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**Kintore Hydrogen Plant  
Pre-Application Consultation Report**

Prepared for Kintore Hydrogen Ltd

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# 1. Background.

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report was prepared by Cavendish Consulting to explain, in detail, the consultation activity undertaken by Kintore Hydrogen Limited ('the Applicant') in relation to the Kintore Hydrogen Project ('the Proposed Development') which includes the provision of 3GW of electrolysis, to be built in phases, in order to produce green hydrogen from abundant Scottish wind power at land to the west of Kintore 400kV Substation, Aberdeenshire.
- 1.1.2 The description of the Proposed Development is as follows: Hydrogen production facility with electrical connection to substation, connection to gas transmission network, water abstraction and return infrastructure, pipelines, access, landscaping, habitat creation, and all associated works and infrastructure.
- 1.1.3 A full description of the development is available within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).
- 1.1.4 A copy of the site boundary can be found in Appendix 9.
- 1.1.5 The Proposed Development is considered "major" development in context of the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009.
- 1.1.6 This PAC Report details the comments and feedback received from the public exhibitions and local community meetings, as well as those received through a wider community engagement programme. In addition, the PAC Report also illustrates how the Applicant has responded to comments from members of the public and community groups, and, where relevant, feedback has helped shape and inform the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.7 Prior to the submission of the statutory Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN), the Applicant believed it was important to consult and engage with key stakeholders in advance to ensure that meaningful, robust and open consultation took place with the local community. A copy of the consultation undertaken prior to the submission of the PoAN is provided within the attached Addendum Report.
- 1.1.8 This feedback helped inform the statutory consultation undertaken by the Applicant.
- 1.1.9 The PoAN was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council on 20 March 2024. The submission of the accompanying application for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) therefore accords with necessary statutory periods, being made to the planning authority no earlier than 12 weeks from when the PoAN was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council and no later than 18 months from that date.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-circular-3-2022-development-management-procedures/pages/3/>

# 2. Consultation overview.

## 2.1 Best practice

- 1.1.1 The Applicant is aware of the value of engaging with and seeking to involve the local people in development proposals, both prior to and following the submission of any application and through to the construction and operation should the Applicant's proposals obtain consent.
- 1.1.2 Planning Advice Note (PAN) 3/2010 – Community Engagement is an update of PAN 81 which advises that in order for the community engagement to be successful, it is important that everyone interested in the future development of the community, village, town, or city they live in, should understand the planning process. Developers are advised to involve residents at the earliest opportunity so that they can feel confident that engagement in the process has been meaningful.
- 1.1.3 PAN 3/2010 highlights that the term “consultation” is used to mean the:
- “Dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups based on a genuine exchange of views and, normally, with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action. The terms ‘engagement’ and ‘involvement’ are generally interchangeable and are taken to mean the establishment of effective relationships with individuals or groups. Participation is everything that enables people to influence the decisions and get involved in the actions that affect their lives. In the context of this document engagement is, in effect, giving people a genuine opportunity to have a say on a development plan or proposal which affects them; listening to what they say and reaching a decision in an open and transparent way to ensure they are taking account of all views expressed (page 3, paragraph 1).”
- 1.1.4 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023) also highlights the important role of effective engagement, stating:
- “Throughout the planning system, opportunities are available to engage in development planning and decisions about future development. Such engagement, undertaken in line with statutory requirements, should be early, collaborative, meaningful and proportionate. Support or concern expressed on matters material to planning must be given careful consideration in the determination of development proposals.”
- 1.1.5 The Applicant is committed to undertaking effective and early consultation methods in this way, including tailoring its strategies to suit individual communities. Residents' values and issues of importance vary, and the consultation programmes are designed to reflect that.

## 2.2 Timeline

- 2.2.1 The consultation period for the Proposed Development began in April 2024. The PoAN (Appendix 1) was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council on 20 March and was allocated the reference ENQ/2024/0415.
- 2.2.2 Ahead of the PoAN submission, the Applicant wrote to stakeholders in the form of an email on 18 March 2024 which included details about the development and the forthcoming Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN). A copy of the email can be found in Appendix 2.
- 2.2.3 The email was sent to:
- East Garioch Local Ward Members

- Chair of the Garioch Area Committee
- Kintore and District Community Councils
- Inverurie Community Councils
- Fintray Community Councils
- Kemnay Community Councils
- Echt and Skene Community Councils
- Gordon MP
- West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine MP
- Aberdeenshire West MSP
- Aberdeenshire East MSP
- North East Scotland MSPs

- 2.2.4 Dialogue has been maintained with local community councils up to the point of submission via written and verbal communication which will continue through determination of the planning application and, should this planning application be approved, into the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. To date, this communication has included information on upcoming consultation events, and general information on the application.
- 2.2.5 Two rounds of formal public consultations were held. A first consultation event took place on 24 April 2024 in the Kintore Bowling Club, where the proposals were shown, and feedback sought. The Applicant received useful feedback (see section 8) through this initial round of consultation, and subsequently held discussions with Kintore and District Community Council regarding the proposals.
- 2.2.6 Following this initial round of public consultation in April, a second event was held to provide the local community and stakeholders the opportunity to view and comment on the updated proposals in advance of the submission of an application to Aberdeenshire Council. This event took place on 19 June 2024 in the Kintore Bowling Club.
- 2.2.7 The timings and venues of the public exhibitions were designed to provide members of the public with the best opportunity to attend, view the proposals and importantly provide feedback.
- 2.2.8 All comments and feedback received from the consultation period, as well as those received through the additional community engagement programme, have been collated and analysed as part of this PAC Report (Section 8), which also illustrates how feedback has, where possible, helped shape and inform the Proposed Development.

# 3. First consultation.

## 3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 The first round of consultation for Kintore Hydrogen took place on 24 April 2024 in the Kintore Bowling Club between 2.00pm and 8.00pm.
- 3.1.2 The first phase of consultation for Kintore Hydrogen was announced on 18 March 2024 when stakeholders were notified of the upcoming public exhibition. The letter (Appendix 2) included details such as the consultation dates, the location of the Proposed Development and an outline of the hydrogen production process.
- 3.1.3 In addition to notifying political stakeholders, a letter (Appendix 3) was sent to 3,796 residences within the vicinity of the site (map available in Appendix 5). A separate letter (Appendix 4) was also sent to 199 businesses within the same area.
- 3.1.4 In addition, a public notice (Appendix 6) advertising the first exhibition was placed in the Ellon Times, Buchan Observer, Fraserburgh Herald and Press and Journal (Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire edition). A copy of this notice was also printed and put up as a poster in the local area, and posted on social media by the Kintore and District Community Council in order to ensure local residents were aware of the event. Posters were put up at local supermarkets, including Morrisons in Inverurie, the Co-Op and Sainsbury's in Kintore, and the Co-Op in Blackburn.
- 3.1.5 A number of enquiries were received once the Proposed Development became public. The Applicant responded by providing answers to questions over the phone and by email wherever possible, confirming details about the Proposed Development, explaining that public consultation events were being planned for April, and making people aware of the Applicant's newsletter mailing list which they could be added to if they wished to be kept up to date with the Proposed Development and notified once details of the April public consultation event had been confirmed..
- 3.1.6 A feedback form (Appendix 7) was available at the exhibition and online at <https://kintorehydrogen.co.uk/consultation> from the same date which included an opportunity to provide general feedback on the proposals as well as suggestions for community benefits. The opportunity to provide feedback remained open for three and a half weeks.
- 3.1.7 Ahead of the public exhibition opening at 2.00pm, there was a roundtable discussion held between the Applicant, Kintore and District Community Council, and Leylodge Against Industrialisation (LAI) at 12.00pm. This allowed for an in-depth discussion of the development, and a detailed run through of the consultation boards.

## 3.2 In-person exhibition event

- 3.2.1 In total, 185 people attended the first consultation event.

3.2.2 At the event, ten information banners were on display (Appendix 8). Paper copies of the boards were also on display to be taken home on request.

3.2.3 The subjects of the boards were as follows:



3.2.4 Viewpoints and visualisations (Appendix 9) were also available on large print outs around the room.

3.2.5 These showed:

- A CGI of the proposed development.
- The red line boundary of the development.
- The red line boundary of the development with labels for associated infrastructure.
- **Viewpoint 1:** a view from South Fornet looking north-westwards towards the development)
- **Viewpoint 2:** a view from the Lauchintilly Road south of Firley Moss looking north-eastwards towards the development.
- **Viewpoint 3:** a view from the B977 looking north-westwards towards the development.
- **Viewpoint 4:** a view from adjacent to the South Leylodge Steading Scheduled Monument looking northwards towards the development.
- **Viewpoint 5:** a view from the B977 (at the location of the proposed construction access) looking westwards towards the development.

3.2.6 The feedback period for the first phase of consultation initially closed on 17 May 2024, allowing four weeks for interested parties to provide their input. In response to a request from Kintore and District Community Council and LAI, the Applicant agreed to extend the deadline to 24 May 2024. In total, 56 feedback forms were submitted through the event, online, or via post.



IMAGES FROM FIRST EXHIBITION, 24TH APRIL 2024



# 4. Second consultation.

## 4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 In June 2024 the Applicant returned to the Kintore Bowling Club to reconsult with the community and outline the changes, where possible, which had been incorporated into the design following the first round of consultation.
- 4.1.2 Stakeholders were again notified via email (Appendix 10) on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
- 4.1.3 As with the first round of consultation, a letter (Appendix 11) was sent to 3,796 residences within the same radius as in March (Appendix 5). 199 businesses were similarly notified via a letter (Appendix 12).
- 4.1.4 A public notice (Appendix 13) was placed in the Ellon Times, Buchan Observer, Fraserburgh Herald and Press and Journal (Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire edition) to ensure that as many people as possible within the local area were aware of the upcoming event. As with the first exhibition, a copy of this notice (Appendix 13) was printed and put up as a poster in the local area, and posted on social media by the Kintore and District Community Council. Posters were put up at local supermarkets, including Morrisons in Inverurie, the Co-Op and Sainsbury's in Kintore, and the Co-Op in Blackburn.
- 4.1.5 Enquiries continued to be received between the first and second consultation periods, and the Applicant responded by providing answers over the phone and by email to questions wherever possible, confirming details about the Proposed Development, explaining that a second public consultation event was being planned for June, and making people aware of the Applicant's newsletter mailing list which they could be added to if they wished to be kept up to date with plans for the Proposed Development.
- 4.1.6 The second public consultation event took place on 19 June 2024 at the Kintore Bowling Club between 2.00pm and 8.00pm.
- 4.1.7 A feedback form (Appendix 14) was available to be filled out at the event or taken home to fill out at a later date. The feedback form was also available online at <https://kintorehydrogen.co.uk/consultation> from 19 June. Respondents were given four and a half weeks to provide feedback.
- 4.1.8 As with the first round of consultation, ahead of the public exhibition opening at 2.00pm, there was a roundtable discussion held between the Applicant, Kintore and District Community Council, and members of LAI at 12.00pm. Also in attendance were Douglas Lumsden MSP, and, at that time, Westminster parliamentary candidate Harriet Cross. This allowed for an in-depth discussion of the development, and a detailed run through of the consultation boards.

## 4.2 In-person exhibition events

- 4.2.1 The second consultation event was attended by 85 people over the session. Members of the project team were on hand to answer questions and discuss the proposals with members of the public.
- 4.2.2 Exhibition boards were on display, with six new boards (Appendix 15) combined with five boards from the previous consultation.

4.2.3 The subjects of the boards were as follows (new boards in blue):

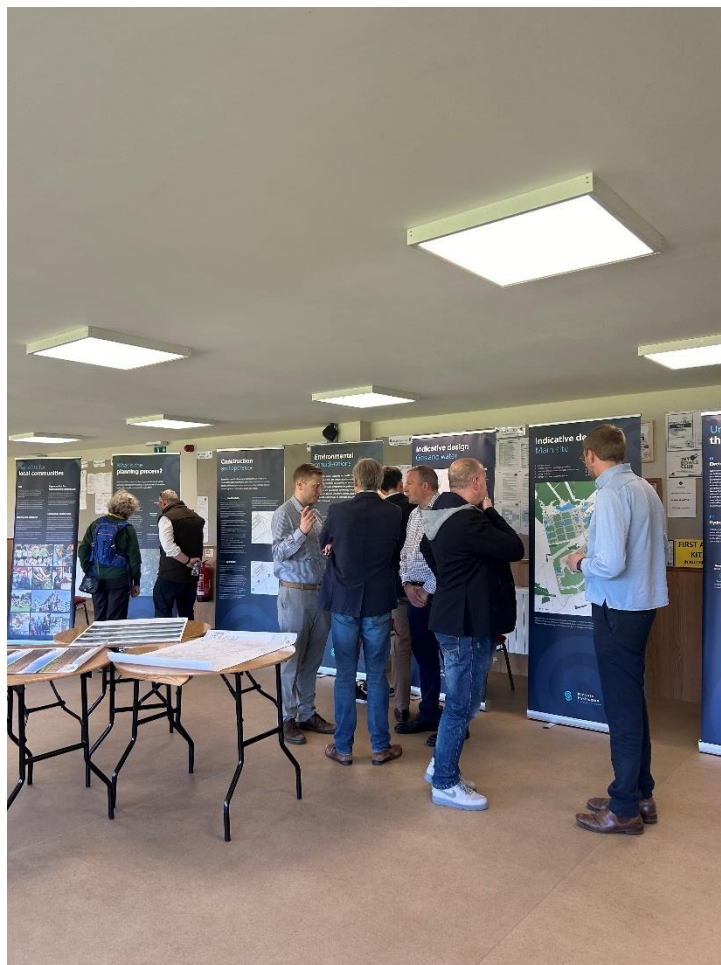


4.2.4 Print outs of various viewpoints and visualisations (Appendix 16) were also available around the room.

4.2.5 These visualisations showed:

- The red line boundary including access points
- The red line boundary
- **Viewpoint 1:** a view from South Fornet looking north-westwards towards the development)
- **Viewpoint 2:** a view from the Lauchintilly Road south of Firley Moss looking north-eastwards towards the development.
- **Viewpoint 3:** a view from the B977 looking north-westwards towards the development.
- **Viewpoint 4:** a view from adjacent to the South Leylodge Steading Scheduled Monument looking northwards towards the development.
- **Viewpoint 5:** a view from the B977 (at the location of the proposed construction access) looking westwards towards the development.
- An additional viewpoint was also provided to a local resident who at the first consultation event had requested a viewpoint from their own property.

4.2.6 In total 12 feedback forms were received over the course of the consultation period when the period of feedback ended on 19 July 2024.



IMAGES FROM SECOND PUBLIC EXHIBITION, 19TH JUNE 2024

# 5. Additional engagement.

## 5.1 Meetings

- 5.1.1. As part of the Applicant's ongoing engagement with the local community regarding the Proposed Development, several meetings took place as part of the pre-application consultation.
- 5.1.2. The Applicant met with representatives from Fintray Community Council on 31 May 2024 to discuss the development in further detail and answer any questions.
- 5.1.3. As detailed earlier in this report, LAI and the Kintore and District Community Council attended both the first (24 April 2024) and second (19 June 2024) consultation events two hours prior to the beginning to engage in a round table discussion with the Applicant, and discuss the consultation materials. Also in attendance on 19 June were Douglas Lumsden MSP and Then-Parliamentary candidate Harriet Cross.
- 5.1.4. The Applicant, alongside other developers active in the local area, attended a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024 with members of LAI and the wider community. This meeting provided a platform for developers to present their respective projects, including any recent updates or changes. Following these presentations, the meeting was opened to the public for a question and answer session, allowing for an open dialogue between developers and residents. The Applicant actively participated in this session, addressing concerns and queries from the community, demonstrating a commitment to transparency and ongoing engagement with local stakeholder. Furthermore, the Applicant is keen to continue engagement with LAI, the community, and other developers as the project progresses through the planning process and beyond.

## 5.2 Contact details

- 5.2.1 To ensure that as many interested parties as possible were able to access information regarding the proposals and speak to a member of the project team, a dedicated website, email address and phone number were established. Details of these point of contacts are listed below.
- 5.2.2 Website: <https://kintorehydrogen.co.uk/>
- 5.2.3 Phone number: 0141 265 2831
- 5.2.4 Email address: [info@kintorehydrogen.co.uk](mailto:info@kintorehydrogen.co.uk)
- 5.2.5 The website contains information about the Applicant, as well as the Proposed Development and how it would work. The relevant consultation materials were uploaded to the project website in tandem with the first and second phase of the consultation.



**PROJECT WEBSITE, SEE APPENDIX 17**

# 6. Feedback and responses.

## 6.1 Feedback from consultation

- 6.1.1 The consultation introduced the Proposed Development to the local community and provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to provide feedback.
- 6.1.2 A feedback form was made available at the events, online and by request, with the option for interested parties to send feedback via multiple channels.
- 6.1.3 The Applicant's contact details (email, print and phone) were also prominent throughout.

## 6.2 Response to key consultation topics

- 6.2.1 The following section sets out the key topics raised during the pre-application consultation period and those raised in the various meetings and discussions the Applicant had with stakeholders.
- 6.2.2 Where appropriate, a response has been made to show how these issues have been addressed or indeed, highlight where adjustments have been made to the site layout as a direct result of the feedback received.
- 6.2.3 Written feedback was also provided to specific queries raised by the local objector group, Leylodge Against Industrialisation, in respect of each of the consultation events.

<i>Key issue</i>	<i>Applicant response</i>
<b>Danger – concerns about safety of plant including fire and explosion risk.</b>	<p>Safety of the plant is a central tenet of the ongoing Front-End Engineering and Design (FEED) process and will continue to be throughout.</p> <p>The operational plant is likely to be in the lower tier of the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regime. Kintore Hydrogen Ltd employees have significant COMAH site experience through previous roles (e.g. Rough gas storage; Grangemouth), which will be supplemented by further hires and internal procedures.</p> <p>For a lower tier site, the Health and Safety Executive and SEPA will require the preparation of a major accident prevention policy (MAPP), detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation and personnel</li> <li>• Identification and evaluation of major hazards</li> <li>• Operational control</li> <li>• Management of change</li> <li>• Planning for emergencies</li> <li>• Monitoring, audit and review</li> </ul> <p>While hydrogen production via electrolysis on this scale is pioneering, there are established practices for mitigating risks arising from hydrogen that will be incorporated into final design and operation of the plant.</p>

<b>Impact on flooding / water supply</b>	The project has an abstraction licence for water from the River Don. This River Don is not a drinking water river (i.e., Scottish Water do not currently abstract from it for the purpose of drinking water supplies). In terms of general resilience of the River Don, the project's abstraction licence contains a "hands off" condition, which sets a flow rate below which the project would need to curtail its abstraction. The "hands off" condition is designed to ensure that classification of the river (which SEPA have designated as "Good") is maintained. In terms of flood risk, the surface water drainage strategy and flood risk assessment submitted with the application set the parameters for how the detailed design will be carried out to ensure compliance with prevailing policy and guidance.
<b>Site access / impact on roads</b>	<p>We have moved the operational access approx. 300m to the east and will ask the Council to extend the 40mph limit (that currently ends at the B977 turn off) further west along the unclassified road at the southern perimeter of the main site area.</p> <p>There were requests for traffic calming measures (e.g. speed cameras) on the B977. The Council will only consider traffic calming measures in circumstances where the average speed limit exceeds the 40mph limit by "10% + 2mph" (i.e. 46mph). We have acquired survey data that shows average speeds between 38mph and 42.5mph. Unfortunately, the Council's policies do not support additional calming measures here.</p> <p>Consequently, we are committed to achieving a shift in modal share so that the majority of workers would travel to and from the site using minibuses or buses. While some private cars would still be used, their presence would be minimized. This approach will be implemented through approved travel plans, and by limiting the number of on-site parking spaces as determined by the planning process. It is common practice to provide minibuses or similar vehicles for operational workers in such scenarios.</p> <p>The Applicant is open to the relocation or addition of the existing laybys on the Lauchintilly Road. This will be discussed with Aberdeenshire Council in order to ensure that the correct number of passing places are provided for the proposed traffic volumes.</p>
<b>Environmental concerns</b>	The development will primarily impact agricultural land, which typically has lower biodiversity value due to its monoculture nature. Land above linear buried infrastructure such as cables and pipelines will be restored to original use. Maintenance of existing wildlife areas and/or establishment of new ones would form a significant part of the planning redline area. Existing pockets of mature conifers and other sensitive habitats will be retained and will be extended by the provision of additional planting. In accordance with Aberdeenshire Council's requirements, we will demonstrate a "biodiversity net gain," ensuring that our project enhances local biodiversity. A BNG feasibility assessment and indicative calculation will be submitted with our application as part of the suite of documents associated with ecology and biodiversity.
<b>Site security</b>	The site will be manned by a privately operated security staff 24 hours per day, the precise details of which are not available at the stage of applying for permission in principle (they depend on detailed design and further engagement with consenting and other regulatory bodies). Currently Kintore Hydrogen is expected to be a Lower Tier COMAH site, for which the level of security referenced in certain consultation queries (e.g., MoD designation, policed security) is not automatically required. However, ensuring the integrity of the site would be an important element of the detailed design, so nothing is ruled out at this stage.
<b>Noise / smell</b>	There would be a number of potential noise sources associated with the constructed plant. Effects from these sources would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of not just the Council via the planning process but also the SEPA. The

	<p>precise mitigation for each noise source would be subject to detailed design but could include adapting noise sources and enclosing plant.</p> <p>No perceptible odours as a result of the operational project are anticipated.</p>
<b>Location</b>	<p>The current proposed site was selected after careful consideration of several alternatives, each initially offering closer proximity to essential infrastructure like substations, gas lines, and major roadways. However, these alternatives were ultimately deemed unsuitable due to significant constraints, including existing commercial activities, ancient woodlands, and insufficient available land for large-scale development. Despite some brownfield sites being reviewed, they were either fully occupied by ongoing operations or lacked the necessary space. Consequently, the current site was chosen as the most viable option for the project, balancing all essential development factors including proximity to infrastructure, land availability and size, environmental and regulatory constraints, access and transportation, feasibility and practicability as well as long-term viability.</p>
<b>Visual impact</b>	<p>The Applicant is committed to advanced planting (secured via planning conditions) in the southern half of the main site as part of the first phase (including native species such as Scots Pine as part of the mix) with the aim of the completed structures for later phases being substantially screened from view. Depending on the cooling system selected, water vapour may be visible during certain climatic conditions.</p> <p>Light spill was a common concern. As part of the Applicant's proposals, a Lighting Principles Statement will be submitted which includes measures to minimise light effects as much as possible while ensuring safe construction and operation. This outline strategy would be incorporated into each phase of the development through Matters Specified in Condition applications.</p>
<b>Impact on house prices</b>	<p>Applicant appreciates this is a sensitive topic for communities. There have been various studies on the impact of other technologies on house prices; the results of these appear to be mixed and there is no consensus that such schemes result in a significant impact on prices.</p>
<b>Size of the development</b>	<p>For the main site, the footprint of the operational plant (i.e., excluding soft landscaping, ecological enhancement etc.) is highly dependent on technology selection, substation equipment and other variables. However, for the full 3GW operation, a max case for land take could be in excess of 120 acres. The Applicant expect that they would not need that large an area but it is possible based on replicating today's available technology across all phases with fewer shared facilities. Staterra makes its own assessment on land take but for the benefit of the CLG, the ~120 acre figure is reinforced by independent sources<sup>2</sup>. It is therefore worth noting that sites that cannot accommodate something at least approaching this acreage would not work for the proposed project.</p>
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	<p>Minimizing on site risks, conducting further risk assessments and site management plans are part of an iterative process that continues through and beyond FEED. The level of detail requested by certain consultation queries is not required (and won't be available) for planning permission in principle stage. However, all phases</p>

<sup>2</sup> See as an example, this report commissioned by Scottish Enterprise, which at page 7 includes an indicative land take for 1000MW (i.e., 1GW) of green hydrogen production as 15 hectares, which would be 45 hectares or approx. 121 acres if extrapolated for a 3GW plant. <https://www.scottish-enterprise.com/media/rxrd0q2i/hydrogen-production-and-export-locations-site-requirements-study.pdf>



	of the site would be regulated via the environmental permitting, hazardous substances and (certainly for the full 3GW plant and potentially the first phase) COMAH regimes which is when the level of detail requested would be required by the competent authorities.
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# 7. Conclusion.

## 7.1 Concluding statement

- 7.1.1 The pre-application community consultation approach adopted by the Applicant meets the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements for major development.
- 7.1.2 From the outset, the Applicant sought to engage and consult fully with the local community and stakeholders regarding the Proposed Development.
- 7.1.3 The Applicant closely followed best practice regarding community engagement and public consultation. The Applicant was grateful for those who were able to attend the in-person public exhibition and take the time to view the proposals on the project website and engage with the development via email and telephone.
- 7.1.4 The Applicant was pleased to meet and present to local residents and will seek to continue to do so following the submission of the application.