

Hagshaw Energy Cluster Western Expansion

Project Benefits Community Trust Fund

We propose to consult on community benefits and shared ownership opportunities for the Hagshaw Energy Cluster – Western Expansion project. We are keen to engage with the local communities surrounding the project to explore the potential to establish a new Community Trust Fund (or similar) mechanism which would receive income (community benefit payments) from the project. This would yield the financial resources to deliver a Community-Led Investment Strategy for the communities closest to the proposed wind turbines.

The overarching objective of the new Trust would be to deliver real improvement to the socio-economic environment in nearby communities over the wind farm’s 40-year operational life. In order to achieve this, the Hagshaw Energy Cluster Western Expansion would make contributions of up to £2.5 million each year to the newly established Community Trust. This equates to a total of £100m of investment in the local area over the life of the project*. This scale of funding presents a real opportunity to deliver a programme of transformational change in the local area.

Detailed discussions need to be had with the closest communities and other stakeholders on exactly how any funds would be apportioned and administered should the project go ahead but a simple breakdown of turbines per Community Council area (based on the current Scoping layout) is provided below for illustrative purposes. We are at an early stage of the design process so this layout could very well change subject to comments received from the Scoping process.

HAGSHAW ENERGY CLUSTER WESTERN EXPANSION				
Community Council Area	Proposed No of Turbines (Scoping Layout)	Proposed No of MWs (Scoping Layout – 7MW turbines)	Community Benefit Funding of £5,000 / MW per annum	Community Benefit Funding Total (40 year operational life)*
Muirkirk	41	287 MW	£1,435,000	£57,400,000
Sandford & Upper Avondale	24	168 MW	£840,000	£33,600,000
Lesmahagow	7	49 MW	£245,000	£9,800,000
TOTAL	72	504 MW	£2,520,000	£100,800,000

The new Community Trust Fund could be used to deliver some of the following ideas:

- Local Energy Discount Scheme for closest communities;
- Local training and employability programme;
- Strategic Investment Plan to maximise Community Wealth Building over 40 year period;
- New floodlit 4G sports pitch in Muirkirk;
- New access and recreation routes which link surrounding communities with existing Hagshaw Energy Cluster;
- New visitor and tourism infrastructure; and
- Potential for using a proportion of the community and conservation management funds to deliver a new Nature Education Centre, similar to Whitelee Wind Farm Visitor Centre.

Other associated benefits of the project could include:

- Community Ownership opportunity;
- Green energy to supply around 330,000 homes;
- Approximately 525,000 tonnes of CO₂ saved every year;
- Employment Catalyst of New Green Hydrogen Hub on M74.



Economic Investment & Employment

The development would see significant local investment and the creation of local business opportunities during both construction and operation. The Applicant is committed to using suppliers as close to the project as possible and to delivering a high percentage of construction values to local companies (subject to complying with procurement regulations).

SPA & SSSI Recovery and Management Fund

As currently designed, the proposal would affect around 0.16% of habitat within the north-eastern extent of the Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands Special Protection Area (MNLU SPA) designated for bird interests. In return, the proposed development would generate nature conservation funding in the region of c.£40m over 40 years*, capable of funding a number of nature conservation measures to help reverse the decline of the SPA qualifying species, and support wider habitat and environmental benefits (notably through peatland restoration). These measures will also improve the condition of designated habitat features within the Muirkirk Uplands SSSI and the Blood Moss and Slot Burn SSSI.



We would like the community to shape the community benefit package so that it best meets local aspirations and wishes: the fund model will be agreed with the local Community Councils. Do you have ideas for how you would like to see the community benefit fund used locally?

*Community Benefit and SPA Investment Fund figures are based on 72 turbines at 230 m to tip and a 40 year operational life – see LVIA boards for more details