

TA 4.9: Wild Land Assessment for East Halladale Flows Wild Land Area (WLA39)

TECHNICAL APPENDIX 4.9: WILD LAND ASSESSMENT FOR EAST HALLADALE FLOWS WILD LAND AREA (WLA 39)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Policy Statement No 02/03 'Wildness in Scotland's Countryside' (the SNH Policy Statement)¹ recognises the concept of wild land or wildness as land that is sensitive to any form of development and provides psychological benefit to those seeking more challenging forms of outdoor recreation. The SNH Policy Statement notes that it is scarce in national terms and has declined in extent over the past few decades. It aims to safeguard the character of these landscapes and protect them from inappropriate development or land use change.
- 1.2 Within the context of this policy, SNH has identified 42 Wild Land Areas (WLAs) considered to represent the most significant areas of wild land character in Scotland. These areas are therefore considered as being of national importance.
- 1.3 WLAs do not constitute designated landscapes but are recognised within the Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)². The SPP identifies WLAs as a Group 2 constraint (Areas of Significant Protection), for inclusion in Spatial Frameworks for Onshore Wind Farms³. Such areas are recognised as requiring significant protection from onshore wind farm development, although wind farms may be appropriate in some circumstances. The SPP states that further consideration is required to demonstrate that any significant effects can be substantially overcome by siting, design or other mitigation.
- 1.4 This assessment considers the potential effects of the Proposed Varied Development on WLA 39: East Halladale Flows⁴. The purpose of the assessment is to analyse the strength of the wild land attributes which contribute to the values of this WLA, the degree to which the Proposed Varied Development could affect these attributes and the resultant effect on the wild land Key Qualities and the integrity of the WLA. The assessment has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects, ASH design + assessment Ltd (ASH) and is supplementary to Chapter 4: Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) (EIAR Volume 2).
- 1.5 The Wild Land Assessment presented in Technical Appendix 4.9 is supported by the following Annexes which are included at the end of this Technical Appendix:
- Annex 1: Representative Photographs of Assessment Locations 1-4;
 - Annex 2: Analysis of Wild land Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses; and
 - Annex 3: Technical Appendix 4.9 Figures. Annex 3: Figures, includes the following:
 - TA Figure 4.9.1: Map of Relative Wildness;
 - TA Figure 4.9.2: Map of Relative Wildness – Jenks 8 Interpretation;
 - TA Figure 4.9.3: SNH Wild Land Attribute Mapping ;
 - TA Figure 4.9.4a: ZTV Overviews: Proposed Varied Development and Strathy North Wind Farm ; and
 - TA Figure 4.9.4b: ZTV Overviews: Baillie Wind Farm and Limekiln Wind Farm.

Wild Land Background

- 1.6 Annex 1 of the SNH Policy Statement¹ identifies five physical attributes which contribute to the experience of wildness and identification of wild land:

¹ Scottish Natural Heritage, (2002), *Wildness in Scotland's Countryside: Policy Statement 02/03*.

² Scottish Government, (2014), Scottish Planning Policy.

³ Scottish Government, (2014), Scottish Planning Policy. Table 1: Group 2 (Areas of significant protection).

⁴ Scottish Natural Heritage, (2017), *WLA 39: East Halladale Flows Wild Land Area Description*.

- A high degree of perceived naturalness in the setting, especially in its vegetation cover and wildlife, and in the natural processes affecting the land;
 - The lack of any modern artefacts or structures;
 - Little evidence of contemporary human uses of the land;
 - Landform which is rugged, or otherwise physically challenging; and
 - Remoteness and/or inaccessibility.
- 1.7 In addition, four perceptual responses are identified as being evoked by those experiencing wild land:
- A sense of sanctuary or solitude;
 - Risk or, for some visitors, a sense of awe or anxiety, depending on the individual's emotional response to the setting;
 - Perceptions that the landscape has arresting or inspiring qualities; and
 - Fulfilment from the physical challenge required to penetrate into these places.
- SNH's Mapping Scotland's Wildness and Wild Land Project*
- 1.8 In 2014, SNH completed a two-phase mapping project to identify areas where the highest degree of wildness is experienced in Scotland and which could be classed as wild land⁵. The two phases to the project comprised:
- Phase 1: Desk- based mapping exercises leading to the production of a Map of Relative Wildness for Scotland; and
 - Phase 2: Identification of WLAs where the highest degree of wildness was found to be experienced.
- MAP OF RELATIVE WILDNESS*
- 1.9 The Map of Relative Wildness⁶ attempts to indicate relative wildness throughout Scotland and indicates the degree of wildness considered to be present on a continuum from Low through to High at a 25 m resolution. This has been compiled through the combined mapping of four individual attributes giving equal weighting to each as follows:
- Perceived naturalness;
 - Rugged or challenging terrain;
 - Remoteness from public mechanised access; and
 - Lack of built modern artefacts.
- 1.10 The Map of Relative Wildness and associated Attribute Mapping have been developed as a desk exercise using GIS software to interrogate and classify a number of datasets leading to an impression of the intensity of each of the physical attributes across Scotland. Whilst this is considered to give a good general impression of the strength of each of the attributes and the potential for the overall degree of wildness in a particular area, there are a number of limitations with this process:
- The analysis is limited to information included in the digital datasets analysed and features which are not mapped have therefore not been considered;
 - Digital datasets can only depict a particular situation at one point in time and any changes taken place since the production of the dataset can therefore not be considered. Therefore, the analysis of 'Absence of Modern Artefacts' considered only wind farms built and mapped at that time. Those consented at the time of production were considered only as footprints and

⁵ Scottish Natural Heritage (2014): *SNH's Mapping of Scotland's Wildness and Wild Land: Non-technical Description of the Methodology*.

⁶ Scottish Natural Heritage, Natural Spaces. Available at: <https://gateway.snh.gov.uk/natural-spaces/> [accessed March 2020]

those built or consented since the production of the mapping in 2014 are not considered at all (changes which have occurred to the baseline since 2014 are discussed in paragraphs 3.7 to 3.14); and

- The perceptual qualities of wild land which lead to its appreciation cannot be accurately mapped by the analysis of physical attributes (*"The appreciation of wildness is a matter of an individual's experience, and their perceptions and preferences for landscapes of this kind. Wildness cannot be captured and measured, but it can be experienced and interpreted by people in many different ways"*⁷). Therefore, the strong presence of the physical attributes can only suggest that the perceptual attributes would be likely to be present. Confirmation of the degree in which the perceptual attributes are present can only be made by site visit and objective analysis. The SNH Policy Statement states that *"to identify wild land... all of the perceptual attributes should be identifiable to some degree."*⁸

WILD LAND AREAS

- 1.11 SNH has identified and mapped 42 WLAs throughout Scotland. These WLAs represent the areas considered to have the highest degree and extent of wild land, meriting safeguarding in the National interest.
- 1.12 The identification of WLAs has involved a review of the Map of Relative Wildness using the Jenks Natural Breaks Optimisation method which divides the data into distinct classes by seeking to reduce the variance within each class and maximise the variance between them. A 'Jenks 8' classification (8 classes) was chosen for analysis of the Map of Relative Wildness data. Review of the Jenks 8 classification informed selection of areas for consideration as WLAs, requiring a sufficient area of contiguous coverage of Jenks 8 Classes 7 and 8, surrounded by a broader expanse of Jenks 8 Classes 5 and 6.
- 1.13 Identification of the defined WLAs has been informed by the following guidelines:
- The areas identified contain around 650 ha+ of Jenks 8 Classes 8 and 7. Areas of wild land will consist of these Classes, with the inclusion of Class 6 and Class 5 where these are part of and contribute to the wild land block as a whole, reflecting that wildness strengthens as you move into or across an area.
 - Account is taken of changes since the baseline data underpinning the Map of Relative Wildness was undertaken, in particular the approval and / or construction of significant developments such as wind farms.
 - Areas can encompass features detracting from wildness (such as isolated estate buildings), but their effect should be localised with relatively limited impact on the wider sense of wildness that can be experienced across the wild land area.
 - Limited areas of lower Jenks Classes may be included within a wild land area where they occur as an isolated feature, interrupt simple boundaries, or fragment otherwise contiguous blocks of wild land (examples include transmission lines and railway lines).
- 1.14 SNH have produced a suite of Wild Land Area Descriptions and identified Key Qualities for each of the 42 WLAs.⁴

2 Methodology

Guidance

- 2.1 In the absence of any finalised, adopted guidance for wild land assessment, the assessment of effects on the WLA has been broadly based on the consultative draft guidance produced by SNH in

⁷ Scottish Natural Heritage, (2002), *Wildness in Scotland's Countryside: Policy Statement 02/03.* paragraph 3.

⁸ Scottish Natural Heritage, (2002), *Wildness in Scotland's Countryside: Policy Statement 02/03.* Annex, paragraph 9.

2017⁹ (the 2017 Guidance) supported by a desk-based analysis of the Map of Relative Wildness and associated attribute mapping in relation to the Proposed Varied Development. Appraisal of the baseline wild land situation and the contribution of individual wild land attributes to the wild land Key Qualities has been undertaken using a methodology adapted from the 2007 SNH Interim Guidance Note¹⁰ (the 2007 Guidance). Consideration has also been given to the methods for landscape assessment outlined in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (Third Edition) (GLVIA3)¹¹.

Structure

- 2.2 The 2017 Guidance⁹ advocates a five-step approach to the assessment of effects on the WLA, broadly in line with GLVIA3¹¹:
- Step 1: Define the study area and scope of the assessment;
 - Step 2: Establish the baseline;
 - Step 3: Assess the sensitivity of the study area;
 - Step 4: Assess the effects; and
 - Step 5: Judgement of the significance of effect.

Step 1: Define the study area and scope of the assessment

- 2.3 The 2017 Guidance⁹ notes that the study area for the wild land assessment should reflect the extent of the likely effects on the WLA, including any cumulative effects. As the East Halladale Flows WLA is entirely within the 45 km study area for the LVIA, it is considered appropriate to consider the whole WLA within the wild land assessment.
- 2.4 The wild land assessment considers the effects of the Proposed Varied Development on:
- The physical and perceptual attributes of wild land;
 - The special qualities of the WLA; and
 - The integrity of the WLA.

Step 2: Establish the Baseline

- 2.5 Establishment of the baseline involves confirmation of the existing wild land qualities of the study area and their contribution to the WLA. This has involved consideration of the degree to which the physical and perceptual attributes of wild land and the identified wild land Key Qualities vary across the WLA and has been established using a combination of desk-based study and site survey. Appraisal of the baseline has considered changes which have occurred directly and indirectly since the 2014 mapping exercises have taken place and anticipated changes to the baseline in the form of consented development.

Desk studies

- 2.6 Desk study has involved review and consideration of the following documents and resources:
- The Map of Relative Wildness and associated attribute mapping from the Mapping Scotland's Wildness project;
 - The 'Non-Technical Description of the Methodology'⁵ for the Mapping Scotland's Wildness project;
 - SNH's Advice to Government¹²;

⁹ Scottish Natural Heritage, (2017), Consultation on Draft Guidance: Assessing impacts on Wild Land Areas – technical guidance.

¹⁰ Scottish Natural Heritage, (2007), *Assessing the Impacts on Wild Land, Interim Guidance Note.*

¹¹ Landscape Institute (LI) / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), (2013), *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition.*

¹² Scottish Natural Heritage, (2014), *Core Areas of Wild Land 2013 Map: Scottish Natural Heritage's Advice to Government.*

- SNH’s Description of East Halladale Flows WLA 39⁴.
- ZTVs for the operational Strathy North and Baillie wind farms, and the consented Limekiln Wind Farm which were not taken into account in the original mapping exercise; and
- Commentary on Wild Land within the Limekiln wind farm PLI Report¹³.

Site Survey

- 2.7 Site survey has been undertaken to verify the findings of the desk-based studies. To obtain a baseline understanding of the site, visits were undertaken by two teams of Chartered Landscape Architects from ASH, between 8th-11th October 2019. Locations within the wild land area were visited and evaluated using a standardised form. Site appraisal considered the strength of the physical and perceptual attributes at each location and the degree to which the identified wild land Key Qualities were found to be present.
- 2.8 Site survey also included travel by train between Forsinard and Scotscalder to review the characteristics of the less accessible south-eastern part of the WLA.

CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL AND PERCEPTUAL ATTRIBUTES

- 2.9 The criteria outlined within the 2007 Guidance were used for identifying the strength of physical attributes as detailed in Table 4.9.1.

Physical Attribute	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Perceived naturalness	Area perceived as generally natural	Majority of area perceived as generally natural.	Some of area perceived as generally natural.	Area is not perceived as generally natural.
Lack of construction or other artefacts	No or minimal perceptible evidence of artefacts	Some artefacts visible but are not prominent.	Some artefacts visible and are prominent.	Several artefacts clearly visible and are prominent.
Evidence of contemporary land uses	Contemporary land use not apparent	Some contemporary land use apparent though not significantly detracting.	Some contemporary land use apparent and locally detracting.	Contemporary land use apparent and detracting.
Rugged or challenging terrain	Rough, tough terrain. Steep ground requiring an appreciable level of fitness to traverse and sturdy footwear. Navigation across this terrain requires high degree of skill.	Appreciable skill in navigation required including in poor visibility, requiring a degree of accuracy. Rough terrain with some steep ground and requiring a degree of fitness and sturdy footwear.	Some rough areas but terrain easy to cross. Only slightly strenuous. Navigation reasonably straight forward with landforms or tracks providing relatively easier to cross terrain.	Easily traversed terrain requiring no navigation skill.
Remoteness and inaccessibility	No roads, tracks or paths. Not key routes available for crossing area.	Some route availability through landform, but no roads, tracks or paths in area.	Few tracks or paths available to traverse area but wider area still relatively inaccessible.	Close to public roads with easily accessed network of paths or tracks.

¹³ Warren, C, and Fleming A, (2018), *Planning and Environmental Appeals Decision, Report by Christopher Warren and Andrew Fleming, reporters appointed by the Scottish Ministers (Case reference: WIN-270-8)*.

- 2.10 The SNH Policy Statement 02/03¹ requires all of the perceptual attributes to be present in order to identify true wild land. The 2007 guidance¹⁰ therefore advocates a method whereby perceptual attributes are identified as being either ‘present’ or ‘not present’. However, in order to more accurately reflect the strength of these attributes and their influence on the degree of wildness, where these attributes have been identified as being ‘present’, this has been broken down into four separate categories as detailed in Table 4.9.2:

Physical Attribute	High	Medium	Low	Not Present
Sense of sanctuary or solitude	Landscape experience provides intense perceptions of sanctuary or solitude and impression of being a long way from developed areas.	Perception of sanctuary or solitude likely to be obtained from most areas but some localised influence of human activity from neighbouring areas.	Perception of sanctuary or solitude may be obtained in some localised pockets but generally not present.	Landscape experience provides very little if any sense of sanctuary or solitude.
Risk, a sense of awe or anxiety	Landscape perceived as having a high degree of potential risk with a level of skill required to maintain safety. Steep cliffs, drops and very rugged terrain are likely to be dominant and risk may be intensified by extreme weather, ice or snow.	Landscape perceived as having a degree of potential risk in some areas. There may be some cliffs or steep drops in some areas or expanses of difficult bog but this is unlikely to be the dominant terrain.	Generally likely to be only a small degree of perceived risk limited to steep slopes, rugged terrain or bog in some areas which can be easily avoided.	No or very little degree of perceived risk.
Arresting or inspiring qualities	Landscape experience arouses intense arresting or inspiring impressions. Landscape perceived as being highly dramatic and very extensive with a high degree of ‘naturalness’.	Landscape experience arouses inspiring or arresting impressions in some areas. Landscape likely to exhibit dramatic or extensive views from some areas with large areas of perceived naturalness.	Landscape generally perceived as having limited arresting or inspiring qualities but some impressive or attractive views may be obtained from some parts.	Landscape perceived as having very little or no arresting or inspiring qualities.
Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Terrain appears complex, rugged or very boggy and difficult to navigate without high degree of skill, or a substantial walk from public roads or paths, leading to a high degree of	Terrain appears fairly rugged with some steep areas, rock outcrops and summits or bogs requiring a level of skill to navigate leading to a moderate degree of	Some physical challenge required to access land although terrain is relatively unchallenging with tracks and paths present and only a few steep slopes, boggy areas or	Little or no physical challenge required to access area.

	exertion and physical challenge.	exertion and physical challenge.	areas of rough topography which are easy to avoid.	

- 2.11 In order to obtain a robust picture of the strength of the various physical and perceptual attributes throughout the WLA, an analysis has been undertaken using the above criteria from a range of locations. Both the locations visited and the journeys undertaken to reach the named locations have been considered in arriving at the conclusions made.
- 2.12 Using the information obtained through analysis at each of the locations, a review has then been undertaken for each of the physical and perceptual attributes across the WLA as a whole.

Strength of Wildness

- 2.13 Based on the strength identified for each of the above criteria an evaluation of strength of wildness has been applied ranging from Low to High as detailed in Table 4.9.3. The individual evaluations at each location have been considered in combination with the information obtained from the desk-based exercises to provide an evaluation of the baseline strength of wildness across the WLA as a whole.

Rating	Description
High	The area has an overriding sense of wildness. It is large scale and remote with little evidence of human influence on the landscape and strong impressions of isolation. It is likely to be difficult to access with a rugged and challenging terrain, inspiring qualities with a considerable sense of awe or risk.
Medium	The area has a generally dominating sense of wildness. It is likely to be large scale and fairly remote although locally influenced by some human interventions or neighbouring land uses. There is likely to be some rugged or challenging terrain with impressive or dramatic views from some areas and a general sense of isolation.
Low	The area has some qualities of wild land but is influenced by human interventions such as tracks, paths and forestry which will be locally dominating. There will be some difficult terrain with a limited degree of risk, but tracks and paths will provide easier routes through the landscape. A sense of solitude or isolation is likely to be experienced in some areas and there may be some expansive or impressive views.

Step 3: Assess the Sensitivity of the Study Area

- 2.14 GLVIA3¹¹ recognises that landscape sensitivity is derived from a combination of two factors:
- Landscape value; and
 - Susceptibility to change.
- 2.15 Given its identification as a WLA, the value of the landscape is recognised as being high. However, susceptibility may change across the WLA depending on the strength of wildness and the degree to which the key qualities are present.
- 2.16 Sensitivity has been evaluated for each of the Key Qualities⁴ rated on a three-point scale. This is transcribed across the WLA area dependant on the degree to which these qualities are present. The criteria for sensitivity are defined as follows:

Rating	Description
High	The WLA Key Quality is strongly present and a highly valued aspect of the WLA assessment location and is very susceptible to change of the type proposed.

Medium	The WLA Key Quality is strongly present and a highly valued aspect of the WLA assessment location but has lower susceptibility to change of the type proposed.
Low	the WLA Key Quality is less strongly present and a less valued aspect of the WLA assessment location and is susceptible to change of the type proposed.

Step 4: Assess the effects (Magnitude of Effect)

- 2.17 Step 4 has involved evaluation of the magnitude of change to each of the physical and perceptual attributes which would result from the addition of the Proposed Varied Development to the baseline. This has fed into a conclusion of the magnitude of effect for each WLA Key Quality across the WLA as a whole.
- 2.18 Criteria for the evaluation of magnitude of change to attributes are specified within the 2007 Guidance¹⁰ as follows:
- High – Total loss or alteration to attribute;
 - Medium – Partial loss or alteration to attribute;
 - Low – Minor loss or alteration to attribute resulting in a change to the baseline; and
 - Negligible – Very minor or no loss to the baseline attribute. The introduction of the development does not change the baseline assessment.
- 2.19 Criteria for the evaluation of magnitude of change to the Key Qualities and the WLA as a whole are adapted from the main LVIA as follows:
- High – where alteration to wild land attributes would cause a notable change in the presence of the Key Quality over an extensive area ranging to a very intensive change over a more limited area;
 - Medium – where alteration to wild land attributes would cause a perceptible change in the presence of the Key Quality over an extensive area ranging to notable change in a localised area;
 - Low – where alteration to wild land attributes would cause a virtually imperceptible change in the presence of the Key Quality over an extensive area or perceptible change in a localised area; and
 - Negligible – where alteration to wild land attributes would cause no discernible change in the presence of the Key Quality.

Step 5: Judgement of the Significance of Effect

- 2.20 A final judgement of predicted significance of effect has been applied based on the identified values for magnitude of effect for each WLA Key Quality against the sensitivity value, taking in to account the strength of wildness across the WLA. Explanation of the effects ratings is described below:
- Major – The Proposed Varied Development would result in total or substantial loss of wild land attributes which contribute a WLA Key Quality and would result in sufficient reduction of strength of wildness to result in an area of high wildness being reduced to low wildness;
 - Moderate – The Proposed Varied Development would result in a partial loss of wild land attributes which contribute a WLA Key Quality and would result in sufficient reduction of strength of wildness to result in an area of high wildness being reduced to medium wildness or an area of medium wildness being reduced to low wildness;
 - Minor – The Proposed Varied Development would result in localised effects to wild land attributes and WLA Key Qualities but would not be sufficient to result in a reduction of the overall strength of wildness value; and

- Negligible – The Proposed Varied Development would result in no discernible effect to the strength of wildness or key WLA qualities.

3 Baseline

East Halladale Flows WLA

- 3.1 The East Halladale Flows WLA is located approximately 8.5 km to the east of the main site covering an area of approximately 159 km² on the boundary between Caithness and Sutherland known as the Flow Country. It is characterised by extensive areas of low-lying peatland and blanket bog and is uninhabited with few tracks or paths entering the area. Limited settlement occurs outside its western and northern sides at Strath Halladale and Reay and there are scattered properties around its south-western edge around Shurray. Forest plantation surrounds the WLA to north, south and east and the railway line forms its boundary on its south-eastern edge. An existing steel lattice overhead line (OHL) defines the boundary of the WLA to the west and north-west.
- 3.2 The WLA can be loosely viewed as two parts separated by a string of lochs: Loch Tuim Ghlais, Loch Torr na Ceàrdaich and Lochan Ealach Beag; and a small hill, Beinn nam Bad Mòr. The two parts defined by this subtle boundary are discussed in this assessment as ‘the north-western section’ and ‘the south-eastern section’ (see TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)).

WLA Key Qualities

- 3.3 The WLA Key Qualities identified by SNH⁴ are:
- An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and few foci:
 - This WLA quality highlights the sense of awe created by the extent of area and openness and simplicity of landscape structure and land cover;
 - The openness of the landscape and exposure to weather conditions are seen to enhance the naturalness of the landscape and perceived sense of risk; and
 - The horizontal character of the landscape reduces appearance of dominant foci, leading to a concentration on foreground elements such as bog pools and mossy vegetation which contributes to the perceived naturalness.
 - A remote, discrete interior, with limited access and a strong sense of solitude:
 - This WLA quality highlights the role of elevated slopes in screening the peatland interior from lower lying human elements outside the WLA leading to a sense of remoteness and sanctuary;
 - The limited number of tracks and paths and difficult boggy ground are seen to discourage visitors and amplify the sense of solitude although views are obtained across the WLA from the railway line; and
 - The sense of solitude is locally reduced by small features such as historic buildings, enclosures and drains which indicate more active management in the past.
 - A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level, despite the landscape’s simple composition at the broad scale:
 - Rough vegetation, bogs, meandering rivers, lochans and pools are seen to contribute to a rugged landscape at a local scale and also the sense of naturalness and physically challenging nature of the landscape; and
 - Difficult navigation due to unseen watercourses and waterbodies, and the rugged, difficult landform are seen to increase the sense of perceived risk.
 - A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible:

- This WLA cites the simplicity of the landscape as leading to a difficulty in perceiving scale and distance which results in the area often appearing more extensive than it actually is. Tall or elevated features appear prominent which increases the influence of human artefacts and contemporary land use and therefore reduces the perceived extent of the area;
- The description notes that the openness of the peat lands and far-reaching views results in distant mountains outwith the area (such as Morven and the Ben Griams) forming key foci and landmarks; and
- Conifer plantations which are prominent due to their contrast of colour, texture and form also diminish some of the qualities of openness as well as perceived naturalness.

Map of Relative Wildness

- 3.4 Within the East Halladale Flows WLA the 2014 Map of Relative Wildness (see TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) shows a fairly high degree of relative wildness throughout with areas of the highest wildness mostly present within an area towards the centre of the north-western section and a few dips and hollows around burns and lochs in other areas. Around the outer edges, particularly the western side adjacent to Strath Halladale, and the northern tip near to Reay, the wildness is shown to be reduced, due to the greater visual influence of land use and built development. Other areas towards the east and through the south-east section show smaller areas of lesser wildness where tracks and isolated buildings are present.

JENKS 8 ANALYSIS

- 3.5 As shown on TA Figure 4.9.2 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3), the most contiguous area of Jenks Classes 7 and 8 are present within a central core area of the north-western section, comprising around 14 km², although Jenks Class 8 comprises only a small part of this at less than 1 km². Smaller areas of Jenks Class 7 and very small areas of Jenks Class 8 are found elsewhere in the WLA, mostly within small hollows around burns and lochs with the next largest area covering Loch Sàinn and Loch Saird in the southern part of the north-western section. Jenks class 7 is scarcer in the south-eastern section. The majority of the WLA is classed as Jenks Class 6 with Jenks Class 5 and 4 fringing the boundaries of the WLA. However, around half of the south-eastern section is indicated as Jenks Class 5. There are only small areas of Jenks Class 3 and 2, mostly along the western edge of the north-western section alongside Strath Halladale and the northern tip near Reay.

ATTRIBUTE MAPPING

- 3.6 The four attribute maps which make up the Map of Relative Wildness are shown on TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3) and discussed further in paragraphs 3.15 to 3.25 below.

Changes to the Baseline

- 3.7 The Map of Relative Wildness depicts a snap-shot picture of the combined physical and perceptual attributes when the study was undertaken in 2014. Since that time, there have been a number of developments which would change this situation, in particular, the 2014 mapping does not take into account wind farms which have been constructed and consented in the intervening years. The baseline for this assessment has taken into account the theoretical visibility of the operational Baillie and Strathy North wind farms. The anticipated effects of the consented Limekiln wind farm have also been considered, but have not been given regard to in ratings and conclusions because this wind farm has not yet been constructed, and therefore does not form part of the current baseline. It is not considered appropriate at this stage to base conclusions of baseline wildness on assumptions regarding a development which is not constructed. Wind farms which are not consented have not been taken into account because it is not reasonable at this stage to anticipate

that they would alter the baseline wildness. These sites are considered in the cumulative landscape assessment (see EIAR Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.6).

- 3.8 ZTVs for the three additional wind farms (Strathy North, Baillie and Limekiln), were produced and overlaid on the Map of Relative Wildness Jenks 8 interpretation and Lack of Modern Artefacts attribute mapping (the attribute under which wind farms have been considered in the SNH Mapping Scotland's Wildness exercise) to ascertain how these developments could affect the baseline (see TA Figure 4.9.4a and TA Figure 4.9.4b (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)).

STRATHY NORTH WIND FARM

- 3.9 The operational Strathy North wind farm is located approximately 7.8 km to the west of WLA 39, as shown on TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3). The ZTV (see TA Figure 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) shows that this site has fairly extensive theoretical visibility across the north-western section of the WLA, other than its most easterly boundary. This affects a large proportion of areas shown as Jenks Classes 6 and 7, including the central wilder core area although has a very small coverage across the small areas of Jenks Class 8 which are present. There are only very small areas of theoretical visibility shown in the south-eastern section of the WLA. This has been taken into account in the analysis of baseline wildness.
- 3.10 The ZTV for Strathy North wind farm covers relatively large areas shown to have a higher degree of the attribute 'Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts', notably across an area in the south of the north-western section around Loch Sàinn and a few areas in the core of the north-western section, although this area has a lower strength of this attribute than review of the Map of Relative Wildness would suggest. It is likely that the strength of this attribute in these areas has been reduced to some degree by the Strathy North wind farm development, although it is typically over 10 km from these higher strength areas. This has been taken into account in the analysis of baseline wildness.

BAILLIE WIND FARM

- 3.11 The operational Baillie wind farm is located just over 6 km to the east of the north-eastern tip of WLA 39, as shown on TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3). The ZTV (see TA Figure 4.9.4b (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) shows that this development is theoretically visible along the north-eastern edge of the WLA and the south-eastern edge, typically up to 2 – 3 km from the WLA boundary. This comprises mostly areas of Jenks Class 5, with some areas of Jenks Classes 4 and 6. However, some smaller areas of theoretical visibility are also shown to affect parts of the core area of highest wildness within the north-western section. This affects some areas of Jenks Class 7 but would have very little effect on areas of Jenks Class 8.
- 3.12 The areas affected show mostly a moderate strength of the attribute 'Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts' with some slightly higher strength areas within the core of the north-western section. There are very few areas shown to be affected where the strength of this attribute is highest. As this development is usually seen in combination with other features of human influence, it is therefore considered that it would result in little alteration to the relative wildness and attribute mapping.

LIMEKILN WIND FARM

- 3.13 The consented Limekiln wind farm is located immediately adjacent to the boundary at the north-east of WLA 39, as shown on TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3). The ZTV (see TA Figure 4.9.4b (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) shows that intervisibility of these wind turbines would be extensive across large parts of the WLA. This would include areas of Jenks Classes 5 and 6 up to around 3 to 4 km from the boundary within the north-

eastern section, and around half of the core wildness area within this section, covering areas of Jenks Class 7, and also most of the areas of Jenks Class 8. The Limekiln turbines would also be theoretically visible across large parts of the south-eastern section, mainly within areas of Jenks Classes 5 and 6.

- 3.14 Most of the areas which would be affected show a moderate degree of the attribute 'Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts' but some areas within the central core area of the north-western section and some dips and hollows closer to the site show a higher degree of this attribute. It is likely that the close proximity of this development would reduce the strength of this attribute in these areas. However, whilst this has been considered in the assessment, it has not been taken into account in the analysis of baseline wildness see paragraph 3.7.

Site Survey

- 3.15 Four locations were evaluated for strength of physical and perceptual attributes as well as the degree to which identified wild land qualities were considered to be present. These included two viewpoints (VPs) identified for the visual assessment and two locations near the western periphery of the WLA which were accessed from Strath Halladale on foot (see TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)).
- Location 1: Smigel Burn, accessed from Strath Halladale at the A897 bridge;
 - Location 2: near Loch Sàinn, accessed from Strath Halladale near Trantlebeg;
 - Location 3: Beinn Ratha, accessed from Reay (VP10); and
 - Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala (VP3) accessed across country from Beinn Ratha.
- 3.16 Representative photographs from each location are presented in Annex 1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9).

Physical Attributes

- 3.17 Analysis of the physical attributes for the above four locations is presented in Annex 2 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9) and summarised below.

PERCEIVED NATURALNESS

- 3.18 The SNH attribute map for 'Perceived Naturalness' (see TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) suggests WLA 39 to have a high degree of perceived naturalness across most of the area. Lower strength of this attribute is limited to areas around the western and north-eastern edges of the north-western section, and an area protruding into the north-western part of the south-eastern section.
- 3.19 Site survey has identified that landcover within the WLA is generally perceived as natural, comprising rough grassland, heather and bog with little sign of management. However, from elevated areas and around the periphery of the WLA, the presence of adjacent landuse and features gives a sense of greater human land use, and therefore less natural seeming landscapes in adjacent areas, which reduces the strength of the attribute to some degree. This analysis is broadly similar to the situation indicated by the SNH attribute mapping.

LACK OF CONSTRUCTION OR OTHER ARTEFACTS

- 3.20 The SNH attribute map for 'Lack of Built Artefacts' (see TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) shows the majority of WLA 39 to have some existing influence of constructed artefacts. The majority of the WLA shows a moderate strength of this attribute but some areas, within the central core of the north-western section and small patches of the south-eastern section, have a higher strength. Areas appearing to have the highest degree of this attribute are limited to a few dips and hollows, with the largest area of around 2 km², around Loch Sàinn in the south of the north-western section. It is likely that this attribute would be slightly reduced in some areas when taking into consideration the wind farm developments which have

been constructed since the mapping exercise was undertaken, as discussed in paragraphs 3.7 to 3.14.

- 3.21 Site survey has identified a similar strength of this attribute to the mapping, being generally moderate but lower towards the periphery of the WLA where other development and features become more prominent, particularly closer to Strath Halladale and Dounreay. However, it is considered that the influence of construction and other artefacts is likely to be slightly greater than that depicted by the mapping within the northern part and core of the north-western section due to the influence of Strathy North and Baillie wind farms. This would be further reduced with the construction of Limekiln wind farm.

EVIDENCE OF CONTEMPORARY LAND USES

- 3.22 There is no SNH attribute map for evidence of contemporary land uses. However, this is broadly covered by the maps for 'Perceived Naturalness' and to some extent 'Lack of Built Artefacts' (see TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)). As 'Perceived Naturalness' is shown as generally high across the WLA (see paragraph 3.18) this suggests that there is little obvious contemporary land use within the WLA as these land uses would be likely to alter the perception of land cover to one that is perceived as being less natural. However, the lower strength of 'Lack of Built Artefacts' across most of the WLA (see paragraph 3.20) suggests that beyond the boundary of the WLA, there is likely to be an influence of features that give a sense of contemporary land use in the wider area.
- 3.23 Site survey has identified this attribute to be variable across the WLA, with a greater strength of the attribute within the central areas, and lesser strength within areas where surrounding forestry and settlement is more evident. However, this is predominantly experienced as far beyond the edges of the WLA with little sense of contemporary land use within its boundaries. This would reduce if the consented Limekiln wind farm were built, as it would be more prominent than other existing adjacent land use features and would give a greater sense of nearby contemporary land use from a greater extent of the WLA.

RUGGED OR CHALLENGING TERRAIN

- 3.24 The SNH attribute map for 'Rugged or Challenging Terrain' (see TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) shows most of WLA 39 to have a low strength of this attribute, with only a small area in Gleann Chorcaill where a burn lies within a steep cut shown to have a high strength. However, site survey suggests that the extensive areas of bog and bog pools in the WLA would increase the strength of this attribute because, although not rugged or steep, the terrain is challenging and navigation although reasonably easy in some drier areas, can be very difficult, taking a long time to cross relatively short distances. Overall, this attribute is considered to be generally Medium across the WLA.

REMOTENESS AND INACCESSIBILITY

- 3.25 The SNH attribute map for 'Remoteness from Roads' (see TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)), shows that the periphery of the WLA is usually close to roads whilst the core is more remote. This is generally upheld by the site surveys although the proximity to the roads of Locations 1 and 2, shown to have a relatively low level of this attribute, is considered to slightly underestimate the difficulties in navigating the boggy terrain without paths.

Perceptual Responses

- 3.26 Annex 2 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 2) provides an analysis of the degree to which each of the perceptual attributes are perceived from, and when accessing, each of the four locations. The overall analysis of the strength of each of the four attributes within the context of the WLA overall is discussed below.

PERCEPTUAL RESPONSES

- 3.27 The site analysis of the perceptual responses found that in general all of these responses are likely to be present to some degree at all of the locations. For the most part, the perceptual responses are considered to be experienced less strongly at Locations 1, 2 and 3 which are closer to the edge of the WLA, and tend to be more strongly felt at Location 4 which is further within the core of the WLA.
- 3.28 Whilst all the perceptual responses are felt to be largely present, "Risk, a Sense of awe or Anxiety" is considered to be less strongly felt due to the low lying, flat terrain, which generally lacks drama. However, some degree of this attribute is felt to be present at all locations due to the very expansive vistas across the undeveloped landscape which may inspire awe, most strongly experienced from Location 4 where there are few existing disrupting features. All the other responses are found to mostly range in strength between Medium – Low and Medium – High. However, a High strength of "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude" was considered to be present within Location 4 due to the expansive distance between this location and any other human activities or development. This also gives this location a Medium to High degree of "Fulfilment from Physical Challenge".

WLA Strength of Wildness

- 3.29 The desk and site survey have identified that physical attributes and perceptual responses are generally present throughout the WLA. However, the strength of these attributes varies across the area, being generally stronger within the centre of the area and lower around the periphery. Overall, the site survey concluded that the majority of the attributes were generally around the medium level, variable between medium to low and medium to high. The lowest degree of physical attributes was identified around Location 3: Beinn Ratha with more moderate strength of these attributes along the Strath Halladale edge at Locations 1 and 2, and a higher degree at Location 4. This is broadly consistent with the SNH attribute mapping (see TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)). However, site survey concluded that there was a slight underestimation of the attributes "Rugged or Challenging Terrain" and "Remoteness and Inaccessibility" due to the lack of relief, as the mapping does not take into account the difficulty in navigating the very wet and boggy ground. This underestimation may lead to a slightly greater strength of wildness across the south-eastern section of the WLA, than is indicated by the Map of Relative Wildness (see TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)).
- 3.30 When reviewing the strength of perceptual attributes, it was found that the lower strength of physical attributes at Location 3 did not necessarily translate into a lower strength of perceptual responses, due to the elevation of this location which is rare within the WLA as a whole and results in a greater overview and perception of the extent of the wider undeveloped landscape, particularly to the south but also to the west. Although Strathy North wind farm is present within this landscape it is relatively distant and is not considered to strongly reduce the strength of perceptual attributes.
- 3.31 Overall, the degree of wildness is considered to be Low within around 1 km of the western and north-eastern edges of the WLA, **Medium** up to around 2.5 km – 3 km from the outer boundary of the WLA and **Medium – High** or **High** within the central core, mostly within the north-western section. Despite the more recent construction of the Strathy North and Baillie wind farms, the Map of Relative Wildness (see TA Figure 4.9.1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) is considered to give a reasonably good depiction of relative wildness across the WLA. However, due to its closer proximity, it is considered that the construction of the consented Limekiln wind farm would lead to a reduction of the strength of wildness within the north-eastern part of the WLA, which would be likely to reduce to Low within around 3 km of the eastern boundary in the north-western section, and Medium within some of the more central areas.

WLA Key Qualities

3.32 Table 4.9.5 summarises the baseline analysis of the key qualities from each of the four locations visited during site survey:

Table 4.9.5: WLA Key Qualities – Baseline Analysis				
Key Quality	An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, 'wide skies' and few foci	A remote, discrete interior, with limited access and a strong sense of solitude	A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level, despite the landscape's simple composition at the broad scale	A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible
Location				
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Present. Notable when looking east towards the main body of the WLA, but OHL towers and Strathy North wind farm provide focus when looking to the west.	Partly present. At this point when journeying into the WLA, this Key Quality starts to become noticeable and the individual is aware of it strengthening if they travel further.	Partly present. Bog pools and burns are notable in this area.	Present. The landscape feels extensive in all directions, though OHL towers and distant turbines of Strathy North wind farm are seen to the west.
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Present. Broad simple landscape, particularly extending to the east.	Partly Present. There is a sense of being on the edge of a wider, remote interior though OHL towers and forestry to the west and south reduce immediate sense of solitude.	Present. Bog, pools and marshy burns make navigation difficult and lead to more complex and difficult local landscape than is perceived from a distance.	Present. Open landscape leads to distorted perception of scale and distance. Small features such as fenceposts and deer on the horizon look larger and further than in reality.
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Partly Present. Key Quality is strongly present looking south over the main body of WLA but distracting features are present in views to north, east and west including Baillie wind farm, Strathy North wind farm (more distant) OHL towers and coastal development.	Not Present. Key quality is not considered to be present at this location. However, the expansive, elevated overview of the wider WLA to the north gives a sense of the remoteness towards the interior of the WLA.	Present. Comprising one of the few rugged hill tops within the WLA but with a very broad overview of the apparently smooth landscapes within the wider WLA and beyond.	Present. Expansive horizontal landscape with distant Ben Griams, Klibreck, and particularly Morven providing distant foci within an apparently undeveloped landscape though features to the north, east and west are more distracting and Strathy North wind farm interrupts the view to Ben Loyal and Ben Hope.

Table 4.9.5: WLA Key Qualities – Baseline Analysis				
Location	Strongly present	Strongly present	Present	Present
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	Surrounding landscape is expansive and horizontal although an abandoned fence provides a nearby focal point	Sense of solitude is strongly present due to the long and difficult walk to reach the location, although nearby old fence provides a sense of historic land use.	Nearby landscape is tussocky and very boggy.	Surrounding landscape is expansive with mountains of Morven, Ben Griams, Klibreck and Ben Loyal / Ben Hope providing focal points. Strathy North wind farm is distant and not distracting.

4 Assessment of Effects

Wild Land Sensitivity

4.1 The sensitivity of each Key Quality has been evaluated at each of the assessment locations in accordance with the criteria in Table 4.9.4, and is summarised in Table 4.9.6.

Table 4.9.6: WLA Key Qualities – Sensitivity				
Key Quality	An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, 'wide skies' and few foci	A remote, discrete interior, with limited access and a strong sense of solitude	A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level, despite the landscape's simple composition at the broad scale	A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible
Location				
Location 1: Smigel Burn	The Key Quality is present and is very susceptible to the introduction of new features such as wind turbines which would form new visual foci. Sensitivity: High	The Key Quality is partly present and is susceptible to direct change of the type proposed but less susceptible to indirect change. Sensitivity: Medium	This Key Quality is partly present but localised landscape composition is considered to be less sensitive to change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: Medium	The Key Quality is present and the open, horizontal landform is considered to be very susceptible to change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: High
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	The Key Quality is present and is very susceptible to the introduction of new features such as wind turbines which would form new visual foci. Sensitivity: High	The Key Quality is partly present and is susceptible to direct change of the type proposed but less susceptible to indirect change. Sensitivity: Medium	The Key Quality is present but localised landscape composition is considered to be less sensitive to change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: Medium	The Key Quality is present and the open, horizontal landform is considered to be very susceptible to change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: High
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	The Key Quality is partly present whilst the landscape to the east and north, and to some extent the	The Key Quality is not present at the location but can be perceived through the extensive views. Where present it is	The Key Quality is present but localised landscape composition is considered to be less sensitive to	The Key Quality is mostly present and considered very susceptible to change of the type proposed, although

	west is less susceptible to change of the type proposed, the southern landscape is very susceptible. Sensitivity: variable Low – High	considered highly susceptible and the indirect influence of the Key Quality on this location is considered to lead to some susceptibility. Sensitivity: Medium	change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: Medium	looking west from this point, the presence of the existing Strathy North wind farm slightly reduces this. Sensitivity: High
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	The Key Quality is strongly present and is considered very susceptible to change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: High	The Key Quality is strongly present and is very susceptible to change of the type proposed in this location. Sensitivity: High	The Key Quality is present, but is considered to be less susceptible to change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: Medium	The key quality is present and is considered to be very susceptible to change of the type proposed. Sensitivity: High

4.2 The sensitivity evaluation has concluded that the Key Qualities of the WLA are generally sensitive to development of the type proposed, and that this sensitivity is fairly consistent throughout the WLA. The sensitivity is therefore considered to be generally High although reduces around the outer boundary. There is slightly less sensitivity for the Key Quality “A remote, discrete interior...” within the locations closer to the WLA boundary (Locations 1, 2 and 3). However, as the sense of this Key Quality is generally perceived from these locations which feel on the cusp of the more remote interior, there is still considered to be Medium sensitivity for this Key Quality at these locations. Overall, the Key Quality “A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level...”⁴ is considered to have a slightly lower sensitivity as the localised landform variation is considered less susceptible to change of the type proposed.

4.3 WLA-wide sensitivity for each of the Key Qualities⁴ is summarised as follows:

- **An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and few foci:** Close to the boundary of the WLA sensitivity is Low but this increases to Medium as height is gained and wider vistas are revealed across the WLA and surrounding context. Continuing towards the heart of the WLA, the sensitivity quickly increases to High as the influence of nearby development such as the adjacent OHL disappears and only the distant turbines of Strathy North wind farm are seen. The transition from Medium to High takes slightly longer in the north where the Strathy North wind farm is slightly closer and more prominent.
- **A remote, discrete interior, with limited access and a strong sense of solitude:** This Key Quality is most sensitive within the core of the WLA. Around the outer boundary sensitivity is Low, but increases to Medium when moving inland as the visual influence of features around the boundary starts to diminish, as demonstrated by Locations 1, 2 and 3 which are considered to lie on this cusp. Moving beyond around 2-3 km from the boundary where landform starts to form containment, it rises to High. This sensitivity would be likely to be lower around the north-east of the WLA if the Limekiln wind farm is built.
- **A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level, despite the landscape’s simple composition at the broad scale:** This Key Quality is generally considered slightly less sensitive than the others as the localised landform and landcover is considered less susceptible to change of the type proposed. However, as the Key Quality is generally present throughout the WLA, other than a few locations where tracks are present or historic land improvements have occurred, sensitivity is considered to be universally Medium.

- **A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible:** This Key Quality is considered highly susceptible to change of the type proposed. In some areas around the boundary, where existing features are already prominent, such as the northern and eastern edges where existing OHL towers are prominent, sensitivity is lower and may be Low or Medium. However, when moving inwards and onto rising ground horizontal vistas open out and distant mountains create foci often with little intervening sign of development or land management leading to a High sensitivity. This Key Quality is slightly lower in northern areas where Strathy North wind farm forms some interruption to the wider view towards Ben Loyal and Ben Hope but this affects only part of an extensive open vista.

Magnitude of Change

Physical and Perceptual Attributes

4.4 Evaluation of magnitude of change to physical attributes and perceptual responses for each of the locations is included in Annex 2 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9) and summarised below.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

4.5 Magnitude of Change for most physical attributes is anticipated to be Negligible or Low as change relating to the Proposed Varied Development would be indirect and therefore, whilst it would be apparent in the western landscape context and could lead to a greater presence of surrounding development, it would not alter the physical qualities within the WLA. As such, it would have only a small influence on attributes such as “Perceived Naturalness” and “Remoteness and Inaccessibility” and no noticeable change to “Rugged or Challenging Terrain”. A greater level of change is anticipated to the attributes “Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts” and “Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses”.

4.6 For “Construction or Other Artefacts”, a Medium magnitude is anticipated for Locations 1, 2 and 3 where the Proposed Varied Development would form a new feature in the western context where few other features are perceived. It would appear larger and therefore closer than the existing Strathy North wind farm, leading to a greater perception of human development within the surrounding area. A slightly lower Medium to Low magnitude is anticipated for Location 3 due to the effects of other development already perceived from this location, albeit within other parts of the context.

4.7 The above changes are also anticipated to lead to an increased perception of contemporary land use within the context, leading to a Medium magnitude of change for Locations 1 and 4 but Low magnitude for Locations 2 and 3 where other contemporary land use is already apparent.

4.8 The above values for magnitude are considered likely to be generally representative of change across the north-western section of the WLA in areas where the Proposed Varied Development would be theoretically visible. Around the outer boundary, the magnitude would be Negligible or Low for all attributes due to the increased influence of development in Strath Halladale and along the north coast including settlement, forest, roads and OHLs. When moving into the WLA, the magnitude of change for “Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts” would increase generally from Low to Medium as the existing influence of these other features is reduced and the Proposed Varied Development starts to appear as a more isolated and prominent feature within the western context. However, it is unlikely that it would increase to a greater level than Medium because, when moving further into the core of the WLA where the strength of attributes is higher, the Proposed Varied Development would start to become more distant, and therefore a less influential part of the wider context. A similar degree of magnitude is anticipated for “Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses” although this is anticipated to have a larger extent of Low magnitude around the north and southern extents of the north-western section where forestry is more influential on the landscape.

4.9 With the even greater distance of the south-eastern section from the Proposed Varied Development and lesser degree of intervisibility, magnitude of change for all the physical attributes is anticipated to be generally lower and therefore would be mostly Negligible or Low for all attributes, but could rise to Medium to Low for “Lack of Built Modern Artefacts” or “Evidence of Contemporary Land Use” in a few areas closer to the heart of the WLA where the attributes are strongest.

PERCEPTUAL RESPONSES

4.10 Changes to perceptual responses are anticipated for all responses except “Fulfilment from Physical Challenge” which would be unchanged by the Proposed Varied Development. The presence of the Proposed Varied Development within the wider context to the west and associated magnitude of changes to “Lack of Built Modern Artefacts” and “Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses” is anticipated to lead to Medium to Low changes on “Arresting or Inspiring Qualities” due to the potential interruption of the surrounding sense of open, undeveloped expansiveness, perceived reduction in scale of the WLA (from Locations 3 and 4 where perception of the wild landscape extending far beyond the edge of the WLA to the west would be reduced) and distraction of focus from the far distant mountains. This also has potential to slightly reduce a sense of awe from some areas leading to a Low magnitude of change to “Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety” experienced from Locations 1, 2 and 4. However, this would be Negligible from Location 3 where this quality is more closely related to the sense of elevation. A Low magnitude of change is also anticipated to “Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude” experienced at Locations 1 and 2 where a somewhat greater impression of surrounding development could be perceived, but this is anticipated to rise to Medium to Low at Location 3 where a High strength of this attribute is considered to be present.

4.11 The magnitude of change for perceptual attributes at the four locations is considered to give an accurate representation for areas where the Proposed Varied Development would be theoretically visible over the WLA as a whole. It is unlikely that there would be any greater magnitude of change in any other locations and therefore all the perceptual responses would remain present following the construction of the Proposed Varied Development. The greatest potential reduction in attribute strength would be to “Arresting or Inspiring Qualities” due to the impact of the Proposed Varied Development on the 360° sense of open expansiveness. As vertical structures within a largely horizontal landscape, the proposed turbines would also have the potential to distract from the focus of the more distant mountains. From the core and towards the east of the WLA, the appearance of the Proposed Varied Development to the west could also reduce the perceived sense of scale as the edge of the WLA is not easily defined from these areas and it appears to stretch across the farther landscapes beyond Strath Halladale. The presence of the Proposed Varied Development would potentially form a visual barrier which would reduce the influence of this western landscape on this perceptual response. This change is likely to be reduced when moving through the south-eastern section as the Proposed Varied Development becomes more distant and intervisible from fewer areas, and the influence of the western landscape on this area is reduced by intervening landform.

Key Qualities

4.12 Magnitude of change on Key Qualities is discussed in Table 4.9.7 to Table 4.9.10 below.

Table 4.9.7: An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and few foci	
Location	Description of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new foci within the western landscape context, recognised by a Medium magnitude of change to Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts. This would lead to a Medium to Low magnitude of change on “Arresting or Inspiring Qualities” and Low magnitude of change to “Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety” and is also anticipated to lead to a Low

Table 4.9.7: An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and few foci	
	magnitude of change on “Perceived Naturalness”. The horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and sense of awe would be retained but would be reduced in the western context.
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new foci within the western landscape, recognised by a Medium magnitude of change to “Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts”. This would lead to a Medium to Low magnitude of change on “Arresting or Inspiring Qualities” and Low magnitude of change to “Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety” but the indirect effect is anticipated to lead to a Negligible magnitude of change on “Perceived Naturalness”. The horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and sense of awe would be retained but would be reduced in the western context.
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new foci within the south-western landscape context but would result in only a Medium to Low magnitude of change to “Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts” due to the influence of other development on this location. This is anticipated to lead to a Medium to Low magnitude of change on “Arresting or Inspiring Qualities” due to the potential distraction from far mountains and apparent reduction in scale of perceived wild landscapes in this direction caused by the barrier effect between the WLA and the landscapes beyond. This is also anticipated to lead to a Low magnitude of change on “Perceived Naturalness”. However, the magnitude of change to “Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety” would be Negligible as the sense of awe relating to the expansive elevated vistas would be retained, as would the horizontal emphasis and ‘wide skies’.
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new foci within the western landscape context which would result in a Medium magnitude of change to “Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts”. This is anticipated to lead to a Medium to Low magnitude of change on “Arresting or Inspiring Qualities” due to the potential distraction from far mountains and apparent reduction in scale of perceived wild landscapes in this direction where an uninterrupted continuation is currently experienced beyond Strath Halladale. This is also anticipated to lead to a Low magnitude of change on “Perceived Naturalness” and would also lead to a Low magnitude of change to “Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety”. The introduction of the Proposed Varied Development as a new focal point in the western vista, and distraction from the far landscapes and distant mountains, is anticipated affect the sense of horizontal openness although the sense of awe and arresting qualities would not be lost.
Magnitude of Change	
This Key Quality recognises the attributes “Perceived Naturalness”, “Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety”, and “Arresting or Inspiring Qualities”. The addition of the Proposed Varied Development to the western landscape context would lead to some interruption of the horizontal emphasis in areas with which it would be intervisible and would form a new focus. From areas on the western edge of the WLA it would form a new man-made artefact to the west, appearing closer and more prominent than Strathy North wind farm and affecting a new part of the context, interrupting the horizontal profile. However, it would be experienced as outwith the WLA. From areas further into the core of the WLA and towards the east where the western landscape beyond Strath Halladale appears as a continuation of the WLA it would form a more noticeable interruption and could diminish the sense of scale of the WLA and distract from the far mountains, leading to a greater focus on man-made artefacts rather than landmarks associated with the natural environment. However, this would be reduced when moving further into the south-eastern section of the WLA where the western context is less influential due to the effects of intervening topography. From all areas it is considered that the horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and sense of awe would be retained but the influence of the western context on this quality would be reduced. Magnitude of change to the perception of this Key Quality is anticipated as follows:	

Table 4.9.7: An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, 'wide skies' and few foci

- Medium, ranging to Medium to Low across parts of the north-western section (mostly within the central core and towards the east) where intervisibility is experienced and the western landscape also forms a continuous context to the WLA and contributes to the sense of a surrounding open, horizontal and undeveloped landscape;
- Low in areas of theoretical visibility around the western and northern edges of the WLA where other features provide a man-made focus and the Proposed Varied Development would be clearly perceived in a separate landscape area to the WLA;
- Low in areas of theoretical visibility where intervening topography inhibits the influence of the western landscape on the immediate character of the WLA (mostly within the south-eastern section and lower lying hollows towards the east of the north-western section); and
- Negligible where no or very little intervisibility of the Proposed Varied Development would be experienced.

Table 4.9.8: A remote, discrete interior, with limited access and a strong sense of solitude

Location	Description of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	This location is considered to be positioned on the cusp of the remote interior but is influenced by some existing development around Strath Halladale including OHL towers and more distantly Strathy North wind farm. The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new man-made features within the western landscape context leading to a Medium magnitude of change on "Lack of Construction and Other Artefacts" and "Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses" but would not lead to direct effects on the WLA and therefore the magnitude of change on "Remoteness and Inaccessibility" would be Negligible. This is anticipated to lead to a Low magnitude of change on "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude". As this Location forms a transition to the remote interior rather than being located within it, the Key Quality would not be directly affected.
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	This location is considered to be positioned on the cusp of the remote interior but is influenced by some existing development around Strath Halladale including properties, OHL towers and more distantly, the Strathy North wind farm. It is also influenced by nearby forest. The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new man-made features within the western landscape context leading to a Medium magnitude of change on "Lack of Construction and Other Artefacts" and Low magnitude of change on "Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses" but would not lead to direct effects on the WLA and therefore the magnitude of change on "Remoteness and Inaccessibility" would be Negligible. This is anticipated to lead to a Negligible magnitude of change on "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude" as other, closer human activities are already perceived. As this Location forms a transition to the remote interior rather than being located within it, the Key Quality would not be directly affected.
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	This location is not located within the remote interior and is influenced by nearby settlement along the north coast and nearby forestry. The Key Quality is therefore considered to be generally not present. Magnitude of change would therefore be Negligible.
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	This location is set within the remote interior and exterior development is considered to have limited influence on it. The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new man-made features within the western landscape context leading to a Medium magnitude of change on "Lack of Construction and Other Artefacts" and "Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses". As there is no perceptible distinction between the WLA and western landscape beyond, the magnitude of change on "Remoteness and Inaccessibility" is anticipated to be Low due to a perception of greater accessibility within the wider but distant context. This is anticipated to lead to a Low - Medium magnitude of change on "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude" as the Proposed Varied Development could appear to bring

Table 4.9.8: A remote, discrete interior, with limited access and a strong sense of solitude

	a sense of developed landscape closer. However, the sense of isolation and feeling of distance from others would remain.
Magnitude of Change	
This Key Quality recognises the attributes "Remoteness and Inaccessibility" and "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude" and is influenced by the attributes "Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts" and "Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses". The addition of the Proposed Varied Development to the western landscape context would lead to an increase in the influence of man-made artefacts and perceived contemporary land use in this area though would affect few areas where existing features are not already apparent. This would have some impact on western edge of the WLA, but would feel generally exterior to the WLA in these areas. These areas also less strongly represent the remote, discrete interior. There would be a slightly greater influence on this Key Quality within the more remote central core of the north-western section where the western landscapes are seen more continuously as part of the WLA. However, the Proposed Varied Development would still appear far from these areas and a sense of remoteness and solitude would therefore remain. Further from the Proposed Varied Development, into the south-eastern section of the WLA, the western landscapes are less apparent due to intervening topography. Whilst the Proposed Varied Development could appear as a new man-made artefact from a few areas, it would appear relatively distant and therefore would be unlikely to lead to any significant effect on the sense of solitude.	
Magnitude of change to the perception of this Key Quality is anticipated as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium to Low where theoretically visible within the most remote parts of the central core of the north-western section where the western landscapes are seen more continuously as part of the WLA; • Low within areas within parts of the north-western section and south-eastern section featuring theoretical visibility, which are slightly less remote (closer to the edges of the WLA or tracks), but have limited influence of adjacent contemporary land use or features; and • Negligible in all other areas. 	

Table 4.9.9: A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level, despite the landscape's simple composition at the broad scale

Location	Description of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	The Proposed Varied Development would be outwith the WLA and would not alter the ground conditions. A Negligible magnitude of change on "Perceived Naturalness" and "Rugged or Challenging Terrain" is therefore anticipated. A Low magnitude of change is anticipated to "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety" but this is associated with the sense of awe. No change to the sense of risk is anticipated.
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	The Proposed Varied Development would be outwith the WLA and would not alter the ground conditions. A Negligible magnitude of change on "Perceived Naturalness" and "Rugged or Challenging Terrain" is therefore anticipated. A Low magnitude of change is anticipated to "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety" but this is associated with the sense of awe. No change to the sense of risk is anticipated.
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	The Proposed Varied Development would be outwith the WLA and would not alter the ground conditions. However, a Low magnitude of change is anticipated for this location to "Perceived Naturalness" as there is little distinction between the WLA and the wider landscape to the south-west which would be directly affected. However, this would not lead to any perceived change on the perception of the local landform. The magnitude of change for "Rugged or Challenging Terrain" and "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety" is anticipated to be Negligible.
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	The Proposed Varied Development would be outwith the WLA and would not alter the ground conditions. A Negligible magnitude of change on "Rugged or Challenging Terrain" is therefore anticipated. However, a Low magnitude of change is anticipated for this location to "Perceived Naturalness" as there is no visual distinction between the WLA and the wider landscape to the west which

Table 4.9.9: A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level, despite the landscape's simple composition at the broad scale	
	would be directly affected. However, this would not lead to any perceived change on the perception of the local landform. A Low magnitude of change is also anticipated to "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety" but this is associated with the sense of awe. No change to the sense of risk is anticipated.
Magnitude of Change	
This Key Quality recognises the attributes "Perceived Naturalness" and "Rugged and Challenging Terrain" and "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety". As the Proposed Varied Development would not be within the WLA and would not directly affect it, there would be no change to the rugged and / or challenging nature of the landform. This would also result in no change to the sense of risk or anxiety (sense of awe is not considered relevant to this Key Quality). A Low magnitude of change has been identified for "Perceived Naturalness" for locations towards the east of the WLA and within the core due to the perceived continuation of the WLA landscape beyond Strath Halladale to the west where the Proposed Varied Development would be sited. However, this would not affect the appreciation of the terrain at the local level.	

Table 4.9.10: A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible	
Location	Description of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	The Proposed Varied Development within the western context is anticipated to lead to a Medium magnitude of change on "Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts" and "Evidence of Contemporary Land Use" as it would form a new focus which would be more prominent than other existing features and affect a previously undeveloped part of the context. This could distract focus from the distant mountains of Ben Loyal and the Ben Griams and could reduce the perceived sense of distance but this change would be experienced as external to the WLA. This is anticipated to lead to a Negligible magnitude of change on "Perceived Naturalness". A Low magnitude of change to "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety" and a Medium to Low magnitude of change to "Arresting or Inspiring Qualities". This Key Quality could therefore be slightly reduced when considering the western context, but would remain intact across the WLA from this location.
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	The Proposed Varied Development within the western context is anticipated to lead to a Medium magnitude of change on "Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts" but a Low magnitude of change on "Evidence of Contemporary Land Use" due to the increased influence of forestry on this location. This is anticipated to lead to a Negligible magnitude of change on "Perceived Naturalness". A Low magnitude of change to "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety" and a Medium to Low magnitude of change to "Arresting or Inspiring Qualities" is anticipated due to the interruption to the surrounding sense of expansiveness and the distraction of focus away from Ben Loyal which could reduce the perceived sense of distance. This Key Quality could therefore be slightly reduced when considering the western context, but would remain intact across the WLA from this location.
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	The Proposed Varied Development is anticipated to lead to a Medium to Low magnitude of change on "Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts" and a Low magnitude of change on "Evidence of Contemporary Land Use" at this location. It would form a new focus within the south-western context and could draw attention away from some of the more distant mountains in this direction, creating a change to a man-made focus, rather than a natural landmark. There is little clear distinction between the WLA and the more distant context in this direction and therefore the sense of distance could be slightly diminished though the expansiveness across the WLA to the south would be maintained. These changes are anticipated to lead to a Low magnitude of change on "Perceived Naturalness" but a Negligible magnitude of change to "Risk, a Sense of Awe or

Table 4.9.10: A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible	
	Anxiety" and "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude" as the sense of elevation and expansiveness which gives these qualities would remain. However, a Medium to Low magnitude of change is anticipated to "Arresting or Inspiring Qualities" due to the new man made focus within the wider landscape and partially reduced sense of scale. Nevertheless, the sense of openness and extensive visibility of the Key Quality would remain.
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	The Proposed Varied Development is anticipated to lead to a Medium magnitude of change on "Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts" and "Evidence of Contemporary Land Use". It would form a new focus within the western context and could draw focus away from some of the more distant mountains in this direction, creating a change to a man-made focus, rather than a natural landmark. The extent of the WLA in this direction is enhanced as there is no clear distinction between it and the more distant context. This extent would therefore be diminished somewhat in this direction. These changes are anticipated to lead to a Low magnitude of change on "Perceived Naturalness" and "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety" and a Medium to Low magnitude of change to "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude" and "Arresting or Inspiring Qualities". However, the sense of openness and extensive visibility would remain present as the Proposed Varied Development would still be relatively remote from the location.
Magnitude of Change	
This Key Quality recognises the attributes "Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts", "Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses", "Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety", "Arresting or Inspiring Qualities" and to some extent, "Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude" and "Perceived Naturalness".	
The addition of the Proposed Varied Development to the western context would lead to an increase in the influence of man-made artefacts and perceived contemporary land use. From areas closer to the western edge of the WLA, this would lead to new vertical foci within this context, which could draw attention away from distant mountains. However, in these areas the changed landscape would appear external to the WLA so the perceived extent of the WLA would not be altered. From some areas further towards the core of the north-western area and more eastern parts, the WLA appears more extensive to the west as there is no clear definition between the WLA and the western context. The appearance of the Proposed Varied Development in this context could appear to diminish the perceived scale of the WLA and divert focus from the far mountains. However, in other directions, particularly to the south, this sense of expansiveness would not be affected.	
Further from the Proposed Varied Development, into the south-eastern section of the WLA, the western landscapes are less apparent due to intervening topography and therefore have less influence on the sense of scale. The magnitude would be less, as there are fewer areas of intervisibility and the Proposed Varied Development would appear more distant. However, it could still form a new visual focus within part of the context where seen.	
Magnitude of change to the perception of this Key Quality is anticipated as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium where theoretically visible within parts of the central core of the north-western section and south-eastern section, where the western landscape context is perceived as a continuation of the WLA; • Medium to Low where theoretically visible within areas towards the west of the WLA where existing features are not prominent and the Proposed Varied Development would interrupt the focus of the western mountains but the major extent of the WLA is to the east; • Low within areas towards the east of the WLA where the western landscape is less apparent but the Proposed Varied Development turbines would be theoretically visible but more distant (mostly within the south-eastern section and potentially a few hollows to the east of the north-western section); and • Negligible within areas where theoretically visible around the boundary where existing features such as OHL towers and turbines of Strathy North and Baillie wind farms are already prominent, and all areas with no or very limited theoretical visibility. 	

Significance of Effects*Effects on Key Qualities*

- 4.13 The Proposed Varied Development would be present within the western context of the WLA. It would appear larger and closer than Strathy North wind farm and would usually be seen to affect a new part of the context where little perceived contemporary land use or development is present. In some areas towards the centre of the WLA and towards the east of the north-western section, there is a perceived continuation of the WLA across these landscapes, and the Proposed Varied Development would therefore interrupt this. This has the potential to lead to a reduction in perceived scale and to distract focus from far mountains to the west, diverting this to the man-made structures of the turbines. A magnitude of effect ranging from Medium to Medium to Low on the Key Qualities *“An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and few foci”* and *“A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible”* is anticipated in areas where this effect would be experienced. These Key Qualities are considered to have a High sensitivity to change within this part of the WLA and therefore a localised predicted significant effect.
- 4.14 The appearance of the proposed wind turbines within this part of the context and reduction in perceived scale of the WLA for some areas is also anticipated to affect the Key Quality *“A remote, discrete interior, with limited access and a strong sense of solitude”* to some extent. The sensitivity of this Key Quality is considered to be High within these parts of the WLA, and magnitude is anticipated to be generally Medium to Low or Low. However, the Proposed Varied Development would still appear remote from this area and it is considered that the qualities of remoteness and solitude would still be felt. The effect on this Key Quality is therefore predicted to be not significant.
- 4.15 In areas towards the western and northern boundaries, and further to the east within the south-eastern section, the effect is considered to be less. These areas, particularly the western and northern boundary areas, have a lower sensitivity due to increased influence of existing features and contemporary land use. The western landscape is also less influential on these areas: in the west and north it is seen as more a part of the surrounding context and less associated with the WLA and therefore the effect would be seen as more indirect; to the east, intervening landform starts to interrupt the view towards this area and therefore it does not appear to increase the extent of the WLA in the same way. However, in these areas the Proposed Varied Development would introduce a new man-made focus and could still lead to a distraction within some views. Sensitivity is considered to be generally Low or Medium within these areas and magnitude would be generally Negligible or Low. Significant effects are not predicted to extend to these areas.
- 4.16 No notable effect is predicted to the Key Quality *“A rugged and complex pattern of hidden burns, lochans and pools at the local level, despite the landscape’s simple composition at the broad scale”* as there would be no direct change to the landform within the WLA.
- 4.17 The above effects would occur only within parts of the WLA where intervisibility would be obtained. For all Key Qualities, there would be large parts of the WLA where the Key Qualities would be unaffected by the Proposed Varied Development. In areas where theoretical visibility would occur, it is considered that, though there could be some effects, all Key Qualities would remain present in areas where they are already experienced.

Effects on Strength of Wildness

- 4.18 Predicted localised significant effects to the Key Qualities of *“An awe-inspiring simplicity of landscape at the broad scale, with strong horizontal emphasis, ‘wide skies’ and few foci”* and *“A remarkably open landscape with extensive visibility, meaning tall or high features in the distance are clearly visible”* within central parts of the WLA and areas towards the east of the north-western

section (where the strength of wildness is generally High), along with other changes to Key Qualities which are not anticipated to be significant on their own are predicted to lead to a locally Moderate and significant effect to the strength of wildness in these areas. Beyond this area, towards the northern and western boundary areas, within approximately 3 km of the WLA boundary where strength of wildness is considered to be Low or Medium, the effect would be **Minor** and not significant. Within the south eastern section, whilst the Proposed Varied Development would form some new focus within the western context, the effect is predicted to be **Minor** or **Minor - Moderate** due to the generally reduced strength of wildness in this area, and the greater distance from the Proposed Varied Development. The transition would be gradual.

- 4.19 The significant effects would be relatively localised with over half of the WLA completely unaffected by the Proposed Varied Development and it is considered that all the Key Qualities would remain intact.

Integrity of the WLA

- 4.20 Analysis of the ZTV in relation to the Jenks 8 interpretation of the Map of Relative Wildness (see Figure TA 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) shows that some areas of Jenks Class 7 and Jenks Class 8 would be theoretically affected. These are the classifications which are given greatest priority in identification of WLAs. The areas affected are located within the central core area of the north-western section, around Loch Sàinn and near Glen Urlan to the west of the south-eastern section. Most of the areas of Jenks Class 7 are already affected by either Strathy North or Baillie wind farms which were built subsequent to the SNH mapping being undertaken (see TA Figures 4.9.4a and 4.9.4b (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)). However, a few small areas of Jenks Class 8 near Gleann Chorcaill in the north-west section and a very small area near Loch Sàinn would be affected which are not affected by these developments. Around half of areas of Jenks Class 7 and Jenks Class 8 would remain unaffected.
- 4.21 The predicted significant effects to Key Qualities and relative wildness would occur within some of the areas of Jenks Class 7 and 8 in the core of the north-western section, but are considered less likely in the area around Loch Sàinn which is within a more enclosed dip, and in Jenks Class 7 areas in the south eastern section.
- 4.22 The effects of wind farms were considered in the Mapping Scotland’s Wildness project within the ‘Lack of Modern Artefacts’ Attribute Mapping. When reviewing the ZTV against the ‘Lack of Modern Artefacts’ map (see Figure TA 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) the areas within the Jenks Classes 7 and 8 in the north-western section central core are less strong although the area around Loch Sàinn is higher. The contribution of ‘Lack of Modern Artefacts’ to the Map of Relative Wildness is therefore assumed to be lower in the central core than that of ‘Perceived Naturalness’ and ‘Remoteness’ (see TA Figure 4.9.3 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3)) which show much higher levels, although a higher contribution is likely for the Loch Sàinn area. Taking this into account, the addition of the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development to the ‘Lack of Modern Artefacts’ map would be assumed to further reduce the strength of ‘Lack of Modern Artefacts’ to some degree in these areas. However, whilst this is considered likely to have some influence on the Map of Relative Wildness and Jenks 8 classification for the Loch Sàinn area, a much more limited influence on the north-western core area is anticipated where ‘Perceived Wildness’ and ‘Remoteness’ are the attributes providing the greater contribution to the higher classification. Therefore, whilst it is anticipated that small areas of Jenks class 8 within the western core, and Jenks class 7 in the western core and around Loch Sàinn, could show reduced wildness, this is considered unlikely to lead to sufficient change to the Jenks 8 classification which would affect the identification of a WLA in this area.

Conclusion

- 4.23 It is concluded that, whilst limited significant effects would be likely to the strength of wildness and the strength of some of the Key Qualities within the WLA, as a result of the Proposed Varied Development, the integrity of the WLA would not be affected. All of the physical and perceptual attributes of wild land would still be present, and all of the Key Qualities would still be experienced, albeit to a somewhat reduced degree in some areas.

ANNEX 1: REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS OF ASSESSMENT LOCATIONS 1-4**WLA Assessment Location 1: Smigel Burn**

View North



View East

WLA Assessment Location 1: Smigel Burn



View South



View West

WLA Assessment Location 2: near Loch Sàinn



View North



View East

WLA Assessment Location 2: near Loch Sàinn



View South



View West

WLA Assessment Location 3: Beinn Ratha



View North



View East

WLA Assessment Location 3: Beinn Ratha



View South



View West

WLA Assessment Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala



View North



View East

WLA Assessment Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala



View South



View West

ANNEX 2: ANALYSIS OF WILD LAND PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES AND PERCEPTUAL RESPONSES

- 1.1 This Annex provides a detailed evaluation of the strength of wild land physical attributes and perceptual responses at each wild land assessment location and the anticipated magnitude of change at each location in accordance with the criteria in Section 2 of Technical Appendix 4.9: Wild Land Assessment of East Halladale Flows Wild Land Area (WLA39).
- 1.2 The physical attributes of wild land are identified in Annex 1 of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Policy Statement No 02/03 'Wildness in Scotland's Countryside' (the SNH Policy Statement) as:
 - A high degree of perceived naturalness in the setting, especially in its vegetation cover and wildlife, and in the natural processes affecting the land;
 - The lack of any modern artefacts or structures;
 - Little evidence of contemporary human uses of the land;
 - Landform which is rugged, or otherwise physically challenging; and
 - Remoteness and / or inaccessibility.
- 1.3 The perceptual responses are:
 - A sense of sanctuary or solitude;
 - Risk or, for some visitors, a sense of awe or anxiety, depending on the individual's emotional response to the setting;
 - Perceptions that the landscape has arresting or inspiring qualities; and
 - Fulfilment from the physical challenge required to penetrate into these places.

Physical Attributes

Table 4.9.2.1: Perceived Naturalness (see TA Figure 4.9.3 and 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3), and Annex 1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9))

Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Landcover comprises bog, moorland and heather and feels generally natural although the visible presence of overhead transmission towers and wind turbines to the east gives a sense of less naturalness in the wider area. Medium to High	The Proposed Varied Development would be in the near to middle distance to the east. The proximity of the development could lead to a decreased perception of naturalness within the wider context to the west but would not alter the perceived naturalness of the WLA to the east. Negligible
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Landcover comprises heather, bog and moorland which continues extensively to the north and west, although there is some evidence of historical improved pastureland. Nearby forest plantation is evident to the south and reduces sense of perceived naturalness to some degree. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would be in the near to middle distance to the west. The proximity of the Proposed Varied Development could lead to a decreased perception of naturalness within the wider context to the west but would not alter the perceived naturalness of the WLA to the east. Negligible
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Ground cover comprises rough grasses and heather. To the south, looking across the WLA, the extensive landscape seen appears predominantly natural heather moorland, but farmed areas, settlement and other development can be seen to the east and	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the land cover within the WLA perceived from this area. However, it would be seen across the north-western part of the WLA and could lead to a decreased perception of naturalness within the farther

Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
	north-west, and nearby forest plantation to the west appears less natural. The Limekiln wind farm within this forest would further reduce the strength of the attribute in this location, although the extensive landscape seen to the south would remain seemingly natural. Medium to Low	undeveloped landscape beyond Strath Halladale which merges with the WLA somewhat within this context. Low
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	Landcover comprises bog, moorland and heather and perceived as generally natural. Although wind turbines seen in the distant landscape may suggest less natural areas beyond, this has only a small effect on the wider perception of a natural landscape within the WLA perceived from this location. High	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the land cover within the WLA perceived from this area. However, it would be seen across the north-western part of the WLA, larger and likely to be perceived as closer than the operational Strathy North wind farm and could lead to an increase in perceived human intervention and consequently a decreased perception of naturalness within the farther landscape which merges with the WLA. This could lead to some reduction in this attribute as there is no obvious distinction between the WLA and the existing undeveloped landscape beyond. Low

Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Transmission towers of an overhead line and distant turbines of Strathy North wind farm are visible in the landscape to the east, but there are no features within the local vicinity or seen in other directions. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would appear in the western landscape context leading to a greater part of this context being occupied by human artefacts. The turbines would appear larger than those of Strathy North wind farm and likely to appear to bring this type of development closer to the WLA. Although this would be within a part of the wider context where some artefacts are already perceived, the increase in the perception of nearby development within this area would lead to some reduction in the strength of this attribute. However, the experience overlooking the WLA would not be affected. Medium
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Some evidence of onsite drainage and a small bridge are present around the vicinity and when viewing across the WLA but are not prominent. In the wider landscape to the west, the distant turbines of Strathy North wind farm are evident. Closer to the WLA, transmission towers, houses and	The Proposed Varied Development would appear in the western landscape context leading to a greater part of this context being occupied by human artefacts. The turbines of the Proposed Varied Development would appear larger than those of Strathy North wind farm and likely to appear to bring this type of development closer to the WLA. Although this is outwith the WLA and there

Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
	other features in Strath Halladale can be seen. Medium	are a few artefacts already perceived in this context, the appearance of human development would be increased and would reduce the strength of this attribute experienced from this location. However, the experience overlooking the WLA would not be affected. Medium
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Extensive development along the north coast is visible from this VP, including the Dounreay industrial site to the north-west. There are also overhead transmission towers close to the VP to the north and west. To the east, turbines of Baillie wind farm are present. These would be joined at close proximity by the consented Limekiln wind farm turbines, if built. Views to the south through the main body of the WLA have no built artefacts but this location is heavily influenced by the other features nearby. Low	The Proposed Varied Development would appear within the western context. Existing artefacts are already seen from this location to east, north and west but the Proposed Varied Development would increase the part of the surroundings effected. As the Proposed Varied Development turbines would be larger than Strathy North wind farm turbines, they would be likely to appear closer within an area where there is little distinction between the WLA and currently undeveloped landscapes beyond. This could reduce the perceived scale of the WLA to the west. The expansive southerly view would remain largely undeveloped. Medium to Low
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	Remains of an old fence are close to the VP location but are not prominent. To the south, extensive stretches of land have no contemporary features. However, the turbines of Strathy North wind farm are seen to the east. Although distant, and not distracting, they are seen across the WLA and therefore reduce the strength of the attribute within this part of the WLA when seen from this location. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would appear within the context to the west. Whilst Strathy North wind farm is apparent in this context, the Proposed Varied Development would be larger and therefore likely to appear closer. It would be located further to the south and would therefore increase the extent of the context affected within an area where little existing development is apparent and there is not obvious distinction of the extent of the WLA. This could therefore have an impression of reducing the scale of the WLA. Medium

Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Contemporary land use is not strongly evident in the local area within the WLA although presence of overhead line transmission towers and the more distant Strathy North wind farm give a sense of contemporary land use within the wider landscape to the west. Medium to High	Located within the western context, the Proposed Varied Development would appear larger and therefore closer than Strathy North wind farm and would lead to a greater perception of contemporary land use in the wider context, although there would continue to be no apparent contemporary land use within the WLA to the east. Medium

Table 4.9.2.3: Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses (see Figure 4.9.3 and 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3) and Annex 1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9))

Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Forest is present at relatively close proximity to the south, although becomes screened if moving downhill. Some contemporary land uses and a few properties can be seen in Strath Halladale along with a few towers of an overhead transmission line. More distantly to the west, Strathy North wind farm, and to the south-west areas of forest, are evident giving some impression of contemporary land uses in the surrounding area. However, to the east, there is little evidence of contemporary land use other than a few localised areas of historical drainage and improvement and a small footbridge. Medium to Low	Located within the western context, the Proposed Varied Development would appear larger and therefore closer than Strathy North wind farm and would lead to a greater perception of contemporary land use in this part of the wider context. However, the appearance of nearby forest already shows some contemporary land use in this wider area and there would continue to be no apparent contemporary land use within the WLA to the east. Low
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Contemporary land use is very apparent seen along the north coast to the east and northwest, including settlement, farmed land and forest. Forest is also seen in the wider landscape to the south-west. Forest plantation close-by to the east also gives some impression of a managed landscape. This impression would be significantly increased with the construction of the consented Limekiln wind farm if built. To the south, looking across the WLA, there is no obvious contemporary land use apparent. A hill race takes place here annually which may temporarily lead to more immediate contemporary land use. Low	The Proposed Varied Development would introduce new contemporary land use to the south-western context seen over and beyond the WLA. Although features such as Strathy North wind farm and a few forest plantations are apparent in these areas, the Proposed Varied Development would appear larger and more prominent. However, this is a location where contemporary land use is already experienced in other parts of the view and the southern vista across the WLA would not be affected. Low
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	The distant Strathy North wind farm gives some sense of contemporary land use in far landscapes but the immediate and surrounding landscape has little evidence of contemporary land use other than the remains of an old fence which appear long abandoned. Medium to High	The Proposed Varied Development would feature in the western context. Although Strathy North wind farm is already nearby in this wider area, the Proposed Varied Development would appear larger and closer and would interrupt a more distant vista where very little contemporary land use is perceived. Although outwith the WLA, there is no clear definition of the edge of the WLA seen in this direction from this location. Medium

Table 4.9.2.4: Rugged or Challenging Terrain (see TA Figure 4.9.3 and 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3) and Annex 1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9))

Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Ground is not rugged but boggy ground is difficult to traverse requiring good fitness and boots. Further penetration into the WLA from this point would require a good	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the challenging nature of the terrain.

Table 4.9.2.4: Rugged or Challenging Terrain (see TA Figure 4.9.3 and 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3) and Annex 1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9))

	ability to navigate as there are few focal features. Medium	Negligible
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Flat to rolling terrain but wet bog is difficult to cross with marshy burns and bog pools which require care in navigation. Further penetration into the WLA from this point would need a good ability to navigate as there are few focal features. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the challenging nature of the terrain. Negligible
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Some rugged and rocky terrain associated with hill summits and bog on lower areas. Navigation is reasonably straight forward but walking is strenuous and appropriate footwear is required. A hill race takes place here annually leading to a larger number of people accessing the area temporarily, but it requires a substantial level of fitness. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the challenging nature of the terrain. Negligible
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	Low rolling terrain but with extensive surrounding bog which is difficult to traverse. Low terrain, bog and lack of focal points make navigation difficult. Medium to High	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the challenging nature of the terrain. Negligible

Table 4.9.2.5: Remoteness and Inaccessibility (see TA Figure 4.9.3 and 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3) and Annex 1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9))

Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Ground is not rugged but boggy ground is difficult to traverse. Relatively close to the public road with some route availability alongside the burn. There are no paths. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the remoteness or inaccessibility although could lead to a limited impression of greater accessibility within the wider context to the west. Negligible
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Flat to rolling terrain but wet bog is difficult to cross. Although close to the public road and relatively accessible, walking is difficult due to the wet terrain, lochs and bog pools and greater time is required to access the area than is suggested by the distance from the public road. There are no paths. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the remoteness or inaccessibility although it could lead to a limited impression of greater accessibility within the wider context to the west. Negligible
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	A path is present for part of the route and navigation is relatively easy but there is no path to the VP, and the wider area shows no paths or tracks. A hill race takes place here annually which may lead to some evidence of a more used route on a temporary basis.	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the remoteness or inaccessibility of this location but could lead to a perception of greater accessibility within the wider context to the west and there is little clear distinction between the WLA and this western landscape.

Table 4.9.2.5: Remoteness and Inaccessibility (see TA Figure 4.9.3 and 4.9.4a (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9, Annex 3) and Annex 1 (EIAR Volume 4, Technical Appendix 4.9))		
	Low to Medium	Low
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	Low rolling terrain with extensive surrounding bog which is difficult to traverse. No paths or tracks are present in the surrounding area and the location of this VP is far from any established routes, requiring a substantial cross country walk.	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the remoteness or inaccessibility of this location but could lead to a perception of greater accessibility within the wider context to the west and there is little clear distinction between the WLA and this western landscape.
	High	Low

Perceptual Responses

Table 4.9.2.6: Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude		
Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Feeling of remoteness leads to a sense of solitude, but an awareness of nearby development is present, due to the appearance of the tops of steel lattice towers in Strath Halladale and the more distant Strathly North wind farm.	The Proposed Varied Development could appear to bring human development closer with in the remote western landscape and could lead to a slightly reduction in sense of solitude for some. However, it would be more distant than other features such as the tops of steel lattice towers in Strath Halladale and therefore the general sense of solitude which is present is likely to remain.
	Medium	Low
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	A sense of remoteness is present due to the expansive surrounding bog areas which are seen to the east. However, the tops of OHL towers to the west, settlement within Strath Halladale and nearby forestry and more distant Strathly North wind farm give some sense of the presence of surrounding development.	The Proposed Varied Development could appear to bring human development closer within the remote western landscape. However, other features such as forest, housing and steel lattice towers would be closer and more influential. The general sense of solitude which is present is therefore likely to remain unaffected.
	Medium to Low	Negligible
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	This is an elevated location with far reaching views. Effort required to get to the location gives some sense of solitude and being far from others, but surrounding development seen nearby ensures that surrounding presence of others is usually perceived. The consented Limekiln wind farm if built could slightly reduce this perceptual response by creating a closer man-made focus to the east. A hill race which takes place here annually may lead to a temporary decrease in the sense of solitude due to the numbers of people which may be present.	The Proposed Varied Development could appear to bring development closer within the south-western context and would increase the surrounding context affected by development. However, the sense of elevation and far reaching views which separate this location from existing surrounding developed areas would not be affected and therefore the sense of solitude is considered unlikely to be noticeably reduced.
	Medium	Negligible
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	Distance and effort required to reach this location along with surrounding expansive views with little development perceived gives strong sense of solitude. Although	The Proposed Varied Development would be seen in the western context from this location and would appear somewhat larger and closer than Strathly North wind farm.

Table 4.9.2.6: Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude		
	Strathly North wind farm is seen, it is distant and feels very remote from this location.	This could bring a sense of wider development slightly closer and lead to a small reduction in the attribute. However, the sense of isolation and feeling of distance from others would remain, as the Proposed Varied Development would still appear to be far away.
	High	Low to Medium

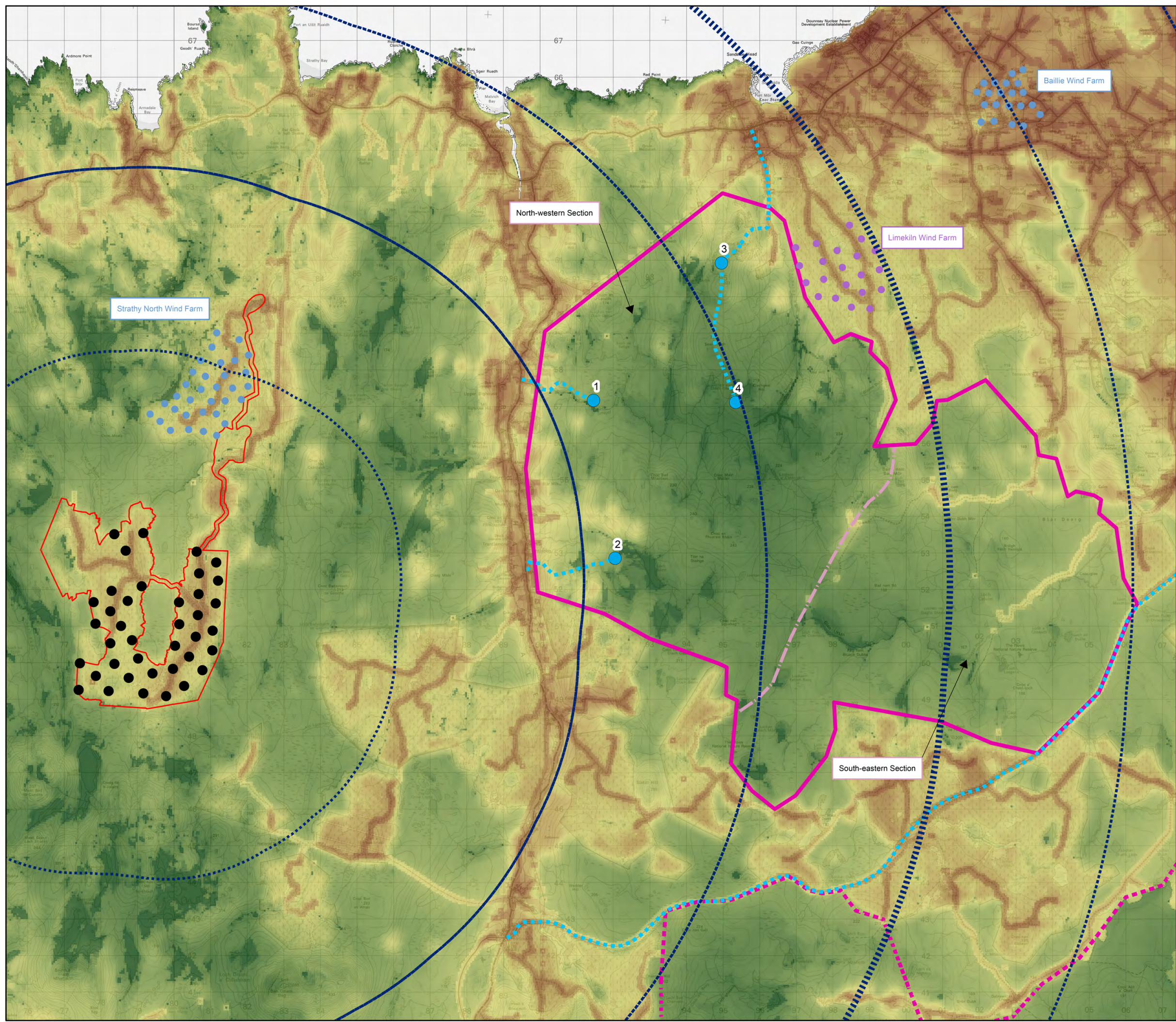
Table 4.9.2.7: Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety		
Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Very limited sense of risk due generally to the perceived proximity to nearby public road and houses. Areas of bog could give a slight sense of anxiety when navigating the landscape. However, the very wide and expansive landscape can give a sense of awe.	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the sense of risk or anxiety. Its presence in the western landscape would lead to an interruption of the expansive surroundings but a sense of awe would be retained.
	Low	Low
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Boggy ground which is difficult to walk through and bog pools give some sense of risk or anxiety but generally limited due to perceived proximity to nearby public road and houses. The surrounding expansive landscape gives some sense of awe although this is reduced by the influence of nearby forestry and features.	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the sense of risk or anxiety. Its appearance in the western landscape could interrupt the sense of expansiveness experienced in this direction but the open character of the WLA would be unaffected and the sense of awe would be retained.
	Low	Low
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Some rough ground with boulders and small drops gives some perceived sense of risk although this is not generally strong as the proximity to nearby developed areas is always sensed. The wide and expansive views to distant mountains to the south and south-west gives a sense of awe.	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the sense of risk or anxiety. Although the Proposed Varied Development would form an interruption within expansive views to the southwest, the sense of awe would not be affected as the sense of elevation, distance and expansiveness would be retained.
	Low	Negligible
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	The remoteness of this location from developed areas with difficult terrain and bog gives a sense of risk or anxiety although the terrain is not generally perceived as dangerous. There is some sense of awe due to the surrounding undeveloped expansiveness.	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the sense of risk or anxiety. The appearance of the turbines within the expansive western vista could lead to a reduced sense of scale and distance although a sense of awe is likely to be retained.
	Medium	Low

Table 4.9.2.8: Arresting or Inspiring Qualities		
Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Although the terrain is not dramatic, the extensive surrounding landscape with expansive sense of scale and openness leads to some arresting and inspiring qualities. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the open and arresting qualities of the WLA. However, its appearance in the western context would interrupt the surrounding sense of expansiveness which is experienced, and could draw focus from the western mountains, and could lead to some reduction in the perceived sense of scale. Medium to Low
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	The terrain is gently rolling and lacks drama but an extensive sense of openness leads to arresting and inspiring qualities. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would not alter the open and arresting qualities of the WLA. However, it would appear in front of the distant Ben Loyal and Ben Hope mountains which could distract from the sense of distance and the expansiveness of the surrounding context. This could lead to some reduction in the perceived sense of scale. Medium to Low
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Arresting qualities may be engendered by the sense of elevation and very expansive views obtained from this location, particularly to the south across extensive landscapes with little signs of human intervention, and to the west, although some detracting features are present in these landscapes. The construction of Limekiln wind farm could reduce this to some degree by forming a close distraction within the easterly view, but the wider southern and western expansive vistas would remain. Medium - High	The Proposed Varied Development would appear within the very expansive views obtained from this location within the south-western context beyond the WLA. It would be larger and could appear closer than Strathy North wind farm and therefore would create a greater interruption to the surrounding expansive views and could draw visual focus away from the far mountains. This could give the effect of a visual barrier between the WLA and farther landscapes to the west and south-west and the extent of undeveloped landscape could therefore appear diminished and more limited to that defined by the WLA boundary. The expansive extent of undeveloped land to the south would be unaffected, however, and arresting and inspiring qualities would nevertheless be maintained. Medium to Low
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	The expansive surrounding vista across the open, low lying landscapes are likely to engender arresting and inspiring qualities. Although the distant wind turbines of Strathy North wind farm are perceived, they are not very distracting and contribute to the perceived sense of scale.	The Proposed Varied Development would appear within the very expansive views obtained from this location to the west beyond the WLA boundary. It would be larger and appear closer than Strathy North wind farm and appear partly in front of the distant Ben Loyal mountain, likely to draw a greater focus of the view. There is no clear distinction between the WLA and these farther landscapes, and the Proposed Varied Development could therefore give a sense of diminishing the scale of the undeveloped landscapes which would lead to some reduction in the strength of this attribute. Nevertheless, it is likely that the arresting

Table 4.9.2.8: Arresting or Inspiring Qualities		
	Medium - High	qualities engendered by the broad sense of openness would be maintained. Medium to Low

Table 4.9.2.9: Fulfilment from Physical Challenge		
Location	Strength of Attribute	Magnitude of Change
Location 1: Smigel Burn	Although the terrain is not steep which reduces the perception of physical challenge somewhat, the lack of paths and difficult, boggy ground leads to some degree of challenge in reaching this location. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would be unlikely to change any perceptions of physical challenge. Negligible
Location 2: near Loch Sàinn	Although the terrain is not steep which reduces the perception of physical challenge somewhat, the lack of paths and difficult, boggy ground leads to some degree of challenge in reaching this location. Medium to Low	The Proposed Varied Development would be unlikely to change any perceptions of physical challenge. Negligible
Location 3: Beinn Ratha	Although not very high, steep terrain requires a moderate degree of exertion and with arrival at the hill summit likely to engender a degree of fulfilment in achieving this location, although a track provides access part of the way to the VP. Medium	The Proposed Varied Development would be unlikely to change any perceptions of physical challenge. Negligible
Location 4: Loch nan Clach Geala	Although there is no steep ground, a substantial and difficult walk across boggy, wet terrain which can be difficult to navigate is required to reach this VP location, likely to give a relatively high degree of fulfilment. Medium - High	The Proposed Varied Development would be unlikely to change any perceptions of physical challenge. Negligible

ANNEX 3: FIGURES



Key

- Site Boundary
- 20 km Detailed Study Area
- 5 km Distance Radii
- Turbine
- Operational Wind Turbine
- Consented Wind Turbine

Wild Land

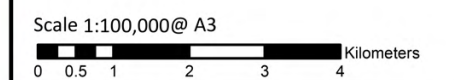
- WLA 39 - East Halladale Flows
- WLA Section Divider
- Other WLA
- WLA Assessment
- WLA Assessment Location Access Routes

Relative Wildness

- High
- Low

Assessment Locations

- Location 1 Smigel Burn*
- Location 2 near Loch Sainn*
- Location 3 Beinn Ratha*
- Location 4 Loch nan Clach Geala*



TA Figure 4.9.1
Map of Relative Wildness

Strathy South Wind Farm
EIAR 2020