6 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report) evaluates the effects of the Development on the landscape and visual resource. This assessment was undertaken by Optimised Environments Ltd (OPEN).

This chapter includes the following elements:

- Legislation, Policy and Guidance;
- Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria;
- Baseline Conditions;
- Potential Effects and Mitigation;
- Assessment of Physical Effects;
- Assessment of Effects on Landscape Character Types;
- Assessment of Effects on Landscape Designations;
- Assessment of Effects on Views;
- Assessment of Effects on Principal Visual Receptors;
- Assessment of Cumulative Effects;
- Summary of Effects; and
- Statement of Significance.

Geographical Information System (GIS) figures which support this Chapter are included as Figures 6.1 to 6.23 in Volume 2b: LVIA Figures, and Visualisations which support this Chapter are included as Figures 6.24 to 6.42 in Volume 2c: Visualisations.

This Chapter of the EIA Report is supported by the following Technical Appendix documents presented in Volume 3 Technical Appendices:

- A6.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology;
- A6.2: Assessment of Effects on the Special Qualities of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park;
- A6.3: Assessment of Effects on the Ben Lui Wild Land Area;
- A6.4: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment; and
- A6.5: Assessment of Visible Aviation Lighting.

6.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

The following guidance, legislation and information sources have been considered in carrying out this assessment:

- The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017[54], as amended;
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013) ('GLVIA3')[55];
- Visual Representation of Wind Farms Version 2.2 (SNH, February 2017)[56];
- Assessing impacts on Wild Land Areas - Technical Guidance. (NatureScot 2020)[57];
- Guidance for Assessing the Effects on Special Landscape Qualities. (SNH DRAFT 2018-2019 or as updated)[58];

[54] Scottish Government (2017) The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 [Online]. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/101/contents/made (accessed 13/01/2023).
[55] Landscape Institute and IEMA. (2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition.
[56] Scottish Natural Heritage. (February 2017). Visual Representation of Wind Farms Version 2.2.
[57] Scottish Natural Heritage (2020). Assessing impacts on Wild Land Areas - Technical Guidance.
[58] Scottish Natural Heritage (2018-2019). Draft Guidance for Assessing the Effects on Special Landscape Qualities.

- Technical Guidance Note 02/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment. (Landscape Institute 2019)[59];
- Guidance – Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy development. (NatureScot 2021)[60];
- Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (SNH and TCA, 2002)[61];
- Siting and Designing of Windfarms in the Landscape: Version 3 (SNH 2017)[62];
- Policy Statement No 02/02: Strategic Locational Guidance for Onshore Windfarms in Respect of the National Heritage (SNH 2009)[63];
- Spatial Planning for Onshore Wind Turbines – natural heritage considerations, Guidance (SNH 2015)[64];
- Good Practice During Windfarm Construction, Version 4 (SNH 2019)[65]; and
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance (NatureScot 2022)[66].

6.2.1 Landscape Capacity Studies

In addition to the list of documents presented above, this LVIA has also considered all relevant capacity studies. Many of the Local Planning Authorities across the Study Area have commissioned landscape capacity studies in respect of future onshore wind farm developments. The capacity study of relevance to this assessment is the Argyll and Bute Wind Energy Capacity Study (Argyll and Bute Council 2017)[67].

The Argyll and Bute Wind Energy Capacity Study (ABWECS) was published in 2017 and attributes each LCT with a capacity rating for wind farm development. The ABWECS attributes a 'no scope' rating in respect of the very large turbines (+130m) for the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT in which the Development would be located. This rating relates to *"…the limited extent and relatively low relief of this landscape, likely effects on the strongly contained and narrow extent of inner Loch Fyne, on the small scale and diverse character of the adjoining Rocky Mosaic (20) and on views from settlement and key routes and destinations popular with visitors."*

In respect of the relevance of capacity studies to this assessment, GLVIA 3 makes the following statement at Paragraph 5.41, *"The assessment may take place in situations where there are existing landscape sensitivity and capacity studies, which have become increasingly common. They may deal with the general type of development that is proposed, in which case they may provide useful preliminary background information for the assessment. But they cannot provide a substitute for the individual assessment of the susceptibility of the receptors in relation to change arising from the specific development proposal."*

6.3 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

6.3.1 Scoping Responses and Consultations

Consultation for this EIA Report topic was undertaken with the organisations shown in Table 6.1.

[59] Landscape Institute (2019). Technical Guidance Note 02/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.
[60] NatureScot. (2021). Guidance – Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy development.
[61] Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency. (2002). Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland.
[62] Scottish Natural Heritage. (2017). Siting and Designing of Windfarms in the Landscape: Version 3.
[63] Scottish Natural Heritage (2009). Policy Statement No 02/02: Strategic Locational Guidance for Onshore Windfarms in Respect of the National Heritage.
[64] Scottish Natural Heritage (2015). Spatial Planning for Onshore Wind Turbines – natural heritage considerations, Guidance.
[65] Scottish Natural Heritage (2019). Good Practice During Windfarm Construction, Version 4.
[66] NatureScot (2022). Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance.
[67] Argyll and Bute Council (2017). Argyll and Bute Wind Energy Capacity Study.

Table 6.1: Summary of LVIA Consultation Responses

Consultee / Type and Date	Summary of Consultation Response	Response to Consultee
NatureScot 31/08/2021	*"NatureScot advise that this location is unlikely to be able to accommodate the nature, height and scale of wind farm development proposed. The Proposal is located in a highly sensitive location which may give rise to significant impacts on natural heritage resources, especially in relation to landscape. NatureScot expect cumulative landscape issues to be particularly relevant and the landscape and visual impacts are likely to be significant. As such, there is a possibility that NatureScot may object to an application for permission to build a wind farm of this scale in this location.* *The height, scale and number of turbines proposed and the requirement for aviation lighting in this highly sensitive location is likely to raise issues of national interest and potentially result in an objection from NatureScot to this Proposal."*	A full and detailed assessment of the potential effects of the Development is presented in Sections 6.7, 6.8, 6.9 and 6.10 and a cumulative assessment presented in Section 6.11. The iterative design process, described in Section 6.5.2, demonstrates the extent to which potential effects have been reduced by improvements to the layout since scoping stage. The effects of aviation lighting have been assessed in Appendix A6.5.
NatureScot 31/08/2021	*"It is advised, in particular, that the 22 x 200m high turbines could potentially result in significant adverse impacts, including cumulative and night time impacts, in relation to highly sensitive landscapes including:* *- Views and setting of Inveraray Castle Designed Landscape (including the town of Inveraray) especially as appreciated from Inner Loch Fyne area including e.g. key routes (A83 and A815, NCRs etc), hills, recreational locations and settlement.* *- Views from within Inveraray Castle Designed Landscape and conservation area of Inveraray.* *- People's appreciation and enjoyment of the special landscape qualities of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park (LLTTNP).* *- People's experience of Ben Lui Wild Land Area and Loch Etive Mountains WLA and their wild land qualities.* *- Both Loch Awe area and Loch Fyne area where the width of the receiving uplands allows relatively close views of the Proposal from both lochs/ coasts, including the sensitive settled coastal edge/ loch shore. It should be noted that the distinctive Inner Loch Fyne area, and northern Loch Awe area have particular sensitivities as highlighted in the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study (LWECS).*	The layout has been reduced to 13 turbines at a blade tip height of 180 m. Viewpoints have been included to represent the views from within the grounds of Inveraray Castle and Inveraray Conservation Area, views from The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park (LLTTNP), Ben Lui Wild Land Area, and from around Loch Fyne and Loch Awe with particular attention to the special sensitivities of these areas.
NatureScot 31/08/2021	*The location of the Proposal is also contrary to the spatial recommendations for wind energy development in the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study (LWECS). The Proposal is located in the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Mosaic landscape character type which has no scope for very large turbines (>130 m tip height) and some scope for the large turbines (80 – 130 m)"*	As stated in GLVIA 3 capacity studies"*cannot provide a substitute for the individual assessment of the susceptibility of the receptors in relation to change arising from the specific development proposal."*
	"We think it is premature to scope out the LCTs/ LCUs over 10 km distant as shown in table 6.1, where there are areas of visibility given the scale and lit nature of this proposal and advise that these	Potential significant effects would be contained within the 20 km radius making this an appropriate study area and this radius has been

Consultee / Type and Date	Summary of Consultation Response	Response to Consultee
	should be included for further consideration at this stage. A reduced radius would need to be justified and agreed."	applied to carry out a preliminary assessment (Table 6.3 at Section 6.4.2.1) to enable the assessment to focus on potential significant effects.
	"We highlight that the Proposal is immediately adjacent to (c1km) LCT20 Rocky Mosaic (West Loch Fyne) and it should be included. The assessment of effects on landscape receptors should focus on potential significant effects. Landscape effects should include effects on the landscape experience including e.g. sense of remoteness, cultural / historical aspects that influence the character and experience of the landscape. All LCTs that could be significantly affected should be included."	LCT20 Rocky Mosaic (West Loch Fyne) is included in the assessment. The preliminary assessment presented in Table 6.3 at Section 6.4.2.1 enables the assessment to focus on potential significant effects. Landscape experience is considered in the assessment presented in Section 6.7.
	"While we generally concur with the focus in Table 6.2 landscape designations and WLAs, we request one or two draft wirelines to show worst case scenario from each of the following designations with visibility at c20km before scoping these receptors out: Knapdale Melfort APQ, Ben Nevis and Glen Coe NSA, Ardchattan Priory, Ben More-Ben Ledi WLA. Confirmation of no lighting visibility from these receptors should also be provided."	Wirelines and Zones of Theoretical Visibility have been shared post-scoping with NatureScot which demonstrate the limited visibility from all the landscape designations which have been agreed to be scoped out. Hub height ZTVs have also been shared which demonstrate the very limited influence that aviation lighting would have on these areas.
NatureScot 31/08/2021	*"The proximity to ICDL, and other highly sensitive landscapes including the small scale Rocky Mosaic, Mountain Glens and Steep Ridgeland and Mountains indicate that ICDL, glen, coastal, water-based, and upland views are likely to be key. Some initial suggestions for additional LVIA assessment viewpoints to explore include representative views from:* *- Key views of / and from ICDL including key approach views such as the road bridge over the River Aray and key planned views.* *- LLTNP including key hill views e.g. Beinn Lochain, Beinn Bheula.* *- Glen Shira including scattered settlement.* *- Water based users of Loch Fyne and Loch Awe including any ferry routes/ recreational water users.* *- Loch Fyne coast in particular the stretch between St Catherine's and Newton area to include recreational and residential users e.g. beaches, caravan parks, hotels, picnic sites etc.* *- Northern Loch Awe area in particular the area of visibility in upper Loch Awe water and coast including key routes, key hill views, beaches, caravan parks, hotels, picnic sites etc.* *- Key approach/ gateway views to Loch Fyne and Loch Awe.* *- Key recreational areas and routes e.g. beaches, LDRs, NCRs, popular hills in closer proximity such as Stob an Eas etc.* *- (scattered) settlement*	The 'Assessment of Effects on Landscape Character' presented in Section 6.7 assesses the effects of the Development on landscape character. In respect of viewpoints, key views from and of Inveraray Castle GDL are included, although not the bridge over River Aray owing to no visibility as shown on Figure 6.9b. Viewpoints have also been included to represent LLTNP, Glen Shira, Loch Fyne Coast, northern part of Loch Awe, recreational areas and routes, popular hills and settlements where these fall within the ZTV and there is potential for a significant effect to arise. The viewpoint from the Pass of Brander has been replaced with a viewpoint from Cruachan Power Station as this represents fuller visibility of the development and a larger number of static visual receptors who are more susceptible to the potential effects.

Consultee / Type and Date	Summary of Consultation Response	Response to Consultee
	- Tourist attractions e.g. Auchindrain Township. *In addition, VP17 'A85, Pass of Brander' is incorrect and should be named 'A85 layby'. This needs to represent the worst case scenario, which is likely to be from the layby at NN099258."*	
	"NatureScot request the pre-application lighting information detailed in our guidance (including e.g. lighting ZTVs and wirelines) to allow us to agree night time visualisation viewpoint locations at this early stage. We advise that the locations for night-time viewpoints should be carefully reconsidered as 3 road viewpoints (VPs 1, 3 and 7) are unlikely to be representative of the range of potential significant effects. The Ben Lui WLA and Loch Etive Mountains WLA should be considered for representative night time viewpoints."	The night-time viewpoints have been selected to represent the effect that the aviation lighting would have on the visual amenity of local residents and road-users. Opportunities for night-time viewpoints within the WLAs have been explored but found to be too distant for potential significant effects to arise and not representative of the views of local people with potential to be affected. With that purpose in mind, the viewpoints have been selected to represent these visual receptors.
	"The assessment should take into account the baseline darkness / artificial lighting characteristics and people's likely use of different areas during darkness and low light (dusk / dawn) conditions. In some cases, there may be the need to select some of the LVIA assessment viewpoints on the basis of the turbine lighting impacts, as opposed to day-time visual effects. Edge of settlement locations are likely to be better lighting assessment viewpoints, compared with locations within towns/ villages (i.e. given the influence of existing street lighting, etc.). As for any component of the wind turbine, they should assess for all, where lighting will not be visible then they can just add a simple statement in the assessment table. *Importantly we advise that:* *- Night-time visualisations from a limited but proportionate number (we suggest two or three) of representative viewpoints. These may be selected on the basis of sensitivity or regular usage during low-light conditions.* *- Lighting is shown at both 200cd and 2000cd on separate visuals. Our experience shows that the visibility of aviation lights and their perceived strength depends on the night time lighting context. There is also some doubt as to how well the dimming of the lights works in the real world where conditions cover a huge range of variability. Production of visuals at 200cd and 2000cd will help to clarify the lighting scenarios and ensure that aviation lighting effects are not underplayed.* *- Photomontages should illustrate cumulative effects of lighting if there are other wind farms with lighting proposed nearby."*	The three night-time viewpoints are VP1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe and VP2: A819, Tullich and VP4: Access track above Inveraray. These have been selected as they are the closest range viewpoints, representative of local residents and road-users, who are most susceptible to the effects of night-time lighting and in locations with low light conditions, regular usage and the highest likelihood of significant effects arising. Separate visualisations will show night-time lighting at both 200 and 2,000cd intensity. The effects of cumulative lighting have been considered in the assessment and represented visually where the information is available.

6.3.2 Scope of Assessment

The key issues for the assessment of potential landscape and visual effects relating to the Development include:

- Temporary effects arising from the construction phase such as the presence of materials and plant, the construction of access tracks, foundations and crane pads and the emergence of the wind turbines;
- Permanent effects arising from the operational phase such as the presence and movement of the wind turbines and presence of the tracks, met mast and substation; and
- Indirect effects arising from the construction and operational phases such as the effects on landscape character and visual amenity owing to visibility of the onshore turbines and other infrastructure, and the removal of localised areas of forestry.

The Development comprises 13 turbines with associated infrastructure, including access tracks, a compound containing the control building, substation and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), a borrow pit search area and a permanent meteorological mast as described in Chapter 2: Development Description. The LVIA is based on turbines of up to 180 m to tip. A hub height of 112 m and a blade diameter of 136 m is shown in the visualisations and evaluated in the assessment as this is the candidate turbine being considered for the Site.

This assessment covers the construction, operational phase and decommissioning of the Development. The effects associated with the construction phase would be temporary in nature, while the effects associated with the operational phase would be permanent for up to the 40-year period of the consent. The decommissioning effects would be similar in magnitude to the construction effects.

Site Access

The Site will be accessed via two access points off the A819. A new access junction is proposed at NGR 209101, 716517, to be constructed in the north of the Site, as part of the Development, with a new crossing over the River Aray. Secondly, an existing access junction at NGR 208923, 713010 and an existing crossing over the River Aray would be replaced by a new bridge. Both access points would be capable of accepting turbine blades and components and although it is likely that only one would be used for turbine component delivery, both are assessed as such within this EIAR.

The access junction in the south of the Site will require removal of existing trees to accommodate the expansion to the junction and the overrun area to the north of the existing junction. The tree removals will extend eastwards from the A819 and across the River Aray where a new bridge will be constructed to the north of the existing bridge. Once the new bridge has been completed the existing bridge would be removed. In total an approximate area of 80m west to east and 60m north to south will be cleared, although much of this will be replanted post construction with the exception of where the new track and bridge are located in addition to the overrun area.

The effects of these removals have been assessed under Assessment of Effects on Views at 6.9.3: Viewpoint 3: A819, north of Inveraray and under Assessment of Effects on Principal Visual Receptors at 6.10.5: A819.

Forestry

Argyll Estates (the 'Landowner') is currently undertaking felling operations within the Site under their approved Long-Term Felling Plan (LTFP) and irrespective of the Development intends to fell areas within the Site in accordance with their LTFP.

The Development is not considered likely to start construction earlier than 2025. Therefore, for future baselines within assessments in this EIAR, felling scheduled for 2025 or earlier has been assumed to have been undertaken and completed. Any forestry compartments scheduled for felling beyond 2025, are assumed (within future baselines) to be existing at the point of construction and thus could be affected by the Development.

As the precise timescale for felling is not within the control of the Applicant, this approach is considered a worst-case scenario. The Applicant would have been content with a targeted approach of differential or 'keyhole' felling to facilitate the project but given the intentions of the Landowner, this worst-case scenario has been adopted for all assessments.

In accordance the Landowner's LTFP, restocking will take place within areas felled under their LTFP, whilst taking account of the wind turbine keyhole areas, tracks and associated infrastructure undertaken as part of the Development. For the purposes of this EIAR, the areas of felling considered to be covered by the Landowners LTFP and the felling considered as part of the Development is provided in Figure 2.14. The Development will require the felling of approximately 79.3 hectares (ha) of existing forestry. There will be replanting on-site, however compensatory planting of 48.7 ha will be required.

Owing to the complexity of the restocking and felling plans in respect of the different compartments and the different timescales for these operations, it is not possible to accurately reflect this complexity in the photomontages or in the narrative of the LVIA. The viewpoints with the greatest susceptibility to be affected by the restocking and felling of forestry occur in Glen Aray which lies to the immediate west of the Site and are namely Viewpoint 1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe and Viewpoint 2: A819, Tullich. An assessment that takes into consideration the effects of the forestry felling and restocking, in conjunction with the effects of the Development, is presented in respect of all LVIA viewpoints in Section 6.9.

Generally, the effects of the forestry restocking and removals will not affect the findings of the assessment of visual effects. This is because the forestry coupes largely occur within the Site and are not immediately adjacent to any of the visual receptors such as the A819 and associated residential properties. This means these coupes do not screen visibility of the Development from these receptors, but instead screen the extents to which the proposed turbines will be visible, for example, typically screening the lowest parts of the proposed turbine towers. The felling of these forest couples will, therefore, typically mean that the same extents of the Development will be visible, albeit with the lowest part of the proposed turbine towers also visible. Similarly, the re-establishment of forest coupes through restocking will mean that as they mature, only the lowest parts of the proposed turbine towers will be screened. These marginal differences will not change the findings of the assessment.

It should be noted that the felling of forestry generally detracts from the scenic qualities of an area. While commercial forestry denotes the modified nature of a landscape, it does nonetheless, present a simple and homogenous land cover that is closely associated with upland landscapes. Clear felling leaves areas appearing vacant and derelict, with the broken ground exposed and debris strewn around. While this reduces the scenic qualities of the baseline views, it can also add to the overall effect of the Development, and this is to be considered in the assessment.

6.3.3 Elements Scoped Out of Assessment

On the basis of the desk based and site survey work undertaken, the professional judgement of the EIA team, experience from other relevant projects, and policy guidance or standards, the following effects have been scoped out of this LVIA, as proposed and agreed through the scoping process.

- Effects on landscape character types lying beyond a 20 km radius of the Development and also where the influence of the Development on the landscape character types would be limited;
- Effects on national and regional designations lying beyond a 20 km radius of the Development and also where the influence of the Development on the Designations would be limited;
- The cumulative effect of the Development in the context of wind farms that lie beyond a 45 km radius from the Development turbines;
- The cumulative effect of the Development in the context of scoping stage wind farms (although scoping stage wind farms within a 20 km radius are shown in the cumulative wirelines);

- Effects arising from the process of decommissioning since they are of a similar nature to construction issues, but of a smaller scale and shorter duration. However, the results of decommissioning (i.e. the removal of the wind farm) are taken into account in assessing on-going and operational effects where appropriate.

Grid Connection

The development would require a grid connection, which would be routed through existing forest tracks and within the A819, to a new substation on the transmission system located at Creag Dubh, approximately 3 km to the north of the site's northern boundary, on the western side of the A819. While there would be some minor effects associated with the construction of the grid connection, the use of underground routing combined with its containment within existing forest tracks or along the main road would limit these effects. As there would, therefore, be no material impact from this cable routing, it does not form part of this Application, and is subject to a future application subject to the Development receiving planning consent.

6.3.4 Study Area

The initial step in the LVIA is the establishment of the Study Area for the assessment. Guidance developed by NatureScot in their Visual Representation of Wind Farms Version 2.2[68] indicates that an area with a radius of 45 km from the nearest turbine is appropriate for turbines of the size proposed. This Study Area is shown in Figure 6.1. ZTV analysis has been carried out for this area, as has mapping of landscape character, landscape related designations, wild land areas and principal visual receptors.

The Study Area is not intended to provide a boundary beyond which the Development would not be seen, but rather to define the area within which it may have a significant landscape or visual effect. A significant effect is, in reality, very unlikely to occur towards the edges of the Study Area.

A review of the wind farm context within a 45 km radius has been undertaken, based on the latest NatureScot mapping of large-scale wind farm development. It is considered that any cumulative effects that will occur, will arise as a result of the pattern of development within the 45 km Study Area radius, rather than as a result of changes beyond this. Figure 6.12 shows the locations of wind farms within 45 km that are operational, under construction, consented or which are at application stage and where the turbines are greater than 50 m to blade tip. Argyll and Bute Council and NatureScot have been issued with the list of sites to be considered within the detailed cumulative assessment – these are presented in Table 6.5. Exceptionally, scoping stage sites may also be included where they are considered to be of specific relevance to the cumulative effect of the Development.

A cut-off date of the 23rd of February 2023 was initially applied in respect of the cumulative situation to enable the completion of the visualisations and assessment. In September 2023, the cumulative assessment was updated to include the An Carr Dubh and Blarghour Variation Windfarms as the consent applications for these projects had been submitted in the intervening period.

6.3.5 Baseline Survey Methodology

6.3.5.1 Desk Study

The assessment is initiated through a desk study of the Site and the 45 km radius Study Area. This study identifies aspects of the landscape and visual resource that may need to be considered in the landscape and visual assessment, including landscape-related planning designations, landscape character typology, wild land areas, operational and proposed cumulative wind farms, and views from settlements and routes.

[68] Scottish Natural Heritage (February 2017). Visual Representation of Wind Farms Version 2.2

The desk study also utilises GIS and Resoft Windfarm software to explore the potential visibility of the Development. The resultant ZTV diagrams and wirelines provide an indication of which landscape and visual receptors are likely to be key in the assessment.

6.3.5.2 Field Survey

Field surveys are carried out throughout the 45 km radius Study Area, although the focus is on the areas shown on the ZTV to gain theoretical visibility of the Development. The baseline field survey has four broad stages:

- A preliminary familiarisation around the Study Area in order to visit the aspects of the landscape and visual resource that have been identified through the desk study and verify their existence and importance. Important features and characteristics that have not become apparent through the desk study are also identified, and particularly sensitive receptors are noted in order to inform the design process;
- A visit onto the Site, in order to establish the potential of the Site for wind farm development and identify the most suitable areas for Development in landscape and visual terms, along with any constraints that may restrict the developable area;
- Further field survey around the Study Area, concurrent with the design process for the Development, to identify those receptors that are likely to be particularly important in the assessment and inform the layout design, possible turbine height, and the extent of the Development; and
- The identification of representative viewpoints to include in the landscape and visual assessment, including a wide range of receptors, landscape character, and directions and distances from the Development.

6.3.6 Methodology for the Assessment of Effects

The significance of the potential effects of the Development has been classified by professional consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the potential effect. This section summarises the methodology and guidance used to carry out the LVIA, which is described in full in Appendix A6.1.

6.3.6.1 Categories of Effects

The LVIA is intended to determine the effects that the Development would have on the landscape and visual resource. For the purpose of assessment, the potential effects on the landscape and visual resource are grouped into the following five categories: physical effects, effects on landscape character, effects on landscape designations, effects on visual receptors and cumulative effects.

6.3.6.2 Assessment of Effects

The broad principles used in the assessment of significance of the various categories of effects are the same and are described below. The detailed methodology for the assessment of significance does, however, vary, and the specific criteria used are described in Appendix A6.1.

The objective of the assessment of the Development is to predict the likely significant effects on the landscape and visual resource. The significance of effects is assessed through a combination of two considerations; the sensitivity of the landscape receptor or view and the magnitude of change that will result as a consequence of the addition of the Development.

6.3.6.3 Sensitivity

Sensitivity is an expression of the ability of a landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the Development. Sensitivity is determined through a combination of the value of the receptor and its susceptibility to the Development. The factors that determine these criteria are described in Appendix A6.1.

Levels of sensitivity - high, medium-high, medium, medium-low and low - are applied in order that the judgement used in the process of assessment is apparent.

6.3.6.4 Magnitude of Change

Magnitude of change is an expression of the extent of the effect on landscape and visual receptors that will result from the introduction of the Development. The magnitude of change is assessed in terms of a number of variables, including the size and scale of the impact and the extent of the affected area. The factors that determine these criteria are described in Appendix A6.1.

Levels of magnitude of change - high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, low and negligible - are applied in order that the judgement used in the process of assessment is apparent.

6.3.6.5 Assessment of Significance

The significance and level of effects are assessed through a combination of the sensitivity of the landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of change that will result from the addition of the Development. While this methodology is not reliant on the use of a matrix to determine a significant or not significant effect, a matrix is included in Table 6.2 below to illustrate how combinations of sensitivity and magnitude of change ratings can give rise to significant effects and the level of those effects in terms of major, moderate or minor. The matrix also gives an understanding of the threshold at which significant effects may arise, where a moderate level of effect is assessed.

Table 6.2: Assessment of Significance Matrix

Magnitude of Sensitivity	**High**	**Medium-High**	**Medium**	**Medium-Low**	**Low**	**Negligible/ None**
High	Significant (Major)	Significant (Major)	Significant (Major / moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)
Medium-High	Significant (Major)	Significant (Major / moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)
Medium	Significant (Major / moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Minor)
Medium-Low	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Negligible)
Low	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Negligible)	Not Significant (Negligible)

Effects within the dark grey boxes in the matrix are considered to be significant with either a Major or Major / Moderate level of effect. Effects within the light grey boxes may be significant or not significant depending on the specific relevant factors that arise at a particular landscape or visual receptor and here the level of effect is Moderate. Effects within the white boxes are considered to be not significant at either a Moderate / Minor, Minor or Negligible level. In accordance with GLVIA3, experienced professional judgement is applied to the assessment of all effects and reasoned justification is presented in respect of the findings of each case.

A significant effect occurs where the Development will provide a defining influence on a landscape element, landscape character receptor or view, albeit that it may be one of a number of defining characteristics. A not significant effect occurs where the effect of the Development is not material,

and the baseline characteristics of the landscape element, landscape character receptor, view or visual receptor continue to provide the definitive influence. In this instance, the Development may have an influence, but this influence will not be definitive.

6.3.6.6 Cumulative Assessment

NatureScot's 'Guidance – Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy development'[69] is widely used across Scotland to inform the specific assessment of the cumulative effects of wind farms. This guidance provides the basis for the methodology for the cumulative assessment.

"The purpose of a Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) is to describe, visually represent and assess the ways in which a proposed wind farm would have additional impacts when considered with other consented or proposed wind farms. It should identify the significant cumulative impacts arising from the proposed wind farm."

The addition of the Development to the operational and under construction wind farm context is assessed in cumulative terms within the main assessment. This includes the assessment of the effects of the Development in the context of the operational wind farms, with Clachan Flats located within a 10 km radius of the Development and An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas located within a 20 km radius, as shown in Figure 6.12.

The cumulative section of the LVIA, presented in Section 6.11, assesses the effects arising from the addition of the Development to a context including two further scenarios of wind farm development, as follows:

- Consented scenario – operational and under construction wind farms plus consented wind farms; and
- Application scenario – operational, under construction and consented wind farms plus application stage wind farms.

Baseline operational and under construction cumulative wind farms are taken into consideration in both the assessment of the Development itself and the cumulative assessment, while consented and application-stage wind farms are considered only in the cumulative assessment.

The aim of the Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) is to focus on, and determine, the likely significant cumulative landscape and visual effects. Significant cumulative landscape and visual effects are likely to arise where wind farm developments become a prevailing landscape and visual characteristic as a result of the additional effects of the Development, albeit that they may become one of a number of prevailing characteristics.

6.3.6.7 Nature of Effects

The 'nature of effects' relates to whether the effects of the Development are positive/beneficial or negative/adverse. Guidance provided in GLVIA3 states that "thought must be given to whether the likely significant landscape and visual effects are judged to be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) in their consequences for landscape or for views and visual amenity" but does not provide an indication as to how that may be established in practice. The nature of effect is therefore one that requires interpretation and reasoned professional opinion.

In this assessment, beneficial, neutral and adverse effects are defined as follows:

- Beneficial effects contribute to the landscape and visual resource through the enhancement of desirable characteristics or the introduction of new, beneficial attributes. The removal of undesirable existing elements or characteristics can also be beneficial, as can their replacement with more appropriate components;
- Neutral effects occur where the Development neither contributes to nor detracts from the landscape and visual resource and is accommodated with neither beneficial nor adverse

[69] NatureScot (2021). Guidance – Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy development'

effects, or where the effects are so limited that the change is hardly noticeable. A change to the landscape and visual resource is not considered to be adverse simply because it constitutes an alteration to the existing situation; and

- Adverse effects are those that detract from or weaken the landscape and visual resource through the introduction of elements that contrast, in a detrimental way, with the existing characteristics of the landscape and visual resource, or through the removal of elements that are key in its characterisation.

All effects in this LVIA are assessed to be adverse and, therefore, not repeated in respect of each individual landscape or visual receptor.

6.3.6.8 Duration and Reversibility of Effects

The effects of the Development are of variable duration, and are assessed as short-term or long-term, and permanent or reversible. The construction would last approximately 24 months and would be considered short term. They would include those effects associated with the groundworks, construction of the compounds, control building, substation, BESS, access tracks, borrow pit, crane pads and turbine foundations, as well as the erection of the turbines and the felling of specific areas of forestry. The tall cranes would be apparent intermittently and over a shorter duration. Borrow pit excavation would also be short-term as the borrow pit would be restored at the end of the construction process, although a permanently altered ground profile may remain evident.

It is anticipated that the operational life of the Development will be 40 years. The turbines, site access tracks and control building, substation and battery storage compound would be apparent during this time, and these effects are considered to be long-term and reversible on decommissioning.

The reversibility of effects is variable. The most apparent effects on the landscape and visual resource, which arise from the presence and movement of the turbines, are reversible as the turbines would be removed on decommissioning. The effects of the BESS, control building and substation, as well as the tall cranes and heavy machinery used during the construction and decommissioning periods are also reversible. It is anticipated that access tracks would remain at decommissioning. Turbine foundations and underground cabling would be left in-situ below ground with no residual landscape and visual effects.

In order to avoid repetition, the duration and reversibility of effects are not reiterated throughout the assessment.

6.3.6.9 Graphic Production

The written LVIA is accompanied by a set of graphics contained in Volume 2b and Volume 2c. Reference is made throughout the written text to these graphics, as they are an integral part of the overall assessment and of importance in illustrating specific matters. They should be viewed in accompaniment to the written text.

The graphics can be divided into two categories; maps and visualisations. The maps are based on the 45 km Study Area around the Development and present data of relevance to the assessment, such as the location and extent of landscape designations and representative viewpoints. ZTV maps are also included. These digitally calculate the extent and level of theoretical visibility across a given area, using Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 mapping as the basis for the calculations. As this terrain model is based only on the 'bare earth', it does not take account of potential screening by vegetation or buildings, and this is why it is referred to as theoretical and not actual visibility.

The visualisations are based on the 19 viewpoint locations which are representative of the visual amenity of visual receptors in the area surrounding the Development. These viewpoints have been shared with Argyll and Bute Council and NatureScot. For each viewpoint there is baseline photography, and wirelines of the Development and the 'bare earth' landform for the same extent as shown in the photography. In accordance with NatureScot's visualisation guidance, the viewpoints also have accompanying photomontages. These use the baseline photography and add

onto this a computer-generated model of the Development. More detailed information on graphic production is included in the Assessment Methodology in Appendix A6.1.

6.3.7 Night-time Assessment

The nature of the daytime and night-time visual effects arising from wind farms differs considerably, as during daylight hours visibility of the large-scale moving turbines gives rise to effects that are very different to the pinpoint effects of lighting at night. As a result, the assessment of sensitivity and magnitude of change for night-time effects is carried out using different criteria/definitions than those for daytime views. These are described in Appendix A6.1.

6.3.8 Assessment Limitations

Photographs and other graphic material such as wirelines and photomontages used in the assessment are for illustrative purposes only and, whilst useful tools in the assessment, are not considered to be completely representative of what will be apparent to the human eye. The assessment itself is carried out from observations in the field and therefore may include elements that are not visible in the photographs.

6.3.8.1 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

There are limitations in the theoretical production of ZTVs, and these should be borne in mind in their consideration and use:

- Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 Digital Terrain Model (DTM) has been used to generate the ZTV's within the Study Area. The analysis is based on visibility at points on a 5 m grid and does not take into account local, small-scale landform changes in analysing theoretical visibility.
- The ZTVs illustrate the 'bare ground' situation, and do not take into account the screening effects of vegetation, buildings, or other local features that may prevent or reduce visibility;
- The ZTVs do not indicate the reduction in visibility that occurs with increased distance from the Development. The nature of what is visible from 3 km away will differ markedly from what is visible from 10 km away, although both are indicated on the ZTVs as having the same level of visibility; and
- It is important to remember that there is a wide range of variation within the visibility shown on the ZTV. For example, an area shown on the blade tip ZTV as having visibility of all of the turbines may gain views of the smallest extremity of blade tips, or of full turbines. This can make a considerable difference in the effects of the Development on that area.

These limitations mean that while the ZTVs are used as a starting point in the assessment, providing an indication of where the Development will theoretically be visible, the information drawn from the ZTVs is not completely relied upon to accurately represent visibility of the Development.

6.3.8.2 Visualisations

Limitations associated with the visualisations are set out in full in Appendix A6.1 and summarised here.

The visualisations are based on theoretical visibility from 1.5 metres above ground level. There are limitations in these theoretical productions, and these should be borne in mind in the consideration and use of the wireline images. Firstly, the wireline illustrates the 'bare ground' situation, not taking into account the screening effects of vegetation, buildings, or other local features that may prevent or reduce visibility. Secondly, the wireline is based on OS Terrain 5 DTM, so there may be local, small-scale landform variations that are not reflected in the wireline but may alter the actual visibility of the Development, either by screening theoretical visibility or revealing parts of the Development that are not theoretically visible. Thirdly planning conditions are likely to allow the locations of the turbines to be horizontally micro-sited to a small degree and the levels of the turbine bases have not yet been established in detail as this will be determined through site investigations and engineering design. Both of these factors may alter the base and therefore the

tip heights of the turbines above ground level from those that are assumed in the assessment and shown in figures. Such variation may also affect ZTVs.

Where descriptions within the assessment identify the numbers of turbines visible this refers to the theoretical illustrations generated and therefore the reality may differ to a degree from these impressions, for example, in reality fewer turbines may be visible but not more. These factors are unlikely to make a material difference to the outcome of the assessment.

Not all areas of the Study Area are publicly accessible, and this has limited the specific assessment of views from residential and other properties, for example. Notwithstanding these limitations, the assessors consider that there is sufficient information available, from publicly accessible viewpoints, to form a competent assessment of the likely landscape and visual amenity effects.

6.3.9 Embedded Mitigation

Embedded mitigation, relevant to the LVIA, relates to site selection and the iterative design of the layout. The Development will be located on the eastern side of Glen Aray. The enclosed nature of the valley landscape gives rise to a contained ZTV, whereby the extents of visibility are limited by the enclosure of the ridgelines to the west and east. The location has been largely determined by the suitability of this upland area for the production of wind energy, its separation from the main centres of population and its location in a glen where there is a baseline influence from extensive commercial forestry and the routing of the overhead electricity transmission line.

There is very limited opportunity to mitigate landscape and visual effects outwith standard mitigation measures undertaken in the iterative design process. There is, therefore, no additional mitigation to be considered in the LVIA.

Residual effects are those effects which remain after mitigation. The residual effects that the Development will have on landscape and visual receptors are assessed in Sections 6.7 to 6.11. These are categorised into physical effects, effects on landscape character, effects on landscape designations, effects on viewpoints, effects on principal visual receptors, and cumulative effects. These are considered at the three main stages of the project, namely, construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning.

6.4 Baseline Conditions

The baseline section of the LVIA records the existing conditions of the Study Area. Establishing a baseline helps to gain an understanding of what makes the landscape distinctive and what its important components or characteristics are. The baseline is instrumental in the identification of the landscape character receptors, visual receptors and viewpoints that are included in the assessment. This section is presented under the following headings:

- The Site;
- Landscape Character;
- Landscape Planning Designations;
- Viewpoints;
- Principal Visual Receptors;
- Trends and Projected Future Baseline: and
- Cumulative Wind Farm Developments.

6.4.1 The Site

The Site is located approximately 4.7 km north of Inveraray in Argyll and Bute. It is situated in an afforested area on the eastern slopes of Glen Aray. The landform rises from an elevation of approximately 100 to 120 m AOD along the western site boundary in the glen to approximately 380 to 400 m AOD along the eastern site boundary close to the ridgeline. The slope is relatively even and without any especially steep sections, rising beyond the eastern boundary of the Site to Stuc Scardan, which at 487 m AOD forms the high point along the enclosing ridge. The alignment

of River Aray and the enclosing ridges to the west and east, is north to south, with the water course passing through the valley to join Loch Fyne at Inveraray to the south.

The Site sits within an area characterised by the combination of uplands, glens and lochs. Loch Awe lies to the north and Loch Fyne to the south, both following a north-east to south-west alignment. Loch Fyne is a sea loch, extending to reach the west coast and connect with the Atlantic Ocean, while the shorter Loch Awe is an inland loch. The hills which separate these lochs lie broadly between 300 m and 500 m AOD, making them smaller compared to the mountainous regions to the north and east. The upland parts are characterised by open moorland, while forestry covers many of the lower slopes around the intervening glens and lochs.

Roads and settlement occur through some of the glens and around some of the lochs, although both are relatively sparse and dispersed with much of the area without access or human habitation. The main roads include the A83 which passes down the western side of Loch Fyne and the A85 which passes along the north side of Loch Awe. The A819 connects these two roads, following the north to south route through Glen Aray and passing by the western boundary of the Site. Inveraray is the closest settlement, approximately 4.7 km to the south of the Site, while other small settlements occur intermittently along both the west and east coasts of Loch Fyne.

The closest operational wind farm is Clachan Flats, which lies a minimum of approximately 6 km to the east of the Site, albeit separated by Glen Shira and its enclosing ridges. The location of Clachan Flats on an upland hill side means that it has very limited visibility from the surrounding loch sides and glens but is readily apparent from surrounding hills. All other operational wind farms lie to the west with none occurring in the more mountainous landscapes to the north and east. These include An Suidhe at a minimum of approximately 9 km to the south-west, Carraig Gheal at a minimum of approximately 13 km to the north-west, A Chruach at a minimum of approximately 22 km to the south-west, and Cruach Mhor at a minimum of approximately 26 km to the south. The pattern of wind farm development in this area is relatively sparse and dispersed, although with some baseline influence occurring.

6.4.2 Landscape Character

In early 2019, NatureScot published an update to the characterisation of Scotland's landscape as a digital resource. The information builds on the characterisation studies published in the 1990's. NatureScot describe the recent publication as now superseding the 1990s landscape character descriptions and mapping adding that "*Where there are topic-specific landscape capacity or sensitivity studies, they would take precedence for informing that development type, e.g. windfarms.*"

The 'topic specific' characterisation study which covers the western and central parts of the 45 km Study Area is:

- Argyll and Bute Council area – Argyll and Bute Wind Energy Capacity Study, 2017 (ABWECS).

The eastern part of the 45 km Study Area is not covered by a 'topic specific' characterisation study, but by NatureScot's detailed Landscape Character Assessment for LLTTNP Park which was updated in 2020. Where NSAs occur in Argyll and Bute, the ABWECS does not provide detailed information on landscape characterisation, and in these instances NatureScot's 2019 Landscape Character Assessment will be used.

These three sources of information, therefore, form the most up to date characterisation studies across the 45 km Study Area and, as such, form the basis of character assessment undertaken in the LVIA.

The ABWECS shows the Site to be located in a Landscape Character Type (LCT) classified as LCT6a Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic, with LCT4 Mountain Glens occurring to the west and east, and LCT20 Rocky Mosaic to the south. Landscape Character is shown in Figure 6.2a and with the blade tip ZTV of the Development overlaid in Figure 6.8. The key to the LCTs is shown in Figure

6.2b. Where more than one area of a LCT occurs, these are distinguished as Landscape Character Units (LCUs) with a geographic name derived from that location used in the naming.

The ZTV shows an especially contained pattern of theoretical visibility as a result of the screening effect of the surrounding hills. Theoretical visibility is concentrated in the first 5 to 10 km around the Site and then occurs in localised patches or bands beyond that. The most notable of these more distant areas of visibility are the patch across the hills at the northern end of Loch Awe and the long band running south through Loch Fyne.

6.4.2.1 Landscape Character Types / Units to be included in the detailed assessment

Table 6.3 presents the preliminary assessment of all of the LCTs / LCUs that are found in the 20 km radius Study Area and indicates which of them are considered to have potential to undergo a significant effect or significant cumulative effect as a result of the Development, and which of them do not require further detailed assessment. The 13 LCTs / LCUs that do have potential to undergo a significant effect, or significant cumulative effect, as a result of the Development, are shaded grey in the table and assessed in detail in Section 6.7 of this Chapter.

Table 6.3: Preliminary Assessment of Effects on Landscape Character

Receptor Name LCT / LCU	**Nearest turbine approx. (km)**	**Subject to theoretical visibility?**	**Need to assess effects further within LVIA?**
1. Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU	3	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 3 km+ means the Development will appear close range and large scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur extensively across this LCU with the main patches to the west and north; • The Development will add to the cumulative situation due to the presence of Clachan Flats within this LCU. • The Development will present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms in the area.
1. Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU	7	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 7 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and large scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur as patches in the northern part with the remainder of the LCT largely unaffected; • The Development will add to the cumulative situation in which Clachan Flats presents a slightly closer, albeit smaller operational wind farm.
2. High Tops LCT	4	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 4 km+ means the Development will appear close range and large scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur as patches on the southern margins around Beinn Bhuidhe, Ben Cruachan and Binnein an Fhidhleir; • The Development will add to the cumulative situation in which Clachan Flats presents a slightly closer, albeit smaller operational wind farm.
4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Aray LCU	1	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 1 km+ means the Development will appear close range and large scale;

Receptor Name LCT / LCU	Nearest turbine approx. (km)	Subject to theoretical visibility?	Need to assess effects further within LVIA?
			• ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur continuously through this LCU although forest cover will notably reduce actual visibility; • The Development will present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms occurring in the area.
4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Shira LCU	2	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 2 km+ means the Development will appear close range and large scale; • ZTV shows low-level theoretical visibility to occur across the eastern side of the glen; • The Development will present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms occurring in the area.
4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Fyne LCU	7	No	No, as there is no theoretical visibility shown on the ZTV.
4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Orchy LCU	11	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 11 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows very small patches of low-level theoretical visibility in the western part of the glen; • Actual visibility will be partly reduced by forest cover in this LCU.
4. Mountain Glens LCT / River Awe LCU	14	No	No, as there is no theoretical visibility shown on the ZTV.
6a. Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT	0	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 0 km+ means the Development will appear close range and large scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur extensively across the northern part of this LCT; • The Development will present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms in the area.
7. Craggy Upland / East Loch Awe LCU	3	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • The hills to the immediate west of the site effectively screen visibility from this close range LCU; • ZTV shows very small patches of theoretical visibility on the summits of the higher hills along the eastern margin with the vast majority of the LCU unaffected; • The presence of operational An Suidhe in this LCU establishes wind farms as a closer baseline influence.
7. Craggy Upland / West Loch Awe LCU	10	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 10 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows patches of low-level theoretical across the higher hills, mostly where operational wind farms are located; • The presence of operational Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas in this LCU establishes wind farms as a closer baseline influence.

Receptor Name LCT / LCU	Nearest turbine approx. (km)	Subject to theoretical visibility?	Need to assess effects further within LVIA?
7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / East Loch Awe LCU	0	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 0 km+ means the Development will appear close range and large scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur as a patch in the southern part of this LCU; • The Development will present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms occurring in the area.
7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / West Loch Awe LCU	7	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 7 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur almost continuously across this LCU with variable levels of visibility occurring; • The Development would present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms occurring in the area.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU	3	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 3 km+ means the Development will appear close range and large scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur as patches of low-level visibility across this LCU; • The Development would present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms occurring in the area.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / West Loch Fyne LCU	15	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 15 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows very small patches of low-level theoretical visibility beyond 23 km; • Other closer range operational wind farms already have an influence on this LCU.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne north LCU	10	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 10 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur extensively across this LCU with the main patches to north and south; • The Development will present the closest wind farm despite other wind farms occurring in the area.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne south LCU	16	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 16 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur extensively across the northern part of this LCU; • The Development will add to the cumulative situation in which A Chruach and Cruach Mhor present a baseline influence.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / West Loch Awe LCU	17	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 17 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale;

Receptor Name LCT / LCU	Nearest turbine approx. (km)	Subject to theoretical visibility?	Need to assess effects further within LVIA?
			• ZTV shows low-level theoretical visibility to occur along the northern part of the coastline; • The Development will add to the cumulative situation in which Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas present a baseline influence.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Awe LCU	6	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 6 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows very small patches of low-level theoretical visibility; • Forest cover in the areas where theoretical visibility is shown will limit actual visibility.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / North Loch Awe LCU	9	Yes	Yes, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 9 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur almost continuously along this coastline; • Actual visibility will be reduced by the extent of tree cover in this area.
250 Steep Ridge and Hills LCT / Beinn Bheag LCU	15	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 14 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows theoretical visibility to occur in patches across north facing slopes; • Actual visibility will be notably reduced by the extent of coniferous forestry across this area.
250 Steep Ridge and Hills LCT / Beinn Bheula LCU	10	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 10 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows small patches of theoretical visibility on summits of hills with vast majority of LCU unaffected; • Other operational wind farms, including Clachan Flats, already have an influence on this LCU.
250 Steep Ridge and Hills LCT / Ardgoil	13	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 13 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows small patches of theoretical visibility on summits of hills with vast majority of LCU unaffected; • Other operational wind farms, including Clachan Flats, already have an influence on this LCU.
251 Highland Summits / Beinn an Lochain	11	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 11 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows small patches of theoretical visibility on summits of hills with vast majority of LCU unaffected; • The closer range operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm already has an influence on this LCU.

Receptor Name LCT / LCU	Nearest turbine approx. (km)	Subject to theoretical visibility?	Need to assess effects further within LVIA?
251 Highland Summits / Beinn Ime and Ben Lui	13	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 13 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows small patches of theoretical visibility on summits of hills with vast majority of LCU unaffected; • The closer range operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm already has an influence on this LCU.
251 Highland Summits / Ben Donich	12	Yes	No, owing to the following reasons; • Separation distance of 12 km+ means the Development will appear middle range and medium scale; • ZTV shows small patches of theoretical visibility on summits of hills with vast majority of LCU unaffected; • The closer range operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm already has an influence on this LCU.

6.4.3 Landscape Planning Designations

There are three ways in which landscape planning designations are relevant to the LVIA:

- The presence of a designation can give an indication of a recognised value that may increase the sensitivity of a landscape character receptor, viewpoint or visual receptor, and may therefore affect the significance of the effect on that receptor;
- The presence of a relevant designation can lead to the selection of a representative viewpoint within the designated area, as the viewpoint will provide a representative outlook from that area; and
- Designated areas may be included as landscape character receptors so that the effects of the Development on these features of the landscape that have been accorded particular value can be specifically assessed.

Through the EIA scoping process, there was no objection from the statutory consultees to the proposed approach, whereby those planning designations unlikely to undergo significant effects as a result of the Development would be scoped out of the LVIA assessment. This judgement was made by undertaking a preliminary assessment of the potential effects, informed by site reconnaissance and an analysis of the ZTV overlaid on the designations map.

The Site is not covered by either a national or local level landscape designation which would otherwise denote a special scenic value. There are, however, a number of different landscape designations occurring across the 45 km Study Area, which are shown in Figure 6.3 and in conjunction with the ZTV in Figures 6.9a and 6.9b. At the national level, within the Study Area there is one National Park (NP), eight NSAs and 19 Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs). The closest national level landscape designation is the LLTTNP, which lies a minimum of approximately 11 km to the south but also wrapping around to the east. The closest GDL is Inveraray Castle which extends north into Glen Aray and Glen Shira to come within 1 km of the Site.

Regional landscape designations are designated through the Local Development Plans (LDPs) and denote the regional value of these landscapes. In the Council's part of the 45 km Study Area, there are seven Areas of Panoramic Quality (APQs), while on the margins, Perth and Kinross Council and The Highland Council, designate Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) and Stirling Council and Inverclyde Council designate Local Landscape Areas (LLAs). The closest regional level landscape designation is the North Argyll APQ, which wraps around the north and east of the Site, coming within close proximity, but not covering the Site.

WLAs are not a landscape designation but a Mapped Interest, defined and described by NatureScot and considered to be of national importance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)[70]. There are seven WLAs in the 45 km Study Area, as shown in Figure 6.3 and in conjunction with the ZTV in Figures 6.9a and 6.9b. These are mostly associated with the mountainous areas to the north-east, but also the more remote islands to the south-west.

6.4.3.1 National Parks and National Scenic Areas

National Parks (NPs) and Scenic Areas (NSAs) are areas of land considered to be important on a national level and are designated by NatureScot. In NPF4 (Scottish Government, 2023), Policy 4 on Natural Places sets out the following protections for NPs and NSAs

"Development proposals that will affect a National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest or a National Nature Reserve will only be supported where:

i. The objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the areas will not be compromised; or

ii. Any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance."

LLTTNP is the only NP in the Study Area. Despite the very limited extents of theoretical visibility that the ZTV in Figures 6.9a and 6.9b show would occur across the NP, the sensitivity of this designated area, combined with its medium proximity at a minimum distance of approximately 11 km from the Development, means that there is the potential that a significant effect may arise. Through the scoping process it was agreed that a detailed assessment of the effects of the Development on the LLTTNP would be included in the LVIA. This is presented in Appendix A6.2 with reference to NatureScot's 'Landscape Character Assessment Loch Lomond and the Trossachs – Landscape Evolution and Influences' (2019)[71] and following SNH's 'Guidance for Assessing the Effects on Special Landscape Qualities' (2018)[72].

There are also eight NSAs within or partly within the 45 km Study Area. As agreed through the scoping process, these NSAs have been discounted from the detailed assessment owing mainly to a combination of distance from the Development and limited extents of visibility, such that significant effects would not arise.

6.4.3.2 Gardens and Designed Landscapes

Historic Environment Scotland is responsible for designating Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs). These are contained in an Inventory which can be accessed at http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/gardens. The descriptions contained in the Inventory identify the special qualities which merit the designation of each GDL.

The relevant planning policy is Policy 7 of NPF4:

"Development proposals affecting nationally important Gardens and Designed Landscapes will be supported where they protect, preserve or enhance their cultural significance, character and integrity and where proposals will not significantly impact on important views to, from and within the site or its setting."

Through the EIA scoping process, there was no objection from the statutory consultees to the proposed approach, whereby those GDLs unlikely to undergo significant effects as a result of the Development would be scoped out of the LVIA assessment. This judgement was made by undertaking a preliminary assessment of the potential effects, informed by an analysis of the ZTV overlaid on the designations map and site reconnaissance. A review of the finalised Development has also been undertaken to ensure that the impacts will not increase from those considered at the scoping stage.

[70] Scottish Government (2023). National Planning Framework 4
[71] NatureScot (2019). Landscape Character Assessment Loch Lomond and the Trossachs – Landscape Evolution and Influences
[72] SNH (2018). Guidance for Assessing the Effects on Special Landscape Qualities (Draft)

Although there are 19 GDLs in the 45 km Study Area, the preliminary assessment in the Scoping Report concludes that two GDLs have the potential to undergo a significant effect, namely Inveraray Castle GDL and Ardanaiseig GDL. The ZTV in Figures 6.9a and 6.9b show that 17 GDLs will either not be affected by theoretical visibility, or that theoretical visibility will be limited in extents and/or levels, such that a significant effect would not arise.

6.4.3.3 Areas of Panoramic Quality

'Areas of Panoramic Quality' (APQ), formerly Regional Scenic Areas (Strathclyde Structure Plan, 1991), are designated at a regional level by Argyll and Bute Council. APQs are covered by Policy LDP 3 of the Argyll and Bute LDP (2015) which states;

"A development will not be supported when it has not been ascertained that it will avoid adverse effects, including cumulative effects, on the integrity or special qualities of international or nationally designated natural and built environment sites."

There are eight APQs within or partially within the 45 km study area as shown in Figure 6.3. The ZTV in Figures 6.9a and 6.9b shows the limited extent of theoretical visibility across many of these designated areas, including the Bute and South Cowal APQ and Knapdale / Melfort APQ. Through the Scoping Request it was agreed that a detailed assessment of the effects of the Development on the North Argyll APQ, West Loch Fyne APQ and East Loch Fyne APQ would be included in the LVIA. It was agreed that the other five APQs would be discounted owing to limited visibility and separation distances. As there are no citations for the APQs, the assessment has been based on the landscape character assessments of the constituent LCTs and LCUs that make up each APQ, as well as an understanding of the landscape character of each APQ derived from extensive site work.

6.4.3.4 Wild Land

Wild Land is recognised in NPF4 (2023) and regional planning policy as a nationally important mapped interest, and not a designation. While WLAs are afforded protection for their wildness qualities, they are not statutorily protected in the way that NPs and NSAs are for their scenic qualities. Figure 6.3 shows the distribution and extent of WLAs across the 45 km Study Area.

The assessment of effects on WLAs follows guidance set out in NatureScot's 'Assessing the Impacts on Wild Land: Technical Guidance' (2020)[73] ('the 2020 Guidance'). NatureScot, on its website, states that the 2020 Guidance is the appropriate guidance to be applied in the assessment of effects on WLAs in place of the previous 2017 Draft Guidance.

Whether a WLA assessment is required, is discussed in paragraph 5 of the 2020 Guidance, with the need considered to be highly likely where the development is located within a WLA, but less likely where the development is located outwith the WLA. The Wildness Qualities of the WLAs are described in terms of either physical attributes or perceptual responses. As the Development lies outwith the WLAs, it will have no effect on the physical attributes of any of the WLAs in the 45 km Study Area. While the Development may have an effect on the perceptual responses of the WLAs, in respect of the fact that there are no WLAs within a 10 km radius of the Development, it is unlikely that the perceptual responses of any of the WLAs will be significantly affected. Furthermore, the presence of operational wind farms already in this area, as shown in Figure 6.12, illustrates the extent of the existing influence form large scale energy developments that form the baseline context to the WLAs and already affect the perceptual responses experienced within these WLAs.

Through the scoping process, the potential effects of the Development have been considered in respect of all WLAs. This considered the separation distance between the WLA and the Development, the extents and levels of visibility across the WLA, the association between the WLA and the location of the Development, and existing influences from other developments including onshore wind farms.

[73] NatureScot (2020). Assessing the Impacts on Wild Land: Technical Guidance.

The findings of this preliminary appraisal undertaken through the scoping process were that the Ben Lui WLA and Loch Etive Mountains WLA have the potential to be significantly affected by the Development and, therefore, requires a detailed assessment. It also found that the other WLAs, do not have the potential to be significantly affected owing mainly to the substantial separation distances between the WLAs and the Development, but also the limited extents of visibility, and limited association between the WLAs and the location of the Development.

A review of the potential effects of the Development on the Loch Etive Mountains WLA has been undertaken following the reduction in the number and size of the proposed turbines presented in the scoping layout. Wirelines and cumulative wirelines produced from this area illustrate the limited influence that the Development would have on the WLA and the ZTVs in Figures 6.9a and 6.9b show the very limited extent of the WLA that would be affected. Referring back to NatureScot guidance which states that is less likely that a WLA assessment be required if the Development is outside the WLA, in this case the Development is more than 10 km outside the WLA and with notably closer operational wind farms already influencing the perceptual responses experienced in the southern margins of this WLA, form where the Development would also be visible.

A detailed assessment of the Ben Lui WLA is presented in Appendix 6.3 with reference to SNH's 'Description of Wild Land Areas' (2017)[74] and in accordance with NatureScot's 2020 Guidance.

6.4.4 Viewpoints

The assessment of landscape and visual effects is informed by a series of 19 viewpoints which are selected to represent visibility from landscape character types, landscape planning designations and principal visual receptors around the Study Area. These include points of specific importance such as recognised viewpoints, designated landscapes, settled areas, important routes and attractions. A variety of landscape character types and locations from different directions and distances have also been represented. Viewpoints for the landscape and visual assessment have been discussed and agreed in consultation with NatureScot and Argyll and Bute Council.

It should be noted that while the majority of the viewpoints are chosen to represent receptors that have potential to undergo a significant effect, this is not always the case, and some viewpoints that are included demonstrate a lower level of visibility from certain locations.

The viewpoint assessment is used to inform and illustrate the assessment of effects on landscape character as well as the assessment of effects on views and principal visual receptors. The viewpoints used in the assessment are set out in Table 6.4, and detailed assessment for each of these is presented in Section 6.9. The viewpoint locations are shown in conjunction with the blade tip ZTV in Figures 6.5a (45 km) and 6.5b (20 km) and the hub height ZTV on Figure 6.6a (45 km) and Figure 6.6b (20 km).

The process of identifying viewpoints involves extensive investigation to ensure that the final viewpoints are representative of levels of visibility around the Study Area, and that they clearly illustrate the predicted visibility of the Development.

Table 6.4: Representative Viewpoints

Viewpoint	Grid reference	Distance / Direction	Representative
VP1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe	209344 717978	1.53 km north-west	Road-users North Argyll APQ
VP2: A819, Tullich	208905 715871	1.32 km west	Road-users / Residents
VP3: A819, north of Inveraray	208546 714168	1.70 km south-west	Road-users
VP4: Access track above Inveraray	209162 708362	6.54 km south	Residents / Road-users West Loch Fyne APQ

[74] SNH (2017). Description of Wild Land Area – Ben Lui.

Viewpoint	Grid reference	Distance / Direction	Representative
VP5: Inveraray Castle Grounds	209388 708876	5.99 km south	Residents / Visitors
VP6: Forest track above St Catherine's	213009 707031	8.02 km south-east	Walkers
VP7: A815, Ardnagowan	210232 705790	8.88 km south	Residents / Road-users East Loch Fyne APQ
VP8: A815, Strachur	208667 702374	9.20 km south	Residents / Road-users East Loch Fyne APQ
VP9: Rubha nam Frangach	207274 704531	6.76 south-west	Walkers West Loch Fyne APQ
VP10: St. Conan's Kirk	211604 726728	9.57 north	Residents / Visitors North Argyll APQ
VP11: Kilchrenan	204397 722862	6.46 north-west	Road-users North Argyll APQ
VP12: Ben Cruachan	206960 730468	10.00 north-west	Walkers Loch Etive Mountains WLA North Argyll APQ
VP13: Ben Lui	226637 726298	14.41 north-east	Walkers LLTTNP Ben Lui WLA
VP14: Beinn Ime	225480 708485	9.44 south-east	Walkers LLTTNP
VP15: Beinn Bhuidhe	220374 718722	4.58 east	Walkers Ben Lui WLA North Argyll APQ
VP16: Beinn Lochain	216034 700610	13.18 south-east	Walkers LLTTNP
VP17: Cruachan Power Station	207747 726821	9.60 north-west	Visitors North Argyll APQ
VP18: Dun na Cuaiche	210064 710134	4.67 south	Walkers North Argyll APQ
VP19: Stob an Eas	218537 707404	6.41 south-east	Walkers North Argyll APQ

6.4.5 Principal Visual Receptors

A number of visual receptors such as settlements and travel routes are considered in the assessment as views from them may be affected by the Development. It is not possible to consider every potential visual receptor in the Study Area due to the extent of ground that it covers and the assessment, therefore, concentrates on the key visual receptors that may gain visibility of the Development such as settlements and routes. Principal visual receptors are shown in Figure 6.4 and in conjunction with the blade tip ZTV in Figure 6.10.

6.4.5.1 General Visibility

The ZTVs of the Development shown on Figures 6.5 to 6.11 show a general pattern in which theoretical visibility would be concentrated in the first 15 km and then occurring more patchily beyond this. The location of the Development on slightly lower hills within a predominantly upland area means that long-distance visibility is generally contained by surrounding hill summits.

Where visibility does occur, this tends to be either across surrounding low-lying areas, or on upland areas facing the Site. This leads to a pattern of general visibility across the surrounding glens, including Glen Aray and Glen Shira; along nearby lochs, including Loch Fyne to the south-west and Loch Awe to the north-west; on the immediate upland area surrounding the Site, to the west, north and east; and on nearby hill slopes facing towards the Site, including around Ben Cruachan to the north and some limited visibility across hill summits within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park to the south-east.

General visibility to the west, east and south-east is contained within an area of approximately 5 – 15 km, due to screening by surrounding uplands. To the south-west, along Glen Fyne, theoretical visibility is more widespread, extending out to the edge of the Study Area. However, actual visibility across this area would be reduced by land cover and settlement. To the north, beyond patches of visibility within approximately 15 km around Ben Cruachan, there are other longer-distance areas of theoretical visibility, including at a distance of between 20 to 30 km to the north of Loch Etive, and at a distance of more than 40 km to the north of Loch Linnhe. Views from these very long-distance areas are likely to feature existing wind farm development as a feature.

The ZTV indicates that the greatest potential for significant landscape and visual effects would occur within the first 15 km radius of the Study Area with sensitive landscape and visual receptors also being susceptible in the localised areas showing theoretical visibility beyond this.

6.4.5.2 Settlements and Residents

The majority of the Study Area comprises an upland landscape where there is no human habitation. The hills are defined by lochs and rivers, and it is in these lower-lying areas that settlement occurs. Small towns and villages typically occur intermittently along the shorelines of the lochs, with a dispersal of small clusters or individual properties between the settlements and into the glens.

At 4.7 km south of the Development, Inveraray is the closest settlement, while the closest properties occur intermittently along Glen Aray, adjacent to the western side of the Site. Other small settlements which occur around the northern end of Loch Fyne include Cairndow at the northern end and Creggans / Strachur on the eastern shore. Around the northern end of Loch Awe, there are the small settlements of Lochawe, Stronmilchan, Kilchrenan and Cladich, with isolated farmsteads and rural properties across the wider low-lying landscape.

The Argyll and Bute Development Plan identifies areas which it regards as 'Settlement' and these identified boundaries are shown in Figure 6.4 and in conjunction with ZTV in Figure 6.10. None of the Settlements lie within 4 km of the Development. The ZTV shows that Inveraray and Creggans / Strachur are the settlements with potential to be significantly affected by the Development and, therefore, are assessed in detail in Section 6.10 of this Chapter.

Properties within the area immediately around the Site are sparse with the closest residential properties occurring at Ladyfield, North Tullich, South Tullich and Drimfern. The Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA), presented in Appendix A6.4, sets out the detailed assessment of the individual properties within a 2 km radius of the Development.

6.4.5.3 Road Routes

Access in the Study Area is largely concentrated alongside the lower-lying loch shores, with some routes passing through the glens and over lower upland areas. The closest road to the Site is the A819, which follows the north to south route of the River Aray, passing by the western boundary of the Site. The A819 links the A85 in the north with the A83 in the south, with the A85 passing alongside the northern shore of Loch Awe and the A83 passing along the western shore of Loch Fyne.

The ZTV in Figure 6.10 shows theoretical visibility to be most extensive along the A819, which passes close to the Site. Theoretical visibility in respect of the other roads is predominantly low in levels and limited in extents. This reflects the low-lying location of most roads, which typically follow the courses of the loch shorelines and river valleys. Furthermore, the sheltered nature of these lower-lying landscapes, means that they often contain either broadleaved tree cover or

coniferous forestry, which further reduces the levels and extents of actual visibility. These factors apply to the A85 and A83 from which visibility of the Development would be limited owing to a combination of intervening landform and vegetation.

The A819 has potential to be significantly affected by the Development and, therefore, is assessed in detail in Section 6.10 of this Chapter.

6.4.5.4 Walking and Cycling Routes

Figure 6.4 shows the location and extent of long-distance walking routes and cycling routes in the 45 km Study Area, with the majority of these routes located more than 10 or 20 km from the Development. The closest long distance walking route is the Cowal Way which connects Lochgoilhead with Strachur to the south of the Development, before extending further south to Kames on the Kyle of Bute. While this route comes within 13 km of the Development, the ZTV in Figure 6.10 shows that there is very little visibility largely owing to the relatively low-lying route of the Cowal Way amidst a surrounding upland landscape. The closest cycle way is National Cycle Route 78 (NCR78) which follows the western shoreline of Loch Awe between Ford in the south and Taynuilt in the north, via Kilchrenan. While this route comes within 9 km of the Development, the ZTV in Figure 6.10 shows that there is very little visibility and where visibility does occur it would be relatively low in level.

The other long-distance walking and cycle routes in the Study Area are more distant and are shown on the ZTV in Figure 6.10 to be subject to very limited extents and / or low levels of visibility such that there would be no potential for significant effects to arise, largely owing to the contained nature of the ZTV combined with the generally low-lying locations of the routes.

The closest routes comprise the relatively short core paths located around Inveraray, Inveraray Castle and the western Loch Fyne shoreline to the south of the Development at approximately 4 to 6 km. Despite the limited extents to which they would be affected, the core paths around Inveraray, all with potential to be significantly affected by the Development, are assessed in detail in Section 6.10 of this chapter.

6.4.6 Trends and Projected Future Baseline

In terms of Climate Change, the Sixth Assessment Report produced by the International Panel for Climate Change[75] makes the following headline statements;

"A. The Current State of the Climate

A.1 It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred.

A.2 The scale of recent changes across the climate system as a whole and the present state of many aspects of the climate system are unprecedented over many centuries to many thousands of years.

A.3 Human-induced climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. Evidence of observed changes in extremes such as heatwaves, heavy precipitation, droughts, and tropical cyclones, and, in particular, their attribution to human influence, has strengthened since the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5)."

The key features of climate change in respect of the Scottish climate are generally warmer and wetter conditions. As well as an increase in rainfall, there will also be a greater risk of flooding with more frequent occurrence of heavy downpours over short periods of time. As settlement and

[75] IPCC, 2022: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Löschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, B. Rama (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA, 3056 pp., doi:10.1017/9781009325844

roads are typically located along the valley floors and loch shores of the Study Area, this means these areas are most susceptible to flooding. Farmland will also be increasingly at risk, especially where run-off from adjacent hillsides washes into lower-lying areas or where rivers or lochs spread into farmed floodplains. Warmer conditions are also giving rise to the spread of pests and diseases, which are not only endangering forestry and other tree species, but also the wildlife dependent on tree cover for their survival.

The most notable changes which are occurring throughout the Study Area, are the felling and replanting of coniferous forestry, which has become mature, and the limited increase in wind farm development. Figure 6.12 shows the extent of operational, under construction and consented wind farm developments, as well as those at application stage and in scoping. The approach of the assessment to cumulative effects is outlined below and a more detailed assessment is contained in 'Assessment of Cumulative Effects' Section 6.11. It must be noted that wind farm consents are time limited and that in the absence of applications for repowering of wind farms, decommissioning would be the default.

Existing settlements at close range are relatively small and their growth has typically occurred incrementally. The Argyll and Bute Council Local Development Plan shows limited provision for future growth in surrounding settlements such as Inveraray, Strachur and Lochawe. The majority of developments in the rural area comprise individual properties or small clusters of properties, which are unlikely to grow substantially.

Forestry comprises a substantial part of the landcover across the Study Area, especially across the small to medium hills that surround Loch Fyne and Loch Awe. In the 'Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy' (2011) there is a map entitled 'Indicative Potential for Woodland Expansion' which highlights preferred and potential areas for the expansion of forestry. Through Glen Aray, while much of the land is already identified as existing planted woodland, the middle to upper slopes which are not, are identified as 'preferred' areas for planting, and the lower slopes as 'potential' areas for planting. The only 'sensitive' areas occur across the eastern slopes of Stuc Scardan to the east, Beinn Ghlas further to the north and around Inveraray to the south. The Strategy shows the proposed long-term commitment to forestry in the area of Glen Aray.

As part of the Development, a 'key-hole' will be cleared in the forestry around each of the 13 turbines. This will amount to a 120 m radius in the forest cover. These areas will be kept free of forestry during the 40 year lifespan of the Development, with the potential for forestry to be replanted following decommissioning.

6.4.7 Cumulative Wind Farm Developments

Both NatureScot and GLVIA3 advise in their guidance that the assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with the Development should encompass the effects of the proposal in conjunction with existing, under construction, consented and application stage wind farms awaiting determination. Schemes that are at the pre-planning or scoping stage are generally not considered in the assessment of cumulative effects because firm information on which to base the assessment is not available. The list of proposals presented in NatureScot guidance (2021, p4)[76] is as follows:

- *"existing development, either built or under construction;*
- *approved development, awaiting implementation; and*
- *proposals awaiting determination within the planning process with design information in the public domain. Proposals and design information may be deemed to be in the public domain once an application has been lodged, and the decision-making authority has formally registered the application."*

The developments to be included within the CLVIA are set out in Table 6.5 below. As stated in NatureScot guidance (2021, p5);

[76] NatureScot (2021). Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy development.

"The key principle for all impact assessments is to focus on the likely significant impacts and those which are likely to influence the outcome of the consenting process.".

The cumulative situation changes frequently as applications are made or withdrawn, and the layouts of submitted application wind farms are changed. It is, therefore, necessary to agree on a cut-off date when the sites and layouts to be included are fixed. This has been set at the 23rd of February 2023 and while typically any changes in the cumulative situation after this date would not be incorporated in the assessment, the following updates have been made. Owing to the close proximity of Blarghour and An Carr Dubh and their more recent change in status from scoping stage to application stage, these changes have been included in the assessment.

The size of the cumulative wind farms is also of relevance to the CLVIA, in terms of the number and size of the turbines. In respect of the cumulative context, the strongest influences will arise from those wind farms in close proximity to the Development. The larger the development, generally the higher the likelihood of a significant cumulative effect. Turbines of less than 50 m are not included within the assessment as they have a limited influence as part of the cumulative context.

A total of 25 sites lie within a 45 km radius of the Development and these are listed in Table 6.5 below. Sites that lie outwith a 45 km radius of the Development have been discounted due to their distance from the Development which ensures that either one or both will be seen from a considerable distance away and, therefore, will have a very limited effect.

Table 6.5 indicates whether or not cumulative wind farms are referenced in the LVIA. Their separation distance from the Development, turbine height and number are the key reasons for excluding sites within the cumulative context as they are considered to not have the potential to contribute to the Development having a significant cumulative effect.

Table 6.5: Cumulative wind energy development within a 45 km radius

Name	Status	Number of turbines	Blade tip height	Distance in km
A Chruach	Operational	21	126.5	21.87
An Suidhe	Operational	23	80	10.56
Barran Caltunn	Operational	2	54 / 67	25.46
Beinn Ghlas	Operational	14	55	14.95
Blarghour Farm	Operational	1	27.13	9.77
Carraig Gheal	Operational	20	110 / 125	12.47
Clachan Flats	Operational	9	93	6.36
Cruach Mhor	Operational	35	71	25.70
Underheugh	Operational	3	27	40.08
A Chruach II	Consented	2	135	22.76
Blarghour	Consented	17	136.5	5.71
Creag Dhubh	Consented	9	114.9 / 124.3 / 130.6 / 144.4	10.43
Strachur House	Consented	1	40	12.19
Blarghour Variation	Application	14	180	4.62
An Carr Dubh	Application	13	180	4.97
Glasvaar	Appeal/Application	11	149.9	22.47
Ard Ghaoth	Scoping	10	100	44.83
Achanelid	Scoping	5	110	24.46

Name	Status	Number of turbines	Blade tip height	Distance in km
Balliemeanoch	Scoping	27	126.5	26.61
Achnaba	Scoping	13	N/A	24.67
Musdale	Scoping	26	179.5	13.46
Garraron	Scoping	7	125	28.32
Barmolloch	Scoping	0	N/A	26.18
Craobh Haven	Scoping	0	N/A	30.35
Carn Dearg	Scoping	0	N/A	27.10
Eredine	Scoping	26	180	9.04

All operational and under construction sites are included in the baseline assessment as they form a part of the baseline situation. Their presence has the potential to influence the assessment of effects on landscape character and the assessment of effects on views. The cumulative assessment of the operational and under construction sites, as well as the consented and application sites, is presented in the 'Assessment of cumulative effects' in Section 6.11. This assessment differs from that contained in the 'Assessment of effects on landscape character' and 'Assessment of effects on views' in that it focuses specifically on the cumulative effect of the Development in association with all other cumulative sites and assesses the detailed relationship between them.

6.5 POTENTIAL EFFECTS AND MITIGATION

6.5.1 Potential Effects

Potential effects are those which could result from the construction, operation and decommissioning of a wind farm, as a result of the Development, Site and receptor characteristics and their interactions. Table 6.6 describes typical landscape and visual effects that can occur from a wind farm; their inclusion does not imply that they will occur or be significant in the case of the Development. A variety of landscape and visual mitigation measures have been incorporated through the iterative design of the Development in order to prevent, reduce or offset potential landscape and visual effects. These are described in the section on mitigation below. The residual effects of the Development – those effects remaining after mitigation that will materialise when the Development is under construction, operation or decommissioning, are assessed in the 'Assessment of effects on landscape character', 'Assessment of effects on landscape designations', 'Assessment of effects on views' and 'Assessment of effects on principal visual receptors' in Sections 6.7, 6.8, 6.9 and 6.10.

Table 6.6: Potential effects of construction, operation and decommissioning

Activity	Specific Element	Potential Effects	Potential Sensitive Receptors
Construction	Construction plant, borrow pit excavation, temporary construction facilities, temporary meteorological mast, construction cranes, forestry felling	Temporary physical effects on landscape fabric Temporary effects on landscape character Temporary effects on views Temporary cumulative effects	Physical landscape features e.g. trees and ground cover Landscape character receptors – landscape character types, wild land areas and designated landscapes Views – experienced by different receptors e.g. residents, road users, walkers
Operation	Turbines, access tracks, restored borrow pit, meteorological mast, substation, site office, transformers	Long term effects on landscape character Long term effects on views Long term cumulative effects with other wind farms	

Activity	Specific Element	Potential Effects	Potential Sensitive Receptors
Decommissioning	Construction plant, cranes	Temporary physical effects on landscape fabric Temporary effects on landscape character Temporary effects on views	

The effects of the Development on the landscape and visual resource will arise principally from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the turbines, control building, substation and BESS, access tracks and one borrow pit. The temporary construction facilities, such as cranes, construction vehicles, construction compounds, laydown areas and delivery vehicles required during the construction will also have effects on the landscape and visual resource. It is anticipated that construction of the Development will take up to approximately 24 months; the construction effects identified are therefore predicted to occur during this period and end at the start of the operational stage. While the majority of the effects during the construction phase would relate to the tall cranes, it is anticipated that the cranes would be active on Site for approximately nine weeks, subject to favourable and safe weather conditions, making this an especially short-term effect. A Construction Management Statement will be prepared that will further detail the mitigation measures to be implemented during the construction phase. It is anticipated that the Development will be in operation for up to 40 years. On completion of its operational life an application for consent may be submitted to retain or replace the turbines and associated infrastructure, or alternatively they will be decommissioned.

6.5.2 Mitigation

This section describes the landscape and visual mitigation measures which have been incorporated through the iterative design of the Development. It should be read in conjunction with the full project description and the rationale for site selection and scheme design in Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design, and Chapter 2: Development Description.

6.5.2.1 Site Selection

The Site lies within an area of Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT which is characterised as a narrow band of gently undulating ridges with relatively steep sides, which provide a setting for the settled fringes of Loch Fyne, featuring a simple land cover of forestry and moorland The suitability of the Site for wind farm development relates principally to the landscape character of the Site and this has been realised through the location of the operational A Cruach Wind Farm partially within this LCT. Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Allt Dearg and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms also lie in close proximity to this LCT and exert an influence on its landscape character. The existing influence from these operational wind farm developments has established wind farm development as a baseline feature of this landscape.

The Development would not be located in any designated landscape, although it would be located in close proximity to the North Argyll APQ. The Development would also not be located in a WLA and would be located a minimum of approximately 6 km from WLA 06 Ben Lui. The Development would, therefore, have no direct effect on the designated LLTTNP and mapped interest WLA. Furthermore, the indirect effects on the LLTTNP and WLA are assessed to be not significant as presented in Appendix A6.2 and A6.3.

General visibility is described in detail in Section 6.4.5.1, highlighting the relatively contained pattern of visibility that would arise across the Study Area, with patchy visibility occurring across the hills surrounding the Site; along Loch Fyne to the south-west; and around Loch Awe and surrounding hills to the north-west. This contained pattern relates largely to the screening effect of surrounding uplands, most notably the ridge of higher hills along the south-eastern side of the Site which would notably reduce the extent of visibility across the eastern half of the Study Area. Furthermore, the Cumulative ZTVs in Figures 6.13 to 6.16 shows that in upland areas where

visibility of the Development would arise, there would typically be existing visibility of the operational wind farms including Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, and A Cruach. This means that in those upland locations where visibility of the Development would arise, it would seldom appear as a new feature owing to existing visibility of the operational developments. In lowland locations, where operational wind farms are not readily visible, the Development would often occur as a new feature.

The visibility of the Development from visual receptors within the wider area, including roads, settlements and core paths, is limited to localised areas and short sections of routes. The potential effect of the Development on visual receptors is assessed in Section 6.10.

6.5.2.2 Layout design

The design of the wind farm layout is a vital part of the EIA process as it is the stage where the most notable contribution can be made to mitigate potential landscape and visual effects. This helps to create a wind farm which is appropriate for the existing landscape character and visual features of an area. The iterative design process allows the effects of different wind farm layouts to be assessed then modified to prevent, reduce or offset effects. The residual effects reported in the following sections, therefore, include considerable embedded mitigation in the form of design refinement and consideration against landscape and visual objectives, for example, arranging turbines with respect to landform features, particular consideration of a view of the wind farm from a highly valued landscape, or ensuring the arrangement of turbines is aesthetically balanced from sensitive viewpoints.

In order to minimise negative effects on landscape character and visual amenity, a number of design principles were considered. Insofar as was possible, given the other technical and environmental constraints on the Site, these principles sought to reduce significant effects through alterations to layout, design and siting, management practices and mitigation. The design objectives are based upon the characteristics of the existing landscape and visual environment, described in the section on 'Baseline Conditions' above, and are set out as follows:

- To create a visually legible design, insofar as was possible on a site, which is constrained by other environmental and technical issues, and create a simple, positive layout, viewed consistently from different positions;
- To reduce the effects of the Development on the sensitive and close range Inveraray Castle GDL, including the Dun Na Cuaiche Tower;
- To ensure that the Development in views from hills within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park appears a compact and well-defined group in which the turbines relate well to the landform and each other;
- To ensure that the infrastructure follows the line of the slope, as far as possible;
- To group turbines to create a balanced and coherent image, avoiding where possible excessive 'stacking' or overlapping of turbine rotors in lines, favouring an irregular cluster, that reflects the nature of the undulating landscape;
- To site buildings and borrow pit within low lying areas enclosed by forestry; and
- To group the infrastructure in order to limit the number of areas affected.

The iterative design process has refined the original layout to help mitigate the potential effects of the Development on the landscape and visual receptors. The sequence of iterative design layouts is illustrated in Figure 3.2(a-e). The key considerations have been the potential effects on the close range Inveraray Castle GDL and North Argyll APQ; close range sensitive receptors within the nearby Glen Aray; and middle range LLTTNP but also taking into account other sensitive receptors using wirelines from key viewpoints to inform the process. Environmental constraints, relating to areas with special sensitivities in respect of cultural heritage assets, ornithology, hydrology and peat, as well as constraints of gradient, also have to be taken into account in the design iteration and this has discounted areas from wind farm development.

6.5.3 Residual Effects

The residual effects are those which remain after mitigation. The residual effects that the Development will have on the landscape and visual resource are assessed in the sections presented below. These are categorised into physical effects, effects on landscape character, and effects on views, as described previously. Cumulative effects are assessed in the 'Assessment of cumulative effects' later in this chapter at Section 6.11.

6.6 Assessment of Physical Effects

6.6.1 Introduction

The first category of effects covered in the assessment is physical effects, which are direct effects on the fabric of the Site, such as the removal of ground cover vegetation and forestry. Physical effects are found only on the Site, where existing landscape elements may be removed or altered by the Development. This category of effects is made up of landscape elements and, in this case, the one element that will be affected is coniferous forestry which covers most of the Site.

The methodology for the assessment of physical effects is described in full in Appendix A6.1

6.6.2 Forestry

Baseline

Commercial forestry covers most of the Site, with plantations extending from the east of the A819 up across the western slopes of Stuc Scardan (487 m AOD) and Creag Dhubh (491 m AOD). There are also open area comprising upland moorland to the immediate west and south-west of Stuc Scardan (487 m AOD) that extends further south-west across the slopes of Ceann Chreagan. While the OS map shows forestry planting blanketing the hill sides, recent aerial photography and site work shows that the central part of this forest area has been clear felled. While the forestry on the lower slopes is more mature, the forestry on the upper slopes has been recently planted and is still immature. The overall appearance is of a mixed age, single species commercial forest.

The forestry predominantly comprises sitka spruce with only very small pockets of deciduous typically confined to gullies around hill streams. The edges of the forest blocks are geometric and do not correspond with the more organic shape of the landform, denoting the human influence in their cultivation and management. Existing forest tracks provide access from the A819 in Glen Aray on the western side of the forest and extend across the hill slopes to enable the management of the forest – these are clearly visible from the glen where the area of clear felling occurs. The absence of car parking, signage or recognised routes discourages recreation within this forest.

The overall appearance is of a mixed age, single species commercial forest, with the central clear-felled section presenting a notable detractor in terms of the quality of the local landscape.

Sensitivity

Coniferous forestry is a common feature in this landscape. The most important consideration that reduces its sensitivity to change is the fact that the forestry has been planted as a commercial crop, with the intention that it will eventually be felled and replanted. It is not indigenous or naturalised woodland and does not contribute to the integrity of the landscape or typify its inherent character. This is evident from the use of single species, the geometric layout of the plantations and the rotational systems of planting and clear felling which mean large areas are the same age and are likely to be felled at the same time. There is also a high potential for mitigation as the replanting of forestry is straightforward and part of standard forestry management. The coniferous forestry does, however, form a notable characteristic of the upland landscape and provides contrast to the open moorlands on the surrounding hills.

The value of the coniferous forestry is low on account of its cultivated origins as a crop and contrived appearance, and its susceptibility is low due to the relative ease with which it can be

reinstated. The combination of these factors results in a **low** sensitivity being attributed to the coniferous forestry on the Site.

Magnitude of Change

All 13 of the turbines will be located in the area of forestry that occurs on Site. While the two turbines in the north-west of the Site will be located in the area of more mature forestry, the remaining 11 will be located in the area of new planting where the forestry is immature. The access track will extend east from the A819 to enter the north-western part of the Site and it's route will wynd up the hillside through the area of more mature forestry before extending across the area of clear felling and branching off across the area of new planting to access each turbine, with the exception of the two turbines in the north-west where they are located in the more mature forestry. The location of the BESS in the north-western part of the Site will also give rise to a small amount of forestry removal.

'Keyholes' will be cleared within the forest cover around each of the 13 turbines. It is anticipated that these will be 120 m in radius and 240 m in diameter. These areas will not be replanted during the operational life of the Development. In respect of the two turbines in the north-west, the removal of these key holes of more mature forestry will make apparent openings in the forest cover. In respect of the remaining 11 turbines, the removal of the immature forestry will not make a notable difference owing to their individual lack of scale and group sense of enclosure. Similarly, the removal of a corridor of the more mature forestry in the north-west to accommodate the access road will be apparent, albeit often screened by the remaining forestry around, while the tracks through the areas of new planting will only require the loss of immature trees.

The magnitude of change on the physical element of coniferous forestry will be **medium**, relating to the localised loss of some more mature tree species more than the more extensive loss of the immature species.

Significance of Effect

The physical effect of the Development on the coniferous forestry will be **not significant (minor)**. This is primarily due to the low sensitivity of the landscape element, the limited proportion of the more mature forestry that will be affected, and the high potential for the mitigation of any direct effects. Although the effect will be not significant, the nature of the effect will be adverse.

6.6.3 Rough Grass Moorland

Baseline

Rough grass moorland covers a much more limited extent of the Site compared to coniferous forestry. It comprises mostly rough grasses, which grow from soil that tends to be peat based and often waterlogged, albeit with drier upper slopes and summits. This type of landcover is typical throughout much of the Argyll and Bute. It contributes to the open and exposed parts of the upland landscape and provides contrast from the enclosure of the commercial forestry plantations. While ecological diversity occurs within the rough grass moorland at a detailed scale, the general appearance is of a homogenous landcover. There are open areas comprising upland moorland to the immediate west and south-west of Stuc Scardan (487 m AOD) that extends further south-west across the slopes of Ceann Chreagan and smaller patches around the peripheries of the woodland blocks.

Sensitivity

In an upland area with relatively extensive commercial forestry, the rough grass moorlands contribute to the more open and less modified character of the landscape. While it is a relatively abundant landscape element that is not rare or recognised for its value, within the diversity at the detailed scale there are landscape elements within it which are of greater value owing to the importance of the flora and fauna. The value of the rough grass moorland is medium.

The susceptibility of the rough grass moorland to the effects of the Development is low as it occurs in abundance across the upland landscape Furthermore, the rough grass species are sufficiently invasive to enable them to re-colonise disturbed areas and can re-establish in relatively short periods of time.

The combination of these factors results in a **medium-low** sensitivity being attributed to the rough grass moorland on the Site.

Magnitude of Change

Changes to the rough grass moorland landscape element will result as a consequence of the removal of soil and vegetation from the routes of the new access tracks, and along the edge of the upgraded access tracks where widening is required, in the areas of the temporary construction compound and the longer-term BESS, sub-station, control buildings, crane pads, turbine foundations and borrow pit.

The magnitude of change on the rough grass moorland element will be **medium-low** as the Development will result in the removal of relatively small areas, which constitute a small proportion of this extensive landscape element. This rating has also taken into account the relative ease with which this vegetation type can re-colonise. The location of the turbines, tracks and other associated infrastructure have been carefully located to avoid the more sensitive habitats within this landscape element.

Significance of Effect

The physical effect of the Development on the rough grass moorland will be **not significant (minor)**. This is primarily due to the medium-low sensitivity of the landscape element, the limited proportion of the landscape element that will be affected, and the high potential for the visual mitigation of any direct effects through reinstatement of the rough grass moorland ground cover. Although the effect will be not significant, the nature of the effect will be adverse.

6.7 Assessment of Effects on Landscape Character

6.7.1 Introduction

Landscape character is the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape and relates to the way in which this pattern is perceived. Effects on landscape character are manifested both on the Site, where the pattern of elements that characterise the landscape will be directly altered by the addition of the Development to the landscape; and off-site, around the Study Area, where visibility of the Development may alter the way in which this pattern of elements is perceived. For example, if the Development is visible from the Glen Aray LCU of the Mountain Glens LCT, the perceived experience of this area may be altered as the visibility of the wind farm introduces new external influences and characteristics, despite its physical location in a different, geographically separate, LCT.

Landscape character receptors fall into two groups:

- LCTs/LCUs; and
- Designated areas.

The assessment of effects on these receptors is described in the following sections of this chapter. The detailed methodology for the assessment of effects on landscape character is described in Appendix A6.1.

It should be noted that levels of magnitude of change on landscape character receptors are generally found to be lower than the magnitude of change on viewpoints that lie within these receptors. This means, for example, that if a viewpoint is assessed to undergo a medium-high magnitude of change it does not necessarily follow that the landscape character receptor within which it lies would also undergo a medium-high magnitude of change but may undergo a medium magnitude of change instead.

This is because the effects on viewpoints are assessed within the context of a specific outlook towards the site and are usually specifically selected to gain a direct view over the Development. The Development is therefore the principal consideration in the viewpoint assessment, and influences that lie in other areas of the view are of lesser relevance to the assessment. The landscape character of a receptor is not, however, determined so specifically by the outlook over the Development, and there are many other considerations, both visual and perceptual, that combine to give an area its landscape character. This means that the degree of influence of the Development on landscape character may be lower than its influence on a specific view. Viewpoints are referred to in this assessment as they do give a useful indication of the appearance of the Development from the landscape receptors, but the level of magnitude of change may vary between the viewpoint assessment and the landscape character assessment.

This is particularly true of areas that lie slightly further away from the Site. In the immediate vicinity of the Site, typically up to around 2 to 3 km away – the magnitude of change on viewpoints and landscape character is likely to be similar, but beyond this, the magnitude of change on landscape character is found to often diminish more rapidly as the influence of the turbines is subsumed in the many other influences on landscape character.

6.7.2 Assessment of Effects on LCTs and LCUs

The LCTs and LCUs that cover the Local Study Area of a 20 km radius are shown in conjunction with the ZTV in Figure 6.8. Through the scoping process, no objection was raised by statutory consultees to the proposed approach to scope out LCTs and LCUs beyond a 20 km radius of the Development. The scoping report presented a preliminary assessment of those LCTs and LCUs within the 20 km radius, which found that the following LCTs and LCUs have the potential to undergo significant effects and, therefore, require a detailed assessment in the LVIA.

- 1. Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU;
- 1. Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU;
- 2. High Tops LCT;
- 4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Aray LCU;
- 4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Shira LCU;
- 6a. Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT;
- 7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / East Loch Awe LCU;
- 7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / West Loch Awe LCU;
- 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU;
- 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne north LCU;
- 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne south LCU;
- 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / West Loch Awe LCU; and
- 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / North Loch Awe LCU.

The effect on each of these 13 LCTs / LCUs is assessed below. The LCTs / LCUs that cover the remainder of the Study Area were found through the preliminary assessment presented in the scoping report, to not have the potential to be significantly affected and have, therefore, not been assessed in any further detail. Table 6.3 in section 6.4.2.1 sets out this preliminary assessment.

6.7.3 1. Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU

Baseline

The following 'Key Characteristics' of this LCT have been extracted from 'Landscape Assessment of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde' (1996).

- *"Dramatic mountain ridges with steep, plummeting slopes and numerous rocky outcrops.*
- *Ribbon lochs and meandering rivers on narrow floodplains form dramatic contrast to surrounding slopes.*
- *Extensive coniferous plantations on lower slopes and open moorland or bare rock faces on upper slopes and summits.*

- *Contrast between open land on upper slopes beyond the head dyke, and large fields enclosed by stone walls within lower valley.*
- *Scattered birch woodland alongside burns and on upper slopes and oak woodland on sheltered lower slope.*
- *Settlement confined to narrow strip along loch edge and concentrated in small bays and at heads of lochs."*

The Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT occurs twice in the Study Area, with the Clachan LCU occurring to the east of the Development within a range of 3 to 12 km and the East Loch Fyne LCU occurring to the south within a range of 7 to 45 km.

The Clachan LCU is a relatively small LCU covering the upland area that sits to the immediate north of the north-western end of Loch Fyne. The landform comprises the high points of Beinn Chas (680 m AOD) and Clachan Hill (658 m AOD) in the north of the LCU, from which the ridge runs south-west following the alignment of Glen Shira to the north-west and Glen Fyne to the south-east. This LCU forms a single mass of hills with steep lower slopes and a more broadly rounded summit, albeit with some steep slopes to the north-west of Beinn Chas and Clachan Hill.

This LCU is covered in commercial forestry, with the exception of the north-eastern part where the upper slopes of Beinn Chas and Clachan Hill remain open with a covering of rough moorland. some of the steeper lower slopes and the higher summits in the north, where the landcover comprises open moorland. Clachan Wind Farm is located across the south-western slopes of Clachan Hill and comprises eight turbines. The busy A83 follows the shoreline boundary along the south-east of this LCU and provides access to the intermittent rural properties. An overhead transmission line passes through the southern part of Glen Fyne and northern shoreline of Loch Fyne before veering west across the southern part of this LCU.

Sensitivity

The value of this LCU is medium-high as it is covered by the North Argyll APQ, which denotes a special scenic value at the regional level.

The susceptibility of this LCU to the effects of the Development is medium-low. Despite the close proximity of this LCU to the Development and the close association between the uplands of this LCU and the neighbouring LCU on the opposite side of Glen Shira, where the Development will be located, there are a number of factors which moderate the susceptibility. Firstly, there is an operational wind farm in this LCU which makes it a close range and established part of the baseline character. Secondly, the majority of this LCU is enclosed by forestry which reduces its association with other surrounding landscapes, including the LCU where the Development will be located.

The combination of the medium-high value of the LCU with its medium-low susceptibility to the Development, gives rise to an overall **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows theoretical visibility occurring almost continuously across western and northern parts of this LCU, with no theoretical visibility occurring across eastern part which forms the western slopes adjacent to Loch Fyne. The ZTV indicates that lower levels of visibility will occur across the lower to middle slopes on the eastern side of Glen Shira, which form the western part of the LCU. Higher levels of visibility are shown to occur across the western upper slopes of Clachan Hill and Beinn Chas, in the northern part of the LCU. While the ZTV shows theoretical visibility of the Development to occur across a minimum of approximately 3 to 9 km, owing to the enclosure of commercial forestry, actual visibility will be confined to the northern part at a minimum of approximately 5 to 9 km.

During the construction phase, the minimum separation distance of 3 km, combined with the elevation across this part of the LCU, will mean that ground level construction works will likely have an influence, albeit limited by the separation distance and the smaller scale of the works. A more notable influence will be the presence and activity of construction cranes and the emerging turbines which will be readily visible from the upper slopes of Clachan Hill and Beinn Chas. This

will result in a **medium** magnitude of change, as the construction works will be seen as a prominent feature, despite the baseline influence from operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm and extensive commercial forestry. Those areas under commercial forestry will either undergo **no change** where there is enclosure from forestry or a **medium-low** magnitude of change in areas where there is clear felling or young planting, and therefore a heavily modified appearance to the landscape. Across the eastern part of the LCU adjacent to Loch Fyne and where there will be no theoretical visibility of the Development, there will be **no change**.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change across most of the LCU will be **medium**. The Development will have an influence on this LCU, owing to the location of the Development in the western sector of the wider landscape, with which the western and northern parts of the LCU have an association owing to the orientation of the landform towards the Site. Theoretical visibility of the Development will, however, be restricted to lower numbers of turbines across the lower to middle slopes owing screening by landform, with actual visibility further reduced by commercial forestry across the area will reduce actual visibility further. Here there will be **no change** where there will be no visibility and a **medium-low** change where areas of clear-felling or new planting occur. The Development will form a notable influence on account of the minimum range of 3 km, with the 180 m turbines presenting a large-scale feature that will appear at variance with the scale and character of the baseline landscape. The area to the north of the LCU, which is subject to more widespread theoretical visibility, will experience a **medium-low** magnitude of change. The magnitude of change will be moderated across this part of the LCU by the presence of the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm, which has introduced wind farm development as a baseline feature of this landscape. Across areas to the east, adjacent to Loch Fyne, there will be **no change**.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT: Clachan LCU will be **significant (moderate)** across the western and northern parts of the LCU where open land occurs out to approximately 9 km, with a **not significant (moderate / minor)** effect where clear felling and new planting has occurred within areas of forestry. There will be **no effect** across the majority of the LCU where there is enclosure from forestry and **no effect** across the eastern parts where there will be no visibility. These effects apply during both the construction and operational phases. The proximity of the Development to this LCU and the large scale of the turbines will mean that it will form a defining feature in respect of the landscape character of this LCU, despite the widespread presence and influence from coniferous forestry, and the existing influence from the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm.

6.7.4 1. Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU

Baseline

The 'Key Characteristics' for the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT are presented at 6.7.3 above. The Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT occurs twice in the Study Area, with the Clachan LCU occurring to the east of the Development within a range of 3 to 12 km and the East Loch Fyne LCU occurring to the south within a range of 6 to 45 km. The East Loch Fyne LCU is especially extensive, extending from the northern part of Loch Fyne down to the Kyles of Bute in the south. Those parts that are relevant to the assessment are situated on the south-eastern side of Loch Fyne and lie within a range of 6 to 18 km.

To the north-west and south-east of the Strachur LCU of the Rocky Mosaic LCT, lies the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT, characterised by medium sized hills, with steep sides and rounded summits, and a predominant land-cover of commercial forestry. These hills form the foothills to the High Tops LCTs which extend to the north and east and also form the enclosing ridgeline to the south-eastern side of Loch Fyne. In the group to the north-east of Strachur, Cruach nan Capull forms the high point at 565 m AOD and from which a strong ridgeline extends south-west. The upper north-west facing hill slopes comprise open moorland while the lower slopes are heavily afforested. In the group to the south-west of Strachur, another Cruach nan Capull forms the high

point at 481 m AOD and this area is more extensively afforested with only smaller patches left open.

Development is concentrated along the Loch Fyne shoreline, where the A815 provides access to the dispersed or low-density settlements. There is no development on the hills, other than a mast to the north of Strachur, although the hills are heavily modified by forestry practices with forest tracks creating a network through this area. There are no wind farms in this LCU but there is an influence from operational An Suidhe to the west and Clachan Flats to the north.

Sensitivity

The value of the majority of the LCU is medium, with a medium-high value along the coast. This reflects the absence of any national or regional level designations across the LCU with the exception of the East Loch Fyne (Coast) which denotes the regional level designation attributed to the coastal landscape.

The susceptibility of this LCU to the effects of the Development is medium. Those factors which add to the susceptibility rating include the relative proximity of this LCU to the Development and the relatively close association between these upland areas on opposite sides of Loch Fyne, albeit with only the northern part aligned towards the location of the Site. Those factors that detract from the susceptibility rating include the influence of operational An Suidhe and Clachan Flats on the opposite side of Loch Fyne and the extent of commercial forestry across this LCU which encloses the landscape and reduces the influence from surrounding landscapes.

The combination of the medium or medium-high value with the medium susceptibility gives rise to an overall **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows variable levels and extents of theoretical visibility throughout the LCU. Across the core of the LCU, within the south of the Study Area, theoretical visibility is limited to small, isolated areas of high ground. Across parts to the north, along the shore of Loch Fyne and across the north-west facing slopes above it, there is more widespread theoretical visibility.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium** across parts within approximately 6 to 13 km of the Development which experience theoretical visibility, and **low** across parts within approximately 13 to 18 km, while there will be **no change** elsewhere. Ground level construction works are unlikely to be visible due to screening by landform, and the influence of construction cranes and the emerging turbines will be moderated across much of the area in which theoretical visibility will be highest, owing either to the screening effect of blanket commercial forestry or the effect that this heavily modified landscape has on the LCU itself. Beyond this area, the addition of the Development to the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT will result in **no change** to landscape character across this LCT, as there will be no visual influence.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium** across parts of the LCU experiencing theoretical visibility of the Development, located within approximately 13 km, **low** within approximately 13 to 18 km and with **no change** in the remaining parts. The **medium** magnitude of change will occur in an area between St Catherine's and Ardnagowan, within a range of approximately 8 to 13 km of the Development. Although the proposed turbines will be visible, this will be to variable extents owing to the screening effect of Dun Corr Bhile (322 m AOD) on the opposite side of Loch Fyne, as well as the screening effect of the commercial forestry which covers much of these north-west facing slopes. Where visibility does occur from open areas or areas of clear felling or new planting, the effect will be moderated by the effect of the surrounding commercial forestry.

Furthermore, the cumulative ZTV on Figure 6.13 indicates that those areas with a visual influence from the Development will also experience a visual influence from the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm, seen upon hills to the east of the Site at a minimum of approximately 6 km and in the same northerly direction as the Development. The cumulative ZTV on Figure 6.14 indicates that operational An Suidhe will also have a visual influence owing to its presence on the hills to the

west at a minimum of approximately 8 km. The Development will therefore be seen in a sector of the view and a wider view which already experiences an influence from this type of development.

Significance of Effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU will be **not significant (moderate** or **minor)** across the hills on the south-eastern side of Loch Fyne, with **no effect** across parts to the south beyond approximately 18 km.

6.7.5 2. High Tops LCT

Baseline

The following 'Key Characteristics' of this LCT have been extracted from 'Landscape Assessment of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde' (1996).

- *"Rugged, steep sided mountain ranges with massive scale.*
- *Diverse landform with gullies, scarp slopes and rocky screes.*
- *Striking exposed rock faces, with scrubby birch-oak woodland in gullies.*
- *Relatively wide glens between mountain ranges.*
- *Fast-flowing burns, waterfalls and small upland lochs are attractive, distinctive features.*
- *Extensive conifer plantations on some lower slopes.*
- *Inaccessible and relatively uninhabited.*
- *Dramatic mountain scenery."*

The High Tops LCT occurs once in the Study Area; covering an extensive mountainous area to the north, north-east and east of the Development. The High Tops LCT extends far beyond Ben Cruachan, with the northern boundary meeting the southern boundary of the Ben Nevis and Glen Coe NSA; the eastern area wraps all the way around to the head of Loch Fyne and its boundary is marked by the LLTTNP; the southern boundary is marked by the Pass of Brander and then to the west of this Loch Etive; and the western boundary is marked by the Lynn of Lorn NSA and to the north of this the Lorn Craggy Uplands LCT.

The second biggest mountain in the High Tops is Ben Cruachan at 1126 m AOD. It sits on the southern edge of the LCU to the north of Loch Awe and forms a dramatic feature over the surrounding area. High and open hilltops extend north of this to where the southern mountains of Glen Coe occur. To the west of Loch Etive there is an area of lower hills over which forestry has encroached, while to the north the hills rise in height towards Bidean Nam Bian. To the east the highest summit is Ben Lui at 1130 m AOD which sits right on the boundary of the LCU although in effect is part of the wider mountainous area which extends across the administrative boundary to the east.

The High Tops landscape is characterised by large scale and open mountains, the profiles are typically steep to form distinct summits and skylines, some with rocky outcrops which add to the rugged appearance. While views from the summits are expansive and place these hills within the wider upland context, views from the glens and lochs are often channelled or more focussed on particular features owing to their specific alignment. The High Tops, especially to the north of the area, have a sense of remoteness and wildness, largely derived from the scale of the landscape but also the absence of development. This is denoted by the WLA which covers much of this LCT. There is very little, small scale development in this area, with the exception of the roads and isolated properties which occur in the more sheltered glens, and no large scale development, with the exception of the hydro-electric power station at Ben Cruachan.

While there is little development in the High Tops, developments in surrounding LCUs have an influence on its character. The NSAs to the west and north and the National Park to the east have protected these landscapes from large scale developments. Wind farm developments are, therefore, concentrated to the south of the High Tops where there are no national or regional designations. Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal are the closest range wind farm developments,

situated in the Craggy Uplands to the south-west of Ben Cruachan and at a range of 7 km and 11 km respectively, from the closest boundary of the LCU.

Sensitivity

The value of the High Tops LCT is medium-high, reflecting the fact that it is covered by the North Argyll APQ designation, which denotes the regional scenic value. Unfortunately, there is no citation to identify the special qualities which have led to this designation. The scenic qualities are nonetheless apparent, with the dramatic scale and openness of the mountains contrasting with the intimacy and enclosure of the glens and lochs.

The susceptibility of the High Tops LCT is medium-high. While there is very little development within this LCU, there are large scale developments in neighbouring LCUs which currently have an influence on its character, including operational Beinn Ghlas, Carraig Gheal, and Clachan Flats wind farms. The raised elevation of much of this LCT means that it draws influences from a much wider extent than other lower-lying LCUs and this reduces its sensitivity to development in one particular area.

The combination of the medium-high value and the medium-high susceptibility gives rise to an overall sensitivity of **medium-high**.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows theoretical visibility occurring fairly extensively across parts of the LCT at minimum ranges of 5 to 9 km, and typically comprising higher levels of visibility across the higher ground. The main areas of visibility occur across high ground around Ben Cruachan at a minimum of 9 km to the north of the Site; to the west of Beinn Bhuidhe at a minimum of approximately 5 km to the east of the Site; and around Stob an Eas and Binnein an Fhidhleir at a minimum of approximately 9 km to the south-east. Outwith these areas, theoretical visibility is limited to isolated areas of high ground, beyond approximately 15 km.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** in the area of the LCT around Beinn Bhuidhe to the north-east of the Site, and **low** or with **no change** in all remaining parts of the LCU. In the part of the LCU to the east of the Site, the influence on the closest range slopes will be moderated by the enclosing and / or moderating effect of the commercial forestry with more open views occurring from the open slopes at 6 to 9 km. While there may be visibility of ground-level construction works where they occur along or close to the ridgeline through the Site, it will be the presence and activity of the construction cranes and the emerging turbines that will form the main influence across this part of the LCT. There will also be some intervisibility across this area with closer range Clachan Flats Wind Farm, which is located close to the southern boundary of the LCU.

Elsewhere, where theoretical visibility occurs, the construction of the Development will be seen in longer-distance views beyond 9 km and will form a relatively small-scale feature of the wider view available from these elevated areas where other operational wind farms and extensive commercial forestry already have an influence on landscape character. From these parts of the High Tops LCT the magnitude of change during the construction phase will be **medium-low** or **low**.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium** around Beinn Bhuidhe to the north-east of the Site, **medium-low** in areas beyond this experiencing theoretical visibility of the Development, and with **no change** in all remaining parts. Those factors which add to the magnitude of change include the proximity of the western part of the LCT, which lies at approximately 5 km, such that the proposed turbines will appear as relatively close range and large-scale structures. Those factors which reduce the magnitude of change most notably include the presence and influence of operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm, seen at closer proximity to the south from parts of the LCT. However, parts of the LCT in closest proximity will not experience visibility of Clachan Flats, and the Development will therefore introduce development of this type into views from parts of the LCT. Beyond the area around Beinn Bhuidhe, views are longer-distance towards the Development, and the proposed turbines will not redefine the view from the LCT.

Elsewhere, where theoretical visibility occurs, the operational phase of the Development will be seen in longer-distance views beyond 9 km and will form a relatively small-scale feature of the wider view available from these elevated areas where other operational wind farms and extensive commercial forestry already have an influence on landscape character. From these parts of the High Tops LCT the magnitude of change during the construction phase will be **medium-low** or **low**.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the High Tops LCT will be **significant (moderate)** during the construction phase and operational phase on the part of the LCT to the north-east of the Site around Beinn Bhuidhe and out to approximately 9 km, due to the proximity of the Development, despite the baseline influence from Clachan Flats Wind Farm and commercial forestry. Elsewhere, where theoretical visibility occurs, the effect will be **not significant (moderate** or **moderate / minor)** and where there will be no visibility there will be **no effect.**

6.7.6 4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Shira LCU

Baseline

The following 'Key Characteristics' of the Mountain Glens LCT have been extracted from 'Landscape Assessment of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde' (1996).

- *"Flat valley floor of narrow, linear mountain glens with sharp break of slope at valley side.*
- *Ribbon lochs in lower valley; glacial moraine creates uneven landform with small, rounded lochs on floor of upper valley.*
- *Mudflats and winding creeks at loch heads and at the mouth of the glen.*
- *Meandering river, fringed with groups of trees, contrasts with rectangular pastures drained by straight ditches.*
- *Small blocks of woodland and some conifer plantations.*
- *Linear settlements strung out along lanes at the foot of the steep side slopes.*
- *Castles and country houses are important local landmarks."*

The Glen Shira LCU follows the north-east to south-west course of the River Shira from south of Lochan Shira and Lochan Sron Mor, in the north, to Dubh Loch and Loch Fyne, in the south. This narrow LCU covers the lower valley slopes and, in the central and southern parts, also the narrow valley floor. It is enclosed by the Loch Fyne LCU of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT to the west and the Clachan LCU of the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT to the east, with the higher hills of the High Tops LCT to the north-east and the Craggy Upland LCT to the north-west. The containment formed by these steeply sloping, close range hills, creates a mountain glen which is well enclosed by landform.

The influence from human development and land-uses is more evident in the south and less evident in the north, with the A83 crossing the southern part from which a western and eastern track extend into the glen to provide access to the small number of dispersed rural farmsteads and properties that occur, as well as to the electricity substation and associated overhead electricity transmission lines which transect the glen. While small farm fields of improved pasture occupy the narrow valley floor in this southern part of the glen, further north there is no valley floor, and the valley slopes comprise fields of rough pasture which gradually transition into wooded slopes. Settlement is even sparser with the most northerly property being the abandoned cottage of Scottish outlaw and folk legend, Rob Roy.

Sensitivity

The value of the LCU is high in the southern part as it is covered by the national designation of the Inveraray GDL and the regional designation of the North Argyll APQ, which denote a special historic and scenic value. The value of the central and northern parts of the LCU is medium-high as it is covered by the North Argyll APQ.

The susceptibility of the LCU to the effects of the Development is medium. While there are no wind farms in this LCU or readily visible from within it, there are overhead electricity transmission lines and a small substation located in the southern part and these form a notable human influence.

The high and medium-high value combined with the medium susceptibility, gives rise to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows low level theoretical visibility occurring across the south-eastern half of this small LCU and no theoretical visibility occurring across all other areas. This distinct pattern relates to the shape of the landform, whereby the south-eastern facing slopes face towards the Development, whilst elsewhere the landform to the north and north-west of Glen Shira screens visibility. Theoretical visibility occurs within a minimum range of approximately 4 km.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across the lower eastern valley slopes in the southern part of the LCU and with **no change** occurring across all remaining parts owing to no visibility. The extent of intervening landform along the northern enclosing edge of Glen Shira will mean that ground level construction works will not have an influence on this LCU. The intervening landform will also screen most of the high-level construction works comprising the use of cranes to construct the emerging turbines. Visibility will amount to a small number of turbine tips and the tops of the construction cranes potentially being visible from the lower eastern valley slopes in the southern part of the LCU. There will be no visibility from the remaining parts of the LCU.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across the lower eastern valley slopes in the southern part of the LCU and with **no change** occurring across all remaining parts owing to no visibility. The Development will have an influence on this LCU, owing to the presence of the proposed turbines seen above the enclosing north-western horizon in views from this valley landscape. The intervening landform will mean that the majority of the proposed turbines will not be visible. While the ZTV on Figure 6.8 shows that between one and six turbines will be seen above the horizon, these will typically be seen as tips or blades and Figure 6.7 shows that they will occupy only 10 to 20 degrees of the wider landscape context. The minimum separation of approximately 4 km will, however, mean that the tips and blades that are visible would be seen within relative proximity. Visibility will be restricted to the southern part of the LCU, where human development is more evident, and this will moderate the magnitude of change associated with the Development.

Significance of effect

During the construction and operational phases, the effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Mountains Glens LCT: Glen Shira LCU will be **not significant (moderate)** in the lower eastern valley slopes in the southern part of the LCU where low level visibility will occur, and there will be no change in all remaining parts where there will be no visibility. The Development will not redefine the landscape character of this LCU owing principally to the small proportion of the LCU which will experience theoretical visibility of the Development, and the limited nature of visibility across this area.

6.7.7 4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Aray LCU

The 'Key Characteristics' for the Mountain Glens LCT are presented at 6.7.6 above. The two LCUs of the Mountain Glens LCT relevant to this assessment, are the Glen Shira LCU, that lies to the east of the Development, and the Glen Aray LCU, that lies to the west.

The Glen Aray LCU follows the River Aray from south of where it is bridged by the A819 at A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe to where it meets Loch Fyne at Inveraray. The Glen Aray LCU forms a narrow band of land following the north to south course of the River Aray. As there are only short sections with a valley floor, this LCU comprises the lower valley slopes which rise up to form the hill slopes of the Loch Fyne LCU of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT, on either side of

the valley. In the northern part of the LCU, the landcover on the western side comprises semi-improved and rough pasture while the landcover on the eastern side comprises woodland. In the southern part of the LCU, the landcover on both sides comprises deciduous woodland with the exception of the fields of farmland to the north-west of Inveraray Castle and the grounds around Inveraray Castle, which occupy the valley floor which opens out as it meets Loch Fyne.

The A819 follows the course of the River Aray, such that is largely straight in the northern section and then more meandering in the southern section. There is also an overhead electricity transmission line that runs parallel on the western side of the A819 in the northern section, with the line then cutting perpendicular across the south-western slopes of Stuc Scardan (487 m AOD) to Glen Shira and back across the northern slopes of Meall Reidh (286 m AOD) to Glen Aray, cutting between the A819 and River Aray for a short section adjacent to Balantyre Wood, before extending south-west into the forestry to the west of Inveraray. While settlement is concentrated in the glen and not on the hill slopes, it is typically sparse and rural in character, with the exception of the A listed Inveraray Castle and associated buildings which form a much larger and grander development.

Sensitivity

The value of the LCU is high in the southern part as it is covered by the national designation of the Inveraray GDL, which denote a special historic and scenic value. The value of the northern part of the LCU is medium as it is not covered by any national or regional designations which would otherwise denote a special scenic value.

The susceptibility of the LCU to the effects of the Development is medium. While there are no wind farms in this LCU or readily visible from within it, there are overhead electricity transmission lines and a main road and these form notable human influences. There is also extensive commercial forestry across the adjacent hill slopes that extend into parts of the LCU which denote the extent to which this landscape has been modified by commercial forestry practices.

The high value combined with the medium susceptibility, gives rise to a **medium-high** sensitivity across the southern part of the LCU, while the medium value and medium susceptibility gives rise to a **medium** sensitivity across the northern part.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows that theoretical visibility is relatively widespread across this LCU. However, across the southern extent of the LCU this will be restricted to visibility of a low number of proposed turbines due to intervening landform. Across the north of the LCU, theoretical visibility will comprise a high number of proposed turbines due to the more open landform, although forestry and woodland cover to the east and south of the glen may partially reduce actual visibility compared to that shown on the ZTV. However, there are parts of this LCU are open, and which will experience open views towards the Development. Theoretical visibility occurs within a range of approximately 1 to 5 km between the LCU and the closest proposed turbine.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **high** across the northern part of the LCU. To the south-west of the Site, where high ground within the neighbouring Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT will screen views towards parts of the Development and only a proportion of the turbines will be visible, the magnitude of change will reduce to **medium-high**. Northern parts of the LCU will experience an influence from the ground level construction works, such as the construction of access tracks, crane pads and turbine foundations seen in relative proximity on the enclosing horizon to the east. The presence and activity of the construction cranes and the emerging turbines will have an even more notable influence on this area, due to their large scale and vertical form. This influence will also occur in the southern part of the LCU, although it is unlikely that there will be an influence from the ground level construction works in this southern part owing to the screening effect of trees, forestry and landform. There will be **no change** in those parts of the LCU where there will be no or very limited visibility.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **high** across the northern parts of the LCU. This will reduce to medium-high across the south of the LCU due to reduced visibility of the Development as a result of intervening landform around Stuc Scardan to the north-east. In those parts of the LCU where there will be no visibility there will be **no change**. Those factors which add to the magnitude of change include the close proximity of the Development to the east of this LCU, such that the turbines will appear as close-range, large-scale and dynamic structures. The large scale of the turbines will appear at variance with the relatively small scale of the glen, and their close proximity will emphasise this disparity. There is a close association between the hills of the Site, on which the turbines will be located, and the landscape of Glen Aray. The position of the turbines on this enclosing horizon will emphasise their scale and increase the influence on the landscape character of the LCU, particularly across northern parts of the LCU. Across the southern part of the LCU, there is less of an association with the hills of the Site, and the introduction of the Development will result in a slightly reduced magnitude of change. There will be **no change** in those parts of the LCU where there will be no or very limited visibility.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Mountain Glens LCT: Glen Aray LCU will be **significant (major / moderate)** during the construction phase and operational phase across the LCU. The Development will redefine the landscape character of the LCU owing to the close proximity and large scale of the proposed turbines, and their position on the hills to the east which form the enclosing horizon. There will also be **no effect** in some of the southern parts of the LCU where there will be no visibility.

6.7.8 6a. Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT – West Loch Fyne LCU

Baseline

The following 'Key Characteristics' of this LCT have been extracted from 'Landscape Assessment of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde' (1996).

- "Upland plateau with rounded ridges, craggy outcrops and an irregular slope profile.
- Upland lochs.
- Winding narrow glens and wider river valleys.
- Extensive, large-scale mosaic of forestry plantations and small areas of open moorland.
- No field boundaries.
- Very few buildings, occasional isolated dwellings in edges of moor.
- Little access, roads typically following shorelines."

The West Loch Fyne LCU of the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT covers a large area, extending across the western slopes of Glen Aray between Drochaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe in the north and Inveraray in the south, and across the western slopes of Loch Fyne between Inveraray in the north and Lochgilphead in the south. It is contained by the Craggy Uplands LCT to the north-west and Glen Aray to the east and Loch Fyne to the south-east, with some narrow lochside bands of the Rocky Mosaic LCT between. It is the northern part of this LCU between Drochaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe and Furnace, that is relevant to this assessment, as this is where visibility of the Development would arise, as shown on the ZTV on Figure 6.8.

The landform is characteristic of this LCT with the hills ranging between 300 m and 600 m, irregular in shape and with rounded ridges and upland plateaux. The east and south-east facing hill slopes in the northern part of the LCU, comprise open moorland with craggy outcrops occurring across the upper slopes, while the remaining parts are more heavily forested, albeit with patches of open moorland across the steeper and more elevated slopes, as described in the 'Key Characteristics' above.

This LCU is predominantly rural with roads and settlement limited to the more sheltered and lower-lying locations, for example, where the A83 passes through this LCU between Inveraray and Furnace. While forest tracks provide access into the plantations, access onto the hills is limited. Overhead electricity transmission lines present a more notable human influence, extending across

the hill slopes of this LCU between Inveraray and Minard. There are also masts near Auchindrain and An Suidhe Wind Farm located in this LCU and the adjacent Craggy Uplands LCT.

Sensitivity

The value of the LCU is medium, reflecting the fact that it is not covered by any national or regional landscape designations which would otherwise denote a special scenic value.

The susceptibility of the LCU to the effects of the Development is medium. This reflects the extent of human influences which already affect the baseline landscape character, including the modification caused by extensive forestry plantations, the presence of overhead transmission lines and masts and the presence of An Suidhe Wind Farm, which is partly located in this LCU.

The medium value of the LCU, combined with the medium susceptibility, gives rise to an overall **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The Development will be located in the north-eastern part of this LCU and will therefore have a direct effect on the LCU. The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows that theoretical visibility will be restricted to within approximately 15 km of the Development, with the majority of that occurring within approximately 9 km. Across the Site and the immediate surroundings theoretical visibility will be extensive, while the ridgeline to the south of the Site formed by Stuc Scardan will restrict visibility to the south, such that it will be limited of to the upper parts of a small number of the proposed turbines, as shown in Figure 6.8. Across the hills to the west of Glen Aray, theoretical visibility will also be widespread, although actual visibility across this area will be reduced by large blocks of commercial forestry. Further south from this area there will be some limited visibility across high ground around Dun Leacainn to the north-east of Furnace. Actual visibility across this area will also be restricted by forestry cover.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **high** across the Site and its immediate surroundings, and **high** across high ground to the west of Glen Aray, reducing to **medium** out to 9 km, to the west of Inveraray. To the south of the Site, where the ridgeline of Stuc Scardan reduces visibility, the magnitude of change will also be **medium**. Across parts of the LCU beyond 9 km from the Development which experience visibility the magnitude of change will be **low**. There will be **no change** across all parts where there will be no actual visibility. The Development will have a direct effect on the landscape character of the Site itself, while other areas in close proximity will experience an influence from the ground level construction works, such as the construction of access tracks, crane pads and turbine foundations. The presence and activity of the construction cranes and the emerging turbines will also have an influence across this area, due to their large scale and vertical form, as well as across other parts of the LCU which may not experience visibility of the ground-level works, including to the west of Glen Aray.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **high** across the Site and its immediate surroundings, and across high ground to the west of Glen Aray, reducing to **medium** out to 9 km, to the west of Inveraray. To the south of the Site, where the ridgeline of Stuc Scardan reduces visibility, the magnitude of change will also be **medium**. Across all other parts the magnitude of change will be **low** or with **no change** in those parts where there will be no visibility. Those factors which add to the magnitude of change include the presence of the Development in the eastern part of this LCU, such that the proposed turbines will have a direct effect on the landscape across the Site and will also appear as close-range and large-scale structures from the immediate areas beyond the Site. The hills to the west of Glen Aray are broadly orientated towards the hills where the Development will be located, with this association potentially increasing the influence of the proposed turbines on the landscape character of this part of the LCU, although forestry cover across this area will reduce visibility of the Development. Across other areas, there is less of an association with the hills of the Site, and the introduction of the Development will result in a reduced magnitude of change.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT: West Loch Fyne LCU will be **significant (major / moderate)** during the construction phase and operational phase across the parts of the LCU immediately surrounding the Site and to the west of Glen Aray. Across parts to the south of the Development and out to 9 km to the west of Inveraray the effect will be **significant (moderate)**. Across other parts experiencing visibility beyond this extent, the effect will be **not significant (minor)** during both the construction and operational phases and where there is no actual visibility there will be no effect. The Development will redefine the landscape character of the eastern part of the LCU owing to the close proximity and large scale of the proposed turbines, and the introduction of development of this type into the landscape of this LCU.

6.7.9 7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / East Loch Awe LCU

Baseline

The following 'Key Characteristics' of the Craggy Upland LCT have been extracted from 'Landscape Assessment of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde' (1996).

- *"Upland moor with irregular, rather amorphous landscape.*
- *Rounded knolls, rock outcrops and numerous lochs in low-lying hollows.*
- *Open moorland predominates, but extensive conifer plantations camouflage the landscape pattern in some areas.*
- *Oak-birch woodland on lower slopes.*
- *Stone walls enclose an irregular patchwork of pastures within glens on the margins of moorland.*
- *Isolated farmsteads and small villages in sheltered sites within glens.*
- *Numerous archaeological remains, often concentrated on rounded knolls on lower slopes."*

The North Loch Awe Craggy Upland occurs at the north end of Loch Awe. It occurs as two distinct areas; one to the west and one to the east, separated by the head of the loch and the Rocky Mosaic LCUs on either side.

The area to the east of Loch Awe is bounded by the A85 in the north, the Rocky Mosaic LCT of Loch Awe in the west, the High Tops LCT in the east and the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT to the south. This area is heavily afforested, with a large block extending south of Dalmally and then two large blocks set either side of the village of Cladich. The eastern side of the LCU remains as open moorland with craggy hills rising up towards the south where Beinn Ghlas at 550 m AOD forms the high point (a different Beinn Ghlas to that associated with the operational wind farm).

There is very little development in these areas as most is typically located along the settled shoreline of the Rocky Mosaic LCT, where minor roads access small villages, clustered or isolated properties. Apart from the A819, which cuts north to south through the western area, and the A85 which runs close to the northern boundary of the LCU, there are no roads within the LCU, only extensive tracks extending into the afforested areas. There are no large-scale developments in this LCU, although wind farms at Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal in the Craggy Uplands LCT on the opposite shore of Loch Awe are apparent, as well as the overhead electricity transmission line that follows the western boundary of the LCU.

Sensitivity to change

The value of the East Loch Awe LCU of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT is medium-high. This LCU is covered by the North Argyll APQ and this denotes the regional scenic value of this landscape.

The susceptibility of the East Loch Awe LCU to the effects of the development is medium-high. In terms of how the surrounding LCUs and their content influences the sensitivity of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland, wind farm development is already evident as a feature to the west and south-west. Furthermore, in the LCUs themselves the extent of forestry not only limits the extents to

which external influences affect character but also detract from the sensitivity by notably increasing the extents to which the landscape has been modified by forestry practices.

The medium-high value of the LCU, combined with the medium susceptibility, gives rise to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The upland nature of this LCU leads to a variable pattern of theoretical visibility, both in terms of levels and extents of visibility. The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows widespread visibility across the southern part of the LCU, in closest proximity to the Development, within approximately 4 km of the Development. Actual visibility across this area will be somewhat reduced by forestry cover to the west of Glen Aray, south of Cladich, although an area to the immediate north of the Site will experience actual visibility in line with the theoretical visibility shown on Figure 6.8. Beyond this, there is an area of theoretical visibility which stretches from east to west through the centre of the LCU, along a ridge of high ground to the east of Cladich between approximately 5 to 9 km from the Development. Theoretical visibility across this area tends to be restricted to views of a number of turbines within the Development, while the area to the immediate north of the Site will experience higher levels of visibility. Actual visibility across the western part of this area will be reduced by forestry cover to the east of Cladich, although further east there will be open views towards the Development. Beyond these two areas, theoretical visibility is intermittent and limited.

During the construction phase the magnitude of change will be **high** across southern parts of the LCU which experience high levels of visibility within approximately 0 to 4 km of the Development. Across the area of high ground to the east of Cladich, which will experience lower levels of visibility, the magnitude of change will be **medium-high**. Beyond these two areas, there will be either a **low** magnitude of change across small, isolated parts of the LCU which experience theoretical visibility, or **no change** elsewhere where there will be no visibility. Parts of the LCU in closest proximity will experience an influence from the ground level construction works, such as the construction of access tracks, crane pads and turbine foundations. The presence and activity of the construction cranes and the emerging turbines will also have an influence across this area due to their large scale and vertical form. The ridgeline through the centre of the LCU which experiences lower levels of theoretical visibility will also experience an influence from these elements of the construction works.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **high** across parts of the LCU experiencing high levels of theoretical visibility within approximately 4 km. Across the ridgeline to the east of Cladich, the magnitude of change will be **medium-high**, due to the relatively lower levels of theoretical visibility. Across all other parts the magnitude of change will be **low** or with **no change** where there will be no visibility. Those factors which add to the magnitude of change include the presence of the Development within close proximity to the south of the LCU, such that the proposed turbines will appear as close-range and large-scale structures from those parts of the LCU experiencing theoretical visibility. Although Clachan Flats Wind Farm is located in relative proximity to the south-east of this LCU, visibility of this existing development is relatively limited. The Development will introduce the influence of wind farm development to localised parts of this LCU, although across most parts there is an existing influence from the more distant wind farms, including An Suidhe, Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal. The Development will introduce wind farm development seen at close proximity to the immediate south of the LCU, generally visible across lower ground from elevated parts of this LCU. Across the centre of the LCU, where theoretical visibility occurs, the magnitude of change will reduce to **medium-high**, due to the increasing separation from the Development. Beyond this, the magnitude of change will be **low** across parts experiencing visibility.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT: East Loch Awe will be **significant (major / moderate)** during the construction and operational phases across southern parts of the LCU experiencing actual visibility of the

Development within approximately 4 km; **significant (moderate)** across parts within approximately 9 km experiencing actual visibility; and **not significant (minor)** or with **no change** across all other parts. The Development will redefine the landscape character of the southern part of this LCU owing to the large scale and notable influence of the turbines immediately adjacent to the LCU.

6.7.10 7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / West Loch Awe LCU

Baseline

The 'Key Characteristics' for the Craggy Upland LCT are presented at 6.7.9 above. The North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT occurs as two distinct areas; West Loch Awe LCU occurs to the west and East Loch Awe LCU occurs to the east, separated by the head of the loch and the Rocky Mosaic LCUs on either side.

West Loch Awe LCU comprises low hills which border the loch with summits between 200 to 300 m AOD with a steep ridge along the northern edge enclosing the River Awe and the Pass of Brander and the remaining area undulating gently with levels falling away towards Loch Tromlee to the west. Although there is an area of open moorland in the centre of the LCU, large blocks of commercial forestry occur to the north and south, with a mix of coniferous and deciduous woodland cover extending into the Rocky Mosaic LCUs around the Loch Awe shore.

There is very little development in these areas, as most is typically located in the settled Rocky Mosaic shoreline, where minor roads access small villages, and clustered or isolated properties. There are only minor roads around the periphery of this LCU although more extensive tracks extend into the afforested areas. There are no large-scale developments in this LCU, although wind farms at Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal in the neighbouring Craggy Upland LCT are readily apparent to the south and seen at minimum of approximately 5.5 km and 7 km respectively. There is also a quarry on the west side of the B845 in Glen Nant and overhead electricity transmission lines crossing the south-eastern part of the LCU

The scenic quality of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland is derived from the wider context rather than any special qualities found in the area itself. The location of this LCU is important in terms of marking the convergence between Loch Awe, Inverlochy and the Pass of Brander, all of which form channels through the upland landscape, and which draw views in towards the landscapes around the head of Loch Awe. Furthermore, there is the presence of Ben Cruachan which presents a dramatic feature at the head of the loch and to which the surrounding landscapes form an important setting.

Sensitivity to change

The value of the East Loch Awe LCU of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT is medium-high. This LCU is covered by the North Argyll APQ and this denotes the regional scenic value of this landscape.

The susceptibility of the East Loch Awe LCU to the effects of the Development is medium. In terms of how the surrounding LCUs and their content influences the sensitivity of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland, wind farm development is already evident as a feature to the west and south-west. Furthermore, in the LCUs themselves the extent of forestry not only limits the extents to which external influences affect character but also detract from the sensitivity by notably increasing the extents to which the landscape has been modified by forestry practices.

The medium-high value of the LCU, combined with the medium susceptibility, gives rise to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows that theoretical visibility is relatively widespread across this LCU, particularly across the south-eastern extents in closest proximity to the Development. Theoretical visibility is generally high-level, with the majority of proposed turbines shown to be theoretically

visible across this area. Forestry cover is relatively widespread across this area and will reduce actual visibility compared to that shown on the ZTV. However, there are parts of this LCU which do not feature forestry land cover, and which will experience open views towards the Development. Theoretical visibility occurs within a range of approximately 7 to 14 km between the LCU and the closest proposed turbine.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts of the LCU which experience actual visibility of the Development, with **no change** across the majority of the LCU where there will be no actual visibility. The separation distance of more than 7 km, as well as the screening effect of intervening landform and forestry, means that ground level construction works are unlikely to be readily visible from this LCU. The presence and activity of the construction cranes and the emerging turbines will have more of an influence owing to their large scale and vertical form. However, this influence will be moderated by existing visibility of wind farms, seen to the west in relative proximity from this LCU, comprising Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal. The setting for this LCU is formed by high ground around Ben Cruachan, and the focus of views is over Loch Awe to the east. The sector of the view in which construction activity associated with the Development will be seen is relatively unremarkable and plays only a small role in the setting to this LCU. These factors will moderate the magnitude of change associated with the construction of the Development.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts of the LCU with no forest cover which experience actual visibility of the Development, and with **no change** across the majority of the LCU where there will be no visibility. Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the larger scale of the proposed turbines, compared to those within Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal Wind Farms, which are visible in close proximity to the west. The Development will introduce turbines into a new sector of the view, to the south-east. However, the magnitude of change will be prevented from being rated above medium-low owing to the separation distance of more than 7 km, the contained extents to within 20 to 30 degrees of the wider landscape context, the existing influence of turbines within Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal Wind Farms, and the fact that the turbines will be present in a relatively unremarkable sector of the view. The setting to the LCU, including Loch Awe to the east and Ben Cruachan to the north, will also remain unaffected.

Significance of effect

During the construction and operational phases, the effect of the Development on the landscape character of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT: West Loch Awe LCU will be **not significant (moderate)**, across parts of the LCU experiencing actual visibility of the Development. Across the majority of the LCU where there will be no visibility, there will be **no change**. The Development will not redefine the landscape character of this LCU owing principally to the limited extents of actual visibility, the separation distance from this LCU, the contained extent of the Development within the wider landscape context and the baseline influence from closer range operational wind farms.

6.7.11 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU

Baseline

The following 'Key Characteristics' of the Rocky Mosaic LCT have been extracted from 'Landscape Assessment of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde' (1996).

- *"Uneven, hummocky landform with rocky outcrops and narrow glens.*
- *Raised beaches, cliffs and distinctive rounded knolls.*
- *Rocky, indented coastline with offshore islands and small sandy bays.*
- *Relatively small-scale landscape with a diverse mix of colours and textures.*
- *Steep wooded cliffs and hummocky, gorse covered slopes.*
- *Stone walls provide partial enclosure.*
- *Scattered isolated farm buildings and small villages in sheltered sites.*

- *Archaeological sites."*

The Inveraray LCU of the Rocky Mosaic LCT forms a narrow band along the shoreline of Loch Fyne between Inveraray in the north and Rubha nam Frangach in the south. It is bounded by the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT to the west and Loch Fyne to the east, with the Mountain Glen LCTs of Glen Aray and Glen Shira extending north and north-east to the north of the LCU.

The landform comprises a relatively flat and low-lying rocky shoreline set along a relatively straight coastline with some subtle headlands and bays. Development is evident in this LCU, with the town of Inveraray in the north and the Argyll Caravan Park in the south, and the busy A83 also set along the coast. There is enclosure from mixed woodland which forms the predominant landcover, with only occasional small fields of improved pasture. While the rising landform to the west creates enclosure to this coastal LCU, Loch Fyne to the east presents a more open aspect.

Sensitivity

The value of this LCU is medium-high, reflecting the fact that this LCU is covered by the West Loch Fyne APQ and recognising the regional value that this landscape designation attaches to this area.

The susceptibility of this LCU to the Development is medium. This LCU has a strong association with Loch Fyne, owing to the general fall of the landform in this easterly direction and the openness of the loch, as well an association with the rising landform to the immediate west and on the opposite side of the loch. In contrast, there is no direct relationship with the hills to the north, where the Development would be located, although they do form part of the wider setting. While there are human influences evident in the form of settlement, roads, forestry and farming in this LCU, there are few large-scale developments visible and this raises the susceptibility of this relatively small scale and rural landscape to the potential effects of the Development.

The combination of the medium-high value and medium susceptibility leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows low level theoretical visibility occurring over a limited extent in the central part around Inveraray and along the coastline of this LCU. The low levels of theoretical visibility relate to the screening effect of the intervening landform around Stuc Scardan, to the south of the Site, as well as the low elevation of this LCU on the edge of Loch Fyne, which will mean that only a proportion of the closer range turbines will be visible over the higher ground to the north. The proposed turbines will be located approximately 5 km from the northern boundary of this LCU.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across central parts of the LCU which experience theoretical visibility of the Development, and **no change** where there will be no visibility. The intervening landform of Dun Corr Bhile (322 m AOD) and Dun na Cuaiche to the south of Stuc Scardan will mean that the ground level construction works will be screened, along with the majority of the high-level construction works associated with the construction of the turbines. The presence and activity of the construction cranes and the emerging turbines will have an influence on this LCU, especially in the central parts where there is theoretical visibility of the tops of up to nine emerging turbines, although actual visibility is likely to be lower than this due to screening by forestry on the intervening hills, as well as built form within Inveraray. The emerging turbines will appear as large-scale structures, at variance with the scale of this landscape, although limited to a 5 to 10 degree sector of the wider landscape, and seen in the opposite direction to the focus of views across Loch Fyne.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts of the LCU around Inveraray which experience theoretical visibility of the Development. There will be **no change** across all other parts, due to the absence of theoretical visibility. Factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the fact that where theoretical visibility occurs, this will comprise visibility of between one and nine of the 13 proposed turbines and is likely to consist of views of only the upper parts of turbines due to screening by intervening landform. The turbines

will occur across a contained 5 to 10 degree sector of the wider landscape, and occur to the north while the main association this LCU has with the surrounding context, is east towards Loch Fyne. Actual visibility is likely to be limited further by built form and tree cover within Inveraray. While the proposed turbines are large in scale and relatively close to this LCU, the limited extent to which they will be visible combined with their location outwith the key associations between this coastal LCU and the loch, their influence on the character of the LCU will be limited.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic LCT: Inveraray LCU will be **not significant (moderate)** during both the construction and operational phases across parts of the LCU which experience theoretical visibility of the Development, and with **no effect** where there will be no actual visibility. The Development will not redefine the landscape character of this LCU owing principally to the low levels and limited extent of visibility, its contained extent within and its oblique location outwith the close range of the proposed turbines and their prominence behind the enclosing ridge.

6.7.12 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne north LCU

Baseline

The 'Key Characteristics' for the Rocky Mosaic LCT are presented at 6.7.11 above, in respect of the Inveraray LCU. The two other LCUs of the Rocky Mosaic LCT, also associated with Loch Fyne and relevant to this assessment, are the East Loch Fyne north LCU, that lies to the south of the Development, and the East Loch Fyne south LCU, that lies to the south-west.

The East Loch Fyne north LCU extends along the coastline from the settlement of Ardnagowan in the north to the settlement of Mid Letter in the south, also extending inland slightly at the settlement of Strachur. The coastline is relatively straight and comprises a narrow shoreline of sand or rock apart from where it recesses inland and the beach broadens between Creggans and Strachur. There is a close association between this coast and the adjacent Loch Fyne to the west, owing to its orientation in this direction, while the landform to the east rises steeply into the lower slopes of the High Tops LCT with the association with the wider landscape reduced by the extent of deciduous and coniferous woodland along the coast and around Strachur.

The A815 is routed close to the coast to the north of Strachur, while the A886 is routed close to the coast to the south. The dispersed, linear settlement of Ardnagowan is situated along the shoreline to the west of the A815, where tree cover is extensive, while the more consolidated and nucleated settlements at Creggans and Strachur occur along the A815 and A886 with some more open patches of farmland around. While there is a general absence of large-scale developments in and around this LCU, there is an influence from operational An Suidhe Wind Farm, a minimum of approximately 8 km to the north-west.

Sensitivity

The value of this LCU is medium-high, reflecting the fact that this LCU is covered by the East Loch Fyne APQ and recognising the regional value that this landscape designation attaches to this area.

The susceptibility of this LCU to the Development is medium. This eastern coast of Loch Fyne has a close association with the open waters of Loch Fyne and the opposite shore of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT, and to a lesser extent, the hills of this type to the north where the Site is located. While human influences are evident along this coast, these are typically small in scale and rural in character with the exception of the influence from operational An Suidhe Wind Farm to the north-west.

The combination of the medium-high value and medium susceptibility leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows high level visibility occurring across two areas within this LCU, to the north and south of its extent, and concentrated along the shoreline of Loch Fyne. The ZTV indicates that there will be no visibility occurring in the centre, where visibility is restricted within the glen in which Strachur is located. The proposed turbines will be located between 10 to 15 km from this LCU.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts of the LCU experiencing actual visibility, and **no change** across all other parts where there will be no visibility. The low elevation of this LCU, combined with the higher elevation of the Site, means that the ground level construction works will be screened, and high-level works associated with the movement of construction cranes and the emerging towers will be those parts of the construction phase that will be readily visible. This activity will have an influence on this LCU, and these elements will appear as medium-scale structures. However, the magnitude of change will be restricted to no more than medium-low due to the minimum separation distance of approximately 10 km, and the fact that the construction works will only occupy 5 to 10 degrees of the wider 360 degree view.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts of the LCU experiencing visibility of the Development, and **no change** across all other parts where there will be no visibility. Factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the large scale of the turbines within the Development and their position upon the enclosing horizon to the north. However, the magnitude of change will be moderated by the distance of more than 10 km between the Development and the LCU; the contained extents within 5 to 10 degrees of the full 360 degree landscape context; and the existing influence of An Suidhe Wind Farm, seen in closer proximity to the north-west above the opposite shoreline of Loch Awe from this LCU. The Development will have only a limited influence on the setting of this LCU, which is primarily formed by Loch Awe.

Significance of effect

During both the construction and operational phases, the effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic LCT: East Loch Fyne north LCU will be **not significant (moderate)** where visibility occurs and with no effect where there is no visibility. The Development will not redefine the landscape character of this LCU, owing principally to the distance of more than 10 km and the limited influence of the landscape of the Site on the setting of this LCU.

6.7.13 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne south LCU

Baseline

The 'Key Characteristics' for the Rocky Mosaic LCT are presented at 6.7.11 above, in respect of the Inveraray LCU. The two other LCUs of the Rocky Mosaic LCT, also associated with Loch Fyne and relevant to this assessment, are the East Loch Fyne north LCU, that lies to the south of the Development, and the East Loch Fyne south LCU, that lies to the south-west, both on the eastern shore of Loch Fyne.

The East Loch Fyne south LCU extends along the coastline from Newton Bay in the north to Lachlan Bay in the south. It comprises an area of land that protrudes out into Loch Fyne and which is characterised by its hilly and open landform. In contrast to the wooded hill slopes that enclose much of the lochside, this LCU is made up of a series of small, irregular knolls with a predominantly open moorland land cover and only smaller patches of deciduous woodland.

While the small settlement of Newton occupies the northern part of the LCU, the coastline and interior of this LCU remains largely undeveloped. The B8000 follows the course of the Strathlachlan River, also coinciding with the eastern boundary of the LCU, and passing through the small settlement of Garbhallt. To the east, the rising and afforested landform of the Upland Forest Moor

Mosaic, encloses the visible extent of the wider landscape, while on the opposite shore to the west, the same landscape type and cover occurs.

Sensitivity

The value of this LCU is medium-high, reflecting the fact that this LCU is covered by the East Loch Fyne APQ and recognising the regional value that this landscape designation attaches to this area.

The susceptibility of this LCU to the Development is medium-high. This eastern coast of Loch Fyne has a close association with the open waters of Loch Fyne and the opposite shore of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT, and to a lesser extent, the hills of this type to the north where the Site is located. While human influences are evident along this coast, these are typically small in scale and rural in character and the absence of large-scale developments contributes to the susceptibility of this LCU.

The combination of the medium-high value and medium-high susceptibility leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows high level theoretical visibility occurring across north-eastern parts of this LCU, within approximately 17 to 19 km of the Development, with no theoretical visibility occurring across the south-west of the LCU.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **low** in the north-eastern part and **no change** elsewhere, where there will be no visibility. From this distance, the ground-level construction works will be screened, and the construction cranes and emerging turbines will form those parts of the Development which will be most visible. This construction activity will have a limited influence on this LCU, due to distance and the small sector of the wider landscape that it will occupy – within 1 to 5 degrees of the full 360 degree context. The focus of this landscape is generally to the west over Loch Fyne, and construction activity at the Site to the north will have a limited influence on this setting.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **low** in the north-eastern part, and **no change** elsewhere where there will be no visibility. While the ZTV in Figure 6.8 indicates high levels of visibility, this is likely to be restricted to the upper parts of turbines due to the low elevation of this LCU and the screening effect of intervening landform. The turbines will be present in a sector of the view which plays a limited role in the setting of this LCU, which is focussed more to the west across Loch Fyne. The Development will occupy only 1 to 5 degrees of the wider landscape context and will have a limited influence on the landscape character of this LCU.

Significance of effect

During the construction and operational phases, the effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic LCT: East Loch Fyne south LCU will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** or with **no effect** where there will be no visibility. The Development will have a limited influence on the landscape character of this LCU owing principally to the separation distance of more than 17 km.

6.7.14 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / West Loch Awe LCU

Baseline

The 'Key Characteristics' for the Rocky Mosaic LCT are presented at 6.7.11 above, in respect of the Inveraray LCU. The two other LCUs of the Rocky Mosaic LCT, associated with Loch Awe and relevant to this assessment, are the West Loch Awe LCU, that lies to the north-west of the Development, and the North Loch Awe LCU, that lies to the north.

The West Loch Awe LCU extends from Tervine on the southern shore to the Ben Cruachan Power Station to the north, around the Ardanaiseig peninsula to the small settlement of Inverinan to the south. This LCU forms a narrow band which includes the loch shore and a limited extent of the

undulating hinterland. The predominant land cover is woodland with a mix of deciduous and coniferous extending around the loch shore and only small fields of improved pasture occurring intermittently. The woodland cover is most concentrated around Ardanaiseig House in the north and the settlement of Inverinan in the south of the LCU.

The fall of the landform from the Craggy Uplands LCT to the west means that the orientation of this LCU is generally south-eastwards or eastwards across the loch. This not only raises the association between this LCU and the loch, but also the Craggy Uplands LCT which occupies the opposite side of the loch, with the Site located in the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT beyond. Development in this LCU is relatively sparse and dispersed and even the small settlements of Kilchrenan and Inverinan are relatively small and contained. Overhead electricity transmission lines cross this LCU to the west and east of Kilchrenan, and Carraig Gheal occupies the Craggy Uplands at a minimum of approximately 2 km to the west.

Sensitivity to change

The value of this LCU is medium-high, reflecting the fact that the majority of this LCU is covered by the North Argyll APQ and recognising the regional value that this landscape designation attaches to this area.

The susceptibility of this LCU to the Development is medium. This western coast of Loch Awe has a close association with the open waters of Loch Awe and the opposite shore of the Craggy Uplands LCT and, to a lesser extent, the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT beyond, where the Site is located. While human influences are evident along this coast, and these are typically small in scale and rural in character, the presence and influence of the overhead electricity transmission lines, and nearby Carraig Gheal Wind Farm reduces the susceptibility of this LCU.

The combination of the medium-high value and medium susceptibility leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows high level theoretical visibility occurring across the northern extents of this LCU, with middle and low-level theoretical visibility across central parts, and no visibility towards the south. The low and middle levels of theoretical visibility relate to the screening effect of the landform to the south of Loch Awe, which will mean only a small proportion of the proposed turbines will be visible over the enclosing ridgelines. The proposed turbines will be located at a distance of approximately 7 to 9 km from this LCU. Much of the shoreline within this LCU is wooded, and actual visibility will therefore be lower across much of the LCU than that indicated by the ZTV.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts experiencing high levels of actual visibility in the north of the LCU, **low** across those parts experiencing medium or low levels of actual visibility in the centre, and with **no change** where there will be no visibility across the majority of the LCU. The position of the Site behind intervening landform from this LCU will means that ground level construction works will be screened. Activity associated with the construction cranes and emerging turbines will therefore be those parts of the Development which will have most influence on the LCU. They will be seen at a distance of more than 7 km and will be limited to a relatively contained sector of the wider landscape. The effects of the construction works will be further moderated by the closer range influence from Garraig Gheal Wind Farm.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across northern parts experiencing high levels of actual visibility, **low** across central parts experiencing medium or low levels of actual visibility, and **no change** where there will be no visibility across the majority of the LCU. Those factors which will increase the magnitude of change include the large scale of the turbines, and their introduction into a sector of the view in which existing wind farm development is currently not visible. However, the magnitude of change will be limited by their position in a relatively unremarkable sector of the view; screening of the lower parts of the turbines by intervening landform; and the intermittent nature of visibility as a result of woodland cover

across this LCU. Across parts of the LCU, there is an existing influence to the west from Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal Wind Farms and this further moderates the effect of the Development.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic LCT: West Loch Awe LCU will be **not significant (moderate)** during both the construction and operational phases on localised parts in the north of the LCU where actual visibility occurs. Outwith this area, the effect will be either **not significant (moderate / minor)** where more limited visibility occurs, or **no change** where there is no visibility. The Development will not redefine the landscape character of this LCU, owing principally to the limited extents of actual visibility, the minimum separation of approximately 7 km, and the baseline influence from closer range Carraig Gheal Wind Farm.

6.7.15 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / North Loch Awe LCU

Baseline

The 'Key Characteristics' for the Rocky Mosaic LCT are presented at 6.7.11 above, in respect of the Inveraray LCU. The two other LCUs of the Rocky Mosaic LCT, associated with Loch Awe and relevant to this assessment, are the West Loch Awe LCU, that lies to the north-west of the Development, and the North Loch Awe LCU, that lies to the north.

The North Loch Awe LCU occurs along the northern shore of Loch Awe, extending from the Pass of Brander in the west to east of Lochawe in the east. It comprises a narrow band of land situated parallel to the shore and contains the lower hill slopes which are associated with, and form the immediate setting to, the northern end of Loch Awe.

This LCU is generally characterised by very steep slopes descending down towards the loch shore from the Ben Cruachan mountain range to the north. These slopes are largely wooded enclosing much of this LCU from the surrounding landscape, albeit with open moorland slopes along the northern transition with the High Tops LCT to the north and through the Pass of Brander. The steepness of the landform has led to the concentration of development within a narrow band along the shoreline. This comprises the A85, the Glasgow to Oban train line, the small settlement of Lochawe and other dispersed settlement.

While the character of this LCU is largely defined by the introverted and enclosed nature formed by the extensive tree cover, the combination of the steepness of the landform and its orientation south across Loch Awe, means that where open patches occur, there is a strong association with the landscapes to the south. The development outwith this LCU which has the greatest influence on its character is the operational Carraig Gheal Wind Farm situated in the Craggy Uplands on the western shore of Loch Awe and close to smaller scale operational Beinn Ghlas Wind Farm. Visibility of Carraig Gheal is limited from much of the LCU owing to the enclosure of woodland and forestry, but is readily visible from the more open areas, especially as it is seen in the open aspect to the south and at the minimum of approximately 10 km.

Sensitivity to change

The value of this LCU is medium-high, reflecting the fact that the majority of this LCU is covered by the North Argyll APQ and recognising the regional value that this landscape designation attaches to this area.

The susceptibility of this LCU to the Development is medium. Despite the extent of enclosure from woodland cover, this northern coast of Loch Awe has a close association with the open waters of Loch Awe and its opposite eastern shoreline, as well as the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT beyond, where the Site is located. While human influences are evident along this coast, and these are typically small in scale and rural in character, the presence and influence of the Cruachan Power Station and Visitor Centre, overhead electricity transmission lines, A85, rail line and nearby Carraig Gheal Wind Farm reduces the susceptibility of this LCU.

The combination of the medium-high value and medium susceptibility leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The ZTV in Figure 6.8 shows high level theoretical visibility occurring almost continuously across this small LCU. Woodland cover across much of this LCT will reduce actual visibility compared to that shown on the ZTV. The proposed turbines will be located at a distance of approximately 8 km from this LCU.

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts of the LCU experiencing actual visibility of the Development, and **no change** where there will be no visibility across the majority of the LCU. Where woodland cover allows outward views, ground-level construction works across the north of the Site will potentially be visible, as well as high-level construction works across the Development. The presence and activity of the construction cranes and the emerging turbines will have a limited influence on the landscape character of this LCU and will be most prevalent from southern parts of the LCU where woodland cover allows outward views, as well as from moorland areas to the north of the band of woodland that covers the lower slopes above Loch Awe. With the separation distance of 8 km the cranes and emerging turbines will be seen as medium range elements occupying only 5 to 10 degrees of the wider 360 degree landscape context.

During the operational phase, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** across parts of the LCU experiencing visibility of the Development, and **no change** where there will be no visibility across the majority of the LCU. Those factors which will increase the magnitude of change include the introduction of wind farm development into a new sector of the view to the south-east, as well as the Development's position on hills to the south of Loch Awe which forms the setting for this LCU. However, the magnitude of change will be prevented from being rated higher than medium-low by the existing influence of wind farm development on this LCU from Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas Wind Farms, as well as by the separation distance of approximately 8 km, and the contained extent of the Development to within 5 to 10 degrees of the wider 360 degree landscape context.

Significance of effect

During the construction and operational phases, the effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic LCT: North Loch Awe LCU will be **not significant (moderate)** in localised parts where actual visibility will occur and with no effect across the majority of the LCU where there will be no visibility. The indirect visual influence of the Development will not redefine the landscape character of this LCU owing principally to the limited extents of actual visibility, the minimum separation of approximately 8 km and the baseline influence from other developments.

6.8 Assessment of Effects on Landscape Designations

The effects of the Development can vary widely across a landscape planning designation and the distinction where significant and not significant effects may occur within the same designation is of particular importance in the assessment. Where this is the case, the assessment has defined boundaries through the designation which express the differing effects of the Development.

The scoping process involved a preliminary assessment to identify those landscape designations with potential to undergo significant effects as a result of the Development. Statutory consultees have raised no objections to the landscape designations presented below, which have potential to be significantly affected and, therefore, require a detailed assessment.

- Loch Lomond and The Trossachs NP; and
- North Argyll APQ.

The effect on the LLTTNP is assessed in Appendix A6.2, with the findings presented below. The effects on all other landscape planning designations with potential to be significantly affected are assessed below. The other designated areas that occur in the Study Area were found through the

scoping process to not have the potential to be significantly affected, and have, therefore, not been assessed in any further detail.

6.8.1 Assessment of Effects on Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park

A detailed assessment of the effects of the Developments on the Special Qualities of the LLTTNP is presented in Appendix A6.2. A summary of this assessment is presented below.

The assessment has considered the effect of the Development on the three relevant Special Landscape Qualities (SLQs) of the LLTNP. The finding is that the effects on these SLQs would be **not significant.** The Development lies outwith the LLTNP, with a minimum distance of approximately 11 km between the closest turbine and the closest north-western part of the LLTNP boundary. This means that there would be no direct effects on the LLTNP, only indirect effects associated with visibility of the Development as seen from within the LLTNP. The ZTVs in Figures 6.9a and 6.9b illustrate the very limited geographical extent to which the Development would be visible, with most of the LLTNP unaffected. The ZTVs also illustrate the typically low or medium levels of visibility where only a small proportion of the proposed turbines would be visible, albeit with high levels occurring on the higher slopes and summits.

23 of the 26 SLQs which apply across the Study Area would not be affected by the Development, in most cases owing to the location of the proposed turbines more than 11 km to the north-west of the LLTNP, especially in the case of those SLQs which are not susceptible to indirect effects. The three remaining SLQs with potential to be affected are '*Tranquillity*', '*Arrochar's mountainous and distinctive peaks*' and '*Steep mountains and long glens*', which would be indirectly affected through visibility of the Development.

The findings of the assessment on these SLQs concludes that the effects of the Development would be **not significant**. This finding relates chiefly to a combination of the limited extent to which the Development would be visible in those parts of the LLTNP where the SLQs are experienced, the separation distances from those areas where visibility would occur and the existing influence from the operational wind farms in the same north-westerly sector of the landscape setting.

While the Development would have effects on three of the 26 SLQs of the LLTNP which apply across the Study Area, effects would be not significant.

6.8.2 Assessment of Effects on North Argyll APQ

Baseline

The North Argyll APQ is designated within the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan. There are no published special qualities for the APQ, so this assessment draws on the key attributes of the LCTs within the APQ.

The North Argyll APQ covers a large area across the north and centre of the Study Area. It extends from Loch Linnhe at its north-western extent through Glen Kinglas towards Bridge of Orchy in the north-east. It follows the western boundary of the LLTNP along its eastern boundary, extending to the south of St Catherine's at its southern extent. The western boundary then passes north of Loch Fyne, to the east of Glen Aray, before extending north-east to take in the northern extent of Loch Awe. Beyond this, the north-western boundary passes to the west of Gleann Salach to meet back at Loch Linnhe.

The APQ covers land within the following LCTs:

- 1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT;
- 2: High Tops LCT;
- 4: Mountain Glens LCT;
- 6a: Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT;
- 7: Craggy Upland LCT;
- 7c: North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT;

- 7d: Lorn Craggy Upland LCT; and
- 20: Rocky Mosaic LCT.

Although there are no published special qualities for the APQ, its scenic qualities are evident. In particular, the dramatic scale and openness of the mountains contrasts with the intimacy and enclosure of the more settled glens and lochs. Parts of the APQ are relatively remote and the landscape is rugged and craggy, particularly to the north across land around Ben Cruachan and the Loch Etive mountains, as well as at its north-western extent near Loch Linnhe. To the south, particularly around Loch Fyne and Loch Awe, the landscape is typically smaller in scale and more settled. There is evidence across the APQ of human influence, including settlement, overhead electricity transmission lines and commercial forestry. There is also an existing influence from wind farm development, including within the APQ itself at Clachan Flats, as well as wind farms outside the boundary of the APQ which exert a visual influence on the landscape within it. These include Beinn Ghlas, Carraig Gheal and An Suidhe Wind Farms, all located to the west of the APQ.

Sensitivity

The value of this landscape is medium-high, owing to the North Argyll APQ designation, which denotes the regional scenic value of this landscape. The susceptibility of the APQ to the Development varies across its extents, although it is generally medium to medium-high. Areas where human influence is less prevalent, including across higher summits and more remote areas, have a medium-high susceptibility. Other areas which have a medium-high susceptibility to the Development include those areas where the hills of the Site play a role in forming the setting to the landscape. These include Glen Aray to the west of the Site, as well as parts of the lower-lying loch-sides across the southern part of the Study Area. Areas which experience a medium susceptibility to the Development include those areas already subject to visibility of existing wind farm development outside the APQ, as well as parts of the landscape in which the hills of the Site play a limited role in forming the setting, including areas to the north of the APQ and parts in closer proximity around Loch Awe. Clachan Flats Wind Farm is located within the APQ, and the area surrounding this wind farm is of lower susceptibility to change associated with the Development due to the existing influence of this operational wind farm.

The combination of the medium-high value with the medium to medium-high susceptibility gives rise to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

The magnitude of change would vary across the extents of the APQ. During the operational phase it would be **high** across parts of the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT to the immediate north of the Site, as well as within the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT around the Site and to the immediate west. The location of the Development in close proximity to this part of the APQ, to the north of Inveraray, and its close proximity to these upland areas, would mean that it would have a notable influence on landscape character across this relatively contained area.

Beyond this area in closest proximity to the Site, the effect on the APQ would be reduced. There would be a **medium-high** magnitude of change across an area of high theoretical visibility within the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT to the east of Cladich. There would be a **medium** magnitude of change across parts of the designation experiencing theoretical visibility beyond the immediate Site surroundings, within approximately 9 km, including parts of the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT to the east of the Site; the High Tops LCT to the north-east; and parts of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT experiencing lower theoretical visibility to the west of the Development.

Outwith these areas, the magnitude of change across the APQ would range from **medium-low** to **low** or **no change**, typically relating to the greater separation distances between these parts of the Development, as well as the occurrence of low level or no visibility and the influence from existing wind farm development.

The magnitude of change would be the same for the construction phase and operational phase.

Significance of effect

During the operational phase, the effect of the Development on the landscape character of the North Argyll APQ would be **significant (major, major / moderate** or **moderate**) across the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains to the immediate east of the Site, within approximately 9 km; the High Tops to the north-east within approximately 9 km; the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic to the immediate east of the Site within approximately 5 km; and across parts of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland experiencing actual visibility within approximately 4 km. The effect across all remaining parts would be **not significant (moderate** or **moderate / minor)** or **no change** where there would be no visibility. The same assessment would apply during the construction phase.

The Development would redefine the landscape character of the south-western part of this APQ owing to the location of the Development adjacent to this part of the APQ and despite the existing influence of Clachan Flats Wind Farm within the APQ to the east. The Development would not redefine the landscape character of the remaining parts of the APQ owing to greater separation of the Development from those parts, combined with the baseline influence from existing wind farms to the west of the APQ.

Significant effects would be contained within a localised part of the APQ where the scenic qualities are less remarkable and baseline influences from wind farm developments and overhead electricity power lines are evident. This means that the remaining parts of the APQ, where the scenic qualities are more remarkable and there is a lesser influence from energy developments, would either remain unaffected or undergo effects that would be not significant. The Development would, therefore not affect the integrity of the APQ as a whole, despite localised significant effects on qualities of the APQ.

6.9 Assessment of Effects on Views

The assessment of effects on views comprises an evaluation of the effects at each of the representative viewpoints. This is carried out on site, using wirelines and photomontages, as well as professional experience and judgement to inform the assessment.

The viewpoint locations are shown in conjunction with the ZTV in Figures 6.5a and 6.5b. The viewpoints are illustrated in Figures 6.24 to 6.42 where a photograph of each view is accompanied by a computer-generated wireline and, for the majority of the views, a photomontage. The viewpoints that have been selected for photomontage include all the viewpoint locations within a 20 km radius which have potential to be significantly affected. The photographs and cumulative wirelines contained in Figures 6.24 to 6.42 have a 90-degree field of view. Photomontages are presented with a 53.5-degree field of view.

In the wirelines, the Development turbines are shown in red, operational wind farms are shown in black, under construction wind farms are shown in purple, consented wind farms are shown in green, application wind farms are shown in blue and scoping stage wind farms shown in orange.

- Viewpoint 1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe
- Viewpoint 2: A819, Tullich
- Viewpoint 3: A819, north of Inveraray
- Viewpoint 4: Access track above Inveraray
- Viewpoint 5: Inveraray Castle Grounds
- Viewpoint 6: Forest track above St Catherine's
- Viewpoint 7: A815, Ardnagowan
- Viewpoint 8: A815, Strachur
- Viewpoint 9: Rubha nam Frangach
- Viewpoint 10: St. Conan's Kirk
- Viewpoint 11: Kilchrenan
- Viewpoint 12: Ben Cruachan
- Viewpoint 13: Ben Lui

- Viewpoint 14: Beinn Ime
- Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe
- Viewpoint 16: Beinn Lochain
- Viewpoint 17: Cruachan Power Station Visitor Centre
- Viewpoint 18: Dun na Cuaiche
- Viewpoint 19: Stob an Eas

6.9.1 Viewpoint 1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe – Figure 6.24

Baseline

The viewpoint is located on the A819, to the north of where the A819 crosses over the water course named Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe. The view looks south-east across the slopes of the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT, which enclose the eastern and western side of Glen Aray. The landscape is characterised by the hill slopes which enclose the glen, and the extent of coniferous forestry across the eastern side of the glen and open moorland across the western side.

Human influences are evident in the form of the A819 and the overhead electricity transmission line which comes close to the bridging point and then runs parallel to the western side of the A819 through this northern section of the glen.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium. The viewpoint is not identified as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, and there are no laybys for road-users to stop along this section of the A819 and appreciate the views more fully. While the viewpoint is located within an APQ, it lies just within the southern boundary and the view look south across an undesignated landscape and, therefore, the value remains medium.

The susceptibility of road-users is medium. While the views will be experienced by road-users travelling at speeds of 40 to 60mph, for south-bound road-users, these views will be apparent over an approximate 3 km section, albeit with some screening from adjacent road-side tree cover (Viewpoint 2 is located approximately 2 km to the south of Viewpoint 1). The Development will be seen in a context where there is very little built development, with the exception of the overhead electricity transmission line which is routed down the western side of the glen.

The combination of the medium value of the view and the medium susceptibility of road-users leads to an overall **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change on the views of south-bound road-users will be **high**. The use of tall cranes and the emergence of the 13 tall turbines will be the most prominent feature of the construction works. They will be seen at a minimum separation of approximately 1.5 km and will be seen to occupy most of the eastern sector of the view. The presence of intervening commercial forestry across the lower slopes will mean that some of the ground level construction works will be screened, while access tracks connecting the turbines on this closest north-west side will be visible, along with the associated forest clearances associated with the tracks and turbines.

Although the overhead electricity transmission line and the A819 already present a human influence, the scale of the cranes and emerging turbines and their position above the enclosing horizon to the south-east would result in a high magnitude of change. Construction works associated with the Development would be seen in views to the south-east, such that they would be readily apparent to south-bound road users but not nth-bound road-users along this section of the A819.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change which south-bound road users will experience during the operational phase would be **high**. The wireline in Figure 6.24 shows that all 13 turbines will be visible above the horizon to the south-east. With a minimum separation distance of approximately 1.5 km, the proposed turbines will appear large in scale compared to the moderate scale of the hills on which they will be located. Their prominence would also be accentuated by their location on the more elevated landform above the glen, and access tracks associated with the turbines on this closest north-west side will also be readily visible and add to the overall effect. The Development will introduce wind farm development into this view in which it is not currently present.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on south-bound road-users on this section of the A819 would be **significant (major / moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates to a combination of the medium sensitivity of the view and the viewers, and the high magnitude of change resulting from the close proximity of the turbines to the viewpoint, despite the slightly oblique nature of views for road users travelling in both directions.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figures 6.24e and 6.24f show that the three turbines on the left are screened by a small group of coniferous trees which do not form part of a coupe, but if they were removed, this would open up visibility of the full extent of 13 turbines. The removal of forest coupes on the Site will expose the lowest parts of the proposed turbine towers for all but the closest proposed turbines, which are already almost fully exposed. This change will be so incremental that it will not alter the assessment of a high magnitude of change and a significant (major / moderate) effect as presented above. This also takes into account the negative appearance of the clear felling, albeit over only the short term prior to the establishment of the restocked coupes which will form a new land cover.

6.9.2 Viewpoint 2: A819, Tullich – Figure 6.25

Baseline

The viewpoint is located on the A819, to the north of properties at South Tullich and Ladyfield, and south of properties at North Tullich. This viewpoint is representative of the views of residents at these properties, as well as road-users on the A819. There are several properties in close proximity to the viewpoint, located to the east and west of the route. Several of these properties have a principal orientation to the east towards the Site.

The view looks south-east across the slopes of the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT, which enclose the eastern and western side of Glen Aray. The landscape is characterised by the hill slopes which enclose the glen, and the extent of coniferous forestry across the eastern side of the glen and open moorland across the western side. Some areas of clear felling are visible across the lower slopes of the hills to the east.

Human influences are evident in the form of the A819, and coniferous forestry on the eastern valley slope, which is especially conspicuous where clear-felling has occurred across the central hill slopes. The overhead electricity transmission line which runs parallel to the western side of the A819 can be seen, albeit partially filtered by woodland along the western edge of the road in views from this section of the route.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium. The viewpoint is not identified as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, and there are no laybys for road-users to stop along this section of the A819 and appreciate the views more fully. The surrounding landscape is not covered by any landscape planning designations which would otherwise denote a special scenic value.

The susceptibility of road-users is medium. Road users will experience views towards the Site whilst travelling at speeds of 40 to 60mph, and the Development will typically be seen in oblique views to the east by road users travelling north or south. However, for south-bound road-users, these views will be apparent over an approximate 3 km section, albeit with some screening from adjacent road-side tree cover. Views to the east, in which the Development will be seen, are generally more open than views in other directions. The Development will be seen in the context of commercial forestry, including areas of clear felling, as well as the overhead electricity transmission line visible to the west.

In contrast, the susceptibility of residents is high. Given that several of the properties are orientated east, towards the Site, there is the potential for residents' views to be affected from front elevation windows, as well as from their garden grounds and access tracks. The susceptibility of residents is higher than that of road-users owing to the static nature and potentially long duration of their views.

The combination of the medium value of the view and the medium susceptibility of road-users leads to an overall **medium** sensitivity, while the medium value and high susceptibility of residents leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity for residents.

Magnitude of change during construction

During the construction phase, the magnitude of change which road-users and residents will experience will be high. The separation distance of approximately 1.3 km to the nearest turbine, combined with the position of the turbines on the eastern valley side, will mean that elements of the ground level construction works, including construction of tracks, foundations and crane pads will potentially be visible. While the photomontage on Figure 6.25 shows that these ground level construction works across the north of the Site are likely to be screened by the forestry on the lower slopes, it is also likely that they will be visible across the south of the site which is either clear-felled or newly planted. Parts of the key-holing forestry removals will be visible in the northern part of the Site, although again mostly screened by the existing forestry, and in the southern part the effects will be moderated by the immature stage of the forestry planting that will be removed.

The use of tall cranes and the emergence of the 13 tall turbines will, however, be the most prominent feature of the construction works and will be seen to occupy most of the eastern sector of the view. Although human influence is already an existing feature of the view in the form of coniferous forestry and the overhead electricity transmission line which runs parallel to the A819, the scale of the turbines and the position of the Development above the enclosing horizon to the east will result in a high magnitude of change. The activity associated with the tall cranes and construction of the turbines, as well as the incomplete appearance of the Development and the large scale of the emerging turbines will make it a prominent feature in the view from the A819. Construction works associated with the Development will be seen in oblique views to the east by road users travelling in both directions along the A819, and in direct principal views from several properties along this stretch of the A819.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change which road users and residents will experience during the operational phase will be **high**. The wireline in Figure 6.25 shows that all 13 turbines will be visible above the horizon. With a minimum separation distance of approximately 1.3 km between the viewpoint and the closest turbine of the Development, the turbines will appear large in scale.

The prominence of the turbines will also be accentuated by their location on more elevated landform above the viewpoint, and the clear visibility of the tracks and other infrastructure towards the western extent of the Development that will occur from this viewpoint. The Development will introduce wind farm development into this view in which it is not currently present. There will be some stacking of turbines in the view, particularly turbines T7 and T8. The turbines will occupy a large proportion of the view to the east, extending throughout approximately 60 to 90 degrees, in

the direction which currently offers most open views, as shown on the horizontal angle ZTV on Figure 6.7.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on north-bound and south-bound road-users on this section of the A819 will be **significant (major / moderate)** during the construction and operational phases, while on residents it will be **significant (major)**. This finding relates to a combination of the medium to medium-high sensitivity of the view and the viewers, as well as the high magnitude of change resulting from the close proximity of the turbines to the viewpoint.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figures 6.25e and 6.25f show that essentially all 13 proposed turbines are visible, albeit with the two on the left partially screened by a close range deciduous tree. There is already an area that has been clear felled visible on the right-hand side of the photomontage. The removal of the remaining forest coupes will not increase the number of proposed turbines that will be visible but will incrementally increase the extent to which these turbines will be visible by revealing a small additional part of the towers, hubs or blades that are already visible. This change will be so incremental that it will not alter the assessment of a high magnitude of change and a significant (major / moderate) effect as presented above. This also takes into account the negative appearance of the clear felling, albeit over only the short term prior to the establishment of the restocked coupes which will form a new land cover.

6.9.3 Viewpoint 3: A819, north of Inveraray – Figure 6.26

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the A819, on a stretch of the road between properties at Drimfern and Stronmagachan. It is representative of road-users travelling north-bound on the A819, although south-bound road-users would experience perpendicular views towards the Site in the section of the A819 to the north. The viewpoint occurs in a section that is partially open, albeit with intermittent tree cover on both sides.

The focus of the view is to the east across the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT which enclose the eastern and western side of Glen Aray. Areas of coniferous forestry are visible across these hills, including parts which have been clear felled. To the immediate east of the road, areas of scrub and deciduous woodland along the valley floor are visible. Views in other directions are largely contained by rising landform and vegetation along the road, and the view to the east, therefore, represents the most open aspect.

Existing human influences in the view includes the A819, and coniferous forestry on the eastern valley slopes. An overhead electricity transmission line is visible passing through Glen Aray to the east. It crosses the road to the north of this viewpoint and can be seen crossing low-lying ground within the glen in a south-easterly direction, albeit partially filtered by vegetation within Glen Aray.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium. The viewpoint is not identified as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, and there are no laybys for road-users to stop along this section of the A819 and appreciate the views more fully. Although the landscape to the south is located within the Inveraray Castle GDL, mature tree cover screens it such that it is not visible from this section of the road.

The susceptibility of road-users is medium. Road users will experience views towards the Site whilst travelling at speeds of 40 to 60mph, and the Development will typically be seen in oblique views to the east by road users travelling north or south. However, for north-bound road-users, these views will be apparent over an approximate 3 km section, albeit with some screening from adjacent road-side tree cover. Views to the east, in which the Development will be seen, are generally more open than views in other directions. The Development will be seen in the context

of existing human influence in the form of coniferous forestry, including areas of clear felling, as well as the overhead electricity transmission line visible in views towards the Site.

In contrast, the susceptibility of residents is high. The elevated position of the small number of properties on the western valley side and the generally open outlook to the east and south-east, means there is the potential for residents' views to be affected from their garden grounds and access tracks, as well as potentially their gable end windows. The susceptibility of residents is higher than that of road-users owing to the static nature and potentially long duration of their views.

The combination of the medium value of the view and the medium susceptibility of road-users leads to an overall **medium** sensitivity, while the medium value and the high susceptibility of residents leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of road-users and residents will be **high** during the construction stage. The position of the Development relative to this viewpoint means that most of the ground level construction works will be screened from this location, with the exception of the key-hole forestry removals, which will be evident around the small number of turbines on the ridge where the lower parts are not screened by close range forestry or tree cover. These forest removals will add to the overall effect by disrupting the existing forest cover. Although the removal of the road-side deciduous tree cover associated with the proposed southern access point, will not be visible from this viewpoint owing to its location further to the north, it will have an effect on the views of road-users as they travel north and south-bound on the A819.

The tall cranes and emerging turbines will be the most visible parts of the construction phase in the views of road-users along the A819 and residents at nearby properties. These structures will be seen to rise above the ridgeline and will be visible to almost their full extents given the position of the Development towards high ground on the enclosing valley side. These components of the construction will form a large-scale, prominent feature, and will be readily visible in oblique views to the east for road users travelling in both directions. Residents at the few nearby properties may experience some filtering of views by vegetation along Glen Aray, although, where visible, construction works associated with the Development will form a prominent feature. These construction works will be seen at a distance of approximately 1.7 km.

Close range views will be experienced by road-users where they pass the construction of the proposed southern access to the north of this viewpoint, where the removal of trees along the road-side, coupled with the presence and activity of heavy plant associated with the construction of the road and bridge, will add to the overall effect of the development.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of road-users and residents will be **high** during the operational stage. The wireline in Figure 6.26 shows that all 13 turbines will be visible along or set slightly behind the ridgeline. The turbines will be visible to variable degrees, with those on the ridgeline seen to their full extent, and those behind seen partly screened. All turbines will be visible from at least hub height upwards and while there will be filtering of visibility by road-side and garden vegetation, the structures will be apparent from most sections of the road and properties, even in the summer months. There will be some stacking of turbines in views from this location, particularly T2 and T4.

The Development will form a prominent feature in the view, occupying a large proportion of the view to the north-east, extending throughout approximately 60 to 90 degrees, in the direction which currently offers most open views. With a minimum separation distance of approximately 1.7 km between the viewpoint and the closest turbine of the Development, the turbines will appear large in scale. The prominence of the turbines will also be accentuated by their location on more elevated landform above the viewpoint.

While the proposed southern access will not be visible from this viewpoint, it will be seen by road-users travelling along the A819. While the effect will be reduced post-construction owing to the absence of construction works, there will be a residual effect associated with the loss of trees, which will be permanent along the road-side and temporary to the east. This effect will reduce over time as the new planting to the east matures and forms some degree of enclosure to passing road-users, although overall the effect will be associated with the influence of the proposed turbines and will remain high.

The Development will introduce wind farm development into this view in which it is not currently present, although there is a notable level of modification through intensive forestry practices and the presence of the overhead electricity transmission line. The turbines and some limited ground-level infrastructure will be experienced in slightly oblique views by road users travelling north, as well as in oblique views by road users travelling south.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on residents will be **significant (major)** while the effect on road-users on this section of the A819 will be **significant (major / moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates to a combination of the high sensitivity for residents and medium sensitivity for road-users, as well as the high magnitude of change resulting from the close proximity of the turbines to the viewpoint.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.26d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the closer range, intervening landform and forest will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.4 Viewpoint 4: Access track above Inveraray – Figure 6.27

Baseline

This viewpoint is located along a track to the north-west of Inveraray. The track connects the A819 with housing development at Barn Park. It passes through an area of open ground at slightly higher elevation on the western side of the settlement of Inveraray. This viewpoint is representative of the views of local residents within the settlement and road-users and walkers along this access track.

From this elevated position on the western side of the settlement, there are open views to the east over buildings and extending out over Loch Fyne. Hills within Cowal form the horizon beyond the loch. Landcover across these hills comprises areas of coniferous forestry and open moorland. To the east and west, the foreground is formed by rough grassland, with the landform sloping from west to east towards the loch shore. Views to the south are contained in close proximity by woodland along the track. To the west, outward views are contained in the middle distance by rising landform around Creag Dhubh, which features coniferous woodland landcover. To the north, lower ground around Glen Aray can be seen, beyond which rises the steep landform of Dun na Cuaiche. The tower at the summit of the hill is apparent, and mixed woodland covers the south-western slopes visible from this viewpoint. Hills to the east of Glen Shira form the horizon beyond.

Human influence in the landscape is apparent in the form of settlement within Inveraray, although this is largely rural in nature. Coniferous forestry is visible across the hill to the north, while overhead electricity transmission and telecommunications infrastructure passes parallel to the track to the east and west. Residential development within the settlement is generally orientated south-east to north-west, with views primarily focussed to the south-east over Loch Fyne. Views experienced by road users along the track are aligned to the north-east and south-west, while views in other directions are oblique.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium-high. The viewpoint is not identified as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, but it does present a natural vantage point across the surrounding landscape. The viewpoint and surrounding landscape are located within the Inveraray Castle GDL, which indicates the national importance of this landscape.

The susceptibility of road users along this access track is medium. Road users travelling north-east along the track will experience direct views towards the Site. Views to the north, in which the Development will be seen, are relatively open, although the focus of the view is to the east. The Development will be seen in the context of existing human influence in the form of coniferous forestry, as well as overhead electricity transmission infrastructure visible in the surrounding landscape. The susceptibility of road-users would also be moderated by the transitory nature and short duration of their views.

In contrast, the susceptibility of local residents will be medium-high. Although not many of the properties are orientated directly toward the Site, there is the potential for residents' views to be affected from side elevation windows, in oblique views from the principal elevation, and more likely from their garden grounds. The susceptibility of residents will be higher than that of road-users owing to the static nature and potentially long duration of their views. Walkers will also have a **medium-high** susceptibility owing to their heightened appreciation and awareness of the views across the surrounding landscape.

The combination of the medium-high value of the view and the medium or medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **medium** sensitivity for road users and a **medium-high** sensitivity for residents and walkers.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of road-users, walkers and residents will be **medium-low** during the construction stage. The position of the Development relative to this viewpoint means that the ground level construction works will be screened from view. As such, the tall cranes and emerging turbines will be the only visible parts of the construction phase, seen at a minimum of approximately 6.5 km. Two emerging turbines, and associated cranes, will be partly visible above the ridgeline to the east of Glen Aray, while the other four theoretically visible tips will be fully screened by the forestry on the intervening hill slope. These components of the construction will form a relatively compact and small-scale feature, which will be experienced over a short duration by road users travelling north and over a longer duration by residents. The construction works will have a limited influence on the views of road-users, walkers and residents in this area.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of road-users, walkers and residents will be **medium-low** during the operational stage. The wireline in Figure 6.27 shows that six of the 13 turbines will be theoretically visible, albeit screened to varying degrees by the landform on the eastern side of Glen Aray. This means that none of the proposed turbines will be seen to their full extent – two will be seen to just below hub height while four will be seen as blade tips only. Forestry on the intervening ridgeline will fully screen the four turbine tips that will be theoretically visible such that only two blades and one hub will be visible. Mixed tree cover around the north of Inveraray and Inveraray Castle will further reduce visibility from the properties in this area.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the medium range of the proposed turbines, at a minimum separation distance of approximately 6.5 km, and the introduction of wind turbines into this view in which there are no operational wind farms currently visible. Although the focus of views from this location is to the east over Loch Fyne, the turbines will be seen in a relatively open, scenic sector of the view, in the context of the hills to the north of Inveraray. The tower on the summit of Dun na Cuaiche provides a focal point in the view, and the turbines will be seen in close proximity to the north of this feature.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the contained horizontal extent occupied by the two visible turbines within the Development. These will occupy 5 to 10 degrees of the much wider view in which they key attraction is the eastward view across Loch Fyne. The turbines will be experienced in direct views over a short duration by road users and walkers travelling north along the track. Residents within nearby properties will experience more limited views of the Development, owing to their lower elevation and enclosure from close range tree cover.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on residents will be **not significant (moderate)** for residents and walkers and **not significant (moderate / minor)** for road-users during the construction and the operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the very limited extent to which the Development will be visible from this track and surrounding properties owing to the screening effect of landform, forestry and closer range tree cover.

6.9.5 Viewpoint 5: Inveraray Castle Grounds – Figure 6.28

Baseline

The viewpoint is located in the grounds of Inveraray Castle, to the south-west of the castle itself. The castle is a Category A listed building, and there are several other listed buildings within the grounds, including the monument on Dun na Cuaiche (Viewpoint 18). In addition, a large area around Inveraray is designated as Inveraray Castle GDL. The castle and grounds are open to the public as a visitor attraction, and part of the castle is also used as a residence. This viewpoint is representative of the views of visitors to the castle and gardens, as well as residents at the castle.

This viewpoint is located in the grounds of the castle, adjacent to an area of sports pitches to the south-west of the castle. The viewpoint is within the castle grounds but offers more open views towards the Site than those likely to be available from the castle or its formal gardens. Outward views from this location are generally restricted by deciduous woodland surrounding the viewpoint. To the north-east, the hill of Dun na Cuaiche is visible, featuring landcover of mixed woodland and with the monument at the top seen against the skyline. The landform of Creag Dhubh, to the west of the viewpoint, is visible at close proximity, and features areas of coniferous forestry and clear felling. A small car park is located to the south-west of the viewpoint, adjacent to the A819. To the south-east, there are limited views through woodland towards high ground to the east of Loch Fyne. Human influence on this landscape is largely restricted to evidence of coniferous forestry and clear felling in the view to the north-west.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is high. The viewpoint is located within the Inveraray Castle GDL and offers views over the landscape within the grounds of the castle. The viewpoint is not considered a formal viewpoint on OS mapping and is taken from a relatively arbitrary point within the grounds of the castle to allow the fullest extent of visibility of the Development.

The susceptibility of recreational visitors is medium-high, while the susceptibility of residents at the castle is high. There are no existing operational wind farms visible in the baseline view, which raises the susceptibility of receptors to development of this type. Residential receptors will experience views towards the Site over a long duration, while recreational receptors will experience views over a short duration.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high to high susceptibility of residents and visitors leads to an overall **high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of recreational visitors and residents will be **negligible** during the construction stage. The position of the Development relative to this viewpoint means that the ground level construction works will be fully screened from view by intervening landform.

While the tall cranes and emerging turbines will generally be more readily visible, only the blade tip of one emerging turbine and crane activity associated with it, will potentially be visible although likely to be screened by the forestry covering the western flank of Dun na Cuaich.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of recreational visitors and residents will be **negligible** during the operational stage. The wireline in Figure 6.28 shows that the blade tip of one of the 13 turbines will be theoretically visible, with lower parts of the turbine and the remainder of the Development screened from view by the landform to the north-west of Dun na Cuaiche. Actual visibility is likely to be further reduced by vegetation both in closer proximity to the viewpoint and along the horizon. Ground level infrastructure associated with the Development will not be visible from this viewpoint.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the relative proximity of the visible proposed turbine, at a minimum separation distance of approximately 6.0 km, and the introduction of wind turbines into this view in which there are no operational wind farms currently visible. The turbine will be seen in the sector which forms the focus of views, given the limited availability of outward views from this location. The tower on the summit of Dun na Cuaiche provides a focal point in the view, and the turbines will be seen in relative proximity to the north-west of this feature.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the limited extremely limited visibility of the Development, whereby the one turbine with theoretical visibility will likely be screened by the intervening tree cover and forestry. The viewpoint represents the view from a part of the grounds with relatively open views to the north towards the Site and is therefore likely to afford more visibility than other parts of the grounds.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on residents will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during the construction and operational phases, while the effect on recreational visitors will be **not significant (minor).** This finding relates chiefly to the very limited visibility of the Development.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.28d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the closer range, intervening landform and associated forest cover will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.6 Viewpoint 6: Forest track above St Catherine's – Figure 6.29

Baseline

The viewpoint is located on an access track through an area of forestry to the south-east of St Catherines on the south-eastern shore of Loch Fyne. The landform rises up from the loch shore towards Cruach nan Capull (565 m AOD) to the south-east of St Catherines, and the viewpoint is located on the lower slopes of this hill. The viewpoint is representative of the views experienced by walkers on forestry tracks in the area.

The viewpoint is located in an area of forestry which offers relatively open north-westerly views towards Loch Fyne. Inveraray can be seen on the shore of Loch Fyne in views in this direction, and Inveraray Castle is also visible, set slightly further north on the shoreline. Beyond Inveraray, the horizon is formed by moorland hills which feature coniferous forestry on the lower slopes. The tower on Dun na Cuaiche is visible to the north-west. The landform to the east of Glen Shira screens the mouth of Glen Shira from this location and forms the horizon to the north. This landform features mixed woodland on the lower slopes near the shoreline, and coniferous forestry on the higher ground. In other directions, forestry and rising landform generally screens outward views from this location.

Human influence in the landscape is apparent through the presence of coniferous forestry, both in the vicinity of the viewpoint and on the hills to the north-west of Loch Fyne. This comprises a mixed age and single species commercial forestry with areas of clear felling. Clachan Flats Wind Farm can be seen on the hills to the east of Glen Shira, in views to the north-east from this viewpoint. The turbines within this development are seen backclothed against more mountainous landform around Beinn Bhuidhe.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium. The viewpoint is not identified as a formal viewpoint on OS maps and the surrounding landscape is not covered by any landscape planning designations which would otherwise denote a special scenic value.

The susceptibility of viewers is medium-high. Walkers will have a heightened appreciation and awareness of the views that will raise their susceptibility to the potential effects of the Development. This susceptibility is, however, moderated by the presence and influence of the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm, as well as the presence of coniferous forestry throughout the view, including areas of clear felling.

The combination of the medium value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of walkers leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The position of the Development beyond the ridgeline formed by the hills between Glen Shira and Loch Fyne means that none of the ground level construction works at the Site will be visible. As such, the tall cranes and emerging turbines will be the most visible parts of the construction phase in the views of walkers along this forestry track. Parts of three emerging turbines, and cranes associated with them, will be visible to some extent above the ridgeline formed by high ground to the west of Loch Fyne. These components of the construction will form a medium-scale and apparent feature, which will be experienced over a short section by walkers on this track. These works will be seen at a distance of approximately 8.2 km, such they will be seen within the middle range and within the same sector as the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.29 shows that five of the 13 turbines will be visible beyond the ridgeline from this elevated viewpoint, although the two tips may not be readily discernible. They will be seen at a minimum distance of 8.2 km, making them slightly closer than the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm. The Development will be seen in more direct views across Loch Fyne, in closer proximity to settlement at Inveraray and Inveraray Castle, which form the focus of views from this viewpoint. Although much of the Development will be screened by the landform, and the turbines which are visible will largely be seen as blade tips only, the larger scale of the turbines within the Development compared to Clachan Flats is still likely to be perceived.

Overall, the magnitude of change is prevented from being rated higher than medium-low due to the existing influence of human activity in the form of the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm, the widespread influence of coniferous forestry across the surrounding landscape and the limited extent of the forest walk from which the Development will be visible. The screening of the majority of the Development by the intervening landform and its containment within 5 to 10 degrees of the wider 360 degree view (as shown on Figure 6.7) also reduces the magnitude of change.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers will be **not significant (moderate)** during both the construction and operational phases. This will arise through a combination of the limited extent to which the Development will be visible owing to the screening effect of intervening

landform and the existing influence from the surrounding commercial forestry and more distant Clachan Flats Wind Farm.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.29e shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform and associated forest cover will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.7 Viewpoint 7: A815, Ardnagowan – Figure 6.30

Baseline

The viewpoint is located to the west of the A815 at Creag a' Phuill, north of Ardnagowan on the south-eastern shore of Loch Fyne. The viewpoint is representative of local road-users on this access road as well as north-east bound road-users who will experience slightly oblique views towards the Site to the north. For road-users travelling south-west, the Site will be at a very oblique angle and, therefore, will not form such a notable feature. The viewpoint is also representative of the views of the few residents living at isolated properties accessed from this slip road.

The viewpoint is situated in the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT which occurs in the Cowal area and is characterised by steep-sided mountains and ridges. The presence of long narrow sea lochs cutting through these mountains is also characteristic of this LCT, and Loch Fyne is an example of this. This viewpoint is located on the shore of the loch, and the landform rises steeply up to the south-east of the viewpoint towards the range of hills above Lochgoilhead. Woodland between the viewpoint and the A815 largely blocks views in this direction, and the focus of views is over Loch Fyne to the north and west. In this direction, Inveraray is visible on the opposite shore of the loch. Rounded hills with mixed and coniferous woodland across the lower slopes rise up beyond. Inveraray Castle and the tower on Dun na Cuaiche can be seen to the north.

In the view from this location, development is largely restricted to settlement at Inveraray and coniferous forestry on the hills beyond the town. There is also visibility of the overhead electricity transmission lines on the hills beyond Inveraray, and while this is largely backclothed against the landform beyond, a section to the west of the viewpoint can be seen upon the skyline. Clachan Flats Wind Farm is screened from view by woodland to the north of this viewpoint. This viewpoint affords more open views than those experienced from the A815 itself, due to screening and filtering by road-side vegetation. Outward views towards the Site from the A815 are likely to be intermittent and glimpsed, although in winter screening by vegetation will be reduced. From the loch-side slip road they will be more open.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium-high. The viewpoint is an incidental viewpoint, located on the shore side access track to the west of the A815, and selected to include the fullest extent of the Development. The medium-high value relates to the regional landscape designation of the East Loch Fyne (Coast) APQ which covers this area and denotes a special scenic value, despite the absence of any formal viewpoints.

The susceptibility of road-users on the access track and the A815 is medium. The north-east to south-west alignment of the access track and road is at an oblique angle to the northern alignment of views towards the Site. While road-users on the A815 will be travelling at speeds between 40 and 60 mph such that their views will be transitory and experienced only over short periods of time, road-users on the parallel access road will be travelling at slower speeds, albeit still experiencing transitory views. These factors will reduce the potential prominence of the Development in the views of road-users on this access road and parallel section of the A815.

In contrast, the views of local residents will be high. While there is only a small number of farmsteads and other rural properties accessed from the slip road, the majority of these are orientated north-west over Loch Fyne. There are several properties within Ardnagowan itself, to the south of this viewpoint, which experience principal views to the north-west. Furthermore, their

views are static and experienced over long periods of time. These factors will increase the potential prominence of the Development in the views of residents in this local area.

The combination of the medium-high value of the view and the high susceptibility of residents leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity for residents, while the medium-high value of the view and the medium susceptibility of road-users leads to an overall **medium** sensitivity for road-users.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of road-users and residents will be **low** during the construction phase. The ground level construction works will be screened by the intervening landform. The higher-level construction works, involving the use of tall cranes and the emergence of the turbines, will form a more readily visible feature that will be experienced by road-users over a short duration and by residents over a longer duration. There are no operational wind turbines visible from this viewpoint currently, and the emergence of turbines at the Site will form a new focus, especially in the views of residents. The effect will, however, be moderated by the separation distance of 9.0 km and the fact that only three of the 13 emerging turbines will be visible, and that these will be partially screened by the landform, such that only the upper parts will be visible.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change that road-users and residents will experience will be **low** during the operational phase. Of the 13 turbines, three will be theoretically visible, seen set behind the ridgeline formed by the landform to the south of the Site, as shown on Figure 6.30. The proposed turbines will be seen at a minimum distance of 9.0 km. The turbines will be partly concealed behind the intervening landform such that the three turbines will be seen as blade only and two of these will appear stacked in the view from this location.

The factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the separation distance, the screening of the majority of the Development and the restriction of visibility of the turbines to blade tips only. The minimum distance of 9.0 km and the position of the turbines beyond the ridgeline means that the proposed turbines will appear as medium-scaled elements within the view. They will occupy only a small proportion of the wider view, with a horizontal extent of approximately 1 to 5 degrees, as shown on the horizontal angle ZTV on Figure 6.7. The presence of the overhead electricity transmission line on the skyline to the north-west means that the Development will be seen in the context of existing human infrastructure.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the absence of operational wind turbines in the view from this location, meaning that the Development will introduce this type of development to the view. The position of the Development in the most scenic sector of views from this location, beyond Inveraray Castle and the tower at Dun na Cuaiche, also increases the magnitude of change associated with it. Residents at properties along the shoreline are likely to experience direct or slightly oblique views towards the Development over a long duration.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on residents will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during both the construction and operational phases, while the effect on road-users will be **not significant (minor)** during the construction and operational phases. This relates to the very limited visibility of the Development at a minimum distance of 9 km which will mean that the small number of blades potentially visible will not redefine the view.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.30e shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.8 Viewpoint 8: A815, Strachur – Figure 6.31

Baseline

The viewpoint is located to the west of the A815 at Creggans, to the north-west of Strachur. The viewpoint is located on a small jetty at Creggans Point, adjacent to the Creggans Inn. The jetty extends towards Loch Fyne to the west of the road. There are two small benches at the viewpoint, and it offers a wide-ranging views across Loch Fyne. It is representative of the views of residents at Creggans, where properties along the A815 are generally orientated to the west over Loch Fyne. It is also representative of the views of north-bound road-users, who will experience direct views towards the Site. For road users travelling south, the Site will be located to the rear and will, therefore, not form a readily apparent feature. It will therefore, be north-bound and not south-bound road users that are affected by the Development.

The viewpoint is situated in the Rocky Mosaic LCT, a relatively small-scale landscape which forms a margin around the shoreline of Loch Fyne. The area is characteristic of this LCT, being relatively well-settled and featuring the small sandy Strachur Bay to the south of the viewpoint. This viewpoint is located on the shore of the loch, and the landform rises steeply up to the east towards the range of hills above Lochgoilhead. The viewpoint is located on lower ground to the west of the A815, near the shoreline itself. The Creggans Inn forms a foreground feature in views to the east, and generally limits outwards views in this direction, although steep wooded ground can be seen rising up to the north-east and south-east. The focus of views is over Loch Fyne to the north, west and south, and views in these directions are long-distance and wide-ranging. The Site is visible in views to the north, seen beyond settlement at Inveraray, which lines the shore of the loch.

In the view from this location, development is largely restricted to overhead electricity transmission line seen traversing the hills to the west, generally backclothed against the landform; as well as coniferous woodland across these hills; and discrete areas of settlement along the loch shore. The wireline in Figure 6.31 indicates that there are theoretical views towards the blade tips of two turbines within An Suidhe Wind Farm to the north-west; however, actual visibility towards these turbines is restricted by coniferous forestry on the horizon.

This viewpoint is likely to afford slightly more open views than those experienced from the A815 itself, given the position of the viewpoint on a small jetty which protrudes towards the loch. Small areas of woodland to the west of the A815 would filter views towards the Site from sections of the route to the north and south of the viewpoint, although in winter this effect would be reduced.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium-high. The viewpoint is an incidental viewpoint, located adjacent to an open section of the A815, and selected to include the fullest extent of the Development. The medium-high value relates to the regional landscape designation of the East Loch Fyne (Coast) APQ which covers this area and denotes a special scenic value, despite the absence of any formal viewpoints.

The susceptibility of road-users on the A815 is medium. The north to south alignment means that road users travelling north will experience direct views towards the Site, while road users travelling south are unlikely to experience views of the Development from this stretch of the road. Road-users will be travelling at speeds between 30 and 40 mph such that their views will be transitory and experienced only over short periods of time. These factors will reduce the potential prominence of the Development in the views of road-users on this section of the A815.

In contrast, the susceptibility of local residents will be medium-high. There are a number of properties along this stretch of the A815 within the small settlement of Creggans. The majority of these are orientated west over Loch Fyne and will therefore only experience oblique views north towards the Site and although there are no visible wind farms in this view, there are other human influences in the form of widespread commercial forestry, overhead electricity transmission line, the A815 and small-scale settlement. These factors combine to moderate the susceptibility and prevent it from being rated high.

The combination of the medium-high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of residents leads to an overall **medium-high** sensitivity for residents, while the medium-high value of the view and the medium susceptibility of road-users leads to an overall **medium** sensitivity for road-users.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of north-bound road-users and residents will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The ground level construction works will be screened by the intervening landform. The higher-level construction works, involving the use of tall cranes and the emergence of the turbines, will form a more readily visible feature that will be experienced by road-users over a short duration and by residents over a longer duration. There are no operational wind turbines visible from this viewpoint currently, and the emergence of turbines at the Site will from a new feature, especially in the views of residents. The emerging turbines and associated cranes will form large-scale elements in this view, in which existing development is relatively small-scale and rural.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change that north-bound road-users and residents will experience will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. Of the 13 turbines, 11 will be theoretically visible, seen set behind the ridgeline formed by the landform to the south of the Site. The proposed turbines will be seen at a minimum distance of 12.5 km. The turbines will be partly concealed behind the intervening landform such that parts of the towers of two turbines will be visible, while the hubs of a further three turbines will be visible, and the remaining turbines seen as blade tips only. only the three turbines will be seen as blade tips only. Vegetation along the horizon is likely to further reduce actual visibility slightly.

The factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the separation distance of 12.5 km and the small overall horizontal extent of this wide-ranging view occupied by the Development, which is shown on the horizontal angle ZTV to include 1 to 5 degrees of the full 360 degree view (Figure 6.7). While the development will be visible to the north, the view across Loch Fyne to the west and south will remain unaffected. The presence of existing overhead electricity transmission line in the view to the west will slightly moderate the magnitude of change associated with the Development, although this existing infrastructure is smaller in scale than the proposed turbines. The view is also seen from a settled and afforested landscape, where human influence is widely evident and this also moderates the overall effect.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the absence of operational wind farms in the view from this location, meaning that the Development will introduce this type of development to the view. Residents at properties along the shoreline will experience oblique views towards the Development over a long duration and north-bound road-users will experience more direct views although over a shorter duration.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on north-bound road-users will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during both the construction and operational phases, while the effect on residents will be **not significant (moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. Although there is not an existing influence from wind farm development in this view, the separation distance of 12.5 km combined with the contained extent of the proposed turbines will ensure that the Development forms a relatively small scale and distant feature that will not form the defining feature in a view that will continue to be defined by the wider extent of Loch Fyne.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.31d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.9 Viewpoint 9: Rubha nam Frangach – Figure 6.32

Baseline

The viewpoint is located on the western shoreline of Loch Fyne to the south of Argyll Caravan Park. An access track passes on slightly higher ground above the shoreline to the west of the viewpoint, and a slipway extends from this track onto a small beach, on which the viewpoint is located.

The viewpoint is located in the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT which covers this part of the western shore of Loch Fyne. The landform rises up to the west, and mixed woodland covers the slopes of the rounded hills in this direction. Woodland adjacent to the access track to the west generally limits views in this direction, and the focus of views is to the east over Loch Fyne. The viewpoint is representative of the views of walkers along the access track and beach.

The focus of views from this location is to the north and east over Loch Fyne. Views are relatively long-distance towards the head of the loch to the north-east. Argyll Caravan Park can be seen on the shoreline to the north, and the landform beyond this screens views towards Inveraray and Glens Aray and Shira. Dun na Cuaiche rises up to the north-east, and the tower is visible near its summit. Further east, the jagged summits of hills at the head of Loch Fyne can be seen in long-distance views. Rounded, forested hills on the south-eastern shore of Loch Fyne form the horizon in slightly closer proximity views to the east and south-east.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium-high. The viewpoint is located within the regional landscape designation of the West Loch Fyne (Coast) APQ, which covers this area and denotes a special scenic value, despite the absence of any formal viewpoints.

The susceptibility of viewers is medium-high. Walkers will have a heightened appreciation and awareness of the views that will raise their susceptibility to the potential effects of the Development. This susceptibility is, however, moderated by the presence of coniferous forestry throughout the view, including areas of clear felling.

The combination of the value of the view and the susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **medium-high** rating.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of recreational visitors will be **low** during the construction phase. The position of the Development beyond the ridgeline formed by the landform to the south of the Site views from this location means that none of the ground level construction works at the Site will be visible. As such, the tall cranes and emerging turbines will be the visible parts of the construction phase to walkers at this viewpoint. Four emerging turbines, and cranes associated with them, will be visible above the ridgeline formed by high ground to the north of Loch Fyne, and above the middle range tree cover, while the other four tips will be screened by the tree cover. These components of the construction will form a medium scale feature, which will be experienced over a small area by walkers at Rubha nam Frangach. These works will be seen at a distance of approximately 10.7 km and will occupy only 1 to 5 degrees of the full 360 degree view (Figure 6.7), such that they will appear relatively distant and contained.

There are no operational wind turbines visible from this viewpoint currently, and the emergence of turbines at the Site will from a new focus. The emerging turbines and associated cranes will form large-scale elements in this view, in which existing development is relatively small-scale and rural, despite the influence of man-made elements in the form of coniferous forestry.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers will be **low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.32 shows that five of the 13 turbines will be visible beyond the ridgeline formed by high ground to the south of the Site. The proposed turbines will be seen at a minimum distance

of 12.7 km. The turbines will be partly concealed behind the intervening landform such that the hub of one turbine and the blades of two turbines will be visible, while the tips of the remaining four turbines will be screened by the intervening tree cover.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the absence of operational wind turbines in the view from this location, meaning that the Development will introduce this type of development to the view. Walkers along the access track and at the beach will experience direct views towards the development over potentially a moderate duration of time.

The following factors will moderate the magnitude of change. Firstly, the separation distance of 12.7 km and the small overall horizontal extent of 1 to 5 degrees that the Development will occupy within this wide-ranging view, will ensure that it forms a relatively distant and contained feature. Secondly, the restricted extent to which the Development will be visible, comprising the hub of one turbine and the blade tips of the other two, will limit its influence on the views of walkers. Thirdly, the presence of man-made development in the view to the north in the form of the caravan park will slightly moderate the magnitude of change, although this existing infrastructure is smaller in scale and different in nature to the proposed turbines. Fourthly, the viewpoint represents a wider area where visibility of the development will typically be further reduced by intervening tree cover and landform and also where the key views are east across Loch Fyne, rather than north to the background hills.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during both the construction and operational phases. This relates chiefly to the separation distance of 12.7 km, the contained horizontal extent of the Development and the extent to which it will be screened by the intervening landform, despite the sensitivity of the walkers and the view.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.32e shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.10 Viewpoint 10: St. Conan's Kirk – Figure 6.33

Baseline

The viewpoint is located in the grounds of the historic St Conan's Kirk. The kirk is located on the north-western shore of Loch Awe, towards the southern edge of the settlement of Lochawe. The viewpoint is located on the terrace to the immediate south of the kirk and close to the shoreline of Loch Awe, in an area with outward views to the east and south.

The viewpoint is located in the Rocky Mosaic LCT, which covers parts of the shorelines of several lochs within Argyll and Bute. Around Loch Awe, it is characterised by areas of settled and farmed shorelines. The viewpoint is representative of the views of visitors to the kirk, as well as residents in Lochawe, at Loch Awe Hotel and at isolated residential properties in the surrounding area.

While the kirk is the focus for visitors, the surrounding landscape plays an important part in its setting. The view to the east and south provides the most open outlook from the surroundings of the kirk and is focussed over Loch Awe. This is a sector of the view in which man-made development is limited. The West Highland train line between Glasgow Queen Street and Oban follows the shoreline to the immediate south-east of the kirk, while in the wider view, development is limited to areas of coniferous forestry and associated access tracks on the undulating moorland hills to the south-east of Loch Awe. Views in other directions are generally restricted by the kirk itself or by surrounding woodland.

Similar views are experienced from Loch Awe Hotel and its surrounding terraces. The hotel lies approximately 1 km to the north-east of St. Conan's Kirk and occupies an elevated and open position above the shoreline. While the main orientation of the hotel is east-north-east to focus on

the ruined Kilchurn Castle, the south-south-east aspect also captures scenic views across Loch Awe. There is a large terrace on this aspect and three storeys of rooms with large windows and open views. The Site lies to the south of the hotel and so will be visible in views of residents.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is high. Although St Conan's Kirk is not marked as a formal viewpoint on OS mapping, and although it is a location people will visit primarily to appreciate the cultural and architectural qualities of the kirk itself, the landscape setting to this location is of importance to the overall experience. St Conan's Kirk is also located in the North Argyll APQ, and this raises its value. The value of the view from Loch Awe Hotel is also **high**. The hotel is also an historic building, which has been located on the loch edge, with the terrace and façade on the south-south-east aspect designed to take advantage of the scenic views across the loch.

The susceptibility of visitors to the effects of the Development will be medium-high. Recreational visitors will have a heightened awareness of their surroundings which will increase their susceptibility to changes associated with the Development, and while there is an influence from built development in the settlement of Lochawe and an influence from commercial forestry and clear felling in the southerly view where the Site is located, there is an absence of other large-scale development such as wind farms visible, this raises the susceptibility of visitors.

The susceptibility of local residents will be high. There are a number of properties along this stretch of the shoreline of Loch Awe. The majority of these are orientated south-east over the loch and will, therefore, experience oblique views south towards the Site. Furthermore, their views are static and experienced over longer periods of time than those of visitors. These factors will increase the potential prominence of the Development in the views of residents in this local area.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high to high susceptibility of visitors leads to an overall **high** sensitivity for visitors to the kirk and hotel, and a **high** sensitivity for residents in the surrounding area.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of visitors to St Conan's Kirk and Loch Awe Hotel and residents in the surrounding area will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The intervening landform will screen the ground level construction works, such that it will only be the higher-level construction works, comprising the emerging turbines and associated cranes, that will be visible. The wireline in Figure 6.33 shows that all 13 of the turbines within the Development will be visible above the skyline. Although they will be visible at a distance of approximately 9.6 km, with the lower parts of most of the turbines screened by the landform and occupying only 5 to 10 degrees of the wider view, their position on the skyline in open views to the south, in a sector of the view in which existing development is limited, will increase the magnitude of change associated with their construction.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of visitors to St Conan's Kirk and Loch Awe Hotel and residents in the surrounding area will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.33 shows that all 13 of the proposed turbines will be theoretically visible, with ten seen with hubs and three as tips. These will all be seen set behind the ridgeline formed by the hills to the south-east of Loch Awe in direct views to the south. The magnitude of change will be increased by the absence of visibility of other operational wind farms, such that the Development will introduce this type of development as a new feature into the view. There will be some stacking of turbines in the view from this location.

The effect will, however, be prevented from being rated more than medium-low owing to the separation distance of 9.6 km, and also the position of the turbines beyond the ridgeline formed by the intervening landform. This will provide some screening of the lower parts of the majority of the turbines, as well as ground level infrastructure including access tracks. The turbines will also

be seen as a relatively compact group occupying a relatively small proportion of the overall view, extending across a horizontal extent of 5 to 10 degrees.

Visitors to the kirk and hotel will experience views towards the Development over a moderate duration, while residents will experience views over a longer duration. The extent to which the Development will be visible will be limited to a localised area on the south-eastern side of the kirk, with trees and the kirk partially or fully screening visibility from other areas. From the southern aspect of Loch Awe Hotel, open and uninterrupted views of the Development will be experienced. Vegetation along some stretches of the A85 will filter views towards the Development from certain residential properties. Residents may experience interior views towards the Development, although given the orientation of the majority of properties to the south-east, and the position of the Development to the south, these views are likely to be oblique where available. Residents are also likely to experience views from the surroundings of properties, including gardens.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of visitors to St Conan's Kirk will be **significant (moderate)** during both the construction and operational phases, while for visitors to the hotel and residents in the surrounding area the effect will also be **significant (moderate)** during both the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the absence of other large-scale developments visible in the baseline view which will mean that the Development will introduce a new and defining feature in the views of visitors at this sensitive viewpoint and residents in the surrounding area.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.33d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.11 Viewpoint 11: Kilchrenan – Figure 6.34

Baseline

The viewpoint is located to the south of the minor road which passes east to west between Ardanaiseig and Kilchrenan, to the north of Loch Awe. The viewpoint is representative of road users travelling in both directions along this stretch of the minor road. The road passes approximately south-west to north-east along this stretch, and the position of the Site to the south-east means that road users travelling either north-east or south-west may experience oblique views towards the Site.

The viewpoint is situated in the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT which occurs along the shoreline and coastal areas in several parts of Argyll & Bute. In this area around Loch Awe, it is characterised by settled and farmed low-lying land around the shoreline. The viewpoint is also located close to the Craggy Upland LCT, and represents a transitional area between the two LCTs, with settled, farmed lower-lying ground located to the south, and more remote upland areas to the north.

The viewpoint is located in a relatively undulating area of landform, characterised by moorland landcover in the immediate surroundings. To the north-east, summits in the Ben Cruachan range are visible beyond closer-range undulating hills. To the west, settlement within Kilchrenan can be seen in the middle distance. Turbines within Carraig Gheal Wind Farm can be seen above the horizon, while an overhead electricity transmission line is visible crossing lower ground, backclothed against the hills beyond. These directions present the longest-distance views, while views in other directions are contained in slightly closer proximity by the undulating landform. To the south, the landform slopes down towards rough pasture to the north of Loch Awe. Plateau hills to the south of Loch Awe form the horizon in this direction and feature open moorland and areas of commercial forestry.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium-high. The viewpoint is an incidental viewpoint, located adjacent to an open section of the minor road, and selected to include the fullest extent of the Development and surrounding wind farm development. The medium-high value relates to the regional landscape designation of the North Argyll APQ which covers this area and denotes a special scenic value, despite the absence of any formal viewpoints.

The susceptibility of road-users on the minor road is medium. The north-east to south-west alignment of the road is at an oblique angle to the south-eastern alignment of views towards the Site. Furthermore, road-users will be travelling at speeds between 30 and 50 mph such that their views will be transitory and experienced only over short periods of time. These factors will reduce the potential prominence of the Development in the views of road-users on this section of the minor road.

The combination of the medium-high value of the view and the medium susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall medium sensitivity for road-users on the minor road.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of road-users and residents will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The ground level construction works will be screened by the intervening landform. The higher-level construction works, involving the use of tall cranes and the emergence of the turbines, will form a more readily visible feature that will be experienced by road-users over a short duration. Operational turbines at Carraig Gheal form an existing part of the view, experienced in direct views upon the enclosing horizon by road users travelling south-west along the road. This means that the emergence of turbines at the Site will not represent a new element in the view, but rather will add development of a kind which is already a feature of the baseline view. Furthermore, only four of the emerging turbines will be partly visible owing to the screening effect of the intervening landform.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change that road-users will experience will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. Of the 13 turbines, six will be theoretically visible, seen set behind the ridgeline formed by the landform to the north of the Site. The proposed turbines will be seen at a minimum distance of approximately 8.6 km. The turbines will be partly concealed behind the intervening landform such that two of the turbines will be seen as blade and two as blades and hubs.

The factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the separation distance, the screening of the majority of the turbines within the Development, as well as the screening of the lower parts of the visible turbines. The minimum distance of 8.6 km and the position of the turbines beyond the ridgeline means that the proposed turbines will appear as medium-scaled elements within the view. They will occupy only a small proportion of the wider view, with a horizontal extent of approximately 5 to 10 degrees (Figure 6.7). The presence of turbines within Carraig Gheal Wind Farm on the horizon to the west, as well as the overhead electricity transmission line in the same sector of the view, means that the Development will be seen in the context of existing human influences including wind turbines.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the position of the turbines in a different sector of the view from the operational Carraig Gheal Wind Farm, thereby extending the proportion of the horizon occupied by this type of development. For road users travelling north-east, for whom the operational turbines will be to the rear and therefore unlikely to be visible, the Development will appear to introduce wind turbines into the view.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on road-users will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during both the construction and operational phases. This will arise owing to the limited extent to which the wind farm will be visible, the separation distance of 8.6 km, the oblique nature of views towards

the Development over a short duration along this stretch of the minor road, and from a location in which operational wind turbines form part of the baseline view.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.34e shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.12 Viewpoint 12: Ben Cruachan – Figure 6.35

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the summit of Ben Cruachan (1126 m AOD), which is the highest peak of a large range of hills between Loch Awe and Loch Etive. It lies to the north of the River Etive and the Pass of Brander, through which the A85 and the West Coast Main Line pass. Ben Cruachan forms a notable landmark feature in views from much of the surrounding landscape. The viewpoint is representative of the views of walkers in this upland area. Access to the summit is generally taken from the A85 to the south, with the route passing the Cruachan Reservoir and Dam, which is located in a corrie to the south of Ben Cruachan. These features are associated with Cruachan Power Station, with the turbines located within the core of the mountain and which can be visited with a visitor centre located on the loch shore. The primary route used by hillwalkers also takes in several of the surrounding peaks.

Ben Cruachan is located within the High Tops LCT and is typical of this LCT with its rugged ridge and steep summit. Its proximity to Loch Awe and Loch Etive emphasises its steep-sided landform and large scale, seen in contrast to these surrounding low-lying areas. It can also be seen from more distant upland areas, from where it is generally seen as part of the surrounding mountain range; however, its distinctive peaks mean that it can be easily identified.

Given its elevation, views from the summit of Ben Cruachan are long-distance and panoramic. To the south and west, views are over lower-lying areas, including Loch Awe and the Firth of Lorn. To the north and east, views are over surrounding mountain ranges within Glen Coe and the Trossachs. These sectors of the view feature dramatic scenery, while the view to the south and west is more understated. While the majority of the view across the surrounding upland areas appears largely undeveloped, several wind farm developments can be seen in the view to the south. These comprise Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, and Barann Caltunn. All three developments are seen backclothed against the landform in views from this elevated viewpoint.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is high. The viewpoint is covered by the regional scenic designation of the North Argyll APQ which indicates the regional scenic importance of this landscape. It is also located within the Loch Etive Mountains WLA, which, although not a statutory designation, also indicates the importance of this landscape. While the summit is not marked as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, it does nonetheless mark a natural viewpoint in this upland landscape, and this contributes to the overall value.

The susceptibility of walkers to the effects of the Development will be medium-high. Typically, walkers have a heightened awareness of their surroundings that increases their susceptibility to new developments. While the views from Ben Cruachan and the surrounding uplands are extensive and predominantly characterised by the upland landscape, there is also the presence and influence from operational wind farms in the view to the south, most notably Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, Clachan Flats and An Suidhe. These wind farms moderate the susceptibility of walkers by establishing this type of development as a feature of the baseline context.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **high** rating for sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Ben Cruachan will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. Due to the elevation of this viewpoint above the surrounding landscape, views of ground level construction works across the Site will be visible, including the construction of access tracks, crane hard-standings and foundations, as well as the key-hole forestry removals around each turbine. While these will be seen as relatively small-scale and distant feature, the emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will form a more readily apparent feature. The position of the Development between existing operational wind farms in the view to the south will ensure that the turbines will be seen in a sector of the view, which is already influenced by wind farm development, thereby reducing the magnitude of change associated with the construction phase. The separation distance of 13.8 km will ensure that they will appear as a relatively small feature of the long-distance panoramic views available from this elevated summit. The turbines will also be seen at a greater distance from the viewpoint than the operational Beinn Ghlas or Carraig Gheal. However, the larger scale of the turbines within the Development will be perceived from this viewpoint and will increase the prominence of the turbines.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the view of walkers on Ben Cruachan will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.35 shows that all 13 of the turbines will be seen in views to the south at a minimum distance of 13.8 km and occupying 5 to 10 degrees of the wider 360 degree view.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the appearance of the turbines as a relatively compact array, fully backclothed against the landform beyond. The turbines will also be seen within the sector of the view which is already influenced by existing operational wind farms, including Clachan Flats to the south-east, Cruach Mhor, An Suidhe and A Cruach to the south, and Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas to the south. The turbines will be seen at a greater distance from the viewpoint than Beinn Ghlas and Carraig Gheal, and at a similar distance as Clachan Flats. The most scenic sector of the wider view is focussed to the north and east, over the more dramatic scenery, including over the Loch Etive Mountains WLA. Although the view to the south and west is also scenic, it is over a more settled and afforested landscape in which human influences are more evident.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include that, although the turbines will be seen at a greater distance than some of the existing wind farm developments in the view, the larger scale of the turbines will increase the prominence of the Development when compared with existing developments.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers will be **not significant (moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the separation distance of 13.8 km, the contained extent of the Development at 5 to 10 degrees and the presence of operational wind farm developments in the same sector of the view, despite the sensitivity of the walkers and the view.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.35e shows that forestry removals will be visible from this mountain top view. Areas of forestry will be seen to be clear felled, temporarily reducing the extent of forest cover across the Site, albeit with restocked coupes replacing the forest cover over time. The appearance of the felled and restocked pattern across the Site will match the similar appearance of other afforested areas across the wider view. Furthermore, the separation distance of 13.8 km will mean that the detail of the clear-felled areas will not be visible and therefore will not have the same detracting influence. These factors combine to ensure that the assessment of a medium-low magnitude of change and a moderate and not significant effect will remain unaltered.

6.9.13 Viewpoint 13: Ben Lui – Figure 6.36

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the summit of Ben Lui (1130 m AOD), which is the highest peak of a large range of hills to the west of Crianlarich and south-west of Tyndrum. It lies to the south of Glen Lochy, through which the A85 passes. Ben Lui is the highest Munro in the Southern Highlands and is a popular hill with hillwalkers. It is generally accessed (along with Beinn a' Chleibh) from Glen Lochy to the north-west, although it can also be accessed via Glen Cononish from Dalrigh to the north-east. The viewpoint is representative of walkers in this upland area.

As the highest peak in the Southern Highlands, Ben Lui forms a prominent feature in views from much of the surrounding landscape, as well as adjacent peaks. Views from the summit are long-distance and panoramic. Views to the north-west and east to south-east form the most scenic sectors of the view. To the north-west, peaks within an extensive upland landscape focussed around Glen Etive and to the south of Glen Coe are visible, and form a dramatic skyline. Ben Lui is located at the north-western extent of the LLTTNP, and views to the east and south-east are over this designated landscape. To the west is a more settled, lower-lying landscape, although views in this direction are also long-distance. Views are available along Loch Awe, and towards the Firth of Lorn and beyond. Islands including Mull and Jura form the distant horizon.

While the majority of the view across the surrounding upland areas appears largely undeveloped, several wind farm developments can be seen in the view to the west and south-west. These comprise, from south-west to west, Cruach Mhor, A Cruach, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas. Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, and Barann Caltunn. The wind farm developments are seen backclothed against the landform beyond in views from this elevated viewpoint. Coniferous forestry also forms a part of the baseline view, particularly across lower-lying areas to the south and west.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is high. The viewpoint is covered by the LLTTNP, which indicates the national importance of this landscape. It is also located within the Ben Lui WLA and North Argyll APQ. While the summit is not marked as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, it does nonetheless mark a natural viewpoint in this upland landscape, and this contributes to the overall value.

The susceptibility of walkers to the effects of the Development would be medium-high. Typically, walkers have a heightened awareness of their surroundings that increases their susceptibility to new developments. While the views from Ben Lui and the surrounding uplands are extensive and predominantly characterised by the upland landscape, there is also the presence and influence from operational wind farms in the view to the west and south-west. These wind farms moderate the susceptibility of walkers by establishing this type of development as a feature of the baseline context.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **high** rating for sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Ben Lui will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The landform of parts of the Site is screened from this viewpoint by high ground to the north-east, around Beinn Bhuidhe. While ground level construction works across parts of the Site could potentially be visible, including key-hole forestry removals around the turbines, from this distance of 17.9 km they will appear distant and small in scale. The emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will form a more visible feature, owing to their larger scale, albeit also appearing distant from this range. The position of the Development in the same sector of views as existing operational developments will ensure that the turbines will be seen in a context which is already influenced by wind farm development, thereby reducing the magnitude of change associated with the construction phase. The Development will however be seen in closer proximity and larger in scale than any of the existing wind farms, and this will increase the magnitude of change associated with its construction.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the view of walkers on Ben Lui will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.36 shows that all 13 of the turbines will be visible to some degree in views to the south. High ground to the north-east of the Site, around Beinn Bhuidhe, will screen the lower parts of several turbines. The hubs and blades of nine turbines will be visible above the ridgeline, with six of these seen to almost their full extents, while the remaining four turbines at the northern extent of the Development will be seen as blade tips only.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the appearance of the turbines as a relatively compact array, fully backclothed against the landform beyond and partially screened by the ridgeline to the north-east. The turbines will also be seen within the sector of the view, which is already influenced by existing operational wind farms, including being seen in front of part of An Suidhe Wind Farm. The most scenic sector of the view is focussed to the north and east, including over the landscape within the LLTTNP and over the Loch Etive Mountains WLA. Although the view to the south-west is also scenic, it is over a more settled landscape in which evidence of man-made development is more prominent. Figure 6.7 indicates that the Development will occupy only a 5 to 10 degree horizontal extent of the expansive, 360 degree view available from this location.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the closer proximity of the Development to the viewpoint than any of the existing operational developments. At a separation distance of approximately 17.9 km, the Development will appear as a relatively distant feature of the view but will bring wind farm development into closer proximity to this upland viewpoint than any of the existing visible developments. The larger scale of the turbines within the Development, combined with its closer proximity, will increase the prominence of the Development when compared with existing developments.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers will be **not significant (moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the separation distance of 17.9 km, the contained extent of the Development at 5 to 10 degrees and the presence of operational wind farm developments in the same sector of the view, despite the sensitivity of the walkers and the view.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.36d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.14 Viewpoint 14: Beinn Ime – Figure 6.37

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the summit of Ben Ime (1011 m AOD), the highest peak within the Arrochar Alps. It is located to the north-west of Arrochar and east of Glen Kinglas. It is popular with hillwalkers, as are the adjacent Beinn Narnain and the Cobbler. It is generally ascended from the south, starting at the north-western shore of Loch Long, sometimes as part of a wider route which also encompasses the two adjacent peaks. The viewpoint is representative of the views of walkers in this upland area.

Beinn Ime is located within the High Tops LCT and sits on the north-west boundary of the LLTTNP. Beinn Ime is characteristic of the rugged mountains of this LCT with its steep sides and conical summit, from which views are long-distance and panoramic. The focus of views is to the south-east, over the upland landscape within the LLTTNP. Ben Lomond forms a prominent feature in this direction and is seen beyond the Cobbler and Beinn Narnain. Beyond this, views stretch towards lower-lying ground across the Central Belt. Ben Lui is visible to the north, and the view stretches in this direction towards Ben Nevis. The Ben Cruachan range forms the horizon to the north-west,

Beinn an Lochain is visible in the foreground to the west, and Loch Fyne can be seen at low level beyond. Beyond this, the landform in this direction is flatter and less distinctive.

While the majority of the view across the surrounding upland areas appears largely undeveloped, several wind farm developments can be seen in the view to the west. These comprise A Cruach, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas and Clachan Flats. Clachan Flats is the nearest wind farm, seen in views towards the Site to the north-west.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is high. The viewpoint is covered by the LLTTNP which indicates the national importance of this landscape. While the summit is not marked as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, it does nonetheless mark a natural viewpoint in this upland landscape, and this contributes to the overall value.

The susceptibility of walkers to the effects of the Development would be medium-high. Typically, walkers have a heightened awareness of their surroundings that increases their susceptibility to new developments. While the views from Ben Ime and the surrounding uplands are extensive and predominantly characterised by the upland landscape, there is also the presence and influence from operational wind farms in the view to the west. These wind farms moderate the susceptibility of walkers by establishing this type of development as a feature of the baseline context.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **high** rating for sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Ben Ime will be **low** during the construction phase. The landform of the majority of the Site is screened from this viewpoint by higher ground to the east of the Site. Visibility of ground level construction works will therefore be limited including the construction of access track and removal of forestry around the turbines. This means that the emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will be the visible parts of the construction phase readily perceived from this viewpoint. The position of the Development in the same sector of views as existing operational developments will ensure that the turbines will be seen in a context which is already influenced by wind farm development. The Development will also be seen at a greater separation distance from the viewpoint than the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm, seen in the same sector of the view to the north-east, albeit with the emerging turbines appearing larger than the operational turbines.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the view of walkers on Beinn Ime will be **low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.37 shows that all 13 of the turbines will be seen in views to the north-west, at a separation distance of 16.1 km. The landform to the east of the Site will screen much of the lower parts of the turbines from this viewpoint, such that four of the 13 turbines will appear as blade tips only. Turbines towards the eastern extent of the Development will be positioned on slightly higher ground and will therefore appear more prominent from this viewpoint than turbines towards the west.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the position of the turbines beyond the ridgeline formed by high ground to the east of the Site and fully backclothed against the landform beyond from this elevated position. The turbines will be seen within the same sector of the view which is already influenced by operational wind farms, including closer range Clachan Flats Wind Farm. The Development will be seen in front of, and overlapping the horizontal extent occupied by, Carraig Gheal Wind Farm and will occupy 5 to 10 degrees of the wider view. The Development will be seen to the west, while the most scenic sectors of the view are to the south-east and north-west.

The difference in scale between turbines within the Development and turbines within existing operational wind farms will be perceived from this viewpoint and will add to the magnitude of change experienced during the operational phase.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the separation distance of 16.1 km extent to which the Development will be screened by intervening landform, its position in a sector of the view in which operational wind farm development is present, and the closer range influence from the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.37d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.15 Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe – Figure 6.38

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the summit of Beinn Bhuidhe (948 m AOD), the only Munro within an upland area to the south and west of Glen Fyne and east of Glen Shira. The peak is generally ascended from Glen Fyne to the east.

Beinn Bhuidhe is located within the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT, which comprises steep-sided, craggy topped mountains and sharp ridges deeply cut by long narrow sea lochs. Beinn Bhuidhe forms part of a steep ridge which extends from south-west to north-east, and which is rough and rocky across parts. The summit is generally ascended along a route from the head of Loch Fyne to the south and involves a long walk in along the glen.

The view to the north, east and south-east is over a large-scale upland landscape, while in other sectors of the view the landform is flatter and less distinctive. Loch Etive and Loch Fyne are visible, along with associated settlement across these lower-lying areas. A new track extends along Glen Fyne to the north of the river and can be followed to access Beinn Bhuidhe. Human influence on the wider landscape is also evident in the form of coniferous forestry, particularly to the west and south; overhead electricity transmission lines; and operational wind farm developments including Clachan Flats Wind Farm, located to the south-west. Other operational wind farms in the view comprise Cruach Mhor, A Cruach, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas.

Sensitivity

The value of this view is high. The viewpoint lies within the North Argyll APQ which denotes the regional scenic value of this landscape. It is also located within the Ben Lui WLA, which, although not a statutory designation, indicates the importance of this landscape. Although not marked on OS maps as a formal viewpoint, the summit of Beinn Bhuidhe does, nonetheless, offer a natural viewpoint.

The susceptibility of walkers to the effects of the Development would be medium-high. Typically, walkers have a heightened awareness of their surroundings that increases their susceptibility to new developments. While the views from Ben Ime and the surrounding uplands are extensive and predominantly characterised by the upland landscape, there is also the presence and influence from operational wind farms in the view to the west. These wind farms moderate the susceptibility of walkers by establishing this type of development as a feature of the baseline context.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **high** rating of sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Beinn Bhuidhe will be **medium** during the construction phase. The landform of the majority of the Site is screened from this viewpoint by higher ground to the east of the Site. Visibility of ground level construction works will therefore be limited. This means that the emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will be the visible parts of the construction phase seen by walkers from this viewpoint. The emerging Development will be seen in the view to the south, in which existing operational wind farm developments are visible. However, due to the separation distance of 9.3 km and the scale of the emerging 180 m tall turbines, the Development will appear as a relatively prominent feature within the view from Beinn Bhuidhe during the construction phase.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Beinn Bhuidhe will be **medium** during the operational phase. The wirelines in Figure 6.38 shows that all 13 of the turbines will be visible to some degree in views to the south-west, at a separation distance of 9.3 km. High ground to the east of the Site will screen the lower parts of several turbines, although this will be across the lower turbine towers only, with the hubs and blades of all turbines visible above the ridgeline. The Development will occupy 10 to 20 degrees of the wider 360 degree view from this summit.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the appearance of the turbines as a relatively compact array, fully backclothed against the landform beyond and partially screened by the ridgeline to the east. The turbines will be seen within the sector of the view which is already influenced by existing operational wind farms, and will be seen at a slightly longer range than Clachan Flats Wind Farm. The most scenic sector of views is focussed to the north and east, including over the landscape within the LLTTNP and Ben Lui WLA. Although the view to the south-west is also scenic, it is over a more settled landscape in which evidence of settlement and afforestation is more prominent. Figure 6.38 indicates that the Development will occupy a relatively small horizontal extent of the long-distance, panoramic views available from this location.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the moderate proximity of the Development to the viewpoint, at a separation distance of 9.3 km. Although Clachan Flats Wind Farm is located in closer proximity to the viewpoint than the Development will be, the scale of the proposed turbines will increase the prominence of the Development. Clachan Flats is also partially screened in the view from the summit, while the Development will be visible to a greater degree. This will cause it to appear as the most prominent wind farm development in the view from this sensitive upland viewpoint.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on walkers on Beinn Bhuidhe will be **significant (major / moderate)** during both the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the moderate proximity of the Development to the viewpoint, and the difference in scale between the turbines of the Development and existing operational developments.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.38d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.16 Viewpoint 16: Beinn Lochain – Figure 6.39

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the summit of Beinn Lochain (703 m AOD), which is the highest peak on a small ridgeline to the west of Lochgoilhead. It is considered part of the Arrochar Alps and lies to the north-west of Loch Goil and east of Loch Fyne. The southern and eastern slopes of the hill are craggy and steep, while to the north and west the landform is slightly more rounded. Although

Beinn Lochain is not one of the more popular hills in the Arrochar Alps, it is visited by hillwalkers, and the viewpoint is representative of the views experienced form this wider group of hills.

Beinn Lochain is located across two LCTs, with the craggier southern and eastern slopes located within the Steep Ridges and Hills LCT, and the gentler northern and western slopes within the Steep Ridgelands and Mountains LCT. The boundary between the two LCTs also marks the boundary of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs NP, with the summit of the hill itself located just outside the National Park.

Although Beinn Lochain is lower in elevation than other peaks within the Arrochar Alps, the views from its summit are long-distance, and it affords panoramic views over the surrounding higher peaks, as well as lower-lying ground to the north and west. The landform of Beinn Bheula, to the south, limits longer-distance views in this direction, but views elsewhere are long-range. To the west, Loch Fyne is visible, with relatively flat, upland landform beyond. To the north, the ridgeline of Ben Cruachan is visible, and the landform becomes more dramatic to the north-east, with higher peaks and more distinctive upland landform. Loch Goil is visible to the east, and to the south-east the point at which Loch Goil and Loch Long meet can be seen.

Human influence in the landscape is evident through coniferous forestry, including in close proximity across the surrounding upland area. Several wind farm developments are also visible in the view to the north, west and south-west. These comprise Clachan Flats, Carraig Gheal, An Suidhe, An Cruach and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms. The wind farm developments are seen in the least remarkable sector of the view, while the view to the east and south across the landscape within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs NP does not feature wind farm developments. However, human influence is visible in this direction in the form of small scale settlement along the shorelines of the lochs, and across the Firth of Clyde to the south-east.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is high. While the summit is located on the western boundary of Loch Lomond and Trossachs NP, the southern and eastern slopes are located within, and the peak offers close-proximity views of the landscape within the NP which indicates the national scenic importance of this landscape. While the summit is not marked as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, it does nonetheless mark a natural viewpoint in the upland landscape, and this contributes to the overall value.

The susceptibility of walkers to the effects of the Development will be medium-high. Typically, walkers have a heightened awareness of their surroundings that increases their susceptibility to new developments. While the views from Beinn Lochain and the surrounding uplands are extensive and predominantly characterised by the upland landscape, there is also the presence and influence from operational wind farms in the view to the north, west and south-west, most notably Clachan Flats, Carraig Gheal, An Suidhe, An Cruach and Cruach Mhor. These wind farms moderate the susceptibility of walkers by establishing this type of development as a feature of the baseline context.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **high** rating for sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Beinn Lochain will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The landform of the majority of the Site is screened from this viewpoint by higher ground along the ridgeline formed by Stuc Scardan, to the south-east of the Site. Visibility of ground level construction works will therefore be limited. This means that the emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will be the visible parts of the construction phase seen by walkers at this viewpoint. The position of the Development in the same sector of views as existing operational developments will ensure that the turbines will be seen in a context already influenced by wind farm development. The Development will also be seen at a similar separation distance as the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm, and in the same sector to the north. While these factors

will all moderate the magnitude of change, the difference in scale between the Development and the operational developments, including Clachan Flats, will be apparent, and will emphasise the larger scale of the turbines within the Development.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the view of walkers on Beinn Lochain will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.39 shows that all 13 of the turbines will be seen in views to the north-west, at a separation distance of 15.3 km. The landform to the south-east of the Site will screen much of the lower parts of the turbines from this viewpoint, such that five of the 13 turbines will appear as blade tips only. Turbines towards the eastern extent of the Development will be positioned on slightly higher ground and will therefore appear more prominent from this viewpoint than turbines towards the west.

Those factors that will moderate the magnitude of change include the position of the turbines beyond the ridgeline formed by high ground to the south-east of the Site and fully backclothed against the landform as seen from this elevated position. The turbines will be seen within the sector of the view which is already influenced by existing operational wind farms, and which represents the least remarkable sector of the view. Views to the east and south over the LLTTNP will remain unaffected. The Development will be seen at a similar separation distance as the existing Clachan Flats Wind Farm and will occupy a horizontal extent of approximately 5 to 10 degrees (Figure 6.7), which is a small proportion of the wider 360 degree view.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the difference in scale between turbines within the Development and turbines within existing operational wind farms, which will be perceived from this viewpoint, and will emphasise the larger scale of the proposed turbines. The turbines will also be seen backclothed against the landform of Ben Cruachan, which forms a distinctive and recognisable craggy ridgeline from this viewpoint.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers will be **not significant (moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the partial screening of the Development by higher ground, its position in a sector of the view in which operational wind farm development is present, and the difference in scale between turbines within the Development and those within operational wind farms visible in the same sector of the view.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.39e shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

Viewpoint 17: Cruachan Power Station Visitor Centre – Figure 6.40

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the northern shore of Loch Awe, adjacent to the Cruachan Power Station Visitor Centre. The visitor centre is located to the west of the power station itself, to the south of the A85 and directly south of the Falls of Cruachan. The viewpoint is representative of the views of visitors to the power station.

Views towards the power station to the east are filtered by vegetation adjacent to the viewpoint. Longer-distance views are available to the south-east towards the main body of Loch Awe and the upland landscape beyond. To the south, views are over the narrow stretch of Loch Awe towards relatively low-lying, undulating landform on the southern shore. This landform rises steeply to the south-west and forms a steep cliff along the edge of Loch Awe, known as the Pass of Brander. Views towards the River Awe to the west are largely screened by vegetation surrounding the visitor centre. To the immediate north, the car park and surroundings of the visitor centre are visible, while to the immediate north-east the visitor centre building can be seen. The landform to the

north of the A85 rises up steeply beyond, with woodland landcover a feature across the lower slopes.

Human influence on the landscape is apparent through the buildings associated with the power station in close proximity. In wider views to the south and east, human influence is more limited, although a fish farm can be seen on the opposite side of Loch Awe and coniferous forestry can be seen on the hills to the east of Loch Awe, in views to the south-east. There are no operational wind farms visible from this viewpoint.

Sensitivity

The value of this view is medium-high. The viewpoint lies within the North Argyll APQ which denotes the regional scenic value of this landscape. Although not marked on OS maps as a formal viewpoint, the visitor centre does, nonetheless, offer a natural viewpoint over Loch Awe and beyond.

The susceptibility of visitors to the Power Station Visitor Centre will be medium-high. Recreational visitors are likely to have a heightened awareness of their surroundings. Although the purpose of visits by recreational receptors relates to the power station, open views across Loch Awe are likely to be experienced by recreational receptors and benches and picnic tables are set up with views across this open aspect.

The combination of the medium-high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **medium-high** rating for sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of visitors as a result of the Development will be **low** during the construction phase. The ground across the Site is not visible from this location, owing to the screening effect of the intervening landform and middle range tree cover. This means that ground level construction works will not be visible and the upper-level construction works comprising the emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will be the only visible components during this phase. While nine emerging turbines will be theoretically visible, screening from landform and tree cover means that actual visibility will comprise only two turbines seen to below the hubs and four turbines seen as blades. These will be seen at a separation distance of approximately 9.6 km and will be visible above the intermediate tree cover in views from this location.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of visitors as a result of the Development will be **low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.40 shows that the Development will be visible, seen above the horizon in views to the south-east. The proposed turbines will be seen at a minimum distance of 9.6 km. Nine of the 13 turbines will be theoretically visible, with six seen to below the hubs, two seen as blades and one seen as a blade tip, due to the screening by landform on the south side of Loch Awe. Visibility will be further reduced by vegetation on the intervening hill slope on the southern side of Loch Awe, such that actual visibility will only comprise two turbines seen to below the hubs and four turbines seen as blades.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the partial screening of several turbines by higher ground and vegetation to the south of Loch Awe, and the separation distance of approximately 9.6 km which will ensure the proposed turbines appear as medium scale features. The turbines will occupy a horizontal field of view of approximately 5 to 10 degrees, which represents a small proportion of the wider views available from this location. The other important factor to consider is the influence from built development, and while wind farm development is not visible from this viewpoint, Cruachan Power Station and Visitor Centre, the fish farm in Loch Awe and the coniferous forestry across enclosing hill sides, moderate the influence from the Development by establishing these human influences as a baseline feature.

Those factors that will add to the magnitude of change include the fact that the Development will introduce wind farm development into views from this location, in which there are currently no operational wind farms. Although the lower parts of the turbines will be screened by the elevated landform and vegetation to the south-east, the upper parts of the turbines will be seen above the horizon. The Development will be seen in the sector of the view which offers longest-distance views.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on visitors to Cruachan Power Station Visitor Centre will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during the construction and operational phases, owing principally to the baseline influences from built development, fish farming and afforestation, as well as the separation distance and very limited extents to which the Development will be visible.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.40d shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.17 Viewpoint 18: Dun na Cuaiche – Figure 6.41

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the summit of Dun na Cuaiche (248 m AOD) to the north-east of the settlement of Inveraray, within the Inveraray Castle GDL. A watchtower associated with Inveraray Castle is located close to the summit of the hill. It was built as a folly to be seen in views from the castle and in conjunction with the castle from the surrounding landscape and forms a distinctive landmark. The viewpoint is representative of views experienced by walkers visiting this monument, with the watch tower marking the endpoint in a signposted route from the castle grounds.

The summit of Dun na Cuaiche forms the most southerly point of an area of high ground between Glen Aray to the west and Glen Shira to the east. The landform to the south of the hill rises up steeply from lower ground around Loch Fyne. Due to its elevated position, the viewpoint offers long-distance views over the surrounding lower-lying ground to the south. The main draw of the view from the summit is to the south-west along Loch Fyne. To the north, Ben Cruachan is visible beyond the closer-range high point of Dun Corr-Bhile (322 m AOD), seen to the north-east. Several of the Arrochar Alps, within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs NP, are visible to the east. Clachan Flats Wind Farm is visible to the north-east, predominantly seen backclothed against the landscape beyond. An Suidhe Wind Farm is also visible, seen in longer-distance views to the west.

The path brings walkers up the northern side hill top, such that the folly sits to the immediate south and the key view opens up across Loch Fyne to the south-west. Walkers typically wander across the hill top and on a good day, sit on the bench or grass to enjoy the view. The viewpoint is located close to the bench and while it is orientated in the opposite direction to the principal view to the north, the Development will be readily visible from this point and from the wider summit of this hill.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is high. The viewpoint is not identified as a formal viewpoint on OS maps, but it does present a natural vantage point across the surrounding landscape. The folly and the surrounding landscape are located within the Inveraray Castle GDL, which indicates the national importance of this landscape.

The susceptibility of recreational visitors to the Development will be medium-high. While the susceptibility of walkers is heightened by their awareness of their surroundings, the presence of the operational Clachan Flats and An Suidhe Wind Farms seen in the wider landscape moderates this susceptibility by making wind farm development an established feature of the baseline context.

The combination of the high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **high** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers at the summit of Dun na Cuaiche will be **medium** during the construction phase. The construction works will be located a minimum of 4.7 km from the viewpoint. The landform of Dun Corr-Bhile screens views towards the ground of the Site from this position, meaning that ground level construction works associated with the Development will not be readily visible. The higher-level works associated with the emerging turbines and construction cranes will therefore form the visible parts of the construction phase. While the separation distance of 4.7 km will mean that the emerging turbines will be perceived as relatively close-range and large-scale structures, the extent of the emerging turbines will be screened by the intervening landform such that theoretically only three turbines will be seen to their hubs, three turbines will be seen as blades, and the remaining four will be seen as tips, as shown in the wireline on Figure 6.41. Actual visibility will be further reduced by intervening tree cover such that only two turbines will be seen to their hubs and three turbines will be seen as blades, with the remaining tips not readily visible. The presence of Clachan Flats Wind Farm in views to the north-east also moderates the effect of the construction works by establishing wind farm development as a baseline feature in the wider view.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers at the summit of Dun na Cuaiche will be **medium** during the operational phase. The wireline on Figure 6.41 shows that the Development will be visible at a minimum distance of 4.7 km. Screening by landform and tree cover to the north, around Dun Corr-Bhile, means that the hubs of two turbines and the blades of a further three turbines will be visible, while the remaining four tips will not be readily apparent. The turbines will be seen between the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm to the east and An Suidhe to the west, such that the Development will not increase the extent of wind farm development seen across the wider landscape. The turbines will occupy a horizontal extent of 10 to 20 degrees, meaning that they will appear well contained within the wider view where the designed principal outlook towards Loch Fyne will remain unaffected.

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the separation distance of 4.7 km, which will result in the turbines appearing as relatively close-proximity features. While each of the visible turbines will be seen at least partially screened by high ground to the south-east of the Site, their larger scale in comparison to existing operational wind farm developments will be apparent and will increase the magnitude of change associated with the operational phase. The turbines will be seen in front of the ridgeline of Ben Cruachan in views from this location, which represents an identifiable landmark in the surrounding landscape.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers on Dun na Cuaiche will be **significant (major / moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the relatively close proximity of the Development, and the larger scale of the turbines within the Development when compared with existing operational developments seen in the same sector of the view, despite the key view south towards Loch Fyne remaining unaffected. The effects of the Development on Dun na Cuaiche is presented from a cultural heritage perspective in Chapter 9: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage. This assessment is separate from the LVIA assessment presented here, as it considers the effects in respect of the cultural heritage qualities rather than the visual and scenic qualities.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.41g shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.9.18 Viewpoint 19: Stob an Eas – Figure 6.42

Baseline

This viewpoint is located on the summit of Stob an Eas (732 m AOD). It is located to the south of Glen Kinglas and north of Hell's Glen, to the east of Loch Fyne. The hill is part of the Steep Ridgelands and Mountains LCT and is situated close to the western boundary of the LLTTNP. It has a relatively rounded, undistinguished landform, with a small ridge stretching south-west to north-east at the summit. The viewpoint is representative of the views experienced by hillwalkers. The hill is generally approached from Hell's Glen to the south-west and is sometimes ascended along with the nearby Beinn an t-Seilich.

The summit of Stob an Eas offers wide-ranging views in several directions. To the west and north-west, Loch Fyne can be seen at low elevation, with a generally undulating upland landscape visible beyond. The distinctive landform of Ben Cruachan is visible to the north-west. To the north-east, the ridgeline of higher ground adjacent to the summit of Stob an Eas forms the foreground, with hills to the north of Glen Kinglas visible beyond. Long-distance views are available towards hills within the LLTTNP, including Ben More and Cruach Ardrain. To the east, Beinn an t-Seilich is visible in closer-proximity views. Further peaks within the National Park are visible to the east and south-east, including Beinn an Lochain, the Cobbler and Ben Donich. Views to the south are longer-distance, beyond Loch Goil towards Inverclyde and the central belt.

Human influence in the landscape is evident through coniferous forestry, including in close proximity across the surrounding upland area. There are also several wind farm developments in the view to the north, west and south-west, including Clachan Flats, Carraig Gheal, An Suidhe, An Cruach and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms. The wind farm developments are seen across the lower-lying, more undulating upland landscape to the north and west. The view to the south and east, over land within the LLTTNP, features more dramatic landform and is less influenced by human intervention. Human influence is also apparent in the form of settlement, both in the middle distance at Inveraray, as well as in long-distance views to the south across the Firth of Clyde.

Sensitivity

The value of the view is medium-high. While the summit itself is outwith the Loch Lomond and Trossachs NP, the boundary is located in relative proximity to the south-east, and the peak offers close views of the landscape within the NP. The medium-high value relates to the regional landscape designation of the North Argyll APQ which covers this area and denotes a special scenic value, despite the absence of any formal viewpoints.

The susceptibility of walkers to the effects of the Development would be medium-high. Typically, walkers have a heightened awareness of their surroundings that increases their susceptibility to new developments. While the views from Stob an Eas and the surrounding uplands are extensive and predominantly characterised by the upland landscape, there is also the presence and influence from operational wind farms in the view to the north, west and south-west, most notably Clachan Flats, Carraig Gheal, An Suidhe, An Cruach and Cruach Mhor. These wind farms moderate the susceptibility of walkers by establishing this type of development as a feature of the baseline context.

The combination of the medium-high value of the view and the medium-high susceptibility of viewers leads to an overall **medium-high** rating for sensitivity.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Stob an Eas will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The landform of the majority of the Site is screened from this viewpoint by higher ground along the ridgeline formed by Stuc Scardan, to the south-east of the Site. Visibility of ground level construction works will therefore be limited. This means that the emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will be the visible parts of the construction phase from this viewpoint. The position of the Development in the same sector of views as existing operational developments will ensure that the turbines will be seen in a context already influenced by wind

farm development. The Development will also be seen at a similar separation distance from the viewpoint as the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm and both seen in the same northerly sector. However, the difference in scale between the Development and the existing operational developments, including Clachan Flats, will be apparent, and will emphasise the larger scale of the emerging turbines within the Development.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of walkers on Stob an Eas will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.42 shows that all 13 of the turbines will be seen in views to the north-west, at a separation distance of approximately 11.0 km. The landform to the south-east of the Site will screen much of the lower parts of the turbines from this viewpoint. The hubs and parts of the towers of seven turbines will be visible above the ridgeline, while five of the turbines positioned on lower ground towards the west of the Development will be seen as blade tips only.

Those factors which will moderate the magnitude of change include the position of the turbines beyond the ridgeline formed by high ground to the south-east of the Site and fully backclothed against the landform beyond from this elevated position. The turbines will be seen within the sector of the view which is already influenced by existing operational wind farms, and which represents a less remarkable sector of the view. Views to the east and south over the LLTTNP will remain unaffected. The Development will be seen at a slightly greater separation distance than the existing Clachan Flats Wind Farm. The Development will occupy a contained horizontal extent of approximately 10 to 20 degrees (Figure 6.7).

Those factors which will add to the magnitude of change include the difference in scale between turbines within the Development and turbines within existing operational wind farms, which will be perceived from this viewpoint, and will emphasise the larger scale of the proposed turbines.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of walkers will be **not significant (moderate)** during the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the partial screening of the Development by higher ground to the south-east of the Site, its position in a sector of the view in which operational wind farm development is present, and the difference in scale between turbines within the Development and those within operational wind farms visible in the same sector of the view.

Forestry Assessment

The photomontage in Figure 6.42e shows that forestry removals will not affect the extent to which the Development will be visible as the screening effect of the intervening landform will prevent visibility of these removals from this viewpoint.

6.10 Assessment of Effects on Principal Visual Receptors

6.10.1 Introduction

The second part of the assessment of effects on views is the assessment of the effects that the Development will have on the views from principal visual receptors. The principal visual receptors considered in the assessment include settlements and route corridors, including roads, walking route and national cycle routes, shown on Figure 6.10. The principal visual receptors assessed in detail have been selected as they have potential to undergo significant effects as a result of the Development. A preliminary assessment to identify these receptors has been carried out through the use of ZTVs and wirelines to indicate the extents, level and nature of actual visibility. This process has identified the following principal visual receptors as requiring detailed assessment:

- Inveraray;
- Creggans / Strachur;
- Loch Awe;

- A819; and
- Core paths around Inveraray.

6.10.2 Inveraray

Baseline

Inveraray is a town situated on the north-western shoreline of Loch Fyne, near the head of the loch. It is set within the Rocky Mosaic LCT, at the mouth of Glen Aray. The underlying topography of the settlement rises gently westwards away from the shoreline. The A83 passes through the historic core of the settlement, while new development has extended the settlement boundary to the south and west. The character of Inveraray relates to its close association with its setting on the western shore of Loch Fyne. The principal orientation of properties on the north-eastern and eastern aspects is across the open waters of Loch Fyne. Along Main Street the views are contained within the street, and in the areas behind Main Street, the properties are also typically inward looking. Viewpoint 4 is representative of the views experienced from the more open and elevated western part of the settlement, form where the view opens up to towards Glen Aray to the north, although this is not typical of the settlement as a whole. In the southern part of the settlement, the properties line the shoreline with a strong association eastwards across the loch and no association with the view to the north.

As well as views over the nearby Loch Fyne, views are available from parts of the settlement to the north along Glen Aray, towards the Site. The tower on Dun na Cuaiche, associated with Inveraray Castle, forms a prominent landmark from much of the surrounding landscape. Human influence in the surrounding landscape is generally rural in nature. Coniferous forestry is visible across the hills to the north of the settlement, and beyond Loch Fyne to the east.

Viewpoints 3 and 4 (Figures 6.26 and 6.27) are representative of the range of views experienced from around the settlement of Inveraray. Both viewpoints are predicted within the viewpoint assessment to experience significant (major / moderate or moderate) effects arising from the Development.

Sensitivity

The value of the views from Inveraray is high. Inveraray lies within the regionally designated West Loch Fyne (Coast) APQ, which indicates the special scenic value of the landscape. Inveraray Castle GDL extends over the majority of the settlement itself and also indicates a landscape of higher value.

Residents are considered to be of high susceptibility. This assumes a 'worst case' scenario in which residents within the settlement have direct views from the front of their properties towards the Site. The ZTV (Figure 6.5b) indicates theoretical visibility of at least one turbine across the majority of the settlement. The limited views of existing large-scale infrastructure increase the susceptibility of residents to the Development, as it would introduce wind farm development into views from the settlement in which wind farms do not currently form a feature of the baseline.

The combination of the high value of the view and the high susceptibility of residents leads to an overall **high** sensitivity at Inveraray.

Magnitude of Change during Construction

From Inveraray, the magnitude of change will be **low** or **no change**. The majority of the town will not be affected by the construction of the Development owing to a combination of the screening effect of the intervening landform and forest cover to the south of the Site and the screening effect of built form, landform and tree cover in and around the settlement. The area from which there will be some limited visibility occurs on the western side of the settlement where a track extends south from the A819 towards Barn Park. While the upper parts of two of the emerging turbines and associated cranes may be visible from this location, visibility from the nearby properties is likely to be limited. Views from the track are represented by Viewpoint 4 and here the magnitude of change will be **low.** From the nearby properties on the northern edge of

the settlement there is unlikely to be visibility owing to the screening effect of closer range tree cover and the variable orientation of the properties. Across the remainder of the settlement, there will either be low level visibility from more open parts where a glimpsed view of the two partly screened turbines may occur, giving rise to a **low** magnitude of change, or no actual visibility and, therefore, **no change**.

Magnitude of Change during Operation

From Inveraray, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low**, **low** or **no change**. The majority of the town will not be affected by the operational phase of the Development owing to a combination of the screening effect of the intervening landform and forest cover to the south of the Site and the screening effect of built form, landform and tree cover in and around the settlement. The area from which there will be some limited visibility occurs on the western side of the settlement where a track extends south from the A819 towards Barn Park. While the upper parts of a small number of turbines may be visible from this location, visibility from the nearby properties is likely to be limited. Views from the track are represented by Viewpoint 4 and here the magnitude of change will be **medium-low.** From the nearby properties on the northern edge of the settlement there may be some limited visibility and here the magnitude of change will be **low**. Across the remainder of the settlement, there will be no actual visibility and therefore there will be **no change**.

Significance of Effect

The Development will have **no effect** across the majority of the settlement owing to the fact that there will be no actual visibility across the majority of the settlement. In a localised part on the western side of the settlement, limited visibility will give rise to an effect that will be **not significant** (**moderate / minor**) during both the construction and operational phases. This relates to the very limited extent to which the Development will be visible and the very localised nature of these effects.

6.10.3 Creggans / Strachur

Baseline

Creggans and Strachur are small settlements located on the south-eastern shore of Loch Fyne. Creggans is a smaller settlement located on the shoreline itself, made up predominantly of residential properties located along the A815. Strachur is a larger village which extends from the shoreline to the south of Strachur Bay along a small glen between Loch Fyne and Loch Eck. The two settlements are considered together due to the lack of definition between the boundaries of each, and the similar effects likely to be experienced as a result of the Development. The settlements are set within an area of Rocky Mosaic LCT. Viewpoint 8 is representative of views experienced from the western edge of the Creggans.

From Creggans and those western parts of Strachur that are situated along the A815 and A886 and the eastern shoreline of Loch Fyne, the focus of views is to the west over the loch. Long-distance views are available to the south-west, west and north. The Site is visible in views to the north, seen beyond settlement at Inveraray along the shore of the loch. To the east, from this western part of the settlement, the landform rises steeply up towards higher ground to the west of Lochgoilhead, north and south of the small glen in which Strachur is situated. These hills generally feature coniferous forestry or moorland landcover. From the main core of Strachur, which is situated to the north of the A815, views are more contained, due to a combination of screening by landform, built form within the settlement, and tree cover. Views are available towards the surrounding high ground, as well as towards hills on the opposite side of Loch Fyne to the west.

In the view from these settlements, development is largely restricted to overhead electricity transmission lines seen traversing the hills to the west, generally backclothed against the landform, as well as coniferous woodland across these hills. There may be glimpsed views of the blade tips of turbines within An Suidhe Wind Farm from parts of the western edge of the settlement, although coniferous forestry on the horizon limits this visibility.

Viewpoint 8 (Figure 6.31) is representative of views experienced from the western edge of Creggans, adjacent to the A815. Residents and road-users represented by this viewpoint are considered to experience not significant (moderate or moderate / minor) effects arising from the Development. This viewpoint represents the parts of the settlement that would experience most open views towards the Development.

Sensitivity

The value of the views from Creggans / Strachur is medium-high. Although there are no formal viewpoints, parts of the settlement along the shoreline are located within the East Loch Fyne (Coast) APQ, which indicates the regional scenic value of the landscape.

Local residents are considered to be of high susceptibility. The majority of the properties face west or south-west with a small number of properties on the northern side of Creggans facing north-west and none facing north where the Site is located. The ZTV (Figure 6.5b) indicates that theoretical visibility is likely to be restricted to parts of the settlement along the shore of Loch Fyne, while from the core of Strachur, outward views are restricted by the landform such that visibility of the Development is unlikely to be experienced.

The medium-high value of the view and the high susceptibility of residents leads to an overall **high** sensitivity for receptors within western parts of the Creggans and Strachur which are likely to experience views towards the Development.

Magnitude of Change during Construction

The magnitude of change on the views of residents in Creggans and Strachur will be **medium-low**, **low** or **no change** during the construction phase. The ground level construction works will be screened by the intervening landform. The higher-level construction works, involving the use of tall cranes and the emergence of the turbines, will form a more readily visible feature that will be experienced by residents at properties located along the shoreline of Loch Fyne. These views are likely to be oblique, due to the orientation of most properties to the west, south-west or north-west, and the position of the Site to the north. At a range of 12.5 km, the small number of emerging turbines and cranes which are partly screened by the intervening landform will not form a notable influence on these views and the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** or **low**. Within remaining areas of both villages, actual visibility of the Development will be very limited due to screening by local built form, landform and vegetation and here there will mostly be **no change**.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of residents in Creggans and Strachur will be **medium-low**, **low** or **no change** during the operational phase. From parts of the settlement with open views to the north, 11 of the 13 turbines will be theoretically visible, seen set behind the ridgeline formed by the landform to the south of the Site. The proposed turbines will be seen at a minimum distance of 12.5 km. The turbines will be partly concealed behind the intervening landform such that parts of the towers of two turbines will be visible, while the hubs of a further three turbines will be visible, and the remaining turbines seen as blade tips only. Vegetation along the horizon will further reduce actual visibility. Here, the magnitude of change will be medium-low. Within the remaining areas of both villages, actual visibility of the Development will be very limited due to screening by local built form, landform and vegetation and here the magnitude of change will be **low** or there will be **no change**.

The Development will form a feature on the horizon when seen from properties along the western edge of the settlement which experience open views to the north. While the Development will form a new and apparent feature, the magnitude of change will be moderate by the separation distance combined with the limited horizontal extent it will occupy and the human influences that already exist along this settled shoreline and the surrounding afforested hills. For residents in the remaining parts of both villages, the operational Development will be intermittently visible between built form, landform and/or vegetation, or not visible at all - especially within Strachur.

Significance of Effect

The Development will have **no effect** across the majority of Creggans / Strachur owing to the fact that there will be no actual visibility across the majority of the settlement. In a localised part on the western side of the settlement, limited visibility will give rise to a **not significant** (**moderate** or **moderate / minor**) effect during both the construction and operational phases.

6.10.4 Lochawe

Baseline

Lochawe is a small settlement situated on the northern shore of Loch Awe. This section of coastline follows a north-east to south-west alignment, with properties mostly aligned to match up with the principal orientation to the south-east, such that views extend south-east from the Rocky Mosaic LCT to the Craggy Uplands LCT on the opposite shore. Mature tree cover is a characterising feature of Lochawe with mixed woodland extending in and around most of the settlement, and enclosing views from many of the properties.

The settlement follows a linear pattern, largely determined by the restrictions of the steep landform rising up from the loch-shore and which constrain the extents of development. This linear settlement also accommodated the A85, which is the main road between Tyndrum and Oban, and the rail line between Glasgow and Oban. The road traverses the lower slopes and provides access to adjacent properties and access tracks, while the rail line sits closer to the loch-shore, with the station set below Loch Awe Hotel.

While views from many of the properties are screened or partly screened by mature tree cover or other properties, there are some more open parts closer to the loch-shore from where open views occur. An example is at Loch Awe Hotel, where although the main orientation of the hotel is east-north-east to focus on the ruined Kilchurn Castle, the south-south-east aspect also captures scenic views across Loch Awe. There is a large terrace on this aspect and three storeys of rooms with large windows and open views. The Site lies to the south of the hotel and so will be visible in views of residents. There is also the Ben Cruachan Inn set on open and elevated ground to the north of the A85 and properties in the south-west of the settlement where tree cover is less dense. From these localised parts, views across the loch may be experienced from internal and external spaces.

Sensitivity

The value of the views from Lochawe is high. Lochawe lies within the regionally designated North Argyll APQ, which indicates the special scenic value of the landscape.

Residents are considered to be of high susceptibility. This assumes a 'worst case' scenario in which residents within the settlement have direct views from the front of their properties towards the Site. There are a number of properties along this stretch of the shoreline of Loch Awe. The majority of these are orientated south-east over the loch and will, therefore, experience oblique views south towards the Site. Furthermore, their views are static and experienced over longer periods of time than those of road-users or visitors.

The combination of the high value of the view and the high susceptibility of residents leads to an overall **high** sensitivity at Inveraray.

Magnitude of change during construction

The magnitude of change on the views of residents in Lochawe will be **medium-low** during the construction phase. The intervening landform on the opposite side of the loch will screen the ground level construction works, such that it will only be the higher level construction works, comprising the emerging turbines and associated cranes, that will be visible. Viewpoint 10 is located in Lochawe and the wireline in Figure 6.33 shows that all 13 of the turbines within the Development will be visible above the skyline from those open aspects where visibility occurs. Although they will be visible at a distance of approximately 9 to 10 km, with the lower parts of most of the turbines screened by the landform and occupying only 5 to 10 degrees of the wider

view, their position on the skyline in open views to the south, in a sector of the view in which existing development is limited, will increase the magnitude of change associated with their construction.

Magnitude of change during operation

The magnitude of change on the views of residents in the surrounding area will be **medium-low** during the operational phase. The wireline in Figure 6.33 shows that all 13 of the proposed turbines will be theoretically visible, with ten seen with hubs and three as tips. These will all be seen set behind the ridgeline formed by the hills to the south-east of Loch Awe in direct views to the south. The magnitude of change will be increased by the absence of visibility of other operational wind farms, such that the Development will introduce this type of development as a new feature into the view.

The effect will, however, be prevented from being rated more than medium-low owing to the separation distance of 9 to 10 km, and also the position of the turbines beyond the ridgeline formed by the intervening landform. This will provide some screening of the lower parts of the majority of the turbines, as well as ground level infrastructure including access tracks. The turbines will also be seen as a relatively compact group occupying a relatively small proportion of the overall view, extending across a horizontal extent of 5 to 10 degrees.

Residents will experience views over a long duration. The extent to which the Development will be visible will be limited to a localised parts of the settlement where openings in the woodland cover occur. From most of the settlement there will be a **low** or negligible change where the development is largely screened by tree cover, and **no change** where there will be no visibility. Tree cover along the A85 will filter views towards the Development from certain residential properties. Residents may experience interior views towards the Development, although given the orientation of the majority of properties to the south-east, and the position of the Development to the south, these views are likely to be oblique where available. Residents are also likely to experience views from the surroundings of properties, including gardens.

Significance of effect

The effect of the Development on the views of residents in those more open parts of Lochawe from where views over the loch occur, will be **significant (moderate)** during both the construction and operational phases. This finding relates chiefly to the absence of other large-scale developments visible in the baseline view which will mean that the Development will introduce a new and defining feature in the views of residents with an open aspect. Where views are partly or fully screened there will be less of an effect, and this will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** or **no effect**.

6.10.5 A819

Baseline

The A819 connects Inveraray in the south, with the A85 near Dalmally in the north. It passes through Glen Aray and connects Loch Fyne with Loch Awe. It passes in close proximity to the west of the Site, cutting a predominantly north – south route through the centre of the Study Area.

The section of the route that is of relevance to this assessment occurs between Inveraray and Cladich; a section which covers approximately 14 km. The ZTV in Figure 6.10 shows that visibility of the Development will theoretically be experienced for long durations along this section of the route. The southern part of this section of the A819, between Inveraray and Tullich, falls within the Mountain Glens LCT, while the section to the north between Tullich and Cladich falls within the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT. The road is routed along the floor of the glen to the west of the River Aray, in close proximity to the river.

Views experienced by road-users on this section are characterised by the surrounding upland landscape. Deciduous woodland along the road corridor also forms a feature of the views and limits longer-distance views from certain sections of the route. Outward views from the route are

generally more open to the north of this section of the road, while to the south, closer to Inveraray, dense woodland and the steep topography combine to limit views. The River Aray itself is generally not visible, due to steep topography between the road and river, although glimpsed views are available along central sections of the road. The position of the river can generally be distinguished by the presence of riparian woodland along its route.

The upland areas to the east and west define and form enclosure to Glen Aray, making them a readily visible and prominent feature along both sides of the road. These upland areas comprise more rounded, plateau hills within the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT wrapping around the western and eastern sides of the glen. Along much of the route, coniferous forestry forms a prominent feature of the baseline view, with large commercial blocks and clear-felled areas set across the hills to the east and west. The view is generally more open to the east, given the position of the road on the western side of the glen, and views are, therefore, available over the glen towards the enclosing hills. The large-scale forestry plantations and moorland in the uplands present a contrast with the deciduous woodland and pastoral fields across flatter parts of the valley floor. Human influence is evident along the route in the form of overhead electricity transmission lines which cross from the east of the route to the west near Drimfern, and then follows along the western edge of the route to the Drochaidean Roin Ruadh-bhuidhe watercourse, where it then passes north-west.

Viewpoints 1, 2 and 3 (Figures 6.24, 6.25 and 6.26) are all located adjacent to the A819 and represent the various views of the Development that are available from this section of the road.

Sensitivity

The value of the view from the A819 ranges from medium to medium-high. Between Inveraray and Three Bridges, along the southern part of the route, it runs through the Inveraray Castle GDL, which indicates the national importance of this landscape. To the north of this, adjacent to the west of the Site, it passes through an undesignated area, although views are available to the east of land within the North Argyll APQ. To the north of Tullich, the road passes into the North Argyll APQ, which again indicates a landscape of regional scenic value.

The susceptibility of road-users is medium. While the views will be experienced by road-users whilst travelling at speeds of 40 to 60mph, these views will be apparent over an approximate 3 km section, albeit with some screening from adjacent road-side tree cover, particularly towards the south of this section of the route, within the Inveraray Castle GDL. The Development will be seen in a context where development is typically small in scale and rural in character, with the exception of the overhead electricity transmission line which is routed down the western side of the glen.

Road-user sensitivity is considered to be **medium** along the stretch to the immediate west of the Site, where the road passes through an undesignated area and where there is the existing influence of close-proximity large-scale infrastructure in the form of the overhead electricity transmission line; and **medium-high** across other parts. This takes into account the medium to medium-low susceptibility of road users, the medium value of views from sections of the road, and the medium-high value of views within the North Argyll APQ and Inveraray Castle GDL.

Magnitude of Change during Construction

The magnitude of change experienced by road users on the A819 will be **high**, for both north-bound and south-bound receptors at a minimum distance of 1.3 km to 3.0 km from the Development. Visibility of the emerging Development will be available for users travelling in both directions, in what will generally be oblique views to the east. The magnitude of change outwith this central 3 km section will drop away to **medium-low** or **low**, as visibility becomes restricted by landform, forestry and road-side tree cover, and there will be **no change** where there is no visibility.

There will also be a **medium-high** magnitude of change in the localised section of the A819 where the southern access point will be located, affecting both north and south-bound road-users and extending over an approximate 200 m section.

The close proximity of the Development to the A819, particularly the stretch directly to the west, combined with the position of the turbines across the valley slopes to the east, will mean that the some of the ground level construction works, including construction of tracks, foundations and crane pads, will be readily visible from much of the route, albeit with some screening where commercial forestry covers the lower slopes.

The use of tall cranes and the emergence of the 13 tall turbines will, however, be the most prominent feature of the construction works and will be seen to occupy most of the eastern sector of the view. This will be apparent in oblique views when travelling in both directions along the stretch of the route to the west of the Site; in slightly oblique views when travelling south along the northern parts of the route; and in slightly oblique views when travelling north along southern parts. Although human influence is already an existing feature of the view, in the form of the overhead electricity transmission line which runs parallel to the A819, the scale of the turbines and the position of the Development above the enclosing horizon to the east will result in a high magnitude of change. The activity associated with the tall cranes and construction of the turbines, as well as the incomplete appearance of the Development and the large scale of the emerging turbines will make it a prominent feature in views from the A819.

The southern access will require the permanent removal of road-side vegetation over an approximate 80 m extent on the eastern side of the A819, in order to accommodate an overrun strip. Removal of vegetation will also extend eastwards and will be permanent to accommodate the new access and bridge, and temporary in the surrounding parts that will be cleared for construction, but which will be replanted post construction.

While the enclosure along the A819 is variable with a mix of open and enclosed sections, the section in which the southern access will be located is fairly enclosed, albeit with a mix of deciduous trees and shrubs, typically of a 20 to 50 m depth. The removal of the 80 m roadside strip and further removals across an approximate 80 m by 60 m area to the east, will create an opening in the tree cover that will appear close range to road-users and will have a direct effect on their perception of local landscape character. While clear felling of coniferous forestry is a common feature in this landscape, removal of deciduous tree cover is not and these tree losses will have a notable influence on the experience of road-users, albeit only within the localised section of approximately 200 m over which it will be visible.

Magnitude of Change during Operation

The magnitude of change to views from the A819 will be **high**, for both north- and south-bound receptors. All 13 turbines will be visible above the horizon from much of the route. With a minimum separation distance of approximately 1.3 km between the route and the closest turbine of the Development, the turbines will form a prominent, large-scale and close-proximity feature of the view. The magnitude of change outwith this central 3 km section will drop away to **medium-low** or **low**, as visibility becomes restricted by landform, forestry and road-side tree cover, and there will be **no change** where there is no visibility.

The prominence of the turbines will be accentuated by their position on the skyline formed by the craggy hills to the east of Glen Aray, which enclose the view and provide containment to the valley landscape. The Development will introduce wind farm development into this view in which it is not currently present. The turbines will occupy a large proportion of the view to the east, extending throughout approximately 60 to 90 degrees, as seen from the section of the A819 directly perpendicular. They will be visible along an approximate 3 km stretch of the route and seen in generally oblique views. Vegetation along the A819 will partly filter views towards the Development and will therefore reduce actual visibility comparative to the theoretical visibility shown on Figure 6.10, particularly at the northern and southern extents of this stretch of the route.

The effect associated with the removal of vegetation around the proposed southern access will remain over the operational phase in respect of the road-side planting which will be permanently removed to accommodate the overrun strip and will gradually reduce in respect of the new tree planting to the east of the road and around the bridge and river. It will, however, take

approximately 10 to 15 years for the replanted trees to grow sufficiently to create an effective replacement for the trees removed. Tree cover along the road-side where the overrun strip is located will not be replanted but this effect will be moderated by new planting developing across the area to the east of the road. The magnitude of change will, therefore, be **medium-high** at the start of the operational phase, reducing to **medium**-**low** by 10 to 15 years.

Significance of Effect

The effect of the Development on views from the A819 will be **significant (major** or **major / moderate)** over an approximate 3 km length from the north of Drochaidean Roin Ruadh-bhuidhe to the access point to Stronmagachan. From these parts, vegetation alongside the route is likely to limit actual visibility, although this effect is considered to occur over small parts of the route only. The exception occurs around the proposed southern access where the removal of vegetation will have a short term effect during the construction phase and will open up visibility to the Development. This significant effect will reduce to not significant after 10 to 15 years, as new planting matures and forms a screen along the road-side. The Development will form a prominent feature at close proximity for road users travelling in both directions. In the remaining sections of the A819 to the north and south of this central section the effect will be **not significant** (**moderate** or **moderate / minor**) and with no effect in those parts where there will be no visibility.

6.10.6 Core Paths around Inveraray

Several core paths pass through and near to the settlement of Inveraray. These include:

- Core Path C201 – Dun Na Cuaiche, which passes from the centre of the settlement to the monument on Dun na Cuaiche, across land within the Inveraray Castle GDL;
- Core Path C200 – Coile Bhraghad – Queen's Drive, a circular route which passes from the western edge of the settlement through a generally forested, upland area; and
- Core Path C203 – Bealach an Fhurain, a circular route which passes through the settlement parallel to the shore of Loch Fyne.

Viewpoint 18 is representative of the view from the highest point on Core Path C201, from which views towards the Site are most open. Viewpoint 4 is located on Core Path C203.

Sensitivity

The value of the views of walkers on core paths around Inveraray is high. This takes account of the position of these core paths within the Inveraray Castle GDL, which denotes a high landscape value.

The susceptibility of walkers on the core paths is medium-high. While awareness and appreciation of their surroundings raises the susceptibility of walkers on these core path, the settlement of Inveraray and associated roads, and the influence from forestry and farming practices in the surrounding landscape will moderate their susceptibility to the effects of the Development. Walkers on Core Path C201 will also be influence by wind farm developments visible from the summit.

Due to the high value of the views from this core path and the medium-high susceptibility of walkers on it, their overall sensitivity is rated as **high**.

Magnitude of Change during Construction

The magnitude of change arising from construction of the Development on the views of walkers on core paths around Inveraray will range from **medium-high** to **negligible**, and with **no change** occurring where there will be no visibility. From much of Core Path C200, forestry will screen views towards the Development. Views will be more open from the high point of Core Path C201, and from western parts of Core Path C203. From each of these routes, where views towards the Development are available, intervening landform is likely to screen views of the ground-level construction works. High-level construction activity, including the emerging turbines and associated construction cranes will be more readily visible. The Development will introduce wind

farm development into the views from these core paths, across parts where this does not form a feature of the baseline view. Construction activity associated with the Development will form a relatively prominent feature in these parts. These primarily comprise parts of Core Path C200 where gaps in forest cover allow open views to the north-east; the western leg of Core Path C203 which passes along the western settlement edge of Inveraray; and the summit of Dun na Cuaiche, on Core Path C201.

Magnitude of Change during Operation

The magnitude of change to walkers' views will range from **medium** to **negligible,** and with **no change** occurring where there will be no visibility. From Core Path C203, as represented by Viewpoint 4, the blade tips of several turbines will be visible for walkers travelling north-east. From a small section of Core Path C201, at the summit of Dun na Cuaiche, as represented by Viewpoint 18, the majority of turbines will be visible, in the context of a view in which existing operational wind farms can be seen. Elsewhere, visibility of the operational turbines will be more limited.

Significance of Effect

During the construction and operational phases, the effect of the Development on views from core paths around Inveraray will range from **significant (major / moderate)** from parts of the core path network which do not currently experience wind farm development as a feature of the baseline view, and in which the Development will be seen in views to the north-east at relative proximity. Across other parts, the effect of the Development will be more limited due to more limited visibility and / or existing visibility of wind farm development across the surrounding landscape. Here the effects will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** or with **no effect** where there will be no visibility.

6.11 Assessment of Cumulative Effects

6.11.1 Introduction

All operational and under construction wind farms have been included as part of the baseline situation in the main assessment. This means that their influence on the main assessment has been taken into account in relation to the landscape and visual receptors assessed in detail in Section 6.7: Assessment of Effects on Landscape Character, Section 6.8: Assessment of Effects on Landscape Designations, Section 6.9: Assessment of Effects on Views and Section 6.10: Assessment of Effects on Principal Visual Receptors. The cumulative effect of the Development in conjunction with the operational and under construction wind farms is assessed in more detail in this section, in relation to two different cumulative scenarios.

- Cumulative Scenario 1 assesses the effects of adding the Development to a cumulative situation comprising all operational, under construction and consented wind farms.
- Cumulative Scenario 2 assesses the effects of adding the Development to a cumulative situation comprising all operational, under construction, consented and application stage wind farms.

The potential for significant cumulative effects as a result of the Development in-combination with the Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 cumulative wind farms is also assessed. These detailed assessments are presented below.

6.11.2 Methodology for the cumulative assessment

The methodology used in the assessment of cumulative effects differs in some respects from that used in the rest of the assessment. The full methodology for the cumulative assessment is described in Appendix A6.1.

It is important to remember that the objective of the cumulative assessment is different from the assessment of effects of the Development as carried out previously in this chapter; here, the intention is to establish whether or not the addition of the Development, in combination with other

relevant existing and proposed wind farms, may lead to a landscape character or view where wind farm developments become a prevailing characteristic as a result of the addition of the Development, albeit that they may become one of a number of prevailing characteristics.

It should be noted that even if the Development itself is assessed to have a significant effect, it does not necessarily follow that the cumulative effect will also be significant.

6.11.2.1 Wind Farm sites included in the cumulative assessment

Table 6.5 in section 6.4.7 sets out which of the cumulative sites will be relevant to the cumulative assessment. Cumulative sites that lie within a 45 km radius of the Proposed Development have been listed in Table 6.5 and their locations shown on Figure 6.12.

Cumulative ZTVs that show the visibility of the cumulative site, or group of sites, along with the visibility of the Development have been produced for all of the operational, under construction, consented and application wind farms that are considered relevant in the cumulative assessment, as shown on Figures 6.13 to 6.19. These show the extent of visibility of each wind farm in conjunction with the Development and are referred to in the following detailed assessments.

The cumulative sites are shown in the cumulative wirelines for each of the representative viewpoints, as shown on Figures 6.24 to 6.42. In these wirelines, the Development turbines are shown in red; operational and under-construction wind farms are shown in black; consented wind farms are shown in green; and application wind farms are shown blue.

In some instances, wind farms show up in the wirelines although they are beyond their own Study Area radius. Where this occurs, the wind farm is not included in the written assessment as it lies outwith its own Study Area radius and is therefore considered to lie beyond the radius within which it may contribute to a significant cumulative effect.

6.11.2.2 Assessment of Cumulative Effects on Landscape Character

The assessment of cumulative effects on landscape character uses the same receptors as the assessment of effects on landscape character carried out previously in this chapter. These are in two groups:

- Landscape character types; and
- Designated areas.

The cumulative assessment for both of these groups of receptors is described in the following section of this chapter. The detailed methodology for the assessment of cumulative effects on landscape character is described in Appendix A6.1.

The first stage in the cumulative assessment of the landscape character types and designated areas is a filtering process to ascertain which of them have the potential to undergo significant cumulative effects as a result of the windfarm. This process is carried out through a desk study and site survey which examines the visibility of the wind farm in conjunction with other wind farm sites from the landscape character types and designated areas around the Study Area, using the ZTV and wirelines.

This filtering process indicated that five landscape character types have the potential to undergo significant cumulative effects as a result of the addition of the Development.

Table 6.7: Potential for Significant Cumulative Effects on Landscape Receptors

Receptor	**Main Assessment during operational phase**	**Potential for Scenario 1 significant cumulative effect**	**Potential for Scenario 2 significant cumulative effect**
1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU	**Significant** – southern and western parts Not significant - remaining parts	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh.	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Receptor	Main Assessment during operational phase	Potential for Scenario 1 significant cumulative effect	Potential for Scenario 2 significant cumulative effect
1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU	**Significant** – south-eastern shore of Loch Fyne Not significant – remaining parts	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from consented Creag Dhubh and Blarghour.	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.
2: High Tops LCT	**Significant -** to east around Beinn Bhuidhe Not significant – remaining parts	No – the influence of the consented wind farms on this LCU will be limited.	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.
4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Shira LCU	Not significant	No – the influence of the consented wind farms on this LCU will be limited.	No – the influence of the application stage wind farms on this LCU will be limited.
4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Aray LCU	**Significant**	No – although consented Creag Dhubh will have a theoretical cumulative influence on the LCU, it will be seen across an area to the south of the LCU in which coniferous woodland is widespread and will limit actual visibility of both Creag Dhubh and the Development, such that a significant cumulative effect is considered unlikely to occur.	No – the influence of the application stage wind farms on this LCU will be limited.
6a. Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT / West Loch Fyne LCU	**Significant** – within 9 km No effect – remaining parts	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from the consented Creag Dhubh.	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.
7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / East Loch Awe LCU	**Significant** – within 9 km Not significant – remaining parts	No – the influence of the consented wind farms on this LCU will be limited.	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.
7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / West Loch Awe LCU	Not significant	No – the influence of the consented wind farms on this LCU will be limited.	No – the influence of the application stage wind farms on this LCU will be limited.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU	Not significant	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from the consented Creag Dhubh.	No – the influence of the application stage wind farms on this LCU will be limited.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne North LCU	Not significant	Yes – there will be an influence on this LCU from the consented Creag Dhubh.	No – the influence of the application stage wind farms on this LCU will be limited. There will be intervisibility between the application stage Glasvaar and the Development across a very limited area, at a distance of more than 10 km, which is not considered likely to result in significant effects.

Receptor	Main Assessment during operational phase	Potential for Scenario 1 significant cumulative effect	Potential for Scenario 2 significant cumulative effect
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne South LCU	Not significant	No – although consented A Cruach II will have an influence on the cumulative situation, this will be limited owing to a lack of intervisibility with the Development.	No – although the application stage Glasvaar is likely to exert an influence on this LCU, the likelihood of significant cumulative effects is limited by the lack of intervisibility with the Development.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / West Loch Awe LCU	Not significant	No – the influence of the consented wind farms on this LCU will be limited.	No – the influence of the application stage wind farms on this LCU will be limited.
20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / North Loch Awe LCU	Not significant	No – the influence of the consented wind farms on this LCU will be limited.	No – the influence of the application stage wind farms on this LCU will be limited.
Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park	Not significant	No – while there will be some cumulative interaction between the consented Creag Dhubh and the Development, the Development will be seen at a greater separation distance in the same sector of the view as Creag Dhubh, which will be seen at close proximity to the LLTNP boundary. Creag Dhubh will therefore exert a greater cumulative influence on the LLTNP than the Development, and cumulative effects arising from the introduction of the Development are considered to be limited.	Yes – there will be an influence on this NP from application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh
North Argyll APQ	**Significant** – parts within 9 km with actual visibility Not significant – remaining parts	No – the influence of the consented wind farms on this designation will be limited.	Yes – there will be an influence on this APQ from application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

6.11.3 1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU

This LCU has been assessed as having a medium sensitivity, a magnitude of change that would range between medium and no change during construction and operation, and effects that would be significant across parts experiencing theoretical visibility within approximately 9 km of the Development, during operation and construction, as a result of the addition of the Development. There will also be extensive areas where there would be no change and no effect, owing to no visibility.

6.11.3.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1. Scenario 1 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs in Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms; and
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms.

The operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm lies within this LCU. Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe is located within this LCU.

Cumulative magnitude of change

The cumulative interactions with the Development will mainly result from the nearer operational schemes, including Clachan Flats, as identified within the main assessment. There will be some intervisibility with consented schemes Blarghour and Creag Dhubh, as identified in the cumulative ZTVs on Figures 6.17 and 6.18.

From this LCU, Blarghour will be seen beyond the Development in the same sector of the view, at a distance between approximately 10 km and 15 km. Creag Dubh will be seen in a different sector of the view, to the south, at a distance between approximately 5 km and 10 km. Intervisibility between the Development and Creag Dhubh to the south will be restricted to a relatively small area within the core of the LCU, in close proximity to Clachan Flats Wind Farm. Intervisibility with Blarghour to the west will be slightly more widespread, with discrete areas within the north, south and centre of the LCU experiencing visibility of both developments. Visibility of the Development will be restricted to a proportion of the 13 turbines across parts of these areas of intervisibility.

The addition of the Development will increase the extent of wind farm development within the setting of the LCU, at a distance of between approximately 3 and 9 km. The relatively low level of consented development, with two consented developments located more than 5 km from the LCU, will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change associated with the Proposed Development. The Development will be seen in the same sector of the view as the consented Blarghour, which will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change associated with it.

The main cumulative interaction which will occur will be between the Development and Clachan Flats Wind Farm, located within this LCU, as described in the main assessment. The difference in scale between the Development and the cumulative schemes, in particular the operational Clachan Flats, will be readily perceived from this LCU which will increase the associated cumulative magnitude of change.

Overall, the somewhat limited intervisibility between the two consented schemes and the Development, as well as the baseline influence exerted on this landscape by the operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm within this LCU, are such that the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium-low**.

Significance of cumulative effect

The Scenario 1 cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Steep Ridgeland Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU will be **not significant (moderate / minor)**.

6.11.3.2 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational, consented and application wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs in Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms;
- Application; Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

The operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm lies within this LCU. Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe is located in this LCU.

Cumulative magnitude of change

The cumulative interactions with the Development will mainly result from the nearer operational schemes, including Clachan Flats, as identified within the main assessment. There will be some intervisibility with consented schemes Blarghour and Creag Dhubh, as shown in the cumulative

ZTVs on Figures 6.17 and 6.18 and application schemes Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh as shown in the cumulative ZTV on Figures 6.19.

Theoretical visibility of Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh is shown to be extensive across this LCU, as shown on Figure 6.19, while actual visibility will be reduced by the extents of commercial forestry in parts of this upland area. Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be located a minimum of approximately 8 km from the closest edge of the LCU and will have a notable influence owing to the height of the turbines at 180 m and 200 m respectively. They will be seen as one development owing to their close proximity and will create a broad horizontal extent across the upland landscape.

It is in this context that the addition of the Development will give rise to a **medium** cumulative magnitude of change. Those factors which moderate this assessment include, firstly, the presence of wind farm development both within and around this LCU, which will ensure the Development does not introduce a new influence on landscape character. Secondly, the location of the development in the same south-westerly sector as the applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh, which will ensure the Development does not spread wind farm development into an undeveloped sector. Thirdly, the location of Clachan Flats in this LCU, which will, by comparison, ensure the Development appears more distant and smaller in scale. In areas of forest cover where there is no visibility of the wind farms, there will be **no cumulative change**.

The addition of the Development will, nonetheless, increase the extent of wind farm development within the setting of the LCU, at a distance of between approximately 3 km and 9 km. It will be seen closer and larger in scale than the application wind farms and although contained within the same sector, will increase the density of turbines within this sector. While the Development will not redefine the landscape character as a 'wind farm landscape' it will have a notable influence on the cumulative context to this LCU.

Significance of cumulative effect

The Scenario 2 cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Steep Ridgeland Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU will be **significant (moderate)**. This takes into account the medium sensitivity of this LCU in combination with the medium magnitude of change. In areas where there is no visibility of the wind farms, there will be no effect.

6.11.4 1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountain LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU

This LCU has been assessed as having a medium sensitivity, a medium or medium-low magnitude of change, and effects that would be not significant (moderate or moderate / minor) during construction and operation, as a result of the addition of the Development. There will also be extensive areas where there would be no change and no effect, owing to no visibility.

6.11.4.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1. Scenario 1 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs on Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms; and
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms.

There are no operational wind farms located within this LCU. The consented Creag Dhubh Wind Farm is located in the northern part of this LCU. This LCU is represented by Viewpoint 6: Forest track above St Catherine's and Viewpoint 7: A815 Ardnagowan. Viewpoint 16: Beinn Lochain is located on the edge of this LCU.

Cumulative magnitude of change

The ZTVs on Figures 6.17 and 6.19 indicate that there will be some intervisibility between the Development and consented schemes Blarghour and Creag Dubh. Intervisibility between the

Development and each of these schemes will be located in two broad areas, north-east of Strachur between Creggans and St Catherines, and south-west of Strachur. Across both areas, coniferous forestry will notably reduce actual visibility of all three developments.

From this LCU, the Development will be seen to the east of Blarghour in the same broad sector of the view, with both developments seen at similar distances of between approximately 10 and 25 km. At this distance, the difference in scale between the turbines within the Development and the turbines within Blarghour will likely be perceived, and will slightly increase the cumulative magnitude of change associated with the Development. The Development will be positioned between Blarghour and the operational Clachan Flats, in a sector of the view which will be subject to the existing influence of wind farm development, and the cumulative magnitude of change associated with its introduction will therefore be moderated.

The addition of the Development will increase the level of wind farm development within the setting of this LCU, at a minimum distance of approximately 8 km. The position of the Development on the hills to the north-west of Loch Fyne will be in keeping with the pattern established by operational wind farms and the consented Blarghour, which will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change associated with it. The difference in scale between the Development and these cumulative schemes is likely to be perceived at this distance, although the similar positioning of each of these schemes upon or behind the ridgeline of forested hills to the north-west, as well as the similar general arrangements of the developments, will moderate the magnitude of change associated with the Development.

Creag Dhubh Wind Farm will be located within this LCU. Across areas in which there will be intervisibility between Creag Dhubh and the Development, Creag Dhubh will be seen at very close range to approximately 5 km, while the Development will be seen at distances of between 8 km to approximately 18 km. From parts of the LCU to the south of Creag Dhubh, the two developments will be seen in broadly the same sector of the view to the north, with Creag Dhubh exerting a stronger influence on the character of the LCU due to its closer proximity. In an area of intervisibility located to the north-east of Strachur, the Development will be seen to the north-west while Creag Dhubh will be seen to the south-east, and the Development will therefore be visible in successive views with Creag Dhubh, increasing the influence of wind farm development throughout the view. However, the position of the Development to the north-west will be in keeping with the pattern of wind farm development established by operational schemes including Clachan Flats, Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas. This will reduce the potential for a significant cumulative interaction between the Development and Creag Dhubh.

The Development will increase the influence of wind farm development seen on the hills to the north of Loch Fyne. However, when considered alongside the consented Blarghour and operational schemes including Clachan Flats, this effect will be moderated due to the Development's position in a sector of the view between cumulative developments seen at similar distance. Actual intervisibility between the Development and these cumulative schemes will be reduced notably compared to the theoretical visibility shown on Figures 6.17 and 6.18 due to coniferous forest cover across this LCU. The Development will result in a **low** cumulative magnitude of change, across areas which experience intervisibility with the consented Blarghour and/or Creag Dhubh.

Significance of cumulative effects

The cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU will be **not significant (moderate / minor)**.**6a.**

6.11.5 Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT / West Loch Fyne LCU

This LCU has been assessed as having a medium sensitivity, a magnitude of change that would range between high and no change during construction and operation, and effects that would range from significant (major / moderate) across parts of the LCU experiencing direct effects as a result of the Development, to no change across parts with no theoretical visibility.

6.11.5.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1. Scenario 1 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs in Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms; and
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms.

The Development would be located within this LCU. There are no operational or consented wind farms within this LCU. This LCU is represented by Viewpoint 9: Rubha nam Frangach.

Cumulative magnitude of change

The cumulative ZTV on Figure 6.18 indicates that there will be intervisibility between the Development and the consented Creag Dhubh across this LCU. This will occur over small areas to the south and east of the Development, as well as across a broader section of the LCU to the west of Glen Aray. The ZTV on Figure 6.8 indicates that across the areas in closest proximity to the Development, screening to the south and east of the Site will mean that visibility of the Development will be relatively low-level. However, across the area to the west of Glen Aray, high-level visibility of the Development will occur. Coniferous forest cover across this LCU is likely to restrict actual visibility beyond that which is shown on the ZTV.

From parts of the LCU to the west of Glen Aray, Creag Dhubh Wind Farm will be seen to the east and south-east, and the Development will be seen in successive views to the north-east and east. However, from this part of the LCU the Development will be seen in the same sector of the view as Clachan Flats and will therefore not introduce wind farm development into a new sector of the view. From this position, the Development will be seen broadly in front of or alongside Clachan Flats Wind Farm, as described in the main assessment. The closer proximity of the Development, compared to these cumulative schemes, will increase its cumulative magnitude of change. However, the overall cumulative interaction will be relatively limited.

Areas to the south and east of the Site will experience visibility of Clachan Flats and Creag Dhubh to the east and south respectively, and the Development will introduce wind farm development into a new sector of the view, to the north and west respectively, and will therefore extend the influence of wind farm development throughout the wider landscape. It will also bring development of this type into closer proximity than the visible operational and consented schemes. These factors will increase the cumulative magnitude of change associated with it. However, the cumulative magnitude of change will be moderated by the low-level visibility of the Development across this area, with views being experienced of between one and three turbines, across the area to the south in particular, and with only the upper parts of turbines visible.

Overall, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium-low**. Although the Development will contribute to increasing the influence of wind farm development within this LCU, cumulative interactions will be relatively limited. Coniferous forestry across the LCU is also likely to moderate the magnitude of change, through reduced visibility of both the Development and cumulative schemes, thereby reducing the opportunity for cumulative interactions. The introduction of the Development to this LCU is not considered to result in the creation of a "wind farm landscape".

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT / West Loch Fyne LCU will be **not significant (moderate)** across parts experiencing intervisibility with the consented Creag Dhubh to the south and / or the operational Clachan Flats to the east, as illustrated on Figures 6.18 and 6.13, and with **no cumulative effect** elsewhere.

6.11.5.2 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational, consented and application wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs in Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms;
- Application; Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Scenario 2 considers the cumulative effect of the application stage wind farms in conjunction with the operational and consented wind farms described above. The most notable influence will come from applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh which are located in the Craggy Uplands LCT to the immediate west of the West Loch Fyne LCU. The cumulative ZTV on Figure 6.19 shows that despite the proximity of these application wind farms to the Development, there is very limited intervisibility. This is because of the upland ridgeline that separates the eastern slopes of Loch Awe from the western slopes of Glen Aray and creates a visual divide between the two. The exception occurs across the patch of slightly lower hills to the east of Beinn Bhreac where intervisibility of the Development and the application wind farms occurs with both seen within 2 to 3 kms of each other. Here the cumulative magnitude of change will be **high**. The West Loch Fyne LCU wraps around the northern end of Glen Aray and across the eastern slopes. While intervisibility also occurs across this area, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium-high** as the effect will relate more to the location of the Development in this LCU than its interaction with the application wind farms seen beyond the western ridge of the glen.

The only other notable patch of intervisibility between the Development and the application wind farms occurs on the western coast of Loch Fyne, to the south of Dalchenna and the A815, although here the blanket cover of forestry will prevent actual visibility form occurring. Across the remaining parts of the LCU, there is **no cumulative change** where there is no theoretical visibility or small patches of either the Development or the application wind farms but very little further intervisibility.

Significance of cumulative effect

The Scenario 2 cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Loch Fyne Forest Moor Mosaic LCT / West Loch Fyne LCU will be **significant (major** or **major / moderate)** across the eastern slopes of Glen Aray and across the patch of intervisibility on the western slopes of Glen Aray with **no cumulative effect** across remaining parts of the LCU.

6.11.6 7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Uplands LCT / East Loch Awe LCU

This LCU has been assessed as having a medium-high sensitivity, a magnitude of change that would range between high and no change, and effects that would range from significant (major / moderate) across southern parts of the LCU within approximately 4 km experiencing actual visibility; significant (moderate) across parts within approximately 9 km experiencing actual visibility; and not significant (minor) or with no change across all other parts.

6.11.6.1 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational, consented and application wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs in Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms;
- Application; Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Scenario 2 considers the cumulative effect of the application stage wind farms in conjunction with the operational and consented wind farms. The most notable influence will come from applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh which are located in the Craggy Uplands LCT to the immediate south-west of the West Loch Fyne LCU. The cumulative ZTV on Figure 6.19 shows that despite the proximity of these wind farms to the East Loch Awe LCU, intervisibility is limited to a patch to the immediate north of the Development and then a patch approximately 2 to 4 km north of this.

Where the patches of intervisibility occur, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium** as the Development will be seen in close rage to the south and in conjunction with application Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh at a minimum of approximately 6 km to the south-west. The combination of these three large scale and relatively close range wind farms will change the character of this landscape, albeit with the effect relating more to the location of the Development adjacent to this LCU than its interaction with the application wind farms seen beyond the ridgeline.

Figure 6.19 shows that the majority of the LCU will have no visibility of either the Development or the application wind farms and all remaining areas will have visibility of one or other but not both consecutively. In these parts, there will be **no cumulative change**.

Significance of cumulative effect

The Scenario 2 cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the North Loch Awe Craggy Uplands LCT / East Loch Awe LCU will be **significant (moderate)** across localised patches of intervisibility out to 4 km to the north of the Development and with **no cumulative effect** across remaining parts of the LCU.

6.11.7 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU

This LCU has been assessed as having a medium-high sensitivity, a magnitude of change that would range between medium-low and no change during construction and operation, and effects that would be not significant (moderate) across parts of the LCU experiencing theoretical visibility of the Development, and with no change across all remaining parts.

6.11.7.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1, which includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs on Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms; and
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms.

There are no operational or consented wind farms located within this LCU. This LCU is represented by Viewpoint 4: Track above Inveraray and Viewpoint 5: Inveraray Castle Grounds.

Cumulative magnitude of change

The cumulative ZTV on Figure 6.18 indicates that there will be some limited intervisibility between the Development and the consented Creag Dhubh. This will occur over an area focussed on the settlement of Inveraray itself. Across this area, theoretical visibility of the Development will be restricted to between one and nine of the proposed turbines, but with reduced actual visibility owing to the screening effect of intervening tree cover in Inveraray and forestry on the hills to the north, as described in the main assessment. The Development will be seen to the north, above the hills which form the enclosing ridgeline to this low-lying landscape. The focus of views from this area is over Loch Fyne to the east and south. The sector of the view in which the consented Creag Dhubh will be visible will be south-east. Viewpoint 4 illustrates that this will be primarily seen as blade tips above the enclosing horizon from this landscape.

The addition of the Development will increase the level of wind farm development within the setting of the LCU, at a distance of approximately 5 km. The presence of Creag Dhubh Wind Farm will moderate the magnitude of change associated with the Development, as it will establish wind farm development as a feature of the baseline view from this LCU. Creag Dhubh will be seen in the direction of principal views, at a distance of approximately 6 km. Although the Development will be seen in a direction of the view which plays a lesser role in forming the setting of the view than the turbines within the consented Creag Dhubh, it will be seen in successive views and will extend the influence of wind farm development throughout the wider view.

The Development will be seen at closer proximity and higher above the horizon than the turbines within Creag Dhubh Wind Farm. However, due to the position of both developments beyond an intervening ridgeline and restricted to views of the upper parts of turbines only, any differences in scale between the turbines within the Development and Creag Dhubh will be difficult to perceive from this LCU, and this will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change.

The restriction of visibility of the Development to between one and nine turbines, and their position behind the enclosing ridgeline will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change associated with their introduction, in keeping with that assessed in the main assessment. Overall, the cumulative magnitude of change associated with the Development will be **medium-low**. This is due to the effect of the Development in slightly increasing the influence of wind farm development into the wider landscape when considered alongside the consented Creag Dhubh. Actual intervisibility across this LCU is likely to be restricted by built form and tree cover within Inveraray, which will reduce the area across which this cumulative magnitude of change will be experienced.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU will be **not significant (moderate)** across parts experiencing intervisibility with the consented Creag Dhubh to the south, as illustrated on Figure 6.18, and with **no cumulative effect** elsewhere.

6.11.8 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne North LCU

This LCU has been assessed as having a medium-high sensitivity, a magnitude of change ranging between medium-low and no change, and effects that would be not significant (moderate) across parts experiencing theoretical visibility, and with no effect in all remaining parts, during operation and construction, as a result of the addition of the Development.

6.11.8.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1, which includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs on Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms; and
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms.

There are no operational or consented wind farms located within this LCU. This LCU is represented by Viewpoint 8: A815, Strachur.

Cumulative magnitude of change

The ZTVs on Figures 6.17 and 6.18 indicate that there will be areas of intervisibility between the Development and the consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh Wind Farms, largely focussed towards the north and south of the LCU, away from the glen which runs through the centre of the LCU and this will restrict outward views towards the surrounding landscape.

From this LCU, the Development will be seen alongside Blarghour at a distance of approximately 10 km to the north of the LCU. Creag Dhubh will be seen in the sector to the east and seen in

closer proximity. Across these areas of intervisibility, visibility of the Development will generally be high level, with the majority of the turbines seen above the hills to the north.

The addition of the Development will increase the level of wind farm development within the setting of this LCU, and will be seen at a minimum distance of approximately 10 km. The position of the Development on the hills to the north-west of Loch Fyne will be in keeping with the pattern established by operational wind farms and the consented Blarghour, which will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change associated with the Development. Although the Development will be seen in successive views with Creag Dhubh Wind Farm, the Development is not considered to extend the influence of wind farm development unduly, due to its position in line with the established pattern of development to the north. Any cumulative interaction between the Development and Creag Dhubh is likely to be due primarily to the close proximity of Creag Dhubh. Overall, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **low**.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne North LCU will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** across parts experiencing visibility of the Development, and with no effect elsewhere.

6.11.9 North Argyll APQ

This APQ has been assessed as having a medium-high sensitivity, a magnitude of change that would range between high and no change, and effects that would range from significant (major, major / moderate or moderate) across the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains to the immediate east of the Site, within approximately 5 km; the High Tops to the north-east within approximately 9 km; the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic to the immediate east of the Site within approximately 4 km; and across parts of the North Loch Awe Craggy Upland experiencing actual visibility within approximately 4 km. The effect across all remaining parts would be not significant (moderate or moderate / minor) or no change where there would be no visibility.

6.11.9.1 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational, consented and application wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative ZTVs in Figures 6.13 to 6.19.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas, A Cruach and A Cruach II, and Cruach Mhor Wind Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms;
- Application; Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Scenario 2 considers the cumulative effect of the application stage wind farms in conjunction with the operational and consented wind farms. The most notable influence will come from applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh which are located in the Craggy Uplands LCT to the immediate south-west of the North Argyll APQ. The cumulative ZTV on Figure 6.19 shows that despite the proximity of these wind farms to the East Loch Awe LCU, intervisibility is limited to a small patches in the APQ to the north and north-east of the Development. Where these patches occur, the Development presents a close range feature at a minimum of approximately 1 to 2 km while the application wind farms are seen beyond approximately 6 km.

Where the patches of intervisibility occur, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium** as the Development will be added to form the closest wind farm in a context where the application stage wind farms will also have a notable influence. In the remaining parts of the APQ there will either be no visibility of wind farms or no intervisibility of the Development with the application stage wind farms, such that there will be no cumulative change.

Significance of cumulative effect

The Scenario 2 cumulative effect of the Development on the landscape character of the North Argyll APQ will be **significant (major / moderate)** in very localise parts to the north and east of the Development and with **no cumulative effect** across remaining parts of the APQ.

6.11.10 Assessment of Cumulative Effects on Views

The assessment of cumulative effects on views is carried out using the same two categories of effects on views as described previously in this chapter:

- Assessment of effects on representative viewpoints; and
- Assessment of effects on principal visual receptors.

The detailed methodology for the assessment of cumulative effects on views is described in Appendix A6.1.

The first stage in the cumulative assessment of the viewpoints and principal visual receptors is a filtering process to ascertain which of them have the potential to undergo significant cumulative effects as a result of the Development. This process is carried out through a desk study and site survey which examines the visibility of the wind farm in conjunction with other wind farm sites from the viewpoints and principal visual receptors around the Study Area, using the ZTV and wirelines.

This filtering process indicated that five viewpoints and no principal visual receptors have the potential to undergo significant cumulative effects as a result of the addition of the Development. The other visual receptors were discounted from the detailed assessment owing to a number of factors that reduced the likelihood for a significant cumulative effect to arise, relating mainly to the limited visibility of the Development and the limited visibility of the cumulative developments, as shown on ZTVs and wirelines, and the distance of the Development and other sites from the viewpoints and receptors.

Table 6.8: Potential for Significant Cumulative Effects on Visual Receptors

Receptor	Main Assessment	Potential for Scenario 1 significant cumulative effects	Potential for Scenario 2 significant cumulative effects
VP1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe	**Significant**	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP2: A819, Tullich	**Significant**	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP3: A819, north of Inveraray	**Significant**	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP4: Access track above Inveraray	Not significant	Yes – consented Creag Dhubh will be visible from this viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP5: Inveraray Castle Grounds	Not significant	No - while there will be theoretical visibility of consented Creag Dhubh, this will be screened by vegetation from the viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP6: Forest track above St Catherine's	Not significant	Yes – consented Blarghour will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.29c.	Yes – applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figures 6.29b and 6.29c.

Receptor	Main Assessment	Potential for Scenario 1 significant cumulative effects	Potential for Scenario 2 significant cumulative effects
VP7: A815, Ardnagowan	Not significant	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – there will be very limited visibility of applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figures 6.30b and 6.30c, that will give rise to limited cumulative interactions with the Development.
VP8: A815, Strachur	Not significant	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP9: Rubha nam Frangach	Not significant	Yes – consented Creag Dhubh will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.32c..	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP10: St. Conan's Kirk	**Significant**	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – visibility of application Blarghour Variation will be indiscernible as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.33b.
VP11: Kilchrenan	Not significant	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP12: Ben Cruachan	Not significant	No – although there will be visibility of consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh, the cumulative effect of the Development will be limited by its location at 13.9 km from the viewpoint, its location in a sector where operational wind farms already occur and its limited extent such that it occupies a 5 to 10 degree HFOV. It is therefore considered unlikely to result in a significant cumulative effect.	Yes – applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.35b.
VP13: Ben Lui	Not significant	No – although there will be visibility of consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh, the cumulative effect of the Development will be limited by its location at 18.0 km from the viewpoint, its location in a sector where operational wind farms already occur and its limited extent such that it occupies a 5 to 10 degree HFOV. It is therefore considered unlikely to result in a significant cumulative effect.	Yes – applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.36b.
VP14: Beinn Ime	Not significant	No – although there will be visibility of consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh, the cumulative effect of the Development will be limited by its location at 16.1 km from the viewpoint, its location in a sector where operational wind farms already occur and its limited extent such that it occupies a 5 to 10 degree HFOV. It is therefore	Yes – applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.37b.

Receptor	Main Assessment	Potential for Scenario 1 significant cumulative effects	Potential for Scenario 2 significant cumulative effects
		considered unlikely to result in a significant cumulative effect.	
VP15: Beinn Bhuidhe	**Significant**	Yes – consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh will be visible from this viewpoint and the relative proximity of the Development means there is the potential for significant cumulative effects to arise.	Yes – applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.38b.
VP16: Beinn Lochain	Not significant	No – although consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh will be visible from this viewpoint, the Development will be seen beyond the close proximity Creag Dhubh in the same sector of view as the established pattern of development and is therefore considered unlikely to result in significant cumulative effects.	No – the close proximity of Creag Dhubh in the same sector of view as the Development combined with the limited visibility of the development means it is unlikely to result in significant cumulative effects.
VP17: Cruachan Power Station Visitor Centre	Not significant	No – there will be no visibility of consented wind farm developments from this viewpoint.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
VP18: Dun na Cuaiche	**Significant**	Yes – consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh will be visible from this viewpoint and the relative proximity of the Development means there is the potential for significant cumulative effects to arise.	Yes – applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be visible from this viewpoint as shown in the cumulative wireline on Figure 6.41e.
VP19: Stob an Eas	Not significant	No – although there will be visibility of consented Blarghour and Creag Dhubh, the cumulative effect of the Development will be limited by its location at 10.9 km from the viewpoint, its location in a sector where operational wind farms already occur and its limited extent such that it occupies a 10 to 20 degree HFOV. It is therefore considered unlikely to result in a significant cumulative effect.	No - the combination of the distance of the Development from the viewpoint and the closer range influence form consented Creag Dubh means that the addition of the Development will not give rise to a significant cumulative effect.
Inveraray	Not significant	No – although consented Creag Dhubh and the Development will be theoretically visible from this settlement, actual visibility of both wind farms will be limited by the screening effect of the built form and tree cover, such that it is considered unlikely for significant cumulative effects to arise.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
Creggans / Strachur	Not significant	No - visibility of the consented wind farms will be limited from this viewpoint.	No - visibility of the application stage wind farms will be limited from this viewpoint.

Receptor	Main Assessment	Potential for Scenario 1 significant cumulative effects	Potential for Scenario 2 significant cumulative effects
Lochawe	**Significant** / Not significant	No - visibility of the consented wind farms will be limited from this viewpoint.	No - visibility of the application stage wind farms will be limited from this viewpoint.
A819	**Significant**	No – although consented Creag Dhubh will be visible from parts of this route, theoretical intervisibility will be reduced by forest cover through these parts, such that cumulative interactions are likely to be limited.	No – there will be no visibility of application wind farm developments from this viewpoint.
Core paths around Inveraray	**Significant** / Not significant	No – although consented Creag Dhubh will be visible from these paths, significant cumulative effects are considered unlikely, in line with assessment of 20. Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU, and Viewpoint 4: Track above Inveraray.	No - visibility of the application stage wind farms will be limited from these paths.

The cumulative effects of the Development on the viewpoints and principal visual receptors with potential to undergo significant cumulative effects are assessed in full below. Where a principal visual receptor is represented by a viewpoint, reference is made to the viewpoint assessment to ensure continuity in the assessment of cumulative effects.

6.11.11 Viewpoint 4: Access track above Inveraray

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a medium sensitivity for road users and a medium-high sensitivity for residents and walkers. It would experience a medium-low magnitude of change, and the effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as not significant (moderate) on residents and walkers, and not significant (moderate / minor) on road-users.

6.11.11.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1, which includes the following wind farm as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figure 6.27.

- Consented: Creag Dubh Wind Farm.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 1, the Development will be added to a cumulative context comprising only consented Creag Dhubh Wind Farm. Wireline in Figure 6.27 shows all nine of the Creag Dhubh turbines visible as blades, spaced evenly along the ridgeline, albeit with the full extent of the turbines screened by the intervening ridgeline that forms the enclosing eastern side of Loch Fyne. While there are four different proposed turbine heights of 114.9, 124.3, 130.6 and 144.4 m, the extent to which the turbines are screened means that these differences will not be apparent. It will be seen at a minimum distance of approximately 6 km.

The Development will be seen at a similar range to Creag Dubh, albeit seen within a fold in the enclosing valley sides to the north, rather than along the enclosing lochside ridgeline to the east. The extent to which the Development will be visible will also be largely screened by intervening landform and restricted to visibility of the upper parts of the turbines. Any differences in scale between the proposed turbines and Creag Dhubh will not be apparent owing to the limited extent to which both wind farms will be visible.

Under Scenario 1, the presence of Creag Dhubh Wind Farm will moderate the magnitude of change associated with the addition of the Development, as it will establish wind farm development as a baseline feature of the view. Creag Dhubh will be seen in the direction of the principal view from this viewpoint and form much of Inveraray, which is east across Loch Fyne. Although the Development will be seen outwith the principal direction of the view, it will be seen in successive views, extending the influence of wind farm development across the wider view between the east and the north, and this will have an increase on the magnitude of change.

The limited visibility of the Development and the limited visibility of Creag Dhubh, means that the Development will have a limited additional influence to a cumulative context where the influence from Creag Dhubh is already weak. Overall, the cumulative magnitude of change associated with the Development will be **medium-low**.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms will be **not significant (moderate)** for residents and walkers and **not significant (moderate / minor)** for road-users, due primarily to the limited visibility of both developments.

6.11.12 Viewpoint 6: Forest track above St Catherine's

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a medium-high sensitivity and medium-low magnitude of change, and the effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as not significant (moderate).

6.11.12.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1, which includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figures 6.29b and 6.29c.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe and A Cruach Wind Farms; and
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dhubh Wind Farms.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 1, the main cumulative interactions will be between the Development and Clachan Flats Wind Farm, as assessed in the main assessment, and between the Development and the consented Blarghour Wind Farm as assessed here. Blarghour will be visible to the west of the Development, on hills above Inveraray Castle. The consented Creag Dhubh Wind Farm will also be theoretically visible, although only as blade tips and with forest cover screening actual visibility from this position.

The addition of the Development will increase the level of wind farm development visible in this view, at a minimum distance of approximately 8 km. The position of the Development on the hills to the north-west of Loch Fyne will be in keeping with the pattern established by operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm and consented Blarghour Wind Farm, which will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change associated with the Development. The difference in scale between Blarghour and the Development may be perceived from this viewpoint, although the position of both developments beyond the ridgeline formed by intervening landform will moderate any disparity.

Overall, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **low**. Although the Development will contribute to increasing the influence of wind farm development to the north of this viewpoint, it will appear in combination with other operational and consented wind farms seen in this direction of view, including Clachan Flats and Blarghour, and will appear consistent in arrangement and position in the landscape, despite the difference in scale.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms will be **not significant (moderate / minor)**. This will relate principally to the limited extent to which the Development will be visible and the limited influence from the other operational and consented wind farms.

6.11.12.2 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 2, which includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figures 6.29b and 6.29c.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe and A Cruach Wind Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dhubh Wind Farms; and
- Application: Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh Wind Farms.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 2, the main cumulative interactions will be between the Development and Clachan Flats Wind Farm, as assessed in the main assessment, and between the Development and applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh Wind Farms, as assessed here. Applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be visible to the west of the Development, on hills above Inveraray Castle.. Seven of the Blarghour Variation turbines will be readily visible in the same location as Blarghour and ten of the An Carr Dubh turbines will be visible to the immediate left. The prominence of these turbines will be increased by their location behind the ridgeline above Inveraray Castle and town.

The addition of the Development will increase the level of wind farm development visible in this view, at a minimum distance of approximately 8 km. The position of the Development on the hills to the north-west of Loch Fyne will be in keeping with the pattern established by operational Clachan Flats Wind Farm and applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh Wind Farms and this will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change associated with the Development. The Development will, nonetheless, give rise to a **medium-low** cumulative magnitude of change owing principally to its closer proximity to the viewpoint and the resultant larger perceived scale of the proposed turbines.

Although the Development will contribute to increasing the influence of wind farm development to the north of this viewpoint, it will appear in combination with other operational, consented and application wind farms seen in this direction of view. Furthermore, the limited extent to which the Development will be visible, with three blades visible with forest cover taken into account, and one nacelle, two blades and one tip if not, will limit its influence on the cumulative situation.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the operational, consented and application wind farms will be **not significant (moderate)**. This will relate principally to the limited extent to which the Development will be visible.

6.11.13 Viewpoint 9: Rubha nam Frangach

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a medium-high sensitivity and low magnitude of change, and the effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as not significant (moderate / minor).

6.11.13.1 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1, which includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figure 6.32.

- Consented: Creag Dubh Wind Farm.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 1, any cumulative effects will be the result of cumulative interactions between the Development and the consented Creag Dhubh Wind Farm, as the only other visible development. The blade tips of wind turbines within Creag Dhubh will be seen above the hills to the south of Loch Fyne, east of this viewpoint. The Development will be seen in a successive view, given its position to the north of this viewpoint. As such, it will extend the influence of wind farm development into the wider view, although the presence of Creag Dhubh will mean that the Development will not introduce wind farm development into a view where there is not already an influence.

Creag Dhubh Wind Farm will be seen in closer proximity to this viewpoint, at a distance of approximately 6 km, compared to a distance of approximately 12 km between the viewpoint and the Development. It will also occupy a greater extent of the horizon, compared to the 1 to 5 degrees the Development will occupy. At this distance, and due to the position of both developments beyond intervening landform, such that they will both appear only as blades or blade tips, the difference in scale between the Development and Creag Dhubh will not be apparent. The similar position of both developments, set behind an intervening ridgeline and seen above moorland and coniferous forestry, will present a consistent image and in so doing will moderate the magnitude of change associated with the Development.

Overall, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **low**. Although the Development will contribute to increasing the influence of wind farm development to the north of this viewpoint, it will occupy a small horizontal extent, and is not considered to result in the creation of a "wind farm landscape".

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms will be **not significant (moderate / minor)**.

6.11.14 Viewpoint 12: Ben Cruachan

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a high sensitivity and undergoing a medium-low magnitude of change. The effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as **not significant (moderate)** during construction and operation.

6.11.14.1 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wirelines in Figure 6.35b and 6.35c.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas and A Cruach Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour, Creag Dubh and A Cruach II Wind Farms; and
- Applications: Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 2, cumulative wind farms will be contained within the south-west to south-east sector in views from Ben Cruachan. Operational wind farms, Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas will be seen in the Craggy Upland LCT to the west of Loch Awe at minimum distances of approximately 13.1 km and 10.0 km respectively and applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be seen in the Craggy Uplands LCT to the east of Loch Awe at minimum distances of approximately 15.3 km and 18.1 km. These two application stage wind farms will be seen as one development owing to their close proximity and despite their distance, their height of 180 m and 200 m respectively combined with the presence of 26 readily visible turbines will make this a notable feature. Operational Clachan Flats is the other readily visible wind farm, seen furthest south-east at a minimum of approximately 18.7 km.

The addition of the Development to this cumulative context will give rise to a **medium-low** cumulative magnitude of change. The effect will be moderated by the fact that there is already an

influence from wind farm development in this sector of the view and the fact that the Development will be located a minimum of approximately 13.9 km such that it will appear to be distant and contained within a small proportion of a much wider view.

The Development will not extend the influence of wind farm development as it will be seen to sit between operational Clachan Flats to the east and applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh to the west and it will also be seen to the fore of consented Creag Dubh, set at a minimum of approximately 26.4 km. While these factors will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change it will be seen closer and larger than these neighbouring developments and will add a further 13 turbines to the cumulative context.

The Development will increase the level of wind farm development seen from this viewpoint, albeit broadly in keeping with the established pattern of development. While the addition of the Development is not considered to result in views from this viewpoint being over a "wind farm landscape", it will contribute to an increasing influence of wind farm development. Taking these factors into account, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium-low**.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms will be **not significant (moderate)** during construction and operation.

6.11.15 Viewpoint 13: Ben Lui

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a high sensitivity and undergoing a medium-low magnitude of change. The effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as **not significant (moderate)** during construction and operation.

6.11.15.1 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figure 6.36b.

- Operational: An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas and A Cruach Wind Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour, Creag Dubh and A Cruach II Wind Farms; and
- Applications: Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 2, cumulative wind farms will be largely contained within the west to south-west sector in views from Ben Lui. Operational wind farms, Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas will be seen in the Craggy Upland LCT to the west of Loch Awe at minimum distances of approximately 28.8 km and 28.4 km respectively and applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be seen in the Craggy Uplands LCT to the east of Loch Awe at minimum distances of approximately 24.9 km and 26.5 km. These two application stage wind farms will be seen as one development owing to their close proximity and despite their distance, their height of 180 m and 200 m will make them a visible feature. Operational An Suidhe is the other readily visible wind farm, seen beyond the Development at a minimum of approximately 30.6 km.

The addition of the Development to this cumulative context will give rise to a **low** cumulative magnitude of change. The effect will be moderated by the fact that there is already an influence from wind farm development in this sector of the view and the fact that the Development will be located a minimum of approximately 17.9 km such that it will appear to be distant and contained within a small proportion of a much wider view.

The Development will not extend the influence of wind farm development as it will be seen to sit close to applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh to the west and to the fore of operational An Suidhe. While these factors will moderate the cumulative magnitude of change it will be seen closer and larger than these neighbouring developments and will add a further nine turbines and three blades to the cumulative context. The cumulative effect will, however, be limited

by the distance of the Development from the viewpoint and its contained extents relative to other cumulative wind farms.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during construction and operation.

6.11.16 Viewpoint 14: Beinn Ime

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a high sensitivity and undergoing a low magnitude of change. The effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as **not significant (moderate / minor)** during construction and operation.

6.11.16.1 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figure 6.36b.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas and A Cruach Wind Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour, Creag Dubh and A Cruach II Wind Farms; and
- Applications: Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 2, cumulative wind farms will be largely contained within the north-west to south-west sector in views from Beinn Ime. Operational wind farms, Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas will be seen in the Craggy Upland LCT to the west of Loch Awe at minimum distances of approximately 29.6 km and 32.2 km respectively, while closer range Clachan Flats will be seen at a minimum of approximately 9.5 km in the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT at the north-west end of Loch Fyne. Applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be seen in the Craggy Uplands LCT to the east of Loch Awe at minimum distances of approximately 22.2 km and 21.2 km. These two application stage wind farms will be seen as one development owing to their close proximity and despite their distance, their height of 180 m and 200 m will make them a visible feature.

The addition of the Development to this cumulative context will give rise to a **medium-low** cumulative magnitude of change. The effect will be moderated by the fact that there is already an influence from wind farm development in this sector of the view and the fact that the Development will be located a minimum of approximately 16.1 km such that it will appear to be distant and contained within a small proportion of a much wider view.

The Development will not extend the influence of wind farm development as it will be seen to sit between applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh to the west and Clachan Flats to the east, as well as to the fore of operational Carraig Gheal. While Clachan Flats will remain the closest wind farm development to the viewpoint, the larger scale of the proposed turbines means that they will appear slightly larger and will add a further thirteen turbines to a cumulative context in which applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh form a notable horizontal extent across the upland landscape. The cumulative effect will, however, be limited by the distance of the Development from the viewpoint, its containment behind the ridgeline which screens the full extents of the turbines and its contained extents relative to other cumulative wind farms.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms will be **not significant (moderate / minor)** during construction and operation. **Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe**

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a high sensitivity and a medium-high magnitude of change. The effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as **significant (major)** during construction and operation.

6.11.16.2 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1. Scenario 1 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figure 6.38b.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas and A Cruach Farms; and
- Consented: Blarghour, Creag Dubh and A Cruach II Wind Farms.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 1, Creag Dhubh and Blarghour Wind Farms will be visible, seen to the south-west, in keeping with the established pattern of wind farm development owing to their location in the upland landscape and in the same westerly sector as the operational developments, and similarities in the number of turbines and appearance of layouts. The Development will also be seen in this sector of the view, and its association with these cumulative schemes will to some extent, moderate its cumulative magnitude of change.

There are also a number of factors that will add to the cumulative magnitude of change including the fact that the Development will bring wind farm development closer to the viewpoint, compared with many of the cumulative developments. The Development will be seen at a distance of approximately 9 km, which will be similar to operational Clachan Flats, partially seen to the east of the Development. The difference in scale between the Development and Clachan Flats will be apparent, as described in the main assessment, while the differences in scale with the other cumulative wind farms will not be less apparent owing to the greater separation distances. The Development will occupy a greater horizontal extent than any of the other cumulative schemes seen from this viewpoint.

The Development will increase the level of wind farm development seen from this viewpoint, albeit broadly in keeping with the established pattern of development. While the addition of the Development is not considered to result in views from this viewpoint being over a "wind farm landscape", it will contribute to an increasing influence of wind farm development, and will be seen in relative proximity, compared to the majority of cumulative schemes. Taking these factors into account, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium**.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the Scenario 1 operational and consented wind farms will be **significant (major / moderate)** during construction and operation. This takes into account the high sensitivity of this view and associated visual receptors in combination with the medium magnitude of change.

6.11.16.3 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 2. Scenario 2 includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wireline in Figure 6.38b.

- Operational: Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Carraig Gheal, Beinn Ghlas and A Cruach Farms;
- Consented: Blarghour, Creag Dubh and A Cruach II Wind Farms;
- Applications: Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 2, cumulative wind farms will be largely contained within the north-west to south-west sector in views from Beinn Bhuidhe. While there is some influence from operational wind farms, with Carraig Gheal and Beinn Ghlas at minimum distances of approximately 22.1 km and 23.2 km respectively to the north-west, and An Suidhe and A Chruach at minimum distances of

approximately 21.3 km and 33.1 km respectively to the south-west, their distance from the viewpoint combined with their relatively small size of turbines, means this influence is limited. Operational Clachan Flats will, however, have a more notable influence owing to its location at 4.6 km, set within the same Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT to the south-west of the viewpoint.

Applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be seen in the Craggy Uplands LCT to the east of Loch Awe at minimum distances of approximately 16.4 km and 17.3 km, respectively. These two application stage wind farms will be seen as one development owing to their close proximity and despite their distance and partial screening by landform, their height of 180 m and 200 m will make them a readily visible feature.

The addition of the Development to this cumulative context will give rise to a **medium** cumulative magnitude of change. The effect will be moderated by the fact that there is already an influence from wind farm development in this sector of the view, especially with close range Clachan Flats at 4.6 km and applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh set to the immediate rear of the Development. The Development will also be seen at a minimum of approximately 9.3 km such that it will not appear as close range and will remain contained within a much wider panoramic view.

Despite these considerations, the Development will present an additional 13 turbines, seen closer to the viewpoint than the application wind farms with the result that they will appear larger. They will also form a more prominent feature than Clachan Flats which is largely screened by intervening landform. The Development will not, however, give rise to a 'wind farm landscape' although it will form a notable addition to the cumulative context.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the Scenario 2 operational, consented and application wind farms will be **significant (major / moderate)** during construction and operation. This takes into account the high sensitivity of this view and associated visual receptors in combination with the medium magnitude of change. **Viewpoint 18: Dun na Cuaiche**

This viewpoint has been assessed as having a high sensitivity and a medium magnitude of change. The effects resulting from the addition of the Development have been assessed as **significant (major / moderate)** during construction and operation.

6.11.16.4 Cumulative Scenario 1

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1, which includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wirelines in Figures 6.41b, 6.41c, 6.41d and 6.41e.

- Operational: Clachan Flats and An Suidhe; and
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 1, Creag Dhubh and Blarghour Wind Farms will be visible to the south and north-west respectively, in addition to the operational schemes described in the main assessment. The Development will introduce additional wind farm development into the view, seen to the north at a distance of approximately 5 km.

From this viewpoint, cumulative development will be relatively widespread throughout the surrounding landscape, with wind farms seen to the north-east, north-west, west, south-west and south. The Development will be seen to the north. Although it will be seen between the operational Clachan Flats and the consented Blarghour, it will contribute towards the increasing influence of wind farm development in this sector of the view. When the consented Creag Dhubh is considered, wind farm development will be seen to occupy most sectors of the view from this panoramic viewpoint. While the Development will contribute towards this effect, it is not considered to be responsible for creating a "wind farm landscape", given that the focus of views will remain on the

landscape itself, rather than wind farm development, and that the Development will occupy 10 to 20 degrees of the overall panoramic view.

The difference in scale between the Development and cumulative schemes, including Clachan Flats and Creag Dhubh, will be apparent from this viewpoint, and this effect will be increased by the relative proximity of the Development. The Development will be seen to have a similar arrangement and position in the landscape as the consented Blarghour, with both seen partially screened beyond an intervening ridgeline to the north-west, which will moderate its magnitude of change, albeit that the turbines of the Development will be seen to a greater extent above the horizon.

The Development will therefore increase the level of wind farm development seen from this viewpoint, albeit broadly in keeping with the established pattern of development, seen between the operational Clachan Flats and consented Blarghour. While the addition of the Development is not considered to result in views from this viewpoint being over a "wind farm landscape", it will contribute to an increasing influence of wind farm development, and will be seen in relative proximity, compared to the majority of cumulative schemes. Taking these factors into account, the cumulative magnitude of change will be **medium**.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the Scenario 1 operational and consented wind farms will be **significant (major / moderate)** during operation and construction. This takes into account the high sensitivity of this view and associated visual receptors in combination with the medium magnitude of change.

6.11.16.5 Cumulative Scenario 2

The addition of the Development to the operational and consented wind farms is considered under Scenario 1, which includes the following wind farms as shown in the cumulative wirelines in Figures 6.41b, 6.41c, 6.41d and 6.41e.

- Operational: Clachan Flats and An Suidhe;
- Consented: Blarghour and Creag Dubh Wind Farms; and
- Applications: Blarghour and An Carr Dubh.

Cumulative magnitude of change

Under Scenario 2, cumulative wind farms will be present in almost every sector of the view from Dun na Cuaiche, with the exception of the view to the north. While there is some influence from operational wind farms, with Clachan Flats at minimum distance of approximately 8.0 km to the north-east, and An Suidhe at minimum distance of approximately 8.5 km to the south-east, their limited visibility owing to the screening effect of vegetation in the case of Clachan Flats and landform in the case of An Suidhe, means this influence is limited.

Applications Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh will be seen set behind the upland ridge to the immediate west of the viewpoint, at minimum distances of approximately 7.4 km and 5.7 km, respectively. These two application stage wind farms will be seen as one development owing to their close proximity and although their full extents will be reduced by the screening effect of the landform, 16 turbines will be visible to variable extents and at heights of 180 m and 200 m will form a relatively close range and notable feature.

The addition of the Development to this cumulative context will give rise to a **medium** cumulative magnitude of change. While there will be a baseline influence from wind farm development to the north-east, south-east, south-west and west, the development will extend the influence also into the sector to the north. The effect will, however, be moderated by the fact that intervening landform will notably reduce the extents to which the Development will be visible, with only two turbines seen to below the nacelle and the remainder seen as only blades or tips. Although close in range and large in scale, these will be seen comparable to the range and scale of the application turbines to the west.

Significance of cumulative effect

The cumulative effect that will arise from the addition of the Development to the Sceanrio 2 operational, consented and application wind farms will be **significant (major / moderate)** during construction and operation. This takes into account the high sensitivity of this view and associated visual receptors in combination with the medium magnitude of change.

6.12 Summary of Effects

The potential effects on the landscape and visual receptors that would arise as a result of the Development have been assessed in this chapter. The process has involved identifying those receptors with the potential to be significantly affected and assessing the potential effects that the construction and operation of the Development would give rise to. The significance of these effects has been assessed through combining the sensitivity of each receptor with a prediction of the magnitude of change that would occur as a result of the Development. The findings of the main and cumulative assessments are presented in summary in Table 6.9 and Table 6.10 and below.

The Development comprises the construction of the 13 proposed turbines each 180 m to blade tip, associated infrastructure, including access tracks, control building, BESS, substation and meteorological mast, as well as the removal of forestry and excavation of borrow pit. The Site layout is shown in Figure 2.1.

The Study Area for the Development covers a radius of 45 km and within this area, those receptors with the potential to be significantly affected have been assessed in detail. This has included two landscape elements, 13 LCTs / LCUs, two designated landscape areas and 19 viewpoints. Photomontages have been prepared for the viewpoints. The figures also include a wireline of the Development on its own and a wireline with all other cumulative developments. These visualisations have helped assist in the assessment process. Figures 6.1 to 6.20 show plans of the Study Area, landscape receptors, visual receptors and ZTVs of the Development on its own and in combination with other cumulative windfarms, while Figures 6.24 to 6.42 show the photographs, wirelines and photomontages from the representative viewpoints.

Table 6.9 sets out all landscape and visual receptors assessed in detail in the LVIA, their sensitivity to the Development and the magnitude of change and significance in relation to both the construction and operational phases. In respect of the landscape receptors, variable findings have been assessed across their extents owing to their broad extents and the variable sensitivities and / or magnitudes of change that would arise. This is represented in Table 6.9 where a range of sensitivity and magnitude of change ratings are set out, along with both significant and not significant effects, for a number of the landscape receptors assessed.

Table 6.9: Summary of Effects during Construction and Operation

Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction: Magnitude of change	Construction: Significance of effect	Operation: Magnitude of Change	Operation: Significance of Effect
Forestry	Low	Medium	Not significant (minor)	-	-
Rough Grass Moorland	Medium-low	Medium-low	Not significant (minor)	-	-
1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU	Medium	Medium / medium-low / no change	Significant (moderate) / Not significant (moderate / minor) / No effect	Medium / medium-low / no change	Significant (moderate) / Not significant (moderate / minor) / no effect
1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT /	Medium	Medium / medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate or minor) / no effect	Medium / medium-low / no change	Significant (moderate or minor) / no effect

Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction: Magnitude of change	Construction: Significance of effect	Operation: Magnitude of Change	Operation: Significance of Effect
East Loch Fyne LCU					
2: High Tops LCT	Medium-high	Medium / medium-low / no change	Significant (moderate) / not significant (moderate) / no effect	Medium / medium-low / no change	Significant (moderate) / not significant (moderate) / no effect
4: Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Shira LCU	Medium-high	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)
4: Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Aray LCU	Medium-high / medium	High / medium-high / no change	Significant (major / moderate) / no effect	High / medium-high / no change	Significant (major / moderate) / no effect
6a: Loch Fyne Upland Forest Mosaic LCT – West Loch Fyne LCU	Medium	High / medium Low / no change	Significant (major / moderate) / significant (moderate) Not significant (minor) / no effect	High / medium Low / no change	Significant (major / moderate) / significant (moderate) Not significant (minor) / no effect
7c: North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / East Loch Awe LCU	Medium-high	High / medium-high Low / no change	Significant (major or major / moderate) Not significant (moderate / minor) / no change	High / medium-high Low / no change	Significant (major or major / moderate) Not significant (moderate / minor) / no change
7c: North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / West Loch Awe LCU	Medium-high	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no effect	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no effect
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU	Medium-high	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no effect	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no effect
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne north LCU	Medium-high	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no effect	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no effect
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne south LCU	Medium-high	Low / no change	Not significant (moderate / minor) / no effect	Low / no change	Not significant (moderate / minor) / no effect
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / West Loch Awe LCT	Medium-high	Medium-low / low / no change	Not significant (moderate / minor) / not significant (moderate) / no change	Medium-low / low / no change	Not significant (moderate / minor) / not significant (moderate) / no change
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / North Loch Awe LCU	Medium-high	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no change	Medium-low / no change	Not significant (moderate) / no change

Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction: Magnitude of change	Construction: Significance of effect	Operation: Magnitude of Change	Operation: Significance of Effect
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park	High	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
North Argyll APQ	Medium-high	High / medium-high / medium / medium-low / no change	Significant (major / moderate or moderate) Not significant (moderate or moderate / minor)	High / medium-high / medium / medium-low / no change	Significant (major / moderate or moderate) Not significant (moderate or moderate / minor)
Viewpoint 1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe	Medium	High	Significant (major / moderate)	High	Significant (major / moderate)
Viewpoint 2: A819, Tullich	Medium (road users) / Medium-high (residents)	High	Significant (major / moderate – road-users) or (major - residents)	High	Significant (major / moderate – road-users) or (major - residents)
Viewpoint 3: A819, north of Inveraray	Medium (road users) / Medium-high (residents)	High	Significant (major / moderate – road-users) or (major - residents)	High	Significant (major / moderate – road-users) or (major - residents)
Viewpoint 4: Access track above Inveraray	Medium (road users) / Medium-high (residents and walkers)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate residents and walkers) (moderate / minor – road users)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate residents and walkers) (moderate / minor – road users)
Viewpoint 5: Inveraray Castle Grounds	High (residents and visitors)	Negligible	Not significant (minor – residents and visitors)	Negligible	Not significant (minor – residents and visitors)
Viewpoint 6: Forest track above St Catherine's	Medium-high	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)
Viewpoint 7: A815, Ardnagowan	Medium (road-users) / medium-high (residents)	Low	Not significant (minor - road users) (moderate / minor - residents)	Low	Not significant (minor - road users) (moderate / minor - residents)
Viewpoint 8: A815, Strachur	Medium (road-users) / medium-high (residents)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate / minor - road users) (moderate - residents)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate / minor - road users) (moderate - residents)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction: Magnitude of change	Construction: Significance of effect	Operation: Magnitude of Change	Operation: Significance of Effect
Viewpoint 9: Rubha nam Frangach	Medium-high	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)
Viewpoint 10: St. Conan's Kirk	High (residents and visitors)	Medium-low	Significant (moderate – visitors and residents)	Medium-low	Significant (moderate – visitors and residents)
Viewpoint 11: Kilchrenan	Medium	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate / minor)
Viewpoint 12: Ben Cruachan	High	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)
Viewpoint 13: Ben Lui	High	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)
Viewpoint 14: Beinn Ime	High	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)
Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe	High	Medium	Significant (major / moderate)	Medium	Significant (major / moderate)
Viewpoint 16: Beinn Lochain	High	Medium	Not significant (moderate)	Medium	Not significant (moderate)
Viewpoint 17: Cruachan Power Station Visitor Centre	Medium-high	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)
Viewpoint 18: Dun na Cuaiche	High	Medium	Significant (major / moderate)	Medium	Significant (major / moderate)
Viewpoint 19: Stob an Eas	Medium-high	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)
Inveraray	High	Low No change	Not significant (moderate / minor) No effect	Low No change	Not significant (moderate / minor) No effect
Creggans / Strachur	High	Medium-low / low No change	Not significant (moderate or moderate / minor) No effect	Medium-low / low No change	Not significant (moderate or moderate / minor) No effect
Lochawe	High	Medium-low Low / negligible No change	Significant (moderate) Not significant (moderate / minor) No effect	Medium-low Low / negligible No change	Significant (moderate) Not significant (moderate / minor) No effect
A819	Medium-high / medium	High Medium-low / Low No change	Significant (major or major / moderate) Not significant (moderate or moderate / minor) No effect	High Medium-low / Low No change	Significant (major or major / moderate) Not significant (moderate or moderate / minor)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Construction: Magnitude of change	Construction: Significance of effect	Operation: Magnitude of Change	Operation: Significance of Effect
					No effect
Core Paths around Inveraray	High	Medium-high – negligible No change	Significant (major / moderate) Not significant (moderate / minor) No effect	Medium-high – negligible No change	Significant (major / moderate) Not significant (moderate / minor) No effect

Table 6.10: Summary of Cumulative Effects under Scenario 1 and Scenario 2

Receptor	Scenario 1: Cumulative magnitude of change	Scenario 1: Cumulative significance of effect	Scenario 2: Cumulative magnitude of change	Scenario 2: Cumulative significance of effect
1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	Medium No change	**Significant (moderate)** Not significant
1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / East Loch Fyne LCU	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	-	Not significant
2: High Tops LCT	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
4: Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Shira LCU	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
4: Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Aray LCU	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
6a: Loch Fyne Upland Forest Mosaic LCT – West Loch Fyne LCU	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)	High / Medium - high No change	**Significant (major or major / moderate)** Not significant
7c: North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / East Loch Awe LCU	-	Not significant	Medium	**Significant (moderate)**
7c: North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / West Loch Awe LCU	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / Inveraray LCU	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate)	-	Not significant
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne north LCU	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	-	Not significant
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / East Loch Fyne south LCU	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / West Loch Awe LCT	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
20: Rocky Mosaic LCT / North Loch Awe LCU	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park	-	Not significant	Low	Not significant

Receptor	Scenario 1: Cumulative magnitude of change	Scenario 1: Cumulative significance of effect	Scenario 2: Cumulative magnitude of change	Scenario 2: Cumulative significance of effect
North Argyll APQ	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 2: A819, Tullich	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 3: A819, north of Inveraray	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 4: Access track above Inveraray	Medium-low	Not significant (moderate or moderate / minor)	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 5: Inveraray Castle Grounds	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 6: Forest track above St Catherine's	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	Medium - low	Not significant (moderate)
Viewpoint 7: A815, Ardnagowan	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 8: A815, Strachur	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 9: Rubha nam Frangach	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 10: St. Conan's Kirk	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 11: Kilchrenan	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 12: Ben Cruachan	-	Not significant	Medium - low	Not significant (moderate)
Viewpoint 13: Ben Lui	-	Not significant	Low	Not significant (moderate / minor)
Viewpoint 14: Beinn Ime	-	Not significant	Low	Not significant (Moderate / minor)
Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe	Medium	**Significant (major / moderate)**	Medium	**Significant (major / moderate)**
Viewpoint 16: Beinn Lochain	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 17: Cruachan Power Station Visitor Centre	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Viewpoint 18: Dun na Cuaiche	Medium	**Significant (major / moderate)**	Medium	**Significant (major / moderate)**
Viewpoint 19: Stob an Eas	-	Not significant	-	Not significant

Receptor	Scenario 1: Cumulative magnitude of change	Scenario 1: Cumulative significance of effect	Scenario 2: Cumulative magnitude of change	Scenario 2: Cumulative significance of effect
Inveraray	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Creggans / Strachur	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Lochawe	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
A819	-	Not significant	-	Not significant
Core Paths around Inveraray	-	Not significant	-	Not significant

In respect of the physical effects on landscape elements, the assessment found no significant effects will arise in relation to the loss of the coniferous forestry or the rough grass moorland as a result of the construction of the Development. The losses will comprise only a small proportion of a much wider landscape resource and both forestry and rough grass moorland will be relatively easy to re-establish either post-construction or post-decommissioning, depending on the short, or long-term use of the area.

The assessment of effects on landscape character found that significant effects, during the construction and operational phases will arise as a result of the Development within parts of five of the LCTs / LCUs that occur in the Study Area. Those parts of the LCTs that will undergo significant effects are as follows:

- 1. Steep Ridgeland and Mountains LCT / Clachan LCU;
- 2. High Tops LCT;
- 4. Mountain Glens LCT / Glen Aray LCU;
- 6a. Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT / West Loch Fyne; and
- 7c. North Loch Awe Craggy Upland LCT / East Loch Awe LCU.

These significant effects will extend out to a radius of approximately 4 km to the west, 4 km to the north, 9 km to the east, 3 km to the south-east and 9 km to the south-west. The effect of the Development on all other LCTs and LCUs during construction and operation will be not significant.

The Development will also have a significant effect on the corresponding parts of the regional designation of the North Argyll APQ, with effects extending approximately 5 km to the north and 9 km to the east.

A detailed assessment of the effects on the special qualities of the LLTTNP presented in Appendix A6.2 found that the Development will not give rise to any significant effects. Similarly, the detailed assessment of the effects on the perceptual responses experienced in the ben Lui WLA presented in Appendix A6.3, also found that there will be no significant effects.

The assessment of the effects of the Development has found that significant effects would occur during the construction and operational phases at six of the 19 viewpoints. The viewpoints significantly affected during the construction and operational phases all lie within a 10 km radius of the Development and include;

- Viewpoint 1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe;
- Viewpoint 2: A819, Tullich;
- Viewpoint 3: A819, north of Inveraray;
- Viewpoint 10: St. Conan's Kirk; and
- Viewpoint 18: Dun na Cuaiche.

The viewpoints will mostly be affected owing to either their close proximity to the construction works and operation of the Development, or their greater sensitivity. There are a number of viewpoints within the 10 km which will not be significantly affected and all viewpoints beyond this range will also not be significantly affected as a result of the Development.

In respect of the principal visual receptors, road-users will be significantly affected during the construction and operational phases, will be the A819. This effect will extend along an approximate 3 km section of the road that lies closest to the Development, at a minimum range of approximately 1.5 km. There will also be significant effects from localised parts of the settlement of Loch Awe and sections of the Inveraray core paths where open and full views of the Development occur.

The Site will be subject to ongoing forestry felling and restocking as part of Argyll Estates (the 'Landowner') approved Long-Term Felling Plan (LTFP), as well as further felling required for the construction of the Development. While the combination of these plans and their implementation over time presents a complicated pattern of forestry felling and restocking, consideration has been made in the assessment to a worst-case scenario in which areas currently afforested are felled. This assessment has highlighted that only three of the 19 viewpoints will be affected by the forestry felling, owing to the screening effect of intervening landform which prevents visibility from the majority of the viewpoints. From those viewpoints where the forestry removals will be visible, the assessment will not be affected by this additional change, although the clear felling will detract from the scenic quality of the views.

The assessment of cumulative effects on landscape character has found that significant cumulative effects will occur in localised parts of three of the LCUs in respect of Cumulative Scenario 2. The effect of the Development on all other LCTs and LCUs that occur in the Study Area will be not significant. This largely relates to the limited number of consented wind farms within the Study Area and the close-range influence of application stage Blarghour Variation and An Carr Dubh.

The assessment of the cumulative effects on visual amenity has found that significant cumulative effects will occur at two of the 19 viewpoints in respect of Cumulative Scenario 1 and Cumulative Scenario 2. The viewpoints which will undergo significant cumulative effects lie within 5 to 9 km of the Development, making the effects relatively localised. At both these viewpoints, the significant effects partially result from the high sensitivity, given that both are elevated hilltop viewpoints experienced by sensitive recreational receptors. There will be no other significant cumulative visual effects.

A detailed assessment of the effects of the Development on the visual amenity of residents has been carried out and is presented in Appendix A6.4. The RVAA considers whether the visual effects likely to be experienced at a given property approach or surpass the 'Residential Visual Amenity Threshold' - the point at which visual effects may become matters relevant to Residential Amenity and which are to be weighed in the overall planning balance. The RVAA has assessed 12 existing and consented residential properties between 1 and 2 km of the Development, albeit with two sets of three properties grouped together and within single ownership. The assessment found all properties will undergo significant visual effects, with the Development resulting in the potential for 'Residential Visual Amenity Threshold' to be reached in respect of four especially close-range properties. The full assessment of effects on residential amenity also considers such matters as the effects of noise, shadow flicker and other disturbance and this is presented in the Planning Statement.

A detailed assessment of the night-time effects of the aviation lighting associated with the Development has been carried out and is presented in Appendix A6.5. Of the four representative night-time viewpoints assessed, two were found to undergo significant effects as a result of the aviation lighting on night-time views. The assessment has found that the effects will be significant in respect of Viewpoint 1: A819, Dorchaidean Eoin Ruadh-bhuidhe and Viewpoint 15: Beinn Bhuidhe. This finding relates principally to the proximity of Viewpoint 1 to the Development and the sensitivity of the dark skies that Viewpoint 15 represents. The effect on Viewpoint 4: Track above Inveraray will be not significant owing to limited visibility and baseline lighting, while the effect on Viewpoint 10: St Conan's Kirk will also be not significant owing to baseline lighting and a greater separation distance. This assessment considers a pronounced worst case scenario without the dimming of lights to 200 cd and without the potential mitigation of using directional lighting.

In summary, the Development will give rise to significant effects on landscape character during the construction and operation of the Development, albeit contained within the localised extent of approximately 9 km. It will give rise to significant effects on visual amenity out to approximately 10 km during the construction and operation of the Development. While landscape and visual receptors beyond these ranges may be affected by the influence of the Development, these effects will not be significant. Furthermore, not all landscape and visual receptors within these ranges will be significantly affected, for example tracts of landscape enclosed by forest cover or where screening by landform occurs. Significant cumulative effects will arise in localised and close-range viewpoints and LCUs where the Development will be seen in conjunction with proximate operational, consented and application stage wind farms.

All effects during the construction of the Development will be short-term and reversible and all effects during the operation of the Development will be long-term and reversible. All effects will be adverse in nature.

6.13 Statement of Significance

The rationale for site selection and scheme design is presented in Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design. The suitability of the Site relates to its upland setting which ensures high wind yields, as well as contains the extent of visibility. The location of the Development on the eastern side of Glen Aray means that the hills which enclose the valley largely screen visibility from extending further west and notably reduce the extent of visibility to the east. While visibility extends north to Loch Awe and south to Loch Fyne, the effects across these areas are moderated to some extent by the influence of operational wind farms and the extent of commercial forestry.

The LVIA has found that there will be significant effects and significant cumulative effects on landscape and visual receptors within the local area around the Development. Such effects are to be expected within the local area around 13 turbines each 180 m to blade tip height as these structures will have notable direct and indirect effects on landscape character out to 9 km and indirect effects on visual amenity out to 10 km. While landscape and visual receptors beyond these ranges may gain views of the Development, these effects will not be significant. Furthermore, not all landscape and visual receptors within these ranges will be significantly affected, for example tracts of landscape enclosed by forest cover or where screening by landform occurs. Significant effects will, therefore, be contained within a localised area and occur intermittently within that localised area.