5 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The Proposed Development would occupy east and north-east facing moorland approximately 7.5 km west of Fort Augustus, 7.3 km north of Invergarry and 3.3 km south of Dalchreichart in The Highland Council ('the Council') administrative area. **Figure 5.1** places the Proposed Development in its local context. The site comprises elevated, undulating moorland terrain which slopes east from a high point at Ceann a' Mhaim to the north-east of Millennium Wind Farm.

5.1.2 The Proposed Development is an extension to operational Millennium Wind Farm and comprises up to eight wind turbines and associated infrastructure. Further details in relation to the Site and Proposed Development are available in **Chapter 2: Proposed Development**.

5.1.3 Stephenson Halliday was commissioned in December 2023 to prepare a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) of the Proposed Development at Millennium East Wind Farm on behalf of the Applicant. This assessment forms part of a suite of documents supporting the application for this development proposal.

5.1.4 To inform the assessment, site visits were made to various locations within the study area including, but not restricted to, representative viewpoints by Stephenson Halliday's assessment team during 2023 and 2024.

5.1.5 This assessment defines the existing landscape and visual baseline environments; assesses their sensitivity to change; describes the key landscape and visual related aspects of the Proposed Development; describes the nature of the anticipated changes and assesses the effects arising during construction and once completed.

5.1.6 This chapter is supported by the following figures and visualisations:

- EIA Report **Volume 2a: Figures**:
  - **Figure 5.1**: Topography and Landcover.
  - **Figure 5.2**: Cumulative Location Plan.
  - **Figure 5.3**: Landscape Character with Cumulative Sites.
  - **Figure 5.4**: Zone of Theoretical Visibility - Bare Ground - Blade Tip Height.
  - **Figure 5.5**: Zone of Theoretical Visibility - Bare Ground - Hub Height.
  - **Figure 5.6**: Zone of Theoretical Visibility - Screening - Blade Tip Height.
  - **Figure 5.7**: Zone of Theoretical Visibility - Screening - Hub Height.
  - **Figure 5.8**: Landscape Designations and Tip Height Zone of Theoretical Visibility.
  - **Figure 5.9**: Visual Receptors and Tip Height Zone of Theoretical Visibility.
  - **Figure 5.10**: Visual Receptors and Tip Height Zone of Theoretical Visibility - with Screening.

- **Figure 5.11**: Designation and Existing Light Environment.
- **Figure 5.12**: Aviation Lighting Zone of Theoretical Visibility.
- **Figure 5.13**: Cumulative Zone of Theoretical Visibility - with Screening Operational Sites (Millennium, Beinneun, Beinneun Extension) and Millennium East.
- **Figure 5.14**: Cumulative Zone of Theoretical Visibility - with Screening, Bunloinn (Consented) and Millennium East.
- **Figure 5.15**: Cumulative Zone of Theoretical Visibility - with Screening, Tomchrasky (Consented) and Millennium East.
- **Figure 5.16**: Cumulative Zone of Theoretical Visibility - with Screening, Other Consented Sites and Millennium East.
- **Figure 5.17**: Cumulative Zone of Theoretical Visibility - with Screening, Culachy (in Planning) and Millennium East.
- **Figure 5.18**: Cumulative Zone of Theoretical Visibility - with Screening, Beinneun 2 (In Planning) and Millennium East.

- EIA Report **Volume 2b: NatureScot Visualisations**.
- EIA Report **Volume 2c: The Highland Council Visualisations**.

5.1.7 This chapter is also supported by the following technical appendices, presented in **Volume 3** of the EIA Report:

- **Technical Appendix 5.1**: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology and Criteria.
- **Technical Appendix 5.2**: Visuals Methodology.
- **Technical Appendix 5.3**: Landscape Sensitivity.
- **Technical Appendix 5.4**: Viewpoint Analysis.
- **Technical Appendix 5.5**: Assessment of Onshore Wind Energy Supplemental Guidance Criteria.
- **Technical Appendix 5.6**: Sequential Wirelines.

5.1.8 The supporting figures, visuals, and technical appendices provide further information and are referenced throughout the chapter. The revision A documents represent amends requested by the ECU, mainly to take into account the recently submitted Beinneun 2 proposal.

Statement of Competence

5.1.9 This chapter along with the design and mitigation of the Proposed Development has been prepared by Chartered Landscape Architects at Stephenson Halliday. The Practice has over 24 years of experience working on wind energy proposals for over 200 wind energy proposals throughout the UK. Key individuals working on this project have over 25 years of experience as landscape architects.

5.1.10 The Practice is a Landscape Institute and IEMA registered practice and all work is prepared and reviewed internally by senior highly experienced landscape planners with Public Inquiry experience.

5.2 Scope and Methodology

Methodology

5.2.1 The detail of the methodology is described in **Appendix 5.1**. A summary of the primary judgements is provided below.

Sensitivity

5.2.2 Sensitivity is judged taking into account the component judgments about the value and susceptibility of the receptor as illustrated by **Table** 5.1 and **Table** 5.2 below. Where sensitivity is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment is adopted. A slightly greater weight is given to susceptibility in judging sensitivity of visual receptors as indicated below:

Table 5.1: Landscape Sensitivity

LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS		Susceptibility		
		High	Medium	Low
Value	National	High	High/Medium	Medium
	Regional	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
	Community	Medium	Medium/Low	Low

Table 5.2: Visual Sensitivity

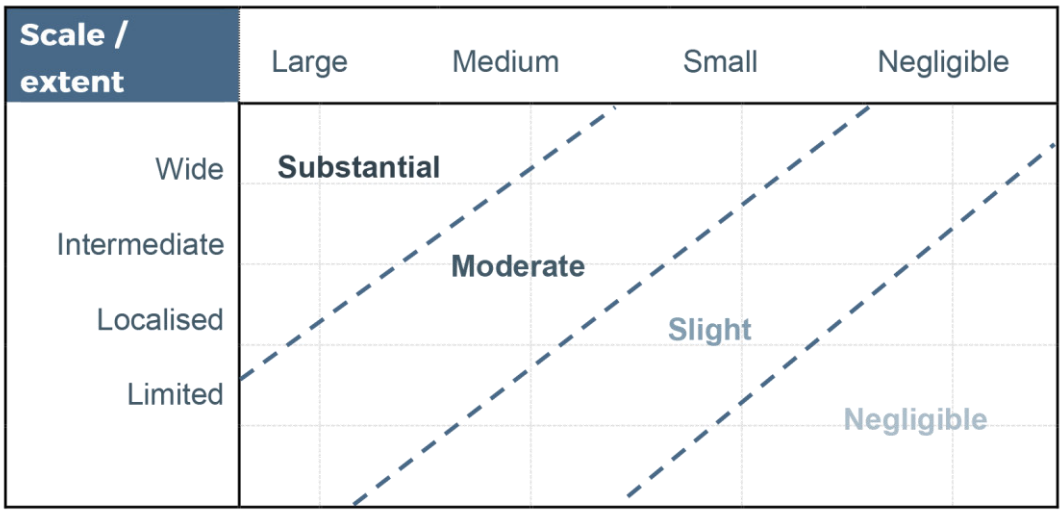
VISUAL RECEPTORS		Susceptibility		
		High	Medium	Low
Value	National	High	High/Medium	Medium
	Regional	High/Medium	High/Medium	Medium/Low
	Community	Medium	Medium/Low	Low

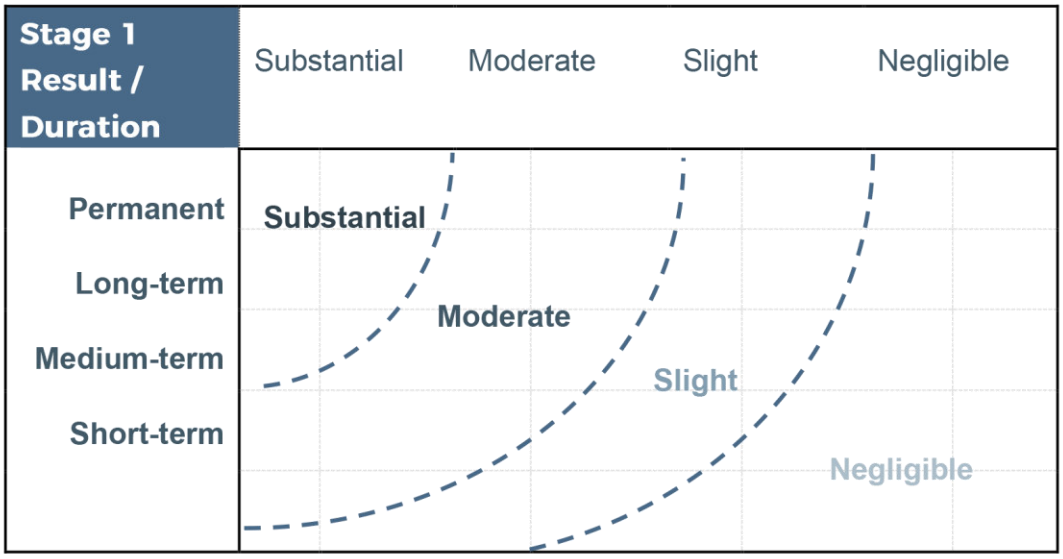
Magnitude

Scale of effect is the primary factor in determining magnitude; which may be higher if the effect is particularly widespread and/or long lasting, or lower if it is constrained in geographic extent and/or timescale. **Table** 5.3 illustrates how this judgement is considered as a two-step process.

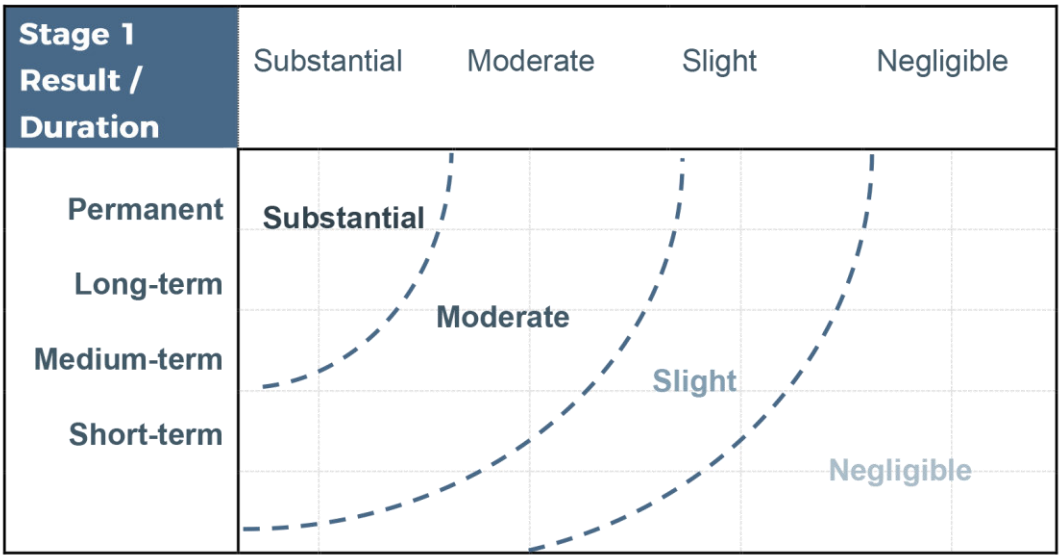
Table 5.3: Combining Scale of Change, Extent and Duration to Determine Magnitude of Landscape and Visual Effects

Stage 1 – Modifying Influence of Geographic Extent on Magnitude of Effect





Stage 2 – Modifying Influence of Duration on Magnitude of Effect



5.2.3 Where magnitude is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment is adopted.

Significance of Effects

5.2.4 The significance of any identified landscape or visual effect is assessed as major, moderate, minor or negligible. These categories are based on the consideration of sensitivity with the predicted magnitude of change. **Table** 5.4 is not used as a prescriptive tool and illustrates the typical outcomes, allowing for the exercise of professional judgement. In some instances, a particular parameter may be considered as having a determining effect on the analysis.

Table 5.4: Significance

		Magnitude of Change			
		Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
Receptor Sensitivity	**High**	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor/ Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible

5.2.5 Where the effect has been classified as Major or Major/Moderate this is equivalent to a significant effect as referred to in the EIA Regulations. Where 'Moderate' effects are predicted, professional judgement is applied to determine whether the effect is significant or not ensuring that the potential for significant effects to arise has been thoroughly considered

with justification. The conclusion that some effects are 'significant' is not intended to imply that they warrant refusal in any decision-making process.

Beneficial/Adverse

5.2.6 Landscape and visual effects can be beneficial or adverse and, in some instances, may be considered neutral. Neutral effects are those which overall are neither adverse nor positive but may incorporate a combination of both.

5.2.7 Taking a precautionary stance, changes to rural landscapes involving construction of man-made objects of a large scale are generally considered to be adverse.

5.2.8 With regard to the visual effects of wind farms, it is important to recognise the differing views revealed by extensive available research and to take into account that for the same development, some may view the impact as adverse, some as beneficial and yet others as neutral. This depends to some extent on the viewer's predisposition towards landscape change but also their opinions regarding climate change and the principle of renewable energy development including wind farms in the landscape. Taking a precautionary approach in making an assessment of the 'worst case scenario', the assessment considers that all effects on views which would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development to be adverse, unless specified otherwise in the text. It should be noted however that not all people would consider the effects to be adverse.

Cumulative Assessment

5.2.9 Cumulative assessment relates to the assessment of the effects of more than one development. The approach to cumulative assessment is set out within **Appendix 5.1**. The Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) is presented in full in **Section 5.14.** Cumulative sites are shown on **Figures 5.2** and **5.3** and on the visualisations in **Volumes 2b** and **2c**.

5.2.10 In addition to the adjacent operational arrays at Millennium, there are operational turbines at Beinneun Wind Farm and Beinneun Extension, located 3.2 km west of the Proposed Development. Further operational turbines are located at Bhlaraidh Wind Farm 11.5 km north-east, Stronelairg Wind Farm 18.7 km east, Corriegarth Wind Farm 26.3 km east, Dunmaglass Wind Farm 34 km east, Fairburn Wind Farm over 44 km north-north-east. There are some operational single turbines located between 35-40 km north-east east and south-east.

5.2.11 Consented wind farms in the study area comprise Tomchrasky 5.8 km north, Bunloinn Wind Farm 9.5 km west, Dell and Cloiche forming a cluster with Stronelairg 17.1 km east, Chrathaich 13.1 km north-east and Bhlaraidh Extension 14.7 km north-east, Corriegarth 2, 25.1 km east and Aberarder 36 km east.

5.2.12 Proposals currently in planning in the study area include Beinneun 2 2.1km to the south-west, Tomchrasky 5.8 km north, Culachy 10km south-east, Loch Laith 16.4 km north-east and Dell 2 at 18.8 km east of the Proposed Development.

5.2.13 Schemes in scoping are listed in **Table** 5.5. Schemes in scoping are subject to change before they progress into planning, and as such are not considered further in the assessment.

Table 5.5: Cumulative Developments within 45 km search area – 30 August 2025.

Development	Status	Distance/ Direction	Number of Turbines	Tip Height
Millenium	Operational	0 km SW	26	115 m (20) + 125 m (6)
Beinneun + Extension	Operational	3.2 km E	25 + 7	133.5 m (25) + 136.5 m (7)
Bhlaraidh	Operational	11.5 km NE	32	125 m (2) + 135 m (30)
Corrimony	Operational	15.9 km NE	5	100 m
Stronelairg	Operational	18.7 km E	66	125 m (13) + 132.5 m (53)
Corriegarth	Operational	27.2 km E	23	119.3 m
Dunmaglass	Operational	34 km E	33	119 m
Fairburn	Operational	44.6 km NE	20	100 m
Bunloinn	Consented	9.5 km W	10	200 m (4) + 230 m (6)
Chrathaich	Consented	13.1 km NE	14	149.9 m
Bhlaraidh Extension	Consented	14.7 km NE	22	180 m
Cloiche	Consented	17.1 km E	36	149.9 m
Dell	Consented	18.8 km E	14	130.5 m
Corriegarth 2	Consented	25.1 km E	16	149.9 m
Aberarder	Consented (under construction)	35.8 km E	12	129.35 m
Beinneun 2	Planning	2.1 km SW	19	200 m
Tomchrasky	Planning	5.8 km N	14	185 m
Culachy	Planning	10 km SE	8	200 m
Loch Laith	Planning	16.4 km NE	13	180 m (2) + 200 m (11)
Dell 2	Planning	18.8 km E	9	180 m (4) +200 m (5)
Highland	Planning	44.5 km E	19	200 m + 230 m
Beinn Bheag	Scoping	19.1 km SW	28	230 m
Cno Farasd	Scoping	25.6km NE	9	220 m
Carn na Saobhaid	Scoping	38.8 km E	29	200 m
Fairburn Extension	Scoping	39.6 km N	14	200 m

Night-time Assessment

5.2.14 The Proposed Development includes aviation lighting for which an assessment of potential night-time impacts is included in **Section 5.11**. There is a distinction between light pollution or nuisance and the effect of lighting on the character and amenity of the landscape at night. This is not a technical lighting assessment but focusses on the night-time effects as a result of the introduction of new artificial lighting within the landscape with consequent effects on visual amenity of the area and any designated landscapes.

5.2.15 For visual receptors, the value attached to night-time views is considered to be low unless there is a particular feature that can be best appreciated in the hours of darkness. The susceptibility of visual receptors also differs at night reflecting the different activities people undertake in the hours of darkness, such as stargazing. As a result, the receptors for night-time impacts may be different from those which experience day-time impacts.

Residential Amenity

5.2.16 As set out in LI Technical Guidance Note 02//19 'Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)':

"Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' …

It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."

5.2.17 A 2 km study area was agreed with consultees at Scoping. There are no residential properties in this study area and therefore a RVAA has not been included, as it is judged that the Proposed Development would not give rise to effects meeting the threshold described above.

Distances

5.2.18 Where distances are given in the assessment, these are approximate distances between the nearest part of the site and the nearest part of the receptor in question, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Visual Aids

5.2.19 Photographs of the existing views, along with wirelines and photomontages showing the Proposed Development, are included in **Volumes 2b and 2c** of the EIA Report. The method of visualisation selected has been informed by LI Technical Guidance Note 06/19 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' and NatureScot's 'Visual Representation of Wind Farms - Guidance' (Feb 2017). The methodology of production for the visualisations is described in **Appendix 5.2.**

5.3 Consultation Undertaken

5.3.1 Information regarding Scoping and consultation is included in **Chapter 3**. A formal Scoping Report was submitted in December 2023 and a Scoping Opinion issued by ECU in April 2024. A Major Project Pre-application consultation and presentation took place on 14th February 2024 with The Highland Council. The Pre-application advice report was received from the Council on 13th March 2024. Further information regarding Viewpoint selection was also submitted and comments from Scoping include that additional information. Key consultation responses are detailed in Error! Reference source not found..

Table 5.6: Consultations

Consultee	Issue	How this is addressed
Energy Consents Unit (ECU)	Noted that additional viewpoints were suggested by Mountaineering Scotland.	MC response noted below.
The Highland Council (THC) Scoping Response	**Study area**: to be 45km and a detailed assessment of the whole area. **Methodology**: to be clearly set out and criteria described and defined for each receptor. All recreational routes should be assessed. **Visualisations**: Require THC format single frame images for visual assessment with focal lengths of 50mm and 75mm. **Viewpoints:** Viewpoint selection agreed with additional suggested viewpoints: 1. On the A887 near the entrance to Millennium Wind Farm. 2. Beinne Loinne 3. The old military road north of the A87 4. Tomchrasky Assessment of proposal against criterion set out in the Council's Onshore Wind Energy Supplemental Guidance (OWESG). Include an assessment from the following SLAs:	The study area is 45 km and a proportionate assessment as advised by GLVIA3 has been undertaken. **Appendix 5.1** describes the LVIA methodology and criteria in detail and the main text describes judgements for each receptor assessed. **Section 5.11** describes an assessment of recreational routes. A full set of THC visuals is provided in **Volume 2c**. 1. Included in Viewpoint 3 as a photomontage 2. Included in Viewpoint 16 as a photomontage 3. Included in Viewpoint 12 as a photomontage 4. Included in Viewpoint 23 as a wireline only OWESG assessment is included in Technical **Appendix 5.5**.

Consultee	Issue	How this is addressed
	• Loch Ness and Duntelchaig. • Loch Lochy and Loch Oich. • Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel. • Strathconon, Morar and Mullardoch. Night-time viewpoints should be representative of commutes, communities and wild land. Residential visual amenity assessment for any houses and groups of houses within 2km of turbines.	SLAs are assessed in **Section 5.13**. Night-time viewpoints are located at the communities of Dalchreichart and Dundreggan (also on the A87) and on the A82 near Aberchalder. There are no residential properties within 2 km of the nearest proposed turbine and a residential visual amenity assessment is not required.
NatureScot	Proposed Development is not anticipated to result in effects that raise issues of national interest. **Glen Affric NSA and Cairngorms National Park:** agree that assessment of effects on Special Landscape Qualities unlikely to be necessary but support Applicant's approach to do an initial assessment. **Wild land:** detailed wild land assessments are not required. **Cumulative assessment:** refers to NatuerScot guidance. **Viewpoints:** content for viewpoints to be agreed with the Highland Council.	An initial assessment of Special Landscape Qualities of Glen Affric NSA is included in **Section 5.13**. Where qualities of wildness and remoteness are key characteristics of special qualities of Landscape Character Types (LCT) or SLA these have been included in the evaluation of sensitivity and assessment of impacts. NatureScot guidance has been used in the cumulative assessment. Viewpoints have been agreed with the Council.
Scoping Mountaineering Council	Endorsed viewpoints proposed and requested Ben Tee and Carn Ghlusaid.	Ben Tee is included as wireline Viewpoint 24 and Carn Ghlusaid as wireline Viewpoint 25.

5.4 Statutory and Planning context

National Planning Policy

5.4.1 Relevant national planning policy is set out in the Planning Statement.

Local Planning Policy

5.4.2 Current local planning policy is described in the following adopted and emerging policy documents:

- The Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) (adopted April 2012)

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) 2012

5.4.3 The HwLDP covers the whole of Highland Council area (excluding the area covered by the Cairngorms National Park) and contains development management policies. It is considered that the following key policies of the HwLDP are applicable to the Proposed Development:

- **Policy 67 Renewable Energy Development**, taking account of the considerations in the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (2016);
- **Policy 57 Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage**, taking account of the level of importance of heritage features (international, national or local/regional); and
- **Policy 61 Landscape**, taking account of particular landscape characteristics.

Local Guidance

5.4.4 In addition to the policy documents identified above, there are relevant local guidance and baseline documents as follows:

- The Highland Council (2011): Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas.
- The Highland Council (2015): Spatial Planning for Onshore Wind Energy in Highland.

Local policy and guidance considerations

5.4.5 The design response to the considerations set out in the policies and guidance identified above is reviewed in **Technical Appendix 5.5** of this assessment. Effects on landscape character and visual amenity (including nearby NSA and SLA) are considered in **Section 5.8** onwards of this report.

5.5 Existing Environment

Introduction

5.5.1 An overview of the baseline study is provided in this section with the full baseline description of the individual landscape and visual receptors being provided alongside the assessment in **Section 5.8** onwards for ease of reference.

5.5.2 This section provides a review of the key local baseline studies and guidance documents and identifies those landscape and visual receptors which merit detailed consideration in the assessment of effects, and those which are not taken forward for further assessment as effects *"have been judged unlikely to occur or so insignificant that it is not essential to consider them further"* (GLVIA3, para. 3.19).

5.5.3 Both this baseline section and the effects section describe landscape character and visual receptors before considering designated areas as it is common for designations to encompass both character and visual considerations within their special qualities or purposes of designation.

Local Guidance and Baseline Studies

5.5.4 The following guidance documents provide advice relevant to this assessment:

- THC Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) (2016)

5.5.5 This supplementary planning guidance supports policy within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan by setting out "how Highland Council will manage onshore wind energy development proposals in line with Section 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006".

5.5.6 The guidance includes a Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind Energy (updated in May 2020) which adopts a set of spatial criteria to determine areas with potential for wind farm development, areas of significant protection and areas where wind farms would not be acceptable. The site falls predominantly within an area of significant protection, but a few areas of potential for wind farm development on the site.

5.5.7 The OWESG identifies landscape character areas surrounding Loch Ness, The Black Isle, surrounding hills and the Moray Firth and for Caithness. The OWESG landscape character area boundaries coincide exactly with the NatureScot's 2019 Landscape Character Assessment. This LVIA refers to NatureScot's 2019 Landscape Character Assessment, with further supplementary detail on character and sensitivity from the OWESG.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility Study

5.5.8 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) studies have been undertaken for the layout of the Proposed Development. **Figures 5.4** and **5.5**, illustrate theoretical visibility based on a 'bare earth' model, separately for both tip and hub heights and illustrate the maximum potential visibility of the turbines. **Figures 5.6** and **5.7** show tip and hub height visibility and incorporate above ground screening features (including woodlands, forestry and buildings) and often provide a more realistic impression of the visibility likely to be experienced especially when woodland is semi-mature or mature. However, given the lifetime of the Proposed Development, it is anticipated that all the commercial forestry would be felled and replanted at some point during the operational phase, but not all at once. The screening ZTV calculation was carried out using a topographic model including buildings and trees (with heights assumed at 7.5 m for all buildings and 15 m for all woodland and forestry).

5.5.9 The ZTVs indicate there would be widespread visibility of the Proposed Development within 15 km with notable differences between the tip and hub height visibility. Visibility is shown at Fort Augustus and the south-western end of Loch Ness and on the eastern side of the Great Glen between Loch Knockie and Letterfinlay on the east side above Loch Lochy.

5.5.10 To the south-west of Fort Augustus visibility is shown along a short section of the floor of the glen and mainly on the west side and coinciding with the uninhabited uplands between Loch Garry and Ben Tee and between Loch Garry and the Site.

5.5.11 Visibility is shown to the north of the Site on the south side of Glen Moriston and along the floor of the Glen between Loch Cluanie in the west and Dundreggan power station and reservoir in the east. To the north of Glen Moriston visibility coincides with uninhabited upland areas.

5.5.12 There are notable areas within 15 km where the ZTVs indicate no visibility and these include: to the west between Loch Cluanie and Loch Garry; to the north at distances of 10 km and greater; to the north-east at Portclair Forest, most of Loch Ness and Loch Locy.

5.5.13 Between 15 km and 30 km theoretical visibility would be restricted to upland areas and would be patchy with large areas showing no visibility. The main areas of visibility would be on the north side of Glen Affric; the uplands east of Loch Ness; and the uplands between Loch Cuaich and Loch Arkaig. Smaller patches of visibility are show to the west of Loch Ness at Balmacann Forest; at Creag Meagaidh and west of Loch Cluanie on the Five Sisters of Kintail.

5.5.14 Beyond 30 km theoretical visibility is shown as very patchy and limited to a few upland areas including: hill tops to the north of Glen Strathfarrar and at Erchless; patches around Loch Ruthven in upper Strath Nairn; small patches at the western edge of the Monadhliath Mountains; patches at Ben Bevis, the Mamores and Loch Trieg; and patches to the south-west of Loch Arkaig and the eastern edge of Knoydart.

5.5.15 The hub height ZTV indicates areas of reduced visibility in Glen Moriston in the Dalchreichart area and to the west of Loch Cluanie. Reduced visibility is shown at Fort Augustus and between the village and Aberchalder to the south-west. Reduced visibility is shown at upland areas on the north and south sides of Loch Arkaig and from the Monadhliath Mountains to the east of the Great Glen.

Landscape Character

5.5.16 LCTs in the study area are shown on **Figure 5.3**. Landscape character for the study area is described in the 2019 NatureScot Landscape Character Assessment. The Proposed Development would be situated in LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness.

5.5.17 Along with the host LCT, effects on the following character types are also considered in **Section 5.10**, with baseline descriptions provided alongside the assessment of effects for ease of reference:

- LCT 221 Rolling Uplands – Inverness;
- LCT 225 Broad Steep Side Glen;

- LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness;
- LCT 236 Smooth Moorland Ridges
- LCT 237 Rocky Moorland - Lochaber;
- LCT 238 Rugged Massif – Lochaber; and
- LCT 239 Interlocking Sweeping Peaks – Lochaber.

5.5.18 Apart from the above character types, the combination of intervening distance, landform, limited visibility or influence of operational wind farms mean that effects would diminish rapidly with distance. As stated in Scoping, the impacts on other LCTs are predicted to be **Not Significant** on landscape character and not included in further detailed assessment.

Visual Receptors

5.5.19 Visual receptors are "*the different groups of people who may experience views of the development*" (GLVIA, 3rd edition, para 6.3). In order to identify those groups who may be significantly affected the ZTV study, baseline desk study and site visits have been used.

5.5.20 The different types of groups assessed within this report encompass local residents; people using key routes, roads, cycle ways, people within accessible or recreational landscapes; people using core paths; or people visiting key viewpoints. In dealing with areas of settlement, public rights of way and local roads, receptors are grouped into areas where effects might be expected to be broadly similar, or areas which share particular factors in common.

5.5.21 Representative viewpoints have been selected to aid the assessment of effects on visual receptors.

Baseline Visual Environment

5.5.22 As shown on **Figure 5.1** the Proposed Development would be located in uplands to the west of Fort Augustus adjacent to operational Millennium Wind Farm. Landcover is open heather moorland with lochans and small pools in the eastern part of the Site.

5.5.23 Landform across the Site comprises mainly of gradual east and north-east facing land near an area of small rounded summits. The elevation ranges from approximately 130 m above ordnance datum (AOD) at the proposed site entrance off the A887 in the north to 700 m in the western part of the Site at Mam a' Chroisg adjacent to operational Millennium Wind Farm.

5.5.24 Millennium Wind Farm operates on part of the Site and a track leads from the existing wind farm to the A887 where the proposed access is situated. There are no core paths at the application site.

5.5.25 Adjacent to the Site to the north and east there are large areas of forestry plantation. To the north the land slopes steeply down to Glen Moriston and east more gradually to a pass between the Site and adjacent upland area. To the south the land slopes down gradually to a plateau edge beyond which the terrain slopes steeply down to Glen Garry and a broad area of undulating moorland west of Loch Lochy. To the west the terrain is irregular with a series of small rounded summits, crags and ridges that extend 6.5 km to Loch Loyne. Millennium, Beinneun and Beinneun Extension Wind Farms are present in this area.

5.5.26 Settlements and transport routes are located mainly in Glen Moriston to the north of the Site and the Great Glen to the east. Glen Moriston is lightly settled. Dalchreichart is the main settlement comprising of dwellings situated on either side of a minor road on the north side of the river Moriston. Dundreggan, to the east of Dalchreichart, is an area of scattered dwellings mainly on the north side of the A887. West of Dalchreichart the glen is sparsely settled with occasional dwellings and farmsteads with a group of houses at Ceannacroc. East of Dundreggan the glen is sparsely settled with the main area of settlement at Invermoriston at the confluence with the Great Glen. The A887 passes through Glen Moriston connecting with the A87 at Bun Loyne.

5.5.27 The Great Glen contains the main settlement of Fort Augustus with groups of houses and individual dwellings and farmsteads scattered along the floor of the glen between Fort Augustus and Invergarry to the south-west. The pattern of scattered settlement continues south-west from Invergarry and north-east from Fort Augustus and on the east side of the glen which is less populated and contains less transport infrastructure. The A82 is the main transport corridor in the Great Glen with the A87 connecting the Greta Glen with Glen Moriston and Glen Cluanie via Invergarry. The Great Glen is also a key transport corridor for commercial and leisure craft using the Caledonian Canal and the series of freshwater lochs that connect the North Sea at Inverness with the Atlantic Ocean in the south-west at Banavie beyond the LVIA study area.

5.5.28 Core path (IN16.16) passes within 0.75 km of the Site to the north-east. **Figure 5.9** shows that core paths coincide mainly with the glens, at and around settlements and on the valley sides and in forestry plantation. The Great Glen Way is one of Scotland's Great Trails that follows the Caledonian Canal towpath and trails on the lower slopes of the Great Glen to the north-east of Fort Augustus.

5.5.29 There are operational wind farms at Millennium, Beinneun and Beinneun Extension adjacent to the Site to south and west. Other operational wind farms are at distances of more than 10 km and include Bhlaraidh, Corrimony, Stronelairg and Corriegarth.

5.5.30 The study area at night is mostly dark comprising of large expanses of upland and lightly settled glens. **Figure 5.11** indicates that existing sources of greater light intensity occur at and around Fort Augustus and at the other main settlements of Invergarry, Invermoriston, Foyers and Drumnadrochit. There are also other sources of greater light intensity mainly on the west side of the Great Glen alongside the A82 where there are groups of houses, tourist accommodation and jetties.

Visual Receptor Groups

5.5.31 The following visual receptor groups are located within the study area and are likely to have visibility of the Proposed Development, as shown on the ZTV study on **Figures 5.4-5.7**, and are considered further in **Section 5.11**:

- Dalchreichart (3 km, north);
- Torgyle and Dundreggan (5 km, north-east);
- Bridge of Oich and Cullochy (6 km, south);

- Aberchalder and Newton (6 km, south);
- Ceannacroc (6 km, north-west);
- Fort Augustus area (7 km, east);
- Borlum and Glendoe (8.2 km east); and
- Glen Garry (8 km, south-west).

5.5.32 There are also receptor groups which are excluded from the detailed assessment on the basis that visual effects are likely to be **Minor** or **Negligible** and **Not Significant**, for the reasons indicated below:

- Glen Affric (16 km, north). No visibility shown from most of the glen with distant views from summits to the north as shown by **Viewpoint 20: Toll Creagach**.
- Cluanie Forest (18 km, west). Limited visibility from low-lying areas and limited patchy visibility from summits with intervening distance and operational wind farms of Beinneun, Beinneun Extension and Millennium influencing views of the Proposed Development.
- Glenquoich Forest (20 km, west). No visibility from low-lying areas and limited patchy visibility from summits with intervening distance and operational wind farms of Beinneun, Beinneun Extension and Millennium influencing views of the Proposed Development.
- West Aberchalder area (25 km, north-east). Limited visibility of the Proposed Development due to intervening landform and distance as shown by **Viewpoint 21: Core Path West Aberchalder**.
- Creag Meagaidh area (25 km, south-east). Intervening distance and the influence of operational wind farms of Beinneun, Beinneun Extension and Millennium indicate that the Proposed Development would be a minor addition to views as shown by **Viewpoint 22: Creag Meagaidh**.
- Monadhliath Mountains (30 km, east). No visibility from low-lying areas, limited patchy visibility from summits and intervening distance mean the Proposed Development would be a minor feature in views having a limited influence in this area.
- Glen Strathfarrar (30 km, north). No visibility from low-lying areas, limited, patchy distant visibility from summits means the Proposed Development would be a minor feature in views having a limited influence in this area.
- Glen Dessary (30 km, west). Intervening distance and patchy visibility from summits only means the Proposed Development would be a minor feature in views having a limited influence in this area.
- Ben Nevis and Loch Trieg area (35 km, south). Intervening distance and the influence of operational wind farms of Beinneun, Beinneun Extension and Millennium indicate that the Proposed Development would be a minor addition to views.

Transport Routes

5.5.33 As shown on **Figure 5.9** the following key transport routes lie within the study area with some theoretical visibility:

- A82, (5.5 km);
- A87, (5.5 km);
- A887, (2.8 km); and
- B862, (7 km).

5.5.34 All unclassified roads are assessed as part of the relevant visual receptor group.

Recreational Receptors

5.5.35 As shown on **Figure 5.9** the following recreational receptors are within the study area:

- Core paths (also illustrated on **Figure 5.9 and 5.10**);
- National Cycle Route 78 (NCR 78) Oban to Inverness – (4 km south-east);
- The Great Glen Way - Fort William to Inverness - (4 km south-east);
- South Loch Ness Trail (6 km, east);
- Trail of the Seven Lochs (18 km north-east); and
- Water-based receptors using the Caledonian Canal and Loch Ness.

5.5.36 Walkers visiting notable summits in the study area such as Munros and Corbetts are assessed as part of the relevant receptor group.

Specific Viewpoints

5.5.37 Below is a list of the specific viewpoints with some theoretical visibility, as indicated on Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping, identified by the Highland Council or through survey work:

- Loch Ness and Fort Augustus Viewpoint (8 km east);
- Glen Garry Viewpoint (8 km, south-west);
- Loch Tarff Viewpoint (12 km, east);
- Carn an t-Suidh Viewpoint (14 km, east); and
- Loch Cluanie Viewpoint (9.5 km, west).

5.5.38 Effects on the following specific viewpoints are likely to be **Minor** or **Negligible** and **Not Significant** and are not considered further in the main assessment.

- Loch Ness Viewpoint (40 km, north-east) – this viewpoint is entirely outside the ZTV.
- Ben Nevis and Aonach Mor (34-40 km, south) – the two Aonach Mor viewpoints are outside the ZTV. The Ben Nevis summit viewpoint is approximately 40 km from the Proposed Development and the effects of intervening distance and adjacent operational wind farms indicate that effects would be negligible.

Designated and valued landscapes

5.5.39 The Site does not coincide with any nationally designated landscapes. The following NSA coinicide with the study area:

- Glen Affric NSA (12.5 km, NW);
- Kintail NSA (25 km, W);
- Glen Strathfarrar NSA (26 km, N);
- Knoydart NSA (30 km, W); and
- Ben Nevis and Glencoe NSA (30 km, S).

5.5.40 An initial assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Development on Glen Affric NSA is described in **Section 5.13**. The other four NSAs have been scoped out of further assessment for the following reasons:

- Kintail NSA. The ZTV studies shown on **Figures 5.4-5.7** show very limited areas of theoretical visibility at distances of 31 km or greater.
- Glen Strathfarrar NSA. **Figures 5.4-5.7** show negligible areas of theoretical visibility mainly at distances of 31.5 km or greater.
- Knoydart NSA. There is no visibility shown on the ZTV.
- Ben Nevis and Glencoe NSA. Visibility is shown in the north of the NSA at distances of 32 km or greater. Intervening distance and the presence of adjacent operational wind farm development mean the addition of the Proposed Development is unlikely to significantly affect the NSA.

5.5.41 The Cairngorms National Park is situated 25 km to the south-east. Due to very limited areas of visibility from the National Park as shown on **Figures 5.4-5.7,** an assessment of the Park has been scoped out.

5.5.42 The following Highland Council SLA occur within the study area and are assessed in detail:

- Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA (7 km, E);
- Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA (5 km, SE);
- Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA (10 km, W); and
- Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA (18 km, N).

5.5.43 The ZTVs shown on **Figures 5.4-5.7** show very limited visibility from Ben Alder, Laggan and Glen Banchor SLA (22 km, SE) and a detailed assessment of this SLA is scoped out.

5.5.44 The Proposed Development would be situated 7 km to the south-east of Wild Land Area (WLA) 24 Central Highlands. NatureScot agreed in their scoping response that a wild land assessment is not required as the Proposed Development is outside all WLAs. Qualities or wildness and remoteness are assessed where these are recognised key characteristics of LCT or designated landscape that coincide with WLA or important to the visual amenity of visual receptors groups and viewpoints that coincide with WLA.

5.6 Future Baseline

5.6.1 This LVIA focuses on the assessment of effects arising from the Proposed Development in relation to the current baseline that includes the operational wind farms listed in **Table** 5.5. The cumulative assessment considers the effects arising from the addition of the Proposed Development to different future baseline scenarios with consented but not yet constructed wind farms as well as wind farms in planning. These future baseline scenarios are described in detail in the cumulative assessment presented in **Section 5.14**.

5.7 Design Considerations

5.7.1 The Proposed Development would comprise an extension to the operational Millennium Wind Farm which comprises of turbines up to 125 m in height. The proposed turbines would be 180 m and 200 m in height with larger spacing between each turbine. The difference in height between the proposed and existing turbines has been a consideration in the positioning of the turbines in the Proposed Development. In addition, the following landscape and visual design principles have guided the design of the array:

- Set turbines back from the edge of the plateau area to reduce impacts on the Great Glen, Fort Augustus and views from the south.
- Position turbines to avoid overlapping with each other in sensitive views.
- Position turbines to avoid the perception of overextending development at the Site.
- Use a mix of tip heights to respond to underlying topographic variations and create a more even arrangement of turbines.
- A reduced lighting scheme has been agreed with consultees.
- Use of existing site infrastructure where possible to minimise the land take footprint and reduce the length of new tracks required.

5.7.2 These design principles have influenced design alongside other factors such as hydrology and hydrogeology, peat and ecology.

5.8 Potential Effects

Introduction

5.8.1 This section sets out the effects that the Proposed Development would have on landscape and visual receptors.

5.8.2 Effects during construction and operation of the Proposed Development are considered for each receptor. The effect of decommissioning would be equal to, or lesser than, the effects during construction. Therefore, they have been considered together.

5.8.3 Where effects on receptors are judged to be less than moderate, they are summarised in **Table** 5.15 and in the relevant sections below.

Effects on Site Fabric

5.8.4 Changes to landscape fabric occur where there would be physical changes to the landscape. In this instance, changes to landscape fabric would predominantly occur within the Site.

5.8.5 There would be a Long-Term loss of landscape elements, mainly moorland vegetation and alteration of topography, as a result of the introduction of the new sections of track, turbine foundations and hardstanding. The energy storage compounds would utilise existing infrastructure and the proposed substation would use the extended borrow pit location. All construction compounds would be restored after construction.

Construction and Decommissioning Effects

Landscape Effects

5.8.6 As shown in **Figure 2.2**, the Proposed Development would use the existing Millennium Wind Farm access track which would be accessed off the A887. The existing bell mouth at the junction with the A887 would be enlarged slightly (as shown in **Figure 10.6**) which would result in the loss of a few young birch trees. A temporary mobilisation compound would be located a short distance to the south-east of the junction on open ground. A second temporary construction compound would be located 1.5 km to the south-east at the base of an existing in-active borrow pit, and two additional temporary construction compounds would be placed on existing hardstandings within the Site between existing Millennium Wind Farm turbines. Their exact location is shown in **Figure 2.2**.

5.8.7 The existing Millennium Wind Farm borrow pit would be extended to provide aggregates for construction of the Proposed Development, and the substation would be located within the extended borrow pit following the completion of construction works associated with the new track and turbine hardstandings.

5.8.8 New sections of track would be constructed, including turning heads and crane pads at the location of each proposed turbine.

5.8.9 The construction of the Proposed Development, as well as the decommissioning stage at the end of life of the Proposed Development, would result in Short Term effects in the host LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness. The effects would mainly result from upgrades to the existing access track and site entrance, new sections of access track, erection of new wind turbines and the ground level construction activities such as, borrow pit extension, construction compound, construction of control building/substation and energy storage, as well as the activity and movement of large construction vehicles/cranes within the Site. These activities would contrast with some of the quieter qualities of landscape character.

5.8.10 The landscape character of the host LCT is considered to be of Medium sensitivity to construction activity. The effects of construction activity are considered to be Large in scale but only over a Limited extent of the host LCT in the Short term. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Moderate, which would give rise to **Moderate** effects which would be **Significant** for LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness.

5.8.11 Construction activity would be visible from other LCT although there would be no physical effects. Construction activity would affect views from adjacent LCT and the perception of landscape character of these LCT would change for a short duration. These effects would be Small in scale across a Localised extent of adjacent LCT in the Short term. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Slight, which would give rise to **Moderate/ Minor** effects which would be **Not Significant** for adjacent LCT.

Visual Effects

5.8.12 The construction activity across the Site would be perceived as an increase in activity compared to the baseline of limited wind farm maintenance and estate activity which occurs at the Site from time to time and forestry operations in the locality. This would include the access track construction, borrow pit extraction, turbine foundations, electrical infrastructure, control buildings/ substation and energy storage as well as vehicle movements on Site. These effects would be different in nature to those experienced once the Proposed Development was complete.

5.8.13 The erection/removal of the proposed wind turbines involving the use of large cranes would be another component of the construction/decommissioning stages. Compared to the ground level construction activities noted above, the visual influence of this activity would be experienced by a wider range of receptors, more similar to the operational phase. These construction/decommissioning effects would occur for the same visual receptors as reported in **Section 5.9** onwards for the operational phase and therefore have not been repeated here.

5.8.14 Residents of the communities at Dalchreichart and Dundreggan would experience some views of construction activity from slightly more elevated locations, although for the majority of people it is likely that only the use of cranes would be seen from Dalchreichart and Dundreggan and these would be more similar to the operational stage effects. These ground level effects would be Negligible in scale across an Intermediate extent of this High/ Medium sensitivity receptor group in the Short term. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Slight/ Negligible, which would give rise to **Minor/ Negligible** effects which would be **Not Significant**.

5.8.15 Those using core paths within 5 km of the Site would potentially experience views of construction activity including ground level activity and the erection of wind turbines using cranes. For these users of High/medium, views would be experienced from more open and elevated sections routes. These effects would be Medium in scale across an Localised extent of core paths within 5 km of the Site. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Moderate, which would give rise to **Major/ Moderate** effects which would be **Significant**.

5.8.16 For users of core paths, hillwalkers and visitors in the wider area beyond 5 km construction activity would be noticeable although it would be seen in the context of operational Millennium Wind Farm. Ground level activity would be visible and these effects would be Small in scale across an Localised extent of core paths and routes in the wider area beyond 5 km. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Slight, which would give rise to **Moderate/ Minor** effects which would be **Not Significant**.

5.8.17 For users of transport routes ground level construction activity is unlikely to be readily discernible. Accordingly, the magnitude of change for these receptors of High/ Medium and Medium sensitivity would be Negligible, which would give rise to **Negligible** effects which would be **Not Significant**.

Viewpoint Analysis

5.8.18 Viewpoint analysis has been undertaken from a total of 22 viewpoints. The final list of viewpoints was prepared following consultation during Scoping with the Council, NatureScot and other consultees.

5.8.19 The viewpoint locations are illustrated on **Volume 2a** Figures. The visualisations (comprising photographs of the existing view, wireframes and photomontages) are presented in **Volumes 2b and 2c**.

5.8.20 The full viewpoint analysis is contained in **Appendix 5.4**. The findings are summarised below in **Table** 5.7. In each case, distances are listed in relation to the nearest turbine.

5.8.21 **Appendix 5.4** considers only the nature of changes to character and views at each viewpoint location. The sensitivity of receptors and wider extent of the effect (beyond the individual viewpoint location) and its duration are considered in the main body of the assessment text below as part of the consideration of the magnitude and significance of effects. The assessment baseline includes the existing influence of wind energy but not the future consented baseline in the scale of change.

Table 5.7: Viewpoint Analysis Summary

VP	Description	Visual Receptor or Receptor Group	Distance from nearest turbine	Scale of visual change at VP	Scale of landscape change at VP
1	Core Path Allt Phocaichain	Core path IN16.16	3.5 km	Large/ Medium	Medium
2	Dalchreichart	Dalchreichart receptor group	3.6 km	Large/ Medium	Medium
3	A887 Layby near site entrance	A887	3.6 km	Negligible	Negligible
4	Core Path Loch Lundie	LO11.02	5.2 km	Medium	Small
5	Caledonian Canal/Great Glen Way	Great Glen Way, NCR 78, water-based receptors using the canal	5.3 km	Small	Small
6	A887 at Dundreggan	Dundreggan receptor group, A887	5.8 km	Large/ Medium	Medium
7	A82 near Newton, Aberchalder	Aberchalder receptor group, A82	6.1 km	Medium/ Small	Small
8	Core path Creag an Larlain	Fort Augustus receptor group, core path IN16.03	6.3 km	Small	Negligible

VP	Description	Visual Receptor or Receptor Group	Distance from nearest turbine	Scale of visual change at VP	Scale of landscape change at VP
9	A82 Fort Augustus	Fort Augustus receptor group, A82	7.3 km	Small	Negligible
10	Loch Oich Great Glen Way	Great Glen Way	7.4 km	Negligible	Negligible
11	Caledonian Canal Boat Lift	Fort Augustus receptor group, Great Glen Way	7.5 km	Small	Negligible
12	Old Military Road north of the A87	Ceannacroc receptor group	7.5 km	Medium/ Small	Small
13	Core Path Meall Ruigh Uisdein	Core path IN05.03	8 km	Medium/ Small	Small
14	South Loch Ness Trail	South Loch Ness Trail, Loch Ness and Fort Augustus Viewpoint, B862	9.5 km	Medium/ Small	Small
15	Meallan Odhar	Hillwalkers	10.7 km	Small	Small
16	Beinn Loinne	Hillwalkers	14.2 km	Small/ Negligible	Negligible
17	A887 Loch Cluanie	A887	12.9 km	Small	Negligible
18	Corrieyairack Pass	Hillwalkers	13.5 km	Small	Negligible
19	Meall Coire nan Saobhaidh	Hillwalkers	16.5 km	Negligible	Negligible
20	Toll Creagach	Hillwalkers	20.9 km	Small/ Negligible	Negligible
21	Core Path West Aberchalder	West Aberchalder receptors group, Core path IN25.02	27.4 km	Negligible	Negligible
22	Creag Meagaidh	Hillwalkers	23.8 km	Negligible	Negligible

5.8.22 Each of the viewpoints is a ‘sample’ of the potential effects, representing a wide range of receptors – including not only those actually at the viewpoint, but also those nearby, at a similar distance and/or direction. In consideration of the ZTVs and these viewpoints it can be seen that the distribution of effects would be as follows:

- The Large and Medium scales of change for visual receptors would be restricted to visual receptors to the north and east, within approximately an 6km radius of the Proposed Development.
- The Medium scale of change for landscape receptors would also be located to the north and east and contained within an approximate 6 km radius.

5.9 Effects on Landscape Character

5.9.1 Descriptions for each of the assessed character areas/types are briefly summarised below, along with further observations from site-based work.

5.9.2 Effects on the following landscape receptor groups are assessed to be less than Moderate and are summarised in Error! Reference source not found..

LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness (host LCT)

5.9.3 As shown on **Figure 5.3**, this LCT unit includes uplands between the Great Glen and Glen Moriston extending from Invermoriston in the east to Loch Cluanie in the west. The LCT unit extends north as far as the edge of Glen Affric. To the north of Glen Affric there is a second, smaller LCT unit. This section describes an assessment of effects on the host LCT unit only as effects on the northern LCT unit are likely to be Moderate/ Minor or less due to intervening distance.

5.9.4 The baseline landscape character description by NatureScot describes landform of the LCT as being "…parallel ranges of massive mountains divided by glaciated valleys. The mountains are enormous in size, ranging from 750 to 1,050 metres above sea level, and have an irregular landform, including crags, which is accentuated by rocky outcrops and glacial debris…" By comparison the area in which the Proposed Development is situated between Loch Loyne and Fort Augustus rises to am altitude of 788 m AOD and comprises of a series of rounded hills with craggier summits in the west.

5.9.5 Landcover comprises of montane habitats at the higher altitudes with heather and rough grassland on the lower slopes and small woodlands of birch and Scots pine in places. The main land use is sporting estates with "…*deer grazing for sporting purposes…"* with muirburn in places and associated access tracks. A key characteristic at the Site and to the west in the LCT unit is the presence of wind farm development. Millennium Wind Farm, Beinneun Wind Farm and Beinneun Extension Wind Farm collectively comprise of 58 wind turbines of between 115 m and 136.5 m tip height. All 58 of these operational wind turbines are situated in LCT 220, strongly influencing landscape character at the turbine locations and influencing the way the landscape is perceived from the surrounding area. Large areas of forestry plantation are present to the north and east of the Site in the LCT unit and this also affects the way in which the landscape is perceived.

5.9.6 The sensitivity of the host landscape is considered to be Medium, as noted in **Appendix 5.3**. This assessment judged the susceptibility of the host landscape type to be Medium and the value to be Regional as there are several SLAs across this LCT.

5.9.7 **Figures 5.4-5.7** illustrate the extent of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development including the screening effect of forestry which would reduce this extent of influence notably. **Figure 5.13** illustrates the extent of additional areas of visibility arising from the Proposed Development in addition to the adjacent operational wind farms of Millennium, Beinneun and Beinneun Extension. **Figure 5.13** indicates there would be limited areas of additional visibility where the Proposed Development alone would be seen, and that the proposed turbines would be seen mainly in areas from which turbines of the three operational wind farms are

already visible. **Viewpoints 1, 12, 15** and **17** are located in the host unit of this LCT. The nature of the change at these viewpoints is described in detail in **Appendix 5.4**.

5.9.8 Error! Reference source not found. outlines the local characterising effect the Proposed Development would have on the key characteristics of LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness, as stated in the NatureScot LCA 2019.

Table 5.8: Effect on Key Characteristics of LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness

Key Characteristic	Effects of the Proposed Development
Parallel ranges of massive mountains of irregular landform divided by deep glaciated valleys.	The Proposed Development would be situated in a range of lower hills slightly increasing the number of turbines in that locality.
Mainly broad, sometimes rounded rugged summits connected by long ridges and relatively few individual mountain peaks, particularly in the east.	The Proposed Development would be situated to the east of a series of rounded craggy summits up to 788 m AOD slightly increasing the number of turbines in that locality.
Steep terrain with many mountain-side burns and occasional lochans in corries and depressions.	T1 and T2 would be situated near steeper ground where small lochans are present adjacent to operational turbines of Millennium Wind Farm.
Landcover of rock outcrops, glacial debris, deer-grazed heather and rough grassland create a smooth surface with mottled texture, with alpine habitats on high land to the west.	The Proposed Development would change some landcover features across the site, but the alpine habitats on high land to the west would be avoided.
Almost uniform texture and cover from lower to upper levels in the east makes the size of the hills difficult to perceive.	Turbines of the Proposed Development would be larger than operational Millennium affecting the perception of the scale of the hills, but this would occur in a part of the LCT already affected by wind energy development..
Tracts of Caledonian pinewoods and occasional small patches of open birch woodland add colour, texture and seasonal diversity.	No effect.
Largely uninhabited, few signs of human activity or human artefacts in the interior, and sparse archaeological evidence.	The Proposed Development would slightly increase the influence of human development on landscape character but would occur in a part which is already affected by wind energy development.
Hill ranges combine to create a fairly even undulating skyline and a sense of enclosure when viewed from straths.	The Proposed Development would introduce turbines into a different part of the skyline when viewed from straths. This would affect the appearance of the skyline but would not affect the sense of enclosure.
Views from the hill tops at the edges of the massif offer expansive views of the adjacent straths and surrounding landscape character types.	The ability to gain views from hill tops at the edges to adjacent straths and landscape types would be unaffected but the

Key Characteristic	Effects of the Proposed Development
	composition of those views would contain more turbines.
A sense of remoteness and wildness which is particularly strong within the interior.	Operational wind farm development, forestry plantation and an overhead transmission line on pylons in the eastern part of the LCT near the site, affects qualities of remoteness and wildness. The Proposed Development would slightly increase the influence of development on these qualities.

5.9.9 The Proposed Development would introduce more wind turbines into the host unit of LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness. The Proposed Development would introduce short sections of new track and crane pads adjacent to the operational wind farm and substation compound would be situated in the proposed borrow pit extension.

5.9.10 The proposed turbines would be larger in size than the operational Millennium turbines. The difference in size would be noticeable, mainly in short range views, and the turbines would be larger scale features than are present in the baseline. **Viewpoint 1: Core Path Allt Phocaichain** shows that the proposed turbines would be seen in combination with those of Millennium increasing the influence of development in a part of the LCT that is already modified by forestry and wind farm development. **Viewpoints 12, 15** and **17** are also located in this LCT unit to the west and north-west. These viewpoints indicate that the Proposed Development would be seen in combination with operational turbines and associated with the same landform and range of hills as existing development.

5.9.11 The most notable impact of the Proposed Development on LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness would be on the appearance of the skyline of the eastern range of hills at the Site when viewed from adjacent straths or from low-lying nearby areas of the LCT. The Proposed Development would also slightly increase the number of turbines in the LCT resulting in changes to the pattern of development in the locality. The proposed turbines would be larger in size and spacing to those of operational Millennium and it would occupy mainly lower, more gradual sloping land compared to the existing array.

5.9.12 Where these changes to the key characteristics could be perceived, they would result in a Large scale of change. However, these would only be important from a relatively Localised area in the south-eastern part of the LCT within approximately 2-4 km of the Proposed Development in the open moorland to the north, east and south. This Long-Term change would result in a Substantial/Moderate magnitude of change on this unit of LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness. For this landscape of Medium sensitivity, this would result in a **Major/Moderate** impact on landscape character, which would be considered **Significant**.

5.9.13 The scale of change would decrease in western and northern parts of this LCT unit in the Loch Cluanie area and to the north of the Loch and north of Glen Moriston. **Viewpoint 12** is on the old military road north of the A87, 7.5 km from the Proposed Development. It illustrates that the proposed turbines would be partly screened by an intervening ridge and the large scale of landform in the adjacent parts of the LCT closer to the viewpoint would be the more dominant influence. The proposed turbines would be of lesser influence to this part of the LCT. **Viewpoint 17** illustrates a similar view where the proposed turbines are seen above an

intervening ridge with adjacent landform being the main influence with a high degree of enclosure to the view.

5.9.14 **Viewpoint 15**: **Meallan Odhar** illustrates that the Proposed Development would be seen alongside operational Millennium turbines occupying mainly the lower part of a ridge extending from a range of rounded hills with forested lower slopes. The turbines would be seen partly against the backdrop of landform and against the sky on more elevated parts of the ridge. There would be a discernible increase in wind turbines in the landscape and the difference in size of turbines would be noticeable.

5.9.15 **Viewpoints 12, 15** and **17** indicate that where changes to key characteristics would be perceived, they would result in a Small scale of change across an Intermediate part of this LCT unit. This Long-Term change would result in a Moderate magnitude of change on this unit of LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness. For this landscape of Medium sensitivity, this would result in a **Moderate** impact on landscape character, which would be **Not Significant**.

LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen

5.9.16 As shown on **Figure 5.3**, this LCT unit comprises of Loch Ness, the lower glen sides and areas of floodplain and low undulating hills in the south-west and north-east. The LCT unit extends from Aberchalder in the south-west to the outskirts of Inverness in the north-east.

5.9.17 The baseline landscape character description by NatureScot describes the LCT as the district's largest individual landscape feature combining the Great Glen and Loch Ness. The long, linear, steep sided glen follows an ancient fault line dividing the Grampian and Highland mountain ranges.

5.9.18 Landcover is mainly deciduous woodland and forest plantation with agriculture restricted to a few flatter areas. The main settlement is Fort Augustus in the south-west of the LCT and several other smaller settlements are found where terrain is more level at Invermoriston and Drumnadrochit where side glens intersect with the LCT. The main transport route of the A82 is on western side of the LCT and there is more activity on that side of the glen. Tourism facilities and recreational activities occur throughout the LCT, with Fort Augustus being a key destination. The route of the Great Glen Way walking trail passes through the LCT and there is a published guide to walks on the south side of Loch Ness that coincide with the LCT. The route of NCR 78 also passes through the LCT on the western side of the glen. Loch Ness and the Caledonian Canal are used for recreational boating, water sports and by commercial traffic.

5.9.19 The sensitivity of LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen is considered to be High/ Medium, as noted in **Appendix 5.3**. This assessment judged the susceptibility of the LCT to be Medium and the value to be National due to the strong cultural association of Loch Ness and the Great Glen as well as the Highland Council SLA Loch Ness and Duntelchaig which also coincides with the LCT.

5.9.20 **Figures 5.4-5.7**, illustrate the extent of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development including the screening effect of forestry which would reduce this extent of visibility notably to the south-west of Fort Augustus in the LCT. The ZTVs indicate a small area of visibility in the south-west of the LCT that coincides with part of the loch surface between Fort Augustus

and Horeshoe Craig and on land at Fort Augustus and the alluvial flood plain to the south-west. **Viewpoints 5, 7, 8, 9, 11** and **14** are located in this LCT. The nature of the change at these viewpoints is described in detail in **Appendix 5.4**.

5.9.21 **Table** 5.9Error! Reference source not found. outlines the local characterising effect the Proposed Development would have on the key characteristics of LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen, as stated in the NatureScot LCA 2019.

Table 5.9: Effects on Key Characteristics of LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen

Key Characteristic	Effects of the Proposed Development
A clearly defined, broad, linear, steep sided, v-shaped glen and deep loch cutting through mountains and hills, with limited areas of flatter ground.	Proposed turbines would be visible from the LCT but would not adversely affect the definition, shape or scale of the glen.
Large-scale conifer forests with small areas of open moorland covering most of the glen sides, particularly the lower slopes.	No effect.
Small patches of broad leaved woodlands, mostly in side glens and close to the shore.	No effect.
Agricultural land on less steep slopes, glen intersections and alluvial plains.	No effect.
A few settlements, with a well-defined core, located at glen intersections and on gentler slopes, separated by long stretches of relatively uninhabited land.	Where visible, the Proposed Development would slightly increase the perception of development in views out from the glen.
Contrast between the busy trunk road and larger settlements on the west side and the quiet minor road on east side which has fewer settlements separated by large undeveloped areas.	The Proposed Development would increase the number of wind turbines visible beyond the western side of the glen but would not affect the contrast between the east and west side.
Strong evidence of past settlement in the number and diversity of archaeological and historic sites from prehistoric times to the 20th Century.	No effect.
Contrast between the visual and seasonal diversity of broadleaf woodland and bright, open pockets of farmland and the forested and moorland surroundings.	No effect.
Contrast between the smaller scale landscapes of settled, lower slopes and the large scale moorland and forested backdrop.	The Proposed Development would introduce new large scale features into the large scale moorland and forested backdrop, but would not appear to be located within the smaller scale settled landscapes. Therefore, there would be no change in the perception of this contrast.
A simple linear and enclosed visual composition of bands of land, water and sky, with long skylines of even height, and the glen and loch as unifying features.	The Proposed Development would be visible on the skyline in the south-western part of the LCT in combination with existing operational Millennium turbines. It would occupy a small part of the skyline and would have limited effect on the composition of views.
Visual focus directed along the linear route of the glen or across the water to the opposite shore and up to the skyline.	The Proposed Development would introduce more wind turbines into an area already characterised by wind energy and the

Key Characteristic	Effects of the Proposed Development
	proposed turbines would have limited influence on the focus of views in the LCT.

5.9.22 The Proposed Development would introduce more wind turbines into the adjacent LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness, but not in this LCT. The proposed turbines would be situated in an area of open moorland beyond the forested upper slopes of the glen and set back from the plateau edge. **Viewpoints 5, 9** and **11** indicate that, from low-lying areas on the floor of the glen, a small number of turbines would be seen with most of the Proposed Development screened by intervening landform and there would be little or no effect on key characteristics. From more elevated locations on the south-eastern valley sides a greater number of proposed turbines would be seen as shown on **Viewpoints 7** and **14**. The viewpoints indicate that the Proposed Development would be perceived as increasing the number of wind turbines visible from LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen. There would be some limited effects on the perceptual qualities and focus of views where turbines are already present therefore effects would be limited.

5.9.23 The proposed turbines would be larger in size than the operational Millennium Wind Farm turbines and this difference would be noticeable. **Viewpoint 14: South Loch Ness Trail** shows that the proposed turbines would be seen in combination with those of operational Millennium beyond the plateau edge, and not on the valley side within this LCT.

5.9.24 The most notable impact of the Proposed Development on LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen would be on the appearance of larger turbines on the skyline in the south-western part of the LCT. Turbines would become a slightly more noticeable feature in views up the glen and would not compete with the strong linear focus of views in the south-western part of the LCT. The visual composition of bands of land, water and sky would be affected to a limited degree by the addition of more turbines into part of the view in which turbines are already present. The overall strong linear focus along Loch Ness would not be affected.

5.9.25 Where these changes to the key characteristics could be perceived, they would result in a Small scale of change. However, these would only be perceived from a relatively Localised area in the south-western part of the LCT on the open water of Loch Ness, on the eastern valley sides and the valley floor and floodplain at Fort Augustus and to the south-west of the village. This Long Term change would result in a Slight magnitude of change on LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen. For this landscape of High/ Medium sensitivity, this would result in a **Moderate/ Minor** impact on landscape character, which would be considered **Not Significant**.

LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness

5.9.26 As shown on **Figure 5.3**, there are two units of this LCT within 25 km of the Proposed Development. The ZTV shown on **Figures 5.5-5.7** indicate very limited theoretical visibility from the northern Glen Affric unit. This LCT unit is therefore scoped out of further assessment as effects on landscape character are likely to be negligible. The southern Glen Moriston unit extends from Loch Cluanie in the west to Levishie near Invermoriston in the east.

5.9.27 The baseline landscape character description by NatureScot describes the LCT as comprising of "…long, east-west oriented glens with broad lower reaches and narrower upper glens. The lower glens have steep upper slopes, undulating lower slopes and a narrow floor

mostly occupied by river terraces. The upper glens extend further west into the higher mountainous areas of Rugged Massif, and become narrower and more rugged."

5.9.28 Water is a key characteristic in the lower glens with meandering rivers in the flat floor of the glen and tributaries on the valley sides. Reservoirs and lochs are present in the upper glens where there is rough pasture and semi-improved pasture. The flat land in the lower glens is more settled than the upper glens and used for agriculture although the LCT unit is sparsely settled with Dalchreichart being the main village. Deciduous woodland is present on the valley floor associated with rivers and tributaries. There are large areas of forestry plantation on the valley sides. The A887 passes through the Glen Moriston LCT unit connecting with the A87 in the western part of the LCT unit to the east of Loch Cluanie and an overhead transmission line on pylons passes across the glen to the east of Dalchreichart.

5.9.29 The sensitivity of LCT 226 Wooded Glen - Inverness is considered to be Medium, as noted in **Appendix 5.3**. This assessment judged the susceptibility of the LCT to be Medium and the value to be Regional/Community due to the valued landscape features within this LCT unit.

5.9.30 **Figures 5.4-5.7**, illustrate the extent of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development including the screening effect of forestry which would reduce this extent of visibility notably on the forested southern side of the glen and on the valley floor between Loch Cluanie and Dundreggan reservoir. **Viewpoints 2, 3** and **6** are located in this LCT. The nature of the change at these viewpoints is described in detail in **Appendix 5.4**.

5.9.31 **Table** 5.10 outlines the local characterising effect the Proposed Development would have on the key characteristics of LCT 226 Wooded Glen - Inverness, as stated in the NatureScot LCA 2019.

Table 5.10: Effects on Key Characteristics of LCT 226 Wooded Glen - Inverness

Key Characteristic	Effects of the Proposed Development
Long glens set within uplands and mountains, divided into upper and lower glens by a cross-cutting narrow farmed strath.	No effect.
Lower glens broader, with steep upper slopes, undulating lower slopes and a narrow floor mostly occupied by river terraces; upper glens are narrower and more rugged, influenced by the surrounding mountains.	There would be limited intervisibility within upper Glen Moriston and no influence on key characteristics. The Proposed Development would be more visible within the broader, lower glens but the degree of influence would be limited.
Rivers, water bodies (lochs and sometimes reservoirs), river flats and areas of wetland in valley floors.	No effect.
Balance between open and enclosed space formed by the diverse mix of landscape patterns, land uses, conifer forests, woodlands and fields.	The Proposed Development would introduce larger wind turbines into the adjacent LCT 220 and would not affect the pattern of land use in LCT 226.
Distinctive mix of rugged hillsides, extensive Caledonian pine forest and lochs in the upper glens.	There would be limited visibility from upper Glen Moriston and the influence on key characteristics would be very limited.
Actively farmed and relatively settled lower glen floors, with small clusters of houses near roads, and farms and crofts in open areas at the base of slopes.	The Proposed Development would introduce turbines that would be visible beyond the valley and associated with the open moorland plateau and hills beyond. This would slightly increase the influence of human activity on the LCT.
Contrast between the settled and farmed floor of lower glens and their open heather moorland and forests of the upper slopes.	The Proposed Development would introduce new large scale features beyond the open heather moorland and forests of the upper slopes, but would not appear to be located within the smaller scale settled lower glen. Therefore there would be no change in the perception of this contrast.
Sparse settlement in upper glens, limited to a few farms and crofts, isolated lodges and clusters of estate buildings usually sheltered by trees or woodland.	Where visible the Proposed Development would have a limited influence on the upper glen in the Glen Moriston LCT unit.
Central, major through-road in lower glens, with minor roads along the glen sides which are integrated with the landform and settlement pattern.	The Proposed Development would be visible from the A887 which is the main road passing through this LCT unit.
Single track road along the base of the upper glens, terminating at the upper edge of the glen.	No effect.
Large number and range of archaeological remains in the lower glens.	No effect.

Key Characteristic	Effects of the Proposed Development
Strong sense of history in upper glens created by the Caledonian pinewood stands.	No effect.
Intimate, semi-enclosed landscape within the glen floor with limited visibility, due to the screening effect of trees and landform.	The degree of enclosure by trees and landform would limit intervisibility with the Proposed Development particularly in the eastern part of the LCT.
Distant views along the glens from open hill ground creating a feeling of openness and exposure.	The Proposed Development would be a noticeable new feature in views from the open hill ground on the north side of the glen. It would be seen in combination with operational Millennium Wind Farm. Whilst the proposed turbines would appear larger, they would have limited influence on the perception of openness and exposure of this LCT.
Increasing sense of naturalness and remoteness traversing the upper glens into mountainous interior.	There would be an increase in the number of turbines visible within the adjacent LCT 220 from the upper glens which would have an adverse influence the sense of naturalness and remoteness to a degree.

5.9.32 The Proposed Development would introduce more wind turbines into the adjacent LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness. The Proposed Development would be perceived as an extension, increasing the number of wind turbines visible from LCT 226 Wooded Glen - Inverness. The proposed turbines would be situated in an area of open moorland beyond the forested upper slopes of Glen Moriston. **Viewpoints 2** and **6** indicate that the proposed turbines would be seen on a mostly horizontal skyline in combination with the smaller operational Millennium turbines, which are located mainly on the more elevated ridges and summits.

5.9.33 The proposed turbines would be larger in size than the operational Millennium turbines. The difference in size would be noticeable and the turbines would be larger scale features than are present in the baseline. **Viewpoints 2** and **6** show that the proposed turbines would be perceived as an increase in the number of turbines visible from the glen and extending turbines across the skyline in a localised part of the LCT.

5.9.34 The most notable impact of the Proposed Development on LCT 226 Wooded Glen - Inverness would be on the appearance of larger turbines on the skyline in the western part of the LCT. Turbines would become a more noticeable feature in views increasing the influence of wind energy development in the moorland backdrop within this part of the Glen Moriston LCT unit. However, the contrast between the settled farmland in the floor of the glen and the forested and moorland upper slopes would not be altered. The proposed turbines would introduce new features that provide a scale comparison with features on the upper slopes of the glen although this would not change the perceived scale of the glen and the change from small, enclosed to large scale open spaces that characterise the valley floor and sides.

5.9.35 Where these changes to the key characteristics could be perceived, they would result in a Medium scale of change. However, these would only be perceived from an Intermediate area in the central part of the LCT in the Dalchreichart and Dundreggan areas. This Long Term change would result in a Moderate magnitude of change on LCT 226 Wooded Glen - Inverness. For this landscape of Medium sensitivity, this would result in a **Moderate** impact on landscape character, which would be considered **Significant** within 5-6 km of the Proposed Development. Beyond 5-6 km the scale of change would reduce to Medium/ Small across and Intermediate area. The magnitude of change would be Moderate and most and the impacts Moderate but **Not Significant**.

LCT 237 Rocky Moorland – Lochaber

5.9.36 As shown on **Figure 5.3**, there is one unit of this LCT within 25 km of the Proposed Development. The ZTV shown on **Figures 5.5-5.7** indicate very limited theoretical visibility mainly in the eastern part of the LCT unit and in the south-west. The LCT unit extends west from the south-western end of the Great Glen coinciding with the north side of Glen Garry and hills to the east of Glen Quoich and Glen Kingie.

5.9.37 The baseline landscape character description by NatureScot describes the LCT as comprising of "…shallow slopes and undulating plateaux of moorland with heather and deer grass cover interrupted by small rocky outcrops. It has a distinctive texture of rocky landform.

Coniferous forest provides the only significant contrast to this relatively uniform pattern of vegetation."

5.9.38 The NatureScot description indicates there are "…no obvious peaks or summits and the skyline appears as an undulating crinkled silhouette…Vertical elements tend to be particularly prominent in this moorland landscape, especially on open slopes."

5.9.39 The sensitivity of LCT 237 Rocky Moorland - Lochaber is considered to be Medium. Susceptibility is evaluated as Medium due to the large scale landform, openness and simple landcover in addition to the presence of hill tracks and overhead transmission line on pylons that crosses the eastern part of the LCT. Landscape value is evaluated as Regional/Community, as a small part of the Moidart, Morar and Glen Shield SLA coincides with the western part of the LCT.

5.9.40 **Figures 5.4-5.7**, illustrate the extent of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development including the screening effect of forestry which would reduce this extent of visibility notably in the east at the Great Glen and to the north and west of Loch Garry. **Viewpoint 4** is located in this LCT. The nature of the change at this viewpoint is described in detail in **Appendix 5.4.**

5.9.41 **Table** 5.11 outlines the local characterising effect the Proposed Development would have on the key characteristics of LCT 237 Rocky Moorland - Lochaber, as stated in the NatureScot LCA 2019.

Table 5.11: Effects on Key Characteristics of LCT 237 Rocky Moorland - Lochaber

Key Characteristic	Effects of the Proposed Development
Rugged, undulating plateaux of heather moorland with a textured and crinkled skyline and no distinct summits or peaks.	There would be no alteration to the moorland texture of this LCT. Given there are no distinct summits or peaks, the turbines would not alter the perception of this key characteristic.
Large patches of coniferous forestry.	No effect.
Uniform expanses of marshy grassland, sedges and rushes, rocky outcrops and stunted trees.	No effect.
Isolated, upland lochans.	No effect
Infrastructure and engineered structures associated with hydro-electricity schemes such as pylons, dams and sub-stations.	The Proposed Development would not add new infrastructure to the LCT.
Closely related to Smooth Moorland Ridges with long views, but lacking the latter's distinctive smooth relief.	The Proposed Development would be visible in longer views from the LCT but in combination with operational Millennium Wind Farm, which would change the composition of views, but not alter the perception of this key characteristic.

5.9.42 The Proposed Development would introduce more wind turbines into the adjacent LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness. The proposed turbines would be visible beyond the intermediate landform of this LCT, as near the proposed development the skyline is formed by landform in LCT 220.

5.9.43 **Viewpoint 4** illustrates that the proposed turbines would be seen amongst the operational turbines of Millennium Wind Farm increasing the number of turbines visible in that cluster. The Proposed Development would slightly increase the horizontal extent of development visible but the increased size of the turbines would be less noticeable as the proposed turbines would be further from the LCT than those of operational Millennium.

5.9.44 Where these changes to the key characteristics could be perceived, they would result in a Small scale of change. However, these changes would only be perceived from a relatively Localised area in the eastern part of the LCT between Loch Garry and the Great Glen. This Long Term change would result in a Slight magnitude of change on LCT 237 Rocky Moorland - Lochaber. For this landscape of Medium sensitivity, this would result in a **Moderate** impact on landscape character, which would be considered **Not Significant**.

Summary of Effects on Landscape Character

5.9.45 There would be **Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** effects on LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness in the eastern part of the LCT where the Proposed Development would be located. In the northern part of the LCT in the Loch Cluanie area and to the north of Glen Moriston the effects would be **Moderate** and **Not Significant**.

5.9.46 There would be **Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant** effects on LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen from which there would be visibility of the Proposed Development mainly in the south of the LCT.

5.9.47 There would be **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effects on LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness where the Proposed Development would be a notable feature on the skyline from part of the Glen Moriston LCT unit. There would also be **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effects on LCT 237 Rocky Moorland as a result of views of proposed turbines on the skyline.

5.9.48 The design of the array has sought to reduce the horizontal and vertical spread of turbines, and the overall increase in turbines would affect a limited area.

5.9.49 The Proposed Development would introduce larger turbines adjacent to a group of operational turbines. The difference in height would be noticeable and this adverse aspect of the Proposed Development would contribute to a degree of adverse effects on landscape character. Wind turbines would not be an uncharacteristic feature in the receiving landscape and would result in a slight increase in the number wind turbines within the host LCT and visible from surrounding landscapes.

5.10 Visual Effects

Visual Receptor Groups

5.10.1 This assessment focuses on effects on groups of visual receptors, incorporating effects on views from public spaces and streets within settlements. The assessment of effects focuses on the visual amenity of public spaces, though views from groups of dwellings will also be noted in the descriptions.

5.10.2 Unless noted differently, these visual receptors are considered to be of High/Medium sensitivity as a result of a High susceptibility to the change and a Community value of the view.

Dalchreichart (3 km, north)

5.10.3 This receptor group comprises of the small, linear settlement of Dalchreichart on the north side of Glen Moriston and the scattered dwellings along the minor road that runs between Torgyle Bridge in the east and Tomchrasky in the west. The receptor group includes a small group of dwellings to the east of Torgyle Bridge. Dalchreichart is a small settlement of dwellings on either side of the minor road that runs west from Torglye Bridge. There is a single row of houses on either side of the road and these dwellings are orientated mainly to the south. The outlook from dwellings varies with some properties such as those in the east having open views south across the River Moriston flood plain. Some dwellings in the west of Dalchreichart on the north side of the road have views to the south truncated by vegetation and buildings to a degree. The group of dwellings at Torgyle Bridge is enclosed by woodland and the dwellings are orientated east-west. There are unlikely to be views of the Proposed Development for residents of this group of properties. Between Dalchreichart and Tomchrasky there are scattered dwellings with varied orientations and outlooks at slightly elevated locations looking south across the River Moriston flood plain to the forested southern side of the glen as illustrated on **Viewpoint 2**. Due to screening, visibility is more like that predicted on the screening ZTV in **Figures 5.6** and **5.7**, than the bare earth ZTVs.

5.10.4 Five of the eight proposed turbines would be visible to hub height with blades only of three turbines visible. The proposed turbines would be seen in combination with operational Millennium wind turbines. The proposed turbines would appear larger than those of Millennium and would be closer and present mainly at a level part of the skyline beyond forestry plantation.

5.10.5 For receptors at Dalchreichart and scattered dwellings along the glen between Dalchreichart and Tomchrasky of High/Medium sensitivity, there would be a Large/ Medium scale of change across an Intermediate extent of this group. These Long Term changes would result in a Substantial magnitude of change, leading to a **Major/ Moderate** effect which would be **Significant**.

Torgyle and Dundreggan area (5 km, north-east)

5.10.6 This receptor group comprises of the community of Dundreggan that lies between Torgyle Bridge and Dundreggan reservoir. Dwellings are situated mainly on the north side of the A887 with varied outlooks and varying degrees of enclosure by woodland with some dwellings having an open outlook to the south and south-south-east. East of Dundreggan dwellings in Glen Moriston are enclosed by woodland and landform and unlikely to experience views of the Proposed Development. **Viewpoint 6** is situated on the A887 to the west of the main populated part of Dundreggan and with open views in the direction of the Site.

5.10.7 Seven turbines would be visible to at least hub height with a blade only of one turbine visible. The proposed turbines would be seen in combination with operational turbines of Millennium

Wind Farm and would occupy a similar position on the skyline appearing slightly closer and larger than the existing turbines. The turbines would be seen mainly across a level part of the skyline beyond forestry plantation and a transmission line on pylons that crosses the view in the middle distance.

5.10.8 For receptors at Dundreggan of High/Medium sensitivity, there would be a Large/ Medium scale of change across an Intermediate extent of this group. These Long Term changes would result in a Substantial magnitude of change, leading to a **Major/ Moderate** effect which would be **Significant**.

Bridge of Oich and Cullochy (6 km, south)

5.10.9 This receptor group includes the area at Bridge of Oich where there are a number of residential properties including those at Cullochy Lock on the Caledonian Canal. Dwellings are situated adjacent to Aberchalder swing bridge and Bridge of Oich to the west and on either side of the Caledonian Canal at Cullochy Lock and along the track to Leek on the west side of the canal. Outlooks are restricted by vegetation and landform. **Viewpoint 5** is situated on the Caledonian Canal towpath just to the north of Cullochy Lock.

5.10.10 Where receptors are situated on the floor of the glen or on the west side, views of the Proposed Development would be restricted by landform and vegetation with no visibility or visibility of a few turbines or blades of turbines. For these receptors of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Small scale of change at most across a Localised extent of this group. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Aberchalder and Newton area (6 km, south)

5.10.11 This receptor group comprises of the community of Aberchalder on the east side of the glen and scattered properties between Aberchalder and Newton along the route of the A82. At Aberchalder there is a small group of dwellings to the south of the A82 and east of Aberchalder swing bridge. These dwellings are orientated in various directions with the main outlooks being south-west through to north with most of the outlook from most of the dwellings restricted by woodland. Dwellings between Aberchalder and Newton are situated on either side of the A82 with mainly a west or west-north-west outlook. **Viewpoint 7** is situated on the A82 to the north of two groups of properties situated on either side of the A82.

5.10.12 Where receptors are situated on the east side of the valley at slightly more elevated locations or with a more open outlook, **Viewpoint 7** shows that Proposed Development would be seen in combination with existing Millennium turbines. T6 and T7 would appear noticeably larger and closer than Millennium turbines while the other six proposed turbines would appear amongst the existing turbines of Millennium and although the rotors of some of them would appear larger they would be seen in an area of established wind farm development. The proposed turbines would result in a limited increase in the number of turbines visible. For these receptors of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium/ Small scale of change across a Localised extent of this group. These Long Term changes would result in a

Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Ceannacroc (6 km, north-west)

5.10.13 This receptor group comprises of the area around Ceannacroc including Ceannacroc Lodge, Coire Dho and the old military road that traverses open hill land to the west of Ceannacroc Lodge. There is a group of dwellings at Ceannacroc Lodge situated on slightly elevated land to the north and west of the confluence of the River Moriston and the River Doe. These dwellings are set within small open areas surrounded by woodland which provides some screening in the direction of the Site. The dwellings are orientated mainly south-north or south-west-north-east. **Viewpoint 12** is located 2.5 km to the west of Ceannacroc Lodge on open elevated land and provides an indication of open views from this area although fewer turbines would be visible in the area around the dwellings at Ceannacroc Lodge due to screening by landform and vegetation.

5.10.14 Up to seven proposed turbines would be theoretically visible with four of these being more noticeable than the others with the rotors and upper parts of tower visible. The proposed turbines would be partly screened by landform and would occupy a similar position on the skyline to existing turbines of Millennium Wind Farm. The Proposed Development would marginally increase the number of wind turbines noticeable from this area and increase the horizontal field of view by a maximum of 10 degrees in which turbines would be visible. For these receptors of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium/ Small scale of change across a Localised extent of this group. These Long Term changes would result in a **Moderate** magnitude of change, leading to a Moderate effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Fort Augustus (7 km, east)

5.10.15 This receptor group comprises of the village of Fort Augustus and the areas between Fort Augustus and Borlum including dwellings on the east side of the floodplain. Fort Augustus is the largest settlement in the detailed study area at the south-west end of Loch Ness on either side of the Caledonian Canal. **Viewpoints 9** and **11** show that a small number of nacelles and blade tips would be visible from Fort Augustus with most of the Proposed Development screened by intervening landform. There would be varied views in this receptor group with buildings and vegetation in the village and environs providing screening in addition to areas where views would be more open.

5.10.16 Where visible the Proposed Development would make wind energy development slightly more apparent but, due to the small proportion that would be visible, the scale of change is judged to be Small for these receptors of High/ Medium sensitivity in this receptor group. The change would be perceived across an Intermediate extent of this receptor group. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Borlum and Glendoe (8.2 km, east)

5.10.17 This receptor group comprises of the eastern side of the Great Glen at Borlum and north-east around Glendoe where there are scattered dwellings mainly in wooded areas. **Viewpoint 14** shows that eight proposed turbines would be visible from elevated areas on the east side of the Glen. However, for most of the receptors in this group there would be no or limited visibility.

5.10.18 Where visible the Proposed Development would be seen in combination with operational Millennium wind turbines. The proposed turbines would appear larger and closer than the existing turbines and would be set back from the plateau edge and seen beyond the extensive areas of forestry plantation and the overhead transmission line on pylons that crosses the glen south-west of Fort Augustus. For these receptors of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium/ Small scale of change across a Localised extent of this group. These Long Term changes would result in a **Moderate** magnitude of change, leading to a Moderate effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Glen Garry (8 km, south-west)

5.10.19 This receptor group comprises of the settlement of Invergarry and environs and Glen Garry that extends west from the village to Inchlaggan and Tomdoun. Glen Garry is sparsely settled and well wooded with large areas of forest plantation on the north and south side of the glen in addition to smaller areas of deciduous and mixed woodland. The sides of the glen rise abruptly and steeply from the narrow floor of the glen at Invergarry. The glen widens at Loch Garry and the south facing slopes are more gradual than the north.

5.10.20 The well wooded and enclosed character of the glen would restrict visibility of the Proposed Development to a few very limited areas as shown on **Figure 5.7**. Where visible the Proposed Development would be seen behind operational Millennium wind turbines at a similar height on the skyline mostly within the extents of the existing wind farm. The difference in size of the proposed turbines compared to those of Millennium would be noticeable although the vertical extent of the Proposed Development would be similar to that of operational, Millennium.

5.10.21 For these receptors of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Small scale of change across a Limited extent of this group. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Transport Routes

5.10.22 This section describes effects on key A roads and B roads in the study area. As mentioned in **Section 5.5** unclassified roads are considered as part of the relevant receptor group with which they coincide. The assessment of effects refers to viewpoints situated on the relevant transport route and **Appendix 5.7** which comprises of sequential wirelines for sections of the transport routes where the ZTVs show visibility.

A82

5.10.23 The A82 is the main route through the Great Glen. It is identified as a Key Route in the Highland Council OWESG and links the main settlements in the Great Glen with Inverness. This receptor is evaluated as being of High/Medium sensitivity as a result of a Medium susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development and a Regional value of the view as this route is considered to be a tourist route.

5.10.24 The ZTVs shown on **Figures 5.4-5.7** show there would be visibility of the Proposed Development along a 4.5 km stretch of the road between Aberchalder and Loch Uanagan to the south of Fort Augustus. There would also be visibility from a 2 km stretch of the route where it passes through Fort Augustus.

5.10.25 **Viewpoint 7** shows a view from the A82 between Aberchalder and Loch Uanagan. Eight of the proposed turbines would be visible beyond the immediate horizon of gradually undulating landform with forestry plantation on the slopes beneath. T6 and T7 would be the more noticeable turbines appearing larger than those in operational Millennium. T1 and T2 would also appear larger in scale than existing turbines due to the larger rotors on the proposed turbines. The Proposed Development would slightly increase the number of turbines visible from this part of the A82 and would not be uncharacteristic features of views to the west from the route. On most of this section of the A82 forestry plantation on either side of the road would restrict view to a few small, open areas.

5.10.26 From the short 2 km stretch of the road in Fort Augustus the ZTV on **Figure 5.4** indicates that for approximately 1 km of that stretch up to six turbines would be seen and up to three turbines would be seen from the northern 1 km stretch. **Viewpoint 9** shows that the proposed turbines would be partly visible above intervening landform with forestry plantation and an overhead transmission line. Views of the proposed turbines would be incidental where the A82 passes through Fort Augustus and would not be a focus of views.

5.10.27 For these receptors of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium/ Small scale of change at most across a Limited (6.5 km) extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

A87

5.10.28 The A87 joins the A82 at Invergarry and passes through Glen Garry and Glen Shiel to the Isle of Skye. The A87 is identified as a Key Route in the Highland Council OWESG and is partly a tourist route. This receptor is evaluated as being of High/Medium sensitivity as a result of a Medium susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development and a Regional value of the view as this route is considered to be a tourist route.

5.10.29 The ZTVs shown on **Figures 5.4-5.7** show there would be visibility of the Proposed Development along an 8 km stretch of the route between Lundie on the north side of Loch Cluanie and the junction with the A887 at Bun Loyne. There would also be visibility from a 3km stretch of the route to the west of Loch Cluanie before the road descends into Glen Shiel at distances of 20 km or more.

5.10.30 **Viewpoint 17** is situated at the Lundie car park beside Loch Cluanie off the A87. The sequential wirelines from the road at a similar location indicate that views from the route would be similar to those from the car park which is a short distance from the road. Five turbines would potentially be visible although only a blade tip of T5 is shown on the wirelines and unlikely to be discernible. Three nacelles would be visible and blades only of one turbine from **Viewpoint 17**. The sequential wirelines in **Appendix 5.7** show that similar views would be obtained along the 8 km stretch of road.

5.10.31 West of Loch Cluanie the road descends towards the loch past and area of forestry plantation. Views are channelled along the glen to Loch Cluanie and beyond to the Site where operational Millennium turbines are discernible. The hub height ZTV shown on **Figure 5.5** indicates that nacelles of up to three proposed turbines would be seen from this short stretch of the route.

5.10.32 For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Small scale of change at most across a Localised extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

A887

5.10.33 The A887 passes through Glen Moriston between Invermoriston in the east where it joins with the A82 and Bun Loyne in the west at the junction with the A87. The A887 is identified as a Key Route in the Highland Council OWESG. It is mainly used by local traffic and to cross between the Great Glen and Glen Shiel when travelling south from Inverness. This receptor is evaluated as being of High/Medium sensitivity as a result of a Medium susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development and a Regional value of the view as this route is considered to be a Key Route by Highland Council and is a key route between Glen Shiel and Loch Ness.

5.10.34 The bare Earth ZTVs shown on **Figures 5.4** and **5.5** indicate visibility along a 6 km stretch of the route between Ceannacroc Bridge and west of Dalchreichart and an 8 km stretch between Dalchreichart and the power station at Dundreggan reservoir. Glen Moriston is well wooded, particularly in the eastern part of the glen between Dundreggan reservoir and Invermoriston and on the south side of the road opposite Dalchreichart. The screened (**Figures 5.6** and **5.7**) ZTVs show there would be shorter stretches of visibility from the route due to screening by forestry.

5.10.35 **Viewpoints 3** and **6** are situated on the A887 where there are open views. **Viewpoint 3** shows that a small block of forestry would screen three of the more noticeable turbines. The sequential wireline, shown in **Appendix 5.7**, for the A887 at Point 6 to the east of **Viewpoint 3**, indicates that landform would screen most of the Proposed Development from view. **Viewpoint 6** shows there would be open views of the Proposed Development and the turbines would be seen on the horizontal skyline above forestry plantation. The turbines would be noticeable for a short distance before the road passes through a wooded area to the east of Torgyle Bridge where the proposed turbines would not be visible due to screening by vegetation.

5.10.36 For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Large/ Medium scale of change at most across a Localised extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a **Major/ Moderate** effect which would be **Significant**.

B862

5.10.37 The B862 runs between Fort Augustus and Inverness on the east side of Loch Ness. It is identified as a Key Route in the Highland Council OWESG. It is mainly used by local traffic and communities on the east side of the Great Glen. This receptor is evaluated as being of High/ Medium sensitivity as a result of a Medium susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development and a Regional value of the view as this route is considered to be a Key Route by Highland Council, although it is mainly a local road.

5.10.38 The bare Earth ZTVs shown on **Figures 5.4** and **5.5** indicate visibility along a 4 km stretch of the route between Fort Augustus and a point to the west of the entrance to Stronelairg Wind Farm. East of that point visibility would be intermittent for 5km and thereafter there would be no visibility until the junction with the B852, 20 km from the Proposed Development. From the junction with the B852 there would be visibility along a 7 km stretch of the road.

5.10.39 **Viewpoint 14** is situated just above the B862 and while it is elevated above the road it provides a similar view. It indicates that eight turbines would be visible in views across the southern part of Loch Ness towards Fort Augustis and the Caledonian Canal. The proposed turbines would be seen on the skyline in combination with operational Millennium turbines beyond intervening landform. Views would be oblique and of short duration as the road descends down the valley side to the alluvial floodplain. Where the road crosses the floodplain fewer turbines would be visible due to screening by roadside trees.

5.10.40 Along the stretch of road from the junction with the B852 blade tips only would be visible and the intervening distance means the Proposed Development would be incidental to views from the route.

5.10.41 For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium/ Small scale of change at most across a Localised (4 km) extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a Major/ **Moderate** effect which would be **Significant** along a short stretch of this route. Across the majority of the route the scale of change would be no greater than Small in Localised areas resulting in a **Slight** magnitude of change and **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effects.

Recreational Receptors

Core paths

5.10.42 Core paths are shown on **Figures 5.9** and **5.10**. Sensitivity of core path users is evaluated as High/ Medium as they have a High susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development and Community or Regional value of views.

5.10.43 **Figure 5.9** shows there would be no visibility from core paths in Glen Affric and core paths around Drumnadrochit.

5.10.44 **Core paths at Foyers**. There would be limited visibility from core paths at Foyers and to the north of the village on the east side of the Great Glen. Visibility is shown along most of core path IN25.02. **Viewpoint 21** is situated on core path IN25.02 at West Aberchalder. It shows that the proposed turbines would be seen on the same part of the skyline as operational Millennium Wind Farm. The difference in size of turbines may be discernible although the Proposed Development would result in a negligible increase in the vertical extent of development and be seen as part of the same established area of wind farms. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Negligible scale of change on a Wide extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.10.45 **Core paths at Invergarry**. Most of the core paths at and around Invergarry would be unaffected by the Proposed Development due to screening by forestry and landform. The ZTV shown on **Figure 5.9** shows there would potentially be visibility from a short section of LO11.01, LO11.08 and LO11.04 to the south and west of Invergarry. The screened ZTV shown on **Figure 5.10** indicates forestry would reduce visibility. Visibility is also shown from LO11.06 on the east side of Loch Oich. **Figure 5.10** and **Viewpoint 10** indicates that the Proposed Development would not be visible from LO11.06.

5.10.46 Core path LO11.02 is the only path in the Invergarry area from which open views of the Proposed Development would be experienced. **Viewpoint 4** shows that the proposed turbines would increase the number of turbines visible on the skyline. The proposed turbines would be seen amongst those of operational Millennium Wind Farm and partly screened by an intervening ridge. The difference in size of the turbine rotors would be noticeable although the Proposed Development would only slightly increase the horizontal extent of development and would not increase the vertical extent. Along the northern part of LO11.02 visibility would be restricted by landform and only blade tips of up to six turbines would be visible. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium scale of change on a Localised extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Significant**.

5.10.47 **Core paths between Aberchalder and Auchtertaw**. Most of the core paths between Aberchalder and Auchtertaw are located in forest plantation. **Figure 5.9** indicates potential visibility of up to six proposed turbines from core paths in this area. **Figure 5.10** shows that forestry would screen views from most of the core paths. Recent felling of forestry has opened up views at Torr Dhuin and nacelles of two turbines and blade tips of five would be visible from core path IN16.12. This would be expected across these paths as some point during the operational phase. When visible for this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium/ Small scale of change on a Localised extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.10.48 **Core paths around Fort Augustus.** Core paths at Fort Augustus are found in forestry plantation to the west and north of the village and on the alluvial floodplain between Fort Augustus and Borlum on the east side of the Great Glen. The ZTV on **Figure 5.10** shows

visibility from short stretches of IN16.01 and IN16.03 but when felling has taken place then visibility would open up in other locations. Visibility is also shown from IN16.07 which follows the same route as the Great Glen Way and is discussed separately below.

5.10.49 The route of core path **IN16.01** is mostly enclosed by trees. There would be some open views towards the Proposed Development and where visible eight turbines would potentially be visible with T6 and T7 being the more noticeable turbines. When visible, the proposed turbines would slightly extend the appearance of wind farm development on the skyline in views from short stretches of core path IN16.01. Where visible for this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Small scale of change on a Localised extent of the route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.10.50 **Core path IN16.03** is in forestry plantation for most of the route. There are some open outlooks mainly to the south and north with views in the direction of the Site screened by landform and forestry. **Viewpoint 8** is situated along a stretch of the route where forestry has been felled giving open views towards the Proposed Development. **Viewpoint 8** shows that blade tips of turbines would be visible above intervening forestry and the turbines of operational Millennium Wind Farm are barely discernible. Without the intervening forestry nacelles of up to four turbines and blades or blade tips of another four turbines would be seen overlapping with operational Millennium turbines. With forestry, for this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Small scale of change on a Localised extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**. With forestry felled the scale of change would be Medium/ Small on a Localised extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate/ Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.10.51 **Core path IN16.16** passes between Fort Augustus and Glen Moriston via a vehicle track. **Figure 5.9** shows visibility of up to eight proposed turbines from a 3.5 km stretch of the route, with visibility of up to six turbines from the remaining parts of the route. A large proportion of the route passes through forestry plantation which would considerably reduce visibility of the Proposed Development as shown on **Figure 5.10**. It is noted that some forestry has been felled which is taken into account in this assessment of effects.

5.10.52 **Viewpoint 1** is situated at a point on the core path where it heads south for a short distance alongside the Allt Phocaichain before crossing the river and passing along a wide forest ride to the north-west. The Proposed Development would be a very noticeable addition to views at sections of the route where there are open views out from forestry or across felled areas of forestry. The proposed turbines would be closer and appear larger than those of operational Millennium Wind Farm and would be seen as an extension of the existing site. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Large/ Medium scale of change on a Localised extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Substantial/ Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a **Major/ Moderate** effect which would be **Significant**.

5.10.53 **Core path IN05.03** is a 15.5 km route that passes between Glen Moriston and Glen Affric along a vehicle track that runs parallel to an overhead transmission line on pylons. The ZTV

on **Figure 5.9** shows visibility of up to eight turbines from approximately 4.5 km of the southern part of the route and visibility of up to three turbines from a 0.5 km stretch of the route near Loch na Beinne Baine.

5.10.54 **Viewpoint 13** shows the view from the southern 4.5 km stretch and indicates that the Proposed Development would be perceived as occupying the same landform as operational Millennium Wind Farm. The Proposed Development would slightly increase the horizontal extent of turbines in views and would slightly increase the vertical extent. The different size of the proposed turbines would be apparent, and the Proposed Development would increase the influence of wind energy development on views. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity there would be a Medium/ Small scale of change on an Intermediate extent of this route. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

National Cycle Route 78 (NCR 78) Oban to Inverness

5.10.55 Sustrans map of NCR indicates that NCR 78 between Fort Augustus and Dores has been reclassified as an 'on road' route. The objective of Sustrans is for routes on the national cycle network to be traffic free. Sustrans has identified that stretch as a 'highly aspirational route'. A short section of the route to the east of Fort Augustus is now traffic free and for the purposes of this assessment the entire route is categorised as high sensitivity.

5.10.56 **Figure 5.9** shows visibility from a 4.5 km stretch of the route to the south of Fort Augustus and a 4 km stretch to the east of Fort Augustus where the route crosses the alluvial floodplain and ascends the side of the Great Glen. There are some very short sections where visibility is shown to the east of the entrance to Stronelairg Wind Farm and very limited or no visibility between that point and Inverness. NCR 78 is evaluated as being of High sensitivity due to the National value of views and the High susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development.

5.10.57 **Viewpoints 5, 11** and **14** are on the route of NCR 78 and show that there will be variable views. **Viewpoints 5** and **11** show that up to four proposed turbines would be visible from sections of the route along the Caledonian Canal and at Fort Augustus. Along the Caledonian Canal views tend to be focussed along the canal. Views of the proposed turbines would be intermittent due to deciduous woodland on the west side of the canal. Where visible the Proposed Development would make wind energy development slightly more apparent but, due to the small proportion that would be visible, the scale of change is judged to be Small along this section of the route

5.10.58 To the east of Fort Augustus views from the floor of the glen would be restricted by woodland. Views of the Proposed Development would be more open on the valley side. **Viewpoint 14** shows that the proposed turbines would be seen beyond the plateau edge above the forested valley sides and in combination with operational Millennium turbines. The sequential wirelines for the B862 (Points 19 to 24) show how visibility of the proposed turbines would vary from NCR 78 to the east of Fort Augustus. On the east side of the glen the scale of change on NCR 78 would be Medium/ Small on a short section of the route.

5.10.59 The changes described above would be perceived across an Localised extent of this receptor group. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a Major/ **Moderate** effect which would be **Significant** on a short stretch of the route.

The Great Glen Way Fort William to Inverness

5.10.60 The route of the Great Glen Way lies entirely within the Highland Council area. It is therefore evaluated as being of National value with receptors using the route evaluated as being of High susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development. Sensitivity is evaluated as High/ Medium.

5.10.61 The ZTV shown on **Figures 5.4** and **5.9** indicate visibility from very short sections of the route on the east side of Loch Oich and at Cullochy Lock to the north of Aberchalder alongside the Caledonian Canal. Visibility is shown along a 4 km stretch of the route between Kytra Lock and Fort Augustus.

5.10.62 **Viewpoints 5, 10** and **11** are representative of views that may be experienced on the Great Glen Way between Invergarry and Fort Augustus. The viewpoints indicate that, where visible, a small number of turbines would be seen with most of the Proposed Development screened by intervening landform and vegetation. The Proposed Development would be seen at an oblique angle to the direction of travel along the Great Glen Way and would not be present in the focus of views along the glen and canal.

5.10.63 The scale of change to receptors using the Great Glen Way would be Small at most across a Localised extent of the route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

South Loch Ness Trail

5.10.64 The South Loch Ness Trail is a 55 km waymarked trail from Bridge of Tarff at the eastern edge of Fort Augustus to Torbreck on the southern fringe of Inverness. It is publicised by the South Loch Ness Access Group. The route evaluated as being of Regional value with receptors using the route evaluated as being of High susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development. Sensitivity is evaluated as High/ Medium.

5.10.65 The ZTV shown on **Figures 5.4** and **5.9** indicate visibility from a 4 km section of the route to the east of Fort Augustus where it crosses the alluvial floodplain and ascends the side of the valley. There are some very short sections where visibility is shown to the east of the entrance to Stronelairg Wind Farm and very limited or no visibility between that point and Torbreck.

5.10.66 **Viewpoint 14** shows that the proposed turbines would be seen beyond the plateau edge above the forested valley sides and in combination with operational Millennium turbines. On that short section of the South Loch Ness Trail the scale of change would be Medium/ Small. To the east of Loch Tarff eight of the proposed turbines would be visible from a 0.5 km stretch of the route and the scale of change here would be Small as the proposed turbines would be perceived as a slight increase in the number of turbines visible. North of this point visibility would be limited to a few short sections and mainly of up to six turbines at distances of 19 km or greater.

5.10.67 The changes described above would be perceived across a Localised extent of the route. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Trail of the Seven Lochs

5.10.68 The Trail of the Seven Lochs is an 80 km route that forms a loop passing within 23 km of the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point. **Figure 5.9** shows visibility of the proposed turbines from the southern part of the route to the east of the B862 beside Loch Mhor. **Viewpoint 21** is situated on the route near West Aberchalder. It shows that the proposed turbines would be discernible on the distant horizon overlapping with turbines of operational Millennium Wind Farm. Views from the route to the south-west of **Viewpoint 21** would be more open and intervening landform would screen less of the proposed turbines. The proposed turbines would be seen as distant features and would not increase the horizontal or vertical extent of wind farm development in views.

5.10.69 The scale of change here would be Negligible across a Localised extent of the route. These Long Term changes would result in a Negligible magnitude of change, leading to a **Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Water-based receptors using the Caledonian Canal, Loch Ness, Loch Lochy and Loch Oich

5.10.70 The Caledonian Canal between Bridge of Oich and Fort Augustus is identified as a core path (IN16.05) by the Highland Council and the effects on water-based users of this core path would be similar to those assessed for the same stretch of the Great Glen Way described above. These water-based receptors are evaluated as High/ Medium sensitivity due to their High susceptibility to change and the Regional value of views. The scale of change to water-based receptors using the Caledonian Canal would be Small across a Localised extent of the route. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.10.71 **Figure 5.4** shows there would be no visibility of the Proposed Development from Loch Lochy. A very small area of visibility is shown on Loch Oich to the south-east of Invergarry Castle. **Figure 5.6** shows that this would reduce in geographic extent due to the screening effects of forestry. The scale of change at Loch Oich would be Negligible across a Limited extent of the receptor. These Long Term changes would result in a Negligible magnitude of change, leading to a **Minor/ Negligible** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.10.72 **Figure 5.4** shows visibility of up to eight proposed turbines from the southern most part of Loch Ness. **Figure 5.5** indicates that visibility would be reduced slightly by the screening effects of forestry. Where visible the proposed turbines would be slightly more noticeable than those of operational Millennium Wind Farm. They would be seen above intervening forestry and appear slightly larger and closer than operational Millennium turbines. The proposed turbines would be incidental to views which would be focussed mainly north-east along the length of Loch Ness and south-west towards Fort Augustus and the beyond to the mountains in the Ben Tee. There would be views up the sides of the Great Glen towards the

Proposed Development which would be a minor new feature in more widely available views from the southern part of Loch Ness.

5.10.73 The scale of change at Loch Ness would be Small across a Localised extent of the receptor. These Long Term changes would result in a Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate/ Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Specific Viewpoints

5.10.74 This section describes an assessment of specific viewpoints, as indicated on OS mapping or identified by the Highland Council. Effects on the following visual receptors are assessed to be less than Moderate and **Not Significant**.

- Glen Garry Viewpoint (8 km south-west) – the ZTV shown on **Figure 5.4** indicates no visibility of the Proposed Development from this viewpoint.
- Loch Tarff Viewpoint (12 km, east) – the Proposed Development would be visible beyond the immediate undulating skyline of Murligan Hill that encloses views from the loch. Effect would be Moderate/ Minor due to the intervening distance and the Proposed Development being partly screened by landform.
- Carn an t-Suidh Viewpoint (14 km, east) – the ZTV shown on **Figure 5.4** indicates no visibility of the Proposed Development from this viewpoint.

Loch Ness and Fort Augustus Viewpoint

5.10.75 This location is not identified as a specific viewpoint on OS mapping although there is a car park on the east side of the B862 that provides a rest point for travellers and views across the southern end of Loch Ness to Fort Augustus and south-west along the Great Glen to Ben Tee. **Viewpoint 14** is situated nearby on the South Loch Ness Trail and at a slightly more elevated location. The sensitivity of visitors to this viewpoint would be High/Medium, as a result of a High susceptibility and Regional value of the view.

5.10.76 The proposed turbines would be seen beyond the plateau edge above the forested valley sides and in combination with operational Millennium turbines. The proposed turbines would be a noticeable addition to views in which wind farm development and overhead lines on pylons are visible. Forestry plantation influences views which also encompass distant hills at Ben Tee to the south-west and the open water of Loch Ness to the north-east. Views from the roadside car park would be screened to a degree by deciduous woodland on the west side of the B862. Where visible the proposed turbines would result in a Medium/ Small scale of change across a Localised extent of this receptor. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Significant**.

Loch Cluanie Viewpoint

5.10.77 This location is not identified as a specific viewpoint on OS mapping although there is a car park on the south side of the A87 that provides a rest point for travellers and views west along Loch Cluanie and east in the direction of the Proposed Development.

5.10.78 **Viewpoint 17** at Lundie car park 4 km to the west of this specific viewpoint provides an indication of views. The sequential wirelines from the A87 (Points 8 and 9) also provide an indication of potential changes to views. Up to five turbines would be visible with nacelles of three turbines and blade tips of two. The proposed turbines would be a noticeable addition in views east along the glen. The main focus of views west along Loch Cluanie and the Cluanie Ridge would not be affected. The proposed turbines would result in a Medium/ Small scale of change across a Localised extent of this receptor. These Long Term changes would result in a Moderate/ Slight magnitude of change, leading to a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

Summary of Visual Effects

5.10.79 There would be **Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** effects on the Dalchreichart receptor group. The outlook from residential properties varies considerably in this area and where there are open views to the south **Significant** effects are predicted. The Torgyle and Dundreggan receptor group would also experience **Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** effects arising from the introduction of the proposed turbines to the skyline above Glen Moriston.

5.10.80 **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effects are predicted in the Aberchalder and Newton area and at Ceannacroc where the proposed turbines would be seen as a noticeable but limited increase in development.

5.10.81 At Borlum and Glendoe effects are predicted to be **Moderate** and **Not Significant**. The proposed turbines would appear larger and closer than the existing turbines and would be set back from the plateau edge.

5.10.82 At Fort Augustus an at Glen Garry effects would be no greater than **Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant** due to screening mainly by landform.

5.10.83 The Proposed Development would be visible from short stretches of the A82 and A87 from which routes effects would be no greater than **Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant**. Effects on the A887 would be **Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** along a short stretch of the route at Dundreggan. There would be visibility of the proposed turbines from a short stretch of the B862 to the east of Fort Augustus where effects would be **Moderate** and **Not Significant**.

5.10.84 There would be **Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** effects on core path IN16.16 which passes within 2 km of the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point. There would be **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effects on core paths LO11.02 at Invergarry, IN16.03 near Fort Augustus and IN05.03 between Glen Moriston and Glen Affric. For other core paths effects would be **Moderate/ Minor** or less and **Not Significant**.

5.10.85 There would be **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effects on NCR 78 and the South Loch Ness Trail to the east of Fort Augustus where there would be open views from short stretches of these routes. Effects on the Great Glen Way would be **Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant** and **Minor** and **Not Significant** on the Trail of the Seven Lochs.

5.10.86 The effects on water-based receptors using the Caledonian Canal, Loch Ness, Loch Lochy and Loch Oich would be **Moderate/ Minor** and most and **Not Significant.**

5.10.87 Effects on Loch Ness and Fort Augustus specific viewpoint and Loch Cluanie specific viewpoint would be **Moderate** and **Not Significant**.

5.11 Night-time Visual Impacts

Summary of Visible Aviation Lighting Requirements and Mitigation

5.11.1 The Proposed Development will require visible aviation lighting, as set out in the **Chapter 2: Proposed Development** and **Chapter 12: Aviation and Radar**. Following an Aviation Study, it has been agreed with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) that a reduced lighting scheme is acceptable for this proposal on this Site. This will comprise a single 2000 candela steady red light mounted on the nacelle of four of the eight turbines which translates to T1, T5, T7, and T8. Visible lights on the towers are not required.

5.11.2 Unlike many aviation lights which currently exist in Scotland, such as on large TV masts, bridges and some existing wind turbines, the lights proposed would include some mitigation. Embedded mitigation includes automatic dimming of the lights (controlled by sensors installed on the turbines) to a nominal intensity of 200 candela during periods of meteorological visibility in excess of 5 km. The switching on and off of lights would be controlled by a timer (assumed 30 minutes before sunset until 30 minutes after sunrise) and not by photocells or similar that respond to particular light levels, thereby not incurring effects in the daytime. The aviation lights would include vertical direction intensity mitigation which would reduce the intensity of the lights when viewed from beneath or above the nacelles.

5.11.3 All embedded mitigation is included in this assessment, unless noted otherwise.

Approach and Scope of the Assessment

5.11.4 There is a distinction between light pollution or nuisance and the effect of lighting on the character and amenity of the landscape at night. This is not a technical lighting assessment but focusses on the night-time effects as a result of the introduction of new artificial lighting, with consequent effects. The methodology for assessment of night-time effects is included in **Appendix 5.1**.

5.11.5 The potential for significant effects resulting from aviation lighting would not extend beyond 20 km and would normally be much closer. The aviation lighting ZTV with screening is presented in **Figure 5.12**. Landscape designations are also shown on this ZTV. All viewpoints have included the potential visibility of lighting on the wirelines. Visualisations at dawn/dusk have been prepared for **Viewpoints 2, 6** and **7**. These have been selected as representative of potential visual receptors which are most likely to be affected at night from the nearest communities and from roads used by local residents and visitors.

5.11.6 In terms of cumulative development, Beinneun and Extension have aviation lighting comprising of nacelle lights on cardinal turbines. The lights are 25 candela flashing 60 times per minute. Operational Bhlaraidh Wind Farm has infra-red lights and the consented extension would also have infra-red lights which would not be visible to the human eye. Tomchrasky (Consented) would have visible aviation lighting and Culachy (In Planning) would have visible aviation lighting. The adjacent development called Beinneun 2 at Planning

stage is also proposed over 150m and would require some lighting. This is considered in the cumulative assessment in **Section 5.14**.

5.11.7 The aviation lights would be visible as points of light, especially where there would be a high degree of contrast at the viewpoint (i.e. the lights were seen against a dark sky/dark landmass or where there would be little or no existing artificial light sources present). As noted in the baseline **Section 5.5**, the local area is moderately dark but lights do characterise the settled areas at night.

5.11.8 During periods of greater ambient light, (e.g. sunset, twilight, dusk, dawn) there would be a reduced effect as the contrast of the aviation lighting against the background would be less. The hours of darkness vary considerably across Scotland. The lights would be switched on 30 minutes before sunset until 30 minutes after sunrise. Therefore, at Fort Augustus on the longest day on 21st June, the lights would be on between 21:48 and 04:52 but there would be no full darkness. By contrast on the shortest day on 21st December, the lights would be on between 15:07 and 09:27 with full darkness c. 12hrs. This variation means that in summer the lighting would not be switched on when people are predominantly active and contrast with the background would be reduced. However, in winter the lighting would be switched on during peak active times.

5.11.9 Due to the location of the lighting on the turbines relative to the rotating blades, this can result in a low frequency blinking effect caused by the screening effect of blades as they travel past the lights. These effects are dependent upon the rotation speed of the blades, direction of wind and the location of the receptor. Where a number of lit turbines are present in the view, such blinking is likely to be at the same frequency but uncoordinated. Most turbines face into the wind and on this Site the prevailing wind would be from the south-west and therefore receptors to the south-west would perceive this more than other parts of the study area.

Night-time Receptors and their Sensitivity

Visual Effects at Night

5.11.10 The impact on visual receptors at night is different from the impact in the daytime. The receptors potentially affected are different and their sensitivity may also be different.

5.11.11 There are no Dark Sky Parks or Dark Sky Discovery Sites within 20 km of the Proposed Development where star-gazing is of particular promotion.

5.11.12 Residents would remain of similar sensitivity. Road users would have a low value to the view, as there is limited amenity value from the roads at night in this area, which reduces their overall sensitivity. In terms of recreational users, long distance paths, core paths and water-based receptors, these routes are unlikely to be used at night and/or would not have any amenity value and therefore are not considered. There may be a very small number of recreational users who wild camp in the mountain areas west of the Proposed Development.

5.11.13 The night-time viewpoint analysis for all viewpoints is described in **Appendix 5.4**.

Landscape Character

5.11.14 The only LCTs which have qualities concerned with perceptions of darkness or an absence of development which could the potential to be significantly affected at night would be the host LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness and LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness.

5.11.15 **LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness** is not defined by the absence of development, but it does form a dark backdrop/skyline to the adjacent valley landscapes. **Figure 5.12** shows that up to four lights could be visible mainly at the Site and in the eastern upland areas of the LCT. Up to four lights could be visible in the north-western part of the LCT from open hill land and mountain tops. The lights would be visible mainly from uninhabited parts of the LCT although it is noted that there could be visibility of lights from a very short stretch of the A87 to the east of Loch Cluanie.

5.11.16 Where visible, the lights would represent a change in perception of landscape character in this LCT by introducing lights to a dark, uninhabited area. As a result of the embedded mitigation proposed, notably the reduced lighting scheme and reduced intensity in good weather, the scale of change would be Small within a Localised part of this LCT leading to a Slight magnitude of change a **Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant** effect on local landscape character.

5.11.17 **LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness** is not defined by the absence of development but it is sparsely settled and streetlights are absent. The A887 passes through this LCT and there are localised point sources of light at Dundreggan power station and the hatchery at Dalchreichart. In addition there are scattered low intensity lights of residential properties and farmsteads throughout the LCT and particularly at Dalchreichart and Dundreggan.

5.11.18 **Viewpoints 2** and **6** are situated in LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness and show how the lights could be perceived from these locations which are discussed below in relation to impacts on settlements. Where visible the lights would represent a change in perception of landscape character in this LCT by the introduction of lights on the skyline that encloses the valley landform of the LCT. As a result of the embedded mitigation proposed, notably the reduced lighting scheme and reduced intensity in good weather, the scale of change would be Small within a Localised part of this LCT leading to a Slight magnitude of change a **Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant** effect on local landscape character.

Residents and Settlements

5.11.19 As noted in **Section 5.5** there are no residential properties within 2 km of the nearest proposed turbine.

5.11.20 At Dalchreichart there would be visibility of up to three nacelle lights as shown on **Figure 5.12** and **Viewpoint 2**. The lights would be noticeable to people in the village mainly from outdoor locations. There would be a noticeable change to night-time views at Dalchreichart where streetlights are not present and low intensity lighting from residential properties is the main source of existing lighting.

5.11.21 The mitigation incorporated into the Proposed Development, as noted at the beginning of this **Section 5.13**, would notably reduce the impacts on Dalchreichart. During periods of

meteorological visibility in excess of 5 km, the lights would be reduced from 2000 candela to 200 candela but would still be visible. For these residents of High/medium sensitivity, there would be a Medium scale of change leading to a Moderate magnitude of change. These Long Term changes would result in a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.11.22 Residential properties at Dundreggan have varied orientations and outlooks with some properties enclosed by woodland. There could be visibility of up to three nacelle lights as shown on **Figure 5.12** and **Viewpoint 6**. The lights would be noticeable to people in the community mainly from outdoor locations. There would be a noticeable change to night-time views at Dundreggan where streetlights are not present and low intensity lighting from residential properties is the main source of existing lighting.

5.11.23 The mitigation incorporated into the Proposed Development, as noted at the beginning of this **Section 5.13**, would notably reduce the impacts on Dundreggan. For these residents of High/medium sensitivity, there would be a Medium scale of change leading to a Moderate magnitude of change. These Long Term changes would result in a **Moderate** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.11.24 **Figure 5.12** indicates there could be visibility of a single nacelle light from some locations in Fort Augustus. Fort Augustus is illuminated by streetlights and other lights in the village centre and this concentrated area of greater light intensity influences night-time views in the village and surrounding area. There are also other point sources of light on the west side of Loch Ness that influence night-time views particularly from the east side of the Great Glen which is predominantly dark.

5.11.25 Given the influence of existing lighting at Fort Augustus visibility of a single nacelle light would result in a limited contrast with the baseline. For these residents of High/medium sensitivity, there would be a Negligible scale of change leading to a Negligible magnitude of change. These Long Term changes would result in a **Minor/ Negligible** effect which would be **Not Significant.**

Recreational Users

5.11.26 As noted earlier, there are no promoted star-gazing recreational receptors within the study area. However, visitors could go wild camping within mountain areas. However, in reviewing the **Figure 5.12**, the areas with visibility tend to be the more exposed locations where wild camping is less likely to occur.

5.11.27 The mitigation incorporated into the Proposed Development, as noted at the beginning of this **Section 5.12**, would notably reduce the impacts on these receptors. During periods of meteorological visibility in excess of 5 km, the lights would be reduced from 2000 candela to 200 candela but would still be visible. For these receptors of High/medium sensitivity, there would be a Small scale of change leading to a Slight magnitude of change. These Long Term changes would result in a **Moderate/Minor** effect which would be **Not Significant**.

5.12 Designated Landscapes

Glen Affric NSA

5.12.1 NatureScot agreed in its scoping response that there are unlikely to be significant effects on the Special Landscape Qualities of Glen Affric NSA but an initial assessment should be undertaken. This section describes the initial assessment.

5.12.2 "Glen Affric is flanked on the north by the highest mountains of the North West Highlands, shapely conical peaks ranged above a long glaciated valley, with steep sides and a broad floor in which are set two great lochs and a river. The lower slopes of the hill are clothed in forest, one of the most beautiful remnants of native Caledonian Pine forest, with a leavening of birches and a sufficiently open canopy to permit the growth of heather and blaeberry.

5.12.3 Glen Affric is often cited as Scotland's loveliest glen. From the rich woodland at the dam to the stark mountains of the upper glen, where all is moor and heather, it displays a fine variety of glen scenery. Fiona Leney, writing of the area in 1974, caught the essence of the place: '… the area maintains a sense of wilderness, less rugged than the remote area of North West Scotland and has a grandeur and classic beauty that is not found in the bleaker lands to the north.'"

5.12.4 The main focus of the Special Landscape Qualities is the combination of Scot's pine forest, lochs, waterfalls and river, steep high peaks that enclose the glen and the contrast between the forested eastern glen and the wilder moorlands in the west. The interplay of these aspects as they are experienced from within the glen are important.

5.12.5 The Proposed Development would be located approximately 12.3 km to the south-east of Glen Affric NSA. **Figure 5.4** shows the extent of theoretical visibility and indicates very small areas of visibility at the southern edge of the NSA with most of the visibility coinciding with the high mountains on the north side of the glen. **Viewpoint 20** is located on Toll Creagach, a summit in the NSA on the north side of the glen.

5.12.6 This designated landscape is considered to be of High sensitivity overall as it is of National value as a landscape designation, although the susceptibility of each special quality may vary.

5.12.7 The special qualities identified in NatureScot's publication The Special Qualities of the National Scenic Areas and the potential effect as a result of the Proposed Development are set out in **Table** 5.12**.**

Table 5.12: Impact on Special Landscape Qualities of Glen Affric NSA

Special Landscape Quality of the NSA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
One of the most beautiful glens in Scotland *Glen Affric has frequently been described as the most beautiful glen in Scotland, representing the romantic, iconic, image of the Highland landscape. Its appeal arises through a combination of:* *Dramatic mountains with high corries rising above a narrow glen.* *Ancient Caledonian forest of beautiful trees and deep heather, grading to open moorland in the west.* *Lochs with rocky shores, small bays and promontories, occasional beaches and wooded isles.* *Fast flowing and broad rivers, tumbling burns with falls.*	This Special Landscape Quality is experienced at vantage points in the glen where combinations of these aspects are present. The experience from the floor of the glen or lower valley sides around Loch Beinn a' Mheadhoin is different to that in the remoter western part of the glen or from the peaks on the north side. Some aspects will have more of an influence than others depending on the location in the glen. The Proposed Development would be visible from the mountains on the north side of the glen but would not influence the combination of features due to intervening distance. Negligible effect.
A glen of transition, from dense forest to exposed moorland *Travelling westwards, at first the glen is heavily wooded, with stands of pine and birch interspersed with glades of deep heather, but by the time Loch Affric is reached the trees are thinning. Open, exposed moorland and bog soon comes to the fore, with the high and pointed mountains of Kintail providing a spectacular backdrop. At the far end of Glen Affric, three glens open up, each leading deeper into the hills.*	The Proposed Development would not be visible travelling westward through the glen or from Loch Affric or where three glens open up. The Proposed Development would not affect the experience of transition from dense forest to exposed moorland. No effect.
A journey into wildness *This long glen leads one further from the inhabited lowlands of the east into the heart of the wild mountains of the west. Travelling westwards gives a strong feeling of leaving civilisation and moving into a harsh environment where nature and natural forces dominate. Roads give way to tracks, which in turn give way to paths. There is often a strong wind funnelling down the upper glen, with the western peaks enveloped in cloud and rain.* *In contrast, it can at the same time be calm and sheltered amongst the trees of the eastern glen, with the surrounding mountains clearly visible in the sunshine.* *The general absence of buildings and other obvious man-made features, other than occasional, single-storey cottages, lends a sense of remoteness to the whole length of the glen.*	This Special Landscape Quality is experienced using roads, tracks and footpaths on the floor and sides of the glen. **Figure 5.4** shows that the Proposed Development would not be visible from any routes in the glen. No effect.

Special Landscape Quality of the NSA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
The prominence of water *In the east the valley floor is filled by Lochs Affric and Beinn a'Mheadhoin, in the west the glens contain fast-flowing rivers with their pools and riffles. Numerous rocky burns tumble down the mountainsides from the high corries.* *The often-present rain, drizzle, mist or snow adds another dimension, emphasising the prominence of water within this landscape.*	The Proposed Development would not influence the how this Special Landscape Quality is experienced. No effect.
A glen for all seasons *The tranquillity of the lochs and woods, and the wildness of the surrounding mountains have drawn visitors to the area since Victorian times. The continual changes in mood and colour provide a feast of sensory experiences throughout the year:* *The light and airy birch woods along the road at Loch Beinn a'Mheadhoin; the darker pine woods, enlivened by the orange of their bark; the beautiful ancient trees, the horizontals of old pines contrasting with the rounded birch; the purples of the heather, the greens of the blaeberry, the oranges of the bracken in autumn.* *The wind whipping up the waters of the lochs, or bringing rain down the glen; the mountains reflected in Loch Affric on a beautiful day; distant panoramas of inaccessible mountains; a glimpse of a deer, the hope of an otter, an eagle soaring overhead; the peace of a landscape where the motor car does not dominate.*	The Proposed Development would be visible from the mountains on the north side of the glen. **Viewpoint 20** shows the predicted view from Toll Creagach at a distance of 20.9 km from the nearest turbine. The proposed turbines would be visible with those of operational Millennium occupying the same low ridge against a backdrop of landform. At this distance the proposed turbines would be seen as a minor addition to available views from the mountains. The rotors would appear to rotate slowly at this distance and would not be a distracting influence on wider views of distant mountains. Negligible effect.
A historic and popular route through the Highlands *Once a drove road, the glen is still popular with walkers of all descriptions: from those out for a day's stroll, to serious hillwalkers and those wishing to traverse the width of Scotland.*	This special landscape quality relates to the use of the glen for walking of all abilities including as a route through the mountains from coast to coast. The Proposed Development would not be visible from the valley floor and lower slopes of the valley sides. It would be visible from upper slop[es and mountain tops on the north side where hillwalkers would be present in the NSA. Negligible effect.
Venerable pine forest	The Proposed Development would not be visible from the pine forests in the eastern part of the glen. No effect.

Special Landscape Quality of the NSA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
The eastern end of Glen Affric is famous for its stands of ancient Caledonian pine trees, containing as it does the third largest remnant in Scotland. *The mature trees, with their horizontal crowns, orange bark and their dark bluegreen foliage are particularly beautiful, especially when in small clumps or emerging singly above the heather. They add a sense of timelessness to the dramatic setting of loch and mountain. In places the dark of the pines is enlivened by the lighter foliage of the birch.*	
Beautiful Loch Affric *Loch Affric is the key to the beauty of this glen. Ancient pine trees, single or in groups, emerge from deep heather to surround the loch, providing a foreground to the dramatic backdrop of Carn Eige and Mam Sodhail. These mountains, with their steep and rocky slopes and burns falling out of the high corries, tower above the water.* *Views eastward over this long and narrow loch are towards a gentler landscape of rolling hills, westward the eye is led over a sandy beach into a panorama of narrow peaks.*	The Proposed Development would not be visible in views across Loch Affric to Carn Eige and Mam Sodhail or in views east and west. No effect.
The baronial Affric Lodge *The baronial Affric Lodge, and its surrounding buildings, brings a sense of human order into the heart of a landscape dominated by nature.*	The Proposed Development would not be visible from the floor of Glen Affric at Affric Lodge or in the vicinity if the Lodge. No effect.

5.12.8 As mentioned above the Special Landscape Qualities are experienced mainly within the glen or looking out across it from the valleys sides or mountains. Due to the intervening distance to the Proposed Development and the way in which the Special Landscape Qualities are experienced, there would be little or no impact on Special Landscape Qualities of Glen Affric NSA.

5.12.9 The proposed turbines would be visible from the high mountains on the north side of the glen and would be seen as minor additions to views where turbines are already present. The difference in height between proposed and operational turbines would be discernible although the appearance would be of an extension to the existing array.

5.12.10 As a result of these changes to the Special Landscape Qualities, there would be a Small/ Negligible scale of change, across a Localised part of Glen Affric NSA leading to a Slight/ Negligible magnitude of change. For this receptor of High sensitivity, this would lead to a **Minor** impact on Glen Affric NSA, which would be **Not Significant**.

Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA

5.12.11 "This area is dominated by the vast linear feature of Loch Ness and its dramatic landform trench, flanked by steep, towering wooded slopes that leads to undulating moorland ridges and a contrasting remote interior plateau of upland lochs, small woods and rocky knolls. Whilst it may not qualify as Scotland's most diverse loch scene, the sheer scale and striking linearity of Loch Ness make it strikingly unique. That is before one even considers the popular myth that surrounds its depths. The loch and its environs also typify the Great Glen as a whole."

5.12.12 The Proposed Development would be located approximately 7.5 km to the west of Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA. **Figure 5.4** shows the extent of theoretical visibility and indicates visibility mainly in the southern part of the SLA between Fort Augustus and Foyers, to the north of Invermoriston and from hills between Loch Duntelchaig and Loch Ruthven. **Viewpoint 14** is located in the southern part of the SLA.

5.12.13 This designated landscape is considered to be of High/ Medium sensitivity overall as it is of Regional value as a landscape designation, although the susceptibility of each special quality may vary.

5.12.14 The special qualities identified in Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas Development Guidance and the potential effect as a result of the Proposed Development are set out in the **Table** 5.13 .

Table 5.13: Impact on Special Qualities of Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA

Special Quality of the SLA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
The imposing steep-sided landform trench, formed by a large strike-slip fault which slices through the centre of the Highlands, creates a dramatic linear landscape which is relatively easily to access and readily appreciated. The very striking profile of the glen is typically best appreciated from either end, or from the water, although good views are also obtained from elevated viewpoints upon the loch-side ridges and hill tops.	The Proposed Development would be set back from the edge of the valley landform and would be inferior in scale. The profile of the glen would not be affected although the proposed turbines would be seen in views along the glen. Negligible effect.
The steep sided slopes of the glen are often deeply incised by watercourses, including the notable Falls of Foyers. These slopes are also flanked by a diverse mix of woodland and forests and form an open smooth moorland skyline ridge.	The proposed turbines would be present on the skyline in views from the southern part of the SLA. The proposed turbines would be seen above forestry plantation and be noticeable on the skyline from part of the SLA. Minor effect.
Strong contrasts exist between the northern and southern slopes in terms of access, activity and settlement which are all considerably more limited on the south side of the loch, reflecting the variations in access, slope, aspect and microclimate.	The Proposed Development would be visible to the west of the SLA where operational Millennium turbines are seen. The proposed turbines would add slightly to number of turbines visible. Negligible effect.
There are distinctive views of grand proportions and long vistas along a vast expanse of the loch, with the detail of foreground features gradually diminishing to distant silhouettes.	This special quality is experienced mainly from the open water of the loch or from the loch shore or lower valley sides. The Proposed Development would be seen in short range views across Loch Ness but would not be visible from most of the areas where this special quality is most evident. Negligible effect.
Atmospheric mists and banks of low cloud often linger over Loch Ness and enhance its dramatic character. Limited visibility during these conditions may reinforce the myth of the monster which is responsible for the many visitor attractions and facilities in Drumnadrochit.	No effect.
Urquhart Castle is a prominent focus along the loch, occupying a magnificent situation on an irregular headland of rock jutting out into the loch and commanding splendid views up and down the Great Glen. Also of significance is Foyers imposing former British	The Proposed Development would not compete with Urquhart Castle as a prominent focus as this special quality would be experienced in a localised area near the castle. The Proposed Development would not be visible from Urquhart Castle.

Special Quality of the SLA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
Aluminium Factory which is most clearly seen from the north slopes.	There is the potential for the Proposed Development to be seen from the same location as the British Aluminium Factory at Foyers. However, this would not affect its significance in local views. Negligible effect.
The landscape is typically experienced from the B852, B851 and the A82. From these routes, however, the loch is viewed at an oblique angle and thus these do not reveal the striking 'v' shape of the glen that is visible at either end. High numbers of walkers and cyclists also view the landscape from the Great Glen Way, while others see it from a high number of boats on the loch, some travelling the length of the Caledonian Canal. From elevated locations along the glen, it is easier to appreciate the simple line, large scale and great expanse of the loch although, even from these places, it is typically difficult to see all of the loch in one view due to its great length. It is also difficult to perceive the scale of the landscape due to a lack of size indicators. From elevated viewpoints, the glen can be seen within its context of a landscape of elevated plateaux and hills.	The Proposed Development would be visible from the B862 in the southern part of the SLA and from the open water of Loch Ness in the southernmost part of the loch. The proposed turbines would also be visible from elevated locations on the side of the glen coinciding with the SLA. Where visible the proposed turbines would be perceived as slightly increasing the number of turbines visible from the SLA. These effects would be more noticeable in the southernmost part of the SLA. The proposed turbines would not adversely impact the simple line, large scale and great expanse of Loch Ness. Negligible effect.
Most of the hills and high points along the enclosing ridges are indistinct in character, however Meal Fuar-mhonaidh is one example of a distinct hill peak, nearly 700m high, it stands out as a landmark clearly visible from both ends of the loch, and is even prominent in views southwest from the castle in Inverness. Meall Fuar-mhonaid is a good vantage point from which to appreciate the massive scale and alignment of the Great Glen fault within a backcloth of the Monadhliath massif to the south and the Balmacann and Affric mountain interior to the north west, both areas which possess wildness qualities.	The Proposed Development would be visible from Meal Fuar-mhonaidh at a distance of 21 km to the nearest proposed turbine. The proposed turbines would not increase the horizontal or vertical extent of wind turbines in views. The proposed turbines would appear slightly closer than those of operational Millennium Wind Farm and the difference in size would be discernible. The Proposed Development would be seen as an extension to the existing development that would slightly increase the influence of wind turbines on views. Negligible effect.
An undulating moorland plateau of rocky knolls flanked by small-scale woods and forests, patches of pastures and sporadic farmsteads, and interspersed with a sequence of tranquil lochs, that creates an intimate mix of landscape elements of changing visual interest.	This special quality is experienced in the Loch Duntelchaig area. **Figure 5.4** shows small areas of visibility at distances of 28 km or greater. Where visible the Proposed Development would have a very limited influence on this special quality due to intervening distance. Negligible effect.

Special Quality of the SLA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
Achculin, accessed from the Balmore road, is a well preserved depopulated township that is now a scheduled monument.	No effect.
The eastern shore of Loch Ness incorporating Loch Duntelchaig, Loch Ashie and Loch Ruthven were clear foci of intensive prehistoric activity. Numerous roundhouses and field systems, interspersed with ritual and burial monuments such as burial cairns, burnt mounds and standing stones proliferate in this area; 3 crannogs are located on Loch Ruthven. This was clearly a highly significant area in prehistory supporting a large population.	No effect.
Two features dominate Fort Augusts; the Caledonian Canal, with its conspicuous flight of locks, which links Loch Ness to Loch Oich and bisects the town, and Fort Augustus Abbey. The latter was enlarged in 1876 using stone from the original fort.	Most of the village of Fort Augustus and the Caledonian Canal lie outside the boundary of the SLA. **Viewpoint 11** situated outside the SLA and at the flight of locks shows that a nacelle of one turbine and blades of two would be visible. **Viewpoint 14** shows a view from within the SLA looking across to Fort Augustus with the Caledonian Canal and Fort Augustus Abbey both visible. The Proposed Development would not reduce the importance of these features in views locally or in wider views. Negligible effect.

5.12.15 The nearest proposed turbine would be 7.5 km west of the SLA which extends from Fort Augustus in the south to Lochend 37 km to the north-north-east. The Proposed Development would be visible mainly from the southern part of the SLA around Fort Augustus and on the east side of Loch Ness. The Proposed Development would be set back from the edge of the moorland plateau that lies to the west of the SLA. As noted in **Table** 5.13 there would be limited effects on each of the special qualities of the SLA.

5.12.16 As a result of these changes to the Special Landscape Qualities, there would be a Small scale of change, across a Localised part of Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA leading to a Slight magnitude of change. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity, this would lead to a **Moderate** impact on Loch Duntelchaig SLA, which would be **Not Significant**.

Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA

5.12.17 "This area is dominated by the strong linear form of the Great Glen fault line with Loch Oich and Loch Lochy occupying the deep, v shaped glen. The lochs are bounded by steep slopes which rise to prominent and striking combinations of peaks and north-east to south west orientated ridges, these hills contain views within the narrow corridor of the Great Glen.

5.12.18 Both lochs, together with Loch Ness and the linking sections of the Caledonian Canal, form part of the "grand processional way" along the Great Glen and which is perhaps best experienced travelling by boat.

5.12.19 Views over gentle pastures along the loch shores across clear, reflective water towards wooded banks and rolling hills opposite are often obscured in part by hovering layers of low cloud or diffused by mist."

5.12.20 The Proposed Development would be located approximately 6 km to the north-west of Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA. **Figure 5.4** shows the extent of theoretical visibility and indicates visibility mainly in the north and east of the SLA on the east side of the Greta Glen. Visibility is also shown to the west of Invergarry Castle and at Ben Tee and Meall nan Dearcag. **Viewpoint 10** is located on the route of the Great Glen Way in the northern part of the SLA and wireline **Viewpoint 24** is located on Ben Tee.

5.12.21 This designated landscape is considered to be of High/ Medium sensitivity overall as it is of Regional value as a landscape designation, although the susceptibility of each special quality may vary.

5.12.22 The special qualities identified in Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas Development Guidance and the potential effect as a result of the Proposed Development are set out in the **Table** 5.14.

Table 5.14: Impact on Special Qualities of Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA

Special Quality of the SLA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
This area covers one link in a chain of lochs and stretches of canal lengths which extend from Inverness to Fort William. These lie in a large and imposing steep sided v shaped glen, formed by a large strike-slip fault which cleaves through the centre of the Highlands.	There would be very limited visibility of the Proposed Development from the floor of the glen. It would be more visible from uninhabited areas on the east side of the glen in the SLA. The proposed turbines would be perceived as a slight increase in the number of turbines visible from the SLA. Negligible effect.
The two main lochs in this SLA are bounded by consistently steep slopes which contain and channel the views. In Loch Lochy's case, these slopes rise to an eye-catching group of peaks over 900m high on its west side. On its east side, a somewhat lower hill ridge parallels the loch for most of its length. This, in turn, parallels similar ridges above the glens Gloy and Roy further to the east, giving the impression of a remarkably regular, corrugated landscape, particularly when seen from the higher Loch Lochy hills.	The Proposed Development would be visible from the group of hills at Ben Tee. Wireline **Viewpoint 24** shows that it would be seen with operational Millennium Wind Farm with Beinneun and Beinneun Extension visible to the west. From the east side of the glen in the SLA the Proposed Development would be perceived as an extension to operational Millennium and in the northern part of the SLA on the uninhabited eastern side of the glen, the difference in size compared to the existing turbines would be noticeable although there would be a limited overall increase in the number of turbines visible. Negligible effect
The Great Glen Way is a maintained and promoted long distance walking and cycling route which allows visitors the opportunity to experience the area at a leisurely pace, remote from vehicular traffic.	There would be very limited or no visibility of the Proposed Development from the Great Glen Way where it coincides with the SLA. Landform and forestry would screen the proposed turbines. **Viewpoint 10** shows a typical view from the Great Glen Way alongside Loch Oich. Negligible effect.
This is a distinctly interior landscape, part of Highland Scotland, part way along the Great Glen with landmark features including the old railway line, the Glengarry Castle Hotel and the Well of the Seven Heads.	The old railway line runs along the east side of Loch Oich and is the route of the Great Glen Way. There would be very limited visibility of the Proposed Development from the route. The Glengarry Castle Hotel is situated on the west side of Loch Oich and the Well of the Seven Heads is about 2km to the south-west of the hotel. The Proposed Development would not be visible from these locations. Negligible effect.
Most people experience this landscape from the A82, which is one of the main roads between Inverness and Glasgow, this is a route	The Proposed Development would not be visible from the A82 where it coincides with the SLA.

Special Quality of the SLA	Potential Impact the Proposed Development
which demands driver attention on the road ahead rather than on the surroundings except at locations where traffic is slowed at bridging points, road junctions and stopping place.	No effect.
Views from low lying locations over agricultural grazings and lochs to steep wooded slopes and rolling summits are made more atmospheric in some weathers when mists and trails of low cloud roll in from the south west. In contrast, in calm conditions, superlative linear views may be gained along the base of the 'v' shaped valley over reflective loch surfaces that mirror the wooded slopes and bare hill tops and blurring the boundaries between land and water.	This special quality is experienced from the floor of the glen or from the open water of the lochs. There would be no or very limited visibility from the floor of the glen and open waters of the lochs. Negligible effect.
Outstanding views occur from higher elevations, most notably from Meall Dubh and Meall na Teanga. These views along and across the Great Glen include Loch Ness more than twelve miles to the north and Ben Nevis a similar distance to the south. The wider views also include the sweep of mountains to the north and west and in clear conditions extend as far southwest as Mull and Colonsay.	The Proposed Development would not be visible from Meall Dubh or Meall na Teanga. It would be visible from Ben Tee on the boundary of the SLA as shown on wireline **Viewpoint 24.** It would also be visible from Meall nan Dearcag (689 m AOD) and Sean Mheall (897 m AOD). Where visible the proposed turbines would be seen in the context of existing operational Millennium, Beinneun and Extension and would be perceived as a slight increase in the number of turbines visible resulting in a very limited influence on this special quality. Negligible effect.
A sense of comfort and shelter is gained from the intimate scale of features at close proximity to the lochs' shores, including rolling pastures and human settlement contrasts. These qualities are empathised by the contrast with the sense of drama and grandeur of the wider glen.	This special quality is experience from the floor of the glen or from the open water of the lochs. There would be no or very limited visibility from the floor of the glen and open waters of the lochs. Negligible effect.
The double waterfall at the mouth of Gleann Cia-aig crashing down from the hills north of Achnacarry into a deep pool called the "Witch's Cauldron" adds dramatic movement and noise.	The Proposed Development would not be visible in views of the waterfall at the mouth of Gleann Cia-aig. No effect.
Càm Bhealach, on the west side of Loch Lochy, is a classic hanging valley and steep mountain pass which is angled in such a way that it is well seen in its entirety from the main A82 road on the main glen floor.	The Proposed Development would not be visible in views of the Cam Bhealach in views from the A82. No effect.

5.12.23 The nearest proposed turbine would be 6 km west of the SLA which extends from Gairlochy in the south to Aberchalder 25 km to the north-north-east. The Proposed Development would be visible mainly from the northern and eastern parts of the SLA which are uninhabited. As noted in **Table** 5.14 there would be limited effects on each of the special qualities of the SLA.

5.12.24 As a result of these changes to the Special Landscape Qualities, there would be a Small scale of change, across a Localised part of Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA leading to a Slight magnitude of change. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity, this would lead to a **Moderate/ Minor** impact on Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA, which would be **Not Significant**.

Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA

5.12.25 "This SLA covers a massive range of landscapes from north to south, including a mountain interior of spectacular grandeur. The combination of high mountains, glens and lochs extending over a vast area, coupled with difficulty of access and sparse habitation, produces a strong sense of remoteness and wildness within the interior. A strikingly diverse and intricate coastal landscape provides an intimate contrast to the vastness of the mountainous surroundings.

5.12.26 The extent of this SLA is strongly influenced by its linkage of surrounding landscapes of high value designated as National Scenic Areas."

5.12.27 The Proposed Development would be located approximately 10 km to the east of Moidart, Morar and Glen Shield SLA. **Figure 5.4** shows the extent of theoretical visibility and indicates visibility from the eastern and south-eastern part of the SLA on the east side of the Greta Glen. **Viewpoints 16** and **17** are located in the eastern part of the SLA and wireline Viewpoint 25 is also located in the east.

5.12.28 This designated landscape is considered to be of High/ Medium sensitivity overall as it is of Regional value as a landscape designation, although the susceptibility of each special quality may vary.

5.12.29 The SLA covers a vast area of mountains and remote glens. It is largely uninhabited and difficult to access due o the absence of roads. Wildness and tranquillity are aspects identified in the special qualities described in an Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas Development Guidance. The use of the area by hillwalkers and 'wilderness enthusiasts' is also noted in the special qualities.

5.12.30 The nearest proposed turbine would be 10 km east of the SLA. **Viewpoint 16** shows that views from the eastern part of the SLA are influenced by operational Beinneun and Extension and Millennium Wind Farms. Wireline **Viewpoint 25** also shows the influence of these existing wind farms on views. The Proposed Development would be located to the east of these three existing wind farms meaning that they would be present between the SLA and the proposed turbines in views from the west and south-west.

5.12.31 The Proposed Development would result in a slight increase in wind farm development when seen from more elevated parts of the SLA. This change would be seen in the context of the existing baseline of wind farm development that already influences the SLA to a degree. The

Proposed Development would have a limited influence overall on the special qualities of Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA.

5.12.32 As a result of these changes to the Special Landscape Qualities, there would be a Small/ Negligible scale of change, across a Localised part of Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA leading to a Slight/ Negligible magnitude of change. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity, this would lead to a **Minor** impact on Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA, which would be **Not Significant**.

Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA

5.12.33 "This area includes a vast unbroken tract of remote interior hills and is the largest such area north of the Great Glen, with mountain summits and glens remote from roads and human habitation. The spectacular large scale and continuous open mountain ridges are intercut with broadly parallel long, deep sinuous glens which offer strongly contrasting experiences of dramatic open scenery with the tranquillity and intimacy of the middle and lower valley floors with their small scale medley of birch and pine woods, rivers, lochans, wetlands and grassland.

5.12.34 The western part of the SLA includes a large section of Strathcarron which comprises a wide floodplain, wooded in part, and a wooded hill and mountain backdrop. The strath includes a strategic road and railway serving the west coast along which there are clusters of settlement. This is the only part of the SLA which is seen by high numbers of people – the rest of the area is mainly viewed by a small number of residents, estate workers and those taking part in recreation."

5.12.35 The Proposed Development would be located approximately 18 km to the south of Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA. **Figure 5.4** shows the extent of theoretical visibility and indicates small areas of visibility from the southern edge of the SLA and in eastern parts 25-30 km from the nearest proposed turbine. **Viewpoint 20** is located at the southern boundary of the SLA.

5.12.36 This designated landscape is considered to be of High/ Medium sensitivity overall as it is of Regional value as a landscape designation, although the susceptibility of each special quality may vary.

5.12.37 The SLA covers a vast area of mountains and remote glens. It is largely uninhabited and difficult to access due to the absence of roads. Wildness, tranquillity and remoteness are aspects identified in the special qualities described in an Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas Development Guidance. The use of the area by hillwalkers is also noted in the special qualities.

5.12.38 The nearest proposed turbine would be 18 km south of the SLA. **Viewpoint 20** shows that views from the southern part of the SLA are influenced to a degree by operational Beinneun and Extension and Millennium Wind Farms.

5.12.39 The Proposed Development would result in a slight increase in wind farm development when seen from more elevated areas in the southern most part of the SLA. This change would be seen in the context of the existing baseline of wind farm development that already influences

the SLA to a limited degree. The Proposed Development would have a very limited influence overall on the special qualities of Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA.

5.12.40 As a result of these changes to the Special Landscape Qualities, there would be a Small/ Negligible scale of change, across a Limited part of Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA leading to a Negligible magnitude of change. For this receptor of High/ Medium sensitivity, this would lead to a **Minor/ Negligible** impact on Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA, which would be **Not Significant**.

5.13 Cumulative Impacts

Introduction

5.13.1 In line with GLVIA3 and NatureScot guidance on Assessing the Cumulative Impact of Onshore Wind Energy Developments, the assessment of cumulative effects should focus on whether there are any likely significant cumulative impacts which are reasonably foreseeable, rather than an assessment of every potential cumulative effect. As recommended by the NatureScot cumulative guidance, this assessment focusses on the "*additional cumulative change which would be brought about by the Proposed Development*' (bottom of page 6 of NatureScot Guidance).

Assessment Scenarios

5.13.2 It is important to differentiate between the assessment of cumulative effects arising from the Proposed Development with projects that are operational (existing baseline Scenario 1) and consented (future baseline Scenario 2); and those that are proposed and about which there is no certainty. Accordingly, the assessment distinguishes between the baseline (Scenario 1) for the LVIA assessment in **Sections 5.8** to **5.12**, the consented sites (Scenario 2) and other proposals (Scenario 3) presented here in **Section 5.13.** The scenarios assessed in this section are:

- Scenario 2: the Proposed Development with operational and consented development; and
- Scenario 3: the Proposed Development with operational and consented development and sites in planning.

5.13.3 **Table** 5.5 in **Section 5.2** lists the cumulative development in the 45 km study area. All the sites listed in **Table** 5.5 are shown on Figure 5.2, and Figure 5.3 shows cumulative wind farms within 20 km of the Proposed Development. The visualisations in Volume 2b show all the key operational, consented and in-planning cumulative sites . With regard to the proposals at pre-planning, there is no certainty in design or that these will progress to planning submissions. If these later proposals do come forward, the burden of cumulative assessment will remain with the later applications.

5.13.4 The cumulative ZTVs are presented in **Figures 5.13-5.18**.

Cumulative Landscape and Visual effects

5.13.5 The following assessment focuses on the likely significant cumulative interactions on landscape character and key visual receptors including local residents, key tourist routes and local roads.

Scenario 2: Consented wind farms

5.13.6 **Landscape Character:** Notable cumulative interactions would include mainly Tomchrasky, 5.8 km to the north and Bunloinn, 9.5 km to the west of the Proposed Development. Both these cumulative sites would be in the host LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness. The cumulative ZTV **Figures 5.14 and 5.15** show that Bunloinn and Tomchrasky would be visible in the Loch Loyne area which is already influenced by visibility of operational Beinneun and Extension and Millennium as shown on **Figure 5.13**.

5.13.7 Bunloinn is situated in a part of LCT 220 that is strongly influenced by steep-sided craggy hills that form a well-defined ridge between Loch Loyne and Loch Cluanie. Bunloinn would be separated from the Proposed Development by distance and terrain and by the intervening wind farms of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium. Tomchrasky is situated in LCT 220 to the north of Glen Moriston on undulating lower slopes. There are no operational or consented wind farms to the north of Glen Moriston in this LCT unit. Tomchrasky would be a notable addition to LCT 220 affecting a part of the LCT where wind farm development is not present and increasing the influence of wind turbines on key characteristics of LCT 220. Viewpoints 12 and 15 show that Tomchrasky would be more noticeable than the Proposed Development in the northern part of the LCT.

5.13.8 The changes identified for the Proposed Development in Scenario 1 affect mainly the eastern part of the LCT unit where effects would be Significant decreasing to the west and north where effects would be Not Significant.

5.13.9 The Proposed Development would result in a slight additional influence on the key characteristics of LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness but only marginally compared to the Proposed Development alone for which **Significant** effects are already identified. The addition of the Proposed Development would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** and **Moderate** and **Not Significant).**

5.13.10 Regarding other consented but not yet constructed wind farms these are all situated adjacent to operational wind farm developments in LCTs that would not experience significant impacts as a result of the Proposed Development. The addition of the Proposed Development to the fully consented baseline would add to the amount of wind farm development visible from these LCT, and from LCTs between the Proposed Development and the consented/operational sites. Due to the separation distance to the other consented sites and their proximity to operational wind farms the addition of the Proposed Development would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** and **Moderate** and **Not Significant).**

5.13.11 **Visual Effects**: As shown on **Figures 5.14** and **5.15**, the Proposed Development would result in visibility from areas where Bunloinn and Tomchrasky would not be seen. However, the

ZTV shown on **Figure 5.13** indicates that there would be visibility of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium Wind Farms from these areas. The Proposed Development alone would therefore not add notable new areas of visibility of wind turbines in addition to Bunloinn and Tomchrasky. **Figure 5.14** and **Viewpoints 12, 13, 15, 16** and **19** show that the Proposed Development, Tomchrasky and Bunloinn would be visible mainly from the north and west but also in distant views from the south-west. In views from the west and south-west Bunloinn would have a greater influence on views and the Proposed Development would be seen as a minor addition to the operational wind farms of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium. In views from the north the separation distance between the Proposed Development and Bunloinn means it would not be seen in combination but would be seen in succession from the same viewpoint. The Proposed Development would be seen as part of an existing group whereas Bunloinn would be seen as a separate wind farm.

5.13.12 In views from the north Tomchrasky would have a greater influence on views and the Proposed Development would be seen as a minor addition to the operational wind farms of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium. In views from the west Tomchrasky would be seen on lower lying foothills while the Proposed Development would be seen on a broad ridge adjacent to a group of operational wind farms.

5.13.13 At Dalchreichart **Viewpoint 2** shows that Bunloinn would be visible in views west along the valley where it would be seen as a separate development and not in combination with the Proposed Development. Tomchrasky would be a notable feature in views west along the valley where it would be seen as a separate development and not in combination with the Proposed Development. Tomchrasky would be seen with consented Bunloinn but separated from it by distance and appear closer having a greater influence on views. Views from Dalchreichart are orientated mainly to the south. The Proposed Development and Tomchrasky would therefore be seen mainly from the minor road along the valley. For most of the people in the east of Dalchreichart receptor group, only the Proposed Development would be seen. In the west of this group Tomchrasky would have a greater influence. The addition of the Proposed Development would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (Major/ Moderate and Significant).

5.13.14 From the A87 there would be some sequential visibility of the Proposed Development and Bunloinn although there would not be combined visibility due to screening by landform

5.13.15 On the A887 there would be some sequential views of the Proposed Development and Bunloinn as shown on **Viewpoint 3**.

5.13.16 There would be no cumulative effects arising from the addition of the Proposed Development to Tomchrasky.

5.13.17 For visual receptors the addition of the Proposed Development to Bunloinn and Tomchrasky would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Millennium East with the operational baseline.

5.13.18 Regarding other consented but not yet constructed wind farms as mentioned above these are all situated adjacent to operational wind farms. The viewpoints shown in **Volumes 2b** and **2c** indicate that these other Consented sites would be seen mainly from uninhabited elevated locations and not in the glens where the majority of people are. The Proposed

Development would be visible with other consented sites in views from core paths on the higher glen sides, plateau areas between the glens and from the upper slopes and summits of mountains in the area. The distance between the Proposed Development and other consented sites in Scenario 2, and the location of the Proposed Development adjacent to a group of operational wind farms, means that the slight increase in turbines would result in limited additional effects when considered with other consented sites.

5.13.19 For visual receptors the addition of the Proposed Development to other consented sites would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Millennium East with the operational baseline.

5.13.20 **Landscape Designations**: **Viewpoint 20** is situated at the southern edge of **Glen Affric NSA** and shows that there would be limited visibility of Bunloinn and Tomchrasky. The addition of the Proposed Development to Bunloinn and Tomchrasky would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.21 **Viewpoint 20** also shows that other consented sites would be visible mainly to the south-east. These sites would adjoin operational development and would be seen as extensions to these groups. The addition of the Proposed Development would slightly increase the number of turbines visible. Due to the separation distance between the Proposed Development and Glen Affric NSA and the distance to other consented sites, the addition of the Proposed Development to these sites would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.22 For **Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA Figures 5.14** and **5.15** show very limited combined visibility of Bunloinn and the Proposed Development and of Tomchrasky and the Proposed Development from the SLA. The Proposed Development would be visible with both from Meall Fuar-mhonaidh where Tomchrasky would be visible in a low-lying area over 20 km away and Bunloinn would be seen as a distant feature over 32 km away. The addition of the Proposed Development to Bunloinn would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.23 Regarding other consented but not yet constructed sites these would be visible from more elevated parts of the SLA such as Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and the Proposed Development would appear to add slightly to the number of turbines visible. From most of the populated and visited parts of the SLA there would not be combined visibility pf the Proposed Development with other consented sites. The addition of the Proposed Development to other consented sites would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.24 For **Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA Figures 5.14** and **5.15** show very limited combined visibility of the Proposed Development and Bunloinn and of Tomchrasky and the Proposed Development from the SLA. There would be visibility of the Proposed Development and Bunloinn from elevated locations and hilltops west of Loch Lochy including Ben Tee where Bunloinn would be seen separated from the group of operational wind farms to which the Proposed Development would add. There would be visibility of the Proposed Development and Tomchrasky only from a very small area on the north facing slopes of Meall a Choire

Ghlais to the south-west of Ben Tee. Views from these hills are already strongly influenced by Beinneun and Extension and Millennium Wind Farms. Tomchrasky would be seen low in the landscape and overlapping partly with Beinneun and Extension. Bunloinn would be appear closer than the Proposed Development which would be a minor addition to the existing operational developments of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium.

5.13.25 Regarding other consented but not yet constructed sites these would not be visible from the glen floor and sides where most people are. The other consented sites would be visible from more elevated parts of the SLA and hilltops including Ben Tee. These sites would be seen adjacent to existing operational wind farms and the Proposed Development would result in a slight increase in the number of turbines visible.

5.13.26 The addition of the Proposed Development to Tomchrasky, Bunloinn and other consented sites would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.27 For **Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA Figure 5.14** shows that Bunloinn would be visible from the eastern part of the SLA introducing new areas of visibility where the Proposed Development would not be seen. Figure 5.15 shows very limited visibility of Tomchrasky alone from the SLA and also limited combined visibility with the Proposed Development. **Viewpoint 16** shows that Bunloinn would have a greater influence on views from the eastern part of the SLA with Tomchrasky introducing turbines to a different part of the view in eth middle distance. **Viewpoint 16** also shows that all other consented sites would be distant features with limited influence on views from the SLA.

5.13.28 The Proposed Development would result in a limited increase in the number of turbines visible from the SLA and would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.29 For Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA **Figure 5.14** shows there would be very limited combined visibility of the Proposed Development and Bunloinn and of the Proposed Development with Tomchrasky from a small area of the SLA at the southern boundary. **Viewpoint 20** shows that Bunloinn would barely be discernible and Tomchrasky would mostly be screened by landform. **Viewpoint 20** also shows that all other consented sites would be seen as distant features adjacent to groups of operational wind farms.

5.13.30 The Proposed Development would result in a limited increase in the number of turbines visible from the SLA and would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor/ Negligible** and **Not Significant).**

Scenario 3 Wind Farms In Planning

5.13.31 This scenario considers the addition of the Proposed Development to operational and consented development and sites in planning. The main cumulative interactions between the Proposed Development and sites in planning would be with Culachy and Beinneun 2. The other sites in planning (Loch Liath and Dell 2) are located adjacent to groups of operational and consented wind farms at distances of 15 km or greater and effects arising from the addition of the Proposed Development to these sites would be limited. The assessment therefore focuses on Culachy.

Scenario 3 Culachy (In Planning)

5.13.32 **Landscape Character**: Culachy is situated 10 km to the south east of the Proposed Development in LCT 236 Smooth Moorland Ridges and would influence landscape character in a localised area around it affecting mainly LCT 236 and LCT 221 Rolling Uplands – Inverness. The Proposed Development would be visible in combination with Culachy from the north as shown on **Viewpoint 15**, from the west (**Viewpoint 16**) and south-east (**Viewpoint 18**). These viewpoints show that the Proposed Development would be seen as part of a group of operational wind farms (Beinneun, Beinneun Extension and Millennium) separated from Culachy by terrain and intervening distance.

5.13.33 The addition of the Proposed Development would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** and **Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.34 Regarding other wind farms in planning these are all situated adjacent to operational and consented wind farm development in LCT that would not experience significant impacts as a result of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development would add to the number of turbines visible from these LCT, and from LCT between the Proposed Development and the consented sites. Due to the separation distance to the other consented sites and their proximity to operational and consented wind farms, the addition of the Proposed Development would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** and **Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.35 **Visual Effects**: As shown on **Figure 5.17**, the Proposed Development would result in visibility from areas where Culachy would not be seen. However, the ZTV shown on **Figure 5.13** indicates that there would be visibility of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium wind farms from these areas. The Proposed Development alone would therefore not add new areas of visibility of wind turbines in addition to Culachy. **Figure 5.17** and **Viewpoints 13, 15 and 18** show that both the Proposed Development and Culachy would be visible mainly from the north and south east. In views from the north Culachy would have a lesser influence on views and the Proposed Development would have a greater influence albeit as a minor addition to the operational wind farms of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium. In views from the south east Culachy would be seen mainly from upland areas and woud have the main influence in a localised area around it on the east side of the Great Glen. The Proposed Development would be seen on a broad ridge adjacent to a group of operational wind farms and would have a lesser influence on views from the south east.

5.13.36 There would be no cumulative effects arising from the addition of the Proposed Development to Culachy from key transport routes.

5.13.37 For visual receptors the addition of the Proposed Development to Culachy would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Millennium East with the operational baseline.

5.13.38 Regarding other wind farms in planning as mentioned above these are all situated adjacent to operational and consented wind farms. The viewpoints in **Volumes 2b** and **2c** indicate that these other sites in planning would be seen mainly from uninhabited elevated locations and

not in the glens where the majority of people are situated. The Proposed Development would be visible with other sites in planning in views from core paths on the higher glen sides, plateau areas between the glens and from the upper slopes and summits of mountains in the area. The distance between the Proposed Development and other sites in planning in Scenario 3, and the location of the Proposed Development adjacent to a group of operational wind farms, means that the slight increase in turbines would result in limited additional effects when considered with other consented sites.

5.13.39 For visual receptors the addition of the Proposed Development to other operational, consented sites and other sites in planning would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Millennium East with the operational baseline.

5.13.40 **Landscape Designations**: **Viewpoint 20** is situated at the southern edge of Glen Affric NSA and shows that Culachy would be noticeable as a separate development at a distance of 32 km without other wind farms nearby. The cumulative interaction between the Proposed Development and Culachy would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.41 **Viewpoint 20** also shows that other sites in planning would be visible mainly to the south-east. These sites would adjoin operational and consented development and would be seen as extensions to these groups. The addition of the Proposed Development would slightly increase the number of turbines visible. Due to the separation distance between the Proposed Development and Glen Affric NSA and the distance to other sites in planning, the addition of the Proposed Development to these sites would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.42 **For Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA Figure 5.17** shows very limited combined visibility of both Culachy and the Proposed Development from the SLA. Both would be visible from the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh where Culachy would be visible to the south and seen as a distant feature separated from the Proposed Development by terrain and distance and appear slightly closer than the proposed turbines. The addition of the Proposed Development to Culachy would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.43 Regarding other sites in planning these would be visible from more elevated parts of the SLA such as Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and the Proposed Development would appear to add slightly to the number of turbines visible. From most of the populated and visited parts of the SLA there would not be combined visibility of the Proposed Development with other sites in planning. The addition of the Proposed Development to other sites in planning would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant).**

5.13.44 For **Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA Figure 5.17** shows very limited combined visibility of the Proposed Development and Culachy from Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA. The ZTV on **Figure 5.17** shows there would be visibility from the north-eastern slopes of Meall nan Dearcag, Sean Mheal and from the summit of Sron a' Choire Ghairbh. The addition of the Proposed Development to Culachy would therefore not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.45 Regarding other sites in planning these would not be visible from the glen floor and sides where most people are situated. The other sites In Planning would be visible from more elevated parts of the SLA and hilltops including Ben Tee. These sites would be seen adjacent to existing operational wind farms and the Proposed Development would result in a slight increase in the number of turbines visible.

5.13.46 The addition of the Proposed Development to Culachy and other sites in planning would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate/ Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.47 For **Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA Figure 5.17** shows very limited combined visibility of both the Proposed Development and Culachy. **Viewpoint 16** shows that, where visible, Culachy would be seen on lower ground and separated from the Proposed Development by distance. The addition of the Proposed Development to Culachy would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.48 Regarding other sites in planning these would be visible from upper slopes and hilltops as distant features adjacent to operational and consented wind farms. The Proposed Development would result in a limited increase in the number of turbines visible from the SLA and would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1baseline (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.49 For **Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA Figure 5.17** shows there would be combined visibility of the Proposed Development and Culachy from a small area in the south of the SLA. **Viewpoint 20** shows that Culachy and other sites in planning would be seen as distant features with all except Culachy adjacent to groups of operational and consented wind farms.

5.13.50 The Proposed Development would result in a limited increase in the amount of wind farm development visible from the SLA and would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor/ Negligible** and **Not Significant**).

Scenario 3 Beinneun 2 (In Planning)

5.13.51 **Landscape Character**: Beinneun 2 would be situated adjacent to Beinneun and Beinneun Extension Wind Farms in LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness and in LCT 237 Rocky Moorland – Lochaber adjacent to LCT 220 to the south. Beinneun 2 would increase the number of turbines in LCT 220 adjacent to a group of operational sites. The Proposed Development would slightly increase the number of turbines in LCT in addition to Beinneun 2.

5.13.52 Both the Proposed Development and Beinneun 2 would be visible in the north of the LCT unit. **Viewpoints 12** and **15** show that with increasing distance from the Proposed Development and increasing elevation more of Beinneun 2 would become visible although they would appear as separate developments in the same overall group of wind farm development.

5.13.53 The addition of the Proposed Development would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 for LCT 220 Rugged Massif (**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** and **Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.54 Turbines of Beinneun 2 would be located in LCT 237 Rocky Moorland – Lochaber and would result in impacts on the LCT unit to the south of that site. **Viewpoint 4** shows that landform would screen most of Beinneun 2 turbines and there would be limited cumulative interaction with the Proposed Development.

5.13.55 The addition of the Proposed Development would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.56 **Visual Effects**: As shown on **Figure 5.18**, the Proposed Development would result in visibility from areas where Beinneun 2 would not be seen. However, the ZTV shown on **Figure 5.13** indicates that there would be visibility of Beinneun and Extension and Millennium Wind Farms from most of these areas. The Proposed Development alone would therefore not add notable new areas of visibility of wind turbines in addition to Beinneun 2. **Figure 5.18** and the **Viewpoints** in **Volumes 2b** and **2c** show that both the Proposed Development and Beinneun 2 would be visible together mainly from more elevated areas of uninhabited land and not from the intervening glens where most people are located.

5.13.57 **Viewpoints 12, 13, 15, 16** and **19** show that both the Proposed Development and Beinneun 2 would be visible mainly from the north and west. The Proposed Development would exert a slightly greater influence on views from the north whereas Beinneun 2 would have a greater influence in views from the west and south-west.

5.13.58 There would be no cumulative effects arising from the addition of the Proposed Development to Beinneun 2 from key transport routes.

5.13.59 For visual receptors the addition of the Proposed Development to Beinneun 2 would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Millennium East alone.

5.13.60 **Landscape Designations**: **Viewpoint 20** is situated at the southern edge of Glen Affric NSA and shows that Beinneun 2 would be partly visible forming part of the same group of operational wind farms to which the Proposed Development would add. Beinneun 2 would increase very slightly the horizontal extent of wind farm development in views and the Proposed Development would result in a limited increase.

5.13.61 Adding Beinneun 2 into the full consented baseline would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Millennium East alone (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.62 For **Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, Figure 5.18** shows combined visibility of both Beinneun 2 and the Proposed Development from the SLA. **Viewpoint 14** shows there would be combined visibility of the Proposed Development with Beinneun 2 from the east side of the Great Glen in the SLA. Both wind farms would be visible from the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh where Beinneun 2 would mostly be screened by landform and seen behind the Proposed Development and adjacent operational wind farms. The addition of the Proposed Development to the consented baseline with Beinneun 2 would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.63 For **Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA Figure 5.18** shows limited combined visibility of both the Proposed Development and Beinneun 2. There would be visibility of both only from Ben Tee and a small area on the north facing slopes of Meall a; Choire Ghlais. There would also be visibility of both from Meall nan Dearcag and Sean Mheall. Beinneun 2 would have a greater influence on views from this part of the SLA. Overall, the addition of the Proposed Development to the consented baseline with Beinneun 2 would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Moderate** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.64 For **Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA Figure 5.18** shows very limited combined visibility of both the Proposed Development and Beinneun 2. **Viewpoint 16** shows that Beinneun 2 would appear closer and more noticeable than the Proposed Development which would be situated behind the group of operational wind farms. The addition of the Proposed Development to the consented baseline with Beinneun 2 would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor** and **Not Significant**).

5.13.65 For **Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA Figure 5.18** shows there would be combined visibility of the Proposed Development and Beinneun 2 from a small area in the south of the SLA. Beinneun 2 would increase slightly the horizontal extent of wind farm development in views and the Proposed Development would result in a further small increase.

5.13.66 The Proposed Development would result in a limited increase in the number of turbines visible from the SLA and would not lead to an increase in the level of significant impact reported for Scenario 1 (**Minor/ Negligible** and **Not Significant**).

5.14 Embedded Mitigation

5.14.1 Mitigation of landscape and visual effects has been undertaken through design modifications and input to the design process (informed by consultation responses and Site-specific constraints and opportunities). The design evolution and embedded mitigation measures are described in **Chapter 2** and standalone **Design and Access Statement**.

5.15 Residual Effects

5.15.1 As all mitigation for landscape and visual effects is embedded within the final design for the Proposed Development, all effects identified in this assessment and chapter are residual effects.

5.16 Summary of Effects

5.16.1 **Table** 5.15 provides a summary of the effects detailed within this chapter.

Table 5.15: Summary of Landscape and Visual Effects

Effect	Phase	Assessment Consequence	Assessment Significance
Landscape Character			
Effects on LCT 220 Rugged Massif - Inverness	Construction	Loss/ alteration of key characteristics	**Moderate** and **Significant**
	Operation		**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant** – eastern part with 2-4 km Moderate and Not Significant – northern part
Effects on LCT 225 Broad Steep Sided Glen	Construction	Loss/ alteration of key characteristics	Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on LCT 226 Wooded Glen - Inverness	Construction	Loss/ alteration of key characteristics	Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		**Moderate** and **Significant** within 5-6 km.
Effects on LCT 237 Rocky Moorland - Lochaber	Construction	Loss/ alteration of key characteristics	Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Visual Effects - Visual Receptor Groups			
Effects on visual amenity at Dalchreichart	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant**
Effects on visual amenity at Torgyle and Dundreggan	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant**
Effects on visual amenity at Bridge of Oich and Cullachy	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity at Aberchalder and Newton area	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity at Ceannacroc	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant

Effect	Phase	Assessment Consequence	Assessment Significance
Effects on visual amenity at Fort Augustus	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity at Borlum and Glendoe	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity at Glen Garry	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Visual Effects - Transport Routes			
Effects on visual amenity on A82	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on A87	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on A887	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant**
Effects on visual amenity on B862	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant**
Visual Effects - Recreation Receptors			
Effects on visual amenity on Core paths at Foyers	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on Core paths at Invergarry	Construction		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		**Moderate** and **Significant** LO11.02 only
Effects on visual amenity on Core paths between Aberchalder and Auchtertaw	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderateand Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on Core	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Negligible and Not Significant

Effect	Phase	Assessment Consequence	Assessment Significance
paths around Fort Augustus	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on Core path IN16.03	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on Core path IN16.16	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	**Moderate** and **Significant**
	Operation		**Major/ Moderate** and **Significant**
Effects on visual amenity on Core path IN05.03	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on NCR 78	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		**Moderate** and **Significant**
Effects on visual amenity on Great Glen Way	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on South Loch Ness Trail	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity on Trail of the Seven Lochs	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on visual amenity of Water-based receptors	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Visual Effects - Specific Viewpoints			
Effects on visual amenity at Loch Ness and Fort Augustus Viewpoint	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		**Moderate** and **Significant**
Effects on visual amenity at Loch Cluanie Viewpoint	Construction	Changes to views and visual amenity	Minor and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Landscape Designations			
Effects on Glen Affric NSA	Construction	Alteration of Special Landscape Qualities	Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant

Effect	Phase	Assessment Consequence	Assessment Significance
	Operation		Minor and Not Significant
Effects on Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA	Construction	Alteration of Special Qualities	Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate and Not Significant
Effects on Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA	Construction	Alteration of Special Qualities	Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Moderate/ Minor and Not Significant
Effects on Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA	Construction	Alteration of Special Qualities	Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Minor and Not Significant
Effects on Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA	Construction	Alteration of Special Qualities	Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant
	Operation		Minor/ Negligible and Not Significant

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