



Spiorad na Mara Offshore Wind Farm

Offshore Project

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Chapter 6: Socio-economics, Volume 2a

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Contents

6	Socio-economics.....	6-1
6.1	Introduction	6-1
6.2	Summary of policy and legislative context	6-3
6.3	Scoping and consultation.....	6-11
6.4	Scope of the Assessment.....	6-26
6.5	Methodology for baseline data gathering and impact assessment.....	6-32
6.6	Baseline conditions	6-46
6.7	Basis for Environmental Impact Assessment.....	6-57
6.8	Assessment of effects: Construction Phase	6-74
6.9	Assessment of effects: Operation and Maintenance.....	6-98
6.10	Assessment of effects: Decommissioning	6-119
6.11	Assessment of Combined effects	6-129
6.12	Consideration of Onshore Transmission Works Project.....	6-129
6.13	Assessment of cumulative effects	6-145
6.14	Transboundary effects.....	6-165
6.15	Summary of residual effects	6-165
6.16	Glossary of terms and abbreviations.....	6-178
6.17	References	6-183

List of Tables

Table 6-1:	Summary of policy and legislation relevant to Socio-economics	6-4
Table 6-2	Summary of consultation for socio-economics.....	6-12
Table 6-3:	Key messages from stakeholder interviews.....	6-21
Table 6-4:	Summary of study areas.....	6-27
Table 6-5	Receptors requiring assessment for socio-economics	6-30
Table 6-6	Activities or impacts scoped into the assessment.....	6-30
Table 6-7	Data sources used to inform the socio-economics assessment.....	6-33
Table 6-8:	Distribution factors.....	6-36
Table 6-9:	Magnitude criteria	6-39
Table 6-10	Sensitivity criteria.....	6-40

Table 6-11: Significance matrix.....	6-46
Table 6-12: Employment by industry (Census)	6-48
Table 6-13: Accommodation stock, Western Isles.....	6-50
Table 6-14 Maximum Design Scenario for impacts on Socio-economics.....	6-58
Table 6-15 Embedded mitigation measures relevant to socio-economics	6-69
Table 6-16: Construction phase employment effects (total person years of employment over 2028/29 to 2032/33)	6-74
Table 6-17: Construction phase employment effects (average FTE per annum between 2028/29 and 2032/33).....	6-75
Table 6-18: Construction phase GVA effects (total GVA over 2028/29 to 2032/33)	6-77
Table 6-19: Estimated tourist bedspaces, Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>	6-81
Table 6-20: Operation and maintenance phase employment effects (FTE) (average over project life).....	6-99
Table 6-21 Operation and maintenance phase GVA effects (total over 35 year operational period)	6-102
Table 6-22 Relevant further mitigation measures	6-106
Table 6-24 Summary of socio-economic pathways and potential for interaction with the OTW Project.....	6-130
Table 6-25 Other Developments considered as part of the Socio-economics CEA	6-147
Table 6-26 Cumulative Project Design Envelope for socio-economics.....	6-151
Table 6-27 Cumulative effects assessment for socio-economics	6-161
Table 6-28 Summary of residual effects.....	6-166
Table 6-29 Acronyms and abbreviations	6-178
Table 6-30 Glossary.....	6-179

List of Plates

Plate 6-1: Worked example of logic model.....	6-29
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6 SOCIO-ECONOMICS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) presents the results of the assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed Spiorad na Mara Offshore Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as 'the Offshore Project') with respect to socio-economics, including wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects.
- 6.1.1.2 Socio-economic impacts on jobs and GVA are assessed on a Project basis, including both the Offshore Project and the Onshore Transmission Works (OTW) Project. This is because the modelling of economic effects is based on estimated capital expenditure (CAPEX) and operating expenditure (OPEX) for the Project as a whole, and it has not been possible to disaggregate spend on the Offshore Project from spend on the OTW Project.
- 6.1.1.3 Wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only. An assessment of the wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects arising from the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project is provided in Section 6.12.
- 6.1.1.4 This chapter should be read in conjunction with the project description provided in **Chapter 3: Project Description, Volume 1a** and the relevant parts of the following chapters and appendices:
- **Chapter 2: Policy and Legislative Context, Volume 1a**, which provides a summary of the legislation and policy context applicable to the Offshore Project;
 - **Chapter 16: Shipping and Navigation, Volume 2a**, which assesses the effects on shipping and navigation arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Offshore Project;
 - **Chapter 18: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Volume 2a**, which assesses the seascape, landscape and visual effects arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Offshore Project;
 - **Chapter 19: Offshore Airborne Noise, Volume 2a**, which assesses the noise effects arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Offshore Project;
 - **Chapter 20: Other Sea Users and Recreation, Volume 2a**, which assesses tourism and recreation effects and effects for other seas users including ports and aquaculture activity arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Offshore Project;
 - **Chapter 21: Commercial Fisheries, Volume 2a**, which assesses the effect of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Offshore Project on commercial fishing;
 - **Chapter 22: Offshore Human Health, Volume 2a**, which assesses the effect of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Offshore Project on human health;
 - **Appendix 6.1: Detailed Social and Economic Baseline, Volume 2c**, which provides a comprehensive social and economic baseline;

- **Appendix 6.2: Focus Group Summary Report, Volume 2c**, which provides a summary of focus groups which have informed the socio-economic baseline and assessment.

6.1.1.5 This chapter describes the following:

- Legislation, planning policy and other documentation that has informed the assessment (Section 6.1.2: Summary of policy and legislative context);
- Outcome of consultation and engagement that has been undertaken to date, including how matters relating to socio-economics have been addressed (Section 6.3: Scoping and consultation);
- Scope of the assessment for socio-economics (Section 6.4: Scope of the Assessment);
- The assessment methods used for baseline data gathering and impact assessment (Section 6.5: Methodology for baseline data gathering and impact assessment);
- Overall baseline (Section 6.6: Baseline conditions) which is a summary of the detailed social and economic baseline included in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**;
- Embedded environmental measures relevant to socio-economics and the relevant maximum design scenario (Section 6.7: Basis for Environmental Impact Assessment);
- Assessment of likely significant socio-economic effects and further mitigation (Section 6.8-6.10: Assessment of effects and mitigation);
- Assessment of socio-economic combined effects (Section 6.11: Assessment of Combined effects);
- Assessment of socio-economic effects interactions with the Onshore Project (Section 6.12: Consideration of Onshore Transmission Works Project);
- Assessment of socio-economic cumulative effects (including cumulative and combined effects) (Section 6.13: Assessment of cumulative effects);
- Assessment of transboundary effects (Section 6.14: Transboundary effects);
- A summary of residual effects for socio-economics (Section 6.15: Summary of residual effects);
- A glossary of terms and abbreviations (Section 6.16: Glossary of terms and abbreviations);
- Information sources and documentation referred to in this chapter (Section 6.17: References).

6.1.1.6 The chapter is supported by the following appendices and figures:

- **Figure 6.1: Socio-economics Local and National Study Area, Volume 2b**;
- **Figure 6.2: Socio-economics Island and Smaller Study Areas, Volume 2b**;
- **Figure 6.3: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, Volume 2b**;
- **Figure 6.4: Socio-economics Zone of Influence (ZOI) and Other Developments, Volume 2b**;
- **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**;
- **Appendix 6.2, Volume 2c**.

6.1.2 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER CHAPTERS OF THE EIAR

6.1.2.1 There are a number of impact pathways relevant to this assessment that are considered in other chapters of the EIAR. In particular:

- Impacts on other sea users, including recreational users, are assessed in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**. Impacts on commercial fishing are assessed in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a**. The scope of this chapter includes the potential wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects that could arise as a result of any change in sea use practices, including wider effects on the fishing, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing sector.
- Impacts on ports and harbours are assessed in **Chapter 16, Volume 2a** and in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**. The scope of this chapter includes the potential wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects that could arise as a result of any disruption to ferry services and other navigational traffic, including wider effects for the transport and storage and tourism sectors.
- Impacts on tourism and recreation receptors, including recreational sea users, are assessed in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**. The scope of this chapter includes assessment of the potential wider socio-economic effects for the tourism sector that could arise as a result of impacts on tourism and recreation receptors reported in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, along with changes in demand for travel and accommodation.
- Impacts on community health and wellbeing are assessed in **Chapter 22, Volume 2a**.

6.2 SUMMARY OF POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

6.2.1.1 This section outlines the legislation, policy and guidance that is relevant to the assessment of likely significant effects on socio-economics associated with the development, construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of the Offshore Project. In addition, other national, regional, and local policies are considered within this assessment where they are judged to be relevant. Further information on policies relevant to the EIAR is provided in **Chapter 2, Volume 1a**.

6.2.1.2 A summary of the legislation and policy relevant to socio-economics is provided in **Table 6-1** which examined their relevance to the assessment. This should be read alongside the policy tables in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** and **Chapter 22, Volume 2a** which include policy and legislation relevant specifically to the sea use and human health aspects of the assessment.

Table 6-1: Summary of policy and legislation relevant to Socio-economics

National and Local Policy and Legislation	Relevance to the Assessment
Legislation	
The Islands (Scotland) Act (2018) (Scottish Parliament, 2018)	Introduces measures to support and help meet the unique needs of Scotland/ <i>Alba's</i> islands, including requiring the Scottish Ministers to develop a National Island Plan, and for relevant authorities to complete island community impact assessments.
UK Government policy	
The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (2025) (UK Government, 2025)	The UK Government's strategy to attract investment and support businesses, with a focus on eight key sectors with the highest growth potential. These include clean energy industries. The Modern Industrial Strategy is supported by a Clean Energy Industries Sector Plan which includes an action plan for offshore wind.
Clean Power Action Plan 2030 (2024) (UK Government, 2024)	The UK Government's plan setting out the measures it will take to achieve clean power by 2030. Of relevance to the assessment in this chapter are measures to develop the supply chain and build a skilled workforce.
British Energy Security Strategy (2022) (UK Government, 2022)	The UK Government's strategy to increase domestic energy supply and improve energy security. In relation to offshore wind, the strategy highlights the benefits of high skilled employment and the importance of increasing the speed of deployment.
Islands Growth Deal (2023) (Scottish Government, UK Government, CnES, Orkney Islands Council and Shetland Islands Council, 2023)	<p>10 year package of investment funded by the UK and Scottish Governments, aiming to drive growth and create sustainable jobs across Shetland/<i>Sealtainn</i>, Orkney/<i>Arcaibh</i> and the Outer Hebrides/<i>Na h-Eileanan Siar</i>. The deal comprises 16 programmes and projects across the following three themes that are relevant to this assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theme 1 – Leading the way to a Low Carbon Future; - Theme 2 – Supporting Growth and Future Industries; - Theme 3 – Thriving, Sustainable Communities.
Scottish Government policy	

National and Local Policy and Legislation	Relevance to the Assessment
Draft Updated Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind Energy (2025)	The Scottish Government consulted on its draft update to the Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind Energy (SMP-OWE) in Summer 2025. The draft updated SMP-OWE sets out an integrated planning framework for the ScotWind leasing round and the Targeted Oil and Gas leasing rounds, alongside consideration of additional capacity for rest and demonstration projects. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken which identified a range of economic and environmental impacts from ScotWind sites. In the North region, the assessment identified socio-economic risks including impacts on commercial fishing activities, impacts on shipping, and reduction in tourism expenditure, all of which are included in the assessment set out in Section 6.8, Section 6.9, and Section 6.10 of this chapter.
National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023) (Scottish Government, 2023)	The national spatial strategy for Scotland/ <i>Alba</i> , setting out Scotland/ <i>Alba</i> 's national planning policy. The following policies are relevant to the socio-economic assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy 11c (Energy) of NPF4 states that '<i>development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities</i>'. - Policy 25 (Community Wealth Building) focuses on community wealth building and states that '<i>development proposals which contribute to local or regional community wealth building strategies and are consistent with local economic priorities will be supported</i>'. - Policy 29 (Rural Development) aims to '<i>encourage rural economic activity, innovation and diversification whilst ensuring that the distinctive character of the rural area and the service function of small towns, natural assets and cultural heritage are safeguarded and enhanced</i>'.
Scotland's Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023) (Scottish Government, 2023)	The Scottish Government consulted on its Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan in 2023. This document sets out Scottish Government policy for delivering ' <i>a net zero energy system for Scotland that also delivers a net gain in employment in Scotland's energy production sector</i> '. In relation to a just transition, the plan aims to secure ' <i>a just transition that benefits all of Scotland's communities</i> '. This includes ensuring that the workforce has the skills required, and developing the domestic supply chain to support the energy transition.

National and Local Policy and Legislation	Relevance to the Assessment
Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (2022) (Scottish Government, 2022)	<p>Scottish Government policy setting out the priorities for Scotland/<i>Alba's</i> economy and the actions needed to maximise opportunities over the next decade. The programme of action set out in this document includes the following 'projects' that are relevant to this assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project 6: Support the development of Scottish supply chains, laying the foundations of a Net Zero Industrial Strategy; - Project 10: Realise the potential of the different economic and community assets and strengths of Scotland's regions; - Project 13: Expand Scotland's available talent pool, at all skills levels, to give employers the skills pipeline they need to take advantage of opportunities.
Update to the Climate Change Plan, 2018-2032: Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero (Scottish Government, 2020)	<p>Updates the Scottish Government's 2018 Climate Change Plan, and sets out the approach to delivering a green recovery and a pathway to deliver on Scotland's climate change targets. Central to the approach is the commitment to <i>'increase the number of good, green jobs, and to enable people to access these jobs through training and reskilling'</i>. This commitment is supported by the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan, discussed below.</p>
Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (Scottish Government, 2020)	<p>Scottish Government document setting out actions to develop the skills needed to meet Scotland's net zero targets. The energy transition, including the offshore wind sector, is identified as a key sector-based opportunity, and the document sets out a series of 'skills implications' for the sector</p>
The National Islands Plan (2019) (Scottish Government, 2019)	<p>Sets out 13 Strategic Objectives to improve the quality of life for Scotland/<i>Alba's</i> island communities. Objectives relevant to this assessment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Objective 1: To address population decline and ensure a healthy, balanced population profile; - Strategic Objective 2: To improve and promote sustainable economic development; - Strategic Objective 3: To improve transport services; - Strategic Objective 4: To improve housing; - Strategic Objective 5: To reduce levels of fuel poverty; - Strategic Objective 7: To improve and promote health, social care and wellbeing;

National and Local Policy and Legislation	Relevance to the Assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Objective 9: To contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and promote clean, affordable and secure energy; - Strategic Objective 10: To empower diverse communities and different places; - Strategic Objective 11: To support arts, culture and language.
Offshore Wind Policy Statement (2020) (Scottish Government, 2020)	Sets out the Scottish Government’s ambitions for the future of offshore wind in Scotland, and provides the context for the Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind. Chapter 4 of the Policy Statement identifies economic opportunities in the supply chain and Chapter 5 identifies economic opportunities associated with skills development.
Scotland’s National Marine Plan (2015) (Scottish Government, 2015)	<p>Scotland’s National Marine Plan (NMP) provides a framework for all marine activity in Scottish inshore and offshore waters, including aspects included in this assessment such as aquaculture, fisheries, offshore wind, recreation and tourism, and shipping, ports, harbours and ferries.</p> <p>The Scottish Government is currently developing National Marine Plan 2 (NMP2), which will replace the existing National Marine Plan (NMP), setting out planning policies to guide decision-making for Scotland’s seas, with a view to balancing the different needs of people, environment and economy. NMP2 will facilitate improved opportunities for co-existence and address conflict arising from competition for marine space. An updated to the NMP, NMP2, is currently being developed by the Scottish Government.</p>
Local policy	
Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan (2018) (CnES, 2018)	<p>Adopted planning policy for the Outer Hebrides/<i>Na h-Eileanan Siar</i>, setting out the vision and spatial strategy for the development of the area over the subsequent 10-20 years. Policies relevant to this assessment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy ED1 – Economic Development; - Policy ED4 – Fish Farming and Marine Planning; - Policy STY3 – Development of Stornoway Port Area. <p>Other policies are relevant to the assessments listed in Section 6.1 that have informed this chapter. CnES is currently preparing a new Local Development (LDP3) to replace the LDP (2018).</p>

National and Local Policy and Legislation	Relevance to the Assessment
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Corporate Strategy 2024-2027 (2024) (CnES, 2024)	Strategy document setting out the strategic direction, ambition, aspirations and commitments of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES). The overall vision of the authority is: <i>'to have a sustainable population and socially and economically thriving communities with a focus on our quality of life, natural heritage, and Gàidhlig language and culture'</i> .
Highlands and Islands Enterprise Strategy 2023-2028 (2023) (HIE, 2023)	Strategy document setting out the long-term vision and ambitions for the Highlands and Islands. Key outcomes identified in this strategy that are relevant to this assessment are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'A more balance population and growing skilled workforce'; - 'Increase in economic and community benefit from the transition to net zero.'
Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn Strategic Plan (2022) (Galson Estate Trust, 2022)	Strategic Plan setting out the vision for the development of the community-owned Galson Estate in north-west Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> . Key priorities that are relevant to this assessment include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Tourism: More and better facilities with a focus on unique aspects that provide a different visitor experience'; - 'Exceptional Place: Delivering and enabling activities that attract more people and enable families to thrive.'
Dalmore to Garynahine Community Plan (2019) (Carloway Estate Trust, 2019)	Community Plan to guide development in the Dalmore/ <i>Dail Mhor</i> to Garynahine/ <i>Gearraidh na h-aibhne</i> area of the community-owned Carloway/ <i>Càrlabhagh</i> Estate on the west coast of Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> . Objectives that are relevant to this assessment include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'To create opportunities for business growth and job creation'; - 'To maintain and enhance the place of Gaelic'; - 'To develop a vibrant destination for visitors'; - 'To promote and preserve our natural, physical and cultural heritage'.
Technical Guidance	
Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), Social Impact Assessment in Environmental Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (ISEP, 2025)	Guidance on assessing social impacts as part of EIA in the UK, including guidance on defining sensitivity and magnitude criteria, and on developing appropriate mitigation.

National and Local Policy and Legislation	Relevance to the Assessment
Scottish Government Marine Directorate - Science, Evidence, Data and Digital (MD-SEDD), Marine Analytical Unit (MAU) General Advice for Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (Scottish Government MD-SEDD, 2022)	Guidance on socio-economic assessment, which describes the key components of a Socio-economic Impact Assessment in the pre-scoping and post-scoping stages of a project and identifies categories of potential effects to be considered. This guidance has informed the scope and methodology for the assessment as described in Section 6.4, including in relation to the project phases and potential impacts that have been considered.
Marine Scotland, Defining 'Local Area' for Assessing Impact of Offshore Renewables and Other Marine Developments: guidance principles (Marine Scotland, 2022)	Sets out an approach to defining the local impact area on land for developments such as offshore wind farms at sea. The document sets out the following principles that have informed the identification of the study areas for this assessment, as described in Section 6.4.2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principle 1 – Dual Geographies; - Principle 2 – Appropriate Impacts; - Principle 3 – Epicentres; - Principle 4 – Accountability; - Principle 5 – Understandable; - Principle 6 – Connected Geography.
Scottish Human Rights Commission, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the Highlands and Islands (Scottish Human Rights Commission, 2024)	Report highlighting areas of human rights concern in rural areas of Scotland/ <i>Alba</i> , including housing, access to food, healthcare, fuel poverty, access to technology, attainment gaps in education, and transport connectivity. The findings of this report have informed the baseline set out in Section 6.6 and in Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c .
Vattenfall, Guidance on Assessing the Socio-Economic Impacts of Offshore Wind Farms (Vattenfall, 2021)	Provides guidance for assessing economic (employment, Gross Value Added (GVA) and sector impacts) and social (demographics, housing and local services, socio-cultural/quality of life) impacts of offshore wind developments, which informed the scoping of potential impacts and the logic model described in Section 6.3.4 and the assessment in Section 6.8, Section 6.9, and Section 6.10.
Scottish Renewables, Maximising Net Socio-Economic Benefit of Renewable Energy, Guidance and Reporting Framework (Scottish Renewables, 2025)	Guidance for developers on maximising the net socio-economic benefit of renewable energy developments, to comply with NPF4 Policy 11c.

National and Local Policy and Legislation	Relevance to the Assessment
HM Treasury, The Green Book: Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation (HM Treasury, 2022)	UK Government guidance on the appraisal of policies, programmes and projects. The economic modelling described in Section 6.5.3 has followed Green Book principles.
HM Treasury, The Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on Evaluation (HM Treasury, 2020)	UK Government guidance on evaluation design, which has informed the assessment methodology, including the logic model developed to identify the theory of change and the range of potential socio-economic impacts of the Offshore Project.

6.3 SCOPING AND CONSULTATION

6.3.1 OVERVIEW

- 6.3.1.1 This section describes the stakeholder engagement undertaken for the Offshore Project. This consists of early engagement, the outcome of, and response to, the Scoping Opinion in relation to the socio-economic assessment, focus groups and further engagement, and consultation undertaken through the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) process (hereafter referred to as the 'formal consultation'). An overview of engagement undertaken for the Project as a whole can be found in **Chapter 5: Approach to EIA, Volume 1a**, and **Appendix 5.4: Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement, Volume 1c**.
- 6.3.1.2 Consultation is a key feature of the EIA process and continues throughout the lifecycle of the Offshore Project, from the initial stages through to consent and post consent.
- 6.3.1.3 Consultation captures all consultation and engagement and has been ongoing with a number of prescribed and non-prescribed consultation bodies and stakeholders in relation to socio-economics. All consultation to date has been undertaken in line with the process described in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a** and **Appendix 5.4, Volume 1c**. Feedback received during this process has been incorporated into the EIAR wherever possible as appropriate.

6.3.2 EARLY ENGAGEMENT

- 6.3.2.1 Community engagement efforts began in 2021 for the Project, and included public information events held in May 2022 to present the initial Project concept and gather early community feedback for its development. The overarching aim of the Pre-Scoping Consultation was to proactively identify any immediate concerns that stakeholders might have and to establish clear and open lines of communication. Further information is provided in **Offshore PAC Report**.

6.3.3 SCOPING OPINION

- 6.3.3.1 Sporad na Mara Limited (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') submitted a Scoping Report (Sporad na Mara Limited, 2023) and request for a Scoping Opinion to the Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) in September 2023. A Scoping Opinion was received in May 2024 (MD-LOT, 2024). The Scoping Report sets out the proposed socio-economic assessment methodologies, outline of the baseline data collected to date and proposed, and the scope of the assessment. The comments received in the Scoping Opinion and how these have been addressed in this EIAR are provided in **Appendix 5.2: Response to Scoping Opinion, Volume 1c**.
- 6.3.3.2 A summary of those responses relevant to socio-economics is shown in **Table 6-2**. Regard has also been given to other stakeholder comments that were received in relation to the Scoping Report.

Table 6-2 Summary of consultation for socio-economics

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	Paragraph 5.4.2.1: The Scottish Ministers advise that a full Socio-Economic Impact Assessment ("SEIA") is included with the EIA Report. The Scottish Ministers draw attention to Annex 1 of the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023 which may be of assistance when developing the SEIA.	This chapter of the EIAR provides a full Socio-Economic Impact Assessment. Other relevant aspects are assessed in Chapter 20, Volume 2a and in Chapter 22, Volume 2a . The methodology for this assessment has been informed by the MD-SEDD advice.
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	Paragraph 5.4.2.2: The Scottish Ministers note the local, regional and national study areas to be used within the assessment are included in section 8.2.2 of the Scoping Report. The Scottish Ministers advise consideration of the South Bragar Grazings Committee advice on the study areas to be classed as local and regional. Consideration should be given to where the epicentre of the impacts may be, for example ports, fishing communities or landfall. The Scottish Ministers expect a description of the epicentres of impact to be included within the EIA Report, as well as the impacts that may be associated with these epicentres. This is in line with MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023.	Section 6.4.2 of this chapter discusses in detail the approach taken to identifying the relevant study areas for each impact considered in the assessment. This has been informed by stakeholder feedback and advice.
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	Paragraph 5.4.2.3: The Developer should also include a list of data sources used to assess the socio-economic impacts of the Project. Examples of this can be found within Annex 1 of the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023.	A full list of sources that have been used to inform the baseline and assessment is included in Section 6.5.1. Data sources have been identified with reference to relevant guidance and representations, including those

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
		<p>Furthermore, section 8.2.3.2 of the Scoping Report refers to 2011 population data on the Isle of Lewis/<i>Eilean Leòdhais</i>. The Scottish Ministers, in line with the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023, would advise using more recent population data. The Scottish Ministers further refer to the representations made by Barvas Estate Trust and Anderson MacArthur (on behalf of Lewis Island Crofters Limited) on additional data sources to be used to inform the SEIA.</p>	<p>cited in the comment. The most up-to-date data has been used wherever possible, including data from the 2022 Scottish Census that has been published since the Scoping Report. Data gaps or limitations are outlined in Section 6.5.2.</p>
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	<p>Paragraph 5.4.2.4: The Scottish Ministers agree with the impact pathways to be scoped in however advise that the list is insufficient and refer the Developer to section 3 of Annex 1 of the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023 for a comprehensive list of impacts that should be considered within the SEIA. The Scottish Ministers advise that transport modes, access, and connections should be scoped in. Additionally, socio-economic impacts on tourism should also be scoped in, this is in line with the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023 and the Barvas Estate Trust representation. The Scottish Ministers advise referring to the Barvas Estate Trust, Sandwick Community Council and South Bragar Grazings Committee representations for a further list of impacts to consider.</p>	<p>The assessment set out in this chapter has considered a comprehensive list of impacts, informed with reference to relevant guidance and representations, including those cited in the comment. This includes wider socio-economic effects for the tourism sector, which are assessed in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2 and Section 6.10.2, and effects on the availability of transport which are assessed in Section 6.10.3, Section 6.9.3, and Section 6.8.3, . Impacts on tourism receptors from the Offshore Project are assessed in Chapter 20, Volume 2a. Section 6.4 discusses the approach to identifying the potential impacts included in the assessment.</p>

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	Paragraph 5.4.2.5: With regard to the engagement of local communities, the Scottish Ministers advise that the Developer should consider potential impacts on local communities as a result of the Project and outline how baseline data will be collected to assess socio-economic impacts of the Project. The SEIA report should be transparent in its methodological choices for assessment of socio-economic impacts.	A detailed methodology for the assessment of Socio-economic effects is included in Section 6.5.3. As outlined in Section 6.3.4, a series of focus groups and interviews were carried out with local communities, residents and interest groups. Further information is provided in Appendix 6.2, Volume 2c.
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	Paragraph 5.4.2.6: Paragraph 8.2.4 of the Scoping Report states that there is no embedded mitigation relevant to the socio-economics assessment. The Scottish Ministers highlight the importance in gathering the views of the local communities and using them to inform how best to mitigate potential negative impacts, as well as maximise positive impacts that may come as a result of the Project. This is supported by the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023.	As outlined in Section 6.3.4, a series of focus groups and interviews were carried out with local communities, residents and interest groups. This engagement included discussion of potential mitigation measures. The findings of the engagement have informed the EIA socio-economic assessment and other relevant chapters of the EIAR. Further information is provided in Appendix 6.2, Volume 2c. Further information regarding stakeholder engagement and consultation for the Project is also provided in Chapter 5, Volume 1a, and Appendix 5.4, Volume 1c.
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	Paragraph 5.4.27: In terms of economic impacts, the Scottish Ministers broadly agree with the Developers proposed approach to the assessment and welcome the inclusion of direct, indirect and induced impacts, however consideration should also be given to deadweight, leakage, displacement and substitution. The Developer is also encouraged	The methodology for this assessment has included consideration of direct, indirect and induced effects, and has accounted for deadweight leakage, displacement, substitution and optimism bias. It also takes into account existing employment in relevant sectors within the study area. A detailed methodology is provided in Section 6.5.3.

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
		<p>to include sensitivity analysis in terms of risk, uncertainty and optimism bias. This is in line with Annex 1 of the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023. Furthermore, the Scottish Ministers advise the SEIA include additional analysis regarding potential job creation in comparison to existing jobs in the study area, as outlined in the MD-SEDD advice dated 24 November 2023.</p>	
MD-LOT	Scoping Opinion, May 2024	<p>Paragraph 5.4.2.8: If significant impacts to commercial fisheries are identified, the Scottish Ministers advise an assessment is undertaken on the resulting socio-economic impacts to the local communities.</p>	<p>A Commercial Fisheries Assessment is provided in Chapter 21, Volume 2a of this EIAR. This chapter has considered the potential for the effects reported in Chapter 21, Volume 2a to result in wider socio-economic effects for the commercial fishing sector in local communities.</p>
Sandwick Community Council	Consultation Response, May 2024	<p>Sandwick Community Council noted topics to be included in the scope of the assessment, including ferry service availability, education, healthcare and other service provisions, housing stock and rental market, effects of infrasound on animals, Sunday observance, island and or Gaelic cultural heritage, community wellbeing, traditional practices such as crofting, fishing, use of common grazing, effects on the Hebridean Way, tourism, self catering, hotels, cafes, restaurants, buses, taxis, gift shops, direct and indirect impacts on population and Gaelic, amenity, feeling of wellbeing, likelihood of staying in or returning to the area, effect on</p>	<p>The scope of the assessment has been broadened to include a wider range of impacts, including increased demand for local services, housing, local culture and identity, the Gaelic language, and key sectors including tourism. Effects on local demographics are included in the scope, including potential effects on out-migration of working age people. Further information is provided in Section 6.3.4. Impacts on tourism and recreation receptors from the Offshore Project are assessed in Chapter 20, Volume 2a, and wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector are assessed in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter.</p>

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
		house values, and reduction of Gaelic speakers.	There are not expected to be any impacts on land use, including impacts on crofting land and common grazings, from the Offshore Project. Impacts associated with the Onshore Project will be assessed in the EIAR for the OTW Project. Impacts on health and wellbeing are assessed in Chapter 22, Volume 2a.
Shawbost Community Council	Consultation Response, May 2024	Shawbost Community Council noted that the socio-economic assessment could be improved by including qualitative elements, including Sunday as a day of rest, and issues relating to the capacity and limitations of connectivity and services on the island, particularly during construction and decommissioning when there could be an influx of temporary workers.	The assessment includes impacts on local services and infrastructure including transport, housing, healthcare and education as a result of temporary changes in the population. Effects on Sunday observance are considered as part of the assessment of Socio-cultural effects. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4.
Shawbost Community Council	Consultation Response, May 2024	Shawbost Community Council noted topics to be included in the scope of the assessment, including ferry service availability; education, healthcare and other service provision, housing stock and rental market, health impacts on farm animals (infrasound), demographics, Sunday observance, island and/or Gaelic cultural heritage and identity, arts, community wellbeing, traditional practices such as crofting, fishing, use of common grazing, effects on the Hebridean Way, tourism, self catering, pods etc.	The scope of the assessment has been broadened to include a wider range of impacts, including increased demand for local services, housing, local culture and identity, the Gaelic language, and key sectors including tourism and crofting and agriculture. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4. Impacts on tourism and recreation receptors from the Offshore Project are assessed in Chapter 20, Volume 2a , and wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector are assessed in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter.

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
			<p>There are not expected to be any impacts on land use, including impacts on crofting land and common grazings, from the Offshore Project, and it is not expected that there would be any significant effects on farm animals from noise associated with the Offshore Project. Impacts associated with the Onshore Project will be assessed in the EIAR for the OTW Project. Impacts on health and wellbeing are assessed in Chapter 22, Volume 2a.</p>
Shawbost Community Council	Consultation Response, May 2024	Shawbost Community Council noted that direct and indirect impacts on local population, and on Gaelic, should be added to scoping. Amenity, feeling of wellbeing, likelihood of staying in, or returning to the area, plus effect on house values.	<p>The scope of the assessment includes both direct and indirect impacts on the local population. Impacts on local demographics and on the Gaelic language are considered as part of the assessment of socio-cultural effects. The assessment also considers effects on the availability of housing, but does not assess effects on house prices as house price variation is typically influenced by wider macroeconomic conditions. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4. Impacts on health and wellbeing are assessed in Chapter 22, Volume 2a.</p>
Shawbost Community Council / South Bragar Grazing Committee	Consultation Response, May 2024	Shawbost Community Council and South Bragar Grazing Committee noted that the local study area for the socio-economic assessment should be the west side of Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> , from Shader to Bernera, and the regional study area should be Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> . The Outer	<p>The study areas for the assessment are defined in Section 6.4.2, and include two 'Small Study Areas' on the west coast of Lewis/<i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> and in Stornoway where it is expected that effects are most likely to arise. Effects are also assessed for Lewis and Harris/<i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i></p>

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
		Hebrides could be considered as the council area, but noting that the wind farm will have no impact on other islands such as Barra/Eilean Bharraigh or South Uist/Uibhist a Deas.	and for the Western Isles, where appropriate.
South Bragar Grazing Committee	Consultation Response, May 2024	South Bragar Grazing Committee noted that, under Likely Significant Effects, both for Construction & Decommissioning, and Operation and Maintenance, direct and indirect impacts on the local population should be added, including the effect on population numbers and the Gaelic language.	The scope of the assessment includes both direct and indirect impacts on the local population. Impacts on local demographics and on the Gaelic language are considered as part of the assessment of socio-cultural effects. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4.
South Bragar Grazing Committee	Consultation Response, May 2024	South Bragar Grazing Committee noted that, under Likely Significant Effects, Construction & Decommissioning, direct and indirect impacts of a large influx of temporary workers on communities should be added. Topics to consider in the scope include: ferry service availability, education, healthcare and other service provision, housing stock and rental market, demographics, Sunday observance, island and/or Gaelic cultural heritage and identity, arts, community wellbeing, traditional practices such as crofting, fishing, use of common grazing.	The scope of the assessment has been broadened to include a wider range of impacts, including increased demand for local services, housing, local culture and identity, the Gaelic language, and key sectors including tourism and crofting and agriculture. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4. Impacts on tourism and recreation receptors from the Offshore Project are assessed in Chapter 20, Volume 2a , and wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector are assessed in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter. There are not expected to be any impacts on land use, including impacts on crofting land and common grazings, from the Offshore Project. Impacts associated with the Onshore Project will be assessed in the EIAR for the OTW Project.

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
			Impacts on health and wellbeing are assessed in Chapter 22, Volume 2a.
South Bragar Grazing Committee	Consultation Response, May 2024	South Bragar Grazing Committee noted that, under Likely Significant Effects, both for Construction & Decommissioning, and Operation and Maintenance, impact on house values on the west side of Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> should be added.	The assessment includes effects on the availability of housing, but does not assess effects on house prices as house price variation is typically influenced by wider macroeconomic conditions. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4.
Barvas Estate Trust	Consultation Response, May 2024	Barvas Estate Trust noted that the chapter should include connectivity, Sunday observance, accommodation, language, arts, healthcare and education.	The assessment includes impacts on local services and infrastructure including transport, housing, healthcare and education. Effects on the Gaelic language are also included as part of the assessment of socio-cultural effects. Effects on Sunday observance are considered as part of the assessment of Socio-cultural effects. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4.
Carloway Estate Trust	Consultation Response, May 2024	Carloway Estate Trust noted that consideration should be given to impact on local infrastructure, supply chain and disruption to local employment market.	The assessment includes impacts on local services and infrastructure, impacts on the supply chain, and the potential for displacement of employment from other key sectors. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4.
Marine Analytical Unit (MAU)	Consultation Response, May 2024	The MAU noted that a full socio-economics assessment should be scoped in, to include where epicentres of impacts may be (e.g. ports, landfall, fishing, communities etc). This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder mapping and working groups 	The assessment includes a full socio-economic assessment of jobs and GVA. The study areas for the assessment are defined in Section 6.4.2, which explains how epicentres of impacts have been identified.

Consultee	Date / Document	Comment	Response/Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary data collection • A list of data sources 	
MAU	Consultation Response, May 2024	The MAU disagreed with the list of social impacts to be scoped in and provided a comprehensive list of impacts to be considered in Annex 1 of the consultation response. For example, in addition to impacts on housing, how broader local services will be affected by the development, including healthcare provision and education as a result of potential in-migration of workers.	The scope of the assessment has been broadened to include a wider range of impacts, including increased demand for local services. Further information on the scope of the assessment is provided in Section 6.4.
MAU	Consultation Response, May 2024	In relation to the assessment of jobs and GVA, the MAU commented that employment should be analysed in terms of years of employment, and if possible information about the type of jobs created should be supplied and how these compare with existing jobs in the study area. The MAU expect to see detailed description of the methodology used to assess the economic effects in the EIA including key assumptions. Further advice on undertaking socio-economic assessment was provided in Annex 1 to the consultation response.	A detailed methodology, including assumptions, for the assessment of jobs and GVA is provided in 6.5.3. The assessment presents employment in terms of years of employment, and considers the jobs that will be created in relation to the existing baseline employment in the relevant Study Areas.
MAU	Consultation Response, May 2024	The MAU noted that the assessment should include knock-on effects relating to commercial fisheries and tourism.	Wider socio-economic effects for sectors including fishing and aquaculture and tourism are included within the scope of the assessment. Further information is provided in Section 6.4.

6.3.4 POST SCOPING CONSULTATION

Focus groups and community interviews

6.3.4.1 Further engagement was carried out on the Isle of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* in Summer 2024 through focus groups and individual interviews with affected communities including residents and interest groups who may be directly impacted by the Project. A total of 39 participants (one of whom later chose to withdraw from the research) took part in six focus groups held in July and August 2024, four community interviews held online or in person with individuals or couples, and two additional responses received in writing. The objectives of this engagement were to:

- Identify characteristics and values which might underpin community concerns or priorities;
- Identify perceived social and economic impacts of the development proposals and compare those impacts with those which had already been identified through desk-based research, scoping responses and other consultation responses;
- Understand broad groupings of communities and gather information on how impacts arising from the Project might affect different people and areas in different ways to inform the definition of meaningful epicentres of impact and how they may change;
- Gather local knowledge and experience to gain a greater understanding of how the values and past experiences of the community underpin concerns or priorities with respect to the proposed project;
- Gather the community's views on potential mitigation strategies to enhance positive or neutral impacts and reduce negative impacts.

6.3.4.2 The findings of the engagement have informed the baseline and methodology for this chapter. **Appendix 6.2, Volume 2c** provides further detail on this engagement, including the methodology and ethical considerations.

Stakeholder interviews

6.3.4.3 Alongside the focus groups and community interviews, a series of stakeholder interviews were conducted with local organisations in 2024 to gather further baseline information and to help refine the scope of the assessment. A summary of key messages from these interviews is provided in **Table 6-3**.

Table 6-3: Key messages from stakeholder interviews

Organisation	Date	Key messages	Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)	June 2024	HIE commented on the potential cumulative effects on the local economy from the temporary construction workforce associated with the Project and other	Cumulative effects on the local economy are assessed in Section 6.13 of this chapter.

Organisation	Date	Key messages	Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
		renewable energy developments, including knock-on effects on the supply chain, and possible shortages due to increased demand for goods and labour.	
Western Isles Fishermen’s Association (WIFA) / Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group (OHIFG)	August 2024	WIFA / OHIFG provided baseline information, commented on the potential impacts of the Project on commercial fisheries – particularly in relation to loss of access to fishing areas – and suggested potential mitigation measures.	Effects on commercial fisheries are assessed in Chapter 21, Volume 2a of this EIAR. This includes consideration of changes in access to fishing areas. Wider socio-economic effects on the commercial fisheries, aquaculture, fish and shellfish processing sector are assessed in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter.
Outer Hebrides Tourism	August 2024	Outer Hebrides Tourism commented that reduced ferry capacity and pressures on accommodation provision could result in impacts on tourism, and suggested potential mitigation measures.	Additional demand for ferries and for tourism accommodation from the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning workforce are considered as part of the assessment of wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector, in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter. Additional demand for ferries is also considered in Chapter 20, Volume 2a . Additional demand for ferries is also considered in Chapter 20, Volume 2a .
Surf Lewis / Outer Hebrides Surfing Association	September 2024	Surf Lewis commented on the importance of the west coast of Lewis as a surfing destination, the potential impacts of the Project on surfing, and suggested potential mitigation measures. Potential impacts raised included: impacts on wave action, changes to coastal access, water quality, noise pollution, shadow flicker, wellbeing effects for recreational users of the coast, and depopulation due to the reduced appeal of the Western Isles to recreational users.	Effects on surfing are assessed in Chapter 20, Volume 2a of this EIAR, and are taken into account as part of the assessment of wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector, in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter. Chapter 20, Volume 2a includes consideration of impacts on wave action, changes to coastal access, and amenity effects for recreational users. Effects on the local population and demographics are considered as part

Organisation	Date	Key messages	Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
			<p>of the assessment of socio-cultural effects in Section 6.8.3, Section 6.9.3, and Section 6.10.3 of this chapter. Water quality is assessed separately in Chapter 10: Marine Sediment and Water Quality, Volume 2a. Shadow flicker is scoped out of the assessment in this ES as it is not expected that there would be any impacts due to the distance of the Turbine Area from the shore. Health effects for recreational users of the coast are scoped out of assessment in Chapter 22, Volume 2a.</p>
Barvas Estate	September 2024	<p>Barvas Estate commented on the visual impact of the Project on communities on the west coast of Lewis and the potential implications that this could have for the tourism sector and for the wider economy of the west coast in terms of potential impacts on visitor numbers and visitor spending.</p>	<p>The visual impacts of the Offshore Project are assessed in Chapter 18, Volume 2a, and are also considered as part of the assessment of effects on tourism and recreation receptors in Chapter 20, Volume 2a, and on human health in Chapter 22, Volume 2a. Visual effects are also considered as part of the assessment of wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector, in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter, and the assessment of socio-cultural effects on culture and identity, in Section 6.8.3, Section 6.9.3, and Section 6.10.3 of this chapter. The assessment considers the potential for impacts on tourism receptors to result in changes in tourist activity.</p>
CnES	October 2024	<p>CnES noted that the development of the island economy is a priority. They also commented on the visual impacts of the Project and on potential impacts on housing, and suggested potential mitigation measures.</p>	<p>The visual impacts of the Offshore Project are assessed in Chapter 18, Volume 2a, and are also considered as part of the assessment of effects on tourism and recreation receptors in Chapter 20, Volume 2a, and on human health in Chapter 22, Volume 2a.</p>

Organisation	Date	Key messages	Where This is Addressed in the EIAR
			<p>Visual effects are also considered as part of the assessment of wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector, in Section 6.8.2, Section 6.9.2, and Section 6.10.2 of this chapter, and the assessment of socio-cultural effects on culture and identity, in Section 6.8.3, Section 6.9.3, and Section 6.10.3 of this chapter.</p> <p>Effects on the availability of housing are assessed as part of the assessment of socio-cultural effects, in Section 6.8.3, Section 6.9.3, and Section 6.10.3 of this chapter. The assessment takes into account relevant embedded mitigation measures identified in Table 6-15.</p>
Gaelic representative	October 2024	The Gaelic representative commented on the importance of north west Lewis as an area of linguistic significance, the factors that have contributed to the recent decline in the use of the language, and measures that could help to support the use of Gaelic in future.	Potential impacts on the use of Gaelic are assessed as part of the assessment of socio-cultural effects on culture and identity, in Section 6.8.3, Section 6.9.3, and Section 6.10.3 of this chapter.
Stornoway Police	December 2024	Stornoway Police commented on potential road safety issues, and potential issues associated with the introduction of a temporary construction workforce. The Police noted that construction company management policies can be effective in terms of managing staff behaviour and reducing potential issues.	<p>Potential effects associated with an increase in demand for local services and infrastructure, including the emergency services, is provided in Section 6.8.3, Section 6.9.3, and Section 6.10.3 of this chapter. The assessment takes into account relevant embedded mitigation measures identified in Table 6-15.</p> <p>It is expected that contractors will also put in place codes of conduct to manage staff behaviour and reduce potential issues associated with the presence of a temporary construction workforce.</p> <p>Potential impacts on road safety will be considered in the Traffic and Access chapter of the Onshore EIAR.</p>

6.3.4.4 A number of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests were also submitted to CnES in order to gather additional baseline information regarding the following topics:

- Early Years (nursery and childminders) childcare capacity;
- Primary and Secondary school capacity;
- Care home capacity.

6.3.4.5 Information gathered through these FOI requests has been incorporated into the baseline presented in Section 6.6, and in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**.

Pre-Application Consultation

6.3.4.6 As part of the formal Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) process, as required by the Marine Scotland Act 2010 and the Marine Licensing (Pre-Application Consultation (Scotland) Regulations 2013, Public Consultation 1 (PC1) and Public Consultation 2 (PC2) were undertaken in 2024 and 2025, respectively. The full PAC process is detailed in the **PAC Report – Offshore**. Both PC1 and PC2 consisted of a one-month long virtual exhibition supported by several public exhibitions at community venues across the Isle of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, small scale local information clinics and stakeholder briefings.

6.3.4.7 Similar themes were raised by participants in both PC1 and PC2. In relation to Socio-economics, the key feedback received included concerns regarding potential visual impacts from the Offshore Project on tourism on the west coast of the Isle of Lewis/*Leòdhais*, the impact to local communities and Gaelic culture particularly during construction, and impacts to the fishing industry. There was some acknowledgement of the economic opportunities the Project could provide, but concerns around possible negative impacts on the economy and on local infrastructure from an incoming construction workforce. Respondents also highlighted the need for training opportunities and support for the local supply chain to benefit from the opportunities created by the Project.

6.4 SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

6.4.1 OVERVIEW

6.4.1.1 This section sets out the scope of the EIA assessment for socio-economics. This scope has been developed as the Offshore Project design has evolved and responds to feedback received to date as set out in Section 6.3.

6.4.2 SPATIAL SCOPE AND STUDY AREA

6.4.2.1 The study areas for the socio-economic assessment are determined based on application of relevant local best practice and guidance, as set out in Section 6.2, and in particular Marine Scotland's guidance for defining local areas for assessing the impact of offshore renewables (Marine Scotland, 2022). Following these principles, appropriate study areas, including two Smaller Study Areas (SSAs), have been defined which are outlined below. The study areas for the assessment are shown on **Figure 6.1, Volume 2b** and **Figure 6.2, Volume 2b**.

National Study Area

6.4.2.2 The national study area, for the assessment of jobs and GVA, is Scotland/*Alba*. The assessment considers the proportion of spend that will occur within Scotland, and the proportion that will occur elsewhere in the UK and outside of the UK. Other categories of effects, including wider socio-economic effects and socio-cultural effects, are not assessed for the national study area as these would occur primarily in the Local, Island and Smaller Study Areas (defined below).

Local Study Area

6.4.2.3 Jobs and GVA are also assessed at the local level, for a study area comprising the local authority area of CnES. This study area is referred to hereafter as the Western Isles. Wider socio-economic effects are also assessed for the Western Isles.

Island Study Area

6.4.2.4 Wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects are assessed at the island level. The island study area is defined as the Isles of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. This geography has been used as Census data is available for the island group of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, rather than for the Isle of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* individually.

Smaller Study Areas

6.4.2.5 Two SSAs have been identified for the assessment of wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. These SSAs represent the locations where the epicentres of impacts are likely to be (see Paragraph 5.4.2.2 of the Scoping Opinion (MD-LOT, 2024), as summarised in **Table 6-2**).

- 6.4.2.6 The **West Side SSA** comprises communities along the west coast of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* between Carloway/*Càrlabhadh* and Ness/*Nis* that are expected to experience the greatest level of visibility of the Turbine Area. The SSA of the West Side is made up of the wards of An Taobh Siar agus Nis and Sgìr' Ùige agus Càrlabhadh.
- 6.4.2.7 The **Stornoway SSA** comprises the town of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* where it is assumed that those incoming construction workers who may require short-term, temporary accommodation on the island would be most likely to be housed. The SSA of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* is made up of the electoral wards of Steòrnabhagh a Deas and Steòrnabhagh a Tuath.
- 6.4.2.8 The study areas relevant to each aspect of the assessment are summarised in **Table 6-4** and shown on **Figure 6.1, Volume 2b** and **Figure 6.2, Volume 2b**.

Table 6-4: Summary of study areas

	National – Scotland	Local – Western Isles	Island – Lewis and Harris	Smaller Study Areas - West Side and Stornoway
Employment and GVA	✓	✓		
Wider socio-economic effects		✓	✓	✓
Socio-cultural effects			✓	✓

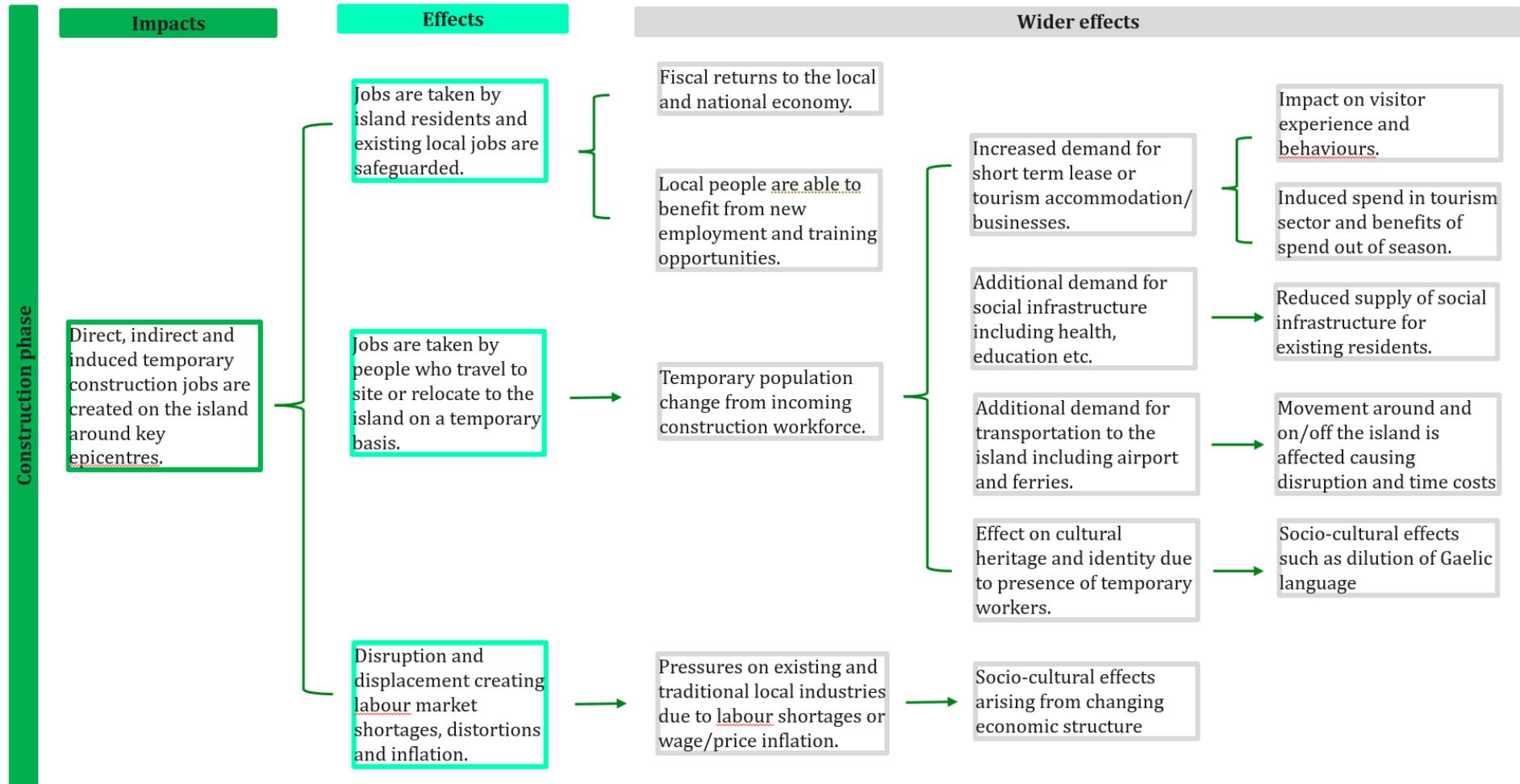
6.4.3 TEMPORAL SCOPE

- 6.4.3.1 The temporal scope of the assessment of socio-economics is the entire lifetime of the Offshore Project, which therefore covers the construction phase (2028/29 – 2032/33), the operation and maintenance phase, which is expected to last for a minimum of 35 years, and the decommissioning phase, which is anticipated to consist of the reverse of the construction phase, including a similar duration.
- 6.4.3.2 MD-SEDD guidance, highlighted in the Scoping Opinion (MD-LOT, 2024), notes that a socio-economic impact assessment should consider the potential for impacts to arise during all phases of a project, including development, construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning. The development phase of the Project will support some jobs locally in the Western Isles, with others remote from the Project. However, as the number of development phase jobs is estimated to be very small, it is not expected that there would be any significant effects, and so the development phase is not considered any further in this assessment.

6.4.4 POTENTIAL RECEPTORS

- 6.4.4.1 The spatial and temporal scope of the assessment enables the identification of receptors which may experience a change as a result of the Offshore Project.
- 6.4.4.2 For socio-economics, a logic model was developed using theory of change to demonstrate the socio-economic impact causal pathways that could arise during the development, construction, and operation and maintenance phases of the Offshore Project. This followed the guidance set out in the UK Government's Magenta Book (HM Treasury, 2020), and identified the range of impacts (changes resulting from the Offshore Project), effects (consequences of impacts) and wider effects (further knock-on consequences) that could arise, drawing on the categories of potential impacts and effects identified in relevant guidance documents listed in **Table 6-1**.
- 6.4.4.3 A worked example of the logic model workflow is provided in **Plate 6-1** below, showing the effects and wider effects flowing from the creation of jobs and GVA during construction.

Plate 6-1: Worked example of logic model



6.4.4.4 The next stage was to use the logic model, along with knowledge and understanding of the Offshore Project and of the study areas, to identify the appropriate study area for each category of effect, and the potential receptors for the assessment of each category of impact and effect. The identified receptors that may experience likely significant socio-economic effects are outlined in **Table 6-5**. Some receptors are included in more than one receptor group as they could be impacted in different ways at different stages of the Offshore Project.

Table 6-5 Receptors requiring assessment for socio-economics

Receptor Group	Receptors included within group
Socio-economic	Economy
	Workforce/labour market
Wider socio-economic	Sectors of the economy (tourism; fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing; transport and storage)
Socio-cultural	Population / community
	Users of community assets and services

6.4.5 POTENTIAL EFFECTS

6.4.5.1 The potential socio-economic effects presented in the Scoping Report focused on employment and economic productivity in the supply chain, direct and indirect impacts on land and sea use practices, and indirect impacts on accommodation providers. In response to comments received in the Scoping Opinion and outlined in **Table 6-2**, the scope of the socio-economic assessment has been broadened to include a wider range of impacts and effects, drawing on the logic model described above. Potential impacts on Socio-economics receptors that have been scoped in for assessment are summarised in **Table 6-6**.

Table 6-6 Activities or impacts scoped into the assessment

Receptor group	Receptor/s	Activity or Impact	Potential Effect
Construction			
Socio-economic	Economy, Workforce/labour market	Construction creates jobs and supply chain opportunities.	Direct, indirect and induced employment and GVA effects.
Wider socio-economic	Sectors of the economy (tourism; fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing;	New jobs increase demand for workers, and potentially for goods and services, including accommodation. Environmental impacts from construction activity.	Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors, such as tourism and commercial fishing.

Receptor group	Receptor/s	Activity or Impact	Potential Effect
	transport and storage)		
Socio-cultural	Population / community	Population change arising from presence of incoming construction workforce.	Temporary changes in demographics.
	Population / community, Users of community assets and services	Impact of temporary workforce on local services and infrastructure.	Increased demand for services could reduce availability.
	Population / community	Impact of demographic change and changes in the environment on local culture and identity	Effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.
Operation and maintenance			
Socio-economic	Economy, Workforce/labour market	Operation and maintenance creates jobs and supply chain opportunities.	Direct, indirect and induced employment and GVA effects.
Wider socio-economic	Sectors of the economy (tourism; fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing; transport and storage)	New jobs increase demand for workers, and potentially for goods and services, including accommodation. Environmental impacts from operation and maintenance activity.	Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for other key sectors, such as tourism and commercial fishing.
Socio-cultural	Population/ community	Population change arising from presence of permanent operational workforce.	Permanent changes in demographics.
	Users of community assets and services	Impact of new population on local services and infrastructure.	Increased demand for services could reduce availability.
	Population/ community	Impact of demographic change and changes in the environment on local culture and identity	Effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.
Decommissioning			
Socio-economic	Economy, Workforce/labour market	Decommissioning creates jobs and supply chain opportunities.	Direct, indirect and induced employment and GVA effects.

Receptor group	Receptor/s	Activity or Impact	Potential Effect
Wider socio-economic	Sectors of the economy (tourism; fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing; transport and storage)	New jobs increase demand for workers, and potentially for goods and services, including accommodation. Environmental impacts from decommissioning activity.	Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors, such as tourism and commercial fishing.
Socio-cultural	Population / community	Population change arising from presence of incoming decommissioning workforce.	Temporary changes in demographics.
	Population / community, Users of community assets and services	Impact of temporary workforce on local services and infrastructure.	Increased demand for services could reduce availability.
	Population / community	Impact of demographic change and changes in the environment on local culture and identity	Effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.

6.4.6 ACTIVITIES OR IMPACTS SCOPED OUT OF ASSESSMENT

6.4.6.1 No potential impacts were scoped out as part of the Scoping process. Direct and indirect impacts on land use practices have been scoped out of assessment in this chapter as there are not expected to be any likely significant effects associated with the construction, operation and maintenance, or decommissioning of the Offshore Project. An assessment of the direct and indirect impacts on land use practices from the OTW Project will be provided in the Onshore EIAR.

6.5 METHODOLOGY FOR BASELINE DATA GATHERING AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.5.1 METHODOLOGY FOR BASELINE DATA GATHERING

Overview

6.5.1.1 Baseline data collection has been undertaken to obtain information over the Study Areas described in Section 6.4.3. The current baseline conditions presented in Section 6.6.1 sets out data currently available from the Study Areas, and have been drawn from a desk-based study of published data, and from information gathered through the focus groups and stakeholder interviews described in Section 6.3.4. The following section describes the methodology for the desk-based study.

Desk study

6.5.1.2 The baseline is a desk-based study using published online data from credible government, industry, and academic sources, including the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and National Records of Scotland (NRS). Baseline data is presented at the appropriate geographical scale for the relevant study area, as discussed in Section 6.4.2, with regional and national data provided for comparison. Baseline information that has informed the assessment is summarised in Section 6.6 of this chapter, with further information provided in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**.

6.5.1.3 The data sources that have been collected and used to inform this socio-economic assessment are summarised in **Table 6-7**. Alongside this statistical information, the baseline has also drawn on findings from research reports and policy documents, and on the findings of the focus groups and community interviews outlined in Section 6.3.4. A full list of references is provided in Section 6.17.

Table 6-7 Data sources used to inform the socio-economics assessment

Source	Date	Summary	Coverage of Study Area
Land Registry	2026	UK House Price Index	Full coverage of relevant study area (Western Isles, Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
NRS	2024	Census 2022	Full coverage of relevant study area (SSAs, Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i> , Western Isles, Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
NRS	2025	Subnational Population Projections (2022-based)	Full coverage of relevant study area (Western Isles, Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
ONS	2025	Annual Population Survey	Full coverage of relevant study area (Western Isles, Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
ONS	2025	GVA	Full coverage of relevant study area (Western Isles, Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
ONS	2025	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)	Full coverage of relevant study area (Western Isles, Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
ONS	2025	Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)	Full coverage of relevant study area (SSAs, Western Isles, Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
Scottish Government	2020	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)	Available at data zone level for the whole of Scotland
Visit Scotland	2023	Scottish Accommodation Occupancy Survey	Full coverage of relevant study area (Western Isles,

Source	Date	Summary	Coverage of Study Area
			Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)
Visit Scotland and CnES	2018	Outer Hebrides Visitor Survey	Full coverage of relevant study area (Western Isles)

Site Surveys

6.5.1.4 As discussed in Section 6.3.4, a series of focus groups was conducted to inform the baseline and assessment. Further information is provided in **Appendix 6.2, Volume 2c**. No further site surveys were undertaken.

6.5.2 DATA LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

6.5.2.1 Baseline datasets are not always available at the spatial level required for each study area. Where data is not available at the smallest area level, data for the larger area has been used as a proxy. For example, Census data is available for the 'island group' of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* rather than for the Isle of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. The baseline therefore uses Census data for Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* for the island study area.

6.5.2.2 The CAPEX and OPEX for the Project have been estimated based on industry benchmarks, guidance, and information supplied by the Applicant. It has not been possible to disaggregate offshore and onshore spend, and so jobs and GVA have been modelled for the Project as a whole. This is discussed further in Section 6.5.3. Further information on the assumptions that have been used to estimate CAPEX and OPEX is also provided in the detailed methodology set out in Section 6.5.3.

6.5.2.3 Assumptions and limitations specific to the focus group research are provided in **Appendix 6.2, Volume 2c**.

6.5.3 METHODOLOGY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Introduction

6.5.3.1 The project-wide generic approach to assessment is set out in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a**. A matrix approach as described in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a** has been used to determine the significance of effects, by comparing impact magnitude against receptor sensitivity. This methodology has been used to assess the construction, O&M, and decommissioning phases of the Offshore Project.

6.5.3.2 The following sections provide the assessment methodology used to assess the socio-economic, wider socio-economic, and socio-cultural effects.

Methodology for assessing socio-economic impacts

- 6.5.3.3 Jobs and GVA are assessed on a whole Project basis, including both the Offshore Project and the OTW Project. As noted above, this is because the modelling of economic effects is based on estimated CAPEX and OPEX for the Project as a whole, and it has not been possible to disaggregate spend on the Offshore Project from spend on the OTW Project.
- 6.5.3.4 An economic model has been built to estimate the direct, indirect, and induced jobs and GVA associated with the construction and operation and maintenance phases of the Project. The model uses industry benchmarks to estimate the CAPEX and OPEX for the Project, and applies government and industry data to these figures to estimate jobs and GVA at the local, national and UK level. The approach is broadly consistent with HM Treasury Green Book guidance (HM Treasury, 2022).
- 6.5.3.5 Jobs and GVA are estimated in terms of:
- Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs, a measure which standardises temporary, part-time, occasional and full-time jobs into one metric measured by person years of employment. One person-year is equivalent to one person working full-time for one year;
 - Productivity is measured by GVA.
- 6.5.3.6 There are three rounds of economic effects considered relevant to both jobs and GVA estimates. These are:
- **Direct impacts:** jobs and GVA created directly by the Project;
 - **Indirect impacts:** jobs and GVA created indirectly through the procurement of goods and services throughout the supply chain;
 - **Induced impacts:** jobs and GVA created from spend on goods and services from direct and indirect employees spending.
- 6.5.3.7 These socio-economic impacts are then used as a basis to inform wider socio-economic effects and socio-cultural effects.

Estimating CAPEX and OPEX

- 6.5.3.8 Direct, indirect and induced economic effects for both jobs and GVA are estimated based on CAPEX and OPEX. Information on decommissioning expenditure (DECEX) is not available at this stage. CAPEX and OPEX have been estimated based on industry data and estimates provided by the Applicant. Two scenarios have been considered: an upper and lower case to account for uncertainty in project design in the final operating capacity of the Project. The final selection of wind turbine generators (WTGs) and the overall capacity of the wind farm will be determined through a procurement process conducted after receiving Section 36 (s.36) Consent, and so the lower case represents a lower operating capacity and the upper case a higher operating capacity.

Distribution effects

6.5.3.9 The assessment estimates the distribution of jobs and GVA effects between the local (Western Isles) and national (Scotland/*Alba*) study areas. Distribution of spend between these study areas is based on information provided by the Applicant in the Supply Chain Development Statement (SCDS) provided to Crown Estate Scotland (Spiorad na Mara Ltd, 2023), and on industry data-sources (BVG Associates, 2017), summarised in **Table 6-8**. The distribution of local spend is based on analysis by BVG Associates as the SCDS does not provide a breakdown of spend at local level.

6.5.3.10 The extent of local spend could vary depending on the locations chosen for construction base ports and for the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) base. These locations are not confirmed at this stage, however, the currently preferred location for the O&M base is Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*. As described in **Chapter 3, Volume 1a**, it is anticipated that most of the offshore infrastructure will be fabricated offsite and then either transported directly from the fabrication facility to site, or stored in a suitable port facility before being transported to site. Due to the specialist nature of many of the parts and skills required, it is assumed that the majority of fabrication will be outside of the Western Isles. Local content could include marshalling, logistics and yard operations at the construction port.

Table 6-8: Distribution factors

	CAPEX	OPEX	Source
Local (Western Isles)	2%	25%	BVG, 2017
National (Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)	16%	25%	SCDS, 2023 & BVG, 2017
UK	8%	12%	SCDS, 2023
Overseas	74%	38%	SCDS, 2023
Total	100%	100%	

Source: Assessment assumptions based on sources, 2025

Estimating jobs and GVA

6.5.3.11 Scottish Government produce input-output supply and use tables (I-O SUTs) which provide a snapshot of the economy at any given time. These show the impact of a change in final demand in one sector and the supply chain impacts stemming from the initial change to final use. Direct job and GVA impacts are estimated from CAPEX and OPEX using FTE and GVA effects. Indirect effects are estimated using Scottish Government Type I multipliers (which estimate direct and indirect outputs in the economy). Induced effects are estimated using Scottish Government Type II multipliers (which estimate induced outputs in the economy) (Scottish Government, 2025).

Adjustments

6.5.3.12 Jobs and GVA estimates were adjusted to account for uncertainty, risk, optimism bias and additionality. The following adjustments were considered:

- **Leakage**, the level of impacts lost outside of the study area, in this case outside Scotland/*Alba*, was assessed by removing expenditure likely to occur outside of Scotland/*Alba*;
- **Deadweight**, the level of impacts that would occur anyway, without the Project, is assumed to be low because there is no existing wind farm or other similar land use in this location;
- **Displacement**, the level of benefits that are displaced from one sector to another. The Project may displace some workers from other projects and sectors. An assumed displacement rate of 25% is applied to construction jobs as a conservative worst case scenario. This is due to feedback on concerns around labour shortages locally, the baseline economic and labour market conditions and the context of an island economy. A displacement factor has not been applied to operational employment as it is assumed this would be negligible. Displacement may also occur at the small area level, impacting other sectors which is considered in the assessment of wider socio-economic effects below;
- **Substitution effects** where a firm substitutes one activity for another, for example, to take advantage of public assistance. The Project has received public assistance through the Contract for Difference (CfD), however, no substitution effects are identified in this assessment because CfD may increase the feasibility of the project but does not change the nature of the project (i.e. offshore wind) or labour requirements;
- **Optimism bias** on benefits was accounted for by considering two Project scenarios, an upper case and lower case. Optimism bias is not included in costs because it is a privately financed Project and includes contingency to account for uncertainty;
- **A discount rate** of 3.5% was applied to monetised economic effects (i.e. GVA) to estimate results in present values, in this case 2025 prices, the purpose being to understand what future impacts look like in today's values and accounting for future uncertainty and risk.

Methodology for assessing wider socio-economic effects.

6.5.3.13 Wider socio-economic effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only, and the assessment draws on the findings of other relevant offshore topics including:

- **Chapter 16, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 18, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 19, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 20, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 21, Volume 2a.**

6.5.3.14 The assessment of wider socio-economic effects is qualitative. It considers the effects that could arise within the local economy of the SSAs, Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the Western Isles as a result of the direct impacts of the Offshore Project, including new jobs as well as changes in sea use practices and associated environmental impacts. This includes, for example, disruption to ports, harbours, or commercial fisheries; noise effects; or changes in the visual environment that could affect businesses and commercial activities. The distribution of wider socio-economic effects at the smaller area level is considered as part of the assessment.

6.5.3.15 In relation to tourism, the assessment also considers the number of construction workers required for the Offshore Project who are likely to need temporary accommodation on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and assesses the impact that this additional demand could have on the availability of accommodation for visitors, and on the availability of transport to the island.

6.5.3.16 As the share of local content during construction is small (2%), it is not anticipated that there would be any significant inflationary effect on prices as a result of increased demand for goods in the local supply chain.

Methodology for assessing socio-cultural effects

6.5.3.17 Socio-cultural effects are also assessed for the Offshore Project only. The assessment of socio-cultural effects is qualitative and draws on the findings of other relevant topics. It considers the likely effect of an incoming construction workforce on local demographics, during construction and operation, and on demand for local services and infrastructure including housing and transport connectivity. It also assesses the likely effect on culture and identity from any change in demographics, changes in sea use practices, or environmental impacts during construction and operation and maintenance. The distribution of socio-cultural effects by demographic group and at the smaller area level is considered as part of the assessment.

6.5.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

6.5.4.1 The assessment of significance has drawn on aspects of work being undertaken in collaboration with the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) to develop a targeted and refined methodology for the assessment of social and economic effects in the context of a highly rural island setting. This has included developing criteria to determine the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of potential impacts, taking into account the wide range of economic and social impacts that could arise, and local issues around connectivity, a lack of alternatives in service provision and infrastructure, geographical distance from services and urban centres, labour shortages and pressures on the housing market.

6.5.4.2 This work is ongoing, and addresses a broader range of topics than would typically be considered within an EIA. However, the methodology has sought to incorporate aspects of the work that are relevant to the topics scoped into this assessment – including the development of bespoke criteria to assess the magnitude of impacts and sensitivity of receptors, as described below – whilst aligning with the general approach to the assessment outlined in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a**. Other aspects of the work have informed the methodology used in **Chapter 22, Volume 2a**.

Magnitude

6.5.4.3 The magnitude of an impact is typically determined by the following factors, as set out in the ISEP guidance referenced in Section 6.2 (ISEP, 2025):

- The **size** of the impact based on anticipated change versus the baseline;

- The **scale or extent** of the impact – the geo-spatial area which the impact would occur;
- The **duration** of the impact – whether the impact would be short, medium or long-term;
- The **frequency** of the impact (if relevant) – how often the impact would occur;
- The **reversibility** of the impact – whether the impact would be temporary or permanent;
- Whether the impact would be **beneficial, adverse or negligible**.

6.5.4.4 For this assessment, tailored criteria have been developed based on these factors, drawing on the work undertaken with UHI and taking into account the local context, as outlined above. The criteria that have been used to assess the magnitude of impacts are set out in **Table 6-9**. These are qualitative criteria that do not seek to quantify the degree of change that would be considered high, medium or low, and have been developed to allow for flexibility so that the assessment can reflect the local context. This approach aligns with the ISEP guidance (ISEP, 2025).

Table 6-9: Magnitude criteria

Magnitude of Impact	Description
High	<p>Total loss or major alteration (beneficial or adverse) of a socio-economic receptor, or permanent closure or severe effect upon the viability of a business, community facility or public service.</p> <p>An impact with permanent implications in the long-term for many people across a broad cross-section of the population, affecting various elements of local communities' quality of life, or impacting permanently on local culture and identity.</p> <p>An impact that would be permanent.</p>
Medium	<p>Partial alteration (beneficial or adverse) to one or more key elements of a socio-economic receptor's baseline value, moderate change to business revenues with potential job losses but no threat to the viability of the business, or moderate change to the function or service of community facilities and public services.</p> <p>An impact with medium to long-term implications throughout the Offshore Project lifecycle affecting specific groups of people and/or specific elements of local communities' quality of life, with temporary impacts on local culture and identity.</p> <p>An impact that would be medium-term and reversible.</p>
Low	<p>Slight alteration (beneficial or adverse) of the socio-economic receptor's baseline value, minor change to business revenues with isolated job losses but no threat to the viability of the business, or minor change to the function or service of community facilities and public services.</p>

Magnitude of Impact	Description
	A short-term impact affecting a small number of people, with limited effect on local communities' quality of life, or on local culture and identity. An impact that would be short-term and reversible.
Negligible	Very little change from baseline conditions. Change barely distinguishable, approximating to a 'no change' situation.

Sensitivity

6.5.4.5 The sensitivity of a receptor is typically indicated by the following factors, as set out in the ISEP guidance referenced in Section 6.2 (ISEP, 2025):

- Its social, economic, or environmental **value** in relevant local, regional or national policy;
- Its **resilience** and **capacity** to absorb change;
- Its **scarcity** value, or the availability of suitable alternative resources;
- The extent to which the local community **depend** on it.

6.5.4.6 Based on these factors, and drawing on the findings of the work with UHI, a more detailed set of sensitivity criteria for each category of potential effects identified in Section 6.4.5 has been developed. These criteria use a framework identified through the UHI work, that takes account of the fragility of receptor groups to social, economic and political conditions, and their ability to control and access resources to cope with any negative impacts (Vanclay, 2015; Rowan, 2024).

6.5.4.7 The criteria that have been used to assess the sensitivity of receptors are set out in **Table 6-10**. Careful consideration has been given to the formulation of criteria to incorporate key issues for rural and remote regions while also providing the flexibility for the assessment to reflect local value systems and the local baseline context. For each category of effects, sensitivity is determined by a combination of indicators of fragility (comprising their social, economic, or environmental **value**, their **scarcity** value, and the extent to which the local community **depends** on them), and indicators of adaptability or resilience (their **resilience** and **capacity** to absorb change).

Table 6-10 Sensitivity criteria

Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
High	Socio-economic impacts <i>Fragility:</i> There is no or low availability of labour and skills in the local workforce. Therefore, a development could lead to labour market pressure and distortions (i.e. skills and capacity shortages, import of labour, wage inflation).

Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
	<p>There is a high dependence on a small number of key industries, which may be vulnerable to disruption or shocks. There are low levels of productivity and indications of seasonal or under-employment.</p> <p>A receptor is of high socio-economic value. It is of importance at a national or international level and has little capacity to absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is limited diversity of industries and household income streams, high seasonal dependence, limited local skill sets, and limited opportunities to access training.</p> <hr/> <p>Wider socio-economic effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> The economy and supply chain are highly dependent on one industry, with a lack of diversity in the supply chain and low productive capacity.</p> <p>Businesses and the supply chain are highly dependent on natural resources and highly susceptible to disruption or shocks. There is a high rate of business births and deaths and limited stability within the supply chain.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is an inability to expand within the supply chain in response to increased demand, and limited availability of workers with relevant skills. There is low connectivity and high import costs, and difficulties in recruiting across many sectors.</p> <hr/> <p>Socio-cultural effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> There are steep declines or increases in the projected population. The population is defined as very rural or remote, and is highly dependent on locally available resources and infrastructure. There may be high levels of deprivation, fuel poverty, inequality, and isolation.</p> <p>Local services have insufficient resources to meet existing demand. Communities rely heavily on a limited number of resources, with limited alternatives, and little access to specialist services.</p> <p>Distinct cultural characteristics of national/international importance, however decline in traditional heritage knowledge and practices and/or decline in use of local language.</p> <p>A receptor is recognised as a major factor that contributes to the cultural heritage and identity of the local community.</p>

Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
	<p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is a lack of support service capacity and lack of access to alternative resources. Institutions have limited flexibility to adapt to disruption or change, and there is a lack of alternative services without incurring additional cost.</p> <p>There are few community spaces for communal activity, and lack of access to opportunities for social events and meetings (either due to physical issues such as lack of transport or due to social attitudes).</p>
Medium	<p>Socio-economic impacts</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> The area has a constrained supply of labour and skills. Therefore, a development may lead to labour market pressure and distortions.</p> <p>There is a dependence on a small number of key industries, but these are not vulnerable to disruption or shocks. There are average levels of productivity, but some indications of seasonal or under-employment.</p> <p>A receptor is of moderate socio-economic value. It is of importance as a national level and has some capacity to absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is limited diversity of industries and household income streams and some seasonal dependence. Local skill sets reflect national averages, and there are some opportunities for training, but these may be difficult to access.</p> <p>Wider socio-economic effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> The economy and supply chain are dependent on a small number of industries, with some diversity in the supply chain and limited productive capacity. Businesses and the supply chain may be dependent on natural resources but are not highly susceptible to disruption or shocks. There is an average rate of business births and deaths and some stability within the supply chain.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is limited ability to expand within the supply chain in response to increased demand, and some availability of workers with relevant skills. There are high import costs, and some difficulties in recruiting in some sectors.</p> <p>Socio-cultural effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> Larger than average changes in the projected population. The population is dependent on locally available resources and infrastructure. There may be high or above average levels of deprivation, fuel poverty, inequality, and isolation.</p>

Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
	<p>Local services are under-resourced and have limited capacity to meet existing demand. Communities rely heavily on a limited number of resources, but have some alternatives, and some segments of the population may not have access to specialist services.</p> <p>Distinct cultural characteristics of local/regional importance, however moderate decline in traditional heritage knowledge and practices and/or moderate decline in use of local language.</p> <p>A receptor is recognised as a major factor that contributes to the cultural heritage and identity of the local community.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is a lack of support service capacity but some access to alternative resources. Institutions have some flexibility to adapt to disruption or change, and there is some availability of alternative services without incurring additional cost.</p> <p>There are community spaces for communal activity, however some groups may lack access to opportunities for social events and meetings (either due to physical issues such as lack of transport or due to social attitudes).</p>
Low	<p>Socio-economic impacts</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> The supply of labour and skills in the area has relatively few constraints, although there may be some challenges with recruitment in specific sectors. A development is unlikely to lead to major labour market pressure or distortions.</p> <p>The local economy is stable, with some degree of diversification. There are average levels of productivity and employment.</p> <p>A receptor is of low socio-economic value. It is of importance at a national/local level and can absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is average diversity of industries and household income streams and limited seasonal dependence. Local skill sets reflect national averages, and an average range of training opportunities are available and can be accessed easily.</p> <hr/> <p>Wider socio-economic effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> There is an average degree of diversity within the economy and supply chain, and capacity within the supply chain to expand to meet increased demand. Businesses and the supply chain are not dependent on natural resources and are</p>

Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
	<p>resilient to disruption or shocks. There is an average rate of business births and deaths and stability within the supply chain.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is ability to expand within the supply chain in response to increased demand, and good availability of workers with relevant skills. Import costs and connectivity are average, and there are few difficulties in recruiting workers with appropriate skills.</p> <p>Socio-cultural effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> The population is broadly stable. There is average dependence on locally available resources and infrastructure, and average levels of deprivation, fuel poverty, inequality, and isolation.</p> <p>Local services have sufficient resources to meet existing demand. There is average dependence on local resources, and residents have access to the specialist services they need.</p> <p>Few distinct cultural characteristics of national/international importance OR some traditional heritage knowledge and practices and continued use of local language.</p> <p>A receptor is recognised as a very minor factor that contributes to the cultural heritage and identity of the local community.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is average level of support service capacity, with access to alternative resources. Institutions have average flexibility to adapt to disruption or change, and there is availability of alternative services without incurring additional cost.</p> <p>There are community spaces for communal activity, and social events and meetings are accessible to all members of the community.</p>
Negligible	<p>Socio-economic impacts</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> The area has an unconstrained supply of labour and skills, and there are no challenges to recruitment.</p> <p>The local economy is stable and robust, with a high degree of diversification. There are high levels of productivity and growth.</p> <p>A receptor is of very low socio-economic value. It is of limited importance at a local level and can absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character.</p>

Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
	<p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is a diverse range of industries and household income streams and very little seasonal dependence. There is an adaptable workforce with diverse skillsets and access to a wide range of training opportunities.</p> <hr/> <p>Wider socio-economic effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> There is a stable and diverse economy and supply chain, with capacity to expand to meet increased demand. Businesses and the supply chain are not dependent on natural resources and are not susceptible to disruption or shocks.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> There is ability to expand within the supply chain in response to increased demand, and good availability of workers with relevant skills. Import costs are low and connectivity is high, and there is good availability of workers with appropriate skills.</p> <hr/> <p>Socio-cultural effects</p> <p><i>Fragility:</i> The population is stable, and there are low levels of deprivation, fuel poverty, inequality, and isolation.</p> <p>Local services have sufficient resources to meet existing and future demand. There is low dependence on local resources, and residents have access to the specialist services they need.</p> <p>Few distinct cultural characteristics of national/international importance OR stable traditional heritage knowledge and practices and continued use of local language.</p> <p>A receptor is recognised as a very minor factor that contributes to the cultural heritage and identity of the local community.</p> <p><i>Adaptability/resilience:</i> Support services have a high degree of capacity, with access to alternative resources. Institutions have flexibility to adapt to disruption or change, and there are many alternative services available without incurring additional cost.</p> <p>There are community spaces for communal activity, and social events and meetings are frequent and easily accessible to all members of the community.</p>

Significance

6.5.4.8 Following the identification of the magnitude of impact and sensitivity it is possible to determine the significance of effect. The matrix provided in **Table 6-11** below is used as a framework to aid in determination of the impact assessment and provides further detail of what effect is considered to

be significant. Effects that are assessed as ‘major’ or ‘moderate’ are typically considered to be ‘significant’ in EIA terms. However, professional judgement is applied, where appropriate, to determine significance of effect.

Table 6-11: Significance matrix

		Sensitivity of Receptor/Receiving Environment to Change/Effect			
Magnitude of Change/ Effect	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	Negligible (Not Significant)	Negligible (Not Significant)	Negligible (Not Significant)
	Low	Negligible (Not Significant)	Negligible (Not Significant)	Minor (Not Significant)	Minor (Not Significant)
	Medium	Negligible (Not Significant)	Minor (Not Significant)	Moderate (Potentially Significant)	Moderate (Potentially Significant)
	High	Negligible (Not Significant)	Minor (Not Significant)	Moderate (Potentially Significant)	Major (Significant)

6.6 BASELINE CONDITIONS

6.6.1 CURRENT BASELINE

6.6.1.1 As noted above, a detailed economic, social and cultural baseline is provided in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**. This section provides a summary of key datasets relevant to the assessment.

Socio-economic context

Employment and economic activity

6.6.1.2 The Western Isles has a slightly higher rate of economic activity than the Scottish average, at 59.3% compared with 56.9% (NRS, 2022). Among economically active residents, unemployment is below average at 2.9% compared with 4.7% for Scotland/*Alba*.

6.6.1.3 However, **Table 4.7** in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** shows residents in the Western Isles are more likely to be employed in part-time employment or self-employed than the average for Scotland/*Alba*. The difference is particularly marked among women, and rates of part-time employment are highest in the retail, accommodation and food services sectors. The high rate of part-time working could suggest a degree of under-employment within the local labour market. It could also reflect the practice of working alongside holding a croft as well as other informal economic activity or domestic responsibilities: 55.6% of employees in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector are recorded as part-time.

Earnings

6.6.1.4 Data from the ONS ASHE shows that median gross weekly pay for residents of the Western Isles in 2025 was £780.30, which is above the Scottish average of £775.60. On a workplace basis, however, average earnings are lower in the Western Isles than average, at £762.70 compared with £773.80 (ONS, 2025). This shows that jobs located in the Western Isles pay less than the Scotland/*Alba* average, and suggests that some residents of the Western Isles are accessing better paid work outside of the local authority area. Travel to work data also indicates that some residents work outside of the Western Isles, with above average proportions of workers commuting longer distances, including 17.7% of residents commuting 60km or more (NRS, 2022).

Productivity

6.6.1.5 In 2023, total GVA in the Western Isles was £645m (ONS, 2025). There has been strong GVA growth in the area with an uplift of 37% over the last ten years, however this falls behind the national uplift (+47%) over the same period. The largest industries locally in terms of GVA are real estate activities which accounts for 17% of total GVA, followed by public administration and defence (16%), and the human health and social work sector (14%).

6.6.1.6 GVA per FTE in the Western Isles in 2023 was £69,730, which was lower than the Scottish average of £85,774 (ONS, 2025). The Western Isles has the third lowest GVA per FTE of all the local authorities in Scotland/*Alba*. However, GVA per population was only the 12th lowest in Scotland/*Alba*, which could suggest that the lower rate of GVA per FTE is a reflection of the structure of the economy in the Western Isles and the relative importance of sectors such as agriculture that generally record lower rates of productivity.

Economic structure

6.6.1.7 The Western Isles is recognised as an economically fragile area, which is reliant on primary industries such as fishing and agriculture (Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership, 2017). Employment in fishing and agriculture is discussed in more detail below, however, data from the latest Census shows that the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector is one of several that employs a larger than average share of the workforce in the Western Isles, accounting for 5.1% of employment compared with 1.6% across Scotland/*Alba* (NRS, 2022).

6.6.1.8 Data provided in **Table 6-12** shows that the largest sector in the Western Isles by employment is human health, which accounts for 16.6% of the workforce, above the national average of 14.6%. This may reflect the age profile of the island, and the role of the Western Isles Hospital (WIH) in Stornoway as an important employer. Other sectors that employ a larger than average proportion of the workforce in the Western Isles include construction (8.9% compared with 7.3% nationally) and transport and storage (7.9% compared with 4.9% nationally) (NRS, 2022). It is likely that the relatively large share of employment in transport and storage reflects the importance of air and ferry services between the islands and the mainland, and associated employment at airports, ferry terminals, and at sea.

Table 6-12: Employment by industry (Census)

Sector	Western Isles (%)	Scotland/ <i>Alba</i> (%)	Difference between Western Isles and Scotland/ <i>Alba</i> (percentage points)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5.1	1.6	3.5
Mining and quarrying	1.7	1.6	0.1
Manufacturing	8.4	8	0.4
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	0.8	0.7	0.1
Water supply, sewage waste management	0.7	0.7	0.0
Construction	8.9	7.3	1.6
Wholesale and retail	9.6	11.2	(1.6)
Transport and storage	7.9	4.9	3.0
Accommodation and food service	6.1	6.9	(0.8)
Information and communication	1.7	2.9	(1.2)
Financial and insurance	1.2	4.3	(3.1)
Real estate	0.9	1	(0.1)
Professional and scientific	3.6	5.8	(2.2)
Admin and support services	3.7	4.7	(1.0)
Public admin and defence	8.8	9.1	(0.3)
Education	8.9	8.2	0.7
Human health	16.6	14.6	2.0
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.9	2.7	(0.8)
Other	3.5	3.8	(0.3)

Source: NRS, 2022

Wider socio-economic context

6.6.1.9 The logic model described in Section 6.4.4 of this report has identified potential wider socio-economic effects for traditional established industries, including those that rely on access to natural resources such as agriculture, commercial fishing, and tourism. The transport and storage sector is also a significant employer locally that could be impacted by the Offshore Project. This section provides further detail on the role of each of the commercial fishing, tourism, and transport and storage sectors within the economy of the SSAs, Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and the Western Isles.

6.6.1.10 Information on agriculture and crofting is not provided here as there are not expected to be any effects on the sector from the Offshore Project. Baseline data relating to agriculture and crofting is provided in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**.

Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing

6.6.1.11 Commercial fishing, aquaculture, and fish and shellfish processing are important employers, particularly in some parts of the Western Isles. Data from BRES shows that, in 2024, there were 75

people working in commercial fishing in the Western Isles, which accounted for 0.6% of total employment in the area. This is higher than the national average of 0.1%. (ONS, 2025). In the West Side SSA, the commercial fishing sector represented 1.1% of employment, and in the Stornoway SSA it represented 0.2% of employment.

6.6.1.12 BRES data shows there were a further 175 people in the Western Isles working in the aquaculture sector in 2024, 1.4% of all employment in the area. There is a particular concentration in the West Side SSA where there were 50 people working in aquaculture, 5.4% of all employment. The processing and preserving of fish, crustaceans and molluscs employed a further 150 people in the Western Isles, including 10 in the West Side SSA (1.1% of all employment) and 30 in the Stornoway SSA (0.4% of all employment).

6.6.1.13 In total, 3.3% of employment in the Western Isles in 2025 was in fishing, aquaculture, or fish and shellfish processing and 7.6% in the West Side SSA. However, Bakkafrost, who ran a harvesting station in Arnish/*Airinis* and a processing plant in Marybank/*Bruach Màiri*, temporarily closed both sites in July 2024 for at least 18 months, with the reported loss of 80 jobs in 2024 (Stornoway Gazette, 2024).

6.6.1.14 90% of fish landings in the Western Isles are shellfish. Deep sea, finfish, and white fish account for the remaining 10%. A significant proportion of the shellfish are exported, with the primary market for Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* shellfish exports being Continental Europe (NatureScot, 2020). Baseline data presented in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a** shows that the key species landed from the commercial fisheries local study area are Norway lobster, langoustine or prawn; lobster; brown crab; Ballan wrasse; razor clam; king scallop; velvet crab; horse mackerel; and mackerel. Further information is provided in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a**.

Tourism

6.6.1.15 Tourism is a major contributor to the economy of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the wider Western Isles. The Outer Hebrides Visitor Survey, commissioned by CnES in partnership with VisitScotland, found that there were approximately 219,000 visitors to the Western Isles in 2017, adding £65m to the economy, which amounts to approximately 10-15% of the overall economic activity on the islands (CnES and VisitScotland, 2018). The most popular reasons leisure visitors gave for visiting the Western Isles were the scenery and landscape (71%).

6.6.1.16 An increasing number of visitors arrive by cruise ship, particularly since the completion of Stornoway Deep Water Terminal in 2024, which increased capacity at Stornoway Port and allowed it to accommodate large cruise liners (McLaughlin and Harvey). The current cruise schedule for 2026 shows cruise ships arriving at Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* between April and September, with activity peaking in August when there are expected to be 13 arrivals, with passenger numbers varying between 110 and 3,560 passengers (Cruise Timetables, 2026).

6.6.1.17 **Table 6-13** provides information on accommodation stock in the Western Isles in 2024 (CnES, 2025). The largest share of visitor accommodation comprises self-catering units or serviced apartments, followed by hotels, camping and caravanning, and guest houses, B&Bs and lodges. Across Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, there is a total of 5,129 tourist bedspaces.

Table 6-13: Accommodation stock, Western Isles

Type of Accommodation	Number of Providers	Maximum Bedspaces	% of Total Bedspaces
Camping, caravanning and touring	29	726	9.2%
Guest houses, B&B, lodges	119	723	9.2%
Hotels	29	898	11.4%
Self-catering / serviced apartments	947	4,847	61.4%
Pods / chalets / static caravans	107	449	5.7%
Hostels	15	247	3.1%
Total	1,246	7,890	N/A

Source: CnES, Outer Hebrides Visitor Levy Report (CnES, 2025)

6.6.1.18 Occupancy rates for tourist accommodation in the Western Isles vary depending on the season and type of accommodation. The average room occupancy for hotels in the Western Isles in 2024 was 68.9% (the fifth lowest of the 14 VisitScotland areas in Scotland/*Alba* for which data is provided), and for guesthouses and B&Bs it was 62.7% (the third highest). Hotel bedspace occupancy was 52.4%. Self-catering accommodation in the Western Isles recorded average occupancy of 65.3% in 2024 (the 2nd highest in Scotland/*Alba*) (VisitScotland, 2025).

6.6.1.19 Occupancy rates vary significantly throughout the year. Across Scotland/*Alba* as a whole, room occupancy in hotels, for example, varied from 36% in January 2024, to a peak of 90.9% in August. Hotel bedspace occupancy varied from 44.2% in January to 79.1% in August, and self-catering occupancy varied from 21.2% in January to 58.4% in August (VisitScotland, 2025). The Scottish Accommodation Occupancy Survey provides data on occupancy by month for Scotland/*Alba* only, and so this information is not available at local area level.

6.6.1.20 Data from BRES shows that the accommodation and food sector employs approximately 1,000 people in the Western Isles, 8.1% of total employment (close to the national average of 8.2%). This is higher in the West Side SSA, with 22.2% of jobs in the Sgìr' Ùige agus Càrlabhagh ward in accommodation and food services (ONS, 2025). Retailers and restaurants in Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* report that they obtain up to 40% of their sales from visitors (Visit Outer Hebrides, n.d.), and focus group and interview findings highlighted the dependence of many residents on tourism for some or all of their income, including crofters on the west coast of the Isle of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*.

6.6.1.21 Further information is provided in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, and in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**.

Socio-cultural context

Population and demographics

- 6.6.1.22 The population of the Western Isles recorded in the 2022 Census was 26,140 (NRS, 2022). The Isles of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* are the most populous islands in the archipelago with 19,680 inhabitants. Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* is the only large town in the Western Isles. Approximately 7,375 live within the Stornoway SSA which accounts for 37.5% of the population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and 28.2% of the total population of the Western Isles.
- 6.6.1.23 The population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the population of the Western Isles both fell by approximately 6% between the 2011 Census and the 2022 Census. The Stornoway SSA recorded a fall in its population of 554, or 7% of the total. The West Side SSA recorded a smaller decrease of 201, equivalent to approximately 4.3% of its population in 2011 (noting that there was a change in ward boundaries in 2017 and so ward level data for 2011 and 2022 is not directly comparable. The 2011 data for the SSAs has been compiled based on data zones to reflect the 2022 ward boundaries as closely as possible). Across the same period Scotland recorded an increase in its population of 3%.
- 6.6.1.24 **Table 4.2** in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 1d** shows that the population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the Western Isles is older than the average for Scotland/*Alba*, and this is also reflected in the data for the two SSAs (NRS, 2022). Across the Western Isles, 58.2% of the population is of working age (16-64), compared with 63.6% of the population of Scotland/*Alba*. The proportion of the population aged 65 and over is above average, at 26.6% compared with 20% for Scotland/*Alba*. It is particularly high in the West Side SSA, where 30.5% of the population are aged 65 and over.
- 6.6.1.25 Data from the 2022 Census shows that the proportion of residents from non-White ethnic backgrounds is smaller than the Scottish average across the SSAs, Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and the Western Isles (NRS, 2022). The proportion of residents who were born in Scotland/*Alba* is generally above average, with the exception of the West Side SSA where 19% of residents were born elsewhere in the UK. This is considerably higher than elsewhere in the study area, and above the Scottish average of 10.4%. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the Western Isles has recorded net in-migration, driven primarily by people moving from elsewhere in Scotland/*Alba* and the UK.
- 6.6.1.26 There is some evidence to suggest that populations in some parts of the Western Isles may be stabilising, in part due to in-migration of working-age people, and that the drivers for out-migration may be more complex than a shortage of employment opportunities. For example, analysis of local school rolls shows that, although secondary school rolls are decreasing, primary school rolls on some islands are generally steady, suggesting that population decline amongst adults of child-rearing age may be slowing (Codel, 2019). The availability of housing is identified as

a key constraint that prevents people from moving to island communities to take up job opportunities (Codel, 2019). This is discussed further below.

6.6.1.27 Further information is provided in **Table 4.3, Table 4.4, Plate 4.1** and **Plate 4.2** of **Appendix 6.1, Volume 1d**.

Deprivation

6.6.1.28 The SIMD is a relative measure of deprivation at data zone level across seven 'domains'. These are income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime, and housing. **Figure 6.3, Volume 2b** shows SIMD data at data zone level for the Western Isles.

6.6.1.29 The data shows that there are varying degrees of deprivation across the isles of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, with the electoral ward of An Taobh Siar agus Nis within the West Side SSA having the highest proportion of residents living in income deprivation (12.0%) with Loch a Tuath directly adjacent having the lowest proportion of residents living in income deprivation (6.3%) (Scottish Government, 2020). There are pockets of deprivation within Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*, with parts of the town centre falling into the 30% most deprived areas in Scotland/*Alba* in terms of income and employment.

Housing

6.6.1.30 The right to housing is identified by the Scottish Human Rights Commission as an area where Scotland/*Alba* is not currently meeting its core human rights obligations in the Highlands and Islands. The Commission found evidence of high levels of homelessness, an overall lack of sufficient adequate housing, a lack of access to services, lack of affordability, and concerns around the inability to heat homes (Scottish Human Rights Commission, 2024).

6.6.1.31 Housing in the Western Isles has traditionally been associated with crofting, with homes built on or near to the family croft. Data presented in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 1d** shows that households in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the Western Isles are three times more likely to be living in detached houses or bungalows than the Scottish average. Rates of overcrowding are lower than the Scottish average, and the proportion of households living in owner-occupied properties is considerably above average (NRS, 2022).

6.6.1.32 However, evidence from the Outer Hebrides Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) for 2023-2042 shows that an estimated 63% of housing stock shows evidence of disrepair and 43% shows evidence of disrepair to critical elements, which are central to weather-tightness, structural stability and preventing deterioration of the property (CnES, 2023). Over 90% of households in the Western Isles do not have access to the gas grid and are therefore reliant on other methods of heating (CnES, 2023), primarily oil (NRS, 2022). Peat also continues to be used as a domestic fuel source, with approximately 10% of respondents to the Scottish Islands Survey 2023 reported that they cut peat for heating their homes (Scottish Government, 2023).

- 6.6.1.33 House prices in the Western Isles are lower than the average for Scotland, but have risen at a faster rate in recent years: between May 2017 and November 2025, average prices in the Western Isles increased by 64.1%, while in Scotland, average prices increased by 41.3%. Local media reports have highlighted the scarcity of housing in Lewis and the Western Isles and the impact that this has on the local economy, with businesses and trade bodies reporting difficulties in employing workers due to a shortage of affordable housing (We Love Stornoway, 2024). It was reported in focus groups and interviews that businesses experience difficulties attracting and retaining staff due to a lack of available, affordable housing.
- 6.6.1.34 Evidence presented in the Scottish Government’s Island Communities Impact Screening Assessment for proposed rental sector reform shows that 8% of dwellings in the Western Isles are vacant and 5.7% are in use as second homes, considerably higher than the Scottish averages of 3.4% and 0.9% respectively. The analysis reports that young people in island communities can face particular difficulties in accessing suitable housing, including competition from tourism and holiday lets that can result in increased prices (Scottish Government, 2024). The strain on the housing market, especially the lack of housing such as flats and shared accommodation for young people to move back to the island after leaving for tertiary education, was consistently mentioned among interview and focus group participants as a barrier, and is highlighted in local analyses of population trends in the islands (Codel, 2019).

Social infrastructure

- 6.6.1.35 **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** provides details of community services and facilities on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, including education, health and social care, childcare, places of worship, and recreational facilities. Much of this social and community infrastructure is concentrated in Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* including, for example, the WIH, which provides accident and emergency (A&E) services on the island, and the Nicolson Institute, the only secondary school on the island. Other services and facilities are located in smaller settlements around the island, including General Practitioners (GP) surgeries, primary schools, care homes, places of worship and community centres, which often serve a range of functions.
- 6.6.1.36 There are 12 primary schools on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, including five (Shawbost/*Siabost* School, Uig/*Ùige* Primary School, Breasclete/*Breascleit* School and West Side School/*Sgoil an Taobh Siar* and Lionel School) that are within the West Side SSA and two (Laxdale/*Lacasdail* School and Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* Primary School) that are within the Stornoway SSA. Scottish Government school estate statistics shows that, in 2025 the Nicolson Institute had 1,038 pupils, 94.4% of its total capacity of 1,100. Primary schools on the island are generally below their capacity, with those within the SSAs ranging from 36.0% of total capacity (Uig/*Ùige* Primary School) to 74% of total capacity (West Side School/*Sgoil an Taobh Siar*) (Scottish Government, 2025). Childcare providers and childminders, however, are reported to have limited capacity, with staff shortages particularly in rural areas (focus group feedback).

6.6.1.37 In relation to healthcare, a survey commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) in 2022 found that 82% of households in the Western Isles have access to a GP surgery permanently located within a 20-minute drive of their local area (Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), 2022). However, the average travel time to a hospital providing A&E services in the Western Isles is 45.2 km, considerably further than the national average of 14 km (Consumer Data Research Centre (CDRC), n.d.). While the WIH has over 200 beds and provides A&E services, for more specialist treatment patients are generally transported to Inverness or Glasgow, making air links to those locations essential for healthcare provision. There are two care homes on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* providing care for older people, and one for adults with disabilities. Recruitment, retention, and the age profile of staff are reported to be issues in the care home sector (CnES, FOI request, November 2025).

6.6.1.38 A key theme to emerge from the focus groups and interviews was the pressure on service provision in Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and the Western Isles. The challenges faced by service providers were consistently acknowledged by almost all focus groups and interview participants as being at capacity, struggling to recruit staff or lacking funding to deliver the desired level of service. Staff shortages in teaching and in the childcare sector in the Western Isles were highlighted as a particular concern, which it was perceived by focus group participants could impact on women and on young families living in, or looking to move into, island communities.

Transport modes and connectivity

6.6.1.39 **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** provides a detailed description of transport infrastructure on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. Public transport is limited to a local bus network operated by CnES, with some routes subcontracted to private companies. Services are sparse, especially on the west coast, with no buses on Sundays, reduced services on Saturdays, and minimal evening coverage. Cycle infrastructure is limited. The proportion of residents who commute to work by car or van, either as a driver or passenger, is 81.8% in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, compared with 72.3% for Scotland/*Alba* as a whole (NRS, 2022).

6.6.1.40 Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* is the main port for the Western Isles. The ferry service between Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* and Ullapool/*Ulapul* on the mainland is operated by Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac), and is described as a 'lifeline service, supporting almost all the trade, commuting and personal travel to and from the islands off Scotland/*Alba's* west coast' (Cebr, 2022). Most food in local supermarkets is imported from the mainland via ferry, presenting a challenge when the ferry is unable to run due to circumstances such as weather or mechanical faults. The ferry, the MV Loch Seaforth, runs an average of 5 crossings per day and, under normal operating conditions, completes the journey in around 2 hours and 40 minutes. Route performance figures for 2024 indicate that overall annual reliability of the service was 94% and overall annual punctuality was 89%, with seasonal variations (CalMac, 2024). Winter cancellations are more likely due to wind and swell conditions.

6.6.1.41 The focus group findings suggested that one of the biggest challenges of island life is the dependence on the ferry links to the mainland. Demand for ferry services to the Western Isles has increased in recent years and, while most traffic is accommodated, difficulties in booking services have risen, increasing the costs and risks of travel. A recent Transport for Scotland consultation paper noted that *'the space for vehicles on busy ferry routes fills up quickly at popular times, especially in summer. This makes it difficult for residents of those islands, and visiting key workers, to travel with a vehicle at short notice'* (Transport for Scotland, 2024). The existing ferry fleet is highly utilised and timetables are stretched, so operational changes to accommodate community needs or respond to disruptions are extremely difficult (Cebr, 2022). Air services offer an alternative, with commercial flights operating from Stornoway Airport to Inverness/*Inbhir Nis*, the Isle of Benbecula/*Beinn na Faoghla*, Edinburgh/*Dùn Èideann*, and Glasgow/*Glaschu*.

Culture, language and identity

6.6.1.42 **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** provides a detailed description of the heritage and identity of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and the Western Isles. The Gaelic language is identified as a key feature of community identity on the islands, and particularly in northwest Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, which is recognised as an area of linguistic significance (Gaelic representative, pers. comm.). Data from the 2022 Census, shown in **Table 6.1** in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c**, shows that across Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the Western Isles, more than half of the population (aged three and above) have some skills in Gaelic, compared to 2.5% nationally. In the West Side SSA, 62% of the population have some skills in Gaelic, while in the Stornoway SSA the figure is slightly lower, at 48.7% (NRS, 2022).

6.6.1.43 However, Scottish Gaelic is classified as 'Definitely Endangered' according to the UNESCO criteria for language endangerment, meaning the language is no longer learnt as a mother tongue in the home (UNESCO, 2024), and the 2022 Census data shows a decrease in the number and percentage of Gaelic speakers at the local level within the Western Isles since 2011, and in the SSAs (NRS, 2022). Factors that may have contributed to this include rapid socio-economic change connected to boom-and-bust industry; disruption to self-directed work such as tweed weaving and crofting caused by the growth in wage labour (McEwen-Fujita, 2010); the ageing population; and migration associated with economic development which has resulted in some Gaelic speakers choosing to move away from the island and non-Gaelic speakers moving into the area (Gaelic Officer, pers. comm., 24 October 2024).

6.6.1.44 Other factors which are identified as contributing to the cultural heritage and identity of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and the Western Isles include traditional industries such as weaving, crofting and fishing; communal activities such as peat cutting and 'ceilidh culture' (community gatherings); family naming traditions; place names; belief systems; and the relationship with the landscape and seascape. The Gaelic word '*Dùthchas*' describes a culturally distinct sense of responsibility and relationship to land that is expressed through the Gaelic language, which contains ecological and cultural knowledge associated with crofting and land stewardship (Meighan, 2022). Settlement

patterns in Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and the Western Isles are heavily associated with the coast, due to the importance of traditional industries and the presence of better quality agricultural land in coastal areas.

6.6.1.45 Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* (39.2%) and the Western Isles (35.3%) have a higher proportion of residents who describe their religion as Church of Scotland than the Scottish average (20.4%), as well as higher than average proportions of residents who describe their religion as 'other Christian', reflecting the local importance of the Free Church of Scotland (NRS, 2022). The church (both Church of Scotland and Free Church of Scotland) has a lasting influence on life on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, particularly regarding Sunday/Sabbath observance. While some restrictions on work and recreational activities on Sundays have eased, the Sabbath remains a day of observance for many.

6.6.2 FUTURE BASELINE

6.6.2.1 The latest subnational population projections for Scotland/*Alba* are 2022-based, i.e. they are estimated based on the population data from the 2022 Census. According to these projections, the population of the Western Isles is expected to decrease by 930, or 3.6%, over the decade from 2022 to 2032, while the population of Scotland/*Alba* is expected to increase by 4.4%. Over the period from 2022 to 2047, it is projected that the population of the Western Isles could decrease by nearly 2,802, or 10.7%. Over the same period, the population of Scotland/*Alba* is projected to increase by 6.2% (NRS, 2025). Despite the projected decrease in the population over this period, it is projected that the Western Isles would experience net in-migration, driven by migration into the islands from other parts of the UK, although total net migration would be considerably lower than the decrease in population associated with natural change (i.e. the difference between births and deaths).

6.6.2.2 **Plate 7.2 in Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** shows the projected change in the population by age group over the period from 2022 to 2047, in the Western Isles and in Scotland/*Alba*. It shows that the population of children and people of working age is expected to fall by over 30% in the Western Isles, while it is expected that there will be an increase in the population who are of pensionable age. By contrast, Scotland/*Alba* is expected to see smaller decreases in the population of children and working-age people, and a larger increase of over 30% in the population of people of pensionable age (NRS, 2025).

6.6.2.3 The decrease in the population, particularly among children and working-age people, could have implications in terms of the sustainability of public services in the longer-term. Primary schools within the Western Isles have been subject to a rolling series of closures over the last 15 years, driven by a lack of funds and a reduction in school rolls. Given the projected decrease in the population of children, it is likely that this trend could continue, although as noted above there are some indications from local analyses that suggest population decline could be stabilising in some areas (Codel, 2019). NHS Western Isles has identified depopulation as 'the single biggest risk facing

treatment and care services in the Western Isles', due to the year-on-year reduction in the available workforce (NHS Western Isles, 2023). The projected decrease in the population of working-age means that it is also likely that current pressures on service provision are likely to continue.

6.7 BASIS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.7.1 MAXIMUM DESIGN SCENARIO

- 6.7.1.1 Assessing using a parameter-based design envelope approach means that the assessment considers a maximum design scenario whilst allowing the flexibility to make improvements in the future in ways that cannot be predicted at the time of submission of the consent applications. The assessment of the maximum design scenario for each receptor establishes the maximum potential adverse impact and as a result impacts of greater adverse significance would not arise should any other development scenario (as described in **Chapter 3, Volume 1a**) to that assessed within this Chapter be taken forward in the final scheme design.
- 6.7.1.2 The maximum parameters and assessment assumptions that have been identified to be relevant to socio-economics are outlined in **Table 6-14** and are in line with **Chapter 3, Volume 1a**. As explained in Section 6.1, socio-economic impacts on jobs and GVA are assessed on a whole Project basis, while wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only. The maximum design scenario for wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects therefore excludes the OTW Project. An assessment of the wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects arising from the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project is provided in Section 6.12.

Table 6-14 Maximum Design Scenario for impacts on Socio-economics

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
Construction and Decommissioning		
<p>Construction and decommissioning creates jobs and supply chain opportunities</p>	<p>Estimated CAPEX for the Project (Offshore and OTW) based on industry data and estimates provided by the Applicant. Construction phase of up to 5 years. Estimated workforce for the whole Project of between 750 and 1,000.</p>	<p>Construction jobs and GVA for the Project have been modelled based on estimated CAPEX and a construction phase of up to 5 years, as described in Section 6.5.3.</p> <p>It has not been possible to estimate decommissioning employment and GVA as there is insufficient information available at this stage. However, it is expected that jobs and GVA created during decommissioning would be less than, or comparable to, those created during construction.</p>
<p>New jobs increase demand for workers, and potentially for goods and services, including accommodation. Environmental impacts from construction and decommissioning activity with potential knock-on effects for certain sectors.</p>	<p>Construction workforce Estimated workforce for the Offshore Project of 400.</p> <p>Construction activity and phasing Construction phase of up to 5 years for the Offshore Project. Offshore construction within the Turbine Area would be April to October only. Work pattern of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</p>	<p>Represents the maximum duration of construction works, the seasonality of construction works and of likely demand for labour, and the maximum extent of infrastructure and construction activities that could have knock-on effects for established sectors of the local economy.</p> <p>Decommissioning employment is not known at this stage. However, it is expected that decommissioning employment and other relevant parameters would be less than, or comparable to, those described during construction.</p>

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	<p>Construction activities to be phased, as per the indicative construction programme provided in Chapter 3, Volume 1a.</p> <p>Construction vessel activity Total no. installation and support vessels on site at any one time: 35 Total installation and support vessel return trips: 871 per year</p> <p>Array Area Maximum no. WTGs: 44 (larger WTG type) Array Area: 161 km² Turbine Area: 140 km² Minimum turbine spacing: 900 m Closest distance to shore of Array Area: 5 km Closest distance to shore of Turbine Area: 6 km</p> <p>Offshore Cable Area of Search: 47 km²</p> <p>Offshore Substation Platform Maximum no. of Offshore Substation Platforms: 1 Height of main structure above MSL: 90 m</p>	
Population change arising from presence of incoming construction workforce.	Construction workforce	Represents the maximum duration of construction works, and the seasonality of construction works

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	<p>Estimated workforce for the Offshore Project of 400. Majority of offshore construction workforce to be accommodated on offshore vessels.</p> <p>Construction activity and phasing Construction phase of up to 5 years for the Offshore Project. Offshore construction within the Turbine Area would be April to October only. Work pattern of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Construction activities to be phased, as per the indicative construction programme provided in Chapter 3, Volume 1a.</p>	<p>and of likely demand for labour that could result in temporary population change.</p> <p>Decommissioning employment is not known at this stage. However, it is expected that decommissioning employment and other relevant parameters would be less than, or comparable to, those described during construction.</p>
<p>Impact of temporary workforce on local services and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Construction workforce Estimated workforce for the Offshore Project of 400. Majority of offshore construction workforce to be accommodated on offshore vessels.</p> <p>Construction activity and phasing Construction phase of up to 5 years for the Offshore Project. Offshore construction within the Turbine Area would be April to October only. Work pattern of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</p>	<p>Represents the maximum duration of construction works, and the seasonality of construction works and of likely demand for labour that could result in temporary increase in demand for local services and infrastructure.</p> <p>Decommissioning employment is not known at this stage. However, it is expected that decommissioning employment and other relevant parameters would be less than, or comparable to, those described during construction.</p>

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	<p>Construction activities to be phased, as per the indicative construction programme provided in Chapter 3, Volume 1a.</p>	
<p>Impact of demographic change and changes in the environment on local culture and identity</p>	<p>Construction workforce Estimated workforce for the Offshore Project of 400. Majority of offshore construction workforce to be accommodated on offshore vessels.</p> <p>Construction activity and phasing Construction phase of up to 5 years for the Offshore Project. Offshore construction within the Turbine Area would be April to October only. Work pattern of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Construction activities to be phased, as per the indicative construction programme provided in Chapter 3, Volume 1a.</p> <p>Construction vessel activity Total no. installation and support vessels on site at any one time: 35 Total installation and support vessel return trips: 871 per year</p> <p>Array Area</p>	<p>Represents the maximum duration of construction works, the seasonality of construction works and of likely demand for labour that could result in demographic change, and the maximum extent of infrastructure and construction activities that could impact on cultural identity and sense of place.</p> <p>Decommissioning employment is not known at this stage. However, it is expected that decommissioning employment and other relevant parameters would be less than, or comparable to, those described during construction.</p>

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	<p>Maximum no. WTGs: 44 (larger WTG type) Array Area: 161 km² Turbine Area: 140 km² Minimum turbine spacing: 900 m Closest distance to shore of Array Area: 5 km Closest distance to shore of Turbine Area: 6 km</p> <p>Offshore Cable Area of Search: 47 km²</p> <p>Offshore Substation Platform Maximum no. of Offshore Substation Platforms: 1 Height of main structure above MSL: 90 m</p>	
Operation and Maintenance		
<p>Operation and maintenance creates jobs and supply chain opportunities</p>	<p>Operational workforce Estimated OPEX for the Project (Offshore and OTW), based on industry data and estimates provided by the Applicant. Operational life of up to 35 years. Estimated operational workforce for the whole Project of 80-120.</p>	<p>Operation and maintenance jobs and GVA have been modelled based on an operational life of up to 35 years, as described in Section 6.5.3.</p>
<p>New jobs increase demand for workers, and potentially for goods and services, including accommodation. Environmental impacts from operation and maintenance activity with potential knock-on effects for certain sectors.</p>	<p>Operational workforce Estimated operational workforce for the whole Project of 80-120. Some operational employment may be taken up by people from outside the Western Isles who</p>	<p>Represents the likely duration of the operation and maintenance phase of the Offshore Project, the scale of likely demand for accommodation or services on the Isle of Lewis/<i>Eilean Leòdhais</i>, and the maximum extent of infrastructure and</p>

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	<p>would require housing on Lewis or Harris/<i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>. Workers required for routine operation and maintenance activities to be accommodated on a SOV or transported using CTVs. Work pattern of 24 hours a day. Operational life of up to 35 years.</p> <p>O&M vessel activity Maximum no. O&M vessels on site at any one time: 11 (including 1 helicopter) Total O&M vessel return trips (excl. CTVs and workboats): 254 over the Offshore Project lifetime (including 70 helicopter movements)</p> <p>Array Area Maximum no. WTGs: 44 (larger WTG type) Maximum rotor diameter: 280 m (larger WTG type) Maximum blade tip height (above Mean Sea Level (MSL)): 338.4 m (larger WTG type) Array Area: 161 km² Turbine Area: 140 km²</p> <p>Offshore Substation Platform Maximum no. of Offshore Substation Platforms: 1 Height of main structure above MSL: 90 m</p>	<p>operation and maintenance activities that could have knock-on effects for established sectors of the local economy.</p>

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
<p>Population change arising from presence of permanent operational workforce.</p>	<p>Operational workforce Estimated operational workforce for the whole Project of 80-120. Workers required for routine operation and maintenance activities to be accommodated on a SOV or transported using CTVs. Some operational employment may be taken up by people from outside the Western Isles who would require housing on Lewis or Harris/<i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>. Work pattern of 24 hours a day. Operational life of up to 35 years.</p> <p>O&M vessel activity Maximum no. O&M vessels on site at any one time: 11 (including 1 helicopter) Total O&M vessel return trips (excl. CTVs and workboats): 254 over the Offshore Project lifetime (including 70 helicopter movements)</p> <p>Array Area Maximum no. WTGs: 44 (larger WTG type) Maximum rotor diameter: 280 m (larger WTG type) Maximum blade tip height (above Mean Sea Level (MSL)): 338.4 m (larger WTG type)</p>	<p>Represents the likely duration of the operation and maintenance phase of the Offshore Project, and the scale of likely demand for accommodation or services on the Isle of Lewis/<i>Eilean Leòdhais</i>.</p>

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	<p>Array Area: 161 km² Turbine Area: 140 km²</p> <p>Offshore Substation Platform Maximum no. of Offshore Substation Platforms: 1 Height of main structure above MSL: 90 m</p>	
Impact of new population and changes in the environment on local services and infrastructure.	<p>Operational workforce Estimated operational workforce for the whole Project of 80-120. Workers required for routine operation and maintenance activities to be accommodated on a SOV or transported using CTVs. Some operational employment may be taken up by people from outside the Western Isles who would require housing on Lewis or Harris/<i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>. Work pattern of 24 hours a day. Operational life of up to 35 years.</p>	Represents the likely duration of the operation and maintenance phase of Offshore Project, and the scale of likely demand for accommodation or services on the Isle of Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> .
Impact of demographic change and changes in the environment on local culture and identity	<p>Operational workforce Estimated operational workforce for the whole Project of 80-120. Workers required for routine operation and maintenance activities to be accommodated on a SOV or transported using CTVs.</p>	Represents the likely duration of the operation and maintenance phase of Offshore Project, and the scale of likely demand for accommodation or services on the Isle of Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> , and the maximum extent of infrastructure and operation and maintenance activities that could impact on cultural identity and sense of place.

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	<p>Some operational employment may be taken up by people from outside the Western Isles who would require housing on Lewis or Harris/<i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>. Work pattern of 24 hours a day. Operational life of up to 35 years.</p> <p>O&M vessel activity Maximum no. O&M vessels on site at any one time: 11 (including 1 helicopter) Total O&M vessel return trips (excl. CTVs and workboats): 254 over the Offshore Project lifetime (including 70 helicopter movements) vessels during maintenance: up to 1,000 m</p> <p>Array Area Maximum no. WTGs: 44 (larger WTG type) Maximum rotor diameter: 280 m (larger WTG type) Maximum blade tip height (above Mean Sea Level (MSL)): 338.4 m (larger WTG type) Array Area: 161 km² Turbine Area: 140 km²</p> <p>Offshore Substation Platform Maximum no. of Offshore Substation Platforms: 1 Height of main structure above MSL: 90 m</p>	

Project Phase and Activity/Impact	Maximum Design Scenario	Justification

6.7.2 EMBEDDED MITIGATION MEASURES

6.7.2.1 As part of the Offshore Project design process, a number of embedded mitigation measures have been adopted to reduce the potential for impacts on socio-economic receptors, and these have evolved over the development process as the EIA has progressed and in response to consultation.

6.7.2.2 The embedded mitigation measures also include those that have been identified as good or standard practice and include actions that would be undertaken to meet existing legislation requirements. As there is a commitment to implementing the embedded mitigations, and also to various standard sectoral practices and procedures, they are considered inherently part of the design of the Offshore Project and are set out in this EIAR.

6.7.2.3 **Table 6-15** sets out the relevant embedded mitigation measures within the design and how these affect the socio-economic assessment. Other measures relevant to particular aspects of the assessment are set out in:

- **Chapter 16, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 18, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 19, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 20, Volume 2a;**
- **Chapter 21, Volume 2a.**

Table 6-15 Embedded mitigation measures relevant to socio-economics

ID	Application	Commitment	Relevance to Socio-economic Assessment	Project Phase Measure Introduced	Securing Mechanism
M037	Offshore	Use of local tour operator vessels or fishing vessels that meet relevant safety requirements, where possible to assist future Project activities, such as guard vessel opportunities.	Relevant to the assessment of effects on the tourism sector (in relation to recreational fishing and angling tours).	Pre-Construction and Construction	Secured in the Section 36 Consent and/or Marine Licence via the condition for an FMMCP to be submitted to MD-LOT for approval.
M020	Offshore	A Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Project in compliance with legislative requirements and/or best practice standards and guidance and adhered to.	Relevant to the approach taken to the assessment of effects during decommissioning, set out in Section 6.10.	Decommissioning	Secured in the Section 36 Consent and/or Marine Licence via the condition for a Decommissioning Plan to be submitted to MD-LOT for approval and the Energy Act 2004
M041	Offshore	The offshore construction workforce to be accommodated on vessels, with the exception of certain limited circumstances such as crew change over and leave, to reduce additional demand for housing / tourist accommodation on Lewis/ <i>Eilean Leòdhais</i> . Medical facilities to be provided on board vessels to treat minor injuries / illness and reduce additional pressure on existing services.	Relevant to the assessment of effects on the tourism sector, housing, population change, community services and infrastructure, availability of	Construction	To be secured through a condition of the Section 36 consent and/or Marine Licence.

ID	Application	Commitment	Relevance to Socio-economic Assessment	Project Phase Measure Introduced	Securing Mechanism
			transport, and culture and identity.		
M042	Whole Project	Project to work with key stakeholders and service providers to understand pressure points on existing services and on storage / port facilities on Lewis, and charter vessels and/or flights to transport crew and materials where required to avoid creating excess pressure, and potentially provide additional capacity. Large construction components to be transported by specialist vessels via private charter. The Project will engage with other developers on opportunities to collaborate on transport services and storage facilities, including through the Renewable Energy Major Developments Forum ¹ .	Relevant to the assessment of effects on the tourism sector, the transport and storage sector, and on the availability of transport.	Construction	To be secured through a condition of the Section 36 consent and/or Marine Licence.
M044	Whole Project	The Project is committed to the establishment of a Community Panel	Relevant to the assessment of	Construction, Operation and Maintenance	To be secured through a condition of the Section 36

¹ The Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum is a collaborative forum involving the private sector developers of proposed/planned renewable energy projects in Lewis and the public sector agencies working on, and in support of, the island. Its purpose is to identify and focus on areas of joint strategic purpose to provide co-ordinated action in pursuit of smooth project implementation; the identification of related growth opportunities, the maximisation of community benefits and the identification, minimisation, and mitigation of any arising challenges. The members of the forum are: Scottish and Southern Energy Networks, BayWa.r.e, Stornoway Wind Farm, Eurowind, Northland Power, Magnora Offshore, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and University of the Highlands and Islands. The forum meets on a quarterly basis, at a minimum, with sub-groups meeting in between to progress collaboration on specific topics.

ID	Application	Commitment	Relevance to Socio-economic Assessment	Project Phase Measure Introduced	Securing Mechanism
		<p>(subject to agreed community participation), comprising a range of community representatives with relevant experience and local knowledge. The purpose of the panel will be to ensure that local voices and perspectives can inform delivery of the Project as it progresses. It is proposed that the panel would be in place prior to the commencement of major construction activities and would be maintained throughout construction and commissioning.</p> <p>During operation, the Project will continue to engage with local communities and will provide opportunities for local residents to contact the Project team, including through dedicated resources within the operation and maintenance team with responsibility for community engagement.</p>	effects on culture and identity.		consent and/or Marine Licence.
M045	Whole Project	<p>A Cultural Integration Plan will be developed prior to the commencement of construction which will put in place measures to support the integration of incoming workers and reduce impacts on local communities and cultural practices. This will include the continuation of</p>	Relevant to the assessment of effects on culture and identity.	Construction, operation (including maintenance), and decommissioning	To be secured through a condition of the Section 36 consent and/or Marine Licence.

ID	Application	Commitment	Relevance to Socio-economic Assessment	Project Phase Measure Introduced	Securing Mechanism
		awareness training and on island induction for all project staff and contractors, and the use of a settlement officer to support cultural integration during construction and operation and maintenance.			
M048	Whole Project	<p>The Project is committed to maximising opportunities for local businesses to compete for contracts on the Project, and will continue to support the development of the local supply chain to develop the skills and capacity needed to construct and operate the Project. In advance of construction, the Project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage with local suppliers to understand local capabilities; • make suppliers aware of opportunities associated with the construction of the Onshore Project, when these will arise, and what the requirements are likely to be; • develop tender criteria to promote local content and the use of local contractors and suppliers in onshore construction works. 	Relevant to the assessment of socio-economic impacts and wider socio-economic effects.	Construction, operation (including maintenance), and decommissioning	To be secured through a condition of the Section 36 consent and/or Marine Licence.

ID	Application	Commitment	Relevance to Socio-economic Assessment	Project Phase Measure Introduced	Securing Mechanism
		The SCDS for the Project will be routinely updated, providing a record of the Project's supply chain commitments and ambitions.			
M049	Whole Project	The Project is committed to maximising opportunities for local people to apply for jobs created by the Project, and will continue to work with the supply chain and other local stakeholders to develop the workforce skills required for the construction and operation of the Project. In advance of construction, the Project will support skills development initiatives, and will work with stakeholders and other agencies such as HIE on wider skills development initiatives. The Project will also develop tender criteria to promote local skills and employment.	Relevant to the assessment of socio-economic impacts and wider socio-economic effects.	Construction, operation (including maintenance), and decommissioning	To be secured through a condition of the Section 36 consent and/or Marine Licence.

6.8 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: CONSTRUCTION PHASE

6.8.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- 6.8.1.1 Jobs and GVA are assessed for the Project as a whole including both Onshore and Offshore elements, as described in Section 6.5.3.
- 6.8.1.2 The construction of the Project (indicatively 2028/29 – 2032/33) would create direct, indirect and induced employment and GVA in the local and national economy. While new jobs and GVA are likely to be beneficial, there is also the potential for increased pressure on the local labour market and displacement of economic activity.
- 6.8.1.3 Socio-economic impacts are assessed for the Western Isles and for Scotland/*Alba*². The receptor for employment effects is the labour market. The receptor for GVA effects is the economy.

Employment effects

- 6.8.1.4 Construction employment has been estimated using the methodology set out in Section 6.5.3. **Table 6-16** shows that the construction phase of the Project as a whole could create or safeguard between 373 and 401 direct person years of employment within the Western Isles over the period 2028/29 – 2032/33.

Table 6-16: Construction phase employment effects (total person years of employment over 2028/29 to 2032/33)

	Lower Case		Upper Case	
	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>
Direct	373	2,639	401	2,839
Indirect	160	1,131	172	1,217
Induced	262	1,855	282	1,996
Total	795	5,626	855	6,051

Source: Assessment estimates, 2025

- 6.8.1.5 As shown in **Table 6-17**, this equates to an average of between 75 and 80 FTEs per year over the construction period, although the number of jobs is likely to fluctuate across the construction

² It is recognised that jobs and GVA will also be created elsewhere in the UK. However, the national study area for the assessment, agreed through scoping, is Scotland, and so effects elsewhere in the UK have not been modelled.

programme. Elsewhere in Scotland, construction would create between 2,639 and 2,839 direct person years of employment, equivalent to an average of between 528 and 568 FTE jobs per year.

Table 6-17: Construction phase employment effects (average FTE per annum between 2028/29 and 2032/33)

	Lower case		Upper case	
	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>
Direct	75	528	80	568
Indirect	32	226	34	243
Induced	52	371	56	399
Total	159	1,125	171	1,210

Source: Assessment estimates, 2025

- 6.8.1.6 As well as direct employment, the construction of the Project would also support indirect and induced employment in the supply chain as a result of increased spending in the local economy. As stated in **Table 6-15**, and specifically M048, the Project is committed to maximising opportunities for local businesses to compete for contracts on the Project, and will continue to support the development of the local supply chain to develop the skills and capacity needed to construct and operate the Project. It is anticipated that much of the employment created during construction will be in the construction and manufacturing sectors. Other support services that could be procured locally include, for example, accommodation, catering, plant hire, transportation, and security.
- 6.8.1.7 The SCDS also commits the Project to employing a Scottish based ‘Supply Chain and Skills Manager’ to work with the Scottish supply chain and enterprise agencies, building upon work done to date by HIE in establishing a renewables-based supply chain, to further develop local capabilities within the Highlands and Islands for the long-term (Spiorad na Mara Ltd, 2023). The vision, set out in the SCDS, is to build a competitive, commercially viable offshore wind sector in Scotland.
- 6.8.1.8 In total, it is estimated that, across Scotland as a whole, construction would create or safeguard between approximately 600 and 650 direct FTE jobs per year, with approximately a further 260 – 280 indirect FTE jobs in the supply chain and approximately 420 – 460 induced FTE jobs in the wider economy. It is estimated that approximately 12% of direct jobs (75 – 80) would be retained within the Western Isles. As noted in Section 6.5.3, the locations of base ports for construction are not known at this stage, and so the proportion of employment that would be retained locally could be higher or lower than this depending on the locations chosen.
- 6.8.1.9 These figures represent the economic effect of the employment that would be created or supported throughout the construction phase, rather than the number of construction workers that would be required at any one time. The construction workforce required on site would fluctuate throughout the construction programme, and would comprise a combination of local workers

employed directly by the Project and indirectly in the supply chain, as well as workers from elsewhere in Scotland and outside of Scotland visiting the site. The Applicant estimates that the workforce required for construction of the Project as a whole would be between 750 and 1,000.

6.8.1.10 In summary, the construction phase of the Project would:

- Create or safeguard between 600 and 650 direct FTE jobs per year in Scotland;
- Of these, between 75 and 80 direct FTE jobs per year would be retained in the Western Isles;
- Employment created during construction would include a construction workforce estimated at between 750 and 1,000, which would comprise direct and indirect workers from within the Western Isles, elsewhere in Scotland, and potentially outside of Scotland.

Magnitude

6.8.1.11 Overall, the magnitude of the impact in the Western Isles is assessed as **Low**. While employment would be created in the medium-term for the duration of the construction period, construction jobs would be temporary and would affect a relatively small proportion of the workforce. As noted above, the FTE construction employment for one year of construction would account for between 75 and 80 FTEs, which equates to less than 5% of the 2024 BRES baseline workforce in the manufacturing and construction sectors locally (1,800 jobs in the Western Isles).

6.8.1.12 While there would be benefits from the additional employment and induced spending, there is the potential that the construction phase could result in increased pressure within the labour market, which could result in difficulties in recruitment for local companies, labour wage inflation, and displacement of economic activity, particularly in the construction sector. This could reduce the overall beneficial effect for the local economy. Potential knock-on effects for specific sectors are discussed in Section 6.8.2 below.

6.8.1.13 The magnitude of the impact in Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **Negligible** as there would be very little change from baseline conditions in the construction and manufacturing sectors. The uplift in employment from direct, indirect and induced jobs would account for around 0.4% of the 2024 BRES baseline of 328,000 employees across construction and manufacturing. Should there be shortages of labour locally, a higher proportion of the workforce may be recruited from elsewhere in Scotland/*Alba*, or from other parts of the UK, however it is unlikely that this would change the magnitude of the impact at the national level.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.8.1.14 In the Western Isles, the sensitivity of the labour market is assessed as **Medium** as the labour force is relatively small and there is limited connectivity to other areas, which could lead to labour market pressures. While there is above average employment in the construction and manufacturing sectors, and there is some indication of under-employment within the local labour market, the relatively low level of unemployment and reduced connectivity to neighbouring labour markets means that the capacity of the local workforce to absorb additional demand is restricted. It is

anticipated that labour will travel from outside of the Western Isles to help meet the additional demand.

6.8.1.15 In the national study area, the sensitivity of the labour market is assessed as **Low**, as there are relatively few constraints on the supply of labour and skills at the national level.

Significance of effect

6.8.1.16 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the local labour market, the overall significance of the employment effect for Western Isles is assessed as **Minor Beneficial** which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.8.1.17 Based on the negligible magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the national labour market, the overall significance of the employment effect for Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.8.1.18 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

GVA effects

6.8.1.19 GVA has been estimated using the methodology set out in Section 6.5.3. **Table 6-18** shows that the construction phase of the Project would generate between £32m and £34m in direct GVA within the Western Isles over the construction period. This equates to between £6.4m and £6.8m in GVA per annum to the Western Isles economy. As noted above, this could vary depending on the locations of the construction base ports chosen.

Table 6-18: Construction phase GVA effects (total GVA over 2028/29 to 2032/33)

	Lower Case		Upper Case	
	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>
Direct (£m)	£32	£225	£34	£242
Indirect (£m)	£11	£76	£12	£82
Induced (£m)	£22	£159	£24	£171
Total (£m)	£65	£460	£70	£495

Source: ERM, 2025

6.8.1.20 Indirect and induced GVA would provide further benefits in the supply chain, creating an additional economic flow into local businesses as construction workers spend their earnings on local goods and services which would boost local businesses and the economy.

Magnitude

- 6.8.1.21 The magnitude of the impact in the Western Isles is assessed as **Low**. While there would be an alteration to the value generated by the local economy in the medium-term throughout construction, this would be slight and temporary. Construction of the Project would contribute between £6.4m and £6.8m in direct GVA per year during construction, which would represent around 1% of the overall local baseline GVA of £645m. This would help to support existing industry, particularly in the construction and manufacturing sectors, which currently contribute £78m per annum to the local economy (ONS, 2025). The magnitude of the impact depends on the share of local content and the ability of the local supply chain to respond.
- 6.8.1.22 The magnitude of the effect in Scotland/*Alba* is expected to be **Negligible** as there would be very little change to baseline conditions. The construction of the Project would generate between £225 and £242m in direct GVA at the national level, equivalent to between £45m and £68m per year, which would represent a very small proportion of existing baseline GVA of £183.5 billion.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

- 6.8.1.23 The sensitivity of the economy in the Western Isles is assessed as **Medium** as, while rates of productivity are below the Scottish average, there has been some growth over the last ten years and the economy has some capacity to absorb change. While the Western Isles is identified as an 'economically fragile' area, the anticipated growth in GVA would be predominantly in well-established sectors of the local economy, such as construction.
- 6.8.1.24 In the national study area, the sensitivity of the economy is assessed as **Low**, as the economy is relatively stable and has recorded growth over the last ten years.

Significance of effect

- 6.8.1.25 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the local economy, the overall significance of the effect for the economy of the Western Isles is assessed as **Minor Beneficial**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.
- 6.8.1.26 Based on the negligible magnitude of impact and low sensitivity of the national economy, the overall significance of the effect for the economy of Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

- 6.8.1.27 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.8.2 WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS

6.8.2.1 Wider socio-economic effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only, as discussed in Section 6.5.3.

6.8.2.2 The employment and environmental impacts associated with the construction of the Offshore Project could have wider socio-economic effects on key sectors of the economy that are important local employers, and/or reliant on natural resources. Effects are assessed for tourism; fisheries, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing; and transport and storage.

Effects on the tourism sector

6.8.2.3 During construction, effects on the tourism sector could arise as a result of:

- Temporary changes in the availability of workers in the sector;
- Temporary changes in demand for tourist accommodation;
- Temporary changes in the availability of air and ferry travel for visitors, and in port capacity for cruise ships;
- Temporary impacts on tourism receptors, including accommodation providers, such as loss of access, disruption, displacement, noise or changes in the visual environment.

6.8.2.4 As noted in Section 6.6.1, tourism is an important employer in the Western Isles, accounting for a higher than average proportion of jobs and providing an important source of income for local people and businesses. As there could be localised impacts associated with changes in the visual environment and increased demand for accommodation, effects on the sector are assessed for the West Side SSA and Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the tourism sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.8.2.5 Employment in the tourism sector is often seasonal, and the employment created by the construction of the Offshore Project could introduce additional competition for workers. Offshore construction activity would be between the months of April and October, which would coincide with the peak tourist season. The assessment set out in Section 6.8.1 indicates that additional demand for workers during construction could lead to some market pressure, particularly in the construction sector. While there is a relatively large construction workforce in the Western Isles, there could be knock-on effects for other sectors, including potential displacement of workers from tourism-related sectors.

6.8.2.6 As set out in Section 6.8.1, it is estimated that the construction of the Project as a whole (including both Offshore and Onshore elements) could create between 75 and 80 direct FTE jobs per year in the Western Isles throughout the construction period, approximately 12% of the total that would be created in Scotland. This estimate of employment is derived from construction spend rather than workforce requirements and, as discussed in Section 6.5.3, it is not possible to disaggregate

estimated onshore and offshore jobs based on this methodology. However, the Applicant estimates that the total offshore construction workforce required would be around 400. Assuming that around 12% of these jobs would be retained locally, it can be estimated that up to approximately 50 construction jobs in the Western Isles would be associated with the construction of the Offshore Project.

6.8.2.7 Data presented in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** shows that, across the economy as a whole, there is a workforce of approximately 9,050 in Lewis and Harris, with higher than average shares of employment in tourism and in construction. While unemployment is below average in the Western Isles, there is a high rate of part-time employment, including in tourism-related sectors, which could suggest some under-employment in the wider economy. It is therefore expected that there is some capacity within the labour market to absorb construction jobs, and that the likelihood of knock-on effects for the tourism sector is relatively small.

6.8.2.8 As well as the employment created locally, the construction of the Offshore Project would also create jobs that would be taken up by people outside of the Western Isles who may require temporary accommodation. As set out in Section 6.8.1, it is estimated that the construction of the Project as a whole (including both Offshore and Onshore elements) could create between 528 and 568 direct FTE jobs per year that would be taken up by workers elsewhere in Scotland, approximately 88% of the total. While this is derived from an estimate of employment based on construction spend rather than workforce requirements, if applied to the construction workforce of 400 it can be estimated that up to approximately 350 construction workers could be required from outside the Western Isles for the construction of the Offshore Project. Not all of these jobs would be on site, and most employment would be seasonal between the months of April and October.

6.8.2.9 As set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041, the offshore construction workforce will be accommodated on vessels, with the exception of certain limited circumstances such as crew change over and leave, to reduce additional demand for housing / tourist accommodation on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhas*. There is likely to be some short-term, temporary use of onshore accommodation by smaller numbers of workers around crew change overs and non-working days between the months of April and October. It is likely that offshore workers requiring accommodation on land would be most likely to seek temporary accommodation in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area, due to proximity to local services and infrastructure.

6.8.2.10 The baseline information set out in Section 6.6 shows that 79.% of tourist bedspaces in the Western Isles are in the non-serviced/self-catering sector, with 20.5% in hotels, guest houses and B&Bs. There is a total of 5,129 tourist bedspaces across Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* (CnES, 2025). Assuming a similar split, it is estimated that there are approximately 4,150 non-serviced/self-catering bedspaces and a further 1,070 bedspaces in hotels, guest houses and B&Bs in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. Occupancy rates for tourist accommodation vary depending on the season and type of accommodation, with hotels typically having the highest occupancy rates.

Occupancy data by month is not available at local authority level, however data for Scotland shows

that hotel room occupancy at the peak of the tourist season was 90.9% in 2024, hotel bedspace occupancy was 79.1%, and self-catering occupancy was 58.4% (VisitScotland, 2025).

6.8.2.11 Applying the peak hotel bedspace occupancy rating for Scotland (79.1%) to the estimated number of bedspaces in hotels, guest houses and B&Bs available in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* (1,070) indicates that there could be up to approximately 225 bedspaces available at the peak of the season. Applying the peak self-catering unit occupancy rating for Scotland (58.4%) to the estimated number of self-catering units available in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* indicates that there could be up to a further 1,070 bedspaces available in non-serviced / self-catering accommodation. This suggests that, even in the peak summer tourist season, there is likely to be some capacity within the local tourist accommodation market to absorb the additional demand. This reduces the likelihood of negative knock-on effects for hospitality and tourism-related businesses associated with the displacement of tourists. There is also the potential for positive effects for businesses from the additional demand, particularly outside of the peak season.

Table 6-19: Estimated tourist bedspaces, Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*

	Serviced Accommodation (hotels, guest houses, B&Bs)	Non-serviced/Self-catering Accommodation
Estimated number of bedspaces (total)	1,070	4,150
Estimated occupancy at peak	845	2,400
Estimated capacity at peak	225	1,750

Source: Calculations based on CnES, 2025, and Visit Scotland, 2025

6.8.2.12 There is also the potential for effects on tourism arising from temporary changes in the availability of air and ferry travel for visitors, and on impacts on port capacity for cruise ships. The use of offshore accommodation for the majority of the construction workforce (M041) reduces the likely impact on the availability of air and ferry services for visitors to Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, although again there is likely to be some intermittent increase in demand around crew change overs and non-working days etc. Data presented in the baseline shows that there can be little capacity on existing ferry services, particularly at peak times.

6.8.2.13 The baseline also shows that cruise vessels are scheduled to arrive at Stornoway between the months of April and September, with the height of activity in August when, in 2026, there are currently 13 vessels scheduled. The recent (April 2024) completion of the Stornoway Deep Water Terminal has increased capacity at the port to accommodate cruise vessels and to support the fabrication and transportation of renewable energy components. Facilities provided at the Deep Water Terminal include a main berth for vessels up to 360m long, a freight ferry berth and up to 6.5 ha of land for unloading, storage, and industrial uses (Stornoway Port, 2025).

- 6.8.2.14 **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports a negligible effect on the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* arising from increased demand for port services during construction. As stated in **Table 6-15**, specifically M042, the Project is committed to working with key stakeholders and service providers to understand pressure points on existing services and on storage/port facilities on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhas*, and charter vessels and/or flights to transport crew and materials where required to avoid creating excess pressure, and potentially provide additional capacity. This would reduce pressure on ferry services, and would also reduce the likely magnitude of impacts on port capacity affecting cruise vessels. As the offshore construction workforce would be accommodated primarily on vessels (M041), increased demand for port or ferry services at Stornoway port is expected to be required on an ad hoc basis and be intermittent and short-term within the overall construction period.
- 6.8.2.15 With mitigation in place (M041, M042), the magnitude of the impact on tourism in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a whole from changes in demand for transport and accommodation and increased competition for labour is therefore assessed as **Low**, as there would be a short-term, slight alteration to the value of the sector in these areas that would be intermittent throughout the construction period, which could lead to minor changes in business revenues or in employment.
- 6.8.2.16 In the West Side SSA, there could be localised effects on tourism activity arising from temporary impacts on tourism receptors and recreational users from the construction of the Offshore Project. While impacts on tourism receptors would be temporary, the offshore construction period overlaps with the peak months for tourism between April – October, which could increase the likelihood of effects on tourism and recreational behaviour. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, reports that there would be minor adverse effects that would not be significant for boat tour operators, angling tour operators, and recreational sea anglers as a result of temporary displacement or disturbance associated with 500 m safety zones, the presence of installation vessels, and construction activities. Effects for surfers, other recreational sea users and tourists would also be minor adverse.
- 6.8.2.17 **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** also reports minor adverse effects for tourists, sea users and visitors to beaches on the west coast as a result of effects on amenity arising from construction activity. Effects on amenity would arise from a combination of visual and noise effects, as reported in **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, and **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**. **Chapter 18, Volume 2a** reports significant adverse visual effects for visitors to tourism attractions within the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) on the west coast, including Arnol/*Àrnoil* Blackhouse, Loch na Muilne RSPB reserve, and Trushal Standing Stone/*Clach an Trushal*, and users of recreational routes including core paths and parts of the Hebridean Way and Timeless Way. Visual impacts from the construction of the Offshore Project could also affect users of tourism accommodation within the ZTV. Visual effects arising during construction would be temporary for specific periods within the overall construction period, and would be associated primarily with the presence of vessels and partially constructed offshore

elements. Tourism attractions within the ZTV are shown in **Figure 20.1: Other Sea Users and Recreation Study Area, Volume 2b**.

- 6.8.2.18 **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, reports that there would be significant adverse night-time noise effects for six noise sensitive receptors (NSRs) associated with piling activity, and significant adverse evening noise effects for two NSRs. The NSRs assessed include dwellings in the settlements of Garenin/*Na Gearrannan*, Dalmore/*Dail Mhor*, Shawbost/*Siabost*, Labost, Brue/*Brù*, and Ballantrushal/*Baile an Truiseil* on the west coast of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, and the Blackhouse Village buildings at Garenin/*Na Gearrannan*. While it is not expected that night-time noise would affect visitors to the Blackhouse Village, there is the potential that tourist accommodation providers within these settlements could be affected.
- 6.8.2.19 The Applicant will commit to producing and following a Piling Strategy (A007), which will include measures to mitigate and minimise adverse impacts. The Piling Strategy will be further refined through detailed design and availability of equipment following the contractor tendering process and equipment readiness. Following this, further mitigation to minimise potential noise impact will be explored and detailed in the Piling Strategy for consultation with MD-LOT. This plan will be produced post-consent. With this further mitigation in place, the residual noise effect for NSRs would be reduced to minor adverse, and not significant. **Chapter 19, Volume 2a** does not assess effects for outdoor locations such as beaches or footpaths. However, users of these receptors are typically transitory, and the largest noise impacts would be at night-time, which reduces the likelihood of noise effects for tourists using these resources.
- 6.8.2.20 There is limited evidence of the impact of the construction of offshore wind farms on tourism and recreation activity, with most analysis focusing on the perceived impacts of operational wind farms (Vattenfall, 2021). A study by Biggar Economics looked at the construction of nine offshore wind farms in England and assessed the impact of the construction stage on local tourism employment. While none of these wind farms is located in an island setting, the study found no evidence that their construction had had an impact on the local tourism economy, including in areas where the landscape was considered sensitive, such as the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB, now National Landscape) and the South Downs National Park (Biggar Economics, 2020). While many of the wind farms included in the study are located further from shore than the Offshore Project would be, others (such as the Teesside offshore wind farm, located 1.5 km off the coast of Redcar) are as close or closer to shore.
- 6.8.2.21 This research was conducted as part of an application by Scottish Power Renewables for two proposed offshore wind farms off the coast of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths National Landscape, an area that attracts tourists due to its largely undisturbed coastal landscape. Research undertaken on behalf of the Suffolk Coast Destination Management Organisation (DMO) found that a minority of survey respondents reported that potential disruption associated with the construction of offshore wind turbines (and associated onshore infrastructure) would deter them from visiting the Suffolk Coast (The Suffolk Coast DMO, 2021). Concerns raised by respondents relevant to offshore

construction included visual impacts, noise, and air pollution. However, 56% of survey respondents stated that they would be no more or less likely to visit the area as a result of the construction of the wind turbines and onshore infrastructure, and 15% reported that they would be more likely to visit.

6.8.2.22 There is a concentration of tourism receptors within the ZTV on the west coast, and it is recognised that the local landscape and seascape is an important feature which attracts visitors to the Western Isles. However, it is not expected that there would be any significant effects on disruption or displacement of tourist or recreational activity during construction, or any significant noise effects for tourism receptors. While construction activity between April and October would overlap with the peak tourism season, significant visual effects would be temporary and intermittent rather than continuous throughout the construction programme. This would represent a partial alteration to one element of the sector's baseline value in some parts of the SSA, however the evidence available suggests that the impacts of offshore wind construction on tourism activity may be limited. The magnitude of the impact in the West Side SSA is therefore assessed as **Low**. Other impacts on tourism such as increased demand for transport, accommodation and labour would also be short-term and intermittent. Overall, it is expected that any changes in business revenues or employment during construction across the SSA as a whole would be minor.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.8.2.23 Tourism is an important employer in the Western Isles, accounting for a higher than average proportion of jobs and providing an important source of income for local people and businesses. Because the local tourism sector is highly dependent on natural capital, and has limited capacity to expand or adapt in response to changing demand, the sensitivity of the sector in the West Side SSA, in the Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

6.8.2.24 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the sector, the overall significance of the effect on the tourism sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse** and therefore **Not Significant**.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.8.2.25 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms. Details of mitigation measures that are proposed during the operation and maintenance phase are provided in **Table 6-22**.

Effects on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector

6.8.2.26 During construction, effects on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector could arise as a result of:

- Temporary disturbance to fishing or aquaculture resources and activity;
- Increased demand for port services which could impact on imports and exports;
- Temporary changes in the availability of workers in the sector.

6.8.2.27 As set out in Section 6.6.1, commercial fishing, aquaculture, and the fish and shellfish processing supply chain are important employers within the Western Isles and the SSAs, with concentrations of jobs in particular areas in and around the Stornoway and West Side SSAs. Effects on the fisheries and aquaculture sector are therefore assessed for the West Side SSA and Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.8.2.28 Effects on commercial fishing activity, including any displacement of or disruption to commercially important fish and shellfish resources, are assessed in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a**. The assessment set out in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a** concludes that there could be moderate adverse effects during construction on potting for lobster, crab and ballan wrasse, as a result of a reduction in access to, or exclusion from established fishing grounds within the Array Area and within the Offshore Cable Area of Search (OCC AoS); displacement leading to gear conflict and increased fishing pressure on adjacent grounds; and the physical presence of infrastructure leading to gear snagging. **Chapter 21, Volume 2a** identifies additional mitigation measures (A001, A002, A003) to address these effects and, based on the successful application of this additional mitigation, the significance of these effects is reduced to minor adverse, which would not be significant in EIA terms.

6.8.2.29 Effects on aquaculture activity are assessed in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, which reports that construction activity would result in a negligible effect for multinational aquaculture companies operating in Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* that would not be significant, and a minor adverse effect for local aquaculture companies that would not be significant. **Chapter 16, Volume 2a**, notes that the closest port or harbour area to the Array Area is Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg* which contains several aquaculture sites. Stakeholder feedback has highlighted that the use of Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg* as a base port during construction of the Offshore Project may reduce access to facilities which could impact on local aquaculture operations. Base ports for the Offshore Project are not yet known, however **Chapter 16, Volume 2a** concludes that, with mitigation in place (M011, M012, M015, M022, M024, M026, M029), there would be no significant adverse effect on access to ports and facilities in the Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg* area.

6.8.2.30 In relation to effects on imports and exports, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** assesses temporary disturbance to ports and harbours during construction due to increased demand for port services, including increased demand for ferry services from the construction workforce. The main Ullapool/*Ulapul* – Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* ferry service is used by freight as well as by passenger traffic, and so increased demand for ferry services has the potential to impact on the capacity for freight. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports that there would be a minor adverse effect on small ports

on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* that would not be significant and a negligible effect on the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* that would also not be significant.

- 6.8.2.31 In Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*, this is due in part to the recent (April 2024) completion of the Stornoway Deep Water Terminal which has increased capacity at the port to support the fabrication and transportation of renewable energy components, and to accommodate cruise vessels. Facilities provided at the Deep Water Terminal include a main berth for vessels up to 360m long, a freight ferry berth and up to 6.5 ha of land for unloading, storage, and industrial uses (Stornoway Port, 2025). As set out in **Table 6-15**, and specifically M042, the Project is committed to working with key stakeholders and service providers to understand pressure points on existing services and on storage / port facilities on Lewis, and charter vessels and/or flights to transport crew and materials where required to avoid creating excess pressure, and potentially provide additional capacity. Large construction components would be transported by specialist vessels via private charter.
- 6.8.2.32 Employment created by the construction of the Offshore Project could introduce additional competition for workers. The socio-economic assessment set out above shows that additional demand for workers during construction could lead to some market pressure. While there is an existing construction workforce in the Western Isles, there could be knock-on effects for other sectors, including potential displacement of workers from the fisheries and aquaculture sector. It is likely that some workers in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors have skills that would be transferrable to the offshore wind sector, increasing the potential for displacement effects.
- 6.8.2.33 As set out in Section 6.8.1, it is estimated that the construction of the Offshore Project could create approximately 50 jobs that would be retained within the Western Isles. Data presented in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** shows that, across the economy as a whole, there is a workforce of approximately 9,050 in Lewis and Harris, with higher than average shares of employment in fisheries and aquaculture, particularly within the SSAs. While unemployment is below average in the Western Isles, there is a high rate of part-time employment which could suggest some under-employment in the wider economy. It is therefore expected that there is some capacity within the labour market to absorb construction jobs, and that the likelihood of knock-on effects for the fisheries and aquaculture sector is relatively small. The seasonality of offshore construction activity – between the months of April and October – could also reduce the likelihood of displacement.
- 6.8.2.34 With mitigation in place, there are not expected to be any significant residual effects on either commercial fishing activity or on aquaculture during construction, and any displacement of labour is likely to be small. Therefore, it is expected that any knock-on effects on the wider sector and the fish/shellfish processing supply chain would also be small. The magnitude of the impact on the commercial fishing and aquaculture sector, and in the fish and shellfish processing supply chain, in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight alteration to the value of the sector in these areas, which could result in minor changes in business revenues or in employment.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.8.2.35 Fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing are important employers in the Western Isles, and particularly in and around the SSAs. As the sector is highly dependent on natural resources, the sensitivity of the sector in both Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the SSAs is assessed as **High**.

Significance of effect

6.8.2.36 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing, the overall significance of the effect on the sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.8.2.37 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on the transport and storage sector

6.8.2.38 During construction, effects on the transport and storage sector could arise as a result of:

- Temporary loss of access or disruption to ports and harbours;
- Additional demand for port services;
- Temporary changes in the availability of workers in the sector.

6.8.2.39 As noted in Section 6.6.1, employment in the transport and storage sector accounts for a higher proportion of employment in the Western Isles than Scotland/*Alba* as a whole, which may reflect the importance of air and ferry services between the islands and the mainland, and associated employment at airports, ferry terminals, and at sea, particularly in the Stornoway SSA where the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* is located. Effects on the transport and storage sector are therefore assessed for the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). Effects are also assessed for the West Side SSA where a number of small ports are located. The receptor is the transport and storage sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.8.2.40 **Chapter 16, Volume 2a** assesses potential effects arising from reduced access to local ports, harbours, and facilities for vessels. The closest port or harbour area to the Array Area is Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg*, which contains various piers, harbours and jetties, the closest to the Array Area being Carloway/*Càrlabagh* Pier. It is not anticipated that construction activities would have an impact on access to the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* due to the distance involved for vessels to transit north of the Butt of Lewis/*Rubha Robhanais*. While there could be impacts on access to local ports, harbours and facilities in Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg*, **Chapter 16, Volume 2a** concludes that,

with mitigation in place (M011, M012, M015, M022, M024, M026, M029), the effect would not be significant

- 6.8.2.41 Temporary disturbance to ports and harbours due to increased demand for port services and marine maintenance is assessed in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**. The assessment also considers increased demand from the construction workforce. For small ports on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, which include those within Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg* and others on the west coast typically used by tourist and pleasure craft, the effect is assessed as minor and not significant. The assessment for the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* notes that the additional workforce associated with the construction of the Offshore Project may also put pressure on ferry services to Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, and particularly on the main Ullapool/*Ulapul* – Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* route. However, the effect is assessed as negligible and not significant. The mitigation set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041, further reduces the likely impact of additional demand from construction workers.
- 6.8.2.42 In relation to port services and capacity, the recent (April 2024) completion of the Stornoway Deep Water Terminal, part of the 20-year Stornoway Port Authority Master Plan (2017), has increased capacity at the port to support the fabrication and transportation of renewable energy components, and to accommodate cruise vessels. Facilities provided at the Deep Water Terminal include a main berth for vessels up to 360m long, a freight ferry berth and up to 6.5 ha of land for unloading, storage, and industrial uses (Stornoway Port, 2025). As set out in **Table 6-15**, and specifically M042, the Project is committed to working with key stakeholders and service providers to understand pressure points on existing services and on storage / port facilities on Lewis, and charter vessels and/or flights to transport crew and materials where required to avoid creating excess pressure, and potentially provide additional capacity. Large construction components would be transported by specialist vessels via private charter, further reducing the likely impact on port services and capacity.
- 6.8.2.43 Alongside increased demand for port and ferry services, employment created by the construction of the Offshore Project could also introduce additional competition for workers, both directly and indirectly. The socio-economic assessment set out above shows that additional demand for workers during construction could lead to some market pressure. While there is an existing construction workforce in the Western Isles, there could be knock-on effects for other sectors, including potential displacement of workers from the transport and storage sector. It is likely that some workers in the sector have skills that would be transferrable to the offshore wind sector, increasing the potential for displacement effects.
- 6.8.2.44 As set out in Section 6.8.1, it is estimated that the construction of the Offshore Project could create approximately 50 jobs that would be retained within the Western Isles. Data presented in **Appendix 6.1, Volume 2c** shows that, across the economy as a whole, there is a workforce of approximately 9,050 in Lewis and Harris, with higher than average shares of employment in transport and storage. While unemployment is below average in the Western Isles, there is a high rate of part-time employment which could suggest some under-employment in the wider

economy. It is therefore expected that there is some capacity within the labour market to absorb construction jobs associated with the Offshore Project, and that the likelihood of knock-on effects for the transport and storage sector is relatively small. The seasonality of offshore construction activity – between the months of April and October – could also reduce the likelihood of displacement.

- 6.8.2.45 An increase in demand for ferry services could indirectly lead to additional labour market pressure by increasing requirements for workers within the transport and storage sector, however the impact is likely to be small and intermittent throughout the construction programme. There is also the potential for increased demand for port services to create business and employment opportunities, both in Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* and in small ports utilised during construction. While such opportunities would have benefits for the transport and storage sector and for the wider local economy, there is also the potential for further pressure on the local labour market. With mitigation in place – specifically M042 – the impact on the labour market is likely to be small.
- 6.8.2.46 Disruption to ports and increased demand for port services would also be temporary and intermittent during periods of construction activity between April and October. Displacement of workers from the sector is likely to be small and have little or no impact on port operations. The magnitude of the impact on employment in the transport and storage sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and Harris/*Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight alteration to the value of the sector in these areas, which could lead to minor changes in business revenues or in employment.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

- 6.8.2.47 The transport and storage sector is an important employer in the Western Isles, accounting for 7.9% of total employment. As the sector has some capacity to expand or adapt in response to changing demand for workers, the sensitivity of the sector in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

- 6.8.2.48 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the transport and storage sector, the overall significance of the effect on the sector in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

- 6.8.2.49 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.8.3 SOCIO-CULTURAL EFFECTS

6.8.3.1 Socio-cultural effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only, as discussed in Section 6.5.3.

6.8.3.2 The presence of a temporary construction workforce has the potential to impact on local demographics and on demand for housing, services and transport. Temporary changes in the population and changes in the environment associated with the construction of the Offshore Project also have the potential to impact on culture and identity, including in relation to the Gaelic language.

Population change

6.8.3.3 The presence of a temporary construction workforce could lead to population change, including changes in demographics. Temporary population change is assessed for the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*), as it is expected that workers would be most likely to be accommodated in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area due to proximity to and availability of local services and infrastructure. The receptor is the local resident population in these areas.

Magnitude

6.8.3.4 As set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041, offshore construction workforce will be accommodated on vessels, with the exception of certain limited circumstances such as crew change over and leave, to reduce additional demand for housing / tourist accommodation on Lewis/*Leòdhas*. A small number of offshore workers would be likely to require short-term, temporary accommodation on land between the months of April and October, however it is likely that this would represent a small proportion of the existing population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* (19,680 at the time of the 2022 Census). Any impact on demographics would be most acute at the neighbourhood level in the areas where construction workers would be most likely to be accommodated. As noted above, it is anticipated that workers would be most likely to seek accommodation in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area, due to proximity to local services and infrastructure. The population of the Stornoway SSA in 2022 was 7,375.

6.8.3.5 There is the potential that the presence of an incoming construction workforce could change the gender and age profile of the local population. Data from the 2023 Offshore Wind Skills Intelligence Report suggests that approximately 24.3% of the offshore wind workforce in Scotland/*Alba* is made up of women, although the Offshore Wind Sector Deal sets a target to reach 33% by 2033 (Offshore Wind Industry Council, 2023). The baseline shows that both SSAs, and the Western Isles as a whole, have an ageing population with a smaller share of the population who are of working-age than the Scottish average. The presence of incoming construction workers could therefore increase the proportion of the population who are men, and who are of working-age. However, as the majority of workers will be accommodated offshore, the impact is likely to be

small. Requirements for accommodation onshore would be short-term and temporary for particular periods during the construction period, between the months of April and October.

- 6.8.3.6 With mitigation in place, the magnitude of the impact in both the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight change to baseline conditions affecting a relatively small proportion of the population, which would be short-term and reversible.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

Given the relatively small population of the Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and taking into account the island setting and dependence on local resources and infrastructure, the sensitivity of the local population in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

- 6.8.3.7 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the local resident population, the overall significance of the effect on the population of the Stornoway SSA and of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to demographic change is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

- 6.8.3.8 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on housing availability

- 6.8.3.9 The presence of a temporary construction workforce could lead to additional demand for housing. Temporary effects on the availability of housing are assessed for the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*), as it is expected that workers would be most likely to be accommodated in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area. The receptor is the local housing market and the local resident population in these areas.

Magnitude

- 6.8.3.10 As set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041, offshore construction workforce will be accommodated on vessels, with the exception of certain limited circumstances such as crew change over and leave, to reduce additional demand for housing / tourist accommodation on Lewis/*Leòdhas*. There would be some requirement for temporary, short-term accommodation on land around change overs and leave between the months of April and October. It is anticipated that these workers would be most likely to seek temporary accommodation in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area.

6.8.3.11 Data presented in the baseline shows that there is very little housing available locally, and so it is considered that any workers who would require temporary housing would be more likely to use tourism accommodation (assessed in Section 6.8.2) than purchase or rent private market housing. As the number of offshore construction workers likely to require accommodation on land is small, the magnitude of the impact on the housing market in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and in the Stornoway SSA is assessed as **Negligible** as there would be very little change from baseline conditions.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.8.3.12 Data presented in the baseline, including feedback from focus group participants, highlights the pressures on housing availability and affordability within the Western Isles. The sensitivity of the housing market and of the local population in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to the availability of housing is therefore assessed as **High**, as communities are dependent on limited locally available resources

Significance of effect

6.8.3.13 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the housing market and the local resident population in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.8.3.14 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of community services and infrastructure

6.8.3.15 The presence of a temporary construction workforce could lead to additional demand for community services and infrastructure such as healthcare, education, and the emergency services. Temporary effects on the availability of community services and infrastructure are assessed for the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*), as it is expected that workers would be most likely to be accommodated in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area. The receptors are community services and infrastructure, and the local resident population that uses those services.

Magnitude

6.8.3.16 As set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041, the offshore construction workforce will be accommodated on vessels, with the exception of certain limited circumstances such as crew change over and leave, to reduce additional demand for housing / tourist accommodation on Lewis/*Leòdhas*. As offshore construction work would be seasonal between the months of April and

October, it is considered unlikely that workers would choose to bring their families with them, reducing the potential for impacts on access to education and childcare.

- 6.8.3.17 There may be some additional demand for services such as healthcare on Lewis/*Leòdhas* from the construction workforce. However, medical facilities would be provided on board vessels to treat minor injuries or illness and reduce additional pressure on existing services. As noted above, only small numbers of workers are expected to require temporary, short-term accommodation on land, which reduces the likely scale of the impact.
- 6.8.3.18 This also reduces the likely scale of the impact on demand for the emergency services, which is expected to be small. As noted in **Table 6-3**, Stornoway Police commented on potential issues associated with the presence of a temporary construction workforce. The Project has committed to developing a Cultural Integration Plan prior to the commencement of construction which will put in place measures to support the integration of incoming workers, which will include the continuation of awareness training and on island induction for all project staff and contractors (M045). It is expected that contractors will also put in place codes of conduct to manage staff behaviour and reduce potential issues.
- 6.8.3.19 While additional demand from the construction workforce could exacerbate existing pressure on services, it could also support the longer-term sustainability of these services, although the impact during the construction phase is likely to be small. The magnitude of the impact on community services and infrastructure in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight change to baseline conditions which would be temporary and reversible.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

- 6.8.3.20 As shown in the baseline, there are reported concerns around the capacity of services on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. The sensitivity of community services and infrastructure and of the local population in in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Medium**, as the population is dependent on locally available resources and infrastructure which have limited capacity, and there is little access to alternatives.

Significance of effect

- 6.8.3.21 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the local population of the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

- 6.8.3.22 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of transport

6.8.3.23 The presence of a temporary construction workforce, and transport of plant or equipment associated with the construction of the Offshore Project, could lead to additional demand for transport, including air and ferry services to the mainland. Temporary effects on the availability of transport are assessed for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is local transport infrastructure and the local resident population of the island.

Magnitude

6.8.3.24 Data presented in the baseline shows that, for people living in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, connectivity to the mainland via air and via ferries is important, with the main Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* – Ullapool/*Ulapul* ferry route described as a 'lifeline' service, both for passengers and for freight, including essential supplies such as food. The baseline reports that existing ferry services are stretched, and that some islanders can experience difficulties booking the ferry services that they need.

6.8.3.25 With mitigation in place, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports a negligible effect on the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* arising from increased demand for port services during construction. As set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041, the offshore construction workforce will be accommodated on vessels, with the exception of certain limited circumstances such as crew change over and leave, to reduce additional demand for housing / tourist accommodation on Lewis/*Leòdhas*. This reduces the likely impact on the availability of air and ferry services for visitors to the island, although there is likely to be some intermittent, ad hoc increase in demand around crew change overs and non-working days etc. The Project is also committed to working with key stakeholders and service providers to understand pressure points on existing services and on storage and port facilities on Lewis, and would charter vessels and/or flights to transport crew and materials where required to avoid creating excess pressure (M042). The measures set out in M042 could also potentially increase capacity, although the impact is likely to be small.

6.8.3.26 Overall, based on the negligible effect reported in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** and the mitigation set out in **Table 6-15**, the magnitude of the impact on transport infrastructure and the availability of transport for passengers and for freight in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **low**, as there would be a slight alteration to baseline conditions that would be temporary and reversible.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.8.3.27 Given the island context and the importance of ferry services in particular as a 'lifeline' service, the sensitivity of local transport infrastructure and of the local resident population on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **High**, as the local community is highly dependent on these services, existing capacity is already stretched, and there are few available alternatives.

Significance of effect

6.8.3.28 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the transport infrastructure and of the local resident population on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.8.3.29 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on culture and identity

6.8.3.30 The construction of the Offshore Project could lead to effects on local culture and identity as a result of:

- Potential dilution of local culture associated with temporary changes in the population and impacts on local cultural and religious practices, including:
 - Impacts on traditional industries and practices, including commercial and recreational fishing;
 - Impacts on the use of the Gaelic language;
 - Impacts on Sunday observance.
- Changes in the local environment, including increased noise and changes in the seascape and visual environment which form an important aspect of local identity.

6.8.3.31 Effects on culture and identity are assessed for the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the local resident population, including Gaelic speaking communities.

Magnitude

6.8.3.32 As discussed above, the effect on population change in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as minor adverse and therefore not significant, as the majority of construction workers would be accommodated offshore with only smaller numbers requiring temporary, short-term accommodation on land, most likely in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area. There could be a localised impact on Sunday observance in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area associated with the presence of construction workers, although this would also be temporary and intermittent, and limited by the use of offshore accommodation (M041).

6.8.3.33 The effect on commercial fishing, a traditional local industry that is identified as a factor that contributes to the cultural heritage and identity of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the Western Isles, is also assessed as not significant (see Section 6.8.2 above). **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, assesses effects on recreational sea angling, which is strongly linked to community and cultural

tradition, and concludes that the effect would be minor adverse and not significant, due to minimal spatial overlap and interaction with the Offshore Project.

- 6.8.3.34 The Gaelic language is a key feature of community identity on the islands, and particularly in the West Side SSA. The presence of an incoming construction workforce from outside of the Western Isles could impact on the Gaelic language as it is likely that the majority of the workforce would be non-Gaelic speakers. While the number of workers expected to require accommodation on land is small, research has shown that in-migration to Gaelic speaking communities can result in changes in language use as Gaelic-speakers tend to 'accommodate' non-Gaelic speakers by using English in settings where they would otherwise use Gaelic. This can result in a decrease in Gaelic being used in social settings which can have wider, longer-term effects on the use of the language in these communities (McEwen-Fujita, 2010).
- 6.8.3.35 With the mitigation identified in **Table 6-15** in place, specifically M041, there would be only small numbers of offshore construction workers requiring short-term, temporary accommodation on the island, between the months of April and October, and it is assumed that workers would be likely to be concentrated in Stornoway. It is acknowledged that in-migration of even small numbers of non-Gaelic speakers can result in changes in the use of the language in social and community settings, and so there is the potential for a localised impact on the use of Gaelic in the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* area that could result in effects on culture and identity in the area. However, the seasonal, short-term nature of in-migration of construction workers would reduce the magnitude of the impact.
- 6.8.3.36 As stated in **Table 6-15**, specifically M044, the Project is committed to the establishment of a Community Panel, comprising a range of community representatives with relevant experience and local knowledge. The purpose of the panel will be to provide a forum for local voices and perspectives to inform delivery of the Project, and to identify potential community opportunities in relation to the Project. It is proposed that the panel would be in place prior to the commencement of major construction activities for the Project. The Project is also committed to continued awareness training and on-island induction for all project staff and contractors, and to utilising a settlement officer to support cultural integration during construction (M045). These measures will form part of a Cultural Integration Plan which will be developed before construction begins.
- 6.8.3.37 Changes in the local environment, including the seascape, could also impact on the sense of place, particularly within the West Side SSA which would be within the ZTV for the Offshore Array. **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports that there would be significant adverse effects for residents of settlements along the west coast of Lewis, from Eoropie/*Eòrapaidh* in the north, to Carishader/*Cairsiadar* in the south. This includes, for example, the communities of Borge/*Borgh*, Barvas/*Barabhas*, Arnol/*Àrnoil*, Shawbost/*Siabost*, Garenin/*Na Gearrannan*, and Carlaway/*Càrlabhagh*. **Chapter 18, Volume 2a** also reports significant adverse effects for visitors to the cemetery at Barvas/*Barabhas*. There are other cemeteries located within the ZTV on the west coast, including at Eoropie/*Eòrapaidh* and Dalmore/*Dail Mhor*.

- 6.8.3.38 Visual effects arising during construction would be temporary for specific periods within the overall construction period, and would be associated primarily with the presence of vessels and partially constructed offshore elements. As discussed in the baseline, the relationship with the landscape and seascape forms a key element of the cultural heritage and identity of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and the Western Isles, and so these significant visual effects could impact on the sense of identity for some residents within these communities. Stakeholders and focus group participants have commented that certain groups within local communities, such as artists, surfers and other recreational groups, are particularly reliant on the landscape and seascape. These groups may therefore be more likely to experience effects on their sense of identity from visual impacts.
- 6.8.3.39 In relation to noise, **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, reports that there would be significant adverse night-time noise effects for six NSRs associated with piling activity, and significant adverse evening noise effects for two NSRs. The NSRs assessed include dwellings in the settlements of Garenin/*Na Gearrannan*, Dalmore/*Dail Mhor*, Shawbost/*Siabost*, Labost, Brue/*Brù*, and Ballantrushal/*Baile an Truiseil* in the West Side SSA. The Applicant will commit to producing and following a Piling Strategy (A007), which will include measures to mitigate and minimise adverse impacts. With this further mitigation in place, the residual noise effect for NSRs would be reduced to minor adverse, and not significant.
- 6.8.3.40 In the West Side SSA, the impact on the Gaelic language is expected to be small as there is not anticipated to be any significant change in the population of the west coast during construction. Some communities within the SSA could experience significant changes in the visual environment which could affect the sense of place. However, visual effects arising during construction would be temporary and associated primarily with the presence of vessels and partially constructed offshore elements. The magnitude of the impact on culture and identity in the West Side SSA is therefore assessed as **Low**. While the visual impacts would represent a partial alteration to a specific element of local culture and identity, visual impacts associated with construction activity would be intermittent rather than continuous throughout the construction programme and unlikely to result in longer-term changes in culture and identity across the SSA as a whole. Other impacts associated with the presence of an incoming workforce would also be short-term and intermittent, and are expected to be minor on the west coast. Project lifetime effects are assessed separately in **Chapter 23: Combined Effects Assessment, Volume 2a**.
- 6.8.3.41 With the mitigation described in **Table 6-15** in place, the magnitude of the impact in the Stornoway SSA is also assessed as **Low**, as there could be short-term, temporary implications for a specific element of local culture and identity. Outside of the SSAs, the magnitude of the impact on culture and identity in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is also assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight alteration to baseline conditions that would be short-term and reversible.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.8.3.42 Given the cultural importance of aspects including the Gaelic language and the relationship with the landscape and seascape, the sensitivity of the local resident population in both the Stornoway SSA and the West Side SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to cultural identity is assessed as **High**, as there are distinct cultural characteristics of national and international importance that contribute to the cultural heritage and identity of local communities in these areas.

Significance of effect

6.8.3.43 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the local resident population of in relation to cultural identity, the overall significance of the effect in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.8.3.44 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.9 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

6.9.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

6.9.1.1 Jobs and GVA are assessed for the Project as a whole including both Onshore and Offshore elements, as described in Section 6.5.3.

6.9.1.2 The operation and maintenance of the Project would create direct, indirect and induced employment and GVA in the local and national economy. Socio-economic impacts are assessed for the Western Isles and Scotland/*Alba*. The receptor for employment effects is the labour market. The receptor for GVA effects is the economy.

Employment effects

6.9.1.3 It is estimated that the operation and maintenance phase of the Project would create between 6,129 and 6,592 direct person years of employment within the Western Isles over the Project's 35-year operational lifecycle. **Table 6-20** presents operational employment in terms of the FTE jobs that would be created or safeguarded each year. Dividing local direct person years of employment over the 35-year operational lifecycle means the Project could create or safeguard between 175 and 188 direct FTE jobs per annum within the Western Isles. Elsewhere in Scotland, operation and maintenance would create or safeguard between 174 and 187 direct FTE jobs per year. In total, therefore, it is estimated that, across Scotland as a whole, operation and maintenance would create

or safeguard between 349 and 375 FTE jobs per year, approximately half of which would be retained within the Western Isles.

6.9.1.4 It is expected that these jobs would be in the manufacturing; wholesale and retail; administrative and support services; professional, scientific and technical; and financial and insurance sectors (NREL, 2023). BRES data shows that there are currently 2,925 people employed in these sectors of the economy in the Western Isles, and 891,000 employed in these sectors in Scotland (ONS, 2025).

Table 6-20: Operation and maintenance phase employment effects (FTE) (average over project life)

	Lower case		Upper case	
	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>
Direct	175	174	188	187
Indirect	64	64	69	69
Induced	105	104	113	112
Total	344	342	370	367

Source: Assessment analysis, 2025

6.9.1.5 As well as direct employment, the operation and maintenance phase of the Project would also support indirect and induced employment in the supply chain as a result of increased spending in the local economy. As stated in **Table 6-15**, and specifically M048, the Project is committed to maximising opportunities for local businesses to compete for contracts on the Project, and will continue to support the development of the local supply chain to develop the skills and capacity needed to operate the Project.

6.9.1.6 The SCDS also commits the Project to employing a Scottish based ‘Supply Chain and Skills Manager’ to work with the Scottish supply chain and enterprise agencies, building upon work done to date by HIE in establishing a renewables-based supply chain, to further develop local capabilities within the Highlands and Islands for the long-term (Sporad na Mara Ltd, 2023). The vision, set out in the SCDS, is to build a competitive, commercially viable offshore wind sector in Scotland.

6.9.1.7 The figures set out in **Table 6-20** represent the economic effect of the employment that would be generated within the local and national economy throughout the operation and maintenance phase, rather than the number of workers that would be required permanently to operate the Project. It includes, for example, the economic effect of routine maintenance activities that would temporarily require workers on site for short periods, as well as the permanent operation and maintenance workforce. The Applicant estimates that the permanent operation and maintenance workforce for the Project as a whole would be between 80 and 120.

6.9.1.8 In summary, the operation and maintenance phase of the Project would:

- Create or safeguard between 349 and 375 direct FTE jobs per year in Scotland;

- Of these, between 175 and 188 direct FTE jobs per year would be retained in the Western Isles;
- Direct jobs retained within the Western Isles would comprise between 80 and 120 permanent operation and maintenance staff, and routine maintenance staff who would be required temporarily for short periods throughout the operation and maintenance phase.

6.9.1.9 The scale of the economic impact within the Western Isles would depend to some extent on the location of the onshore O&M base for the Project. While this has not yet been confirmed, the currently preferred location is in Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*. However, the Project aims to retain as many long-term operational roles on the island as possible, and recognises that investment in skills development, employment training and apprenticeship opportunities will be required to enable this. As stated in **Table 6-15**, and specifically M049, the Project is committed to maximising opportunities for local people to apply for jobs created by the Project, and will continue to work with the supply chain and other local stakeholders to support skills development initiatives to develop the workforce skills required for the operation of the Project.

Magnitude

6.9.1.10 The magnitude of impact in the Western Isles is assessed as **Medium**, as there would be a long-term impact throughout the Project lifecycle affecting a relatively small proportion of the workforce. As noted above, it is estimated that operation and maintenance would create or safeguard between 175 and 188 FTE jobs that would be retained within the Western Isles, or approximately 6% of the baseline workforce in the relevant sectors of the economy (which employed 2,925 people in the Western Isles in 2024). It is acknowledged that this could be higher or lower depending on the location of the O&M base and the extent of remote working during operation and maintenance, which could be impacted by factors such as the ease of recruiting and the availability of housing on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* for incoming workers.

6.9.1.11 Due to the nature of some operational employment, not all workers would need to be local throughout the entire operational period (Catapult, 2021) as some of the operations involve remote monitoring which could be conducted from other localities. Should the currently preferred location of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*, or another location on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, be chosen for the O&M base, it is anticipated that there would be some labour migration into the Western Isles to take up operational job opportunities, discussed further in Section 6.9.2 and Section 6.9.3. This reduces the potential for labour shortages or displacement of activity elsewhere in the economy.

6.9.1.12 The jobs created would be permanent, for the duration of the operation and maintenance phase, and so would provide employment opportunities and benefits in the long-term. While it is acknowledged that there are a range of social, economic and historical factors that have contributed to the decrease in the population of the Western Isles, these jobs would provide long-term opportunities that could help to sustain the working-age population in future.

6.9.1.13 The magnitude of the impact in Scotland/*Alba* is expected to be **Negligible** as there would be very little change to baseline conditions in the relevant sectors of the economy. A total of between 174

and 187 direct FTE jobs would be created or safeguarded in the country per annum, in sectors that account for 891,000 jobs as per the baseline data (2022). Employment associated with the operation and maintenance of the Project would therefore account for less than 0.1% of the current baseline.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.9.1.14 In the Western Isles, the sensitivity of the labour market is assessed as **Medium** as the labour force is relatively small and there is limited connectivity to other areas, which could lead to labour market pressures. While there is an existing labour supply in the sectors most relevant to operation and maintenance employment, and there is some indication of under-employment within the local labour market, the relatively low level of unemployment and reduced connectivity to neighbouring labour markets means that the capacity of the local workforce to absorb additional demand is restricted.

6.9.1.15 The sensitivity of the national study area baseline is assessed as **Low**, as there are relatively few constraints on the supply of labour and skills at the national level.

Significance of effect

6.9.1.16 Based on the medium magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the local labour market, the overall significance of the effect for the Western Isles is assessed as **Moderate Beneficial**, which is **Significant** in EIA terms.

6.9.1.17 Based on the negligible magnitude of impact and low sensitivity of the national labour market, the overall significance of the effect for Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.9.1.18 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

GVA effects

6.9.1.19 **Table 6-21** shows that the operation and maintenance phase of the Project would generate between £330m and £355m in direct GVA within the Western Isles, over the 35 year operational period. This equates to between £9.4m and £10.1m per annum to the Western Isles economy.

Table 6-21 Operation and maintenance phase GVA effects (total over 35 year operational period)

	Lower case		Upper case	
	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>	Local Western Isles	National Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>
Direct	£330	£328	£355	£353
Indirect	£76	£75	£81	£81
Induced	£242	£240	£260	£258
Total	£648	£642	£697	£691

Source: Assessment analysis, 2025

Magnitude

6.9.1.20 The magnitude of the impact in the Western Isles is expected to be **Low** as there would be a slight alteration to the value generated by the local economy. The operation and maintenance of the Project would contribute between £9.4m and £10.1m in direct GVA each year, which would account for a small proportion of the overall local baseline GVA (£645m in 2023) and of the baseline GVA in relevant sectors³ (£140m).

6.9.1.21 The magnitude of the impact in Scotland/*Alba* is also expected to be **Negligible** as there would be very little change to baseline conditions. The operation and maintenance of the Project would generate between £9.4m and £10.1m per annum in direct GVA at the national level, which would represent a very small proportion of the current total baseline GVA (£183.5bn) and the baseline in relevant sectors.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.9.1.22 The sensitivity of the economy in the Western Isles is assessed as **Medium** as, while rates of productivity are below the Scottish average, there has been some growth over the last ten years and the economy has some capacity to absorb change.

6.9.1.23 The sensitivity of the national study area is assessed as **Low**, as the economy is relatively stable and has recorded growth over the last ten years.

Significance of effect

6.9.1.24 Based on the low magnitude of impact and low sensitivity of the local economy, the overall significance of the effect for the Western Isles is assessed as **Minor Beneficial**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

³ These are: manufacturing; wholesale and retail; administrative and support services; professional, scientific and technical; and financial and insurance

6.9.1.25 Based on the **Negligible** magnitude of impact and **Low** sensitivity of the national economy, the overall significance of the effect for Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.9.1.26 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.9.2 WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS

6.9.2.1 Wider socio-economic effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only, as discussed in Section 6.5.3.

6.9.2.2 The employment and environmental impacts associated with the operation and maintenance of the Offshore Project could have wider socio-economic effects on key sectors of the economy that are important local employers, and/or reliant on natural resources. Effects are assessed for tourism; fisheries, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing; and transport and storage.

Effects on the tourism sector

6.9.2.3 During operation and maintenance, effects on the tourism sector could arise as a result of:

- Changes in demand for tourist accommodation;
- Impacts on tourism receptors, including accommodation providers, such as loss of access, disruption, displacement, noise or changes in the visual environment.

6.9.2.4 Effects on the tourism sector are assessed for the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA, and the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the tourism sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.9.2.5 During operation and maintenance, it is proposed that workers required for routine maintenance tasks who are not resident on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* would either be accommodated on an SOV, or would be transported to site using CTVs. There may, therefore, be some short-term, intermittent requirements for onshore accommodation. While there is the potential that this increase in demand could reduce availability of accommodation for tourists during the peak season, there is also the potential that it could result in positive effects for tourist accommodation providers throughout the operation and maintenance phase. As shown in Section 6.8.2, it is likely that there would be capacity in the tourist accommodation sector even at the peak of the tourist season.

- 6.9.2.6 There may also be additional demand for transport, including air and ferry services to the island, from the operational workforce, including both routine maintenance workers and the permanent operation and maintenance workforce, which could reduce availability for tourists during the peak season. This is discussed further in Section 6.9.3 below. The impact would be intermittent, and would be reduced should an SOV be used to accommodate maintenance workers. As noted above, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports a negligible effect on the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* arising from an increase in demand for port services during operation, including as a result of increased demand from the operation and maintenance workforce.
- 6.9.2.7 There is also the potential for loss of access for boat tour operators, sea anglers, angling tour operators, and other recreational and tourism receptors such as paddleboarders, canoeists and kayakers. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, reports that effects from loss of access during operation and maintenance for these groups of receptors would be minor adverse and not significant. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** also assesses the potential for changes in wave resource associated with the presence of infrastructure to impact on surfers during operation and maintenance, and reports that the effect would be negligible and not significant.
- 6.9.2.8 As the impact on tourist accommodation and on the availability of transport to the island from the operational workforce is expected to be very small, and there would be no significant effect on tourism and recreation receptors from loss of access or impacts on wave resource, the magnitude of the impact on the tourism sector in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a whole is assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight alteration to the value of the sector in these areas, which could lead to minor changes in business revenues or in employment.
- 6.9.2.9 In the West Side SSA, there could be amenity effects for tourism receptors from operational noise and from changes in the seascape associated with the Turbine Area, which could result in wider effects on the tourism sector. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, reports that the effect on amenity for users of tourism and recreation assets and other sea users would be minor adverse. **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports that there would be significant adverse visual effects for visitors to beaches on the west coast of Lewis/*Na Hearadh*, including those at Barvas/*Barabhas* and Brue/*Brù*; visitors to tourism attractions within the ZTV on the west coast, including Arnol/*Àrnoil* Blackhouse, Loch na Muilne RSPB reserve, and Trushal Standing Stone/*Clach an Trushal*; and users of recreational routes including core paths and parts of the Hebridean Way. The visual impact of the Turbine Area could also affect users of tourism accommodation, particularly on the west coast. However, **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, reports that operational noise effects for NSRs within the West Side SSA would be negligible/minor and therefore not significant. Overall, therefore, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** concludes that the effect on amenity would be minor adverse and not significant.
- 6.9.2.10 Research commissioned by Vattenfall has looked at the impact of offshore wind farms on tourism and recreation (Vattenfall, 2021). There is limited evidence from offshore wind farms in the UK, however the literature suggests that the overall impact of offshore wind farms on tourism is 'relatively benign', and that in some cases there can be positives (for example, by providing a

differentiator that can help a location to stand out in a crowded marketplace). The research notes that the real or expected visual impact of offshore wind farms is a key concern, and that the evidence consistently shows that stakeholder concerns about visual impacts decrease as distances of the wind farm from shore are increased (Vattenfall, 2021). This is reflected in research from the United States that found that tourists' concerns around the visual amenity of wind turbines increase the closer they are to the shore (Lutzeyer, 2018).

- 6.9.2.11 An example from France, however, concludes that a wind farm can be located as close as 5 km from shore without a loss in tourism revenues 'if accompanied by a coherent environmental policy and wind farm associated recreational activities' (Vattenfall, 2021). There are also examples within the UK of offshore wind farms creating benefits for local tourism businesses. For example, Rampion Wind Farm, located between 13 km and 25 km off the shore of Sussex, has a visitor centre on Brighton seafront, and it has been reported that a number of local businesses now run boat trips for visitors to see the wind turbines (BBC, 2025). There is the potential, therefore, that the Project could create opportunities for local tourism and recreation businesses once in operation.
- 6.9.2.12 While there is limited evidence of the impact of offshore wind farms on tourist behaviour, the literature does show that visual impacts can be a concern for visitors and for tourism-related businesses, particularly when turbines are located relatively close to the shore. It should also be noted that the examples given above may not be directly comparable to the Project due to the difference in local contexts and sensitivities. Taking into account the visual effects described above and the concentration of tourism receptors within the ZTV on the west coast, the magnitude of the impact on tourism in the West Side SSA is assessed, on a precautionary basis, as **Medium**, as there would be partial alteration to one or more key elements of the sector's baseline value which could result in moderate changes in business revenues or in employment in the medium-term throughout the project lifecycle.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

- 6.9.2.13 Tourism is an important employer in the Western Isles, accounting for a higher than average proportion of jobs and providing an important source of income for local people and businesses. As the tourism sector is one of the key local industries and is to some extent dependent on natural resources, the sensitivity of the sector in the West Side SSA, in the Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

- 6.9.2.14 Based on the medium magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the tourism sector, the overall significance of the effect in the West Side SSA is assessed as **Moderate Adverse**, which is **Significant** in EIA terms.

6.9.2.15 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the tourism sector, the overall significance of the effect in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation

6.9.2.16 Given the potential wider socio-economic effect was predicted to be significant in EIA terms for the tourism sector in the West Side SSA, the following further environmental mitigation has been identified.

Table 6-22 Relevant further mitigation measures

ID	Environmental Measure Proposed	Project Phase Measure Introduced	How the Environmental Measures will be Secured
A0004	<p>The Project has already engaged with Outer Hebrides Tourism (also known as Visit Outer Hebrides), and is committed to developing a Tourism Support Strategy, through which it can – in consultation with Outer Hebrides Tourism and other relevant stakeholders – support existing tourism initiatives and, where appropriate, collaborate to explore new opportunities for tourism on the islands, in particular in the area of ecotourism associated with renewable energy.</p> <p>Other specific initiatives the Project will include in such a strategy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultation with local organisations to discuss opportunities to enhance the Multiuse Pathway along Barvas Moor Road that will be delivered as part of the Onshore Project; • opportunities to incorporate learning and visitor opportunities into the Operations and Maintenance Base; • potential for information stops along the west coast of Lewis to showcase the area's cultural 	Construction, operation (including maintenance), and decommissioning	To be secured through a condition of the Section 36 consent and/or Marine Licence.

ID	Environmental Measure Proposed	Project Phase Measure Introduced	How the Environmental Measures will be Secured
	heritage and biodiversity, subject to consultation with CnES and further planning approval if required.		

Significance of residual effects

6.9.2.17 Taking into account the further mitigation measures identified in **Table 6-22**, the residual effect on the tourism sector in the West Side SSA during the operation and maintenance phase is assessed as **Minor Adverse** which is **Not Significant**. While some tourism receptors and tourism accommodation providers in the West Side SSA would experience significant adverse visual effects during the operation and maintenance phase of the Offshore Project, the mitigation described in **Table 6-22** would help to support the wider tourism sector in the area, including the delivery of potential benefits, and would therefore reduce the magnitude of the impact on the sector overall.

Effects on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector

6.9.2.18 During operation and maintenance, effects on the fisheries, aquaculture, and fish/shellfish processing sector could arise as a result of disturbance to fishing or aquaculture resources. As shown in Section 6.6.1, commercial fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing are important employers within the study area, with concentrations of jobs in particular areas in and around the Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* and West Side SSAs. Effects are therefore assessed for the West Side SSA and Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.9.2.19 Effects on commercial fishing activity, including any displacement of or disruption to commercially important fish and shellfish resources, are assessed in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a**. The assessment concludes that there could be moderate adverse effects during the operation and maintenance phase on potting for lobster, crab and ballan wrasse, as a result of the physical presence of infrastructure leading to gear snagging. **Chapter 21, Volume 2a** identifies additional mitigation measures (A001, A002, A003) to address these effects and, based on the successful application of this additional mitigation, the significance of these effects is reduced to minor adverse, which would not be significant in EIA terms.

6.9.2.20 In relation to aquaculture, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, reports a negligible effect for multinational aquaculture companies operating in Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* that would not be significant, and a minor adverse effect for local aquaculture companies that would also not be significant. **Chapter 16, Volume 2a**, concludes that, with mitigation in place (M012, M014, M015, M022, M024, M026,

M029, M033, M039), there would be no significant adverse effect on access to ports and facilities in the Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg* area, where a number of aquaculture sites are located. The impact on the ability to import or export goods is expected to be small. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports that the effect on the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* during operation would be negligible and not significant, as the Stornoway Deep Water Terminal is expected to be able to support the continued growth of the port.

6.9.2.21 With mitigation in place, there are not expected to be any significant residual effects on either commercial fishing activity or on aquaculture during construction. Therefore, it is expected that any knock-on effects on the wider sector and its supply chain would also be small. The magnitude of the impact on businesses and employment in the commercial fishing and aquaculture sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Low** as there could be a slight alteration to the value of the sector in these areas, which could include minor changes in business revenues or in employment.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.9.2.22 Fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing are important employers in the Western Isles, and particularly in and around the SSAs. As the sector is one of the key local industries and is highly dependent on natural resources, the sensitivity of the sector in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSAs, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **High**.

Significance of effect

6.9.2.23 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector, the overall significance of the effect on the sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse** which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.9.2.24 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on the transport and storage sector

6.9.2.25 During operation and maintenance, effects on the transport and storage sector could arise as a result of disruption to ports and harbour operations. Should the currently preferred location of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*, or another location on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, be chosen for the O&M base, there is also the potential for beneficial effects associated with increased demand for port services and facilities. Effects on the transport and storage sector are assessed for the Stornoway SSA and the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the transport and storage sector in these areas.

Magnitude

- 6.9.2.26 As noted in Section 6.6.1, employment in the transport and storage sector accounts for a higher proportion of employment in the Western Isles than Scotland/*Alba* as a whole, which reflects the importance of air and ferry services between the islands and the mainland, and associated employment at airports, ferry terminals, and at sea. There is the potential for disturbance to port operations to impact on employment in the transport and storage sector in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and particularly in the Stornoway SSA, where the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* is located.
- 6.9.2.27 **Chapter 16, Volume 2a** assesses potential effects arising from reduced access for vessels to local ports, harbours, and facilities. It is not anticipated that operation and maintenance activities would have a substantial effect on vessel approaches to and from Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg* and, with mitigation in place (M012, M014, M015, M022, M024, M026, M029, M033, M039), **Chapter 16, Volume 2a** concludes that the effect would not be significant.
- 6.9.2.28 **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports that there could be increased demand for port services during operation and maintenance due to the presence of vessels required to operate the Offshore Project. For small ports on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, which include those within Loch Roag/*Loch Ròg* and others on the west coast typically used by tourist and pleasure craft, the effect is assessed as minor and not significant. For Stornoway Port, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** assesses the effect as negligible and not significant, due in part to the recent (April 2024) completion of the Stornoway Deep Water Terminal, part of the 20-year Stornoway Port Authority Master Plan (2017), which has increased capacity at the port.
- 6.9.2.29 There is also the potential for long-term beneficial impacts due to the increased demand for port services and facilities, which could bring business and employment opportunities to ports utilised during the operational lifetime of the Offshore Project. The scale of the impact will depend on the location for the O&M base. Increased demand for passenger ferry services could provide additional revenue for ferry operators, which could help to sustain these services in the long-term, although there is also the potential for increased demand from the operational workforce to impact on the availability of services. This is discussed further in Section 6.9.3 below.
- 6.9.2.30 Taking into account the potential for minor disturbance to port operations, and the potential long-term economic benefits associated with the operation and maintenance of the Offshore Project, the magnitude of the impact on the transport and storage sector in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight alteration to the value of the sector in these areas, which could include minor changes in business revenues or in employment.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.9.2.31 The transport and storage sector is an important employer in the Western Isles, accounting for 7.9% of total employment. As the sector is one of the key local industries, the sensitivity of the sector in the Stornoway SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

6.9.2.32 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the transport and storage sector, the overall significance of the effect on the sector in the Stornoway SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.9.2.33 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.9.3 SOCIO-CULTURAL EFFECTS

6.9.3.1 Socio-cultural effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only, as discussed in Section 6.5.3.

6.9.3.2 Potential in-migration of workers during the operational phase has the potential to impact on local demographics and on demand for housing, services and transport. Changes in the population and changes in the environment associated with the Offshore Project once in operation also have the potential to impact on culture and identity, including in relation to the Gaelic language.

Population change

6.9.3.3 Employment created by the operation and maintenance phase of the Offshore Project could lead to in-migration of workers and their families, which could result in population change. The creation of long-term employment opportunities could also help to retain existing working-age residents. Population change is assessed for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the local resident population of the island.

Magnitude

6.9.3.4 During operation and maintenance, it is proposed that workers required for routine maintenance tasks who are not resident on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* would either be accommodated on an SOV, or would be transported to site from Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* using CTVs, reducing the impact on the local population. It is expected that any use of CTVs would be infrequent and on an ad hoc basis.

- 6.9.3.5 Should the currently preferred location of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*, or another location on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, be chosen for the O&M base, there could also be permanent, long-term employment opportunities based on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. As noted in Section 6.9.1 above, the Applicant estimates that the permanent operation and maintenance workforce for the Project as a whole (including both Onshore and Offshore elements) would be between 80 and 120. It is assumed that at least half of these would be associated with the Offshore Project. While there is the potential that some of these jobs could be remote, the Project aims to retain as many long-term operational roles on the island as possible.
- 6.9.3.6 As discussed in Section 6.9.1, there are currently 2,925 people employed in the relevant sectors of the economy (manufacturing; wholesale and retail; finance and insurance; professional, scientific and technical; and business administration and support) in the Western Isles. This suggests that it should be possible to recruit many of the operation and maintenance roles locally. As stated in **Table 6-15**, and specifically M049, the Applicant is committed to maximising opportunities for local people to apply for jobs created by the Project and working with the supply chain and other local stakeholders to develop the workforce skills required for the construction and operation of the Project.
- 6.9.3.7 The creation of a variety of new skilled roles on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, as well as further opportunities within the supply chain, could help to retain the local-working age population or encourage people who have moved away from the island to return, although it is noted that there are other issues around housing, for example, which currently contribute to out-migration of younger people from island communities. It is also recognised that some stakeholders and focus group participants have commented on the possibility that changes in the local environment associated with the visual impacts of the Offshore Project, for example, could result in some people choosing to move away.
- 6.9.3.8 Some operational employment associated with the Offshore Project may be taken up by people from outside the Western Isles who would choose to move permanently to Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and who may bring family members with them. As noted above, this may be reduced by the extent of local recruitment and by remote working from other locations. Any impact on demographics would be most acute at the neighbourhood level. However, it is likely that any workers moving permanently to the islands would be dispersed between settlements rather than concentrated in a particular location, unlike during construction when it is assumed that most incoming workers would choose to be located in and around Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*.
- 6.9.3.9 There is the potential that any permanent change in the population could change the gender and age profile of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. As noted above, approximately 24.3% of the offshore wind workforce in Scotland/*Alba* is made up of women, although the Offshore Wind Sector Deal sets a target to reach 33% by 2033 (Offshore Wind Industry Council, 2023). The baseline shows that Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the Western Isles have an

ageing population with a smaller share of the population who are of working-age than the Scottish average. The working-age population of the Western Isles is projected to fall by over 20% by 2043. There is therefore the potential that an increase in the working-age population associated with the operational workforce could result in beneficial effects given the reported difficulties in recruiting staff in some sectors of the economy and the projected decrease in the working-age population.

6.9.3.10 As noted above, incoming operational workers are expected to be dispersed across Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* rather than concentrated in a particular area, as it is assumed that people moving permanently to the islands would consider a range of factors when choosing a location rather than prioritising proximity to local services. Effects have therefore been assessed at the level of the island study area. Given that many of the workers required for routine maintenance are expected to be accommodated offshore and that many permanent operation and maintenance roles are expected to be recruited locally, the incoming workforce is estimated to account for a relatively small proportion of the total population of the islands (19,680 at the time of the 2022 Census). The magnitude of the impact on the population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight change to baseline conditions which could affect a relatively small proportion of the population.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.9.3.11 Given the relatively small population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and taking into account the island setting and dependence on local resources and infrastructure, the sensitivity of the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

6.9.3.12 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Beneficial**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.9.3.13 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on housing availability

6.9.3.14 In-migration of operation and maintenance workers and their families could lead to additional demand for housing. Effects on housing availability is assessed for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptors are the housing market and the local resident population of the island.

Magnitude

- 6.9.3.15 As noted above, it is estimated that, once in operation, there would be some migration of labour into the Western Isles to take up employment opportunities and so some workers from outside the area would require permanent accommodation on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. The scale of in-migration, however, would depend on the location chosen for the O&M base, and may be reduced by remote working from other locations. The currently preferred location for the O&M base is Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh*. It is likely that in-coming workers would be dispersed across settlements rather than concentrated in one particular location, reducing the impact on the local housing market, as it is assumed that people moving permanently to the islands would consider a range of factors when choosing a location rather than prioritising proximity to local services.
- 6.9.3.16 Data presented in the baseline, including feedback from focus group participants, highlights the pressures on housing availability and affordability within the Western Isles. However, it is expected that any incoming operation and maintenance workers and their families would represent a small proportion of all households on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, which reduces the likely impact of the additional demand on the local housing market. The magnitude of the impact on the housing market and the local population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight alteration to baseline conditions.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

- 6.9.3.17 Data presented in the baseline, including feedback from focus group participants, highlights the pressures on housing availability and affordability within the Western Isles. The sensitivity of the housing market and of the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to the availability of housing is therefore assessed as **High**, as communities are dependent on limited locally available resources.

Significance of effect

- 6.9.3.18 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the local resident population in relation to local housing market in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

- 6.9.3.19 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) is not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of community services and infrastructure

- 6.9.3.20 In-migration of operation and maintenance workers and their families could lead to additional demand for community services and infrastructure such as healthcare, education and the emergency services. Effects on the availability of community services and infrastructure are

assessed for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptors are community services and infrastructure and the local resident population of the island.

Magnitude

- 6.9.3.21 Increased demand from operational workers moving permanently to Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, and potentially bringing family members with them, has the potential to impact on access to community services and infrastructure including health, education and the emergency services. Data set out in the baseline shows that primary schools on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* are generally operating below capacity, although the only secondary school on the island – the Nicolson Institute – is currently over 90% of its capacity. Focus group participants reported pressures on service provision in Lewis and the Western Isles, in part due to difficulties in recruiting staff. This was highlighted as a particular issue in healthcare, teaching and in the childcare sector.
- 6.9.3.22 As noted above, it is estimated that the incoming operational workforce would represent a small proportion of the total population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. The additional demand for services is therefore expected to be small. There is also the potential for beneficial effects from the increase in the working-age population associated with construction workers and their families, which could increase the workforce available for key community services, although the impact is likely to be small. Additional demand for rural schools, shops and other social infrastructure could also support the longer-term sustainability of these services, although again the impact is likely to be small.
- 6.9.3.23 Given the small increase in the population associated with incoming operation and maintenance workers and their families, the magnitude of the impact on community services and infrastructure in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight change to baseline conditions that would not be expected to affect the function of community facilities and public services.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

- 6.9.3.24 As shown in the baseline, there are reported concerns around the capacity of services on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. The sensitivity of community services and infrastructure and of the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Medium**, as the population is dependent on locally available resources and infrastructure which have limited capacity, and there is little access to alternatives.

Significance of effect

- 6.9.3.25 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of community services and infrastructure and of the local population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.9.3.26 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) is not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of transport

6.9.3.27 In-migration of operation and maintenance workers and their families could lead to additional demand for transport, including air and ferry services to the mainland. Effects on the availability of transport are assessed for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptors are local transport infrastructure and the local resident population of the island.

Magnitude

6.9.3.28 Data presented in the baseline shows that, for people living in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, connectivity to the mainland via ferries and air services is important, with the main Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* – Ullapool/*Ulapul* ferry route described as a 'lifeline' service for passengers and for freight. The baseline reports that existing ferry services are stretched, and that some islanders experience difficulties booking the ferry services that they need.

6.9.3.29 As noted above, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports a negligible effect on the port of Stornoway/*Steòrnabhagh* arising from disruption to port operations during operation and maintenance. There is the potential that the permanent increase in population on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* associated with the operational workforce could result in increased demand for ferry services to the mainland. While this could exacerbate existing pressure on ferry services, the impact is likely to be small. Additional demand could also support the longer-term sustainability of these services, although again the impact is likely to be small.

6.9.3.30 Given the small increase in the population associated with operation and maintenance workers and their families, the magnitude of the impact on the availability of transport in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Negligible**, as there would be very little change from baseline conditions.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.9.3.31 Given the island context and the importance of ferry services in particular as a key 'lifeline' service, the sensitivity of transport infrastructure and of the local resident population on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **High**, as the local community is highly dependent on the service and there are few available alternatives.

Significance of effect

6.9.3.32 Based on the negligible magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of transport infrastructure and of the local population on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.9.3.33 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) is not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on culture and identity

6.9.3.34 The operation and maintenance phase of the Offshore Project could lead to effects on local culture and identity as a result of:

- Potential dilution of local culture associated with changes in the population and impacts on local cultural and religious practices, including:
 - Impacts on traditional industries and practices, including commercial and recreational fishing;
 - Impacts on the use of the Gaelic language;
 - Impacts on Sunday observance.
- Permanent changes in the local environment, including increased noise and changes in the seascape and visual environment which form an important aspect of local identity.

6.9.3.35 Effects on culture and identity are assessed for the West Side SSA and the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). It is expected that effects in the Stornoway SSA would be comparable to those in the island study area during operation and maintenance and so the Stornoway SSA is not assessed separately. The receptor is the local resident population of the island, including Gaelic speaking communities.

Magnitude

6.9.3.36 As noted above, it is expected that the permanent change in the population associated with an incoming operation and maintenance workforce would be small and beneficial, given the projected decrease in the population of the Western Isles over the period to 2043. Incoming workers and their families would be dispersed across settlements rather than concentrated in one particular location, reducing the impact at neighbourhood level. Data presented in the baseline shows that the Western Isles have, in recent years, recorded net in-migration, driven primarily by people moving from elsewhere in Scotland/*Alba* and the UK, and that the West Side SSA has a higher than average proportion of residents born outside of Scotland/*Alba*.

6.9.3.37 The effect on commercial fishing, a traditional local industry that is identified as a factor that contributes to the cultural heritage and identity of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the Western Isles, is assessed as not significant (see Section 6.8.2 above). **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, assesses effects on recreational sea angling, which is strongly linked to community and cultural tradition, and concludes that the effect would be minor adverse and not significant, due to minimal spatial overlap and interaction with the Offshore Project.

- 6.9.3.38 The presence of an incoming operation and maintenance workforce from outside of the Western Isles could impact on the Gaelic language as it is likely that the majority of the workforce would be non-Gaelic speakers. Data presented in the baseline shows that rates of Gaelic speakers have been declining in the Western Isles in recent years, with the West Side SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* recording a decrease between the 2011 and 2022 Censuses. The ageing population of the islands is identified as a factor in the decrease in Gaelic speaking, as well as the decline in traditional industries, and patterns of migration. As noted in the construction assessment, research has shown that in-migration to Gaelic speaking communities can result in changes in language use which can have wider, longer-term effects on the use of the language in these communities (McEwen-Fujita, 2010).
- 6.9.3.39 As discussed above, the small increase in population associated with operation and maintenance workers and their families is likely to increase the working-age population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and could help to support local service provision, which could help to reverse some of the trends that have contributed to the decrease in Gaelic speaking in the West Side SSA and across Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. Given the small increase in population, however, the impact is likely to be relatively small. The presence of non-Gaelic speakers within Gaelic-speaking communities could impact on the use of Gaelic within those communities, although there is the potential that incoming workers and their families may, over time, choose to learn Gaelic, which could reduce the impact in the longer-term.
- 6.9.3.40 As it is assumed that incoming workers and their families would settle in communities across the island, the magnitude of the impact on culture and identity in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* overall is assessed as **Low**, as there would be a slight alteration to baseline conditions that would affect a relatively small proportion of the population of the island as a whole. In relation to traditional industries, operational effects on commercial fishing are assessed as minor adverse, and so it is expected that any effect on the culture and identity of the island would be very small. Impacts on Sunday observance would also be small due to the relatively small increase in the population.
- 6.9.3.41 **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports that, during operation and maintenance, there would be significant adverse visual effects for residents of settlements along the west coast of Lewis, from Eoropie/*Eòrapaidh* in the north, to Carishader/*Cairsiadar* in the south. This includes, for example, the communities of Borve/*Borgh*, Barvas/*Barabhas*, Arnol/*Àrnoil*, Shawbost/*Siabost*, Garenin/*Na Gearrannan*, and Carloway/*Càrlabagh*. **Chapter 18, Volume 2a** also reports significant adverse effects for visitors to the cemetery at Barvas/*Barabhas*. There are other cemeteries located within the ZTV on the west coast, including at Eoropie/*Eòrapaidh* and Dalmore/*Dail Mhor*.
- 6.9.3.42 As discussed in the baseline, the relationship with the landscape and seascape forms a key element of the cultural heritage and identity of Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and the Western Isles, and so these significant visual effects could impact on the sense of identity for some residents within these communities. Stakeholders and focus group participants have commented that certain groups

within local communities, such as artists, surfers and other recreational groups, are particularly reliant on the landscape and seascape. These groups may therefore be more likely to experience effects on their sense of identity from visual impacts. In relation to noise, **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, reports that operational noise effects for NSRs within the West Side SSA would be negligible/minor and therefore not significant.

- 6.9.3.43 Some communities on the west coast could experience significant changes in the visual environment alongside population change and impacts on the Gaelic language. As stated in **Table 6-15**, specifically M045, the Project is committed to continued awareness training and on-island induction for all project staff and contractors and to utilise a settlement officer to support cultural integration during operation and maintenance. These measures will form part of a Cultural Integration Plan which will be developed prior to the commencement of construction. During operation, the Project will also continue to engage with local communities and will provide opportunities for local residents to contact the Project team, including through dedicated resources within the operation and maintenance team with responsibility for community engagement (M044).
- 6.9.3.44 With this mitigation in place, the magnitude of the impact on culture and identity in the West Side SSA is also assessed as **Low**. While there would be significant changes in the visual environment which could impact on the sense of culture and identity for some residents, population change within the West Side SSA is expected to be small and potentially beneficial in the longer-term, and it is not expected that there would be any significant effect on cultural practices including commercial and recreational fishing and Sunday observance. The mitigation described above would help to reduce the impact on the Gaelic language and on local culture throughout the operation and maintenance period.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

- 6.9.3.45 Given the cultural importance of aspects including the Gaelic language and the relationship with the landscape and seascape, the sensitivity of the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the West Side SSA in relation to cultural identity is assessed as **High**, as there are distinct cultural characteristics of national and international importance that contribute to the cultural heritage and identity of the local community.

Significance of effect

- 6.9.3.46 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the local resident population in relation to cultural identity, the overall significance of the effect in the West Side SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and significance of residual effects

6.9.3.47 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) is not significant in EIA terms.

6.10 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: DECOMMISSIONING

6.10.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

6.10.1.1 Jobs and GVA are assessed for the Project as a whole including both Onshore and Offshore elements, as described in Section 6.5.3.

6.10.1.2 The decommissioning of the Project would create direct, indirect and induced employment and GVA in the local and national economy. While new jobs and GVA are likely to be beneficial, there is also the potential for increased pressure on the local labour market and displacement of economic activity.

6.10.1.3 Socio-economic impacts are assessed for the Western Isles and Scotland/*Alba*. The receptor for employment effects is the labour market. The receptor for GVA effects is the economy.

Employment effects

6.10.1.4 It has not been possible to estimate decommissioning employment as there is insufficient information available at this stage. It is expected that decommissioning employment would be comparable to, or less than, the employment created during construction, as discussed in Section 6.8.1. There could also be effects on the local economy from the loss of operation and maintenance employment.

Magnitude

6.10.1.5 The magnitude of the impact in the Western Isles arising from decommissioning employment is assessed as **low**, as it would be a short-term impact affecting a relatively small proportion of the workforce. It is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage additional demand for labour and reduce the likelihood of displacement effects or distortions elsewhere in the local economy. The magnitude of the impact in Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **negligible** as there would be very little change from baseline conditions in the construction and manufacturing sectors.

6.10.1.6 As noted above, there is also the potential for adverse effects on the local economy arising from the loss of operation and maintenance employment. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage workforce transition if required.

Sensitivity of receptor

6.10.1.7 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.1, the sensitivity of the labour market in the Western Isles is assessed as **Medium** and the sensitivity of the labour market in Scotland is assessed as **Low**.

Significance of effect

6.10.1.8 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the local labour market, the overall significance of the employment effect for Western Isles is assessed as **Minor Beneficial** which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.10.1.9 Based on the negligible magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the national labour market, the overall significance of the employment effect for Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.1.10 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

GVA effects

6.10.1.11 It has not been possible to estimate decommissioning GVA as there is insufficient information available at this stage. It is expected that decommissioning GVA would be comparable to, or less than, the employment created during construction, as discussed in Section 6.8.1.

Magnitude

6.10.1.12 The magnitude of the impact in the Western Isles is assessed as **Low** as there would be a slight, short-term alteration to the value generated by the local economy.

6.10.1.13 The magnitude of the effect in Scotland/*Alba* is expected to be **Negligible** as there would be very little change to baseline conditions.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.1.14 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.1, the sensitivity of the economy in the Western Isles is assessed as **Medium**, and the sensitivity of the economy in Scotland is assessed as **Low**.

Significance of effect

6.10.1.15 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the local economy, the overall significance of the effect for the economy of the Western Isles is assessed as **Minor Beneficial**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.10.1.16 Based on the negligible magnitude of impact and low sensitivity of the national economy, the overall significance of the effect for the economy of Scotland/*Alba* is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.1.17 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.10.2 WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS

6.10.2.1 Wider socio-economic effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only, as discussed in Section 6.5.3.

6.10.2.2 The employment and environmental impacts associated with the decommissioning of the Offshore Project could have wider socio-economic effects on key sectors of the economy that are important local employers, and/or reliant on natural resources. Effects are assessed for tourism; fisheries, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing; and transport and storage.

Effects on the tourism sector

6.10.2.3 During decommissioning, effects on the tourism sector could arise as a result of:

- Temporary changes in the availability of workers in the sector;
- Temporary changes in demand for tourist accommodation;
- Temporary changes in the availability of air and ferry travel for visitors;
- Temporary impacts on tourism receptors, including accommodation providers, such as loss of access, disruption, displacement, or changes in the visual environment.

6.10.2.4 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.2, effects on the sector are assessed for the West Side SSA and Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the tourism sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.10.2.5 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on the tourism sector during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact on tourism in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a whole is assessed as **Low**. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage additional demand for labour and accommodation for the decommissioning workforce.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.2.6 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.2, the sensitivity of the sector in the West Side SSA, in the Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

6.10.2.7 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the sector, the overall significance of the effect on the tourism sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.2.8 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on the fisheries, aquaculture, fish and shellfish processing sector

6.10.2.9 During decommissioning, effects on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector could arise as a result of:

- Temporary disturbance to fishing or aquaculture resources and activity;
- Temporary disturbance to ports which could impact on imports and exports;
- Temporary changes in the availability of workers in the sector.

6.10.2.10 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.2, effects on the fisheries and aquaculture sector are assessed for the West Side SSA and Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.10.2.11 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact on the commercial fishing and aquaculture sector, and in the fish and shellfish processing supply chain, in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage additional demand for labour during decommissioning.

Sensitivity of receptor

6.10.2.12 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.2, the sensitivity of the sector in both Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the SSAs is assessed as **High**.

Significance of effect

6.10.2.13 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing, the overall significance of the effect on the sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.2.14 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on the transport and storage sector

6.10.2.15 During decommissioning, effects on the transport and storage sector could arise as a result of:

- Temporary loss of access or disruption to ports and harbours;
- Additional demand for port services;
- Temporary changes in the availability of workers in the sector.

6.10.2.16 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.2, effects on the transport and storage sector are assessed for the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the transport and storage sector in these areas.

Magnitude

6.10.2.17 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on the transport and storage sector during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact on employment in the transport and storage sector in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and Harris/*Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage additional demand for labour during decommissioning.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.2.18 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.2, the sensitivity of the sector in both Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and the SSAs is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

6.10.2.19 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the transport and storage sector, the overall significance of the effect on the sector in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA, and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.2.20 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.10.3 SOCIO-CULTURAL EFFECTS

6.10.3.1 Socio-cultural effects are assessed for the Offshore Project only, as discussed in Section 6.5.3.

6.10.3.2 The presence of a temporary decommissioning workforce has the potential to impact on local demographics and on demand for housing, services and transport. Temporary changes in the population and changes in the environment associated with the construction of the Offshore Project also have the potential to impact on culture and identity, including in relation to the Gaelic language.

Population change

6.10.3.3 The presence of a temporary decommissioning workforce could lead to population change, including changes in demographics. In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, temporary population change is assessed for the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*).

Magnitude

6.10.3.4 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on population change during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.3.5 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, the sensitivity of the local population in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

6.10.3.6 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of the local resident population, the overall significance of the effect on the population of the Stornoway SSA and of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to demographic change is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.3.7 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on housing availability

6.10.3.8 The presence of a temporary decommissioning workforce could lead to additional demand for housing. In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, temporary effects on the availability of housing are assessed for the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the local housing market and the local resident population in these areas.

Magnitude

6.10.3.9 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on housing availability during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Negligible**. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage accommodation for the decommissioning workforce and reduce the likelihood of additional pressure on the local housing market.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.3.10 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, the sensitivity of the housing market and of the local population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* and in the Stornoway SSA in relation to the availability of housing is assessed as **High**.

Significance of effect

6.10.3.11 Based on the negligible magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the housing market and the local resident population in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na*

Hearadh, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.3.12 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on community services and infrastructure

6.10.3.13 The presence of a temporary decommissioning workforce could lead to additional demand for community services and infrastructure such as healthcare, education and the emergency services. In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, temporary effects on the availability of community services and infrastructure are assessed for the Stornoway SSA, and for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptors are community services and infrastructure, and the local resident population that uses those services.

Magnitude

6.10.3.14 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on community services and infrastructure during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Low**. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage demand for services such as healthcare from the decommissioning workforce and reduce the likelihood of additional pressure on existing services.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.3.15 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, the sensitivity of community services and infrastructure and of the local population in in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Medium**.

Significance of effect

6.10.3.16 Based on the low magnitude of impact and medium sensitivity of community services and infrastructure and of the local resident population in Stornoway SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.3.17 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of transport

6.10.3.18 The presence of a temporary decommissioning workforce, and transport of plant or equipment associated with the decommissioning of the Offshore Project, could lead to additional demand for transport, including air and ferry services to the mainland. In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, temporary effects on the availability of transport are assessed for the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is local transport infrastructure and the local resident population of the island.

Magnitude

6.10.3.19 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on culture and identity during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Low**. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage additional demand for air and ferry services during decommissioning.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.3.20 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, the sensitivity of local transport infrastructure and of the local resident population on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **High**.

Significance of effect

6.10.3.21 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the transport infrastructure and of the local resident population on Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effect

6.10.3.22 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

Effects on culture and identity

6.10.3.23 The decommissioning of the Offshore Project could lead to effects on local culture and identity as a result of:

- Potential dilution of local culture associated with temporary changes in the population and impacts on local cultural and religious practices, including:
 - Impacts on traditional industries and practices, including commercial and recreational fishing;
 - Impacts on the use of the Gaelic language;
 - Impacts on Sunday observance.
- Changes in the local environment, including changes in the seascape and visual environment which form an important aspect of local identity.

6.10.3.24 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, effects on culture and identity are assessed for the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*). The receptor is the local resident population, including Gaelic speaking communities.

Magnitude

6.10.3.25 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely impacts on culture and identity during decommissioning. As such, it is assumed that the magnitude of the impact would be comparable to, or less than, the impacts assessed during construction. On a worst-case basis, therefore, the magnitude of the impact on culture and identity in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is therefore assessed as **Low**. As noted in **Table 6-15**, a Decommissioning Plan will be developed prior to the construction of the Offshore Project (M020), and it is assumed that measures would be put in place to manage accommodation for the decommissioning workforce and reduce the likelihood of additional pressure on local communities.

Sensitivity or value of receptor

6.10.3.26 In line with the construction assessment set out in Section 6.8.3, the sensitivity of the local resident population in the Stornoway SSA and the West Side SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to cultural identity is assessed as **High**.

Significance of effect

6.10.3.27 Based on the low magnitude of impact and high sensitivity of the local resident population of the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to cultural identity, the overall significance of the effect is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Further environmental mitigation and residual effects

6.10.3.28 No additional socio-economic mitigation is considered necessary because the likely effects in the absence of further mitigation (beyond the embedded commitments outlined in Section 6.7.2) are not significant in EIA terms.

6.11 ASSESSMENT OF COMBINED EFFECTS

- 6.11.1.1 The combined effects assessment considers likely significant effects from multiple impacts and activities from the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases of the Offshore Project on the same communities, receptor, or group of receptors. The overall method followed in identifying and assessing potential Combined Effects in relation to the offshore environment is set out in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a**.
- 6.11.1.2 Combined effects could potentially arise in one of two ways. The first type of combined effect is a Project lifetime effect, where multiple phases of the Project (construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning) interact to create a potentially more significant effect on a receptor than in one phase alone.
- 6.11.1.3 The second type of combined effect is receptor-led effects. Receptor-led effects are where effects from different environmental aspects combine spatially and temporally on a receptor. These effects may be short-term, temporary, transient, or longer-term.
- 6.11.1.4 Receptor-led effects have been considered, where relevant, in this chapter for potential interactions between socio-economics and the following environmental aspects:
- Shipping and Navigation (see **Chapter 16, Volume 2a**);
 - Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact (see **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**);
 - Airborne Noise (**Chapter 19, Volume 2a**);
 - Other Sea Users and Recreation (**Chapter 20, Volume 2a**);
 - Commercial Fisheries (**Chapter 21, Volume 2a**).
- 6.11.1.5 Full results of the Project lifetime effects and receptor-led effects assessment can be found in **Chapter 23, Volume 2a**.

6.12 CONSIDERATION OF ONSHORE TRANSMISSION WORKS PROJECT

- 6.12.1.1 A separate application for the Project's onshore elements (the OTW Project) that includes all infrastructure landwards of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) within the Onshore Transmission Works Boundary will be made, under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES). The OTW Project EIAR will provide a full description of the onshore elements of the Project landward of MLWS, and include an assessment of the associated likely significant effects.
- 6.12.1.2 This EIAR has considered the additive interactions between the Offshore Project and OTW Project to understand if there is the potential for any change to the assessment outcomes as a result of both elements of the Project. The approach to identify and consider potential interactions between the Offshore Project and OTW Project is set out in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a** and key design parameters associated with the OTW Project are summarised in **Chapter 3, Volume 1a**.

6.12.1.3 The potential for effects identified in **Table 6-6** to interact with effects associated with the OTW Project at a common receptor has been considered for Socio-economics. As stated in Section 6.5.3, employment effects and GVA effects have been assessed for the Project as a whole, including Offshore and OTW elements, and so are not considered further here. **Table 6-23** provides a summary of the pathways considered in this chapter and the potential for interaction. Where required, this table provides the relevant MDS information for the OTW Project that has been used to inform this assessment.

Table 6-23 Summary of socio-economic pathways and potential for interaction with the OTW Project

Assessment pathways considered and receptors	Maximum Design Scenario
Construction	
<p>Wider socio-economic effects: additional demand for labour leads to displacement of workers from established industries. Noise and visual effects on tourism and recreation receptors.</p>	<p><u>Offshore Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See MDS table (Table 6-14) <p><u>OTW Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 13 Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) entry points near a coastal cliff at Barvas / <i>Barabhas</i> (Scenario 2) - Transition Joint Bays (TJBs) - An onshore temporary construction HDD compound (approximately 465 m x 480 m) and temporary access road to connect to the A857 - Up to 12 circuits of buried Onshore Cables will connect from the TJBs to the Landfall Substation located near Barvas / <i>Barabhas</i> or <i>Barbhas</i> (Scenario 2). - Construction of a Landfall Substation with a platform of approximately 150 m by 150 m and a maximum height of 15 m, plus several other, smaller buildings housing electrical and other equipment. Within the site compound, there will also be safety features such as lightning masts and access paths/roads. Permanent access road to the substation from the A857. - 2 circuits of 400 kV cables to connect from Landfall to a Grid Substation to the SSEN Lewis Hub. Onshore Cables to be buried. Open cut trenching to be the primary installation method, however 12 locations have been identified where trenchless crossing installations are anticipated.

Assessment pathways considered and receptors	Maximum Design Scenario
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Haul road to enable construction of the Onshore Cables. This road will be either removed and the land re-instated or transformed into a multi-use pathway post construction of the Onshore Cables. - Grid Substation to be constructed northwest of Loch Cnoc a'Choilich, consisting of up to 6 buildings in total, with a maximum height of 20 m, plus a number of other, smaller buildings housing electrical and other equipment. Within the site compound, there will also be safety features such as lightning masts and access paths/roads. - The total anticipated construction period for each onshore substation is around 36 months and the total expected duration of construction works relating to the cable route is 2-3 years. It is anticipated that the OTW Project construction will take up to 5 years.
<p>Socio-cultural effects: presence of temporary construction workforce could lead to demographic change and additional demand for housing, services and transport. There could also be effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.</p>	<p><u>Offshore Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See MDS table (Table 6-14) <p><u>OTW Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 13 Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) entry points near a coastal cliff at Barvas / <i>Barabhas</i> (Scenario 2) - Transition Joint Bays (TJBs) - An onshore temporary construction HDD compound (approximately 465 m x 480 m) and temporary access road to connect to the A857 - Up to 12 circuits of buried Onshore Cables will connect from the TJBs to the Landfall Substation located near Barvas / <i>Barabhas</i> or <i>Barbhas</i> (Scenario 2). - Construction of a Landfall Substation with a platform of approximately 150 m by 150 m and a maximum height of 15 m, plus several other, smaller buildings housing electrical and other equipment. Within the site compound, there will also be safety features such as lightning masts and access paths/roads. Permanent access road to the substation from the A857. - 2 circuits of 400 kV cables to connect from Landfall to a Grid Substation to the SSEN Lewis Hub. Onshore Cables to be buried. Open cut trenching to be the primary installation method, however 12 locations

Assessment pathways considered and receptors	Maximum Design Scenario
	<p>have been identified where trenchless crossing installations are anticipated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Haul road to enable construction of the Onshore Cables. This road will be either removed and the land re-instated or transformed into a multi-use pathway post construction of the Onshore Cables. - Grid Substation to be constructed northwest of Loch Cnoc a'Choilich, consisting of up to 6 buildings in total, with a maximum height of 20 m, plus a number of other, smaller buildings housing electrical and other equipment. Within the site compound, there will also be safety features such as lightning masts and access paths/roads. - The total anticipated construction period for each onshore substation is around 36 months and the total expected duration of construction works relating to the cable route is 2-3 years. It is anticipated that the OTW Project construction will take up to 5 years.
Operation and maintenance	
<p>Wider socio-economic effects: additional demand for labour leads to displacement of workers from established industries. Noise and visual effects on tourism and recreation receptors.</p>	<p><u>Offshore Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See MDS table (Table 6-14) <p><u>OTW Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operational employment, noise and visual effects associated with Landfall Substation (Scenario 2) and Grid Substation - Potential use of haul road as multi-use pathway.
<p>Socio-cultural effects: in-migration of labour could lead to demographic change and additional demand for housing, services and transport. There could also be effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.</p>	<p><u>Offshore Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See MDS table (Table 6-14) <p><u>OTW Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operational employment, noise and visual effects associated with Landfall Substation (Scenario 2) and Grid Substation - Potential use of haul road as multi-use pathway.
Decommissioning	
<p>Wider socio-economic effects: additional demand</p>	<p>As per construction.</p>

Assessment pathways considered and receptors	Maximum Design Scenario
for labour leads to displacement of workers from established industries. Noise and visual effects on tourism and recreation receptors.	
Socio-cultural effects: in-migration of labour could lead to demographic change and additional demand for housing, services and transport. There could also be effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.	As per construction.

Construction

Wider socio-economic effects

6.12.1.4 There is the potential for temporary adverse and beneficial wider socio-economic effects associated with the construction of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project. The construction phase of the OTW project will overlap with the construction phase of the Offshore Project. This section assesses knock on effects to wider local industries including the tourism sector; fisheries, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing sector; and the transport and storage sector.

Effects on the tourism sector

6.12.1.5 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the tourism sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.12.1.6 The construction of the OTW project could introduce additional competition for workers within the local labour market, with the potential for displacement from the tourism sector. As shown in Section 6.8, it is estimated that the construction of the Project as a whole would create between 75 and 80 direct FTE jobs per year that would be taken up by people in the Western Isles. It is assumed that around half of these jobs would be associated with the OTW project, and expected

that there is capacity within the local labour market to absorb the majority of these jobs. The likelihood of knock-on effects for the tourism sector is therefore relatively small.

- 6.12.1.7 Construction of the OTW project would also create jobs that are likely to be taken up by workers from outside of the Western Isles who would require temporary accommodation on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, and would use air and ferry services from the mainland. This could increase demand for tourism accommodation and for travel, which could reduce availability for tourists and lead to displacement effects. Data presented in the baseline indicates that there is likely to be capacity within the tourist accommodation sector to absorb additional demand, even in the peak summer tourist season.
- 6.12.1.8 In relation to demand for ferry services from the additional workforce, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports that, with mitigation in place, the cumulative effect of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project on demand for port services, including at Stornoway Port, would be slightly greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone. The overall significance of the effect is assessed as minor adverse and therefore not significant.
- 6.12.1.9 There could also be further impacts on tourism and recreation receptors due to changes in the visual environment, and noise and traffic impacts associated with the construction of the OTW project. **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, concludes that the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of airborne noise effects during the construction phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.
- 6.12.1.10 There is the potential that the construction of the OTW project could introduce new amenity effects for tourism receptors as a result of noise and visual impacts. The Landfall Substation is within the ZTV considered for the Offshore Project. However, as the Offshore Project is the dominant contributor to visual and noise effects due to the scale, height and offshore extent of the array plus associated noise produced during piling activities, it is not anticipated that the OTW Project will result in a material increase in magnitude of impact of amenity effects. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** therefore concludes that the significance of the cumulative effect of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project would be minor adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms. This is no greater than the effect of the Offshore Project alone.
- 6.12.1.11 **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** also reports that the cumulative effect on displacement or disturbance to recreational and tourism activities from the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project would be no greater than the effect of the Offshore Project alone. At the time of writing, detailed traffic and transport information for the OTW Project is not publicly available. A precautionary, qualitative assessment has therefore been undertaken, drawing on the scale and duration of the OTW Project, experience from comparable projects, and the findings of the Offshore EIA assessments. On this basis, it is considered unlikely that traffic impacts on individual receptors would change the overall significance of the effect on the wider tourism sector.

6.12.1.12 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the tourism sector during the construction phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.13 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the tourism sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing sector

6.12.1.14 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.12.1.15 The construction of the OTW project could introduce additional competition for workers within the local labour market, with the potential for displacement from the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector. As shown in Section 6.8, it is estimated that the construction of the Project as a whole would create between 75 and 80 direct FTE jobs per year that would be taken up by people in the Western Isles. It is assumed that around half of these jobs would be associated with the OTW project, and expected that there is capacity within the local labour market to absorb the majority of these jobs in the short-term. The likelihood of knock-on effects for the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector is therefore relatively small.

6.12.1.16 Barvas/*Barabhas* Hatchery is based within the Barvas Estate in Arnol/*Àrnoil* and is used for freshwater Atlantic salmon. As the hatchery is located outside of the Offshore Project development area it is considered that there is no potential for impacts from the construction and operation of the Offshore Project as there is no spatial overlap.

6.12.1.17 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector during the construction phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.18 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on the transport and storage sector

- 6.12.1.19 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the transport and storage sector in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.
- 6.12.1.20 The construction of the OTW project could introduce additional competition for workers within the local labour market, with the potential for displacement from the transport and storage sector. As shown in Section 6.8, it is estimated that the construction of the Project as a whole would create between 75 and 80 direct FTE jobs per year in the Western Isles. It is assumed that around half of these jobs would be associated with the OTW project, and expected that there is capacity within the local labour market to absorb the majority of these jobs in the short-term. The likelihood of knock-on effects for the transport and storage sector is therefore relatively small.
- 6.12.1.21 In relation to demand for ferry services from the additional workforce, **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** reports that, with mitigation in place, the cumulative effect of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project on ports and harbours, including at Stornoway Port, would be slightly greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone. The overall significance of effect is assessed as minor adverse and therefore not significant.
- 6.12.1.22 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the transport and storage sector during the construction phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.
- 6.12.1.23 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the transport and storage sector in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Socio-cultural effects

- 6.12.1.24 There is the potential for temporary adverse and beneficial socio-cultural effects associated with the construction of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project. The construction phase of the OTW project will overlap with the construction phase of the Offshore Project.

Population change

- 6.12.1.25 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the local resident population of the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to demographic change is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.
- 6.12.1.26 As noted above, it is likely that some of the jobs that would be created by the construction of the OTW project would be taken up by workers from outside of the Western Isles who would

require temporary accommodation on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. This could increase the scale of temporary population change compared to the Offshore Project alone. However, as the number of incoming construction workers associated with the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the overall population, it is not expected that this would change the overall significance of the effect for local residents.

6.12.1.27 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the local resident population from demographic change during the construction phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone. There is also the potential that the construction of the OTW project could introduce new effects within the West Side SSA, as construction workers may choose accommodation close to the landfall site, however it is expected that this would be no greater than the effect in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*.

6.12.1.28 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the local resident population in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on housing availability

6.12.1.29 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the local resident population of the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to housing availability is **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms. This is based on the commitment to accommodating offshore construction workers on vessels (M041), and on baseline data showing capacity within the tourism accommodation sector.

6.12.1.30 As noted above, it is likely that some of the jobs that would be created by the construction of the OTW project would be taken up by workers from outside of the Western Isles who would require temporary accommodation on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. This could increase temporary demand for housing compared to the Offshore Project alone, although the scale of demand is likely to fluctuate across the onshore construction programme.

6.12.1.31 The number of incoming construction workers associated with the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the overall population, and it is expected that construction workers would be most likely to be accommodated in tourist accommodation. Data presented in the baseline indicates that there is likely to be capacity within the tourist accommodation sector to absorb additional demand, even in the peak summer tourist season. However, some construction workers employed on the OTW project who would be resident on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* throughout the year may be more likely to seek longer-term lets, which could increase demand in the private rented sector.

6.12.1.32 The availability of housing on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and across the Western Isles has been raised as a key concern by stakeholders and focus group participants. The Socio-economics chapter of the Onshore EIA will explore the need for further mitigation should this be required. It is assumed for the purposes of this assessment that the Project will also continue to engage with other developers and stakeholders, including through the Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum, to identify mitigation opportunities in relation to construction of the OTW Project.

6.12.1.33 Increased demand in the private rental sector from construction workers on the OTW Project could increase the magnitude of the impact on housing availability in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* compared to the Offshore Project alone. There is also the potential that the construction of the OTW project could also introduce new effects within the West Side SSA, as construction workers may choose accommodation close to the landfall site.

6.12.1.34 Based on the information available at this stage, and assuming that appropriate mitigation will be developed as part of the Onshore EIA if required, the significance of the effect of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the local resident population from changes in housing availability on the local resident population in the West Side SSA, the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of community services and infrastructure

6.12.1.35 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the local resident population of the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to the availability of community services and infrastructure is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms. This is based on the commitment to accommodating offshore construction workers on vessels and providing medical facilities on board (M041).

6.12.1.36 As noted above, construction of the OTW project would create jobs that are likely to be taken up by workers from outside of the Western Isles who would require temporary accommodation on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. While the number of incoming construction workers associated with the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the overall population, this could increase temporary demand for community services and infrastructure compared to the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.37 Pressure on service provision and infrastructure on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and across the Western Isles has been raised as a key concern by stakeholders and focus group participants. The Socio-economics chapter of the Onshore EIA will explore the need for further mitigation should this be required. It is assumed for the purposes of this assessment that the Project will also continue to engage with other developers and stakeholders, including through the Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum, to identify mitigation opportunities in relation to construction of the OTW Project.

6.12.1.38 Increased demand from construction workers on the OTW Project could increase the magnitude of the impact on community services and infrastructure in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* compared to the Offshore Project alone. There is also the potential that the construction of the OTW project could introduce new effects within the West Side SSA, as construction workers may choose accommodation close to the landfall site.

6.12.1.39 Based on the information available at this stage, and assuming that appropriate mitigation will be developed as part of the Onshore EIA if required, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project from changes in the availability of community services and infrastructure during the construction phase on the local resident population in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of transport

6.12.1.40 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the local resident population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to the availability of transport is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms. This is based on the commitment to accommodating offshore construction workers on vessels (M041), and to work with key stakeholders and service providers to understand pressure points on existing services and on storage / port facilities on Lewis, charter vessels and/or flights to transport crew and materials where required to avoid creating excess pressure, and transport large construction components by specialist vessels via private charter (M042).

6.12.1.41 As noted above, construction of the OTW project would create jobs that are likely to be taken up by workers from outside of the Western Isles who would require temporary accommodation on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*. While the number of incoming construction workers associated with the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the overall population, this could increase temporary demand for transport to and from the island compared to the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.42 Pressure on ferry services to Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* for residents and visitors has been raised as a key concern by stakeholders and focus group participants. The Socio-economics chapter of the Onshore EIA will explore the need for further mitigation should this be required. It is assumed for the purposes of this assessment that the Project will also continue to engage with other developers and stakeholders, including through the Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum, to identify mitigation opportunities in relation to construction of the OTW Project.

6.12.1.43 Based on the information available at this stage, and assuming that appropriate mitigation will be developed as part of the Onshore EIA if required, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* from a change in the availability of transport is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on culture and identity

- 6.12.1.44 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of construction on the local resident population of the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to culture and identity is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.
- 6.12.1.45 As noted above, construction of the OTW project would increase the scale of the temporary increase in population compared to the Offshore Project alone. The number of incoming construction workers associated with the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the overall population, however there is the potential that this could increase the scale of the impact on the use of the Gaelic language and on Sunday observance.
- 6.12.1.46 The construction of the OTW Project is unlikely to have any further effects on recreational fishing. There could be socio-cultural effects associated with impacts on crofting or access to peatbanks, however these are unlikely to be significant. In relation to changes in the environment, **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, concludes that the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of airborne noise effects during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone. **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports that the magnitude of visual impacts at some viewpoints within the West Side SSA could increase slightly from the construction of the Landfall Substation, however the overall significance of effects would not change.
- 6.12.1.47 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the local resident population in relation to culture and identity during the construction phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.
- 6.12.1.48 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the local resident population in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA, and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Operation and Maintenance

Wider socio-economic effects

- 6.12.1.49 There is the potential for adverse and beneficial wider socio-economic effects associated with the operation and maintenance of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project. The operation and maintenance phase of the OTW project will overlap with the operation and maintenance phase of the Offshore Project. This section assesses knock on effects to wider local industries including the tourism sector; fisheries, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing sector; and the transport and storage sector.

Effects on the tourism sector

- 6.12.1.50 Following the inclusion of mitigation measures, the Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of operation and maintenance on the tourism sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.
- 6.12.1.51 While there may be some short-term, intermittent requirements for tourist accommodation during the operational phase, it is expected that that the majority of incoming workers required to operate and maintain the OTW project would settle permanently on Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais* and therefore would not require tourist accommodation.
- 6.12.1.52 There could be further impacts on tourism and recreation receptors due to changes in the visual environment, and noise and traffic impacts associated with the operation of the OTW project. **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, concludes that the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of airborne noise effects during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.
- 6.12.1.53 There is the potential that the operation and maintenance of the OTW project could introduce new amenity effects for tourism receptors as a result of noise and visual impacts. The Landfall Substation is within the ZTV considered for the Offshore Project. However, as the Offshore Project is the dominant contributor to visual and noise effects due to the scale, height and offshore extent of the array, it is not anticipated that the OTW Project will result in a material increase in magnitude of impact of amenity effects. **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** therefore concludes that the significance of the cumulative effect of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project would be minor adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms. This is no greater than the effect of the Offshore Project alone.
- 6.12.1.54 **Chapter 20, Volume 2a** also reports that the cumulative effect on displacement or disturbance to recreational and tourism activities from the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW Project would be no greater than the effect of the Offshore Project alone. At the time of writing, detailed traffic and transport information for the OTW Project is not publicly available. A precautionary, qualitative assessment has therefore been undertaken, drawing on the scale and duration of the OTW Project, experience from comparable projects, and the findings of the Offshore EIAR assessments. On this basis, it is considered unlikely that traffic impacts on individual receptors would change the overall significance of the effect on the wider tourism sector. There could also be benefits for the tourism sector from the potential creation of a multi-use pathway on the route of the construction haul road across Barvas Moor.
- 6.12.1.55 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the tourism sector during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the

Offshore Project alone. There is also the potential for beneficial effects for tourism, including in the West Side SSA, associated with the potential use of the haul road as multi-use pathway during operation.

6.12.1.56 On a worst-case basis, therefore, the significance of the effect on the tourism sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish and shellfish processing sector

6.12.1.57 It is not anticipated that the operation and maintenance of the OTW project would result in any further effects on the fisheries, aquaculture, and fish and shellfish processing sector. Therefore, the significance of the effect on the fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector in the West Side SSA, Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on the transport and storage sector

6.12.1.58 It is not anticipated that the operation and maintenance of the OTW project would result in any further effects on the transport and storage sector. Therefore, the significance of the effect on the transport and storage sector in the Stornoway SSA and in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Socio-cultural effects

6.12.1.59 There is the potential for adverse or beneficial socio-cultural effects associated with the operation and maintenance of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project. The operation and maintenance phase of the OTW project will overlap with the operation and maintenance phase of the Offshore Project.

Population change

6.12.1.60 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of operation and maintenance on the local resident population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to demographic change is **Minor Beneficial**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.12.1.61 As shown in Section 6.9, it is estimated that the operation and maintenance of the Project as a whole would create between 175 and 188 direct FTE jobs per year in the Western Isles. While many of these jobs would be recruited locally, it is expected that there would be some in-migration of labour to the area, although this may be reduced by remote working from other locations. There could be benefits associated with the increase in the working-age population.

6.12.1.62 It is expected that the in-coming workforce associated with the operation and maintenance of the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and that incoming operational workers would be dispersed across the island rather than concentrated in a particular area. The increase in population would be greater than for the Offshore Project alone, however it is not expected that this would change the overall significance of the effect for local residents.

6.12.1.63 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the local resident population from demographic change during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.64 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Beneficial**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on housing availability

6.12.1.65 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of operation and maintenance on the local resident population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to housing availability is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms

6.12.1.66 It is expected that the in-coming workforce associated with the operation and maintenance of the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*, and that incoming operational workers and their families would be dispersed across the island rather than concentrated in a particular area. While the increase in demand for housing would be greater than for the Offshore Project alone, it is not expected that this would change the overall significance of the effect for local residents.

6.12.1.67 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project on the local resident population from changes in housing availability during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.68 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of community services and infrastructure

6.12.1.69 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of operation and maintenance on the local resident population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to the availability of community services and infrastructure is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms

6.12.1.70 It is expected that the in-coming workforce associated with the operation and maintenance of the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. While the increase in demand for community services and infrastructure would be greater than for the Offshore Project alone, it is not expected that this would change the overall significance of the effect for local residents.

6.12.1.71 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the local resident population from changes in the availability of community services and infrastructure during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.72 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on availability of transport

6.12.1.73 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of operation and maintenance on the local resident population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to the availability of transport is **Negligible**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.12.1.74 It is expected that the in-coming workforce associated with the operation and maintenance of the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the population of Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*. The increase in demand for transport would be greater than for the Offshore Project alone, and it is possible that the magnitude of the impact may increase. However, it is not expected that this would change the overall significance of the effect for local residents.

6.12.1.75 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the local resident population in Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Negligible to Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Effects on culture and identity

6.12.1.76 The Offshore Socio-economics assessment concluded that the impact of operation and maintenance on the local resident population of the West Side SSA, and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* in relation to culture and identity is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.12.1.77 The increase in population associated with the OTW project would represent a relatively small proportion of the overall population. As noted above, in-migration of operation and maintenance workers and their family could have benefits due to the increase in the working-age population. There is the potential that this could increase the scale of the impact on the use of the

Gaelic language and on Sunday observance, however there is also the potential that workers and their families would choose to learn Gaelic over time.

6.12.1.78 The operation and maintenance of the OTW Project is unlikely to have any further effects on commercial or recreational fishing. There could be socio-cultural effects associated with impacts on crofting or access to peatbanks, however these are unlikely to be significant in operation. In relation to changes in the environment, **Chapter 19, Volume 2a**, concludes that the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of airborne noise effects during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone. **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports that the magnitude of visual impacts at some viewpoints within the SSA could increase slightly due to the presence of the Landfall Substation, however the overall significance of effects would not change.

6.12.1.79 Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Offshore Project in combination with the OTW project in terms of effects on the local resident population in relation to culture and identity during the operation and maintenance phase is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Offshore Project alone.

6.12.1.80 Therefore, the significance of the effect on the local resident population in the West Side SSA and Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh* as a result of the Offshore Project in addition with the OTW project is assessed as **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

Decommissioning

6.12.1.81 Given the comparable but reverse nature of decommissioning to the construction phase, it is considered that the impacts assessed above for the construction phase will be the same or greater than those impacts arising during the decommissioning phase. Based on the information available at this stage, wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects arising during decommissioning are considered to be **Negligible to Minor Adverse** and therefore **Not Significant** in EIA terms.

6.13 ASSESSMENT OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

6.13.1 APPROACH

6.13.1.1 A cumulative effects assessment (CEA) examines: the combined impacts of the Project in combination with 'Other Developments' on the same single receptor or resource and the contribution of the Project to those impacts. The overall method followed in identifying and assessing potential cumulative effects is set out in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a**.

6.13.1.2 The offshore screening approach is based on the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note Nine (Planning Inspectorate, 2018) and Advice Note Seventeen (Planning Inspectorate, 2024), with relevant components of the RenewableUK (RenewableUK, 2013) accepted guidance, which includes

aspects specific to the marine elements of an offshore wind farm, addressing the need to consider mobile wide-ranging species (foraging species, migratory routes etc).

6.13.2 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

6.13.2.1 For socio-economics, a Zone of Influence (ZOI) has been applied to ensure direct and indirect cumulative effects can be appropriately identified and assessed. The ZOI as identified within this chapter comprises the island study area (Lewis and Harris/*Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh*) and local study area (Western Isles) used in the socio-economic assessment. Only projects likely to impact on the labour market in these areas have been included in the CEA. While there may be the potential for cumulative economic effects elsewhere in Scotland associated with additional stimulus for the offshore wind supply chain, given the uncertainties and limited information available at this stage, effects at the national level have not been included in the CEA. The Socio-economics ZOI is shown in **Figure 6.4, Volume 2b**.

6.13.2.2 A short list of Other Developments that may interact with the Project ZOIs during their construction, operation or decommissioning is presented in **Appendix 5.4, Volume 1c**. This list has been generated applying criteria set out in **Chapter 5, Volume 1a** and **Appendix 5.3: Cumulative Effects Assessment Detailed Search and Screening Criteria, Volume 1c** and has been collated up to the finalisation of the EIAR through desk study, consultation, and engagement.

6.13.2.3 Only those Other Developments in the short list that fall within the Socio-economics ZOI have the potential to result in cumulative effects with the Project on Socio-economics. All Other Developments falling outside the Socio-economics ZOI are excluded from this assessment. The following types of Other Development have the potential to result in cumulative effects on Socio-economics:

- Onshore wind farms;
- Offshore wind farms;
- Grid connections, substations and transmission;
- Upgrades to road or harbour infrastructure;
- Commercial or industrial developments.

6.13.2.4 On the basis of the above, the Other Developments that are scoped into the Socio-economics CEA are outlined in **Table 6-24**. It should be noted that Other Developments which are proposed or under construction at the time of writing this chapter are included in the table below with the information available.

6.13.2.5 The cumulative Project Design Envelope is described in **Table 6-25**.

Table 6-24 Other Developments considered as part of the Socio-economics CEA

ID (Figure 6.4, Volume 1c)	Development Type	Application Reference	Description of Development	Status	Timescale ⁴	Confidence in Assessments	Tier ⁵	Distance from Array Area	Distance from OCAS
1	Offshore Wind Farm	OWF-024	Talisk Offshore Wind Project	In planning – scoping report submitted (onshore and offshore)	Construction expected 2029-2032	Medium	2	28 km	32 km
2	Offshore Wind Farm	OWF-026	Havbredey	In planning – scoping report submitted (offshore)	Construction expected 2030-2035	Medium	2	55 km	55 km
3	Onshore Wind Farm	ONWF-002	Stornoway Wind Farm	Consented	Construction expected 2027-2031	High	1	23 km	17 km
4	Onshore Wind Farm	ONWF-005	Druim Leathann Windfarm	Consented	Decommissioning expected 2033-2068	High	1	24 km	17 km

⁴ The Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 17 states 'Where other developments are expected to be completed before construction of the proposed Major Infrastructure Project and the effects of those projects are fully determined, effects arising from them should be considered as part of the baseline and may be considered as part of both the construction and operational assessment.'

⁵ Chapter 5 sets out the full definitions of the tiers. Tier 1: high level of certainty or information availability (including under construction or where a planning application has been approved or is awaiting decision). Tier 2: medium level of certainty or information (such as developments where a Scoping Report has been submitted). Tier 3: low level of certainty or information available (no planning applications submitted or identified for potential future development only).

ID (Figure 6.4, Volume 1c)	Development Type	Application Reference	Description of Development	Status	Timescale ⁴	Confidence in Assessments	Tier ⁵	Distance from Array Area	Distance from OCAS
5	Onshore Wind Farm	ONWF-006	Uisenis Wind Farm	Consented	Construction expected 2027-2030	High	1	31 km	34 km
6	Onshore Wind Farm	ONWF-009	West Coast Community Energy Project	Pre-planning	Construction expected 2030-2033	Low	3	14 km	6 km
7	Onshore Wind Farm	ONWF-011	Arnish Moor Wind Farm	Operational	Decommissioning expected 2031-2032	High	1	29 km	23 km
8	Grid connections, substations and transmission	ENG-013	Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub	In planning – application submitted	Construction expected 2026-2030	High	1	31 km	23 km
9	Grid connections, substations and transmission	ENG-018	Talisk Floating Offshore Wind Farm (Onshore Components)	In planning – scoping report submitted	Construction expected 2029-2032	Medium	2	27 km	20 km
10	Grid connections, substations and transmission	ENG-020	Stornoway Grid Supply Point Upgrade	Pre-planning	Construction expected 2028-2030	Low	3	27 km	20 km

ID (Figure 6.4, Volume 1c)	Development Type	Application Reference	Description of Development	Status	Timescale ⁴	Confidence in Assessments	Tier ⁵	Distance from Array Area	Distance from OCAS
11	Grid connections, substations and transmission	ENG-021	Stornoway Windfarm Grid Connection	Pre-planning	Construction expected 2028-2030	Low	3	26 km	19 km
12	Grid connections, substations and transmission	ENG-022	Muaitheabhal Wind Farm 132 kV Overhead Line Connection	In planning – scoping report submitted	Construction expected 2028-2030	Medium	2	31 km	34 km
13	Grid connections, substations and transmission	ENG-029	Western Isles Connection Project – HVDC Link	In planning – application submitted	Construction expected 2028-2030	High	1	31 km	23 km
14	Harbour Development	POR-014	Deep Water South, Stornoway Port	In planning – scoping report submitted	Construction expected 2028-2031	Medium	2	30 km	22 km

6.13.2.6 A description of the significance of cumulative effects upon socio-economics receptors arising from each identified impact is given below. The cumulative effects assessment has been based on information publicly available in the planning application documents for the Other Developments. It is noted that the maximum assessment assumptions quoted within these planning applications (EIARs / ESs) are often refined during the determination period and in the post-consent phase such that the final scheme's build out may have a reduced impact when compared to what has previously been assessed.

Table 6-25 Cumulative Project Design Envelope for socio-economics

Project Phase and Activity / Impact	Scenario	Justification
Construction		
Socio-economic effects: construction creates temporary jobs and supply chain opportunities	<p>Tier 1 projects Stornoway Wind Farm (ONWF-002) Uisenis Wind Farm (ONWF-006) Arnish Moor Wind Farm (ONWF-011) Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub (ENG-013) Western Isles Connection Project – HVDC Link (ENG-029)</p> <p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024) Havbredey (OWF-026) Talisk Floating Offshore Wind Farm (Onshore Components) (ENG-018) Muaitheabhal Wind Farm 132 kV Overhead Line Connection (ENG-022) Deep Water South, Stornoway Port (POR-014)</p> <p>Tier 3 projects West Coast Community Energy Project (ONWF-009) Stornoway Grid Supply Point Upgrade (ENG-020) Stornoway Windfarm Grid Connection (ENG-021)</p>	The construction or decommissioning of these projects is expected to overlap with the construction phase of the Project and could therefore create additional employment and GVA within the local and national economies.
Wider socio-economic effects: additional demand for labour leads to	<p>Tier 1 projects Uisenis Wind Farm (ONWF-006)</p>	The construction or decommissioning of these projects is expected to overlap with the construction

Project Phase and Activity / Impact	Scenario	Justification
<p>displacement of workers from established industries. Noise and visual effects on tourism and recreation receptors.</p>	<p>Arnish Moor Wind Farm (ONWF-011) Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub (ENG-013) Western Isles Connection Project – HVDC Link (ENG-029)</p> <p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024) Havbredey (OWF-026) Talisk Floating Offshore Wind Farm (Onshore Components) (ENG-018) Muaitheabhal Wind Farm 132 kV Overhead Line Connection (ENG-022) Deep Water South, Stornoway Port (POR-014)</p> <p>Tier 3 projects West Coast Community Energy Project (ONWF-009) Stornoway Grid Supply Point Upgrade (ENG-020) Stornoway Windfarm Grid Connection (ENG-021)</p>	<p>phase of the Project. There is therefore the potential that the additional demand for labour could result in further knock-on effects for established local industries. There could also be additional disruption that could lead to temporary effects for the tourism, transport and storage, and fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sectors.</p> <p>These projects are within the ZOI for the SLVIA CEA, and there is therefore the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and recreation as a result of visual effects during the construction phase.</p>
<p>Socio-cultural effects: presence of temporary construction workforce could lead to demographic change and additional demand for housing, services and transport. There could also be effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.</p>	<p>Tier 1 projects Stornoway Wind Farm (ONWF-002) Uisenis Wind Farm (ONWF-006) Arnish Moor Wind Farm (ONWF-011) Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub (ENG-013) Western Isles Connection Project – HVDC Link (ENG-029)</p>	<p>The construction or decommissioning of these projects is expected to overlap with the construction phase of the Project. There is therefore the potential that temporary in-migration of labour could lead to additional demand for housing and services, demographic change, and impacts on local culture and identity.</p>

Project Phase and Activity / Impact	Scenario	Justification
	<p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024) Havbredey (OWF-026) Talisk Floating Offshore Wind Farm (Onshore Components) (ENG-018) Muaitheabhal Wind Farm 132 kV Overhead Line Connection (ENG-022) Deep Water South, Stornoway Port (POR-014)</p> <p>Tier 3 projects West Coast Community Energy Project (ONWF-009) Stornoway Grid Supply Point Upgrade (ENG-020) Stornoway Windfarm Grid Connection (ENG-021)</p>	<p>These projects are within the ZOI for the SLVIA CEA, and there is therefore the potential for cumulative effects on culture and identity as a result of visual effects during the construction phase.</p>
Operation		
<p>Socio-economic effects: operation creates permanent jobs and supply chain opportunities</p>	<p>Tier 1 projects Stornoway Wind Farm (ONWF-002) Druim Leathann Windfarm (ONWF-005) Uisenis Wind Farm (ONWF-006) Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub (ENG-013) Western Isles Connection Project – HVDC Link (ENG-029)</p> <p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024) Havbredey (OWF-026)</p>	<p>The operation or decommissioning of these projects is expected to overlap with the operational phase of the Project and could therefore create additional employment and GVA within the local and national economies.</p>

Project Phase and Activity / Impact	Scenario	Justification
	<p>Talisk Floating Offshore Wind Farm (Onshore Components) (ENG-018) Muaitheabhal Wind Farm 132 kV Overhead Line Connection (ENG-022) Deep Water South, Stornoway Port (POR-014)</p> <p>Tier 3 projects West Coast Community Energy Project (ONWF-009) Stornoway Grid Supply Point Upgrade (ENG-020) Stornoway Windfarm Grid Connection (ENG-021)</p>	
<p>Wider socio-economic effects: additional demand for labour leads to displacement of workers from established industries. Noise and visual effects on tourism and recreation receptors.</p>	<p>Tier 1 projects Stornoway Wind Farm (ONWF-002) Druim Leathann Windfarm (ONWF-005) Uisenis Wind Farm (ONWF-006)</p> <p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024) Havbredey (OWF-026)</p> <p>Tier 3 projects West Coast Community Energy Project (ONWF-009)</p>	<p>The operation or decommissioning of these projects is expected to overlap with the operational phase of the Project. There is therefore the potential that the additional demand for labour could result in further knock-on effects for established local industries. There could also be additional disruption that could lead to effects for the tourism, transport and storage, and fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sectors.</p> <p>These projects are within the ZOI for the SLVIA CEA, and there is therefore the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and recreation as a result of visual effects during the operational phase.</p>
<p>Socio-cultural effects: in-migration of labour could lead to demographic change and additional demand for</p>	<p>Tier 1 projects Stornoway Wind Farm (ONWF-002) Druim Leathann Windfarm (ONWF-005)</p>	<p>The operation or decommissioning of these projects is expected to overlap with the operational phase of the Project. There is therefore the potential that in-</p>

Project Phase and Activity / Impact	Scenario	Justification
<p>housing, services and transport. There could also be effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.</p>	<p>Uisenis Wind Farm (ONWF-006)</p> <p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024) Havbredey (OWF-026)</p> <p>Tier 3 projects West Coast Community Energy Project (ONWF-009)</p>	<p>migration of labour could lead to additional demand for housing and services, demographic change, and impacts on local culture and identity. These projects are within the ZOI for the SLVIA CEA, and there is therefore the potential for cumulative effects on culture and identity as a result of visual effects during the operational phase.</p>
Decommissioning		
<p>Socio-economic effects: operation creates permanent jobs and supply chain opportunities.</p>	<p>Tier 1 projects Western Isles Connection Project – HVDC Link (ENG-029)</p> <p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024) Talisk Floating Offshore Wind Farm (Onshore Components) (ENG-018) Muaitheabhal Wind Farm 132 kV Overhead Line Connection (ENG-022) Deep Water South, Stornoway Port (POR-014)</p> <p>Tier 3 projects Stornoway Grid Supply Point Upgrade (ENG-020) Stornoway Windfarm Grid Connection (ENG-021)</p>	<p>The operational phase of these projects is expected to overlap with the decommissioning phase of the Project and could therefore create additional employment and GVA within the local and national economies.</p>

Project Phase and Activity / Impact	Scenario	Justification
<p>Wider socio-economic effects: additional demand for labour leads to displacement of workers from established industries. Noise and visual effects on tourism and recreation receptors.</p>	<p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024)</p>	<p>This project is within the ZOI for the SLVIA CEA, and is expected to be in operation during the decommissioning of the Project. There is therefore the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and recreation as a result of visual effects during the decommissioning phase.</p>
<p>Socio-cultural effects: in-migration of labour could lead to demographic change and additional demand for housing, services and transport. There could also be effects on culture and identity, including the Gaelic language.</p>	<p>Tier 2 projects Talisk Offshore Wind Project (OWF-024)</p>	<p>This project is within the ZOI for the SLVIA CEA, and is expected to be in operation during the decommissioning of the Project. There is therefore the potential for cumulative effects on culture and identity as a result of visual effects during the decommissioning phase.</p>

Socio-economic impacts

- 6.13.2.7 The construction or decommissioning phases of all of the Other Developments identified in **Table 6-24** will overlap with the construction of the Project. However, estimated employment projections were not publicly available at the time of writing for any of the Other Developments listed, with the exception of Uisenis Wind Farm, Stornoway Wind Farm, and the Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub. Construction employment associated with the Uisenis Wind Farm is assessed as minor and not significant (Uisenis Power Limited, 2023). Construction employment associated with Stornoway Wind Farm is assessed as probably significant at the local level in Lewis, with up to 307 FTEs that would be retained within the Western Isles (Lewis Wind Power, 2019). Socio-economics was scoped out of the EIA for the Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub, however a separate Socio-economic Assessment estimates that total construction employment within the Western Isles would be relatively small, with 29 job years created in total, of which 17 would be direct, 3 would be indirect, and 9 would be induced.
- 6.13.2.8 There could be temporary benefits for the local labour market and economy associated with construction employment and GVA from the construction of the Project in combination with the other developments. However, there is also the potential for temporary adverse effects such as displacement of economic activity that could arise due to additional demand on the local labour market and supply chain. The Applicant will continue to engage with other developers and key stakeholders as part of the Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum, to co-ordinate activity and to identify, minimise, and mitigate any arising challenges. On this basis, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Project in combination with Other Developments on employment and GVA is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Project alone. Therefore the magnitude of the impact in the island and local study areas is assessed as **Low**, and the sensitivity of the local economy is assessed as **Medium**, resulting in a **Minor Beneficial** effect that is **Not Significant**.
- 6.13.2.9 Once in operation, there are likely to be beneficial effects for the local labour market and economy from the additional jobs and GVA created by the Project and the Other Developments. Overall employment numbers would be smaller than during construction, reducing the likelihood of displacement effects. There could be further beneficial cumulative effects on the supply chain in the Western Isles which may develop around the Project and other offshore and onshore wind developments. At this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Project in combination with Other Developments on employment and GVA is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Project alone. Therefore the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Medium**, the sensitivity of the local economy is assessed as **Medium**, resulting in a **Moderate Beneficial** effect that is **Significant**.
- 6.13.2.10 During decommissioning, there could be beneficial effects on jobs and GVA from the Project in combination with Other Developments that would then be in operation. There is limited information available at this stage to inform the assessment and it is assumed that the effect would be relatively small due to the comparatively small numbers of workers likely to be required during

the operation and maintenance phases of the Other Developments. At this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Project in combination with Other Developments on employment and GVA is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Project alone. Therefore the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Low**, the sensitivity of the local economy is assessed as **Medium**, resulting in a **Minor Beneficial** effect that is **Not Significant**.

Wider socio-economic effects

- 6.13.2.11 There is the potential for temporary adverse wider socio-economic effects such as displacement of labour from established industries as a result of the construction of the Project in combination with the Other Developments identified in **Table 6-24**. As noted above, of those projects whose construction phases overlap with the Project, employment associated with Uisenis Wind Farm is assessed as minor and not significant. It is estimated that Stornoway Wind Farm would create up to 307 FTEs within the Western Isles, and the Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub would create a total of 690 direct job years of employment in Scotland across the construction period as a whole, 17 of which would be retained within the Western Isles.
- 6.13.2.12 Additional demand for labour and the presence of incoming construction workers could also impact on the availability of tourism accommodation, although it is recognised that the demand for workers and for accommodation is likely to fluctuate throughout the construction period of the Project and the Other Developments. The EIA for the Stornoway Wind Farm application reports a potentially significant beneficial effect on local accommodation and hospitality providers as a result of additional demand. Mitigation set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041 and M042, will reduce the potential for cumulative impacts and, as noted above, the Applicant will continue to engage with other developers and key stakeholders as part of the Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum.
- 6.13.2.13 There could also be temporary cumulative effects on the environment which could impact on certain sectors including commercial fisheries and tourism. The CEA in **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports no significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors. The CEA in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, also reports no significant cumulative effects on other sea users, including tourism and recreation receptors. The CEA in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a**, reports no significant cumulative effects on commercial fisheries. Based on the information available at this stage, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Project in combination with Other Developments in terms of wider socio-economic effects is expected to be no greater than the effects of the Project alone. Therefore the magnitude of the impact on key sectors of the economy in the island and local study areas is assessed as **Low**, the sensitivity of the local economy is assessed as **Medium**, resulting in a **Minor Adverse** effect that is **Not Significant**.
- 6.13.2.14 Employment numbers during the operation and maintenance phase of the Project and the Other Developments would be smaller than during construction, reducing the potential for adverse wider socio-economic effects. The CEA in **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports no significant

cumulative effects on views or visual receptors during operation, and the CEA in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, also reports no significant cumulative effects on other sea users, including tourism and recreation receptors. The CEA in **Chapter 21, Volume 2a**, reports no significant cumulative effects on commercial fisheries. Based on the information available at this stage and the mitigation outlined above, the significance of the cumulative effect of the Project in combination with other developments is expected to be no greater than the effect of the Project alone. Therefore the magnitude of the impact on key sectors of the economy in the island and local study areas is assessed as **Low**, the sensitivity of the local economy is assessed as **Medium**, resulting in a **Minor Adverse** effect that is **Not Significant**.

6.13.2.15 During decommissioning, there could be effects on tourism and recreation as a result of visual impacts associated with the Project in combination with Other Developments that would then be in operation. The CEA in **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports no significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors.

Socio-cultural effects

6.13.2.16 During construction, there is the potential for temporary adverse socio-cultural effects in relation to demographic change, additional demand for services and accommodation from incoming construction workers, changes in the environment, and impacts on the Gaelic language from the Project in combination with the Other Developments listed in **Table 6-24**. As noted above, the effect on employment associated with Uisenis Wind Farm is assessed as minor and not significant. It is estimated that the Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub would create a total of 690 direct job years of employment in Scotland across the construction period as a whole, the majority of which would be taken up by workers from outside the Western Isles.

6.13.2.17 As noted in Section 6.12, the availability of housing and pressure on service provision, including ferries to Lewis/*Eilean Leòdhais*, have been raised as key concerns by stakeholders and focus group participants. It has recently been announced that SSEN Transmission will help to fund the construction of new homes in Stornoway that would initially be used by workers on the Lewis Hub project, which could help to reduce the potential for cumulative effects on the availability of housing (Hebrides New, 2025). The EIA for Stornoway Wind Farm also states that purpose built accommodation is likely to be required for the construction workforce. Mitigation set out in **Table 6-15**, specifically M041 and M042, will also reduce the potential for cumulative effects and, as noted above, the Applicant will continue to engage with other developers and key stakeholders as part of the Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum.

6.13.2.18 In relation to cumulative effects on the environment, the CEA in **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports no significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors. Based on the information available at this stage and the mitigation outlined above, and assuming that appropriate mitigation will be developed as part of the Onshore EIA if required, the significance of the cumulative effects of the Project in combination with Other Developments in terms of socio-cultural effects is

expected to be no greater than the effects of the Project alone. Therefore the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Low**, the sensitivity of local communities in the island and local study area is assessed as **High**, resulting in a **Minor Adverse** effect that is **Not Significant**.

6.13.2.19 As overall employment numbers would be smaller during operation and maintenance than during construction, the potential for adverse socio-cultural effects associated with demographic change, additional demand for services and accommodation from incoming construction workers, changes in the environment, and impacts on the Gaelic language would be reduced. The CEA in **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports no significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors. The CEA in **Chapter 20, Volume 2a**, also reports no significant cumulative effects on other sea users, including tourism and recreation receptors. At this stage, the significance of the cumulative effect of the Project in combination with other developments is expected to be no greater than the effect of the Project alone. Therefore the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Low**, the sensitivity of local communities in the island and local study area is assessed as **High**, resulting in a **Minor Adverse** effect that is **Not Significant**.

6.13.2.20 During decommissioning, there could be effects on culture and identity as a result of visual impacts associated with the Project in combination with Other Developments that would then be in operation. The CEA in **Chapter 18, Volume 2a**, reports no significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors.

Conclusions

6.13.2.21 The CEA presented above and in **Table 6-26** below concludes that, at this stage, it is not expected that the cumulative effects of the Project in combination with the Other Developments identified would be any greater than those of the Project alone. However, there are limitations in the data available at this stage regarding the likely requirements of the Other Developments in terms of workforce, skills, and infrastructure. Should multiple projects come forward for construction simultaneously, there is the potential for increased pressure on the local labour market, as well as on local services and infrastructure.

6.13.2.22 As noted above, the Applicant will continue to engage with other developers and key stakeholders as part of the Renewable Energy: Major Developments Forum. This is a collaborative forum involving the private sector developers of proposed/planned renewable energy projects in Lewis and the public sector agencies working on, and in support of, the island. Its purpose is to identify and focus on areas of joint strategic purpose to provide co-ordinated action in pursuit of smooth project implementation; the identification of related growth opportunities, the maximisation of community benefits and the identification, minimisation, and mitigation of any arising challenges. The forum meets on a quarterly basis, at a minimum, with sub-groups meeting in between to progress collaboration on specific topics.

6.13.2.23 The CEA for socio-economics is set out in **Table 6-26**.

Table 6-26 Cumulative effects assessment for socio-economics

ID (Figure 6.4, Volume 1c)	Development Title	Application Reference	Assessment Discussion	Mitigation
1	Talisk Offshore Wind Project	OWF-024	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing. No significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors, or on tourism and recreation receptors, which reduces the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and cultural identity.	None required at this stage.
2	Havbredey	OWF-026	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing. No significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors, or on tourism and recreation receptors, which reduces the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and cultural identity.	None required at this stage.
3	Stornoway Wind Farm	ONWF-002	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA associated with construction, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. Construction employment is assessed as beneficial and potentially significant. Effects on accommodation are also assessed as beneficial and potentially significant. Purpose built accommodation is	None required at this stage.

ID (Figure 6.4, Volume 1c)	Development Title	Application Reference	Assessment Discussion	Mitigation
			<p>likely to be required for the construction workforce, reducing the potential for cumulative effects on the availability of housing.</p> <p>No significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors, or on tourism and recreation receptors, which reduces the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and cultural identity.</p>	
4	Druim Leathan Windfarm	ONWF-005	<p>Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA associated with decommissioning, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.</p> <p>No significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors, or on tourism and recreation receptors, which reduces the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and cultural identity.</p>	None required at this stage.
5	Uisenis Wind Farm	ONWF-006	<p>Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. Construction employment associated with the Uisenis Wind Farm is assessed as minor and not significant, and therefore the cumulative effect is not expected to be significant.</p> <p>No significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors, which reduces the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and cultural identity.</p>	None required at this stage.

ID (Figure 6.4, Volume 1c)	Development Title	Application Reference	Assessment Discussion	Mitigation
6	West Coast Community Energy Project	ONWF-009	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing. No significant cumulative effects on views or visual receptors, or on tourism and recreation receptors, which reduces the potential for cumulative effects on tourism and cultural identity.	None required at this stage.
7	Arnish Moor Wind Farm	ONWF-011	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA associated with decommissioning, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.	None required at this stage.
8	Western Isles Connection Project – Lewis Hub	ENG-013	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA associated with construction, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects.	None required at this stage.
9	Talisk Floating Offshore Wind Farm (Onshore Components)	ENG-018	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.	None required at this stage.
10	Stornoway Grid Supply Point Upgrade	ENG-020	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.	None required at this stage.

ID (Figure 6.4, Volume 1c)	Development Title	Application Reference	Assessment Discussion	Mitigation
11	Stornoway Windfarm Grid Connection	ENG-021	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.	None required at this stage.
12	Muaitheabhal Wind Farm 132 kV Overhead Line Connection	ENG-022	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.	None required at this stage.
13	Western Isles Connection Project – HVDC Link	ENG-029	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.	None required at this stage.
14	Deep Water South, Stornoway Port	POR-014	Potential for beneficial and adverse effects due to increase in employment and GVA, with wider socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. However, no employment information available at time of writing.	None required at this stage.

6.14 TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS

- 6.14.1.1 Transboundary effects occur when a development in one European Economic Area (EEA) State impacts the environment of another EEA State(s).
- 6.14.1.2 It is expected that some economic impacts will arise outside of Scotland and the UK as a result of spend on materials in other EEA States. As shown in **Table 6-8**, it is expected that up to 74% of CAPEX and 38% of OPEX will be outside of the UK. It is not possible at this stage to quantify the likely significant effect of this expenditure in terms of employment and GVA in other EEA States, however any effect is likely to be beneficial. It is not anticipated that there would be any significant transboundary effects on the interest of other EEA States in relation to wider socio-economic or socio-cultural effects. Therefore, transboundary effects have not been considered further within the Socio-economics assessment.

6.15 SUMMARY OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS

- 6.15.1.1 **Table 6-27** presents a summary of the assessment of significant impacts, any relevant mitigation measures, and residual effects on socio-economic receptors.

Table 6-27 Summary of residual effects

Activity and Impact	Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Receptor and Sensitivity or Value	Embedded Mitigation Measures	Significance of Effect (Significance)	Further Environmental Mitigation	Significance of Residual Effect (Significance)
Construction							
Employment effects	Labour market (Western Isles)	Low	Medium	M048; M049	Minor beneficial (not significant)	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)
	Labour market (Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)	Negligible	Low	M048; M049	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
GVA effects	Economy (Western Isles)	Low	Medium	M048; M049	Minor beneficial (not significant)	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)
	Economy (Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)	Negligible	Low	M048; M049	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors: tourism	Tourism sector (West Side SSA)	Low	Medium	M012; M019; M037; M041; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Tourism sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Medium	M012; M019; M037; M041; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Tourism sector (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Medium	M012; M019; M037; M042; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Knock-on socio-economic	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish	Low	High	M011; M012; M015; M019; M022; M024; M037; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors: fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing	processing sector (West Side SSA)						
	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	High	M011; M012; M015; M019; M022; M024; M037; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	High	M011; M012; M015; M019; M022; M024; M037; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors	Transport and storage sector (West Side SSA)	Low	Medium	M011; M012; M015; M019; M022; M024; M037; M041; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Transport and storage sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Medium	M011; M012; M015; M019; M022; M024; M037; M042; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Transport and storage sector (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas</i>)	Low	Medium	M011; M012; M015; M019; M022; M024; M037; M041; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

transport and storage	<i>agus Na Hearadh</i>						
Temporary changes in demographics	Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Medium	M041	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Medium	M041	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Increased demand for services: housing availability	Housing market; Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Negligible	High	M041	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
	Housing market; Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Negligible	High	M041	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
Increased demand for services: community services and infrastructure	Community services and infrastructure; Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Medium	M041	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

	Community services and infrastructure; Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Medium	M041	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Increased demand for services: availability of transport	Transport infrastructure; Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	High	M041; M042	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Effects on culture and identity	Local resident population (West Side SSA)	Low	High	M042; M044; M045	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Low	High	M042; M044; M045	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas</i>)	Low	High	M042; M044; M045	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

	<i>agus Na Hearadh</i>						
Operation and maintenance							
Employment effects	Labour market (Western Isles)	Medium	Labour market, medium	M048; M049	Moderate beneficial (significant)	N/A	Moderate beneficial (significant)
	Labour market (Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)	Negligible	Labour market, low	M048; M049	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
GVA effects	Economy (Western Isles)	High	Economy, medium	M048; M049	Minor beneficial (not significant)	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)
	Economy (Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)	Negligible	Economy, low	M048; M049	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors: tourism	Tourism sector (West Side SSA)	Medium	Tourism sector, medium	M037	Moderate adverse (significant)	A0004	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Tourism sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Tourism sector, medium	M037	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Tourism sector (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Tourism sector, medium	M037	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Knock-on socio-economic effects for the	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing	Low	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector, high	M037; M022; M024	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

wider economy and for employment in other key sectors: fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing	sector (West Side SSA)						
	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector, high	M037; M022; M024	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector, high	M037; M022; M024	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors:	Transport and storage sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Transport and storage sector, medium	M037; M022; M024	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Transport and storage sector (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Transport and storage sector, medium	M012; M019; M022; M024	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

transport and storage							
Permanent changes in demographics	Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)	Low	Local resident population, medium	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)
Increased demand for services: housing availability	Housing market; Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)	Low	Local resident population, high	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Increased demand for services: community services and infrastructure	Community services and infrastructure; Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)	Low	Local resident population, medium	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Increased demand for services:	Transport infrastructure; Local resident population	Negligible	Local resident population, high	N/A	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)

availability of transport	(Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)						
Effects on culture and identity	Local resident population (West Side SSA)	Medium	Local resident population, high	M044; M045	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Local resident population, high	M044; M045	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Decommissioning							
Employment effects	Labour market (Western Isles)	Low	Labour market, Medium	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)
	Labour market (Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)	Negligible	Labour market, Low	N/A	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
GVA effects	Economy (Western Isles)	Low	Economy, Medium	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)	N/A	Minor beneficial (not significant)
	Economy (Scotland/ <i>Alba</i>)	Negligible	Economy, Low	N/A	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and	Tourism sector (West Side SSA)	Low	Tourism sector, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Tourism sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Tourism sector, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Tourism sector (Lewis and	Low	Tourism sector, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

for employment in other key sectors: tourism	Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)						
Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors: fisheries, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector (West Side SSA)	Low	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector, High	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector, High	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector (Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)	Low	Fishing, aquaculture and fish/shellfish processing sector, High	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

Knock-on socio-economic effects for the wider economy and for employment in other key sectors transport and storage	Transport and storage sector (West Side SSA)	Low	Transport and storage sector, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Transport and storage sector (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Transport and storage sector, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Transport and storage sector (Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)	Low	Transport and storage sector, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Temporary changes in demographics	Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Local resident population, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)	Low	Local resident population, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Increased demand for services: housing availability	Housing market; Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Negligible	Local resident population, High	M020	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)
	Housing market; Local resident population	Negligible	Local resident population, High	M020	Negligible (not significant)	N/A	Negligible (not significant)

	(Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)						
Increased demand for services: community services and infrastructure	Community services and infrastructure; Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Local resident population, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Community services and infrastructure; Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Local resident population, Medium	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
Increased demand for services: availability of transport	Transport infrastructure; Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/ <i>Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh</i>)	Low	Local resident population, High	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

Effects on culture and identity	Local resident population (West Side SSA)	Low	Local resident population, High	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Local resident population (Stornoway SSA)	Low	Local resident population, High	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)
	Local resident population (Lewis and Harris/Leòdhas agus Na Hearadh)	Low	Local resident population, High	M020	Minor adverse (not significant)	N/A	Minor adverse (not significant)

6.16 GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

6.16.1.1 A list of key terms and acronyms used in this chapter are provided in **Table 6-28** and **Table 6-29**.

Table 6-28 Acronyms and abbreviations

Term	Definition
A&E	Accident and Emergency
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ASHE	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings
BRES	Business Register and Employment Survey
CAPEX	Capital Expenditure
CEA	Cumulative Effects Assessment
CFLO	Company Fisheries Liaison Officer
CnES	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
CTV	Crew Transfer Vessel
DECEX	Decommissioning Expenditure
DEVEX	Development Expenditure
DMO	Destination Management Organisation
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
EEA	European Economic Area
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
EMP	Environment Management Plan
FIR	Fishing Industry Representative
FMMCP	Fisheries Mitigation, Monitoring and Communication Plan
FOI	Freedom of Information
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GVA	Gross Value Added
HIE	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
HNDA	Housing Need and Demand Assessment
I-O SUTs	Input-output supply and use tables
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team
MD-SEDD	Marine Directorate Science, Evidence, Data and Digital
MHWS	Mean High Water Springs
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
MW	Megawatts
NPF	National Planning Framework
NRS	National Records of Scotland
NSR	Noise Sensitive Receptor
NtM	Notices to Mariners
NSVMP	Navigational Safety and Vessel Management Plan

Term	Definition
PAC	Preliminary Application Consultation
OCAS	Offshore Cable Area of Search
OEMP	Offshore Environmental Management Plan
OFLO	Offshore Fisheries Liaison Officer
OHIFG	Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group
OHL	Overhead Line
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OPEX	Operating Expenditure
OTMP	Operational Traffic Management Plan
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
OTW	Onshore Transmission Works
OWF	Offshore Wind Farm
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
SCDS	Supply Chain Development Statement
SEDD	Science, Evidence, Data and Digital
SEIA	Socio-economic Impact Assessment
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SOV	Service Operational Vessel
SSA	Small Study Area
UHI	University of the Highlands and Islands
WIFA	Western Isles Fishermen's Association
WIH	Western Isles Hospital
WTG	Wind Turbine Generator
ZOI	Zone of Influence
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Table 6-29 Glossary

Term	Meaning
The Applicant	Spiorad na Mara Limited (the Project owner).
Amenity	The natural environment, cultural heritage, landscape and visual quality. Also includes the impact of the Applicant's works on communities, such as the effects of noise and disturbance from construction activities.
Array Area	The offshore area within which the offshore wind turbine generators (WTGs), associated foundations, Offshore Cables, and Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) (if required), will be located. This area encompasses the Turbine Area that will contain all above water surface infrastructure (WTGs / OSP) and an additional area within which further below water infrastructure (foundations and cables) may also be located.

Term	Meaning
Array Cables	The offshore electrical and communication cables that connect infrastructure located within the Array Area, for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenario 1: Array Cables will be used to connect Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) to each other, and to connect WTGs to the OSP. • Scenario 2: Array Cables will be used to connect WTGs to each other.
Array Cables to Landfall	The offshore electrical and communication cables located in the Array Area and Offshore Cables Area of Search that connect the wind turbine generators (WTGs) directly to Landfall for Scenario 2.
Combined Effects	Combined effect of the individual development on one particular receptor; for example noise, dust, and visual. This includes Project-Lifetime Effects and Receptor-Led Effects.
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	The local authority for the Western Isles/ <i>Na h-Eileanan an Iar</i>
Cumulative effects	Considers the likely significant effects of multiple impacts and activities from several developments.
Deadweight	Economic output that would occur under a 'do nothing' scenario.
Displacement	Economic output that would be accounted for by reduce outputs elsewhere in the study area.
Effect	Term used to express the consequence of an impact. The significance of an effect is determined by correlating the magnitude of the impact with the importance, or sensitivity, of the receptor or resource in accordance with defined significance criteria.
Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)	The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) prepared to assess the likely significant effects of the Project on the environment.
Embedded or 'Designed-in' Mitigation	Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce environmental effects that are directly incorporated into the preferred design for the Project. This can include standard practice in accordance with or without guidance. Embedded Mitigation is considered as part of the impact assessment, before effect significance is identified.
Export Cables	The offshore electrical and communication cables located in the Array Area and Offshore Cables Area of Search that connect the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) (if required) to Landfall for Scenario 1.
Full-time Equivalent	A measure which standardises temporary, part-time, occasional and full-time jobs into one metric measured by person years of employment.
Gross Value Added	The value of economic outputs, a measure of economic performance and productivity.
Impact	Change that is caused by an action; for example, foundation installation (action) during construction which results in habitat loss (impact).
Leakage	Economic outputs that would occur outside of the study area.
Multiplier effects	Further economic activity that would occur due to additional local income and local supplier purchases.
Offshore Application	The application for Marine Licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (between 0 and 12nm) and a Section 36 consent under the Electricity Act 1989.

Term	Meaning
Offshore Cables	Electrical and communication cables located within the Array Area and Offshore Cable Area of Search. The Offshore Cables consist of Array Cables, Array Cables to Landfall, and Export Cables.
Offshore Cable Area of Search (OCAS)	The area within which the offshore electrical and communication cables between the Array Area and Landfall up to Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) will be located.
Offshore Project	The components of the Spiorad na Mara offshore wind farm (the Project) located seaward of Mean High Water Springs (MHWS).
Offshore Project Boundary	The 'red line boundary' encompassing the Offshore Project.
Offshore Substation Platform (OSP)	The optional offshore substation located within the Turbine Area. Includes the platform and associated components which allows the voltage to be increased to meet onward transmission requirements.
Onshore Application	The application for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).
Onshore Transmission Works (OTW)/ Onshore Project	The onshore components of the Spiorad na Mara offshore wind farm (the Project) located landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS). The Applicant will seek consent for the OTW Project through a separate application and so does not form part of this application.
Percussive Piling	A method of installing piles and pile casings into the seabed using an impact hammer. This form of piling can be solely used if ground conditions are suitable. If pile depth cannot be achieved through percussive piling alone, a pile-drill-pile technique can be used to reach desired depths. The percussive piling technique can be used for the installation of the Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) and the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) (if required) located within the Percussive Piling Area.
Percussive Piling Area	The area within the Turbine Area where both percussive piling, and drill and grout construction methods can be used for the installation of the wind turbine generators (WTGs) and the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) (if required) fixed foundations.
Percussive Piling Exclusion Area	An area in the southwest of the Turbine Area where there will be no percussive piling. Other methods including drill and grout or vibratory methods can be used in this area.
Person year of employment	A metric of employment. One person-year is equivalent to one person working full-time for one year.
Project	The Spiorad na Mara offshore wind farm development. This term describes the whole development, including all offshore and onshore components.
Project Boundary	The 'red line boundary' encompassing all offshore and onshore components of the Project.

Term	Meaning
Project Design Envelope	A description of the range of possible components that make up the Project design options under consideration when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known.
Project-Lifetime Effects	Assessment of the scope for combined effects that occur throughout more than one phase of the project (i.e. construction, operation and maintenance, decommissioning), to interact to potentially create an effect of greater significance than if assessed just within individual/isolated project phases.
Receptor-Led Effects	Assessment of the scope for all combined effects to interact, spatially and temporally, to create an effect on a receptor of greater significance than when the effects are considered in isolation. Receptor-led effects may be short-term, temporary or transient effects, or incorporate longer-term effects.
Scoping Opinion	A report presenting the written opinion of the Scottish Ministers, with input from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) for the OTW, as to the scope and level of detail of information to be provided in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Project.
Study Areas	Study Areas are determined for each technical discipline and are described within each technical chapter.
Turbine Area	A reduced area within the Array Area where above water surface infrastructure would be located i.e. wind turbine generators (WTG) and Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) (if required). This area has been developed and refined through stakeholder engagement and environmental assessment.
Wind Turbine Generators (WTG)	The wind turbines that generate electricity consisting of tubular towers and blades attached to a nacelle housing mechanical and electrical generating equipment

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