



## **Aspen Offshore Wind Farm**

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## **Pre Application Consultation Proposals**

**On behalf of**

**Cerulean Winds Aspen Project Ltd**

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# DOCUMENT INFORMATION

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## Pre Application Consultation Proposals

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Cerulean Winds Aspen Project Limited (‘the Applicant’) a subsidiary of Cerulean Winds (UKCS) Limited (referred to collectively as ‘Cerulean Winds’) is proposing the development of Aspen Offshore Wind Farm (‘the Project’), a floating offshore wind farm with an indicative operational life of 35+ years, located approximately 84 km offshore to the east of Peterhead, Aberdeenshire.

The Project consists of both offshore and onshore components as set out within the Aspen Offshore Wind Farm - Project Overview (Figure 2). The offshore components of the Project are referred to as the ‘Proposed Offshore Development’ and the onshore components as the ‘Proposed Development’.

The application for the Proposed Offshore Development is subject to a separate application and seeks consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The Applicant intends to submit an application for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) for the Proposed Development which includes land between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) near Craig Stirling, Newtonhill and Fetteresso Forest, Aberdeenshire.

The Proposed Development is further described in Section 3.2; however, the works include the installation of underground onshore transmission cables between the MLWS located near Newtonhill and the grid connection point and include the construction of an onshore substation.

All the infrastructure forming part of the Proposed Development is required to allow a connection to the Grid Connection Point at the proposed Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN) proposed Transmission Hurlie 400kV Substation to the west of Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire. The boundaries of the Proposed Development are identified on Proposal of Planning Application Notice Boundary Plan (Figure 1).

## 2. PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The Onshore Transmission Infrastructure required for the Aspen project is classified as a National Development (Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure) under the Scottish Government’s National Planning Framework 4.

All National (and Major) Developments in Scotland must undertake Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) prior to submitting a planning application. Where a PAC is

required, the developer must submit a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of an application for planning permission.

PAC allows stakeholders and local communities to influence development proposals and provide feedback in advance of a planning application being submitted to the local planning authority (LPA) which in the case of the Aspen Project is Aberdeenshire Council, to whom the application for the onshore elements of the project will be submitted.

The offshore elements of the project have already been submitted to Marine Directorate's Licensing and Operations Team (MD-LOT) for consent. Pre Application Consultation for the Offshore elements of the Aspen project including the wind farm array was undertaken in 2025.

In order to comply with the statutory requirements, Cerulean Winds has submitted a PoAN and the PoAN includes:

- A description of the development to be carried out;
- A postal address, if the proposed development site has one, or a description of the location if it does not;
- A plan showing the outline of the site at which the proposed development is to be carried out;
- Contact/correspondence details for Cerulean Winds; and
- An account of consultation proposals, including information as to when such consultation is to take place, with whom and what form it will take.

In addition to the content of the PoAN, this Pre Application Consultation Proposals report also sets out the steps the Project is taking to ensure that the proposed PAC complies with the following requirements:

- The applicant must consult every community council whose area is within or adjoins the proposed application site;
- The consultation must include at least two public events where members of the public may make comments to Cerulean Winds on the proposals; the final of these events must be held no sooner than 14 days after the first;
- The public event advertisements must include the location and description of the proposed development; details as to where further information can be obtained; the date and place of the events; a statement explaining how and by when persons wishing to make comments relating to the project may do so; and a statement that comments made to Cerulean Winds are not representations to the planning authority but there will be an opportunity to make such representations if a planning application is submitted;
- Details of the proposals and consultations must be published in a local newspaper at least 7 days prior to the first and last events being held; and
- Cerulean Winds must provide feedback to members of the public in respect of comments received in relation to the Project (as defined below).

### **3. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

#### **3.1 Project Background**

The Scottish ‘Innovation’ (IN) and ‘Targeted Oil and Gas’ (TOG) (together ‘INTOG’) leasing round is the first offshore wind leasing round globally to include an industry specific emissions reduction objective, aligned with the UK Government’s North Sea Transition Deal (NSTD), under which oil and gas operators committed to reducing emissions by 50% by 2030. TOG projects are intended to support industrial decarbonisation through the electrification of offshore oil and gas installations, contributing to the UK’s net zero and carbon abatement targets.

INTOG awarded Cerulean Winds exclusivity to enter an option agreement for the Aspen site in March 2023, under a 50-year term. The Aspen Array Area covers an area of approximately 333 km<sup>2</sup> and is located in deepwater 84 km east of Peterhead on the east coast of Scotland (as shown on Figure 2). The site was very carefully selected in the heart of the Central North Sea, close to the majority of the offshore oil and gas facilities and in areas of least environmental impact. Aspen’s business case requires around 80% of the power generated to be exported to UK grid with the remainder being supplied to offshore oil and gas facilities.

Floating offshore wind involves new technology and an operating model that is more aligned with oil and gas than fixed wind, and therefore Aspen is one of the only floating offshore wind projects that can be delivered in time to: 1) Capture what is considered a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Scotland and the UK to seize the a multi-billion pound supply chain market before other nations (as happened with fixed wind); 2) Offer oil and gas an opportunity to invest in decarbonisation whilst they still have enough life left to justify the investment and continue to support the UK security of supply.

Aspen will deliver clean, home-grown energy security at the same time as retaining, transitioning and growing our existing oil and gas supply chain jobs in parallel to building a new thriving industry for Scotland and the UK. Aspen will generate enough renewable energy each year to power the equivalent of 1.8 million homes and enable the abatement of more than 2 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually for up to 50 years. With over a billion of initial investment in Scotland, over its lifetime it will attract over £10bn in investment, generate over £4bn in GVA.

Project Aspen is wholly aligned with Just Transition principles in ensuring the shift to a sustainable, low-carbon economy that is fair, equitable, and inclusive, leaving no workers or communities behind. This commitment will be embedded through a Community Wealth Building Strategy that strengthens local supply chains, creates quality employment, and directs long-term investment into local communities.

The offshore infrastructure of the Proposed Development includes up to 72 Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) and associated Floating Foundations, Offshore Substation

Platform(s) (OSP(s)) and associated foundations, Inter-array Cables (IACs), Inter-link Cables, Offshore Transmission Cables (OTCs) and Landfall.

Cerulean Winds has adopted a collaborative alliance-based delivery model for the Aspen Project, selecting world-class Tier 1 partners with technical expertise and experience in delivering large scale offshore projects. The approach has been focused specifically to maximise Scottish and UK supply chain content.

The Aspen project was included in the Holistic Network Design Follow-up Exercise (HNDFUE), which concluded in September 2024. Following this, the National Energy System Operator (NESO) recommended Fetteresso, near Stonehaven, as the preferred grid connection location. In doing so NESO considering Network, Economic, Technical, and Societal (NETS) criteria for the NETS holistically which included economic and efficient, be deliverable and operable, minimise the impact on the environment, and minimise the impact on local communities<sup>1</sup>. Onshore and offshore transmission survey works have been undertaken in line with this recommendation.

In August 2025, Cerulean Winds submitted applications for Section 36 consent under the Electricity Act 1989 for the construction and operation of an offshore generating station, together with Marine Licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 for offshore infrastructure, seabed works and associated activities, supported by an accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

## 3.2 Proposed Development Description

The permanent onshore elements of the Project include all infrastructure extending landwards from Mean Low Water Springs, including a Transition Joint Bay at the landfall area where the offshore export cables transition to the onshore cable circuits. From the landfall area, up to three underground cable circuits with a nominal voltage of 220kV will then transmit the electricity, through onshore transmission cables, to the Project's onshore substation. The project's onshore substation will be situated within the Project's boundaries as defined by the red line as shown on Figure 1 and located between the A90 and the A92. Further details of the proposed onshore substation options will be provided at the pre application consultation events. From the onshore substation, up to two underground cable circuits with a nominal voltage of up to 400kV will then link the Project's onshore substation to the proposed SSEN Transmission substation at Hurlie, Fetteresso which is the Project's grid connection interface point.

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<sup>1</sup> The full NETS criteria can be found within NESO's Holistic Network Design Methodology Feb 2022 (<https://www.neso.energy/document/239466/download>)

### 3.3 Consents Requirements

Consent for the onshore elements of the Project (described above in Section 3.2) will be sought from Aberdeenshire Council by way of Planning Permission in Principle under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

The Project constitutes a National Development under the National Planning Framework 4 and this triggers the requirement for Cerulean Winds to undertake PAC.

### 3.4 Application Site Boundary

The PoAN is accompanied by two plans. Figure 1 contains the PoAN red line boundary within which all onshore infrastructure is proposed to be located. Figure 2 is provided for information only and provides a whole Project boundary which includes the offshore array, export cable corridor and onshore PoAN boundary.

## 4. PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

### 4.1 Proposed Consultation Events

In line with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2021, the PoAN and PAC Proposals report sets out an account of the consultation that Cerulean Winds intends to undertake, including information as to when such consultation is to take place, with whom and what form it will take.

In addition to informal engagement with stakeholders, Cerulean Winds will undertake two rounds of consultation related to the onshore elements of the project in addition to the previous round of consultation relating to the offshore consultation that was undertaken in 2025, where views were sought on the proposed offshore elements of the project.

The first round of consultation related to the onshore elements of the project is scheduled to commence on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

Two in-person consultation exhibition events will take place as follows:

**Date:** 27th May 2026  
**Venue:-** Bettridge Centre, Greystone Place, Newtonhill, AB39 3UL  
**Time:** 12 noon – 19:00 pm

**Date:** 28th May 2026  
**Venue:** The Station Hotel, Arduthie Road, Stonehaven AB39 2NE  
**Time:** 12 noon - 19:00 pm

Adverts will be placed in the Press and Journal newspaper and the Mearns Leader two weeks before the events take place.

After the first round of events in May, the consultation period in which feedback on the proposals can be provided will be open until Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

The second round of consultation events will provide feedback and additional opportunity to comment and will take place at the same venues. The consultation period is intended to commence on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July, with in-person exhibition events intended to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> at the Bettridge Centre and 14<sup>th</sup> of July at The Station Hotel. These events will run from 12 noon – 7 p.m., as per the first consultation events.

**Date:** 13th July 2026  
**Venue:** Bettridge Centre, Greystone Place, Newtonhill, AB39 3UL  
**Time:** 12 noon – 19:00 pm

**Date:** 14th July 2026  
**Venue:** The Station Hotel, Arduthie Road, Stonehaven AB39 2NE  
**Time:** 12 noon – 19:00 pm

The feedback period for the second round of consultation events is scheduled to close on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July.

## 4.2 Online Consultation

Information will be available via specific pages on the Cerulean website, where people can view the consultation materials and submit feedback via the following link:  
[Communities and Engagement - Aspen Floating Offshore Windfarm](#)

All information available at the in-person events, such as the consultation banners, maps, and feedback forms will be available and presented on the webpage. The virtual consultation webpage will be available during both consultation periods with options for online feedback.

## 4.3 Consultation Mail-out

A consultation leaflet will be sent to all properties within the vicinity of the proposal area to ensure all stakeholders who may be impacted by the development are made aware of the consultation and public events.

## 4.4 Gathering Feedback

A feedback form will be available at each of the consultation events and online, including targeted questions focussing on key factors of the onshore development proposals. The aim of the feedback form is to gather constructive feedback from stakeholders to help refine the Project proposals.

In addition, we have the following contact options for those who wish to provide feedback:

Freephone: 0808 178 5704

Email: [community@Ceruleanwinds.com](mailto:community@Ceruleanwinds.com)

Post: Cerulean Winds, C/O BIG Partnership, Carden Studios, Lower Ground Floor (South), 6 Carden Place, Aberdeen, AB10 1UR

## 4.5 Notified Parties

The following parties will be notified of PoAN and the consultation proposals:

- The local UK Parliamentary MP for Aberdeenshire South and the MP for West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine
- The relevant Scottish Parliamentary Constituency MSP;
- MSPs for the North East of Scotland;
- Ward Councillors; and
- Statutory Stakeholders, including Aberdeenshire Council, NatureScot, Historic Environment Scotland and SEPA.

The following Community Councils have been identified as having boundaries in, or adjacent to, the proposed area within which the onshore infrastructure may be situated and will therefore also be notified of the consultation events:

- Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore Community Council;
- North Kincardine Community Council;
- Stonehaven and District Community Council;
- Mearns Community Council

The notifications will contain an invitation to attend the consultation events or a separate meeting with the key members of the project team. A consultation leaflet will be provided and will include a link to the website. Due to the Scottish Parliamentary Elections being held in May, the Project will update any new MSPs elected following the elections.

## 4.6 Processing Feedback and Reporting

Cerulean Winds has chosen the consultation dates to allow an appropriate amount of time to gather and process feedback and consider the implications for the refinement of the Project.

All feedback will be considered and a report produced setting out how the feedback was assessed and the outcomes of that process. Cerulean Winds will present its final proposals prior to the submission of the application for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) to Aberdeenshire Council. The final onshore proposals will be refined following completion of the two rounds of consultation. The PPiP application will also be accompanied by a Pre Application Consultation Report, a statutory requirement, which will detail the consultation process undertaken, a summary of responses and how such responses were taken into consideration in the refinement of the proposals.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This document outlines the proposed Project and proposed PAC activities associated with the onshore infrastructure in compliance with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2021.

Whilst part of the statutory requirements, Cerulean Winds believes that stakeholder engagement is a fundamental part of project development and will thoroughly consider all feedback received as part of the PAC process.

Cerulean Winds believes the proposals will allow for meaningful engagement with sufficient opportunity provided to stakeholders and the local community to engage with the Project and provide feedback. We welcome Aberdeenshire Council's agreement to the measures set out in the PoAN and additional information provided within this overview report.

### Figures:

Proposal of Planning Application Notice Boundary Plan (Figure 1)

Aspen Offshore Wind Farm - Project Overview (Information Only) (Figure 2)