

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL14 September 2016Report by Director of EnvironmentLOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE)**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Council in relation to the outcome of the consultation on the Proposed Supplementary Planning Guidance: Renewable Energy and to seek approval to submit this to Scottish Ministers for approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Council is asked to:
- (a) Approve the proposed responses and recommendations to representations for the finalised Supplementary Planning Guidance (Appendix 1);
 - (b) Approve the proposed responses and recommendations to representations for the finalised SEA Environmental Report (Appendix 2);
 - (c) Approve the submission of the finalised Supplementary Planning Guidance to Scottish Ministers for Adoption, (www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/spg);
 - (d) Approve the submission of the finalised SEA Environmental Report to Scottish Ministers, (www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/spg); and
 - (e) Delegate to the Director of Environment to approve any minor inconsequential changes to the documents, in line with Council policy, prior to submission to Scottish Ministers.

BACKGROUND AND REPORT

3. Section 22 of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 makes provision for the preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in connection with a Local Development Plan (LDP). Supplementary Planning Guidance can be prepared and adopted alongside the Local Development Plan or subsequently. When adopted, any SPG forms a statutory part of the Local Development Plan.

4. The purpose of Supplementary Planning Guidance is to provide detailed guidance on Local Development Plan policies and proposals. Supplementary Planning Guidance provides context and detail and is an important tool in the Development Management process.

5. A number of Supplementary Planning Guidance documents are already adopted and are part of the LDP. In February 2016, the Council approved the Proposed Supplementary Planning Guidance: Renewable Energy for formal publication and consultation.

6. The Council is required, as part of this consultation process, to consider every representation received and offer a response to each. A six week consultation period was undertaken between 31 March 2016 and 12 May 2016. The consultation stage is now complete. The SPG itself received 11 responses and the SEA Environmental Report received 3 responses. A variety of minor changes to the text of the SPG and SEA have been required, including some additional maps and refreshed layout. For the SPG, a summary of the representations received and the Council's response is set out in Appendix 1 to this report. For the SEA, a summary of the representations received and the Council's response is set out in Appendix 2 to this report. The SPG and SEA can be viewed on the Council's website: www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/spg. Paper copies of all finalised documents and response reports have been made available in the Members Room.

7. A copy of the SPG/SEA Environmental Report and a statement setting out the publicity measures undertaken will be submitted to Scottish Ministers together with the representations summary and responses.

8. 28 days after the Supplementary Planning Guidance has been submitted to Scottish Ministers, the Council may adopt the guidance unless directed by Ministers not to do so. Ministers have indicated that they will focus more on ensuring that the principles of good public involvement and a proper connection with the Local Development Plan has been achieved rather than on detailed policy content.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

9. Any costs associated with the printing of Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance will be met from within existing budgets.

CONSULTATION

10. The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 sets out specific requirements in relation to publicity and consultation of Supplementary Planning Guidance. All documents have met these requirements and been subject to consultation with external agencies, statutory consultees and Council Departments.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

11. As described within this report and appendices, the preparation of this Supplementary Planning Guidance has been the subject of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

12. There are no other staffing, property, IT, sustainability or equalities implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSIONS

13. Supplementary Planning Guidance forms an important and statutory part of the Local Development Plan and provides an opportunity for the Council to provide detailed guidance

on key matters that shape and influence the growth and change of East Renfrewshire up to 2025 and beyond. The SPG will be formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance alongside the already adopted Local Development Plan and the existing suite of SPG's.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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- (d) Approve the submission of the finalised SEA Environmental Report to Scottish Ministers, (www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/spg); and
- (e) Delegate to the Director of Environment to approve any minor inconsequential changes to the documents, in line with Council policy, prior to submission to Scottish Ministers.

Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from: Iain MacLean, Head of Environment on 0141 577 3720 or iain.maclea@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

19 August 2016

KEY WORDS: A report seeking approval to submit Finalised Supplementary Planning Guidance to Scottish Ministers for Adoption. SEA, Local, Development, Plan, Supplementary, Planning, Guidance.

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Consultation & Summary of Consultation Responses and Recommendations

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPG): RENEWABLE ENERGY

This SPG was approved by East Renfrewshire Council for consultation on 23 March 2016. The consultation period ran for six weeks from 31 March 2016 until 12 May 2016.

In line with the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, the Council is required to demonstrate that appropriate engagement has been undertaken and submit this to Scottish Ministers, together with the comments received and how they have been taken into account.

The following provides a summary of the participation methods used by East Renfrewshire Council.

<p>Statutory consultation/engagement</p>	<p>The Statutory period of consultation ran from 31 March until 12 May (6 weeks). SPG and response forms were deposited at all Council libraries; at the Planning Office in Spiersbridge; Eastwood Headquarters Giffnock; and Main Street Barrhead. SPG and response forms made available to view and download on the Council's website. 48 letters were sent to those on the LDP consultation database and in addition adverts were placed in The Extra and Barrhead News.</p> <p>451 e-mails (incl. statutory consultees) were sent to interested parties from the LDP consultation database.</p> <p>A further 10 e-mails were sent to representees who made representations at the LDP Proposed Plan stage.</p>
<p>Additional consultation/engagement</p>	<p>In addition to the Council web-page the SPG was also placed, over the duration of the consultation period, on the Council's Citizen's Space, which is specifically designed for Council consultations.</p> <p>Advert in Barrhead News, The Extra</p>

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The table provides a summary of representations received and the response (including reasons) by the planning authority:

Body or person who submitted representation (including reference number) (representations submitted during consultation on the Proposed SPG)
SNH (Ref1) Aileen Jackson (Ref2) Forestry Commission Scotland (Ref3) SPT (Ref4) Strathclyde Geoconservation Group (Ref5) HES (Ref6) RSPB (Ref7) Scottish Government (Ref8) SEPA (Ref9) SPR (Ref10) Transport Scotland (Ref11)

Planning authority's summary of the representation (s)**SNH (Ref1)**

Point 1.1 The guidance is comprehensive, clearly based on SPP and the existing Landscape Capacity Studies. Overreliance on the East Renfrewshire Wind Energy Study (2012) may lead to confusion. Recommend to use recent Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley (2014).

Point 1.2 Useful to include a map with a description of the current level of wind energy schemes that are operational, have consent or are currently under consideration in East Renfrewshire

Point 1.3 Spatial framework currently applies to any wind energy development containing a minimum of 2 turbines of any height. Recommend that for consistency the whole supplementary guidance should use this scale as 20MW reference may lead to confusion.

Point 1.4 Spatial framework does not tie in very well with Section 2 of the guidance. Recommend that the role of Section 2 should be to set out the development management criteria that will apply to the areas identified as group 2 and group 3 of the spatial framework.

Point 1.5 Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley (2014) should play an important role in the identification of potential areas.

Point 1.6 Welcome that Carbon Rich Soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat map has been applied to the spatial framework. Map seems to have applied areas 1,2,3,4 and x contained in the draft SNH carbon rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat map. For the purposes of the spatial framework we recommend that **only the areas identified as 1 and 2** on the draft map are used within the spatial framework.

Point 1.7 Recommend that it would be useful to expand the information for carbon-rich soil, deep peat and priority peatland habitats within section 2.4.5. Recommend text such as:

“Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has prepared a consolidated spatial dataset of carbon-rich soil, deep peat and priority peatland habitats in Scotland derived from existing soil and vegetation data. Classes 1 and 2 correspond to the 'carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat' identified in Table 1 of SPP and have been used in the spatial framework. This technical report and mapping is currently in a draft state and has not yet been finalised. Developers should consult the SNH website to ensure they are using the most up to date version.”

Point 1.8 Recommend reference is made to the SNH guidance Spatial Planning for onshore wind turbines – natural heritage considerations www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1663759.pdf

Point 1.9 Note that reference is made to the East Renfrewshire website to view the landscape capacity study (2014). However, we could not locate it on your website.

Point 1.10 Wind Energy Study section does not sit comfortably with the approach set out in SPP. SPP now has no mention of greenbelt in the development management criteria. Also SPP no longer uses a 20MW threshold. In our view the inclusion of the information contained in this section of the SPG could lead to confusion. Recommend that you remove most of this section. However, there is merit in retaining reference to the East Renfrewshire Wind Energy Study.

Point 1.11 Suggest this section should place greater emphasis on the maps contained in the Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley (2014). Recommend the maps which set out the sensitivity levels of the landscape against the five different turbine typologies identified in the capacity study would be particularly useful to include.

Point 1.12 Section on small-scale wind energy should include link to two SNH guidance documents

- Assessing the impact of small-scale wind energy proposals on the natural heritage www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1323094.pdf
- Micro renewables and the natural heritage - Revised guidance <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A301202.pdf>

Point 1.13 Note there is reference to SNH on the requirements for ornithological studies. The following web page could be inserted which gives links to a range of bird survey guidance <http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/renewable-energy/onshore-wind/windfarm-impacts-on-birds-guidance/>

Point 1.14 Recommend that reference could be included on the consultative draft of the Clydeplan Forestry and Woodland strategy which guides woodland expansion and management of woodlands in the Clydeplan area. This would be a useful signpost to developers of which areas maybe suitable to provide compensatory planting.

http://www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/files/ClydeplanFWS_ConsultationDraft_1_0.pdf

Point 1.15 Note the current wording states “The potential to create positive tourism opportunities associated with the development”. Recommend that recreation is also included in this sentence.

Point 1.16 Note there is reference to peat and carbon rich soils. Recommend that this section be expanded to link to the carbon rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat map which can assist in identifying peat and other carbon-rich soils for development planning and development management purposes.

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/soils-and-development/cpp>

Point 1.17 Recommend a section on Decommissioning, Restoration and Repowering should be included in the guidance. SNH have several pieces of guidance that may be useful.

There are relevant sections of text in the Good practice during wind farm construction guidance <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1168678.pdf>

For further guidance on aftercare following decommissioning we have produced guidance to develop a common approach to decommissioning and repowering plans (DRPs) for on-shore wind farms.

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1434319.pdf>

We have also undertaken research and guidance on restoration and decommissioning of onshore wind which can be found at the following link

http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/591.pdf

Aileen Jackson (Ref2)

Point 2.1 Scottish Government's renewable energy target is one of a number of key considerations for Planning Authorities when updating their Development Plans and when preparing SPG and for Ministers when considering those documents. Politically driven target by itself does not presume that consents/permissions must follow. The existence of a target does not define the outcome of any renewable energy planning application.

Point 2.2 Planning system has already played its full part in ensuring that the earlier interim targets were met and there is already significant progress towards the 2020 target. Adverse landscape effects from new wind turbine/farms should be "balanced" against a target which has already been met and **therefore any "need" argument for more turbines is significantly reduced.**

Point 2.3 Appears to be little difference between the previous SPG Renewable Energy and this proposal, including the outdated appendix 2 which is unhelpful for the determination of cumulative issues.

Point 2.4 Noted that:

*In East Renfrewshire, a **wind farm** is considered to be any wind energy development containing a minimum of 2 turbines of **any** height.*

Point 2.5 In accordance with Group 2 of the SPP (2014), the East Renfrewshire spatial framework applies a 2 kilometre buffer to settlements affording significant protection from **wind farm** development. It is noteworthy that the many windfarms surrounding the village of Uplawmoor would probably not have received planning permission under the proposed SPG.

Point 2.6 No proposed restriction on single turbine developments. Single turbines do not enjoy the same level of assessment as windfarms and this has resulted in an unacceptable complex and haphazard pattern of development in the area which has been criticised by both SNH and East Ayrshire Council.

Point 2.7 Scottish Government document Onshore Wind Turbines (December 2013) confirms that in the first instance the advice of Scottish Natural Heritage be followed in respect of impact on landscape character appraisal and visual impact analysis. ERC appear to completely ignore SNH Guidance and continually refer to it in Reports of Handling as "being purely for information and advice". Even when SNH are given the opportunity to comment on a development, as with Neilston Community Windfarm, their expert opinion is dismissed.

Point 2.8 Noise section refers only to large scale development. The noise impacts of smaller turbines with faster rotation speeds generate more noise complaints nationally than large turbines due their annoying noise character. Difficulties have also arisen due to the poor standard of noise reports, submitted by inexperienced noise consultants, in support of planning applications. These have not been adequately scrutinized by ERC resulting in consented and operational turbines now exceeding noise levels in the area. Many of these developments are accompanied by unenforceable noise conditions which offer no protection to residents.

Point 2.9 Due to the proximity of Glasgow airport, all medium/large scale turbines in the Uplawmoor/Neilston area require obstacle lighting. This has led to numerous complaints from residents who are affected by the strobing effect caused by blades passing in front of the lights. As no mitigation is available, it is obvious that no turbine development of a size requiring lighting, is acceptable in this area.

Point 2.10 The effect of this over development has resulted in this area becoming a wind turbine landscape. It has contributed to the loss of our greenbelt and negatively impacted on residential amenity and wildlife. It may also limit or sterilise other development opportunities with greater social and economic benefits for the area.

Point 2.11 Obvious there is no further capacity for wind turbine development of **any** size in the Uplawmoor/Neilston area and this must be emphasised in the SPG in order to direct developers elsewhere.

Point 2.12 The contamination and silting up of private water supplies due to windfarm construction has been highlighted by the Whitelee 3 Public Inquiry. No decision has been made but one of the most worrying aspects under discussion at the Inquiry was the reluctance of developers to identify water sources. Greater scrutiny of all turbine applications by the planning authority and consultation with SEPA is required before planning permission is granted and developers should be reminded that under European Law – *the polluter pays!* (APPLICATION STAGE)

Point 2.13 It is apparent that ERC have absolutely no interest whatsoever in preserving multi-use access routes and opportunities for recreation and outdoor pursuits by restricting badly sited wind turbine development. Neilston Pad, the much loved and widely used local beauty spot as well as much of the core path network and local angling clubs have been surrounded by ill sited turbines. This is another reason why no more turbines of any size should be considered in the area.

Point 2.14 It is considered that financial guarantees, when properly applied and monitored, are an important means of ensuring that restoration and aftercare obligations will be met in the event that the developer is unable or unwilling to meet these obligations. They are also an important means of providing reassurance to local communities that decommissioning, restoration, aftercare and mitigation obligations will be met.

Forestry Commission Scotland (Ref3)

Point 3.1 FCS would like to offer the following as an alternative form of words to support this very important section

“Scottish Government recognises the valuable contribution trees, woodlands and forestry can make to the social, economic and environmental aspects of communities. In recognition of forestry’s wider value Scottish Government has set a woodland creation target of 100,000 hectares of new woodland by 2022 to help mitigate against Climate Change. Forestry is 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. Compensatory planting is generally expected where woodland is removed in association with development and will be taken into account when assessing proposals. The effects that the proposed development will have on woodlands and the consequences that woodland removal will have on the ecology and landscape of the area and environs requires to be fully assessed.

The information submitted with the application requires to adequately address the impact that the felling associated with the development, will have on the environment and how the felling proposals adhere to the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines and the Scottish Government’s Control of Woodland Removal Policy.

Design options to minimise the necessity for tree removal should be considered and early engagement with Forestry Commission Scotland is advised.”

Forestry and woodland coverage often coincides with areas identified with 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 Forest Design Planning guidance. All operations should be compliant with the UK Forest Standard. The restructuring of the woodland area may increase 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.*
- *An assessment of the 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.

· Where it is proposed to fell significant quantities of trees to accommodate a proposal, then consideration of how forestry waste will be disposed of needs to be provided as part of the planning application. Further information can be found in SEPA Guidance on management of forestry waste.

SPT (Ref4)

Point 4.1 No comments to make

Strathclyde Geoconservation Group (Ref5)

Point 5.1 There is good potential for borrow pits and aggregate used in site construction to enhance local geodiversity, during, or if not refilled, after construction. The Scottish Geodiversity Charter guidance for local authorities at:

<http://scottishgeodiversityforum.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/implementing-scotlands-geodiversity-charter-local-authorities-july-2013.pdf>

which mentions things like :

“..Ensure that opportunities to enhance geodiversity and access to sites are considered in all relevant proposals, including the potential to create, extend or restore geodiversity interests (e.g. during construction of new routes or upgrade of existing ones, or as part of Housing developments) and that any landscaping (e.g. hydroseeding) or slope grading takes account of geodiversity interests...

HES (Ref6)

Point 6.1 Welcome the preparation of this guidance and consider that it clearly sets out the factors that the council will take into account when considering renewable energy applications in relation to the historic environment. The spatial strategy recognises the Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes in line with Scottish Planning Policy and the further guidance relating to historic environment features should ensure that these assets are appropriately considered when assessing individual renewable energy applications.

RSPB (Ref7)

Point 7.1 SPG should cross reference policy (D8) in the main body of the LDP.

Point 7.2 One of the mechanisms for securing mitigation and enhancement of Natural Heritage is through the provision of Habitat Management Plans. Suggest the following wording:

'The impact of proposals on the natural heritage will require to be assessed and appropriate mitigation put in place. For larger wind farm proposals and any other wind energy schemes where priority species/habitats are affected, applicants may be required to submit and implement a Habitat Management Plan setting out the means of land management that will secure biodiversity enhancement.'

Point 7.3 Suggest that RSPB should be specifically referred to as an organisation that would be able to provide advice on bird issues by adding the following:

'Applicants should refer to RSPB's Bird Sensitivity Map and relevant SNH guidance, including on cumulative impacts (provide links.)'

Point 7.4 SPG should highlight and provide a reference to the Scottish Government's Woodland Removal policy.

Point 7.5 The numbering is wrong on page 20 para. 3.4.7. The policy should use the relevant wording in Scottish Planning Policy (para. 205)

Point 7.6 It would be useful to provide a link to 'BRE National Solar Centre Biodiversity Guidance for Solar Developments.'

Scottish Government (Ref8)

Point 8.1 To assist clarity of understanding, there would be benefit in referring to the document as 'Supplementary Guidance' and removing the reference to Planning.

Point 8.2 The SG will not form part of the 'local development plan' but will form part of the 'development plan'. Alternatively Para 1.1.1 could state 'until such time as it is adopted in connection with the Local Development Plan

Point 8.3 2.1.5 mentions 2013 stats for our progress to the 2020 electricity target. This has been updated by the 2014 stats published in December last year with the new figure of 49.7%.

Point 8.4 Consideration should be given to the Chief Planner letter (11 November 2015). This explained that local and community owned developments can have a net economic impact which is a relevant material consideration.

Point 8.5 Paragraph 4.6.3 – PAN 45 has been superseded. The Scottish Government website provides up-to-date online renewables planning advice at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/Policy/Subject-Policies/low-carbon-place/Heat-Electricity/renewables-advice>.

Point 8.6 The SG does not comply with paragraphs 158 – 160 of the SPP or paragraph 3.5 of the NPF. Both of these relate to heat. Further information is set out in the Planning and Heat online renewables planning advice. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0048/00488003.pdf>.

SEPA (Ref9)

Point 9.1 Welcome the preparation of a spatial framework to guide the location of wind energy developments in East Renfrewshire and the further clarification offered on the considerations that apply to all wind energy developments. This will assist the delivery of Scotland's renewable energy targets and ensure that potential environmental impacts associated with wind energy developments are identified and fully considered at an early stage. However, we would offer the following comments on the Proposed SPG.

Point 9.2 May be useful to clarify that the environmental considerations apply not only to the wind turbine element of the proposals but also to the associated ancillary works such as borrow pits, access roads, crane hardstandings, construction compounds, cabling, substations etc. These elements should be subject to the same scrutiny as the wind turbines themselves.

Point 9.3 Would have expected that the SPG considers wind farm decommissioning. We require that information be provided to demonstrate that our waste regulations, and the principle of waste minimisation, have been taken into account from the outset in terms of decommissioning or repowering.

Point 9.4 Welcome reference to the management of forestry waste guidance within the SPG. However, to contextualise this, it may be useful to state:

“Where it is proposed to fell significant quantities of trees in order to accommodate a proposal, then consideration of how any tree material cleared to facilitate development will be utilised must be undertaken. Where this includes felling to waste, where the waste generated by the process will be managed by techniques such as chipping, mulching or spreading, this approach must comply with SEPA’s Management of Forestry Waste guidance.”

Point 9.5 Note that the section numbers on page 19 and page 20 are out of sequence.

Point 9.6 Recommend that soils/water section is split into two, one considering carbon rich soils and the other considering the water environment.

Point 9.10 Carbon rich soils. Recommend that reference is made to the difficulties in working with/in peat, particularly regarding the re-use of excavated peat and problems with waste peat disposal. Any peat reuse proposals must be in line with Guidance on the Assessment of Peat Volumes, Reuse of Excavated Peat and Minimisation of Waste and our Regulatory Position Statement – Developments on Peat.

Point 9.11 Water Environment. Welcome the identification of the water environment as a potential constraint for wind farm development and the recognition that the proposals should also consider impacts on Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). However, it would be useful if the guidance clarified that the water environment includes wetlands, rivers, lochs, transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater. SEPA requires wind energy developers to demonstrate that every effort has been made to avoid any adverse impact to the water environment. This includes all built elements of the proposed development as well as construction impacts. We also recommend that reference is made to flood risk and impacts on groundwater abstractions (including private water supplies) within this section. Further guidance can be found in our Planning Advice on Windfarm Developments and Planning Guidance on assessing the impacts of development proposals on Groundwater Abstractions and Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems.

Point 9.12 Note that Part 3 of the document focusses on alternative renewable technologies and generally describes the potential opportunities that exist for these technologies within East Renfrewshire. It may be useful to clarify the considerations that will apply to these technologies should a planning application be lodged.

Point 9.13 The section on criteria for assessing renewable energy schemes states “in assessing proposals for all wind energy developments, the Council will consider the details contained in Paragraph 169 of SPP”. Paragraph 169 of SPP is then summarised on page 22. As this section immediately follows Section 3.5, titled ‘Environmental Considerations for all wind energy developments’, we recommend the council consider the appropriateness of including this list of requirements in this section as it may mislead users of the guidance.

SPR (Ref10)

Point 10.1 In line with SPP, the clear presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development should be set out clearly. It should also be clearly noted that this is a material consideration.

Point 10.2 In line with SPP, a separation distance not exceeding 2km should be identified, including a refinement exercise by the local authority using landform and other features which restrict views. It is not clear whether/how this recommended refinement exercise has been carried out, and further clarity on this would be useful. Windfarm development should not be precluded, should this refinement exercise allow, within the 2km area where it may be appropriate (e.g. a number of turbines from a site outside the 2km buffer may extend into this area). It can be noted that any significant effects need to be managed or mitigated where possible in line with para 169 of the SPP.

Point 10.3 SPR notes and welcomes that there are no Group 1 locations identified meaning that there are no areas where windfarms will not be acceptable.

Point 10.4 SPG seems to be very focused on guiding the location only of new sites. SPR would like to see, in addition, support for future windfarm development, including through refurbishment of existing turbines or reconfiguration of a site with larger turbines. SPP (Paragraph 174) supports proposals to repower existing windfarms which are already in suitable locations where other impacts can be shown to be capable of mitigation. SPP (Paragraph 170) also states that “*areas identified for wind farms should be suitable for use in perpetuity. Consents may be time-limited but wind farms should nevertheless be sited and designed to ensure impacts are minimised and to protect an acceptable level of amenity for adjacent communities.*” The guidance should follow this SPP support, and recognise its contribution to maintaining/enhancing installed capacity, underpinning renewable energy targets.

Point 10.5 In line with SNH Guidance (Spatial Planning for Onshore Windfarms June 2015) and SPP, spatial planning exercises should be used as a guide to help inform developers, and it should be made very clear that there is no presumption against windfarm development in the East Renfrewshire area, using the wording 'there should therefore be no presumption against windfarm development'. The presumption in favour of development that contributes to the principles of Sustainable Development should also be highlighted.

Point 10.6 LCS (2014) is a strategic landscape study using mapping at 1:50000 scale, focused on broad patterns of development, and states that a refinement exercise needs to take place at the local level, any LCA boundaries should not be treated as firm, they do not recognise local variation in landscape character, boundaries should be treated as zones of transition.

Point 10.7 The context and limitations of the East Renfrewshire Wind Energy Study (2012) should be set out in the SPG for transparency, and the study should be recognised as a guide only. The study does not recognise consented/operational windfarm sites, making the assumption that these sites have already been developed. The scope of the study also focused solely on the broad area of search as defined in the GCVSDP and is therefore subject to

Point 10.8 SPG identifies potential negative impacts caused by windfarm development but reference should be made to the quantifiable positive impacts on tourism, recreation, access and local amenity for balance. This section should recognise the contribution that windfarms can bring to tourism in the area, using Whitelee Windfarm as a best case example of this (as noted for example in section 1.15 of the Main Issues Report for the Clyde Plan 2015). SPR suggests the addition of text along the following lines:

“Whitelee Windfarm is the largest onshore windfarm in the UK and over 500,000 people have visited the on-site Visitor Centre since it opened in 2009. The Visitor Centre is consistently rated as a four star attraction by Visit Scotland and in 2015 achieved the Green Tourism Scheme “Gold” award. The Visitor Centre runs various free events throughout the year aimed at children and adults including stargazing, a drama club, animal education events and a week dedicated to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) activities. Visitors are also able to take a bus tour onto site to get up close to a turbine and learn about the windfarm, how it was developed and the ecology on site. Over 31,000 school children have benefitted from interactive environmental education workshops delivered at the Visitor Centre by experienced Glasgow Science Centre educators and primary schools from across Scotland continue to bring their pupils here year after year. 130km of windfarm tracks are well-used as a recreational resource for runners, cyclists, dog walkers and horse riders and the addition of the Mountain Bike Track facility in summer 2014 added an extra element. The Whitelee Countryside Ranger Service also runs a substantial programme of well-attended guided walks and outdoor activities at the windfarm which are free of charge and designed to appeal to all ages and interests”.

Point 10.9 SPG should reference SPP (Para 45) which supports Resource Efficient development. This is any form of development that reuses/shares existing resources, maximises the efficiency of resources through natural/technological means and prevents future resource depletion by mitigating/adapting to climate change. Scottish Power Renewables is working alongside the Scottish Government to implement initiatives and publications such as Making Things Last – A Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland (<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/02/1761>). This strategy is well-aligned with the intention to ensure that Scotland has a secure, long-term mix of low carbon energy generation.

Point 10.10 Focus must not solely be on the need to meet future renewable energy targets. It is also important to maintain progress already made to date, ensuring that policy and planning decisions support the durability of the life of renewable assets including through decisions to repair, refurbish or repower. This is recognised by Scottish Planning Policy 2014 (Paragraph 174, which reads “Proposals to repower existing wind farms which are already in suitable sites where environmental and other impacts have been shown to be capable of mitigation can help to maintain or enhance installed capacity, underpinning renewable energy generating targets. The current use of a site as a wind farm will be a material consideration in any such proposal”.

Point 10.11 The consideration of renewables sites in-perpetuity is also essential in line with SPP (Paragraph 170, which reads “Areas identified for wind farms should be suitable for use in perpetuity. Consents may be time-limited but wind farms should nevertheless be sited and designed to ensure impacts are minimised and to protect an acceptable level of amenity for adjacent communities”.

Transport Scotland (Ref11)

Point 11.1 The document indicates that for wind farms over 20MW a 2km buffer will be required around cities, towns and villages, and a 500m buffer around dwellings, however, we would normally expect to see some further form of technical guidance, for example:

- The minimum distance of twice the height of the turbine to blade tip to public roads and railways;
- The minimum distance of 10 rotor blade diameters from a residential property;
- The potential requirement for abnormal loads assessment;
- The potential requirement for environmental management plans;
- The potential requirement to assess shadow flicker.

Point 11.2 SPG identifies the potential location of large scale wind energy developments over 20MW, (assuming a rough estimate of 3MW per turbine, this equates to developments of 7 turbines or more). We would request that a paragraph be added after 3.3.15 which indicates that **Transport Scotland will require to be consulted on any wind farm developments with a potential impact on the trunk road network.** In addition, where the trunk road is to be used for transporting abnormal loads, an abnormal load assessment should be undertaken in consultation with Transport Scotland. The guidance should indicate that any mitigation required to the trunk road network will require to be discussed and agreed with Transport Scotland.

Point 11.3 It is noted from Figure 5 (see extract below that one of the areas of 'greatest potential' for accommodating this scale of development is located directly adjacent to the M77(T) at Floak. It should be noted that the potential impact of a development of this size and scale directly adjacent to the trunk road would require to be assessed and agreed with Transport Scotland.

Summary of responses (including reasons) by Planning Authority

It is proposed to modify some sections of the guidance based on the comments received. However, it should be noted that this SPG relates to the Local Development Plan adopted in June 2015. The delay in adopting this SPG has been as a result of changes to Scottish Planning Policy and SEA requirements. The SPG largely focuses on wind energy and contains details of the Wind Energy Study (2012) and Landscape Capacity Study (2014). Although these studies pre-date the SPP (2014) they provide a local area analysis that goes beyond the Spatial Framework and should be used by developers and decision makers when considering site location.

SNH (Ref1)

Point 1.1 Details of the Wind Energy Study and Landscape Capacity Study have been included in the revised layout to ensure clarity.

Point 1.2 Agree to the addition of a new map showing turbines in East Renfrewshire

Point 1.3 20MW reference remains in part of the document as it is relevant to the Wind Energy Study and is distinct from the Spatial Framework.

Point 1.4 Changes to the layout of the SOPG have ensured clarity

Point 1.5 Landscape Capacity Study has been included in Appendix 2 with additional maps.

Point 1.6 Spatial Framework map has been altered to include only Classes 1 and 2.

Point 1.7 Carbon rich soil information has been expanded.

Point 1.8 Reference has been made to the SNH guidance Spatial Planning for onshore wind turbines – natural heritage considerations www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1663759.pdf

Point 1.9 The landscape capacity study (2014) will be uploaded on website prior to adoption of SPG.

Point 1.10 There is merit in retaining reference to the Wind Energy Study in the SPG as it is specific to East Renfrewshire context.

Point 1.11 Maps which set out the sensitivity levels of the landscape against the five different turbine typologies have been included in Appendix 2.

Point 1.12 Links to SNH guidance have been included.

Point 1.13 Link to ornithological studies has been included.

Point 1.14 Reference Clydeplan Forestry and Woodland strategy has been included.

Point 1.15 Recreation reference has been included.

Point 1.16 Carbon rich soils section has been expanded.

Point 1.17 Section on Decommissioning, Restoration and Repowering has been included

Aileen Jackson (Ref2)

Point 2.1 SPG has to consider SG targets.

Point 2.2 SG target is not an end point and more capacity is required.

Point 2.3 SPG has been updated accordingly

Point 2.4 Confirm that Spatial Framework relates to minimum two turbines of any height

Point 2.5 Single turbine applications will not fall under scope of spatial framework but will be considered against identified criteria.

Point 2.6 Single turbine applications will not fall under scope of spatial framework but will be considered against identified criteria.

Point 2.7 SNH are an important consultee and their advice is considered as part of the application process.

Point 2.8 Noise issues are dealt with effectively at the application stage through Environmental Health requirements.

Point 2.9 Lighting has to be considered and agreed at the application stage.

Point 2.10 The SPG attempts to guide development by identifying areas with greatest potential.

Point 2.11 The SPG attempts to guide development by identifying areas with greatest potential.

Point 2.12 Water Environment issues have been considered in the SPG and would also be dealt with at the application stage.

Point 2.13 Wind farms can be incorporated into the landscape to accommodate paths for leisure and recreation purposes.

Point 2.14 Decommissioning, restoration and aftercare section has been included.

Forestry Commission Scotland (Ref3)

Point 3.1 ERC agrees to the following wording being included in the SPG:

“Scottish Government recognises the valuable contribution trees, woodlands and forestry can make to the social, economic and environmental aspects of communities. In recognition of forestry’s wider value Scottish Government has set a woodland creation target of 100,000 hectares of new woodland by 2022 to help mitigate against Climate Change. Forestry is 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. Compensatory planting is generally expected where woodland is removed in association with development and will be taken into account when assessing proposals. The effects that the proposed development will have on woodlands and the consequences that woodland removal will have on the ecology and landscape of the area and environs requires to be fully assessed.

The information submitted with the application requires to adequately address the impact that the felling associated with the development, will have on the environment and how the felling proposals adhere to the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines and the Scottish Government’s Control of Woodland Removal Policy.

Design options to minimise the necessity for tree removal should be considered and early engagement with Forestry Commission Scotland is advised.”

SPT (Ref4)

Point 4.1 ERC has no comments

Strathclyde Geoconservation Group (Ref5)

Point 5.1 ERC agrees to the following wording being included in the SPG:

“..Ensure that opportunities to enhance geodiversity and access to sites are considered in all relevant proposals, including the potential to create, extend or restore geodiversity interests (e.g. during construction of new routes or upgrade of existing ones, or as part of Housing developments) and that any landscaping (e.g. hydroseeding) or slope grading takes account of geodiversity interests...

HES (Ref6)

Point 6.1 ERC has no comments

RSPB (Ref7)

Point 7.1 Policy (D8) has now been referenced in the SPG.

Point 7.2 Reference to Habitat Management Plans has now been included in the SPG.

Point 7.3 RSPB have now been specifically referred to as an organisation that would be able to provide advice on bird issues.

Point 7.4 SPG now provides a reference to the Scottish Government's Woodland Removal policy.

Point 7.5 The numbering issues have now been resolved.

Point 7.6 A link has now been provided to the BRE National Solar Centre

Scottish Government (Ref8)

Point 8.1 The SPG is part of a suite of SPG's attached to the adopted LDP and for consistency this document will remain as an SPG. The use of the term SG will be considered during LDP2, however planning legislation does not specifically state that the term SPG cannot be used.

Point 8.2 This text has been altered to state that SPG is part of the development plan.

Point 8.3 The progress statistics have been updated to the most recently available statistics

Point 8.4 Community ownership has now been considered in a new section of the SPG.

Point 8.5 PAN 45 reference has been removed and replaced with details of online renewables planning advice

Point 8.6 The SPG is largely focused on wind energy. Heat and other low carbon issues will be likely to be considered in more detail through LDP2

SEPA (Ref9)

Point 9.1 Comments are noted by ERC.

Point 9.2 SPG now contains reference to associated ancillary works

Point 9.3 Decommissioning and repowering section has now been included.

Point 9.4 ERC agrees to include the below text:

“Where it is proposed to fell significant quantities of trees in order to accommodate a proposal, then consideration of how any tree material cleared to facilitate development will be utilised must be undertaken. Where this includes felling to waste, where the waste generated by the process will be managed by techniques such as chipping, mulching or spreading, this approach must comply with SEPA’s Management of Forestry Waste guidance.”

Point 9.5 Section numbering issues have been resolved

Point 9.6 ERC agrees to the recommendation that soils/water section should be split into two.

Point 9.10 Carbon rich soils section now includes more specific references

Point 9.11 Water Environment section has been separated from soils/water section and expanded.

Point 9.12 The revised layout gives clarity to the considerations that will apply to other technologies.

Point 9.13 Paragraph 169 of SPP has been moved closer to the start of the SPG through layout changes.

SPR (Ref10)

Point 10.1 SPG supports details contained in SPP (2014)

Point 10.2 2km buffer is appropriate and in line with SPP (2014).

Point 10.3 Wind farm applications in Group 2 and Group 3 will still require significant consideration at the application stage.

Point 10.4 Section on repowering mentions opportunities this provides

Point 10.5 the SPG supports wind energy and provides information to help guide development.

Point 10.6 LCS (2014) is used as a tool to help inform developers and decision makers and excerpts of the findings are displayed in Appendix 2.

Point 10.7 WES (2012) is used as a tool to help inform developers and decision makers and excerpts of the findings are displayed in Appendix 1.

Point 10.8 SPG identifies opportunities and supports wind energy however it is not intended as a promotional document for wind energy rather a tool for decision makers and developers.

Point 10.9 The SPG supports the low carbon agenda and further versions of the SPG will consider wider implications of other low and zero carbon technologies.

Point 10.10 new section on repowering supports the concept but recognises the need for full consideration of developments.

Point 10.11 the acceptability of a proposal whether a completely new site or a repowered site will be determined at the application stage and the SPG will be used as a tool to inform decision makers.

Transport Scotland (Ref11)

Point 11.1 A new section on transport focuses on some of the issues highlighted by Transport Scotland.

Point 11.2 A new section on transport focuses on some of the issues highlighted by Transport Scotland.

Point 11.3 A new section on transport focuses on some of the issues highlighted by Transport Scotland.

Consultation & Summary of Consultation Responses and Recommendations

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT FOR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPG): RENEWABLE ENERGY

This Environmental Report for that accompanies the SPG Renewable Energy was approved by East Renfrewshire Council for consultation on 23 March 2016. The consultation period ran for six weeks from 31 March 2016 until 12 May 2016.

In line with the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, the Council is required to demonstrate that appropriate engagement has been undertaken and submit this to Scottish Ministers, together with the comments received and how they have been taken into account.

The following provides a summary of the participation methods used by East Renfrewshire Council.

<p>Statutory consultation/ engagement</p>	<p>The Statutory period of consultation ran from 31 March until 12 May (6 weeks).</p> <p>Environmental Report and response forms were deposited at all Council libraries; at the Planning Office in Spiersbridge; Eastwood Headquarters Giffnock; and Main Street Barrhead.</p> <p>Environmental Report and response forms made available to view and download on the Council's website.</p> <p>48 letters were sent to those on the LDP consultation database and in addition adverts were placed in The Extra and Barrhead News.</p> <p>451 e-mails (incl. statutory consultees) were sent to interested parties from the LDP consultation database.</p> <p>A further 10 e-mails were sent to representees who made representations at the LDP Proposed Plan stage.</p>
<p>Additional consultation/ engagement</p>	<p>In addition to the Council web-page the Environmental report was also placed, over the duration of the consultation period, on the Council's Citizen's Space, which is specifically designed for Council consultations.</p> <p>Advert in Barrhead News, The Extra</p>

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The table provides a summary of representations received and the response (including reasons) by the planning authority:

Body or person who submitted representation (including reference number) (representations submitted during consultation on the Environmental Report)
<u>SNH (Ref1)</u>
<u>HES (Ref2)</u>
<u>SEPA (Ref3)</u>

Planning authority's summary of the representation (s)**SNH (Ref1)**

Welcome that our comments at the scoping stage have been taken into account.

Overall, the assessment of likely significant effects on the environment has been carried out satisfactorily. The use of SEA objectives and sub criteria questions for the assessment is welcomed and we can confirm that we are content to agree with the findings of the assessment. However, we would have found it useful if the document included a key with each sub criteria question, as it was difficult to interpret these.

HES (Ref2)

The clear and concise manner in which the assessment has been carried out and reported is to be welcomed. Furthermore, I welcome that our comments at the scoping stage have been taken up and the objectives for the historic environment amended accordingly. I am therefore content to agree with the findings presented within the report as they relate to the historic environment.

None of the comments contained in this letter should be construed as constituting a legal interpretation of the requirements of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. They are intended rather as helpful advice, as part of Historic Environment Scotland's commitment to capacity-building in SEA.

SEPA (Ref3)**General comments**

We note that most of the comments that we fed back at the scoping stage, in our role as a consultation authority, have been taken into account.

For the purpose of proportionality and clarity this response will focus on issues that we consider to require action.

Detailed comments

Table 3: Summary of Assessment refers to 'Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind' not Renewable Energy. This is something that we consider should be altered.

In Section 3.2 of our scoping response we noted that windfarm development may cause localised disruption to groundwater flow that could impact on GWDTE and nearby abstractions. We note that the potential impacts on GWDTE have been included in Objective 3, however, nearby abstractions (which include private water supplies) have not been included in the assessments.

In Section 3.3 of our scoping response we suggested that data on air quality should be included in the baseline data. We note that Objective 12 considers air quality in relation to renewable energy.

Summary of responses (including reasons) by Planning Authority**SNH (Ref1)**

Comments are noted and will be applied to any subsequent SEA's we undertake

HES (Ref2)

Comments are noted.

SEPA (Ref3)

We have Amended Table 3 as per SEPA's recommendations.

In Section 3.2 we have added in type A groundwater abstractions but we have an incomplete data set for all private water supplies. We have noted this within the report and will work on improving the dataset for any subsequent SEA's.