



Proposal for Tourism & Leisure Initiatives In the Barrhill Area

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**Proposal for
Tourism & Leisure Initiatives in the Barrhill Area
Associated with Arecleoch Windfarm**

Mission Statement:

'The construction of Scotland's fourth largest Windfarm at Arecleoch in South Ayrshire has created an exciting opportunity for the local community to benefit from revenues generated at this new 60 turbine site. The creation of a co-ordinated strategy and action plan for Recreation & Tourism Initiatives associated with Arecleoch will identify new activity based opportunities, consider the introduction of improved visitor services, recommend the set up of new community businesses initiatives and seek to reinvigorate the Barrhill area by attracting visitors to the area and increasing economic activity in the tourism sector, thereby creating stability in community development, which can attract families to the area with the prospect of new employment opportunities'.

Background:

McKenzie Wilson Partnership (from now on referred to as MWP) was appointed by Ailsa Horizons (AH), the rural regeneration company for South Ayrshire, to work in partnership with them to produce an Access Plan for Arecleoch Windfarm along with a broader Tourism & Leisure study for discussion with local communities and stakeholders involved with the village of Barrhill in South Ayrshire. This work was undertaken on behalf of Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) and Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) who are respectively, the operators of the Windfarm and owners of the land. Other stakeholders involved in the project include South Ayrshire Council, Carrick Community Councils' Forum, Carrick Futures, Barrhill Community Development Association and DGA Forestry.

It is a condition of the planning approval from South Ayrshire Council that an Access Plan is produced. An Excerpt from Section 36 'Consent for Arecleoch', concerning Public Access Conditions is shown at the end of this report in Appendix 1. The production of an Access Plan to meet the planning authority condition was a minimum requirement from this assignment, however, the developer and other stakeholders, including the local communities, were keen to identify recreation and tourism initiatives that might be developed using Windfarm developments as one of the catalysts. The confines of the strategy were initially within the Arecleoch Windfarm site boundary but after consultation with SPR and the other stakeholders it was agreed that the strategy should have close linkage with other similar initiatives relating to the South Carrick area as a whole.

The consultants were advised that proposed recreation and tourism initiatives in South Carrick should be viewed in the context of South West Scotland as a whole and should take account of other current or proposed initiatives in the area. The clients identified some twenty reports, studies and local plans, which were reviewed by the consultants during the early stages of the project. A full list of these papers and reports is available from Ailsa Horizons.

The Relevance of Outdoor Access:

The 'Scottish Planning Policy' (SPP, 2010)¹ is the current statement of the Scottish Government policies on nationally important land use planning matters. The SPP sets out various subject planning policies, including policies on Open Space and Physical Activity about public access and development.

Paragraph 150 states: -

“Statutory access rights under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 apply to most land and inland water in Scotland, underpinning opportunities for outdoor recreation. Planning authorities should consider access issues and should protect core and other important routes and access rights when preparing development plans and making decisions on planning applications. Where relevant, access rights and core paths plans should be considered when determining planning applications. New development should incorporate new and enhanced access opportunities, linked to wider access networks.”

The SPP also states that: -

“Wherever possible, planning authorities and developers should identify opportunities to create and enhance networks between open spaces and avoid fragmentation. The planning system should support a pattern of development which reduces the need to travel, facilitates travel by public transport and provides safe and convenient opportunities for walking and cycling.”

This means that there is broad relevance for considering access issues within development planning. Potentially, any type of development proposal, and many policies and plans, are likely to have some level of impact or opportunities for statutory access rights, and for paths and networks. It might arise from direct land-take, or effects on path networks, or through affecting nearby access links to local community facilities or amenities.

The Proposal for Tourism & Leisure Initiatives associated with Arecleoch Windfarm is designed to bring together the various issues, impacts and opportunities relating to site access and the development of business in the locality. These will be identified, considered

¹ A Brief Guide to Preparing an Outdoor Access Plan – Scottish Natural Heritage 2010

and developed in an integrated and open manner.

The Action Plan assesses the existing baseline outdoor access provision, predicts the impact of any proposed developments or policy on that baseline, and considers how any impacts will be managed and monitored, and how new site opportunities can be achieved.

Credible business opportunities can then be developed taking account of any access agreements, site restrictions and health & safety concerns, in a manner that does not stifle community development aimed at increasing visitor activity in the Barrhill area.

The engagement between the local community, Scottish Power Renewables and the Forestry Commission Scotland should seek to provide an example of best practice that can be used in other Windfarm development sites in Scotland. Renewable energy sources must be fully developed in the future but they must also be able to sit comfortably beside Land Reform access rights, in a manner that avoids any conflict between advisors, developers, public users and commercial operators in a manner that is acceptable to all.

Key Objectives of the Assignment:

It was agreed that Horizons would manage the assignment and would provide staff with particular expertise in community engagement and consultation to work alongside MWP on the four key elements of the project work. This would form the basis of a successful strategy for the Action Plan and the business case for any future projects as detailed below: -

Desk based research into relevant data including: -

- Reports and other data on the initiatives listed above
- Trends in relevant tourism sectors and potential new ideas
- Market data
- Potential funders and their priorities and funding programmes

Primary research including consultations with stakeholders such as: -

- Scottish Power Renewables (“SPR”)
- Forestry Commission Scotland Galloway and Conservancy
- DGA Forestry
- South Ayrshire Council – Planning; Enterprise and Tourism
- Carrick Community Councils’ Forum
- Carrick Futures (community benefit company)
- Barrhill Development Association

Producing a document containing all potential options gathered including: -

- An analysis of the opportunities including up to date market research;
- A description including broad costings of the proposals;
- Allocation of lead roles for each action;
- A full description of landowner & SPR requirements
- A breakdown of which options are sustainable in the long-term;
- Suggestions for funding (including grant funding sources or need for private investment as appropriate)
- Timelines (split between short, medium and long-term actions)

After steering group and communities meeting to decide on options to: -

- Prepare an Access Plan for Arecleoch to meet the planning authority condition
- Prepare an Action Plan
- Prepare a business case including relevant potential funders
- Prepare a timeline for delivery

Barrhill - General Location:

The 60 turbine Arecleoch Windfarm is located to the west of the village of Barrhill in the Carrick area of South Ayrshire and is the fourth largest Windfarm in Scotland. There are two main access roads into the site, which are located at Bents Farm in the north and Wheeb Bridge in the south. Both of these access roads connect with the main A714 route between Girvan and Newton Stewart. The access from Wheeb Bridge also intersects with the B7027 road between Barrhill and New Luce.

Barrhill is a small village with a population of approximately 200 residents. The village lies on the A714 approximately one and a half miles south of the main Bents Farm access road to Arecleoch Windfarm. The Cross Water of Luce, which is a tributary of the River Stinchar, flows through the village. While the surrounding area is predominantly agricultural land, local amenities include a village store and a small hotel and bar. There is also a local community minibus available. Barrhill Primary School serves the local population, providing education for 5-11 year olds but there are some concerns that it may be under threat of closure in the future.

Barrhill is fortunate to be on the Glasgow South Western Line, which runs between Stranraer and Glasgow. The small railway station is approximately ½ mile south west of the village centre. In November 2011, Stena Ferries moved its Scotland to Northern Ireland operation from Stranraer to their new base at Cairnryan, which is six miles further north in Loch Ryan. This has resulted in foot passengers from Northern Ireland being transported north to Ayr by coach rather than making use of the railway service, which previously originated from the ferry pier in Stranraer. This change in passenger handling has given rise to concerns about the long-term future of the railway service between Stranraer, Girvan and Ayr. If any new local business developments are capable of attracting rail business to the Barrhill area this would help to bolster passenger numbers on the southern section of the service and help to reverse any current loss of business from ferry passengers.

In the general area surrounding Arecleoch and Barrhill there are a number of small coastal and inland villages within a half hour drive. The Southern Upland Way, which spans a route from Portpatrick in Dumfries & Galloway to Cockburnspath in the Scottish Borders, passes through the hamlet of Bargrennan, which is only 9 miles south of Barrhill. The southern section of the Carrick Way includes Barrhill and many of the surrounding villages and the developing Pilgrim's Way from Paisley to the Isle of Whithorn will also pass through Barrhill.

These factors collectively make walking and outdoor activities attractive baseline activities, which could be at the core of any new visitor developments around the Arecleoch site and the village of Barrhill.

Sustainability & Viability of the Community:

During discussions with local community organisations in Barrhill the consultants were advised that over the last twenty years there had been a number of local changes that had impacted on the structure of the Barrhill community, which had subsequently led to a decline in some local businesses and services. They were detailed as follows: -

- Closure of the local Bank of Scotland 16 years ago
- The loss of one shop and a garage in the village
- The lack of a local post office
- Changes in agricultural policies affecting employment in that sector
- An ageing population with many people retired from full time employment
- A significant number of properties for sale in and around the village

It was suggested that any future developments in the area should, wherever possible, be sustainable and capable of generating higher value economic benefit to new business operators as well as helping to support the local community.

Forestry Commission Scotland is not really looking for revenue from their land but would be happy to consider private sector business lease subject to the type of business opportunity being proposed. Revenues from Scottish Power Renewables to the local community should be managed in a manner that creates high value opportunities that will be viable and will interact with other community initiatives to ensure continuity of activity thereby avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort at local or regional level.

There are a number of local groups and organisations involved throughout the area and it is fundamental that these groups work together to ensure that a co-ordinated effort is made by the community to get best value from their collective actions. Failure to meet that basic challenge will make any future business developments difficult to succeed, however, the consultants believe that there is already a general willingness to co-operate for the benefit of the community. Although aware of the challenges ahead and the hard work that will be required to deliver the possible projects discussed, we detected a very positive response from local groups regarding the long term sustainability of the village and the economy and future employment prospects for the local area.

The two Community Benefit organisations, working in partnership with the Carrick Community Councils' Forum and Ailsa Horizons must ensure that they have a simple but effective means of driving the process forward and making decisions that represent the views of the community. This must also be used to deal efficiently with other agencies such as South Ayrshire Council and the new Carrick Tourism Development Project.

S.W.O.T. Analysis:

Strengths:

- Attractive rural environment
- On a good tourism route from Newton Stewart to Girvan
- Local railway station on main Stranraer to Glasgow line
- Revenues from Arecleoch and Markhill Windfarms
- Good local organisations that understand the needs of the community

Weaknesses:

- Loss of some local businesses over the last 16 years
- Short supply of overnight accommodation for visitors
- Current lack of local visitor attractions
- Shortage of affordable housing to support new business start ups
- Existing local job market is fairly weak

Opportunities:

- Development of the Memorial Hall as an enhanced community/ information facility
- Creation of Local Access Officers to avoid health & safety issues on Windfarm site
- Potential for the development of a wide range of activity tourism facilities
- Close proximity to the 'Dark Skies' initiative in Dumfries & Galloway
- Organic growth in the accommodation sector
- Ensure local strategy dovetails with new Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy
- Secure vacant/derelict properties as long term assets

Threats:

- Reduction or closure of railway services
- Restricted vehicular access to Windfarm site
- Failure to develop affordable accommodation to attract new families to the area
- Risk of future closure of the local school

It is the view of the consultants that both the Strengths and Opportunities of the area, which are shown above, can create a strong base for the development of a strategic plan that will reduce the Threats and eventually counter the current Weaknesses in the local area.

The strength of local groups and organisations and their continued willingness to work together for the benefit of the community should ensure that targets and timelines are met and that viable new businesses are established locally and encouraged to attract new visitors to Barrhill and the surrounding area.

Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy:

Early in 2011 the Ayrshire Economic Partnership (AEP) made a commitment² to work together to strengthen and develop the tourism sector in Ayrshire & Arran by supporting business growth, creating jobs and improving communities. AEP comprises representation from the business community and public sector agencies involved in economic development in Ayrshire and Arran. Members include the three Ayrshire Councils, Scottish Enterprise, Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry and three representatives from the business community.

The objective of the AEP is to focus on the most important economic development issues, taking action to generate clearly identified outputs that will have a positive and lasting economic benefit on the region. The AEP has identified tourism as an industry sector with significant potential for development and agreed to pursue a pan-Ayrshire approach to growing the contribution of the sector for the benefit of the local economy and communities.

Tourism is important to the economy of Ayrshire and Arran, generating around £348 million of revenue per year, and there is potential to grow this further through a co-ordinated regional approach. Ayrshire and Arran offers a wide range of great experiences, spanning rural, coastal, historic and built environments; world class golf, sailing, culture and heritage; high quality food, drink and hospitality; beautiful islands, marine and countryside. The region is highly accessible, with three international airports within 75 minutes drive time, as well as excellent road, rail and sea connections. The challenge is to build on these assets to grow businesses, create jobs and improve local communities.

AEP launched the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy 2012/17, which was developed with extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation. The consultation shaped the overall strategy and highlighted specific areas as important priorities for development effort. The process highlighted the important contributions made by the private sector, the public sector, voluntary organisations and communities. Stakeholders all now share the challenge to make these ambitions a reality. It is essential that any proposals associated with Arecleoch and the Barrhill Community take cognisance of this new tourism strategy to ensure that the tourism strategy fits well with the proposals to develop new visitor facilities and services in the Barrhill area.

The Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy has a vision that 'Ayrshire & Arran will be a premier destination of choice, where visitors will receive a fantastic welcome and enjoy outstanding experiences of our coastline, countryside, culture and hospitality'.

² Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy 2012/17

The key strategy objectives are to: -

- Increase the annual number of visitors to Ayrshire & Arran by 10% to 3.85 million.
- Increase annual spend by visitors by 20% to £418 million.
- Grow the employment supported by the tourism sector by 10% to 9,800 jobs.
- Enhance and conserve the region's natural, heritage and cultural assets.
- The strategy will be based on a clear understanding of our key target markets and visitor needs.

The strategy seeks to focus on these markets by: -

- Targeting the domestic market with integrated packages of activities and experiences that meet consumer aspirations.
- Providing added value – improving the visitor experience with exceptional customer service and strong product knowledge.
- Developing and promoting unique experiences that highlight the area's assets to targeted customer segments.
- Using traditional and new media to connect with customers on an ongoing basis.
- Extending the visitor season using events and pricing/ packaging of activities and experiences.
- Offering authentic food and drink experiences that add value to visitor experiences.
- Improving quality in all we provide and using credible Quality Assurance as widely as possible.

In order to achieve the vision and objectives of the strategy, AEP will use the following elements: -

Leadership:

A Tourism Leadership Group comprising of public and private sector partners has been established to champion the strategy and inspire all stakeholders. This provides strong, effective leadership at all levels across the industry and encourages collaboration in developing our offers and the delivery of the highest levels of service excellence. The Tourism Leadership Group is supported by a dedicated Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Team, which works closely with partners to deliver specific strategic pan-Ayrshire projects, reports progress against strategic projects, milestones and targets, and raises any emerging issues, challenges and opportunities.

Marketing:

Ayrshire & Arran will be marketed as a single destination and be aligned with VisitScotland's promotions. This one brand approach identifies the region as a distinctive destination, and will be supported by consistent communication of the main strengths of our visitor offer. It will be used by all industry stakeholders in their promotional activities.

Information and Visitor Services:

Information will be provided that is easy to understand, consistent and accurate. AEP will ensure it is accessible in a variety of ways including through Visitor Information Centres as well as online presence and booking capabilities. We will also develop familiarisation activities and sales skills to enable an increased level of cross-selling and up-selling that will enhance the visitor experience and maximise their time in our area. We will encourage investment in technology and use of innovative approaches to ensure information and promotional offers are available in the ways our visitors prefer.

Offers:

The strategy specifies eight distinct areas of offer where we know Ayrshire & Arran has particular strengths – Culture and Heritage, Activities and Natural Environment, Golf, Sailing, Food and Drink, Islands, Weddings and Civil Partnerships, and Business Tourism. The approach to each will differ, depending on the characteristics and potential for increased yield. There will be a focus on further product development and packaging with collaboration and networking playing a vital part. Significant events and festivals will be developed to attract visitors and extend the season.

The Basics:

We will get the basic elements of the visitor experience right and link with our key offers in the development of packages. Quality and service excellence will be at the heart of this.

Effective Partnership Working:

All stakeholders are encouraged to get directly involved in making this strategy work: businesses, the voluntary sector, communities and public sector. Without doubt, the single most critical success factor for the strategy is the ownership and commitment of all stakeholders to engage, contribute and sustain their efforts over the full five year period of the strategy. Working together for tourism, we can realise our ambitions for economic growth to the benefit of all.

Subsequent to the completion of the main part of this assignment, Carrick Community Councils' Forum's Tourism Development Project got underway. This project, now in its second year, also provides an important part of the context for tourism and leisure initiative in the Barrhill area. The Carrick Tourism Business Network will provide opportunities for existing and new businesses in Barrhill to share expertise and the website – www.carrickayrshire.com – providing a high quality marketing channel that local businesses can use at no charge.

We will now consider some of the opportunities that Barrhill could develop to meet the aspirations of the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy and provide a range of potential business options for Arecleoch and the surrounding area.

The Strategic Role of Barrhill Memorial Hall:

The Memorial Hall is at the core of the community in Barrhill and is similar to many halls found in small villages throughout Scotland. However, during discussions with local community groups the consultants were shown plans³ for the redevelopment of the hall, which would respect the original character of the building, increase and improve space within the hall and provide a modern facility for Barrhill.

The preferred layout option includes a suitable bus stop and drop off point for the nearby school, twenty car parking spaces in total with three accessible spaces. A safe pedestrian route would be provided between the village hall and the school, which could include areas of interest along the route including a wildlife and wetland area, seating and a possible play area. Within the building there is the main hall, a smaller hall and an office. The current kitchen area would be upgraded and an outdoor seating area located along the rear of the building, adjacent to the kitchen area.

The consultants were impressed by these proposals and felt that a multi flexible approach to the provision of services within the Memorial Hall could provide a 'Hub' for the village and offer a range of visitor services and facilities that would support the strategy of attracting new business ideas within the community. For example, this could include some of the following suggestions: -

Community Visitor Information Centre:

This service would be operated by local people and could use mobile information displays that can be used during the day and easily removed and stored when the hall was being used for other functions. Working in partnership with the regional tourist office in Ayr, staff operating the facility would need to be trained to VisitScotland's operating standards. A Visitor Information Centre (VIC) would help to stop people travelling through the area and introduce them to the facilities and services available in South Carrick.

Community Office:

There would be a need to have an office that provided back up support to the temporary VIC facilities in the hall. This could either be in either of the two remaining spaces on the ground floor. Consideration should be given to the creation of a community business facility that was able to operate a number of commercial services in the location such as: -

- A range of Visitor Information services
- A small Post Office service
- A shop providing crafts, books and other goods not currently available in the village

³ Barrhill Memorial Hall Feasibility Study – Collective Architecture

- An ancestral tourism service for visitors to the area, linked to South Ayrshire Council's Registrars and Library services
- A booking service for accommodation, Community Access Rangers (details in following section), activity operators, weddings and corporate events
- Cycle hire and community bus pick up arrangements for visitors

Café/ Bistro:

The improved kitchen facilities could be extended to provide catering facilities for visitors and local residents. The scale of this provision would need to be the subject of further discussion but the current lack of roadside facilities between Newton Stewart and Girvan would suggest that there is a market that can be tapped into.

The provision of good catering is absolutely fundamental to the attraction of visitors to the area. The planned developments for the Memorial Hall provide an ideal opportunity to introduce a service that is required to maintain and support any new tourism business activity at Arecleoch or in the Barrhill area. This will enhance the status of the 'Hub' and provide facilities that will help to strengthen the delivery of tourism support services in the community.

Other Services:

A number of other services could be provided at the hall, subject to further discussion with local community groups and operators. These could include: -

- Free Wi-Fi or internet access using hall computers
- A remote viewing area for wildlife using cameras located on Arecleoch
- Wedding packages or functions for groups who have a preference for the outdoors or rural activities
- A local guide service for low level walking trips
- Overnight storage for cycles and an area for washing equipment and bikes
- Showers that can be made available for activity users at a cost

This list is not exclusive and only serves to identify a number of opportunities, which could be considered. It has already been said that any new activities undertaken in the community should be as high value as possible and able to bring additional economic benefit to the village by providing a range of new services that will attract visitors to the area. There is currently a lack of accommodation in the area but this factor is discussed later in the report.

If the local community is able to provide a warm welcome consistently and customer services are of a high standard, this will allow the Barrhill area to be able to be marketed as a value for money, quality destination in South Carrick.

Provision of Community Access Rangers:

In discussions with Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) and Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), it has become evident that there are concerns about vehicular access on to the Arecleoch Windfarm site. This is primarily due to the fact that electrical cables connecting the turbines to the sub station are buried at the side of the access roads, in relatively soft ground, at an approximate depth of 0.9 metres. If a vehicle were to go off the road (as has happened on another windfarm in the past), part of the windfarm would have to be powered down to effect recovery of the vehicle in a safe and hazard free manner.

Accepting that any risk assessment must prioritise any health & safety issues, it would be unfortunate if too much restriction on vehicular access denied the local population the opportunity to develop new businesses that would support the sustainability of the local community. With these factors in mind the consultants would suggest that with the support of SPR and FCS, fully trained members of the community could become Community Access Rangers and could be licensed to operate on the windfarm roads using the Community owned minibus and/ or registered 4x4 vehicles carrying small groups.

Strict rules on access would have to be agreed and training would require to be undertaken by both agencies. The benefits of having trained Community Rangers would mean that certain activities could be undertaken on the site with members of the public using the ranger service. We anticipate that most of this activity would be fairly low level and much of it undertaken on the main access roads that enter the windfarm site. This service could be operated commercially and would be a very useful way of introducing members of the public to the operation of windfarm technology and allow them to have a better understanding of the renewables industry.

In the following section of the report we have looked at a number of activity sectors and new business opportunities, which we believe could be developed to enhance the product offer of the area and create employment opportunities for South Carrick. These examples are not listed in any order and we are aware that many of these proposals would require further market research to ensure that a business case can be made for their successful operation.

We do however believe that they have the potential to be developed around Barrhill, some of them on the Arecleoch Windfarm site and others that would have to be operated in areas that would require further discussion and agreement with Forestry Commission Scotland and other private landowners.

New Business Development Opportunities:

Walking:

Barrhill is located within an ideal area for walking and there is a broad range of levels to suit all tastes from beginner to the more experienced walker. We previously stated that the southern section of the Carrick Way includes Barrhill and many of the surrounding villages and the developing Pilgrim's Way from Paisley to the Isle of Whithorn will also pass through the village. The more demanding Southern Upland Way, which spans a route from Portpatrick in Dumfries & Galloway to Cockburnspath in the Scottish Borders, passes through the hamlet of Bargrennan, 9 miles south of Barrhill.

A series of new local walking routes could be developed in partnership with FCS, initially making use of some of the many existing tracks on the lower part of Arecleoch. In the sections away from the turbines some new walking/cycling paths could be created using some of the minerals left over from the excavation of the Borrow Pits. Most of the effort in developing new walking trails should be aimed at families and older couples.

There may be a need to develop some inexpensive accommodation, which could be used by families who are attracted to the area for walking and cycling short stays. This is a part of the accommodation sector that has grown in recent years. The developments are often based on a barn conversion, or similar, with a standard of accommodation above that of a bunkhouse, with affordable prices for short breaks. Eco style accommodation units would also work well in the Barrhill area and would provide a simple and effective short-term answer to the present shortage of accommodation. These could be operated by an existing business, such as a caravan or camping operator.

The community minibus could also be used to transport walkers from the railway station or collect walkers from the Southern Upland Way who may wish to take a short side trip to Arecleoch. The community should make every effort to market Barrhill as a 'Hub' for walking.

Cycling:

Most of what has been referred to above in relation to Walking also applies to Cycling. The Barrhill community should target families and couples and not attempt to compete with the Seven Stanes mountain bike centres in nearby Dumfries & Galloway. It is inevitable that some people will bring mountain bikes to the area but the economic benefit from that sector is relatively low.

Barrhill Railway Station provides an additional opportunity to market cycling and walking to any of the communities on the Glasgow line. The consultants have had discussions with First Scotrail and concessionary travel may be available to support any new activity packages that

the community or commercial operators may wish to set up. In the case of cycling further discussions would have to be held with the train operator to ensure that sufficient space was available to transport cycles to the area. Alternatively the community business could consider providing hire cycles for visitors.

Orienteering:

There are 20 orienteering clubs in Scotland with more than half of them in the lowlands. The Scottish Orienteering association and all the clubs are listed at www.scottish-orienteering.org Officials from the 2 nearest clubs at Ayr and Dumfries should be invited to visit Arecleoch initially to gauge the suitability of the local area as an event venue.

Quad Bike Centre:

There are a number of Quad bike centres in Scotland and the north of England, however, there are none located between Stirling and the Border. This is a sector that would probably require the set up of a commercial business to operate the facility but we believe that provision could be made within Arecleoch to accommodate Quad bike tours along with a small circuit in an area away from the turbines. This type of business facility would require the services of a Community Access Ranger and would be based on supervised tours. There are 63 quad bike centres listed in the UK on the website www.quad-nation.co.uk but there are also many other independent operations, which in many cases will take children above the age of 12. The popularity of this sport is growing and would help to attract new visitors to Barrhill.

Motorsport – Rallying:

We are advised that part of Arecleoch was previously used as a MSA registered rally school in the mid 90's. It is unlikely that Arecleoch Windfarm would now be considered for that purpose due to the Health & Safety issues previously mentioned but the other forestry areas around Barrhill should be reviewed for that purpose and discussions held with East Ayrshire Car Club to see if they would be able to use local facilities. Most of their events are currently held at their own sprint circuit at Kames in Muirkirk.

There are a large number of car clubs in Scotland and England within relatively easy reach of Barrhill that could be approached were suitable facilities made available for their use but this would need to be viewed as more of a long term development. Motorsport activities attract teams that tend to stay in local accommodation as well as a wide range of spectators who tend to have good levels of expenditure when visiting rally stages and motorsport venues.

Clearly the use of any vehicles on the site will not be popular with the windfarm operator and this may well be a difficult issue to resolve. However, we believe that the local community should at least review all of options as part of the overall proposals for the area.

Borrow Pits as Activity Centres:

There are around 15 Borrow Pits on the Arecleoch Windfarm site. These locations were quarried to supply raw materials to build the road network around the windfarm site. A number of these pits are well away from the main turbine area with four of them on the access road between Wheeb Bridge and the Main Office and Control Building.

Even though SPR has given a clear indication that it is against the idea of 4x4's in the vicinity of their site, these Borrow Pits could be considered as possible locations for the development of 'off road' vehicle sites and operated commercially by the local community using their own Access Rangers. This would restrict public access to these locations, which would primarily allow the community to market the facilities to the many 4x4 clubs that exist throughout the United Kingdom.

The consultants have spoken with 'off road' clubs in Hampshire and the Scottish Borders and have found that many of these membership organisations travel great distances in the UK to follow their sporting pastime. This is partly due to the lack of challenging 'off road' centres in many parts of the country. The revenue from site bookings range from between £20 and £45 per vehicle per day with crews and families usually staying in local serviced accommodation or in local campsites. There are a number of key operators in the UK who can advise on the development requirements for sites, layout requirements and health & safety issues. Open public access to these facilities would not be available.

Equestrian Access & Trail Riding:

In recent years there has been growth in the number of horse riders taking part in trail riding. This is when horses and their riders travel over longer distances using forestry roads, tracks and bridle paths as a form of adventure/endurance sport. In some cases they travel between accommodation centres that are specifically geared up to meet the needs of equestrian visitors. There are groups of accommodation operators who are members of the 'Horses Welcome' scheme, which is a quality assurance programme from the British Horse Society.

The roads and tracks around Arecleoch and Barrhill could be used to provide a range of off road offers for riders wishing to take part in this type of activity and specific 'entry level' routes could be set up to attract new users to this sporting activity. This is an activity that would require the services of a qualified equestrian operator who would be required to work in partnership with landowners and the local community to review potential routes and provide a series of proposals that can be discussed prior to any final decision being made. Specific routes for general equestrian access, particularly aimed at younger riders may well attract interest as riders throughout Scotland find it increasingly difficult to find safe and attractive routes where they can operate without fear of vehicular traffic or conflict with other users.

Wildlife Tourism:

During a visit to Arecleoch FCS staff gave details of the wildlife that were present on and around the site. FCS has taken a very responsible position with regard to wildlife and has instigated a number of measures to protect certain species and provide suitable habitat for others as follows:

- Red, Fallow and Roe deer are prevalent on the site and were visible during our visit. Numbers are reasonably high and contract keepers or FCS staff have to cull between seventy and one hundred beasts annually.
- There are a number of different birds of prey around Arecleoch including Hen Harriers, Buzzards, Sparrowhawks and Kestrel. Other birds, such as Barn Owls and Crossbills appear to be attracted to the area.
- Otters and Red Squirrels are found in specific areas of Arecleoch. There is also a good Water Vole population in the watercourses throughout the site. The Water Vole population in the UK has been reduced by 80% in the last 20 -25 years mainly due to predators, such as the Mink. Mink have not yet been sighted on Arecleoch and to further protect the Water Vole FCS has increased the number of cuts off the existing watercourses, as Mink tend to travel along a waterway without deviating from the main watercourse. FCS has stripped the land back near some of the watercourses and cuts to improve the habitat and provide food (grass) for the Water Voles.

Following a meeting with Peter Mackay of Wildlife for All, www.wildlife-for-all.co.uk, the consultants believe that there could be benefit in undertaking a study to consider whether remote cameras could be installed on Arecleoch at key locations and a wireless relay system installed to feed back images of wildlife and the turbines to the Community Visitor Information Centre in Barrhill. Through time an interpretative centre based on renewables and the environment could be developed as an added attraction for the area.

In the short term escorted wildlife tours could be set up and operated by a community business initiative. This could be managed from the VIC in Barrhill and would again require the services of a Community Access Ranger.

Fishing and Stalking:

There are a number of operators and estates offering fishing and/or stalking in South Ayrshire. These market sectors are fairly traditional and generally well established. Although there may be potential to develop some local fishing packages, the possibility of arranging stalking around Arecleoch would have to be discussed in more detail with the local Forestry Commission offices in Newton Stewart. Even if there was a willingness in FCS to consider commercial stalking it may not sit comfortably with a number of the other activity opportunities proposed in this report.

Tree Top Adventure Site:

There are a growing number of Tree Top adventure sites in the UK that provide a range of courses and outdoor experiences for a wide range of clients, including adults, children, schools, colleges and corporate customers. One of the most successful operators is a company called Go Ape, which has 27 centres throughout Scotland, England and Wales.

These centres, which are often dog friendly, have walking routes, cycle trails, zip wires, crossings, kids play areas, bike hire as well as a range of support services, such as car parking, food & drink, and shops.

A facility of this type would add value to Arecleoch and should be considered as a future opportunity, which could be developed. The advantage of having a Railway connection to Barrhill could attract groups and corporate business to a facility of this kind.

Archaeology:

The archaeology of the area around Arecleoch is well documented in the SPR Report Part2 (The Assessment) Chapter 8: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, which was produced in February 2010. It is not our intention to repeat the 20 pages in this section detailing the range of desk based studies and site visits that were undertaken for this report, however it is worth recording that there are 10 scheduled sites of interest in the locality of Arecleoch (including a reasonably well preserved chambered cairn) and 348 scheduled monuments within fifteen kilometres of the windfarm site.

It must also be noted that the report states that: 'The whole of the development site can have the potential for the survival of unrecorded archaeological remains of all periods from the Neolithic to the present day. The potential is significantly reduced in the areas subject to commercial forestry operations, although any substantial features may have been damaged rather than destroyed'.

There is much more detail available in the report beyond the small section we have identified and we are conscious that overall, the quality of any potential sites may be limited. However, there may be some worth in approaching Scottish Universities who have archaeological faculties with a view to offering them a lease agreement to use agreed parts of the site for research and development studies and field trips. If undertaken this would require an agreement from both FCS and SPR to ensure that any site visits or archaeological investigations were subject to strict health & safety agreements.

There may well be undiscovered sites of interest that would not normally attract any further investigation based on the findings of the report referred to above but a series of University based field trips, digs and desk research may offer some additional opportunities to record

more detailed information on the area. More significantly, this type of arrangement would bring small groups to the area and afford some additional marketing for the general area within key special interest groups.

Eco Tourism:

Eco tourism is defined as a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and usually protected areas, intended as a low impact and often small scale alternative to standard commercial tourism. Its purpose may be to educate the traveller, to provide funds for ecological conservation, to directly benefit the economic development and political empowerment of local communities, or to foster respect for different cultures.

For the last 30 years environmentalists have considered ecotourism a critical endeavour, so that future generations may experience destinations relatively untouched by human intervention. Generally, ecotourism focuses on volunteering, personal growth and environmental sustainability.

Ecotourism typically involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. One of the goals of ecotourism is to offer tourists insight into the impact of human beings on the environment, and to foster a greater appreciation of our natural habitats.

Responsible ecotourism includes programs that minimise the negative aspects of conventional tourism on the environment and enhance the cultural integrity of local people. Therefore, in addition to evaluating environmental and cultural factors, an integral part of eco tourism is the promotion of recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation and the creation of economic opportunities for local communities. For these reasons, ecotourism often appeals to environmental and social responsibility advocates.

The decision to promote eco tourism must lie with the local community, working in partnership with major agencies such as SNH, RSPB, South Ayrshire Council, SEPA, FCS and SPR but if developed properly, could provide an interesting and effective promotional campaign that would sit alongside current Biosphere aspirations and the excellent 'Dark Skies' initiative in nearby Dumfries & Galloway.

Forest Art Projects:

Consideration should be given to increasing opportunities for the creative arts sector in the area. Each sector would again require careful analysis beforehand and would require to be evaluated as part of the business case for new developments. Examples of activities could include: -

- Forest art sculptures
- Wood carving and cabinet making courses
- Painting breaks with local artists

- Photography courses and field trips for individual groups and clubs

This type of activity may provide additional opportunities for attracting Rural Skills Training, which could assist local business expansion.

Local Accommodation Sector:

It is fair to say that there is a general lack of serviced and self catering accommodation in and around the Barrhill area. This is a situation that will have to be addressed but we believe that organic growth in this sector will prevail as new business initiatives are developed. In the short term an audit of accommodation should be undertaken and this should include all local villages, the town of Girvan and Newton Stewart, where there is a more established accommodation stock that is already benefitting from initiatives such as 'Dark Skies'.

Networking and partnership activities with accommodation providers must be sought to ensure that visitors wishing to come to the area are able to find suitable accommodation. Just outside Barrhill is Kildonan Country House, which although closed at the beginning of this study, has now reopened. The success and development of this facility may be able to provide an immediate increase in the local accommodation stock, which could also be used for corporate promotions, special events and weddings in the short to medium term. Discussions should be held with the owners and other accommodation providers in the surrounding area to prepare an accommodation development plan.

Transportation Plan:

A transportation plan should be prepared in partnership with Rail and Coach companies to ensure that the local community keeps these companies engaged with ongoing developments in the area. This will assist any communications plan and may help to protect any transport initiatives that could be under threat. Car parking, picnic sites and general visitor management would be included at this point.

Conclusions:

- ❖ Barrhill is located on an increasingly important tourism route between Newton Stewart and Girvan, in a relatively unspoilt part of rural Carrick in South Ayrshire. The village has good transport links including a railway station on the main Glasgow to Stranraer line.
- ❖ Although Barrhill has suffered the loss of local businesses over the last 16 years the village has significant untapped potential to develop high value outdoor tourism activities being close to the 'Dark Skies' initiative and a number of good walking routes.
- ❖ The strengths and opportunities identified in the SWOT analysis, supported by financial assistance from windfarm developments, offer a unique opportunity to reduce any weaknesses in the area and remove most of the current threats to the local community.
- ❖ The provision of support services and facilities at a redeveloped Memorial Hall could provide a range of business opportunities, which would attract visitors to the area, increase local economic benefit and create a number of employment opportunities.
- ❖ A wide variety of outdoor tourism ideas have been identified and these should form the basis of development discussions within the community. Accommodation and transport issues need to be considered and a business, marketing and communications plan developed.
- ❖ Proposed tourism & leisure developments would meet the key objectives of the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy and could provide an effective working partnership opportunity in South Ayrshire.
- ❖ A co-ordinated effort will be required by all local groups to evaluate the potential of these proposals in a simple and effective manner, through the creation of an effective and representative steering group.
- ❖ The identification of new activity based opportunities, the introduction of improved visitor services and the setting up of new community businesses initiatives will reinvigorate the Barrhill area by attracting visitors to the area and increasing economic activity in the tourism sector, thereby creating stability in community development, which should attract families to the area with the prospect of new employment opportunities.

- ❖ An initial meeting should now be held between the consultants and the local community to discuss the content of this study and consider how best to take the initiative forward. Following agreement on the range of initiatives to be included in the development an action plan could be produced, along with a framework schedule for each phase of the project.

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In the following pages we have copied the Draft Public Access Plan prepared for ScottishPower Renewables to consider and lodge with South Ayrshire Council as part of the overall planning process for the windfarm site. The draft Plan is shown in blue type and does not form part of the main Tourism & Leisure Strategy.

Arecleoch Windfarm

Public Access Plan

PURPOSE OF THE ACCESS PLAN

The Public Access Plan (the 'Plan') has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning Condition 6.23 of the Consent and Deemed Planning Permission for Arecleoch Windfarm dated 25th June 2008. Planning Condition 6.23 states: That within 12 months of the first commissioning of the wind farm, a detailed plan of public access throughout the site when the development is completed, shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority.

The Access Plan shall identify:

- Any area of land for exclusion from statutory access rights after development, for reasons of privacy, disturbance or curtilage, in relation to proposed buildings or structures.
- Any paths proposed for construction by any person enjoying access rights under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, such as walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including spur(s) to the site boundary, which have the potential to be linked into the route of the Carrick Way and other routes that are reasonably practicable and have been agreed with the Carrick Way Steering Group.
- And that the approved Plan shall then be implemented to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority within 24 months of the commissioning of the development.

The Access Plan has been produced by consultants for ScottishPower Renewables (SPR), to ensure that adequate provisions have been made for public access to the Site under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

The Plan was completed after consultation with Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), South Ayrshire Council, Carrick Community Councils' Forum, Carrick Futures, Barrhill Community Development Association and DGA Forestry. For reference purposes the layout of Arecleoch Windfarm is shown on Drawing Number ARE/A/3/001, which is attached as Appendix 1 and more details of the locations of turbines and roads are given in appendix 2.

In addition to meeting South Ayrshire Council's planning conditions, the developer and other stakeholders including the local communities were keen to identify additional recreation and tourism initiatives that might be developed. These initiatives are addressed in a separate expanded report, 'Strategy for Recreation and Tourism Initiatives Associated with Arecleoch Windfarm', which looks at the potential of utilising the Windfarm and neighbouring areas for wider opportunities.

CONTEXT OF THE ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES

The site is most suitable for access by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The Access Plan addresses the needs of these groups and focuses, in particular, on the following characteristics of the Arecleoch site:

- Relationship to other current and proposed walking routes
- Active Travel Network proposals
- Suitability for cycling and equestrian access
- Archaeology
- Wildlife tourism
- Ecotourism
- Forest Arts projects
- Transportation links via Barrhill Village
- Car Parking for vehicles with horse boxes and bicycles adjacent to the Arecleoch site
- Barrhill Memorial Hall

These characteristics are considered in detail in the Strategy report mentioned above. A brief summary of each is given below in order to clarify their basis for the Public Access Plan.

Relationship to Other Current and Proposed Walking Routes:

The Carrick Way:

The development of this route has not progressed as was anticipated at the time of the granting of planning permission for the Arecleoch Windfarm. The Carrick Way Steering Group (now known as the Carrick Way Community Interest Company) announced in late 2011 that it would not continue with the development of the “southern loop” of the Way – including the section that might be linked to the Arecleoch site. In the absence of a definitive route for the Carrick Way, this Public Access Plan identifies walking routes within the site and links to Barrhill railway station and to a planned public car park adjacent to the Barrhill Memorial Hall – two locations that are sure to be important to the Carrick Way.

Pilgrims’ Trail:

Currently under development, the Trail, running from Paisley to the Isle of Whithorn, will pass through Barrhill village. Again, this Plan identifies links to the proposed Trail via the railway station and the public car park in Barrhill.

Southern Upland Way:

The more demanding Southern Upland Way (SUW), which spans a route from Portpatrick in Dumfries & Galloway to Cockburnspath in the Scottish Borders, passes through the hamlet of Bargrennan, 9 miles south of Barrhill. The formation of a spur route between Arecleoch and the Southern Upland Way is a possible future development that may be pursued through the Active Travel Network

initiative cited below. In the short-term there may be an option to use the community minibus, operated by the Stranraer to Ayr Line Support Association (SAyLSA) to collect/ return walkers to the Southern Upland Way.

Keep Fit Trails:

There is a wish to provide a range of 'Keep Fit' trails that can be used by visitors and locals of all ages and abilities to encourage greater use of the outdoors and increase participation in healthier pastimes.

Active Travel Network Proposals:

The recent Central Scotland Green Network funded report on "Methods of enhancing the Active Travel Network within Carrick" has a particular emphasis on routes within and between existing and possible future windfarms. It proposes a strategic approach to the development of active travel networks and identifies several specific initiatives including on-road signage and constructing links to the Southern Upland Way, to Colmonell from Barrhill, and to the National Cycle Network route 7 via Glentool forest tracks.

Opportunities for linkage between windfarms, for example between Arecleoch and Markhill are addressed in the 'Strategy for Recreation and Tourism Initiatives Associated with Arecleoch Windfarm' report.

Suitability for Cycling and Equestrian Access:

Cycling:

Cycling in the Barrhill and Arecleoch area is an option that can provide a number of opportunities to attract visitors to the area both in the short, medium and long term. There are existing tracks in the lower part of Arecleoch that could currently be used for that purpose and there are other options for installing additional paths, using differing grades of hardcore stockpiled by the Forestry Commission, from excavations in the Borrow Pits

Equestrian:

In recent years there has been growth in the number of horse riders taking part in trail riding. This is when horses and their riders travel over longer distances using forestry roads, tracks and bridle paths as a form of adventure/endurance sport. In some cases they travel between accommodation centres that are specifically geared up to meet the needs of equestrian visitors. There are groups of accommodation operators who are members of the 'Horses Welcome' scheme, which is a quality assurance programme from the British Horse Society.

The roads and tracks around Arecleoch and Barrhill could be used to provide a range of off road offers for riders wishing to take part in this type of activity and specific 'entry level' routes could be set up to attract new users to this sporting activity. The planning of any new tracks or bridle paths needs to take account of any potential conflict between users by engaging with representatives of these sectors and key stakeholders and landowners.

If new tracks are developed for this purpose there would be significant benefit in considering the construction of multiple paths, which could accommodate different user groups, minimise any conflict of use and provide a 'unique selling point' for the marketing and promotion of activity tourism in the Barrhill area. Conflict can also be reduced through education, guidance leaflets, maps and information boards emphasising responsible access and how to be considerate and safe when sharing routes with other users. The width and line of sight on routes can also have a great impact on the efficiency of use and the long term success of any new developments.

It follows that increased activity tourism in the Barrhill area, combined with the distance of the Arecleoch site from the main road, will necessitate the provision of car parking for horse boxes and vehicles carrying bikes, closer to the main site access points. The proposed additional car parking at the Barrhill Memorial Hall is unlikely to be able to cope with trailers and vehicles parked for longer periods throughout the day. Two new car parking locations are likely to be required on the access roads from Bents Farm and Wheeb Bridge but final agreements will have to be reached in discussion with the Forestry Commission, private land owners and ScottishPower Renewables.

Archaeology:

The archaeology of the area around Arecleoch is well documented in the SPR Report Part2 (The Assessment) Chapter 8: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, which was produced in February 2010. It notes that there are 10 scheduled sites of interest in the locality of Arecleoch (including a reasonably well preserved chambered cairn) and 348 scheduled monuments with 15 kilometres of the Windfarm site.

There may be some worth in approaching Scottish Universities who have archaeological faculties with a view to offering them a lease agreement to use agreed parts of the site for research and development studies and field trips. If undertaken this would require an agreement from both FCS and SPR to ensure that any site visits or archaeological investigations were subject to strict health & safety agreements.

Wildlife Tourism:

Arecleoch has a wide range of wildlife. FCS has taken a very responsible position with regard to this and has instigated a number of measures to protect certain species and provide suitable habitat for others as follows:

- Red, Fallow and Roe deer are prevalent in the area and numbers are reasonably high and visible when on site. Contract keepers or FCS staff have to cull between seventy and one hundred beasts annually.
- There are a number of different birds of prey around Arecleoch including Hen Harriers, Buzzards, Sparrowhawks and Kestrel. Other birds, such as Barn Owls and Crossbills appear to be attracted to the area.
- Otters and Red Squirrels are found in specific areas of Arecleoch. There is also a good Water Vole population in the watercourses throughout the site. The Water Vole population in the UK has been reduced by 80% in the last 20 -25 years mainly due to predators, such as the Mink. Mink have not yet been sighted on Arecleoch and to further protect the Water Vole FCS has increased the number of cuts off the existing watercourses, as Mink tend to travel along a waterway without deviating from the main watercourse. FCS has stripped the land back near some of the watercourses and cuts to improve the habitat and provide food (grass) for the Water Voles.

There could be benefit in undertaking a study to consider whether remote cameras could be installed on Arecleoch at key locations and a wireless relay system installed to feed back images of wildlife and the turbines to a proposed Community Visitor Information Centre in Barrhill. Through time an interpretative centre based on renewables and the environment could be developed as an added attraction for the area.

Eco Tourism:

Eco tourism is defined as a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and usually protected areas, intended as a low impact and often small scale alternative to standard commercial tourism. Its purpose may be to educate the traveller, to provide funds for ecological conservation, to directly benefit the economic development and political empowerment of local communities, or to foster respect for different cultures.

The proximity of Arecleoch to the Galloway Forest Dark Skies Park and its location within the transition zone of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere will offer significant opportunities for growth in eco-tourism. These will be explored as part of the wider Strategy for Recreation and Tourism Initiatives Associated with Arecleoch Windfarm.

Forest Art Projects:

Consideration should be given to increasing opportunities for the creative arts sector in the area. Each sector would again require careful analysis beforehand and would require to be evaluated as part of the business case for new developments. Examples of activities could include: -

- Forest art sculptures
- Wood carving and cabinet making courses
- Painting breaks with local artists
- Photography courses and field trips for individual groups and clubs

Transportation Links via Barrhill Village:

Key to current and future developments will be the links created between Barrhill Village, Barrhill Railway Station, and the Arecleoch site, as well as links between the village and the access roads at Bents Farm and Wheeb Bridge. Proposals on this for the short and medium terms are addressed in the wider strategy for the area.

Barrhill Memorial Hall

The Hall is at the core of the community in Barrhill and there are proposals from local community groups for its redevelopment. The plans would increase and improve space within the hall and provide a modern facility for Barrhill. Once redeveloped, the Memorial Hall will provide a 'Hub' for the village and offer a range of visitor services and facilities that would support the strategy of attracting people into Barrhill and onward to Arecleoch and other local sites.

THE ACCESS PLAN

With the above as the context, the Access Plan is presented overleaf.

THE ARECLEOCH PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

There are no areas of land within the site designated for exclusion from statutory access rights for reasons of privacy, disturbance or curtilage, in relation to the buildings or structures. As it stands the site does not warrant substantial investment in terms of access improvements. However, ScottishPower Renewables will work with the local community and third sector organisations to facilitate access in the following ways: -

1. Information Boards at Barrhill Memorial Hall Car Park and at the access points to the Arecleoch site on the routes from Queensland Holiday Park and from Barrhill Railway Station, detailing:
 - a. Walking and cycling routes to Arecleoch via Queensland Holiday Park and via Barrhill Railway Station
 - b. Links to the Carrick Way and the Pilgrims' Trail
 - c. Walking, cycling and equestrian routes within Arecleoch
 - d. Points of interest within Arecleoch
2. Four additional Information Boards at strategic points within the Arecleoch site detailing circular routes and points of interest
3. Signposted 2, 3 and 5 mile walking routes in the lower levels of the Arecleoch site
4. Signposted 2, 3 and 5 mile cycling routes in the lower levels of the Arecleoch site
5. Four picnic areas in the lower levels of the Arecleoch site
6. Picnic benches and vista boards at two scenic spots in the higher levels of the Arecleoch site
7. Suitable car parking for horseboxes, trailers and bike carriers adjacent to the Arecleoch site boundary to facilitate easier access to any newly developed routes

The above will provide a foundation on which future developments can be built. If the communities surrounding the site decide to source funds to realise some of the aspirations captured in the wider 'Strategy for Recreation and Tourism Associated with Arecleoch Windfarm' report then this Access Plan will be revisited and updated accordingly.

This plan, as previously stated, will support methods of enhancing the Active Travel Network within Carrick with particular emphasis on routes within and between existing and possible future windfarms. The Access Plan and the wider Strategy for Recreation and Tourism Associated with Arecleoch Windfarm will also seek to meet the objectives and deliverables of the Carrick Tourism Development Project and the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Strategy.

In line with advice from the Planning Department at South Ayrshire Council, the exact detail of pathways and routes for walking, cycling and horse riding have not been detailed in this plan or on the attached maps. This policy also applies to any additional car parking or the number, location and erection of signs, picnic facilities and information boards.

This will allow these facilities to be developed and linked to other routes and pathways in land areas bordering Arecleoch and this policy will require further discussion with SPR, FCS, other landowners and the local community.

It should be clearly noted that ScottishPower Renewables, as tenants of the main Arecleoch site, cannot provide approval or planning consent for car parking, the erection of signs, information boards or new picnic facilities. However, initial discussions with Forestry Commission Scotland, the main landowners, have suggested that they would consider any of these facilities in the normal manner, subject to their standard operating procedures and planning consents.

The Way Forward:

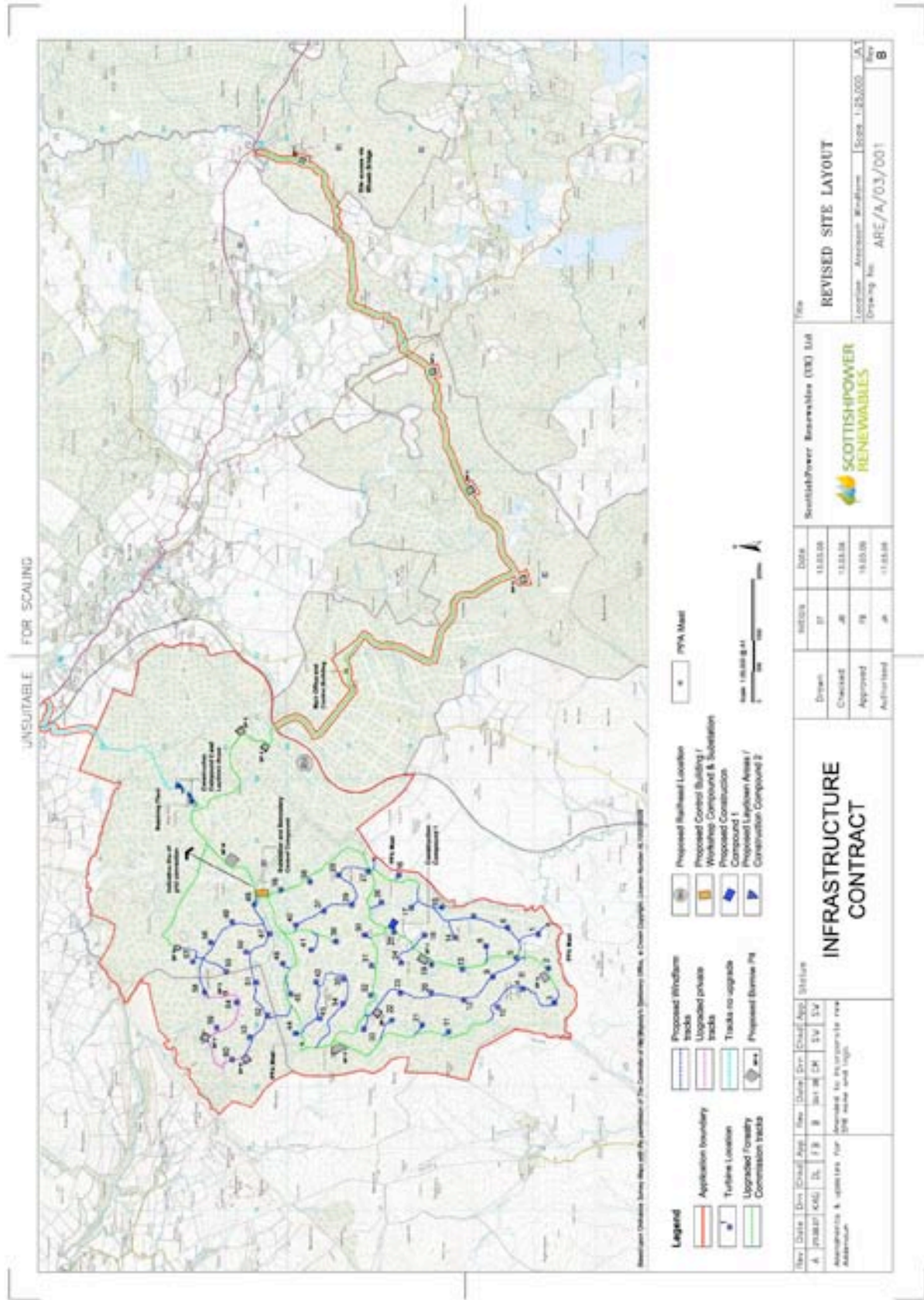
A Steering Group will be formed to ensure that the proposals in the Access Plan are taken forward in a timetable and manner that meets the aspirations and expectations of all stakeholders involved in this process. This will include representatives from: -

- Local Community Representatives
- Carrick Community Councils' Forum
- Developers
- Landowners
- Local Authorities
- Ailsa Horizons

It is expected that the first meeting of this Steering Group will be held soon after formal acceptance of this Access Plan is granted by South Ayrshire Council.

Arcleoch Windfarm Boundaries, Roads and Turbine Locations:

(Appendix 1)



<p>INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRACT</p>		<p>ScottishPower Renewables (UK) Ltd</p> <p>SCOTTISHPOWER RENEWABLES</p>		<p>REVISÉD SITE LAYOUT</p> <p>Location: Arcleoch Windfarm Scale: 1:25,000 A1</p> <p>Drawing No: ARE/A/0.3/001 Rev: B</p>	
<p>Drawn</p> <p>Checked</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Authorised</p>	<p>DATE</p> <p>07/10/2018</p> <p>08/10/2018</p> <p>09/10/2018</p> <p>11/10/2018</p>	<p>SCALE</p> <p>1:10,000</p>	<p>DATE</p> <p>07/10/2018</p> <p>08/10/2018</p> <p>09/10/2018</p> <p>11/10/2018</p>	<p>SCALE</p> <p>1:10,000</p>	<p>DATE</p> <p>07/10/2018</p> <p>08/10/2018</p> <p>09/10/2018</p> <p>11/10/2018</p>

Arcleoch Windfarm Boundaries, Roads and Turbine Locations: (Appendix 2)

