

Perth and Kinross Council
Planning and Placemaking Committee – 11 October 2023
Pre-Application Report by Head of Planning and Development
(Report No. 23/275)

PROPOSAL: Formation of a 49.9 MW solar farm comprising ground mounted solar arrays, inverters, transformers, a substation, a DNO substation, battery storage facility, security fencing, CCTV cameras, cabling, access tracks and associated works

LOCATION: Kinnon Park Farm, Methven, Perth, PH1 3NE

Ref. No: 23/00012/PAN

Ward No: P9 – Almond and Earn

Summary

This report is to inform the Committee of a potential forthcoming planning application in respect of a major development for the formation of a 49.9 MW solar farm comprising ground mounted solar arrays, inverters, transformers, a substation, a DNO substation, battery storage facility, security fencing, CCTV cameras, cabling, access tracks and associated works at Kinnon Park Farm, Methven, Perth, PH1 3NE. The report also aims to highlight the key planning policies and the likely stakeholders who would be involved in the decision making process, and to offer a brief overview of the key planning issues which are likely to be relevant to the proposal.

BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

1. In accordance with the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), the applicants submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) on 31 July 2023. The purpose of this report is to inform the Planning and Placemaking Committee of a forthcoming planning application in respect of a major development for the formation of a 49.9 MW solar farm comprising ground mounted solar arrays, inverters, transformers, a substation, a DNO substation, battery storage facility, security fencing, CCTV cameras, cabling, access tracks and associated works at Kinnon Park Farm, Methven, Perth, PH1 3NE.
2. Pre-application reports give the Committee an opportunity to raise issues which it would like to see addressed in the planning application. This PoAN seeks to formally establish a major development. The exact range of uses, scale and design of the development will be arrived at during pre-application discussions.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

3. Due to the scale of the proposal it will require to be screened as to whether the proposal is an EIA development under the EIA 2017 Regulations. A screening request is required to be submitted by the applicant.

PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

4. The PoAN (reference **23/00012/PAN**) confirmed that a public exhibition will be held at Methven Community Hall, The Old Vestry, 28 Main Street, Methven, PH1 3PU on Tuesday 22 August 2023 between 15.30pm and 19.30pm with a second event held on Tuesday 24 October 2023 between 15.30pm and 19.30pm. The Ward Councillors, MP, MSP and Methven and District Community Council have been notified. The results of the community consultation will be submitted with the planning application as part of the required Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5. The Development Plan for the area comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2 (2019) (LDP2).

National Planning Framework 4

6. The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is the Scottish Government's long-term spatial strategy with a comprehensive set of national planning policies. This strategy sets out how to improve people's lives by making sustainable, liveable and productive spaces.
7. NPF4 was adopted on 13 February 2023. NPF4 has an increased status over previous NPFs and comprises part of the statutory development plan.
8. The Council's assessment of this application has considered the following policies of NPF4:
 - Policy 1: Tackling the Climate and Nature Crisis
 - Policy 3: Biodiversity
 - Policy 4: Natural Places
 - Policy 5: Soils
 - Policy 6: Forestry, Woodland and Trees
 - Policy 7: Historic Assets and Places
 - Policy 11: Energy
 - Policy 13: Sustainable Transport
 - Policy 14: Design, Quality and Place
 - Policy 18: Infrastructure First
 - Policy 20: Blue and Green Infrastructure
 - Policy 22: Flood Risk and Water Management

- Policy 23: Health and Safety
- Policy 29: Rural Development

Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2019

9. The Local Development Plan 2 (2019) (LDP2) sets out a vision statement for the area and states that, “Our vision is of a Perth and Kinross which is dynamic, attractive and effective which protects its assets whilst welcoming population and economic growth.” It is the most recent statement of Council policy and is augmented by Supplementary Guidance.

The principal relevant policies are, in summary;

- Policy 1A: Placemaking
- Policy 1B: Placemaking
- Policy 1C: Placemaking
- Policy 2: Design Statements
- Policy 5: Infrastructure Contributions
- Policy 6: Settlement Boundaries
- Policy 8: Rural Business and Diversification
- Policy 15: Public Access
- Policy 26B: Scheduled Monuments and Archaeology: Archaeology
- Policy 29: Gardens and Designated Landscapes
- Policy 30: Protection, Promotion and Interpretation of Historic Battlefields
- Policy 31: Other Historic Environment Assets
- Policy 32: Embedding Low and Zero Carbon Technology in New Development
- Policy 33A: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: New Proposals for Renewable and Low-Carbon Energy
- Policy 33C: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: Decommissioning and Restoration of Existing Facilities
- Policy 35: Electricity Transmission Infrastructure
- Policy 38B: Environment and Conservation: National Designations
- Policy 38C: Environment and Conservation: Local Designations
- Policy 39: Landscape
- Policy 40A: Forestry, Woodland and Trees: Forest and Woodland Strategy
- Policy 40B: Forestry, Woodland and Trees: Trees, Woodland and Development
- Policy 41: Biodiversity
- Policy 42: Green Infrastructure
- Policy 43: Green Belt
- Policy 47: River Tay Catchment Area
- Policy 50: Prime Agricultural Land
- Policy 51: Soils
- Policy 52: New Development and Flooding
- Policy 53A: Water Environment and Drainage: Water Environment
- Policy 53C: Water Environment and Drainage: Surface Water Drainage

- Policy 54: Health and Safety Consultation Zones
- Policy 55: Nuisance from Artificial Light and Light Pollution
- Policy 56: Noise Pollution
- Policy 58A: Contaminated and Unstable Land: Contaminated Land
- Policy 60B: Transport Standards and Accessibility Requirements: New Development Proposals
- Policy 61: Airfield Safeguarding

OTHER POLICIES

10. The following non statutory guidance and documents are of particular importance in the assessment of this application:-

- [Planning Guidance - Planning & Biodiversity](#)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Renewable & Low Carbon Energy](#) (draft)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Airfield Safeguarding](#) (adopted in 2020)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Developer Contributions & Affordable Housing](#) (adopted in 2020)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Flood Risk and Flood Risk Assessments](#) (adopted in 2021)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Forest & Woodland Strategy](#) (adopted in 2020)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Green & Blue Infrastructure](#) (adopted in 2020)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Landscape](#) (adopted in 2020)
- [Supplementary Guidance - Placemaking](#) (adopted in 2020)
- Perth and Kinross Community Plan 2013/2023
- Perth and Kinross Local Transport Strategy (2010)

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

11. The Scottish Government expresses its planning policies and guidance through the National Planning Framework, Planning Advice Notes, Creating Places, Designing Streets, National Roads Development Guide and a series of Circulars.

Planning Advice Notes

12. The following Scottish Government Planning Advice Notes are likely to be of relevance to the proposal:-

- PAN 1/2011 Planning and Noise
- PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology
- PAN 3/2010 Community Engagement
- PAN 40 Development Management
- PAN 51 Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation
- PAN 61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
- PAN 68 Design Statements
- PAN 69 Planning and Building Standard Advice on Flooding
- PAN 73 Rural Diversification

PLANNING SITE HISTORY

13. **04/02335/FUL** Full Planning Permission application was withdrawn on 23 December 2005 for conversion of existing steading and erection of 11 dwellinghouses
14. **05/01778/OUT** was approved on 23 December 2005 for construction of golf course and associated buildings and parking (in outline)

CONSULTATIONS

15. As part of the planning application process the following would be consulted:

External

- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- NatureScot
- Historic Environment Scotland – Battlefield and Garden and Designed Landscapes
- Forestry Commission Scotland
- Health and Safety Executive
- Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust
- Methven Community Council
- Blue Sky Experiences - Airfield Safeguarding
- National Grid - Gas

Internal

- Environmental Health - Noise and Odour
- Environmental Health – Contamination
- Environmental Health – Private Water
- Planning and Housing Strategy
- Development Contributions Officer
- Community Greenspace including Access
- Transportation and Development
- Structures and Flooding
- Biodiversity Officer

KEY ISSUES AGAINST WHICH A FUTURE APPLICATION WILL BE ASSESSED

16. The key considerations against which the eventual application will be assessed include:
 - a. Visual Impact
 - b. Scale, Design and Layout
 - c. Relationship to Nearby Land Uses
 - d. Natural Heritage and Ecology

- e. Landscape
- f. Water Resources and Soils
- g. Air Quality
- h. Transport Implications
- i. Tourism and Economy
- j. Impact on Agriculture
- k. Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS WHICH WILL BE REQUIRED

17. Should an EIA Report not be required the following supporting documents will need to be submitted with any planning application:

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report
- Leisure/Economic Impact Assessment
- Transport Assessment
- Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Tree and Woodland Survey
- Habitat Survey
- Archaeological Assessment
- Sustainability Assessment

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

18. This report summarises the key issues which should be considered as part of the appraisal of any subsequent planning application which may be lodged in respect of this development and members are recommended to note these key issues and advise officers of any other issues which they consider should be included as part of the application and assessment.

Background Papers: None
Contact Officer: Kirsty Strong – Ext 01738 475333
Date: 29 September 2023

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HEAD OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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