provided below. The Council has given consideration to the appropriateness of identifying areas of significant protection. The Spatial Framework 2010 and the Update 2013 identify three areas where cumulative impact limits further development based on assessment of existing and proposed wind farms:

- i. Around Whitelee/Avon and Douglas Valley in the west
- ii. Clyde wind farm in the south
- iii. Black Law wind farm in the north east

**3.13** The Douglas Valley area has been extended in the Spatial Framework Update 2013 from the area identified in Spatial Framework 2010 to take account of further consents. As these areas contain existing wind farm development their landscape character has already been subject to change. It is recognised that these areas are approaching their wind farm capacity, and cumulative impact is therefore a significant constraint. However, the analysis in section 6 of the Spatial Framework 2010 and updated in the Spatial Framework 2013 indicates that limited new development in these areas may be acceptable where it can be demonstrated not to significantly affect the underlying landscape character of these areas. Since the spatial framework was introduced in the Council's 2010 SPG, favourable consideration has been given to a limited number of proposals in these areas. On this basis, the current SG considers areas where cumulative impact limits further development where there are already multiple existing and consented wind farm and wind turbine development and are reaching capacity, to be stage 2 constraints. Further guidance is provided within Chapter 4 Other Constraints for Wind Energy Developments (section 4.9).

**3.14** Guidance on the second category is provided below as this is considered a stage 1 constraint. In relation to undeveloped areas which prevent coalescence between existing clusters of wind farms, there is a need for such areas to be identified as areas of significant protection as incremental development within them would undermine their function

3 Areas of Significant Protection for Wind Energy Developments (stage 1)

of providing separation between existing clusters. This accords with Scottish Government guidance as outlined above (paragraph 3.9) and is supported by SNH in their 2009 publication 'Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape'. In Part 2 Strategic planning for wind farms, paragraphs 18-19 recognises that such areas to be kept free of wind farms may have to be substantial to be effective, considering intervisibility and sequential impacts. The Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update 2013, identifies one such area in South Lanarkshire: Areas where Cumulative Impact Limits Further Development - **Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills area of significant protection.**

**3.15** The analysis of landscape capacity for wind farms in South Lanarkshire is based on landscape character types. The areas described in the Council's Landscape Character Assessment as the 'Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills' are the most extensive landscape area remaining undeveloped.

**3.16** The Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills area includes Special Landscape Areas. However these designated areas are not the only reason for identifying this area, as an 'area of significant protection'. This area has a diverse landscape with a mix of landscape character that extend outwith South Lanarkshire. In addition, the Pentland Hills' role as an undeveloped backcloth to the developed Central Belt is recognised by SNH. This area is currently without wind farms and thus provides a contrast with concentrations of wind farm developments elsewhere.

**3.17** Further, the Spatial Framework 2010 undertook analysis of visibility from selected viewpoints and routes within and adjacent to South Lanarkshire (refer to Section 4 of Spatial Framework 2010). This concluded that the most visible parts of South Lanarkshire in relation to tourism and recreation routes and viewpoints lie in the north east of

South Lanarkshire, around Tinto Hill, Biggar and Lanark. This provides further support to the identification of the Southern Uplands Foothills as an area of significant protection.

**3.18** The Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update 2013 therefore confirms that development should be restricted in this area to create a buffer between surrounding areas with high cumulative change and help conserve distinctiveness in the South Lanarkshire landscape. Guidance on single and small scale wind turbine developments in the **Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills area of significant protection is provided in Section 6.**

**3.19** The Council strongly discourages wind farm and turbine development over 25m in the Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills area of significant protection.

**3.20** Table 3.1 sets out a summary of the policy guidance relating to the areas of significant protection.

Table 3.1

Areas of Significant Protection – Summary of policy guidance	
Area of Significant Protection	Summary of policy guidance
International and national natural heritage designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Wind farm and turbine developments of any scale must accord with Policy 15 Natural and Historic Environment of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan and;</li><li>Detailed policies on designations set out in the Natural and Historic Environment SG (until SG is prepared refer to Policies ENV 20, 21 and 26 in Adopted Local Plan 2009)</li></ul>
Green Belt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Wind farm developments over 20MW are unlikely to be supported</li></ul>

## Areas of Significant Protection for Wind Energy Developments (stage 1) 3

Areas where Cumulative Impact Limits Further Development - Southern Uplands Foothills/Pentland Hills

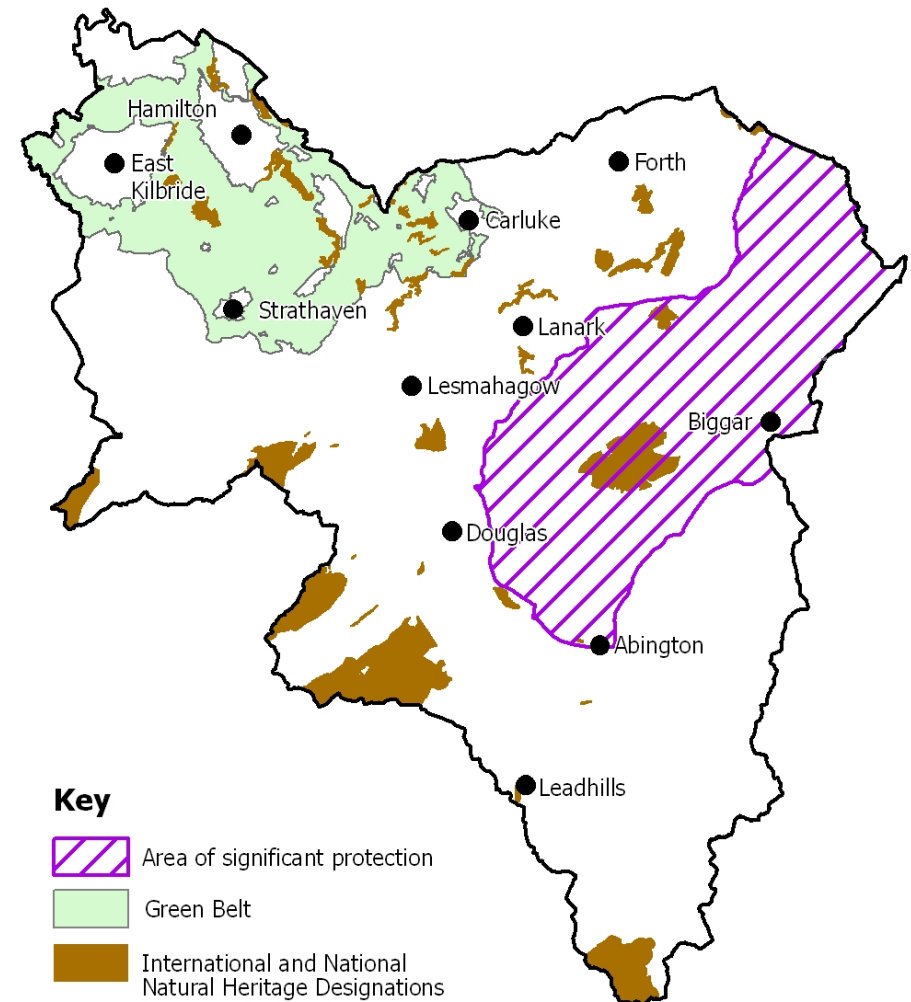
- Wind farm developments and turbines of 25m and above shall be strongly discouraged
- Single and small scale turbine developments should be 25m or less in height
- All applications for wind farm and turbines within this area of greatest protection should include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

**3.21** The Areas of Significant Protection listed below and shown on Figure 3.1 (areas shown at a larger scale on the SLLDP Strategy Map) are identified as areas of significant protection in relation to wind farm development.

- International and national natural heritage designations
- Green Belt
- Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills area of significant protection

**3.22** Development proposals in these areas shall not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that they address the requirements outlined in Table 3.1. All development proposals in the areas of significant protection will be assessed against the relevant criteria in Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals (Table 7.1).

Figure 3.1 Area of significant protection



## 4 Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

### Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

**4.1** In addition to the areas of significant protection, further constraints and policy considerations have been taken into account in developing a spatial framework for wind farms/turbines in South Lanarkshire. SPP (paragraph 190) makes it clear that these constraints should be given less weight than the constraint of the areas of significant protection and the stage 2 constraints should not in themselves lead to blanket restrictions on development.

### Local landscape considerations and cumulative impact

#### Landscape Character Assessment

**4.2** South Lanarkshire Council considers that landscape character and capacity are key considerations in developing a policy framework for wind farm/turbine proposals.

**4.3** The landscape technical studies (see section 1) provide a comprehensive baseline for the assessment of wind farm/turbine proposals in South Lanarkshire, and underpin the Spatial Framework 2013 that informs this SG.

**4.4** Section 6 and Table 6.1 of the Spatial Framework 2013 assesses each landscape character type in relation to its sensitivity to change and capacity for development, and provides guidance on the scale and type of wind energy development, if any, that may be appropriate. The guidance in Table 6.1 should be followed in the consideration of proposals for all scales of wind energy developments.

**4.5** Certain landscape types have been assessed as being of lesser sensitivity to the change which would result from wind farm/turbine development. This is an important factor in the identification of Broad

Areas of Search (BAOS). It is recognised however that the most suitable landscape types for accommodating wind farm (plateau moorland and rolling moorland) have largely been developed out already.

#### Landscape Designations

**4.6** SPP (paragraph 140) supports the designation of local landscape areas in development plans to

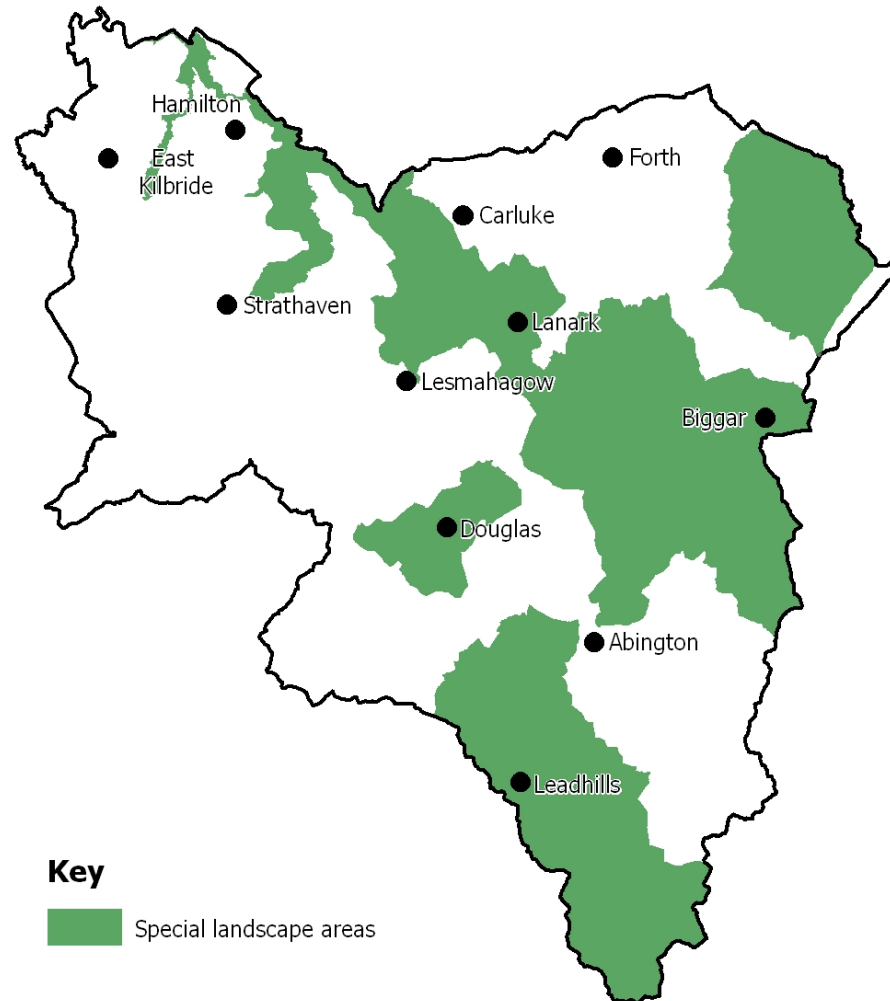
- safeguard and enhance the character and quality of landscapes which are important or particularly valued locally or regionally, or
- promote understanding and awareness of the distinctive character and special qualities of local landscapes, or
- safeguard and promote important settings for outdoor recreation and tourism locally.

**4.7** The Validating Local Landscape Designations Report 2010 identifies those areas of South Lanarkshire covered by local landscape designations. These are shown on Figure 4.1 and the SLLDP Environmental Designations Map. It is important to note that wind farm/turbine development may be compatible with local landscape designations. Special Landscape Areas (SLA) were not specifically excluded in the exercise to identify BAOS. Some of the SLAs contain landscape character types with capacity to accommodate wind farms, however it should be recognised at the design stage that the area is more sensitive to wind energy developments and the qualities for which the SLA is designated require be taken into account.



## Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2) 4

Figure 4.1 Special Landscape Areas



**4.8** Any applications for wind energy development within the SLAs would be judged on their merits, in accordance with the adopted Local Development Plan and any relevant SGs, with particular consideration given to landscape and visual impacts. Applications will be assessed against the Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals in this SG. Any applications for wind farm/turbine development in locally designated landscapes should not affect the qualities for which these areas have been recognised, as described in Validating Local Landscape Designations report (2010).

### Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact

**4.9** South Lanarkshire has become a focus for wind energy investment, see Table 2.1, existing and proposed wind farms in South Lanarkshire February 2013, with many of the wind farm developments located within the potential wind farm areas of search identified in previous development plans. Section 6 of the Spatial Framework 2010 considered cumulative impact in relation to landscape capacity and this work has been updated in the Spatial Framework 2013 to take account of developments implemented or consented since 2010. Therefore based on this assessment the SG has identified three areas where cumulative impact may limit further development (refer to Figure 4.2):

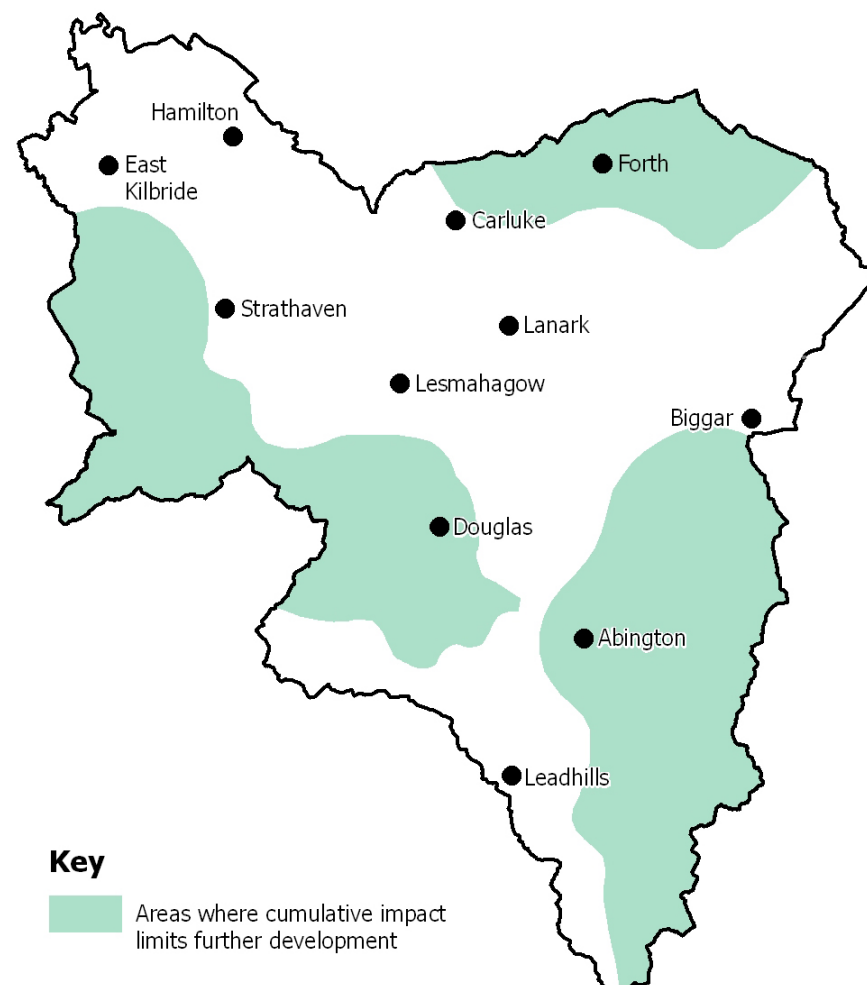
1. Whitelee/Avon Valley/Douglas and Duneaton Water Valley - Plateau moorland and fringes of plateau farmland/upland river valley around Whitelee wind farm in the west and in the rolling moorland south of the Avon Valley around the operational/consented Bankend Rig, Dungavel and Nutberry wind farms. This area has been extended from Spatial Framework 2010 to take account of the consented Galawhistle and Andershaw windfarms.

## 4 Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

2. North East Clydesdale/Black Law - Plateau moorland and fringes of plateau farmland around Forth in the north east where Black Law wind farm is accompanied by a number of smaller consented developments.
3. Clyde and Southern Uplands - Southern Uplands in the vicinity of consented Clyde wind farm in South Lanarkshire and Harestanes/Glenkerie to the south in Dumfries and Galloway.

**4.10** The three areas where cumulative impact limits further development vary in landscape character and have different factors influencing their extent. This is explained further in section 6 of the Spatial Framework 2013. There may be limited opportunities for wind energy development in these areas where it can be demonstrated not to significantly affect the landscape objectives, as summarised in Table 4.1.

Figure 4.2 Areas where cumulative impact limits further development





## Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2) 4

Table 4.1

Areas Where Cumulative Impact Limits Further Development: description and key objectives (see Spatial Framework 2013 Section 6 for further detail)	
Whitelee/ Avon Valley/ Douglas and Duneaton Water Valleys	
Description	Key Objectives
<p>The boundaries of this area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Plateau Moorland on which Whitelee and its extensions lie;</li> <li>The Plateau Farmland to the east lying between the moorland and Strathaven and the A726;</li> <li>The Plateau Farmland and Urban Fringe Farmland to the north lying between the Plateau Moorland and East Kilbride;</li> <li>The Rolling Moorland between the Avon and Douglas valleys including the areas around the consented Bankend Rig, Dungavel and Galawhistle windfarms and the operational Nutberry and Hagshaw Hill wind farms;</li> <li>The Rolling Moorland between the Douglas and Duneaton Water Valleys</li> <li>The Upland River Valleys (Avon and Douglas Water Valley) lying between the areas of moorland.</li> </ul>	<p>Whitelee wind farm plus extensions, Calder Water and West Browncastle have been accepted in the Plateau Moorland area, creating a Wind Turbine Landscape. Hagshaw Hill, Nutberry Hill and Galawhistle create an area of Wind Turbine Landscape in the Rolling Moorland above the Douglas Water Valley; with smaller wind farms (Bankend Rig, Dungavel, and Andershaw) creating areas of Landscape with wind Turbines. The objectives governing the extent of the area are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creation of a appropriate buffer in the surrounding farmlands to prevent visual coalescence of developments in the Plateau Farmlands and Plateau Moorlands and to prevent unacceptable visual impacts on Strathaven and East Kilbride;</li> <li>2. A broad set back of wind farm and wind turbine development from the southern edge of the Plateau Moorland to ensure that there is no dominance of the Avon Valley by wind turbines on the horizon located in the Plateau Moorland;</li> <li>3. Maintenance of gaps between the medium size wind farms on the Rolling Moorland and preventing the creation or extension of larger clusters leading to further areas of Wind Turbine Landscape;</li> <li>4. Prevention of commercial scale wind farm development extending into the Avon,</li> </ol>

Douglas Water and Duneaton Water Valleys.	
Northeast Clydesdale/ Black Law	
Description	Key Objectives
<p>The boundaries of this area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Plateau Moorland in which Black Law and the three other operating/consented wind farms lie</li> <li>The Plateau Farmland and Urban Fringe Farmland between Black Law and Carluke</li> <li>The Plateau Farmland to the south of the wind farms with the boundary defined by areas of higher ground including Hill of Kincadzow: Brae Head and Windy Gate near the A70.</li> <li>The western side of the Old Red Sandstone Hills (Pentland Hills) form Horse Law in the South to White Craig in the north.</li> </ul>	<p>In the case of Black Law the current level of development includes a Wind Turbine Landscape around the main wind farm and a Landscape with Wind Turbines around the smaller wind farms to the east. The objectives governing the extent of the area are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creation of an appropriate buffer in the surrounding farmlands to prevent visual coalescence between developments in the Plateau Moorlands and Plateau Farmlands and to prevent further significant visual impacts on Carluke and Forth;</li> <li>2. Prevention of coalescence of currently clearly separated wind farms to the east of Black Law and thereby preventing extension of a Wind Turbine Landscape;</li> <li>3. Prevention of further extension of the Landscape with Wind farms into the Pentland Hills.</li> </ol>
Clyde and the Southern Uplands	
Description	Key Objectives
<p>The boundaries of this area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Southern Uplands in which Clyde wind farm lies and the hills to the north around Culter Fell up to the border with the Southern Uplands;</li> </ul>	<p>The objectives governing the extent of the area are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An appropriate buffer to the west of the consented Clyde wind farm to clearly separate further wind farm and wind turbine developments in the area from Clyde wind farm. In this case it is judged</li> </ol>

4 Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Broad Valley Upland of the Upper Clyde lying below and between the hills;</li><li>• The Upland Glens lying between the main ridges of the hills including Cow Gill, Culter Water, Camps Water, Midlock Water, Clydes Burn/ Evan Water and Daer Water</li><li>• The facing slopes and first ridges of the Southern Uplands west of the Clyde and Daer valleys and the eastern ends of the Glangonnar and Elvan Waters.</li></ul>	<div>2. Prevention of cumulative impacts between the southern end of Clyde wind farm and the northern end of the consented Harestanes wind farm in Dumfries and Galloway;</div> <div>3. Prevention of cumulative impacts between the northeastern edge of Clyde wind farm and the consented wind farm at Glenkerie in Scottish Borders;</div> <div>4. A set back to the north to avoid turbines dominating views of ridgelines to the south of the Upper Clyde Valley between Abington and Biggar.</div>
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The SG identifies the above areas where the cumulative impact of existing and consented wind farms currently may limit further development. However it is recognised that cumulative impact issues may occur elsewhere in the area as new developments come forward and that this could apply to small scale and single turbine proposals as well as larger wind farms. The Council would therefore expect all applications for wind farms of four or more turbines to contain a cumulative impact assessment. In areas where there are multiple small scale proposals and/or wind farms the Council will request that developers of smaller schemes submit a cumulative impact assessment (see Section 6 Single/Small wind turbine developments and Section 7 Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals criterion 7).

Turbine Height

**4.11** Turbine height is an important factor when considering the landscape and visual impacts of wind farms/turbines. This is particularly true for single and small scale and Feed in Tariff (FiT) turbines in lowland landscapes which are closer to settlements and residential properties.

The Spatial Framework 2013 identifies a range of turbine heights and provides guidance on the use of these in different landscape character types. The height categories are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.2

Turbine Size Categories		
Size Category	Blade Tip Height	Typical Use
Small	Turbines less than 25m in height	Typically used for domestic and farm FiT schemes
Medium	Turbines 25m to <50m in height	Typically used for farm and industrial FiT schemes
Large	Turbines 50m to <100m in height	Single turbine FiT schemes and smaller turbines used in commercial schemes
Very Large	Turbines 100m in height and greater.	Most commercial wind farms

**4.12** Section 5 in the Spatial Framework 2013 provides guidance on situations where height reduction may be used to achieve particular benefits as follows:

- mitigating significant landscape or visual impacts on a highly valued or sensitive receptor;
- avoiding an adverse scale relationship with a landform or other key landscape element or feature;
- allowing an intervening landform and/or forest to screen views of turbines from certain receptors; or
- achieving a significant reduction in overall visibility by virtue of relationship to surrounding landform and trees.

## Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2) 4

### Design Iteration Process

**4.13** All wind farm applications for four or more turbines require to document the design iteration process which sets out the design objectives. A design statement is a useful way for developers to explain why a proposal has a particular layout. Section 5 in the Spatial Framework 2013 provides guidance with regard to design principles and turbine layout, and this is also addressed in SNH publications (see below and Appendix II).

### SNH Landscape Guidance

**4.14** The guidance in SNH publications 'Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape' (2009), 'Siting and Design of Small Scale Wind Turbines of between 15 and 50 metres in height' (2012), 'Visual Representation of Windfarms - Good Practice Guidance' (2006) and 'Assessing the cumulative impact of onshore wind energy developments' (2012) are useful sources of information for developers proposing wind energy projects. SNH guidance 'Assessing the impact of small scale wind energy proposals on the Natural Heritage' (2012) recommends appropriate levels of landscape and visual impact appraisal for smaller scale projects. The Council will expect developers to follow this guidance in respect to the level of landscape appraisal required for different scales of development. The Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals summarises the Council's requirements with regard to the submission of landscape and visual impact assessments (criteria 8 and 9). A list of guidance is contained in Appendix II.

### Ecology, biodiversity and nature conservation

#### South Lanarkshire Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

**4.15** A Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBAP) for South Lanarkshire was published in 2010. Unlike the previous LBAP, this new strategy takes an ecosystem based approach which aims to protect

individual species and habitats by conserving the whole of the environment in which they are found. Four ecosystems are identified: Upland, Freshwater and Wetland, Woodland and Lowland. Developers are encouraged to take account of the aims and objectives for South Lanarkshire's ecosystems set out in the Biodiversity Strategy when designing and developing projects. The Biodiversity Strategy places a strong emphasis on the conservation and where possible, enhancement of habitats including peatlands, ancient woodland and freshwater (as detailed above). If turbines and associated infrastructure (turbine foundations, array road network, drainage, borrow pits, transmission lines and other physical features) will be located in areas of peat a detailed peat depth survey is required in order to inform the assessment of the proposal. Deep peat (greater than 0.5 metres) should be avoided where possible. Mitigation measures proposed to off-set adverse impacts on the peatland environment require to be identified (see section 4.28 below).

**4.16** For larger wind farm proposals and other wind energy schemes where specific species/habitats are affected, applicants will be required to submit a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) setting out the means of land management that will secure biodiversity objectives identified the LBAP. HMPs should provide a focus for landscape scale restoration of large networks of bogs, scrub woodland, heath and other key habitats, benefiting biodiversity and maximising the carbon storage potential of degraded habitats. There is spatial correlation in South Lanarkshire between peatlands, forestry and upland areas with good wind resource. The Scottish Government aims to deliver action to reduce climate change under renewable energy, forestry and peatland restoration which all have a part to play in the wider climate change agenda. However there are challenges when the three areas come together on wind farm proposals. Applicants are required to address these conflicts in their proposal and identify appropriate mitigation measures (on or off site) which can be implemented and delivered over the lifetime of the wind farm

## 4 Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

development. Early engagement with SNH, SEPA and the Council's Countryside and Greenspace Service should be sought to ensure HMP proposals are acceptable. [http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/379/countryside\\_and\\_wildlife](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/379/countryside_and_wildlife)

### Local nature conservation designations

**4.17** The local nature conservation designations taken into account in the Spatial Framework include local nature reserves and ancient woodlands. There are other local nature conservation resources, such as Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) but at present these are not comprehensively mapped across South Lanarkshire. Conserving biodiversity assets is being promoted in the LBAP with the strongest emphasis being placed on those habitats such as peatland, ancient woodland and freshwater. Due to the small scale and dispersed nature of local nature conservation resources it is anticipated that any impact on these shall be addressed at the project stage. Where schemes are small-scale and formal EIA is not required, applicants are encouraged to provide information to support their applications in line with that recommended in SNH guidance 'Assessing the impact of small-scale wind energy proposals on the natural heritage' (2012). Local Nature Conservation designations are shown on the SLLDP Environmental Designations Map. Further advice and data on resources such as peatland is available from the Council's Countryside and Greenspace Service.

### Bird Sensitivity

**4.18** The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) for SLLDP identified that potential impacts on protected bird species, outwith designated sites, in particular Special Protection Areas (SPA), required consideration. EU and national legislation require that full account must be taken of the impact on the qualifying interests of SPAs. In some cases these interests can extend beyond the boundary of the site (for example foraging, roosting and flight paths of

bird species associated with SPAs). The RSPB produce bird sensitivity mapping but this provides only a broad indication of sensitivity and there may be local variations within each category of sensitivity which will only become apparent after detailed surveys have been undertaken. Individual applications either within or outwith the Broad Areas of Search will continue to be assessed on their merits in relation to bird issues and applicants should be guided by SNH in respect of the requirements for ornithological surveys.

**4.19** The Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals summarises the Council's requirements with regard to the local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity and nature conservation in Assessment Checklist criterion 10.

### Forestry and Woodland

**4.20** Woodlands within South Lanarkshire are under increasing pressure from wind energy developments. The Scottish Government's control of woodland removal policy includes a presumption in favour of protecting woodland resources and woodland removal should only be allowed where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits. In appropriate cases compensatory planting may form part of the balance (SPP paragraph 148 and National Planning Framework 2 paragraph 94).

**4.21** In some cases South Lanarkshire has an extensive forestry and woodland coverage and this often coincides with upland areas which have potential for wind farms. In order for a full assessment to be undertaken on the removal of woodland, the following requires to be provided as part of the planning application:

- A Forest Plan that details all major forest operations over the lifespan of the wind farm. When developing the plan, the developer should follow Forestry Commission Scotland's Strategic Forest Plan guidance. All operations should be compliant with the UK Forest Standard. The restructuring of the woodland area may increase

## Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2) 4

the diversity of tree species and habitats with biodiversity benefits for habitats.

- Woodland habitat assessment in terms of its social, economic and environmental value
- Proposed mitigation for area of woodland to be felled. Where compensatory planting is required, full details should be provided that are compliant with the UK Forest Standard. The compensatory planting land must have the necessary forestry consents to allow tree planting.
- Assessment of landscape impact of the felling plans. The developer should refer to the UK Forest Standard, Forest and Landscape guidelines when undertaking this assessment.
- Where the technique of key holing turbines into woodlands is proposed, this prescription must be supported by a full description of both the top height and yield class of the surrounding woodland, as well as the topography of the site. This information is necessary to demonstrate how these factors influence wind flow and inform the extent of felling that is required to mitigate against reductions in wind yield.

**4.22** Any wind energy proposal that includes woodland removal should therefore be discussed at an early stage with Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and take account of the advice in Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, Scottish Forest Strategy and Glasgow and Clyde Valley Forest and Woodland Strategy. Where forestry occurs on peatland, additional guidance should be sought regarding habitat restoration proposals and early engagement with FCS and the Council's Countryside and Greenspace Service (Assessment Checklist criterion 11).

### Historic Environment

**4.23** Historic environmental resources are widely distributed across South Lanarkshire, these include:

- Listed buildings
- Conservation areas
- Scheduled monuments
- Archaeology
- Historic gardens and designed landscapes
- New Lanark World Heritage Site and its setting (buffer zone)
- Historic Battlefields

**4.24** The majority of historic environmental resources in South Lanarkshire are in areas also affected by other constraints (such as settlement buffers and Country Parks) which would preclude them from being included in a Broad Area of Search. However due to the small scale and dispersed nature of the resources, particularly archaeology, it is possible that some sites may occur within the identified BAOS. In these circumstances, impacts arising from development should be assessed at project level and mitigated where possible.

**4.25** Wind energy developments have the potential for direct and/or indirect impacts on the historic environment by virtue of the location of turbines and ancillary development, or changes to ground water levels or surface water patterns, which may affect archaeological deposits. Developments can be designed to avoid or minimise such impacts. Historic Scotland's guidance on setting explains how the impact of change can be assessed and mitigated.

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/setting-2.pdf>

**4.26** The Council considers that the policies in the Local Development Plan for the protection of the historic environment continue to provide an adequate basis for the assessment of wind energy proposals. Wind farm and turbine developments of any scale must accord with Policy 15 Natural and Historic Environment of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan and the detailed policies/guidance on designations set out in the Natural and Historic Environment SG. (Until SG is prepared refer to Policies ENV 22 – ENV25 in Adopted Local Plan). Criterion 12 in



## 4 Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

the Assessment Checklist covers the impact on the historic environment. Historic environmental resources are shown on the SLLDP Environmental Designations Map.

### Peat, Soils and Water

#### Peat

**4.27** The 2000 Land Cover Map of Great Britain indicate that the main concentrations of peatland in South Lanarkshire are located in the upland areas, particularly along the northern and western boundaries of the area. Often these areas coincide with other designated sites (SPA, SAC, SSSI) and were therefore not included within areas of search. For those areas of peat which are not covered by any designations, these are not excluded, but require to be subject to good on-site peat management practises to ensure minimum carbon loss (refer to SNH Good Practice During Windfarm Construction and relevant current guidance on peat management). SEPA recommend that developers undertake detailed peat surveys using a maximum 50m grid as this will help to better establish the depth of peat throughout the targeted area and will in due course better inform the layout and assist in minimising the intrusion into existing areas of deep peat (greater than 0.5 metres). Early discussion with SNH, SEPA and the Council's Countryside and Greenspace Service is recommended where wind farm developments are likely to affect peatland or mire systems.

**4.28** The Scottish Government's published method for assessing carbon losses and savings requires to be carried out. Developers are expected to follow best practice for minimising carbon emissions and disturbance of peat, and the carbon calculator represents a useful tool in assessing proposed practices. Full details of this can be found on the Scottish Government website <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business->

[Industry/Energy/Energy-sources/19185/17852-1/CSavings](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Energy/Energy-sources/19185/17852-1/CSavings) . Criterion 13 in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals covers peat and soils.

#### Soils

**4.29** SPP emphasises the need for the protection of prime agricultural land (classes 3.1 and above). Wind energy development may be acceptable where restoration proposals can return the land to its former status. Criterion 13 and 14 in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals covers impact on soils.

#### Water

**4.30** The water environment (e.g. watercourses, lochs, wetlands, riparian areas) are identified by SEPA as a potential constraint for wind farm development. A principal concern is the potential impact from construction works in or adjacent to water bodies. These works may involve watercourse crossings, river bank modifications and/or culverting. The South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy has a strong presumption against the installation of new culverts. Water abstraction and impacts on water resources (e.g. springs) may be other important considerations.

**4.31** Apart from water quality and quantity, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) also requires maintenance of the good ecological status of water bodies and consideration of any potential impacts on hydromorphological and hydrological processes. Further information is available from <http://www.sepa.org.uk/water.aspx>. These issues may be a constraint to wind farm developments in terms of site location, layout and design. These matters are covered by criterion 15 in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals and further sources of guidance are listed in Appendix II.

## Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2) 4

### Communities and Residential Amenity

**4.32** There are a number of impacts on communities that require consideration as follows:

#### Separation Distances

**4.33** SPP (paragraph 190) states that a separation distance of up to 2km between areas of search and the edge of cities, towns and villages is recommended to guide developments to the most appropriate sites and to reduce visual impact. This approach is adopted in the SG as a mechanism for directing proposals to Broad Areas of Search (BAOS). This 2km separation distance is a guide for areas of search, it is not a rule for distance of turbine from residential properties. Decisions on individual developments should take into account specific local circumstances and topography. However within 2km of the edge of cities, towns and villages wind energy proposals will continue to be judged on a case by case basis. There is currently no standard minimum distance specified in Scottish Government guidance between residential properties and turbines, other than in relation to shadow flicker, where a separation distance of 10 rotor diameters is recommended. The renewable industry standard for the distance from non-financially involved residential properties to a turbine is approximately 500-600metres. The Council will assess all proposals on their merits taking into account turbine height and specification, local topography and landscape features.

#### Noise

**4.34** All applications for wind turbine developments should be accompanied by a noise assessment. The applicant shall undertake a noise assessment to determine the impact of noise from the proposed development on nearby dwellings and any noise sensitive premises taking cognisance of the Scottish Government document Planning Advice Note 1/2011 Planning and Noise. For single /small scale wind energy developments the noise assessment should use the principles set out in

the document 'Small turbine performance and safety standard' February 2008 published by the British Wind Energy Association. The Scottish Government's online guidance for Onshore Wind Farms provides links to various publications setting technical advice for the measurement and assessment of wind farm and turbine noise. For wind farm developments it is recommended by Scottish Government that the report, "The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms" (Final Report, Sept 1996, DTI), (ETSU-R-97) should be followed by applicants and consultees, and used by planning authorities to assess and rate noise from wind energy developments, until such time as an update is available.

**4.35** For small scale wind energy developments the applicant will ensure that noise associated with the proposed development measured as LA90, T shall not exceed the prevailing background noise level +5dB at anytime. For wind farm developments the applicant shall ensure that noise associated with the proposed development shall not exceed 35dB, measured LA90, T or the prevailing background noise level +5dB, during the daytime period and shall not exceed 43dB measured as LA90, T or the prevailing background noise level +5dB during the night time period. The applicant for any wind energy development will require to consider the cumulative effects of any nearby wind turbine developments, either operational, approved or under construction at the time of submission of the application. Criterion 16 in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals sets out the Council's requirements in relation to communities and residential amenity.

### Tourism and recreation interests

**4.36** Tourism and recreation and wind farm development are not necessarily incompatible. Frequently those areas which are important for tourism are often protected by other designations, as is the case in South Lanarkshire where the most popular destinations are already covered by designations (World Heritage Site, National Nature Reserves (NNR), Country Parks, historic gardens/designed landscape).

## 4 Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

**4.37** The visual impact of wind farms from tourist routes and viewpoints is an important consideration. The SG seeks to ensure that views from key tourist routes and visitor attractions will not be adversely affected by development. This would be addressed at project stage. The Spatial Framework 2010 carried out analysis of visibility from selected viewpoints and routes within and adjacent to South Lanarkshire (refer to Section 4 of Spatial Framework 2010). This concluded that the most visible parts of South Lanarkshire in relation to tourism and recreation routes and viewpoints lie in the north east of South Lanarkshire, around Tinto Hill, Biggar and Lanark. This provides further support to the identification of the Southern Uplands Foothills as an Area of Significant Protection.

**4.38** The Council recognises the importance of outdoor access (walking, cycling, horseriding and non-motorised water based activities) for both the health and social well-being of communities and economic vitality of the area. The South Lanarkshire Core Path Plan should be referred to where a network of core paths is identified, however core paths are only one component of the overall outdoor access provision of the area. Core paths will be supplemented by and linked to a more extensive network of access routes (non core paths). The Land Reform Act creates a statutory right of non-motorised access to most land and inland water in Scotland for the purpose of recreation and passage. There are however certain exceptions to this right on grounds of safety, security and privacy. Any impacts from wind energy developments on core paths, wider access network routes and recreational uses across South Lanarkshire require to be fully assessed and proposed mitigation measures require to be identified. This can include making use of the turbine array road networks for recreational access, based on an Access Plan aimed at informing and the development and future management of the site for recreational access use. Criterion 19 in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals sets out the Council's requirements in relation to tourism and recreation interests.

### Traffic and Transportation

**4.39** Road and traffic impacts required to be identified in the application submission. In siting wind turbines close to major roads, it is recommended that pre-application discussions are held with Transport Scotland's Trunk Roads Network Management (TRNM). This is particularly important for the movement of large components (abnormal load routing) during the construction period, periodic maintenance and for decommissioning. To ensure safety, a minimum set back from roads and railways of at least the height to tip of the turbine proposed is required.

**4.40** The construction of wind farm and turbine developments can have significant short term impacts on the local road network. For wind farm developments traffic and transportation require that a Transport Assessment/Statement Scoping form be completed and recommend pre-application discussions to ensure full details are submitted with the application. Details of the development will be required such as programme of works – phases of development, impact on road network, surveys and travel plan. Criterion 17 and 18 in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals set out the Council's requirements in relation to traffic and transportation.

### Borrow pits

**4.41** Borrow pits which are proposed within the application site for wind farm developments are an important consideration in relation their environmental and visual impacts in comparison to the environmental impacts of importing material on to site. Borrow pit locations should consider proximity to residential properties, the visual, noise, dust impacts and potential impacts on hydromorphological and hydrological processes.



## Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2) 4

**4.42** Borrow pits associated with the wind farm development though located outwith the application site will require a separate application and will be assessed against the South Lanarkshire Minerals Local Development Plan Adopted 2012. Criterion 20 in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals sets out the Council's requirements in relation to borrow pits.

### Aviation and Defence Interests

**4.43** South Lanarkshire is affected by a number of aviation and defence interests:

- the northern part of South Lanarkshire is within the radar coverage for Glasgow Airport
- an area on the western edge of South Lanarkshire is within the radar coverage for Prestwick Airport
- the north east of South Lanarkshire is within the radar coverage for Edinburgh Airport
- almost all of South Lanarkshire is identified by NATS (En Route) plc (NERL) as an area where wind farm developments are likely to interfere with operational infrastructure
- the south of South Lanarkshire is within the 50km buffer zone around Eskdalemuir Seismic Array
- MOD Tactical Training Area (TTA) covers the southern and western area of South Lanarkshire (low flying operations take place across all of South Lanarkshire not just in the TTA)
- there is a small airfield at Strathaven, where local safeguarding requirements apply

**4.44** Scottish Planning Circular 2/2003 Safeguarding of Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage Areas: The Town and Country Planning (Safeguarded Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage) Direction 2003 identifies the need for safeguarding of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Prestwick airports and NATS (En Route) plc

technical installations. Strathaven airfield is subject to a local safeguarding agreement which identifies a 3km radius consultation area around the airfield.

**4.45** The relationship between wind farm development and aviation and defence interests is an evolving field. Current advice from the aviation industry and Ministry of Defence (MoD) is that development proposals will continue to be assessed on a case by case basis. The identification of BAOS has therefore not excluded any areas on the grounds of aviation and MoD constraints. However all developers of wind turbines are advised that early engagement with the relevant consultees is essential to determine the nature of any issues and engage in dialogue to identify possible mitigation at an early stage.

**4.46** NATS (En Route) Ltd (NERL) offer a pre-planning service to developers. All pre-planning enquires and scoping requests should be made via the pre-planning service on NATS website <http://www.nats.co.uk/environment/windfarms/>

**4.47** There are particular issues with regard to radar capacity in the south west of Scotland. Early in 2009 a group was set up under the leadership of the Scottish Government Energy Consents and Deployment Unit (ECDU) to investigate the potential for solutions to the radar-based objections currently holding up a significant number of consented or proposed developments in the south-west of Scotland. The South-West Scotland Regional Aviation Solution Group (SWSRASG) has the remit to investigate the development and application of a regional solution, with its endeavour concentrated where it is likely to free up the most MW of electricity by the alleviation of aviation objections. Progress is ongoing with the Scottish Government and a suspensive conditions sub-group has been set up to consider a change in planning advice around the use of suspensive conditions for aviation objections.

## 4 Other Constraints and considerations for Wind Energy Developments (stage 2)

**4.48** Eskdalemuir Seismological Recording Station is located in southern Scotland. The Eskdalemuir Seismic Array is one of 170 seismic stations across the world used to monitor compliance with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The UK is bound by the Test-Ban Treaty not to compromise the detection capabilities of the Eskdalemuir station, and it is the responsibility of the MoD to safeguard this station. A study in 2004, commissioned by the Eskdalemuir Working Group (EWG), showed that wind turbines generate ground vibrations that could interfere with Eskdalemuir Seismic Array. To safeguard the Seismic Array, MoD manage a statutory consultation zone for wind farm planning applications within a radius of 50km around the station using a noise budget. The budget is allocated on a first-come first served basis, as planning applications are submitted, however at this time the reserved noise budget has been reached. The allocated noise can alter as new schemes reach planning and others do not obtain consent. Any schemes to which the MoD does not object, which subsequently do not gain planning consent, could have their noise quota back into the available noise budget. The EWG and its Forum focuses on the noise budget, by facilitating reassessment of available budget and considering the policy required to manage available budget. Work continues between Scottish Government, Department of Energy and Climate Change, MoD and developers to verify technology which can combat the noise and vibration emissions from wind turbines affecting the Seismic Array, and enable more turbines to be built near it.

### Other SG's to support South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan

**4.49** While this SG provides specific guidance for wind energy proposals, it should be noted that there may be other policies within the SLLDP and other associated SG's which are relevant depending on the nature, scale and location of the development. Therefore it is strongly recommended that reference be made to this SG, the SLLDP and other relevant SG's when considering new development proposals.

**4.50** Applications for wind energy developments will only be acceptable if they address the constraints set out in Section 4 of this SG and meet the relevant criteria of the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals.

## Broad Areas of Search for Wind Farms over 20 Megawatts (stage 3) 5

### Broad Areas of Search for Wind Farms over 20 Megawatts (stage 3)

**5.1** The spatial framework for wind farm development was derived through application of the stages set out in the SPP (see SG Section 1 Introduction). The process enabled the identification of areas where there are no significant constraints on development for wind farms over 20 MW. These are referred to as Broad Areas of Search (BAOS). The SPP states that the BAOS are locations where appropriate proposals are likely to be supported subject to detailed consideration against identified criteria. The term 'broad' is not defined but for the purposes of this SG it is taken to mean that broad areas of search should not be site specific, in other words that there should be locational choice within the identified area.

**5.2** The Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind farms 2010 has been updated to take account of new wind farm and turbine developments and consents since 2010. The Spatial Framework 2013 update has resulted in adjustments to the BAOS.

#### Constraints within Broad Areas of Search

**5.3** The SPP accepts that BAOS can contain constraints. It advises that within these areas sites may be constrained by a number of factors including:

- other natural heritage interests, including habitats of high nature conservation value,
- project viability, including wind speed, site access, ground suitability and other environmental factors, and
- grid capacity
- aviation and defense

**5.4** Within BAOS it is therefore the developers' responsibility to prove that their development is viable with respect to these site specific factors.

**5.5** There are a number of other constraints that should be taken into account by developers in BAOS. The nature of these constraints means that they cannot be fully evaluated in the context of supplementary guidance, but would require more detailed survey work to be carried out at project EIA stage to confirm their extent and impacts. These constraints include the following.

- **Bird Sensitivity** – As noted in paragraph 4.16 above, extensive areas of South Lanarkshire have been identified by RSPB as sensitive for bird species. This is a particular issue where BAOS are within the flight path or foraging ranges of the qualifying species associated with Special Protection Areas (SPAs). However these areas are indicative and the true extent of any issues will only become apparent after detailed surveys have been undertaken. These areas have therefore not been excluded from the broad areas of search.
- **Special Landscape Areas** – The Council's view is that excluding local landscape designations from BAOS as a matter of principle would not be consistent with the SPP. The key issue is the extent to which wind farm development would affect the landscape characteristics that lead to the designation being made. The majority of the SLAs comprise landscape character types with no or low capacity for wind farms. The main exception to this is the Leadhills and Lowther Hills SLA. Part of this area is already excluded as an area of greatest protection due to cumulative impacts; however the western part of the area may have limited capacity and was therefore not excluded from the broad areas of search.
- **Aviation and Defence** - As noted in paragraph 4.44, aviation and radar issues affect much of South Lanarkshire and developers in all areas are advised that they should consult the relevant aviation and

## 5 Broad Areas of Search for Wind Farms over 20 Megawatts (stage 3)

defence interests at an early stage to establish the nature and extent of such constraints. The identification of BAOS does not imply that these areas are free from aviation constraints.

- **Cumulative Impact** - As noted in paragraph 4.9, the SG has identified three areas where cumulative impact limits further development. These areas are adjacent to the BAOS therefore any developments in the BAOS must address any cumulative impacts which may arise due to their proximity.

### Location of Broad Areas of Search

**5.6** The analysis above and in the Spatial Framework 2013 confirms that there are very limited areas in South Lanarkshire which are completely unconstrained. In order to maximise opportunities in South Lanarkshire the SG therefore identifies BAOS where there is some potential for development provided that developers can address the constraints through their project EIAs to the satisfaction of the Council and the statutory consultees.

**5.7** Three BAOS for wind farms over 20MW are therefore identified, and are shown on the SLLDP Strategy Map. Table 5.1 describes these areas and summarises the constraints and capacity issues that must be addressed by developers. There is some potential for development provided that developers can address the constraints through their project EIAs to the satisfaction of the Council and the statutory consultees. In addition, proposals in the BAOS should meet the relevant criteria in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals.

**5.8** The main change from the BAOS from 2010 to 2013 is that Area B has been reduced due to the consent of Andershaw wind farm (14 turbines). As a result of removing the consented development area from the BAOS (2010), the remaining area does not leave 'broad areas' see paragraph 5.1. The area previously within the BAOS (2010) which has

been removed may have capacity for wind turbine developments of appropriate scale and design, however the area is not of sufficient size to be determined as BAOS in this SG.

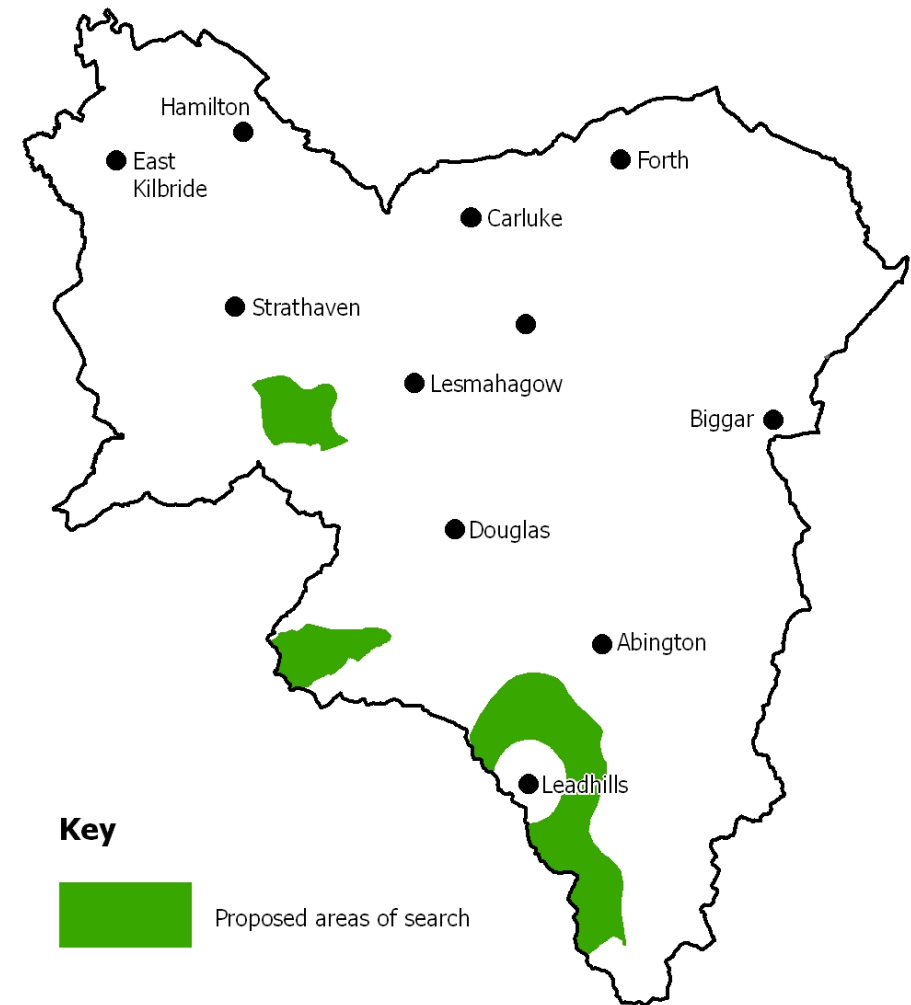
Table 5.1

Broad Areas of Search - constraints			
Area	Description	Constraints to be addressed	Status of BAOS as at Feb 2013
Area A	West of Lesmahagow and Douglas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bird sensitivity, proximity to SPA and impact on qualifying interests of SPA</li> <li>• cumulative visual impact</li> <li>• ornithological impacts</li> <li>• aviation impacts</li> </ul>	This area is subject to current wind farm proposals which if approved would affect the capacity of this area – Kype Muir Wind Farm (Section 36 application - 26 turbines) and Auchrobert Wind Farm (planning application – 12 turbines).
Area B	Between Douglas and Crawfordjohn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bird sensitivity, proximity to SPA and impact on qualifying interests of SPA</li> <li>• cumulative visual impact</li> <li>• ornithological impacts</li> <li>• impact on hydrology of SAC</li> <li>• aviation impacts</li> </ul>	This area is subject to current applications for Penbreck (9 turbines) and Kennoxhead (Section 36 – 26 turbines). If these applications were to be approved it would affect the capacity of this area.
Area C	Leadhills and Southern Uplands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bird sensitivity, proximity to SPA and impact on qualifying interests of SPA</li> </ul>	This area remains the same as identified in 2010. There is a proposal at scoping stage for a 14 turbine development on the north-eastern edge of the

## Broad Areas of Search for Wind Farms over 20 Megawatts (stage 3) 5

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cumulative visual impacts</li> <li>• ornithological impacts</li> <li>• impact on aviation</li> <li>• impact on Eskdalemuir Seismic Array</li> <li>• impact on Special Landscape Area</li> </ul>	BAOS. There are currently no applications. This area is has aviation and MOD constraints.
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Figure 5.1 Broad Areas of Search



## 6 Single and Small Wind Turbine developments

### Single and Small Wind Turbine developments

**6.1** In this section guidance is provided for single/small wind turbine developments which are defined as up to three turbines even when the turbines themselves might be quite large (SNH guidance 'Assessing the impact of small-scale wind energy proposals on the natural heritage March 2012).

**6.2** Single and small scale wind turbine developments could cover a range of turbine heights and scales of development. The impact of such schemes could therefore vary considerably. On this basis it is not considered appropriate to identify specific geographic areas in which such developments would be less constrained.

**6.3** When assessing single/small scale/Feed in Tariff (FiT) developments the issues raised are considered individually and cumulatively with other small scale developments and with larger wind farm developments. Key issues for single/small scale/FiT developments include (SNH guidance 'Assessing the impact of small-scale wind energy proposals on the natural heritage March 2012):

- Proximity to residential properties and areas of population which can lead to adverse landscape and visual and residential amenity impacts
- Proximity to transport routes
- The character of lowland landscapes which can be sensitive to larger turbines and require careful landscape and visual assessment, particularly in terms of cumulative impacts;
- Locations which can have particular bird species present e.g. geese on agricultural land;
- Locations close to buildings, woodlands and other habitats that may increase risks to bats;
- Cumulative effects with other small and large scale developments

**6.4** The Council's Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update (2013) provides a detailed consideration of the suitability of the local landscape character types (LCT) in South Lanarkshire to accommodate wind energy developments of different scales/turbine heights. Each LCT has been assessed in terms of its capacity (ranging from no capacity to high capacity) in relation to turbines of various height categories (ranging from 25m to >100m). Guidance is also set out with regard to maximum numbers of turbines in each group, and separation distances between turbines/turbine groups. **This guidance is set out in Table 6.1 and Appendix 4 Detailed guidance for LCT of the Spatial Framework 2013, and will form the basis for consideration of development proposals for single and small scale wind turbines.**

**6.5** Turbines under 25m to blade tip are excluded from the above analysis as they are not considered to have the same qualities of scale, prominence and widespread visibility that lead to the wider cumulative impacts that characterise larger turbines (25m to blade tip or greater). Such small turbine proposals will be judged on a case by case basis.

**6.6** In addition the factors which were taken into account in the preparation of the Spatial Framework 2013 should also be a consideration in relation to smaller developments. Using the Spatial Framework 2013 it is possible to indicate where there may be particular restrictions on developments for single/ small wind turbine applications and these are discussed further below.

### Applicability of Spatial Framework

**6.7** Areas to be afforded significant protection include international/national natural heritage designations, Southern Uplands Foothills/Pentland Hills, and Green Belt. Guidance for each of these in relation to developments for single/ small wind turbines is outlined below.



## Single and Small Wind Turbine developments 6

### International and national natural heritage designations

**6.8** Wind turbine developments of any scale must accord with Policy 15 of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan and the detailed policies on designations set out in the Natural and Historic Environment SG (until SG is prepared refer to Policies ENV 20, 21 and 26 in Adopted Local Plan).

### Areas where cumulative impact limits further development - Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills area of significant protection

**6.9** The Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills is an extensive regional landscape area which remains undeveloped in respect to wind farm developments. This area of significant protection creates a buffer between surrounding areas with high cumulative change and helps to conserve distinctiveness in the South Lanarkshire landscape.

**6.10** The principle of maintaining the Southern Upland Foothills and Pentland Hills as an area undeveloped for wind farms is applicable to proposals for single/ small wind turbines. The principle is to maintain the area free from wind farm developments and turbines over 25m in height. However in such an extensive landscape there may be opportunities for single/ small scale turbine developments under 25m in height which can utilise local landform patterns to avoid adverse visual and cumulative impacts, as noted in SNH guidance 'Siting and Design of small scale wind turbines of between 15 and 50 metres in height' (2012). Developers must therefore demonstrate to the Council that their proposal can be accommodated without adversely affecting the open and wind farm free character of this area, and without creating cumulative impact with wind farms and turbines in neighbouring landscape character areas.

**6.11** Applications for wind turbines within this area of significant protection should include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The scope of this assessment should be agreed with the Planning Service prior to submission. Applicants should refer to relevant SNH guidance (sources of guidance are provided in Appendix II).

### Green Belt

**6.12** The Green Belt is identified as an area of significant protection in relation to wind farms over 20 MW. However the Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update (2013) does identify that there may be limited capacity within the plateau farmland landscape character type for single/ small turbine developments (refer to Table 6.1 in Spatial Framework 2013).

**6.13** There may be scope for single/small turbine developments to be accommodated in selected Green belt locations away from settlements and avoiding proximity to and significant cumulative impacts with large wind farms on the adjacent plateau moorland.

**6.14** Impact on residential amenity will be a significant factor in the Green Belt. In accordance with the SPP any proposals for schemes coming forward within 2km of settlements in the Green Belt will be considered on a case by case basis taking into account specific local circumstances and geography (see paragraph 4.33).

### Cumulative impact

**6.15** The SG in Section 3 identifies areas where the cumulative impact of existing and consented wind farms currently limits further development. In addition it is recognised that cumulative impact issues may occur elsewhere in the area as new schemes come forward and that this could apply to single/ small turbine developments as well as larger wind farms. On this basis the Planning Service may request that

## 6 Single and Small Wind Turbine developments

applicant's submit a cumulative impact assessment. The scope of such an assessment should be agreed with the Planning Service prior to submission of the application.

**6.16** The three cumulative impact areas identified in paragraph 4.9 and shown on SLLDP Strategy Plan as having limited capacity due to cumulative impact would be sensitive to any additional wind turbine development, depending on its scale and location. Therefore there may be limited cases where single/ small turbine developments will be considered in these areas. Such proposals shall be carefully considered on their merits and developers require to demonstrate that the proposal does not undermine landscape objectives for these areas as set out in Table 4.2. All applications for single/small turbine developments in these areas will be expected to contain a detailed cumulative impact assessment.

### Design

**6.17** Wind turbine design and layout which incorporates the number of turbines and their height is an important consideration when assessing the impact, acceptability or suitability in the landscape. SNH report 'Siting and design of small scale wind turbines of between 15 and 50 metres in height' (2012) deals specifically with the siting and design aspects of proposals for small turbines, and is a useful source of guidance.

### Other Policy Criteria

**6.18** The requirements set out in Section 4 above in relation to the various constraints are generally applicable to all scales of turbine development, unless otherwise stated. The relevant criteria for single/small scale turbine proposals is set out in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals (Table 7.1).

**6.19** The requirements with regard to aviation, set out at section 4.44, apply equally to single/ small wind turbine developments.

**6.20** A summary of the guidance for single/small turbine applications is provided in Table 6.1. Applications will be judged on their merits but must meet the criteria identified in this SG, see Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals Table 7.1.

Table 6.1

Summary of guidance for single/ small turbine applications	
International and national natural heritage designations	Wind farm and turbine developments of any scale must accord with Policy 15 of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan and the detailed policies on designations set out in the Natural and Historic Environment SG (Until SG is prepared refer to Policies ENV 20, 21 and 26 in Adopted Local Plan). Refer to Chapter 8 Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals.
Southern Uplands Foothills/ Pentland Hills	<p>The principle is to maintain the Southern Upland Foothills and Pentland Hills as an area undeveloped for wind farms and turbines over 25m in height. Developers of single/ small turbine developments under 25m must demonstrate that these can be accommodated without adversely affecting the open and undeveloped character of this area and without creating cumulative impact with wind farms in neighbouring landscape character areas.</p> <p>All applications for wind turbines within this area of significant protection should include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The scope of this assessment should be agreed with the Planning service prior to submission.</p>
Green Belt	Limited capacity within the plateau farmland landscape character type for single/ small turbine developments (refer to table 6.1 in Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update (2013)).



## Single and Small Wind Turbine developments 6

Areas where cumulative impact limits further development	There may be limited cases where single/ small turbine applications may be considered in areas where cumulative impact limits further development. Such proposals shall be carefully considered on their merits and developers require to demonstrate that the proposal does not undermine the governing landscape objectives as set out in Table 4.2. All applications for single/ small turbine developments in this area will be expected to provide a detailed cumulative impact assessment.
Landscape Capacity	Refer to Table 6.1 in Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update (2013).

## 7 Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals

### Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals

**7.1** Scottish Government guidance advises that development plans should set out the criteria that will be considered in deciding applications for all wind farm applications.

**7.2** To assist developers, this is presented as a checklist indicating which criteria have to be addressed. The criteria relate to both assessment and technical requirements. In some cases, particularly for small scale developments, developers are advised to discuss with the Council whether a criterion is relevant; this is indicated in the checklist. While it is intended that the checklist provides a comprehensive guide to developers, it is always possible that individual applications may raise site specific issues which are not addressed in the list. Furthermore,









guidance from the Scottish Government and other statutory agencies may change in future, therefore developers must comply with guidance that is current at the time of their application.

**7.3** While this SG and checklist provides specific guidance for wind energy proposals, it should be noted that there may be other policies within the SLLDP and other associated SG's which are relevant depending on the nature, scale and location of the development. Therefore it is strongly recommended that reference be made to this SG, the Local Development Plan and other relevant SG's when considering new wind energy development proposals.

**7.4** All proposals for wind farms and turbine developments will be assessed against the relevant criteria set out in Table 7.1 Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals.

## Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals 7

Table 7.1 Assessment checklist for wind energy proposals

<p><b>Proposals for wind turbine and wind farm developments will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals.</b></p> <p>  proposals in this category must comply with this criterion            proposals in this category may require to comply with this criterion – discuss with Council         </p>	<p><b>Single and small wind turbines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to 3 turbines of any height</li> </ul>	<p><b>Wind farms 4 or more turbines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be 70m height to tip or more</li> </ul>
Areas of Significant Protection		
<p><b>1. Impact on international and national natural heritage designations</b></p> <p>The impact of wind energy developments on international and national natural heritage designations must accord with South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan (SLLDP) Policy 15 Natural and Historic Environment and associated supplementary guidance (SG):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natura 2000 Conservation Sites ( Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation including sites outwith the South Lanarkshire boundary)</li> <li>- European Protected Species</li> <li>- National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest</li> </ul> <p>Until the SLLDP and SG is approved, refer to South Lanarkshire Local Plan Policies ENV 20, 21, and 26</p>		
<p><b>2. Impact on Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills Area of Significant Protection</b></p> <p>Wind farm developments shall be strongly discouraged in the Southern Uplands Foothills/Pentland Hills area of significant protection as identified on SLLDP Strategy Map.</p> <p>Single and small scale turbine developments should be 25m height to tip or less.</p>		
<p><b>3. Impact on the Green Belt</b></p> <p>All wind energy developments in the Green Belt must comply with the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) with regard to Green Belts. Wind farm developments of over 20 MW will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, either as a national priority or to meet an established need, and only if it can be demonstrated no other suitable site is available.</p>		

## 7 Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals

Other Constraints: Local Landscape Considerations		
<b>4. Landscape Character and Visual Impact</b> Proposals must not have any unacceptable significant detrimental effects on landscape character and/or significant adverse visual impact. This should take into account turbines, apparatus associated with the development and borrow pits. The guidance for specific landscape character types contained in the Spatial Framework and Landscape Capacity for Wind Turbines Update 2013 shall be taken into account in the assessment of proposals.	●	●
<b>5. Impact on Special Landscape Areas</b> Any applications for wind energy development within the designated Special Landscape Areas shall be judged on their merits, in accordance with the SLLDP policy, and must not adversely affect the qualities for which these areas have been recognised.	●	●
<b>6. Assess the effects of the development on areas where cumulative impacts limits further development</b> In areas shown on Figure 4.2 in SG (also shown in SLLDP Strategy Map) wind turbine proposals shall not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that they do not undermine the governing landscape objectives for each area set out in Table 4.2.	●	●
<b>7. Cumulative Impacts</b> The cumulative visual and landscape impacts of wind farm and wind turbine developments must be fully assessed and shown to be acceptable. Applications for 4 or more turbines must contain a full cumulative impact assessment prepared in accordance with current Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) guidance. The Council will request that applicants provide an assessment appropriate to single/ smaller schemes where there are multiple proposals. Cumulative landscape and visual impact assessments must include all operating and consented schemes and those that are the subject of valid but undetermined applications. Assessments must consider where appropriate, sequential effects that may extend beyond the Council area.	●	●
<b>8. The contents of the LVIA to be submitted with the application - wind farms 4 or more turbines</b> Wind farm applications of 4 or more turbines must contain a full landscape and visual impact assessment, demonstrating potential impact to a radius of 35km unless otherwise agreed with the Council, using a range of techniques including Zones of Visual Influence, wire line diagrams and photo montages where appropriate. The design iteration process which sets out the design objectives and documents the design process of the development must be provided. Guidance is available in SNH Good Practice Guidance 'Siting and designing windfarms in the landscape' and 'Visual representation of windfarms' and other relevant guidance is provided in Appendix II.	●	●
<b>9. The contents of the LVIA to be submitted with the application - 3 turbines or less</b> For wind turbine developments of 3 or less, the Council will require applicants to follow guidance 'Assessing the impact of small-scale wind energy proposals on the natural heritage (March 2012) and 'Siting and Design of Small Scale Wind Turbines of between 15 and 50 metres in height' (2012). This sets out appropriate levels of landscape and visual impact appraisal for small scale projects.	●	●

## Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals 7











Other Constraints: ecology, biodiversity and nature conservation		
<p><b>10. Impact on Nature Conservation interests</b></p> <p>The development must have no unacceptable significant adverse impact on Local Nature Conservation Sites, sensitive bird areas identified by Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and should take account of the aims and objectives for South Lanarkshire's ecosystems set out in the Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Where applicants are advised by SNH and RSPB at scoping stage that there may be significant cumulative impacts on ecological and/or ornithological interests, developers will be required to undertake a cumulative impact assessment, to include all operating and consented schemes and those that are the subject of valid but undetermined applications.</p> <p>For larger schemes, and for other schemes where specific species/habitats are affected, developers will be required to submit a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) setting out the means of land management that will secure biodiversity objectives. Restoration proposals should take into account opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Discussion on the HMP should take place at an early stage with SNH, SLC Local Biodiversity Officer, RSPB and Forestry Commission Scotland (if appropriate).</p>	●	●
<p><b>11. Impact on Trees and Woodland</b></p> <p>Any wind energy proposal that includes woodland removal should be discussed at an early stage with Forestry Commission Scotland and take account of the advice in Scottish Government Control of Woodland Removal Policy which includes a presumption in favour of protecting woodland resources and woodland removal should only be allowed where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits. In appropriate cases compensatory planting may form part of the balance.</p> <p>Any wind energy proposal that includes woodland removal should therefore be discussed at an early stage with Forestry Commission Scotland and take account of the advice in Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, Scottish Forest Strategy and Glasgow and Clyde Valley Forest and Woodland Strategy (see Appendix II). The following documents may be required to support the application – Forest Plan, Woodland Habitat Assessment, mitigation plan, assessment of landscape impact of the felling plans, topographical survey and information to demonstrate wind flow and inform the extent of felling that is required to mitigate against reductions in wind yield.</p>	○	●
Other Constraints: historic environment		
<p><b>12. Impact on Historic Environment</b></p> <p>Applications for wind energy developments must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify historic assets that could be affected by the development</li> <li>2. Consider the potential for direct impacts on historic environment assets from components of the application such as turbine bases, access tracks and ancillary structures</li> <li>3. Consider the potential for impacts on the setting of historic environment assets by identifying the setting of assets within the vicinity of the proposal and assessing the potential impact of the development on these settings.</li> </ol> <p>Wind farm and turbine developments of any scale must accord with Policy 15 Natural and Historic Environment of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan and the detailed policies/guidance on designations set out in the Natural and Historic Environment SG. (Until SG is prepared refer to Policies ENV 22 – ENV25 in Adopted Local Plan).</p>	●	●



## 7 Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals

Other Constraints: peat, soils and water		
<b>13. Impact on Peat and Soils</b> Developments must be designed to minimise soil disturbance when building and maintaining roads and tracks, turbine bases and other infrastructure to ensure that the carbon balance savings of the scheme are maximised. Guidance has been issued by the Scottish Government "Calculating carbon savings from wind farms on Scottish peat lands - A New Approach". Developers are encouraged to use this guidance and its calculator when preparing applications. Where relevant, developers will be expected to provide geotechnical and hydrological information in support of applications, identifying the presence of peat at each site, including the risk of landslide connected to any development work. Developers should undertake detailed peat surveys using a maximum 50 metre grid where required). To ensure minimum carbon loss developments should be subject to good on-site peat management practices (SNH Good Practice During Windfarm Construction and up-to-date guidance from SNH). Early discussion with SNH and SEPA is recommended where wind farm developments are likely to affect peatland or mire systems.	○	●
<b>14. Impact on Prime Agricultural Land</b> Wind energy development on Prime Agricultural Land (MacAulay classes 1, 2 and 3.1) shall only be acceptable where restoration proposals will return the land to its former status.	●	●
<b>15. Impact on Water</b> Wind energy proposals must not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the water environment as required by the Water Framework Directive and related regulations. Planning applications for wind farm developments must be accompanied by appropriate drainage strategies.	○	●
Other Constraints: communities, tourism, recreation, traffic and borrow pits		
<b>16. Impact on Residential Amenity</b> The development must not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of residents of nearby towns, villages and other properties by means of noise, visual dominance, shadow flicker, reflected light or other emission. All applications for wind energy developments should contain a noise assessment.	●	●
<b>17. Roads and Traffic impacts</b> In siting wind turbines close to major roads, it is recommended that pre-application discussions are held with Transport Scotland's Trunk Roads Network Management (TRNM). To assure safety, a minimum set back from roads and railways of at least the height to tip of the turbine proposed is required.	●	●

## Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals 7

<p><b>18. Transportation impacts and access</b></p> <p>The construction of wind farm developments can have significant short term impacts on the local road network. Access for construction traffic must not compromise highway safety, residential amenity or cause significant permanent damage to the environment. Applicants must provide a transportation statement or assessment setting out the traffic impact for the construction and operational periods and demonstrating suitability of the transport routes for turbine components from their source. It is likely that pre and post construction road surveys will be required by the Council and that the developer may be required to enter a Section 96 Agreement with the Council. Any impacts of road construction/upgrading on Natura 2000 sites or European Protected Species must comply with criteria 1 above. Where appropriate, an appraisal of the ecological and landscape/visual impacts associated with road construction/upgrading will be required from the developer.</p>		
<p><b>19. Impact on Tourism and Recreation</b></p> <p>Views from key tourist routes and visitor attractions must not be adversely affected to an unacceptable degree. Consideration should be given to the impact of wind energy development on Right of Ways, core paths identified in the South Lanarkshire Core Path Plan and potentially other non-core paths. Any impacts identified on recreational routes and uses, requires to be assessed in full and proposed mitigation measures identified. Where appropriate an access plan should be prepared aimed at informing and guiding the development and future management of the site for recreational access use.</p>		
<p><b>20. Borrow Pits</b></p> <p>Borrow pits associated with wind farm developments shall only be acceptable where there are no significant adverse effects on environmental protections, protected species, flood risk areas, settlements and residential amenity and where proper provision has been made for the restoration and aftercare of the borrow pit areas.</p> <p>Borrow pits associated with the wind farm development though located outwith the application site will require a separate application and will be assessed against the South Lanarkshire Minerals Local Development Plan Adopted 2012.</p>		
<p><b>Other Constraints: aviation, defence and telecommunications</b></p>		
<p><b>21. Impact on Transmitting or Receiving Systems</b></p> <p>It must be demonstrated no electromagnetic disturbance is likely to be caused by the proposal to any existing transmitting or receiving system or, where such disturbances may be caused, that measures will be taken to remedy or minimise any such disturbances. In relation to TV reception, pre surveys should be carried out and agreed demonstrating the baseline position, and if required, appropriate mitigation measures and remedial procedures should be agreed with the Council.</p>		
<p><b>22. Impact on Aviation and Defence (use of suspensive conditions)</b></p> <p>The impacts of the proposal on radar performance, defence interests and other air safety considerations must be satisfactorily addressed and demonstrated to the satisfaction of the relevant technical authorities. Developers are strongly advised to seek early engagement with the relevant consultees.</p> <p>The use of suspensive conditions to address aviation issues, on Planning consents for wind energy developments will not be considered unless the principle of the type of solution to be developed has been established and there is agreement between the developer and the relevant operator that such a solution can be delivered in a reasonable time frame.</p>		



## 7 Assessment Checklist for Wind Energy Proposals

Information required		
<b>23. Restoration</b> All wind energy applications must acknowledge the need for decommissioning, restoration and aftercare at the end of the permission or the life of the turbines, if earlier, and not renewed by the Council. Conditions, including a restoration bond or other approved mechanisms as appropriate, will be imposed on any permission granted to this effect, requiring implementation measures to be agreed with the Council in accordance with best practice at the time.	●	●
<b>24. EIA</b> The Council will require all applications for wind energy developments which fall within the scope of the Environmental Assessment legislation to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement, and encourages these to be preceded by a pre-application scoping report.	○	●
<b>25. Legal Agreement</b> Where appropriate, the Council will normally require an applicant to enter into a legal agreement (Section 75 Agreement/Section 96 Agreement) to address community benefit payments, restoration bond requirements, planning monitoring officer, roads and bridge structures and other matters which cannot be controlled by the imposition of planning conditions.	○	●
<b>26. Economic Benefits</b> Applications where appropriate must include details of the environmental, social and economic benefits that will arise from the project, both locally and nationally, including the overall number of jobs and economic activity associated with the procurement, construction and operation of the development.	○	●
<b>27. Environmental Protection</b> Developers must obtain all required authorisations or licenses under the environmental protection regimes prior to construction. Further details can be found in PAN 51: Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation.	●	●
<b>28. SEPA Requirements</b> Conditions may be imposed to planning permission requiring submission of Construction Method Statements and Environmental Management Plans. These documents should also take into consideration SEPA's Pollution Prevention Guidance Notes.	○	●
<b>29. Mitigation</b> Where proposals are shown to have a significant adverse impact in respect of any of the above criteria, the developer will be required to demonstrate that appropriate mitigating measures will be applied.	●	●

## Implementation and Monitoring 8

### Implementation and Monitoring

**8.1** This SG will be kept under review to ensure that it remains relevant and up to date. The development of wind energy generation facilities and the framework that supports it continually evolves and reacts to changing circumstances in technology and national energy policy. The Council will therefore keep under review:-

- National legislative and policy developments
- Changes to renewable energy technologies
- The scale and nature of wind energy developments in South Lanarkshire and adjoining areas

**8.2** A monitoring report will be prepared along with the local development plan which will cover:

- Data on wind energy proposals and developments in South Lanarkshire
- Developments within and outwith the Areas of Search
- Developments affecting the constraints identified in this SG

## 9 Contacts

### Appendix I Contacts

#### Planning and Building Standards

##### Policy Matters

Sheila Alderson,  
Planning and Building Standards Headquarters,  
Community and Enterprise Resources,  
Montrose House,  
154 Montrose Crescent,  
Hamilton, ML3 6LB  
Tel: 01698 455936  
Email: [shiela.alderon@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:shiela.alderon@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

Gwen McCracken,  
Planning and Building Standards Headquarters,  
Community and Enterprise Resources,  
Montrose House,  
154 Montrose Crescent,  
Hamilton, ML3 6LB  
Tel: 01698 454672  
Email: [gwen.mccracken@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:gwen.mccracken@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

##### Planning HQ – 4 turbines or more

Ruth Findlay,  
Planning and Building Standards Headquarters,  
Tel: 01698 455943  
Email: [ruth.findlay@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.findlay@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

#### Area Offices – 3 turbines or less

##### Cambuslang/Rutherglen and East Kilbride

Tina Meikle, Area Manager,  
Planning and Building Standards,  
Community and Enterprise Resources  
East Kilbride Area Office,  
Civic Centre,  
Andrew Street,  
East Kilbride, G74 1AB  
Tel: 01355 806302  
Email: [tina.meikle@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:tina.meikle@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

##### Hamilton

Lesley Campbell, Area Manager,  
Planning and Building Standards,  
Community and Enterprise Resources,  
Montrose House,  
154 Montrose Crescent,  
Hamilton, ML3 6LB  
Tel: 01698 455179  
Email: [lesley.campbell@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.campbell@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

##### Clydesdale

Tony Finn, Area Manager,  
Planning and Building Standards,  
Community and Enterprise Resources  
Clydesdale Area Office,  
South Vennel,  
Lanark, ML11 7JT  
Tel: 01555 673154  
Email: [tony.finn@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:tony.finn@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

## Further Sources of Information 10

**Appendix II Further Sources of Information**

Scottish Government Planning Policy and Advice (Legislation, circulars, SPP and PANs)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning>

Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Energy/Infrastructure/Energy-Consents/>

Scottish Government Policy on Control of Woodland Removal

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc125.pdf/\\$FILE/fcfc125.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/fcfc125.pdf/$FILE/fcfc125.pdf)

Calculating carbon savings from wind farms on Scottish peat lands - A New Approach – Scottish Government 2007

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/25114657/0>

Guidance from SEPA on Water Environment

<http://www.sepa.org.uk/water.aspx>

Additional guidance is available from SEPA's CAR Practical Guide accessible from

<http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/regulations.aspx>.

NATS en route safeguarding maps.

<http://www.nats.co.uk/environment/windfarms/nerl-self-assessment-maps/>

SNH Guidance

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/renewable-energy/onshore-wind/>

Various guidance is available on the SNH website. SNH publications referred to in this SG include the following:

- Visual Representation of Windfarms (2006)

- Cumulative Effect of Windfarms (2005)
- Assessing the impact of small-scale wind energy proposals on the natural heritage (2012)
- Guidance on Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (2012)
- Siting and Design of Small Scale Wind Turbines of between 15 and 50 metres in height (2012)
- Assessing the cumulative impact of onshore wind energy developments (2012)
- Renewables Trends in Scotland 2010
- Good practice during wind farm construction (Oct 2010)
- Siting and designing windfarms in the landscape (V1) (2009)
- Visual representation of wind farms. Good Practice Guidance (February 2007)
- Visual assessment of windfarms best practice (2002)
- Survey methods for assessing the impacts of onshore wind farms (2005 – revised 2010)
- Bats and Wind Turbines (2012)

Other:

Scottish Government: Guidance on Dealing with Aviation Objections and Associated Negative Conditions in Wind Turbine Consents

Wind Energy developments and Natura 2000 (EU Guidance Document) (October 2010)

## 11 Glossary

### Appendix III Glossary

**Ancient Semi-natural Woodlands:** Class 1 and 2A on the SNH Inventory of Ancient and Long Established Woodland Sites.

**Cumulative Impact:** The additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together. Although the term “cumulative impact” is often used to refer only to landscape and visual effects, cumulative effects of wind energy development can relate to a wider range of natural heritage effects, including impacts on birds and habitats,

**Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):** An Environmental Impact Assessment is a technique for drawing together, in a systematic way, expert quantitative analysis and qualitative assessment of a proposals environmental effect. The need for an EIA is determined under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999 and divides into two schedules:-

**Schedule 1** - development which by law must have an EA

**Schedule 2** - development which poses significant harm to the environment by virtue of the nature, size and location of the proposal requires an EA at the discretion of the local authority.

**Environmental Statement (ES):** A document containing the compiled information gathered during the EIA process.

**Green Belt :** Policy framework intended to control the growth of built-up areas, the coalescence of settlements, and the encroachment of new development into the countryside.

**Habitat Survey:** A field based survey that identifies and maps the different types of habitat (assemblages of plants) within an area and highlights any special or potentially sensitive areas.

**Habitat Management Plan (HMP):** mitigation measures proposed by the applicant as part of their submitted development proposal, or required by a condition of planning consent which

- mitigate or compensate for the impacts caused by the development, or
- enhance the natural heritage interest of the area.

**Habitats Regulations Appraisal:** Used to describe an assessment of the implications of the policies and proposals of the LDP on Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) as required by Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) as transposed into domestic law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 as amended

**Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes:** This is a list of nationally important sites that meet the criteria published in the [Scottish Historic Environment Policy 2011](#).

**Inventory of Historic Battlefields:** The Inventory of Historic Battlefields is a list of nationally important battlefields in Scotland that meet the criteria published in Scottish Historic Environment Policy 2009. It provides information on the sites in it to raise awareness of their significance and assist in their protection and management for the future.

**Landscape Character Assessment (LCA):** a documented process which describes and categorises the landscape, highlighting key landscape characteristics and the main forces for change.

## Glossary 11

**Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP):** Local Biodiversity Action Plans and Partnerships operate at a local level to conserve and enhance biodiversity and deliver action for national priorities identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), as well as for species and habitats which are particularly cherished or valued in local areas of Scotland.

**Megawatts (MW):** The unit for measuring power equalling one million watts (1000 kW). The output from wind farms is measured in MW.

**National Nature Reserves (NNR):** NNR's are areas of national or international importance for study, research and the preservation of flora, fauna, geological and zoological interests of importance for nature conservation. They are declared by Scottish Natural Heritage.

**Renewable Energy:** Those sources of energy which are naturally occurring within the environment and which can either be tapped without consuming the resource, or where the resource can renew itself on a human timescale.

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):** Key areas of nature conservation value for plants, animals, habitats or rock formations designated by SNH under the provisions of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

**Special Areas of Conservation (SAC):** A European wide network of important sites containing rare or endangered species and habitats, (Natura 2000 sites) designated under the terms of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna (The Habitats Directive).

**Special Landscape Areas (SLAs):** Local designation for quality and value of landscape.

**Special Protection Areas (SPA):** Designated under the terms of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Europe on the conservation of wild birds. These areas are specifically protected for their ornithological importance.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):** Aims to provide a systematic method of considering the effects on the environment of a plan or programme with the aim of helping to reduce or avoid environmental impacts.

**Wind Farm:** A development of four or more turbines

## 12 Community Benefit Contributions

### Appendix IV Community Benefit Contributions

#### Background

**12.1** The Council has a well established mechanism for the collection and distribution of community benefit related to renewable energy developments. The Council's Renewable Energy Fund (REF), set up in 2004, administers community benefit schemes for a number of wind farms within South Lanarkshire resulting in delivery of locally led projects. The Scottish Government advises that a community can gain valuable funding from renewables projects over and above the energy generated and financial benefits. The South Lanarkshire REF seeks to support this.

**12.2** Where a development is considered acceptable in planning terms, but may have potential long-term impacts, it is important that the options for securing community benefit are maximised. Since Scottish Government guidance is clear that such developments should deliver wider benefits, the Council's Regeneration Services actively seeks contributions in respect of appropriately scaled renewable energy developments.

**12.3** At the Executive Committee on the 1st December 2010 the Council approved a report which updated and refined existing policy, and considered and set the level of community benefit for renewable energy developments in South Lanarkshire.

#### The Renewable Energy Fund

**12.4** The purpose of the REF is to collect and distribute funds to assist affected communities to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in their local area by providing capital funding for community based projects within the identified area. Examples of previously funded projects include either upgrading or providing new community halls, upgrading of play parks, purchase of equipment for community groups and feasibility studies for future projects.

**12.5** The REF will consider grant applications for projects within an identified 10km radius of each participating renewable energy development site. Applications can be considered from outwith the 10km radius if it can be demonstrated that the beneficiaries of the project reside within the eligible area. The grant award in these cases would be proportionally based on the percentage of residents from eligible communities benefiting from the project.

**12.6** The REF will provide financial support for capital projects which meet one or more of the criteria set out in the fund application process. Details of the REF and eligibility criteria can be found on the Council's website [www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

**12.7** The REF provides the opportunity for affected communities to access funding for their eligible projects and benefit from the support and expertise that the Council can provide. Communities also have the comfort that the fund has a fully transparent reporting process and operates independently from any one community group.

#### Contribution Level and Process

**12.8** It is common industry practice, although not mandatory, for the level of community benefit to be related to the electrical output of a wind farm. This is the approach that South Lanarkshire Council will use in relation to the community benefit calculation. In this respect there are two elements to consider:

(1) The measure of electrical output from the wind farm is in Megawatts.

It is considered that installed/consented capacity is the most appropriate mechanism as this provides a consistency of payment and therefore allows the Council to project future payments and manage their distribution.



## Community Benefit Contributions 12

(2) The value of the contribution per Megawatt of production.

**12.9** The Council has agreed that a wind farm contribution of £2,500 per megawatt be set as the standard minimum contribution. This would be payable annually from the date of commissioning and would increase relative to the General Index of Retail Prices (excluding mortgage interest).

**12.10** The Council are keen to explore ways of maximising local benefits through additional measures such as training and employability initiatives delivered locally around the contribution development.

**12.11** The payment would be expected for developments of four or more turbines, including either planning applications to the Council or Section 36 applications to the Scottish Government. Developments of three or less turbines may also be expected to contribute with the scale and structure of the payments considered on a case by case basis.

**12.12** It is recognised that there may be circumstances when the development costs of a wind farm are exceptional and a developer may find it difficult to finance the level of contribution sought. On this basis, the Council may not wish to prejudice the development proceeding. In these circumstances the Council will ask the developer to enter into an open book discussion on the finances of the scheme. This would allow an informed judgement to be made by the Council on the level of contribution sought.

**12.13** With regard to other forms of renewable energy generation, an equivalent level of Community Benefit will be negotiated once the details of the scheme are known.

**12.14** Regeneration Services will handle the negotiation and collection of community benefit from all renewable energy developments. The funds will be distributed to eligible communities using the existing REF approach providing a coordinated and comprehensive system to the

whole process of collection and distribution. As set out in Policy ENV 17 in the adopted South Lanarkshire Council Local Plan 2009, a Section 75 agreement associated with the planning application will normally be used to control payment of community benefit by a developer.

**12.15** It is the Council's view that discussions on contributions should begin as early as possible in the development process to provide a degree of certainty to all parties. At the same time, however, these discussions should not be construed as the Council, as Planning Authority, pre-determining the application. As stated above, any contributions are not material considerations in the assessment of the proposed development.

**12.16** For further information please contact: John Archibald, Project Development Officer, Tel: 01698 455181, E-mail: [john.archibald@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:john.archibald@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)





## **South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan**

South Lanarkshire Council  
Community and Enterprise Resources  
Planning and Building Standards Services  
Montrose House, Montrose Crescent  
Hamilton ML3 6LB  
[www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

For further information or to enquire about  
having this information supplied in an  
alternative format or language,  
please phone 01698 455934 or email:  
[localplan@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)