

## 3 Climate Emergency

The effects of climate change are widely acknowledged as one of the biggest global, economic, environmental, and social concerns the world is currently experiencing. The use of fossil fuels to produce electricity, supply heat, and fuel transportation is a major contributor to the increase in the concentration and volume of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

One of the primary aims of the Scottish Government is to move towards a low carbon economy, with climate change targets to reduce carbon dioxide emission levels by 100% (net zero) by 2045. This relates to all sectors of business and industry and all policy frameworks that affect the public in general and there is a recognition from the Scottish Government that renewable energy technologies will play a key role in the delivery of the emission reduction targets to achieve 'Net Zero'.

The Climate Change Plan (CCP) Update 2020, states that ***“renewable energy generation in Scotland will account for the equivalent of 50% of our energy demand across electricity, heat and transport”*** by 2032, and also by 2032, that ***“our electricity system will have deepened its transformation for the better, with over 100% of Scotland’s electricity demand being met by renewable sources”***.

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023) identifies 'strategic renewable energy generation and transmission infrastructure' as a national development which will

support the delivery of sustainable places. It is acknowledged that grid infrastructure can help to reduce emissions and improve security of supply. Policy 11 of NPF4 states that ***“development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies will be supported. These include (ii) enabling works, such as grid transmission and distribution infrastructure”***.

In 2019, Dumfries and Galloway Council declared a Climate Emergency and adopted a strategic Action Plan that outlined 12 commitments facilitated by the Council’s Climate Emergency Cross Party Working Group. The strategy is aimed to further reduce the Council’s Carbon emissions and to become a net zero carbon region by 2025. The Council have also prepared a Carbon Neutral Strategic Plan which provides a route map to give direction and identify key points of action for the Council. This is in line to support the national targets for the Scottish and UK governments.

SPEN recognises that our electricity networks are the backbone of the energy system which sits at the heart of this Net Zero transition. SPEN is currently at the forefront of decarbonising our energy system, having already connected approximately one quarter of all onshore wind in Great Britain to the distribution network. SPEN recognises our key role in helping the government meet its climate change targets.

## Harestanes West Wind Farm 132kV Overhead Line Grid Connection

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