

## **TECHNICAL APPENDIX 8.5: ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES**

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## 1. Technical Appendix 8.5: Assessment of Landscape Character Types

### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The following SNH<sup>1</sup> (2019)<sup>2</sup> (now NatureScot) National Landscape Character Types (LCTs) within the detailed study area were identified in the baseline review as potentially experiencing landscape effects as a result of the Proposed Development (as illustrated in Figure 8.4.2 and 8.4.3):

- LCT 220: Rugged Massif – Inverness
- LCT 221: Rolling Uplands – Inverness
- LCT 222: Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness
- LCT 224: Farmed and Wooded Foothills
- LCT 225: Broad Steep-Sided Glen
- LCT 226: Wooded Glen – Inverness
- LCT 227: Farmed Strath – Inverness
- LCT 230: Interlocking Sweeping Peaks – Inverness
- LCT 236: Smooth Moorland Ridges

1.1.2 The above areas are assessed in the following tables, in accordance with criteria outlined in section 8.5 of Chapter 8 of the EIA Report. Where LCTs also comprise Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) included in The Highland Council (THC) Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG<sup>3</sup>) Loch Ness Landscape Sensitivity Study, these are referenced and this document has been considered in the assessment.

1.1.3 Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes is detailed in Appendix 8.4.

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) formally changed their name to NatureScot on 24 August 2020. Many of their documents referred to in this EIA report were published prior to this date. As such reference is still made to SNH where appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Natural Heritage. (2019 [online]). Scottish Landscape Character Types Map and Descriptions. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/scottish-landscape-character-types-map-and-descriptions> Accessed on: May 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The Highland Council. (2017). *Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance*. November 2016 (with addendum, December 2017).

## 1.2 SNH National Landscape Character Types

**Table 1.2.1: LCT 220 – Rugged Massif – Inverness (OWESG LCA LN5)**

Landscape Baseline	
<b>Description</b>	<p>This LCT occurs in 4 locations in the detailed study area and, at its closest point, is located around 3.1 km from the Proposed Development comprising a number of south-west to north-east oriented ridgelines, often separated by LCT 226: Wooded Glen - Inverness. It is described as rugged, exposed mountains divided into distinct hill ranges by the long east-west glens and covers extensive uplands west of the Great Glen. Mountains are described as enormous in size with irregular landform, accentuated by rocky outcrops and glacial debris. Broad, rounded summits are connected by long ridges. A few small lochans and bogs occur on gentler slopes, and many small burns dissect the mountain slopes. Thin sub-alpine soils on higher ground support mountain habitats, with heather and rough grassland dominating lower slopes. Occasional patches of open birch woodland occur, and Caledonian pine woods are present on sheltered lower slopes and extending up gullies. This LCT is largely uninhabited, with a few minor settlements and roads located on lower ground. Wind development is found in the area between Glen Moriston and the Great Glen. Expansive views are obtained from hill tops over lochs, pinewoods, birch woods and settlements of adjacent straths and there is a sense of remoteness and wildness.</p>
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Rugged Massif – Inverness LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Parallel ranges of massive mountains of irregular landform divided by deep glaciated valleys.</i></li> <li>• <i>Mainly broad, sometimes rounded rugged summits connected by long ridges and relatively few individual mountain peaks, particularly in the east.</i></li> <li>• <i>Steep terrain with many mountain-side burns and occasional lochans in corries and depressions.</i></li> <li>• <i>Landcover of rock outcrops, glacial debris, deer-grazed heather and rough grassland create a smooth surface with mottled texture, with alpine habitats on high land to the west.</i></li> <li>• <i>Almost uniform texture and cover from lower to upper levels in the east makes the size of the hills difficult to perceive.</i></li> <li>• <i>Tracts of Caledonian pinewoods and occasional small patches of open birch woodland add colour, texture and seasonal diversity.</i></li> <li>• <i>Largely uninhabited, few signs of human activity or human artefacts in the interior, and sparse archaeological evidence.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hill ranges combine to create a fairly even undulating skyline and a sense of enclosure when viewed from straths.</i></li> <li>• <i>Views from the hill tops at the edges of the massif offer expansive views of the adjacent straths and surrounding landscape character types.</i></li> <li>• <i>A sense of remoteness and wildness which is particularly strong within the interior”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	<p>This LCT is valued for its remote, upland character and as a setting to the Great Glen and Glen Moriston. It is located in four locations in the detailed study area, suggesting it is not particularly rare in the local context, but it does overlap with a number of protected or designated landscapes within the detailed study area, including the nationally valued Glen Strathfarrar National Scenic Area (NSA) and Glen Affric NSA; and regionally designated Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch Special Landscape Area (SLA) and small areas in the Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel SLA and the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA. The Central Highlands Wild Land Area (WLA) also covers large parts of the LCT areas. This LCT is valued for its scenic qualities and recreational opportunities. Its landscape value is therefore considered to be <b>medium-high</b>.</p>

Assessment of Landscape Effects	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	<p>The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Almost uniform texture and cover from lower to upper levels in the east” which “makes the size of the hills difficult to perceive.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Hill ranges combine to create a fairly even and undulating skyline and sense of enclosure when viewed from straths.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Views from the hill tops at the edges of the massif offer expansive views of the adjacent straths and surrounding landscape character types.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“A sense of remoteness and wildness due to lack of habitation, human activity or artefacts.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	<p>This is a relatively highly valued LCT with a relatively high degree of wildness, remote and scenic characteristics, particularly for those more northern parts of the LCT. However, the direct influence of the existing Millennium, Beinneun (and Extension) Wind Farms within part of the LCT, and indirect influence of other wind farms in the wider area reduce the landscape sensitivity to this type of development in some parts, although the role of this LCT as a setting to the Great Glen gives sensitivity to further development which could become more dominant in this area. It is considered that this landscape has characteristics that may be tolerant of some small degrees of change of the type proposed.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity to change of the type proposed is considered to be <b>medium-high</b>.</p>
<b>Potential Effects</b>	<p>Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new wind turbines within the context may be perceived as scale indicators and potentially alter the perceived scale of the hills and other landscape features.</li> <li>• Turbines present in the wider landscape context may change the experience of the fairly even and undulating skyline and may distract within expansive views over straths.</li> <li>• Turbines present in the wider landscape context may reduce perceptions of wildness or remoteness.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<p>This LCT would experience indirect effects, as Proposed Development turbines would be visible from many of the open, facing slopes and summits within the detailed study area. However, they would nearly always be experienced in the context of the Operational Development, with only a few small areas of new intervisibility (where the Operational Development would not be experienced), as well as other wind developments in the wider area. Effects would vary across different parts of the LCT. From the north-western part of this LCT, north of Glen Strathfarrar (e.g. VP 22) turbines would be barely perceptible next to the Operational Development on the skyline, appearing slightly larger in scale and extending turbines along a ridge. Here they would often be experienced in the context of other wind farms in the wider landscape. From locations to the west of the Proposed Development turbines would often be even less perceptible, appearing behind Operational Development turbines (e.g. VP 12), although from some areas (e.g. VP 11 and 14) they may occupy a slightly larger part of the horizon. However, from these areas the Proposed Development would often be experienced in the immediate context of the turbines of Millennium Wind Farm and Beinneun (and Extension) Wind Farm. On upper, open slopes immediately south of Invermoriston the turbines would be noticeable next to Operational Development turbines, appearing larger in scale. Overall, the Proposed Development would be experienced to varying degrees but given its relationship with other wind developments, would result in a largely imperceptible change to landscape characteristics.</p> <p>Magnitude of change would therefore be considered <b>negligible-low</b> during construction and operation.</p>

<b>Effect Significance</b>	<p>The Proposed Development would appear in vistas from a number of parts of this LCT within the detailed study area, but where experienced, would be in the context of the Operational Development and other wind developments both in the immediate context and in the wider landscape. It may result in a marginal increase to the perceived dominance of wind turbines in some areas where Proposed Development turbines would be seen adjacent and in front of other wind turbines, but it would not reduce the sense of remoteness or alter the landscape character.</p> <p>The landscape effect would be <b>negligible (not significant)</b>, during construction and operation.</p>
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**Table 1.2.2: LCT 221 – Rolling Uplands – Inverness (OWESG LCA LN6)**

Landscape Baseline	
<b>Description</b>	<p>This LCT is located around 10.7 km from the Proposed Development and consists of the rolling hills which lie to the south-east of the Great Glen. It is dominated by a series of large scale, smooth, rounded heather clad hills which collectively form broad, undulating upland plateaux. The hills are devoid of clearly defined summits, creating a vast, almost featureless landscape, with no distinct patterns. The generally smooth texture is occasionally broken by small areas of scree, rocky outcrops, narrow glens cutting into the plateau, deeply incised burns and occasional small lochs. Occasional pastureland and small patches of woodland and forestry in straths and glens provide a contrast to the consistent heather-clad uplands. The LCT is largely uninhabited, with limited settlement in the few remote, steep-sided straths. Existing wind farm development in the southern and western margins form prominent local features. There are also occasional hydroelectric dams, reservoirs and other related infrastructure. Views from hill tops and plateaux are expansive, creating a strong sense of openness and exposure and revealing the interlocking arrangement of moorland and hill landform. The lack of artefacts in the interior evokes a strong perception of remoteness. However, this is reduced in some areas by the presence of existing wind turbines.</p>
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Rolling Uplands – Inverness LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“A series of large scale, smooth, rounded hills with summits of similar height forming broad, undulating upland plateaux containing occasional steep-sided straths.</i></li> <li>• <i>Open heather moorland dominates, the uniform colour and texture accentuating the landform.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strath floors contain in-bye pastures, trees and small patches of woodland.</i></li> <li>• <i>Conifer forests limited to the lower edges of uplands and strath sides.</i></li> <li>• <i>Settlement limited to a few isolated farms in remote straths.</i></li> <li>• <i>A few mainly single track roads, integrated within the landform.</i></li> <li>• <i>Uninhabited interior, largely inaccessible to vehicles.</i></li> <li>• <i>Archaeological evidence of settlement and farming from prehistoric times to the 19th century.</i></li> <li>• <i>Striking colour and textural contrast between strath floors and moorland vegetation above.</i></li> <li>• <i>Expansive views from the hill tops and plateaux create a strong sense of openness and exposure.</i></li> <li>• <i>Scale and distance difficult to judge.</i></li> <li>• <i>Few signs of active management in the interiors, creating a strong perception of remoteness, although this is affected by a number of large wind farm developments.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	<p>This LCT covers a large area with varying landscape value. Whilst some parts are wilder in character, such as areas within WLA 20: Monadhliath (some of which is within the detailed</p>

	study area), others are influenced by the relatively recent construction of (now operational) wind and hydro development and associated tracks and likely to be less valued. Nonetheless, the LCT is generally valued for its expansive views, large scale qualities and sporting and recreational opportunities and on balance, landscape value is considered to be <b>medium</b> .
<b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The uniformity of the <i>“broad, undulating upland plateaux”, “with summits of similar height and uniform land cover.”</i></li> <li>• Heather moorland, of uniform colour and texture.</li> <li>• Perception of remoteness within <i>“uninhabited interior, largely inaccessible to vehicles”</i> and <i>“with few signs of active management ... although this is affected by a number of large wind farm developments”</i> and hydro developments.</li> <li>• <i>“Expansive views from the hill tops and plateaux which create a strong sense of openness and exposure.”</i></li> <li>• Difficulty in judging scale and distance.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	This is a vast and varying landscape, with differing degrees of landscape value. While some areas where wild characteristics are more prominent are more susceptible to change, its vast scale and the presence of existing wind farms within the detailed study area somewhat reduces sensitivity to change of this type to further wind development. Landscape sensitivity is consequently varying throughout the landscape, from medium, where the landscape is characterised by other wind turbines, to high, where wild land characteristics predominate. On balance, this relatively valued landscape has a composition and characteristics tolerant of some degree of change of the type proposed and landscape sensitivity is considered <b>medium-high</b> .
<b>Potential Effects</b>	Potential indirect effects which may result to this landscape comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turbines present in the wider landscape could reduce sense of remoteness particularly within the interior and contribute to large wind farm developments as a feature in the landscape.</li> <li>• Turbines present in the wider landscape could appear and distract within expansive views.</li> <li>• Turbines present in the wider landscape could create new focal points and reduce sense of scale and distance.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	There would be no direct change to this LCT. ZTV coverage indicates that there would be relatively extensive intervisibility with the Proposed Development within the detailed study area (most notably within 15-20 km of the Proposed Development), particularly along the north-western edge of this LCT. In most of these areas, the Proposed Development turbines would be experienced at a distance in the context of the Operational Development. From the east of the LCT, they would be seen in front of Operational Development turbines and would appear slightly larger in scale (see VP 9), whereas from the south they would be seen next to the Operational Development, taking up a slightly greater portion on the skyline. There are only a few very small areas of new intervisibility (where the Operational Development would not be experienced), including on the eastern slopes of the Great Glen on some of the lower slopes around Creag Dubh (near Cullachy Falls) and near Borlum Hill. However, in many of these areas the Proposed Development turbines would be experienced in the context of Millennium Wind Farm and Beinneun (and Extension) Wind Farm turbines. In general, the turbines would often be experienced in the context of existing wind farms within this landscape, which include Stronelaig Wind Farm, Corriegarth Wind Farm and Dunmaglass Wind Farm. Large areas in the southern part of this LCT would not experience intervisibility of the Proposed Development.

	<p>Given the experience of other wind developments in the landscape, and the distance at which the Proposed Development would be experienced, there would be a virtually imperceptible change in landscape characteristics, relating to an intensification of an existing feature.</p> <p>Magnitude of change would therefore be <b>low</b> during construction and operation.</p>
<b>Effect Significance</b>	<p>Effects on this LCT would be indirect, relating to the appearance of wind turbines in upland areas to the west. The Proposed Development would largely be seen in the context of Operational Development turbines and as such few additional parts of the LCT would be indirectly affected by the Proposed Development, although the Proposed Development turbines may marginally increase the perceived dominance of wind turbines in the landscape. This may affect expansive views from this LCT and potentially contribute to perceived focal features in the landscape. However, this would affect parts of the LCT in which existing wind developments already have a notable presence (locally and in the wider context) and from the western edge of the LCT there are often views into nearby, more settled landscapes, which somewhat reduces its sensitivity to development of the type proposed, such that key characteristics of this LCT are less likely to be affected.</p> <p>The effect significance is therefore considered to be <b>locally minor</b> for open, elevated and often north-west facing slopes within the ZTV, <b>elsewhere negligible</b> (not significant) during construction and operation.</p>

**Table 1.2.3: LCT 222 – Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness (OWESG LCA LN10)**

Landscape Baseline	
<b>Description</b>	<p>This LCT, within which the Proposed Development is located, is found in two locations in the detailed study area: to the north and south of Glen Urquhart. This LCT is characterised by open, gently rolling and undulating moorland plateaux with distinct edges, containing small hills formed by rocky outcrops and low areas of varying scale. The landform, shaped by weathering and glacial erosion, is divided by glens following the easterly direction of ice flows, and later rivers. Rocky heather moorland dominates the hilltops and upper slopes, and small lochans and areas of bog occupy depressions mainly on the extensive surface peat deposits in the south west. Regenerating pine, birch and gorse is concentrated along glens with rivers, with sporadic patches occurring on hillsides. The landscape is sparsely inhabited although there are a few isolated small farms and crofts in the east. Existing infrastructure is a feature of this LCT, including hydro infrastructure, the Beaully-Denny overhead line, Corrimony Wind Farm, and the Operational Development. There is an overall sense of scale, openness, exposure and degree of remoteness on the open plateau within this LCT, where there are extensive views of the surrounding landform. The pattern and ground texture of the majority of this landscape tends to appear random, which creates a landscape with no dominant visual movement or clear focal points.</p>
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Open, gently rolling moorland plateaux with distinct edges descending to adjoining straths and glens or rising to merge with Rugged Massif.</i></li> <li>• <i>Plateau with a patchy texture of small rocky outcrop hills, bogs and lochans in no clear hierarchy or discernible pattern.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hilltops and upper slopes dominated by rocky heather moorland, except in the north east where extensive, contrasting conifer forests dominate.</i></li> <li>• <i>Regenerating trees and scrub in glens with rivers and sheltered lower hillsides.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strong contrast in landcover and settlement between the plateau and adjoining straths and glens.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sparsely inhabited and little evidence of active landuse.</i></li> <li>• <i>A few historic sites indicating past settlement and land use.</i></li> <li>• <i>Orientation is difficult due to the lack of hierarchy, pattern and foci in the landform and landcover.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Within the plateau distance and scale are generally difficult to perceive due to the lack of elements of known size.</i></li> <li>• <i>Distinct edges isolate the plateau from adjacent areas and give the sense of a vast, remote, upland moor.</i></li> <li>• <i>At the plateau edges, expansive views over inhabited straths and glens create surprise.</i></li> <li>• <i>Eastern areas have a semi-exposed character with occasional views of distant hills framed by the distinct edges of conifer forests.</i></li> <li>• <i>Perception of remoteness on the open plateau, from the rugged patchy texture and absence of obvious human artefacts."</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	A small peripheral part of this LCT falls within the regionally designated Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, although it does not form an integral part of this designation. While its contrasting upland sense of remoteness is valued, along with recreational opportunities, cultural heritage associations and scenic quality, existing wind farm developments, overhead line structures and the presence of commercial forestry reduce its sense of individuality, sense of remoteness and scenic quality to a degree. Landscape value is therefore considered <b>medium</b> .
<b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	<p>The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Strong contrast in landcover and settlement between the plateau and adjoining straths and glens."</i></li> <li>• Sense of remoteness due to sparse habitation, little evidence of active land use or obvious human artefacts and rugged, patchy texture.</li> <li>• Lack of focal points which makes orientation and sense of distance and scale difficult to perceive.</li> <li>• <i>"Distinct edges" which "isolate the plateau from adjacent areas and give the sense of a vast, remote, upland moor."</i></li> <li>• <i>"At the plateau edges, expansive views over inhabited straths and glens" and "occasional views of distant hills framed by the distinct edges of conifer forests" from eastern areas.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	<p>This is a moderately valued landscape due to its remote, upland characteristics. Although these remote characteristics are likely to suggest a susceptibility to change of the type proposed, the presence of existing wind farm development and forestry reduces this susceptibility within the detailed study area.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity to development of the type proposed is considered to be <b>medium</b>.</p>
<b>Potential Effects</b>	<p>Potential direct and indirect effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction works, wind turbines, access tracks and other infrastructure within the LCT may increase evidence of active land use and obvious human artefacts.</li> <li>• Wind turbines, access tracks and other infrastructure within the LCT may appear and distract within expansive views or erode the contrast between upland and settled areas.</li> <li>• Construction works, wind turbines and other infrastructure within the LCT may introduce additional focal points adjacent to the Operational Development, changing the perceived sense of scale and distance.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<p>Other than the site entrance, the Proposed Development would be entirely within one area of this LCT including 18 turbines, new access tracks and hardstanding, substation and temporary infrastructure and borrow-pits during construction. Within this LCT area (which also contains the Operational Development), the ZTV indicates that indirect effects would be widespread within around 5km of the Proposed Development, with more occasional higher ground and facing slopes being affected beyond this distance, particularly on the northern slopes of Glen Coiltie and hill summits south-west of the Proposed Development. Although this is generally a relatively open landscape, forestry would screen the Proposed</p>



	<p>Development from some north-easterly parts of Glen Coiltie, near Drumnadrochit. From the majority of the LCT, the Proposed Development turbines would be experienced in the context of the Operational Development. The Proposed Development would also introduce some additional patches of intervisibility to the north, east and south where new visibility of turbines would be extended to some lower slopes and valley areas. From the north and north-east of the LCT (see VP 3) the Proposed Development would generally be experienced in front of or next to the Operational Development and appear larger in scale, often taking up a greater portion of the horizon. From the west and south-west of the LCT however, it would be experienced behind the Operational Development, appearing less prominent on the skyline (see VP 1). Quite often it would be experienced in the context of other wind farms on distant skylines.</p> <p>Within the LCT area north of Glen Urquhart, the Proposed Development would be seen mainly from the south and east (see VP 10) of this LCT area, from elevated areas and facing slopes, although effects would occasionally be mitigated by screening by forestry. It would usually be seen in the context of the Operational Development, marginally increasing the prominence of wind development in this part of the landscape due to its scale and horizontal extent. There would be some new areas of intervisibility on lower slopes.</p> <p>Magnitude of change would vary throughout the LCT. For the area of LCT that contains the Proposed Development, magnitude would range between <b>low</b> in areas to the west and south-west of the Proposed Development and <b>medium</b> to the north and north-east, during construction and operation. For the area of LCT north of Glen Urquhart, magnitude would be <b>low</b>.</p>
<p><b>Effect Significance</b></p>	<p>The Proposed Development would be within and directly affect this LCT. However, the proposed turbines would be located in areas which are already indirectly affected by the Operational Development, reducing sensitivity of these areas to further development. Nevertheless, new turbines and tracks would increase the developed footprint and result in these areas becoming more strongly characterised by wind turbines. Within the wider LCT, the Proposed Development would usually be seen in association with Operational Development turbines, although it would introduce some additional areas of intervisibility, and may in some areas also increase the prominence of wind turbines as experienced from the surrounding landscape, whereby the larger scale structures may be perceived in relation to the Operational Development, particularly to the north and north-west. This may have some potential to alter the perception of scale and distance, and potentially increase evidence of active land use and obvious human artefacts in areas where the Operational Development is not currently experienced, although the presence of wind development in this LCT and adjacent landscapes means it is unlikely to considerably alter the landscape character.</p> <p>The landscape effect is therefore anticipated to be <b>locally minor-moderate</b> (not significant) during construction (around the Proposed Development site itself due to construction activities); and during operation (where turbines on the skyline would become more prominent, typically to the north-east of the Proposed Development). However, elsewhere and in general, the landscape effect is likely to be <b>minor</b> (not significant) across this LCT during construction and operation.</p>

**Table 1.2.4: LCT 224 – Farmed and Wooded Foothills (OWESG LCA LN16)**

Landscape Baseline	
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>This LCT is located around 7 km from the Proposed Development, comprising a ridge of low hills to the east of the Great Glen. These steep-sided foothills have a complex landform with rocky ridges interrupted by short glens, which sometimes feature lochs and rivers. Conifer forests can be found on lower slopes, while patches of broadleaf woodland occur along watercourses and on less accessible slopes. Heather moorland, interrupted by craggy outcrops, dominates higher elevations. Land use consists of a mixture of agriculture and forestry. There is a long history of human settlement in the area as evidenced by</p>

	archaeological findings. Present day settlements are relatively small and clustered around a network of minor roads.
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Farmed and Wooded Foothills LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Low rocky hills with a complex and irregular landform of steep sided slopes, rocky ridges and peaks, with some small corries, short glens and lochs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Open summits with heather moorland, crags and rough pasture, contrasting with mid and lower slopes of forests and woodlands interspersed with rough and improved pasture.</i></li> <li>• <i>A diverse mix of woodland, agricultural land use and open moorland creating a balanced but complex range of open and enclosed spaces.</i></li> <li>• <i>Small farms, crofts and farming settlements scattered on the mid to lower slopes, with a network of narrow roads, stone dykes and hedgerows field boundaries.</i></li> <li>• <i>Many archaeological relics from prehistoric to 18th-19th Century periods.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contrast between the panoramic views of the open, exposed upper slopes and summits, and the sheltered and enclosed lower, slopes with conifer forests and woodlands.</i></li> <li>• <i>A sense of care and prosperity in settled and farmed parts due to active agricultural land management.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	The majority of this LCT falls within the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA and is valued as a backdrop to the Great Glen. It is valued for its scenic qualities, recreational opportunities and cultural heritage associations, but is not rare in the wider context. Landscape value is therefore considered to be <b>medium-high</b> .
<b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	<p>The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Contrast between the panoramic views of the open, exposed upper slopes and summits, and the sheltered and enclosed lower, slopes with conifer forests and woodlands.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	<p>This is a relatively highly valued LCT due to its context as a setting to the Great Glen, but due to the high degree of forest cover and presence of man-made elements, including wind development in adjacent landscape types it has the potential to accommodate some degree of change of the type proposed.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity to change of the type proposed is considered to be <b>medium</b>.</p>
<b>Potential Effects</b>	<p>Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind turbines may appear and disrupt panoramic views from open, exposed upper slopes.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<p>The ZTV indicates intervisibility with the Proposed Development particularly from the southern part of this LCT (which is situated on the opposite side of the Great Glen), and areas of higher elevation in the north of the LCT. However, due to the high proportion of woodland cover the Proposed Development would, in reality, only be experienced from some open slopes and higher elevations, such as near Carn an t-Suidhe (see VP 6), Creag Mhor, north of Glendoe, around Loch Kemp and near some summits to the north, as well as by Loch Tarff. It would usually appear in the context of the Operational Development, although it would add intervisibility to some lower facing slopes. It would appear next to or in front of the Operational Development and often be perceived to be larger in scale. Other wind developments within the wider landscape would also be experienced from some of these areas (e.g. VP 6).</p>

	<p>The experience of the Proposed Development would lead to some perceptible changes in landscape characteristics whereby wind development would become slightly more notable in this part of the landscape, however these would not affect the whole LCT.</p> <p>Magnitude of change would be <b>locally negligible-low</b> and <b>negligible elsewhere</b> during construction and operation.</p>
<b>Effect Significance</b>	<p>All effects on this LCT would be indirect, resulting from the appearance of the Proposed Development within the westerly landscape context. From the majority of areas, the Proposed Development would be experienced within the context of Operational Development turbines, although the larger size and closer proximity may result in turbines appearing slightly more perceptible from a few areas and from a slightly greater part of the LCT. Although the Proposed Development would lead to some small areas which were not previously influenced by wind turbine development being affected, it is likely to have little influence on the character of the LCT overall.</p> <p>As a result, the perception of wind turbines in vistas from open, upper, exposed slopes may increase, but considering existing wind development here and in the surrounding context, this would not affect the character of this LCT.</p> <p>The landscape effect would be <b>locally negligible-minor</b> (not significant) and <b>negligible elsewhere</b>, during construction and operation.</p>

**Table 1.2.5: LCT 225 – Broad Steep-sided Glen (OWESG LCA LN19)**

Landscape Baseline	
<b>Description</b>	<p>Comprising the area of the Great Glen around Loch Ness, around 1.8 km from the Proposed Development, this LCT is characterised by a clearly defined, V-shaped glen encompassing the long, linear Loch Ness and the farmed alluvial plains at either end of the loch. Steep valley-sides descend directly to the loch, with flatter ground and shoreline limited to the mouths of side-valleys. The most significant of these are Glen Moriston and Glen Urquhart on the west side of the loch. Settlement is concentrated near intersections with side valleys, with further properties sometimes scattered along the loch-edge, or perched on the high valley slopes where terrain permits. Forestry clothes most of the valley-sides but is limited to the lower slopes and has often rigid, pronounced edges. Heather moorland and rough grassland occupy the higher slopes with occasional craggy outcrops. Semi-natural woodlands frequently line the loch-side and extend along river valleys. The alluvial plains at either end of the loch are characterised by a patchwork of forestry, woodland, agricultural land and settlement.</p> <p>The glen forms a strong linear feature through the surrounding upland landscape with funnelled views along its length and particularly along the loch. There is a simple linear pattern to the landscape, where there is also a sense of enclosure within the glen, and horizontal bands of loch, shores, hillside and skyline are experienced. There is also a perception of continuation and unity within this LCT, created by loch that runs the length of the LCT and provides a visual focus. Focus is also drawn to the road corridor, as this LCT is a busy transport and recreational corridor for the A82 trunk road as well as the Caledonian Canal through Loch Ness and the Great Glen Way walking and cycling routes.</p>
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Broad Steep-sided Glen LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“A clearly defined, broad, linear, steep sided, v-shaped glen and deep loch cutting through mountains and hills, with limited areas of flatter ground.</i></li> <li>• <i>Large-scale conifer forests with small areas of open moorland covering most of the glen sides, particularly the lower slopes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Small patches of broad leaved woodlands, mostly in side glens and close to the shore.</i></li> <li>• <i>Agricultural land on less steep slopes, glen intersections and alluvial plains.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A few settlements, with a well-defined core, located at glen intersections and on gentler slopes, separated by long stretches of relatively uninhabited land.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contrast between the busy trunk road and larger settlements on the west side and the quiet minor road on east side which has fewer settlements separated by large undeveloped areas.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strong evidence of past settlement in the number and diversity of archaeological and historic sites from prehistoric times to the 20th Century.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contrast between the visual and seasonal diversity of broadleaf woodland and bright, open pockets of farmland and the forested and moorland surroundings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contrast between the smaller scale landscapes of settled, lower slopes and the large scale moorland and forested backdrop.</i></li> <li>• <i>A simple linear and enclosed visual composition of bands of land, water and sky, with long skylines of even height, and the glen and loch as unifying features.</i></li> <li>• <i>Visual focus directed along the linear route of the glen or across the water to the opposite shore and up to the skyline.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	This LCT falls within the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA and forms a key contribution to the designation. The dramatic, topography, popularity for recreation and tourism and associations with Loch Ness and its famous monster give it a notable value. Landscape value is therefore considered to be <b>high</b> .
<b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Contrast between the smaller scale landscapes of settled, lower slopes and the large scale moorland and forested backdrop.”</i></li> <li>• <i>The “simple linear and enclosed visual composition of bands of land, water and sky with long skylines of even height”.</i></li> <li>• <i>“Visual focus directed along the linear route of the glen or across the water to the opposite shore and up to the skyline.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	This landscape is highly valued. Although topographically large-scale, smaller scale patterns of land cover and land use are susceptible to large, vertical elements which may be dominant and diminish the feel of diversity. The simple structure is also sensitive to development which may break the skyline. The presence of the Operational Development on the skyline as experienced from some areas slightly reduces sensitivity to change. Landscape sensitivity to development of the type proposed is considered to be <b>medium-high</b> .
<b>Potential Effects</b>	Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearance of turbines could lead to increased perception of developed uplands and could erode the contrast between the smaller scale settled landscapes and larger scale backdrop.</li> <li>• The presence of turbines along the skyline could interrupt the simple, linear composition and distract visual focus.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	The ZTV suggests some relatively small and concentrated areas of intervisibility within this LCT, mainly concentrated around Invermoriston (see VP 2) and on the eastern side of Loch Ness opposite from here; and north of Drumnadrochit (see VP 4) and on the eastern side near Dores (see VP 8 and 17). There is also a small area of ZTV cover on the eastern loch shore near Fort Augustus. However due to the wooded context the Proposed Development is only likely to be seen from a small number of land-based locations, and quite often only a small number of tips would be visible. From more elevated locations on the eastern slopes of the Great Glen (at and around VP 17), the Proposed Development would slightly increase the prominence of turbines in the landscape. From the loch itself, the experience

	<p>of the Proposed Development would be minimal given the low elevation and screening and for the most part, would be in the context of the Operational Development.</p> <p>In general, the Proposed Development turbines would usually be experienced in the context of the Operational Development, although they would introduce a few areas of new intervisibility (where the Operational Development would not be experienced): for example, north of Drumnadrochit (e.g. VP 4), near Dores and near Fort Augustus.</p> <p>Magnitude of Change is therefore considered to be <b>locally low-medium</b> for elevated areas on the eastern shore south of Dores, but <b>negligible elsewhere</b> during construction and operation.</p>
<b>Effect Significance</b>	<p>Whilst the Proposed Development would be theoretically intervisible with small parts of this LCT, in reality this is likely to be limited on the western shores to only a few glimpsed views of turbine tips (see VP 2 and VP 4) as well as from the loch itself, but would be more notable from elevated eastern shores (see VP 17). The increased prominence of turbines from a few elevated parts of the LCT may locally affect the perception of developed uplands, but this would be localised and, on the whole, would not notably change the balance between the settled valley floor and uplands. Given the experience of the Operational Development, it would not be perceived as a new 'interruption' on the skyline, although it may become slightly more of a visual focus. This would be a localised change and it is unlikely that the overall limited intervisibility obtained would lead to any recognisable loss or reduction of any of the key characteristics.</p> <p>The landscape effect is anticipated to be <b>locally minor</b> for elevated areas of the eastern shore, south of Dores and <b>negligible elsewhere</b> during both construction and operation (not significant).</p>

**Table 1.2.6: LCT 226 – Wooded Glen – Inverness (OWESG LCA LN2)**

Landscape Baseline	
<b>Description</b>	<p>This LCT, present in five locations in the detailed study area, is located 1.7km from the Proposed Development turbines at its closest point, although the access track extends into this LCT. It comprises a number of glens west of Loch Ness, described by NatureScot as having <i>“broad lower reaches and narrower upper glens.”</i> Land use in these glens consists of a mixture of farmland, woodland and open moorland. In the lower glens (Glen Urquhart and Glen Moriston), forestry dominates the upper slopes, while lower slopes are characterised by farmland interspersed with patches of broadleaf woodland. The upper glens (Glen Strathfarrar, Glen Cannich and Glen Affric) are largely covered by Caledonian pine forest, interspersed with areas of exposed moorland and rough grassland in the upper reaches. Water is a common feature in all of these glens in the form of rivers, lochs and wetland areas, and hydroelectric schemes are found in some of the upper glens. The lower glens are relatively well-settled, while settlement is more limited in the upper glens. The glen floors are described as having a sense of enclosure due to limited visibility, which is in contrast with the <i>“openness and exposure”</i> and often extensive views experienced from higher ground. The upper glens in particular are described as having a sense of <i>“naturalness and remoteness.”</i></p>
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Wooded Glen – Inverness LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Long glens set within uplands and mountains, divided into upper and lower glens by a cross-cutting narrow farmed strath.</i></li> <li>• <i>Lower glens broader, with steep upper slopes, undulating lower slopes and a narrow floor mostly occupied by river terraces; upper glens are narrower and more rugged, influenced by the surrounding mountains.</i></li> <li>• <i>Rivers, water bodies (lochs and sometimes reservoirs), river flats and areas of wetland in valley floors.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Balance between open and enclosed space formed by the diverse mix of landscape patterns, land uses, conifer forests, woodlands and fields.</i></li> <li>• <i>Distinctive mix of rugged hillsides, extensive Caledonian pine forest and lochs in the upper glens.</i></li> <li>• <i>Actively farmed and relatively settled lower glen floors, with small clusters of houses near roads, and farms and crofts in open areas at the base of slopes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contrast between the settled and farmed floor of lower glens and their open heather moorland and forests of the upper slopes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sparse settlement in upper glens, limited to a few farms and crofts, isolated lodges and clusters of estate buildings usually sheltered by trees or woodland.</i></li> <li>• <i>Central, major through-road in lower glens, with minor roads along the glen sides which are integrated with the landform and settlement pattern.</i></li> <li>• <i>Single track road along the base of the upper glens, terminating at the upper edge of the glen.</i></li> <li>• <i>Large number and range of archaeological remains in the lower glens.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strong sense of history in upper glens created by the Caledonian pinewood stands.</i></li> <li>• <i>Intimate, semi-enclosed landscape within the glen floor with limited visibility, due to the screening effect of trees and landform.</i></li> <li>• <i>Distant views along the glens from open hill ground creating a feeling of openness and exposure.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increasing sense of naturalness and remoteness traversing the upper glens into mountainous interior."</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape Value</b></p>	<p>This is a highly valued landscape, which is appreciated for its scenic qualities and natural heritage. Some areas of this LCT also form parts of designations or protected landscapes of national and regional importance, including Glen Strathfarrar NSA, Glen Affric NSA, Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA and the Central Highlands WLA. Whilst other areas of this LCT that are not protected/designated (Glen Urquhart and Glen Moriston) they are nevertheless valued landscapes, although structures experienced from Glen Moriston (overhead lines and turbines) slightly reduce value. Overall, landscape value is therefore considered to be <b>medium-high</b>.</p>
<p><b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b></p>	
<p><b>Landscape Receptors</b></p>	<p>The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Contrast between the settled and farmed floor of lower glens and their open heather moorland and forests of the upper slopes."</i></li> <li>• <i>"Distant views along the glens from open hill ground creating a feeling of openness and exposure."</i></li> <li>• <i>"Increasing sense of naturalness and remoteness traversing the upper glens into mountainous interior", where settlement is sparse</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape Sensitivity</b></p>	<p>This landscape is highly valued. While its wooded nature reduces its susceptibility to change, its remote character and sense of naturalness makes it somewhat vulnerable to change.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity to development of the type proposed is considered to be <b>medium-high</b>.</p>
<p><b>Potential Effects</b></p>	<p>Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of wind turbines would potentially reduce the contrast between the settled, farmed lower glens and the open heather moorland and forests on upper slopes.</li> <li>• The presence of turbines in views from open hill ground may interfere with the feeling of openness and exposure.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presence of wind turbines in the wider context may diminish the sense of remoteness and naturalness in the upper glens.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<p>There would be a very small direct impact within this LCT relating to the presence of the access and site compound at the Operational Development access point on the A887 in Glen Moriston. However, given the existing use of this area as access for the Operational Development this would not be a perceptible long term change to landscape characteristics (and any small changes associated with construction would be localised and short term).</p> <p>The ZTV indicates very little intervisibility with the Proposed Development in the northern glens within the detailed study area. There would be no visibility of the Proposed Development in Glen Strathfarrar, and very small areas on wooded slopes in Glen Cannich and Glen Urquhart.</p> <p>There are small areas of ZTV coverage on the valley sides of Glen Affric, many of which are wooded. Where visible, the Proposed Development would be barely perceptible as tips in the context of the Operational Development turbines (see VPs 19 and 20) and nearly always experienced in the context of the Operational Development.</p> <p>Glen Moriston has the largest proportion of ZTV coverage, mainly on the southern slopes and near the site entrance and to the west near Bunloinn Forest. However, due to the wooded context, in reality the Proposed Development would often be screened by trees and likely only be seen from open slopes and in glimpsed views. The Proposed Development turbines would usually be experienced where the Operational Development is already visible, although Proposed Development turbines would appear taller and more prominent (see VP 26) and would extend intervisibility to some lower slopes and introduce some small additional areas of intervisibility near the site entrance. Quite often the turbines would also be experienced in the context of other wind farms in the area, including Beinneun (and Extension) Wind Farm and Millennium Wind Farm.</p> <p>The introduction of the Proposed Development would therefore result in minimal discernible changes in landscape characteristics from the majority of glens in this LCT, given its relationship to the Operational Development. Within Glen Moriston, the experience of wind development in the local area would be marginally intensified, but screened from large parts by woodland.</p> <p>Magnitude of Change is considered to be <b>locally negligible-low</b> within Glen Moriston and <b>negligible</b> for other glens during construction and operation.</p>
<b>Effect Significance</b>	<p>Effects would vary across this LCT. In the northern glens, there would be very little intervisibility with the Proposed Development, and where seen it would appear barely perceptible behind Operational Development turbines, resulting in no discernible change to landscape characteristics of this LCT.</p> <p>In Glen Moriston, the Proposed Development would potentially appear in vistas from some open slopes and be seen in front of Operational Development turbines, potentially slightly increasing the perceived dominance of wind turbines in this landscape and slightly reducing the contrast between the settled valley floor and the open moorland and forests on upper slopes, by introducing human-made structures to elevated slopes. However due to the presence of hydro development, overhead lines and nearby wind farms, this part of the LCT feels more developed and the remote character is less strong than in other parts of this LCT. The intrinsic landscape character of the Glen Moriston LCT area would be barely affected.</p> <p>The landscape effect is anticipated to be <b>locally negligible-minor</b> in Glen Moriston and <b>negligible elsewhere</b> (not significant) during both construction and operation.</p>

**Table 1.2.7: LCT 227 – Farmed Strath – Inverness (OWESG LCA LN15)**

<b>Landscape Baseline</b>
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<b>Description</b>	This LCT comprises two straths running parallel to each other in a south-west to north-east direction: Stratherrick/Strathnairn east of the Great Glen and Strathglass to the west. They are both characterised by a farmed valley floor with a pattern of large fields and occasional settlements, more frequent in Stratherrick. They differ slightly in landform, with Strathglass being narrower and more contained, while Stratherrick/Strathnairn has a wide valley floor with relatively steep side slopes. Forestry, broadleaf woodland and moorland often dominates side slopes, contrasting with the more settled agricultural landscape below. Water is a characteristic feature in both straths, with meandering rivers running across the strath floor, and Loch Mhor (the upper reservoir of the Foyers Hydro Pumped Storage Scheme), is a dominant, yet attractive feature in Stratherrick. There is a relatively strong presence of man-made features in this landscape type, with overhead lines and a hydro dam in Strathglass and wind developments (including Millennium, Corriegarth, Dunmaglass and the Operational Development) experienced from Stratherrick/Strathnairn. There is also a strong sense of enclosure, which is perhaps more pronounced in Strathglass.
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	The key characteristics of the Farmed Strath - Inverness LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Linear to sinuous channels cut through uplands, with a central meandering river located in a flat or gently undulating strath floor, edged by the steep, rocky, side slopes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Pronounced and dynamic river meanders of Strathglass, emphasised by riparian trees, oxbow lakes and curved wetland features.</i></li> <li>• <i>Small scale broadleaf woodlands and small blocks of conifer forest within Strathnairn/Stratherrick strath floor which do not override openness of the strath.</i></li> <li>• <i>A few small settlements located on the strath floor or sides and infrequent small farms, crofts, estate buildings or groups of houses.</i></li> <li>• <i>Roads which generally relate well to landform, with a limited number of river crossing points.</i></li> <li>• <i>Many archaeological sites in Strathnairn dating from a range of periods.</i></li> <li>• <i>Contrast between the open, inhabited and agricultural landscape of the straths, the side slopes cloaked in alternating broadleaf woodlands, conifer forests and heather moorland, and the setting of adjacent rugged, remote uplands.</i></li> <li>• <i>Diversity of colour and texture added by river meanders, wetlands, damp pastures and thin bands of woodland.</i></li> <li>• <i>An overall sense of linear enclosure, which directs distant views along the strath and allows uninterrupted views of the flanking hill slopes.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	This is a moderately valued landscape, which has some recreational opportunities mainly associated with its rivers and lochs, and is appreciated for its scenic qualities and cultural heritage associations (particularly in Strathnairn). A small part of this LCT (east of the Great Glen) is contained within the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA and very small parts of the LCT (west of the Great Glen) overlap with the Glen Strathfarrar NSA and Central Highlands WLA.  The landscape value is considered to be <b>medium</b> .
<b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Contrast between the open, inhabited and agricultural landscape of the straths, the side slopes cloaked in alternating broadleaf woodlands, conifer forests and heather moorland, and the setting of adjacent rugged, remote uplands.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	This LCT is moderately valued and has some potential to accommodate change of the type proposed, given its experience of other wind developments. Its relatively developed but



	<p>rural character and the presence of woodland makes it less susceptible to new development.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity is therefore considered to be <b>low-medium</b>.</p>
<b>Potential Effects</b>	<p>Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearance of wind turbines in the wider landscape may erode contrast between the settled and farmed strath floor and setting of adjacent rugged, remote uplands.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<p>There would be no direct change to this LCT. Indirect change may result from intervisibility of the Proposed Development turbines.</p> <p>The ZTV indicates some theoretical visibility from Strathglass, mainly on the upper slopes on the western side and particularly close to the mouth of Glen Cannich, to the north and south. The Proposed Development would nearly always be experienced with the Operational Development and mostly tips would be visible, although on the slopes above Carnoch, hubs would also be seen adjacent to Operational Development turbines. Some of the slopes are covered by forestry which would screen the Proposed Development turbines, which means they would likely only be seen from open upper slopes. From the Strathglass part of this LCT, given woodland cover and minimal visibility, the Proposed Development would have a virtually imperceptible change to landscape characteristics.</p> <p>Stratherrick would have more extensive intervisibility with the Proposed Development, particularly near Loch Mhor (e.g. VP 7) and where the landscape is more open to the west. While the turbines would often be experienced with the Operational Development, their larger scale and extent may slightly increase the perceived prominence of turbines in the landscape (see VP 7). There would be some areas of new intervisibility (where the Operational Development would not be experienced) around the north of Loch Mhor and in Strathnairn. Here, forestry and woodland would mitigate effects, as it would from many locations in this LCT. From the Stratherrick part of this LCT, the Proposed Development would have some perceptible changes in localised areas, whereby the prominence of wind development in the landscape would be slightly increased.</p> <p>Magnitude of change is predicted to range between <b>negligible</b> in Strathglass and <b>low</b> in Stratherrick.</p>
<b>Effect Significance</b>	<p>The Proposed Development may result in a slight increase to the perceived influence of wind development in parts of this landscape type, with a more notable change in Stratherrick. In comparison, from Strathglass, the change would be less perceptible. Where turbines would be experienced to the west from Stratherrick, in front of Operational Development turbines, there is some potential for them to alter the perceived contrast between the settled valley floor and adjacent more remote uplands by increasing the presence of human development in upland areas. However, the presence of other similar features experienced from large parts of this LCT and the settled sense of place means that the Proposed Development would not alter the intrinsic landscape character of the area.</p> <p>The landscape effect would therefore be <b>locally minor</b> for parts of the Stratherrick LCT are and <b>negligible elsewhere</b>, during construction and operation.</p>

**Table 1.2.8: LCT 230 - Interlocking Sweeping Peaks – Inverness**

Landscape Baseline	
<b>Description</b>	<p>This LCT is found to the west of the Proposed Development and comprises a series of defined, angular mountains which often have a stacked or interlocking appearance and are connected by narrow ridges to form ranges. They often have steep slopes which descend down into adjoining glens. Land cover on higher ground is often sparse, with a predominance of bare rock, while lower slopes are covered by heather or grasses, with occasional areas of coniferous woodland. There is very little settlement, and a lack of man-made elements, leading to a strong sense of remoteness and wild character particularly in less accessible parts of the landscape. However, the area is relatively popular for recreation</p>

	and there are a number of paths and tracks which are used e.g. for hill walking and deer stalking.
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Interlocking Sweeping Peaks - Inverness LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Glaciated mountainous landscapes with pyramidal rock peaks.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sweeping, concave slopes with screes plunging directly into deep glens or lochs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Mountain peaks and slopes often seen as repetitive elements within a group, appearing to interlock and overlap when viewed along glens and fjords.</i></li> <li>• <i>No overall hierarchy of peaks, which tend to be connected by high level ridges aligned either side of central, u-shaped valleys.</i></li> <li>• <i>Elegant profile due to the greater vertical to horizontal emphasis.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sparse vegetation and few native trees.</i></li> <li>• <i>Fragments of broadleaf woodland along water courses and the coast, naturally relating to landscape form.</i></li> <li>• <i>Banded landcover of rocky summits and lower slopes of grassland and heather.</i></li> <li>• <i>Infrequent but prominent coniferous woodland plantations on accessible foot slopes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Largely uninhabited and few roads or structures.</i></li> <li>• <i>Extensive high level views of peaks and ridgelines, and over to opposing sides of glens.</i></li> <li>• <i>Expansive views of the vast mountainous interior, and the large scale pattern of glens and summits.</i></li> <li>• <i>Low level views are enclosed, directed upwards or along glens and fjords.</i></li> <li>• <i>Upward views dominated by the steep slopes and towering summits which reveal the vertical scale of mountains.</i></li> <li>• <i>Wild character in the interior due to remoteness from roads and settlements, lack of evidence of modern human use, dominance of natural landforms, and vast scale of the mountain landscape.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	<p>This landscape is highly valued for its wild upland character and scenic qualities. It falls within several designations of national and regional importance, as large parts are covered by the Glen Affric NSA, Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA and it is located entirely within the Central Highlands WLA. The presence of several mountain summits and recreational routes makes it popular for recreation.</p> <p>The landscape value is considered to be <b>high</b>.</p>
<b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	<p>The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Extensive high level views of peaks and ridgelines, and over to opposing sides of glens.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Wild character in the interior due to remoteness from roads and settlements, lack of evidence of modern human use, dominance of natural landforms, and vast scale of the mountain landscape.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	<p>This is a highly valued LCT. The lack of other development and open character particularly on higher ground makes it susceptible to change of the type proposed. However existing wind development is experienced in adjacent areas and is often seen from summits within this LCT, which slightly reduces its sensitivity.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity is therefore considered to be <b>medium-high</b>.</p>

<b>Potential Effects</b>	<p>Potential indirect effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind turbines in the wider landscape may appear and distract in high level views.</li> <li>• The increased influence of wind development may reduce the wild character of the landscape in the less developed interior.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<p>There would be no direct change to this LCT. The ZTV indicates patches of intervisibility throughout the detailed study area, mainly near hill summits and on facing slopes and particularly north of Glen Affric (e.g. VP 21). Turbines would nearly always be seen in areas where the Operational Development can already be experienced, and would be barely perceptible in the context of the Operational Development (see VP 13 and VP 21) and several other wind farms which are present in the wider landscape, particularly to the south-east and east, as can be seen from higher elevations. Given distance, scale and context, the Proposed Development would not result in any discernible change in landscape characteristics.</p> <p>Magnitude of change is predicted to be <b>negligible</b>.</p>
<b>Effect Significance</b>	<p>The Proposed Development may be barely perceptible from this LCT and given distance, scale and context, would be unlikely to result in an increase to the perceived influence of wind development in extensive high level views. Due to the presence of wind farms in the wider context it would not alter the intrinsic character of this landscape.</p> <p>The landscape effect would therefore be <b>negligible</b> for this LCT, during construction and operation.</p>

**Table 1.2.9: LCT 236 – Smooth Moorland Ridges (OWESG LCA LN4)**

<b>Landscape Baseline</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<p>This LCT comprises gently sloping hills alongside the wide glaciated valleys to the south-east of the Great Glen, around 17.9 km to the south of the Proposed Development. It is a large scale landscape of low-lying ridges with smooth undulating topography. On the flat plateaux there is an accumulation of peat, and the surfaces are riven with exposed peat hags. The rounded hills are swathed in heather moorland, often interspersed with a rough grass sward which contributes to a uniform appearance. On lower slopes there are small blocks of pasture, often associated with stone dykes and fences. Scrubby rowan and birch follow burns and gullies which cut through the grain of the ridges and disrupt the smooth landform. Oak and birch wood occupy some lower slopes and coniferous forests also occur along the hillsides and often cover the lower foothills. Properties, usually of traditional stone are present on the edges of the LCT, and there are remains of medieval and post-medieval settlement and agriculture. There is a uniformity to this large scale landscape with a simple landcover pattern and smooth open slopes that are highly visible.</p>
<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<p>The key characteristics of the Smooth Moorland Ridges LCT are noted by NatureScot as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Gently undulating hills with smooth elongated ridge profiles, developing a more undulating landform in transitional areas with Rugged Massif - Lochaber.</i></li> <li>• <i>Simple, large scale landscape pattern dictated by uniform landcover and uncomplicated landform.</i></li> <li>• <i>Plateau summits generally draped in a mixture of grasses, heather and sedges, with exposed peat hags.</i></li> <li>• <i>Large blocks of conifer forests along the hill sides and lower foothills.</i></li> <li>• <i>Broadleaf woods on lower slopes and along loch edges, often framing crofts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Scattered croft settlements with stone dykes concentrated on lower slopes, particularly along roads and south-facing slopes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Roads and transmission lines following the base of the hills.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Smooth open slopes highly visible.</i>"</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	This LCT forms a peripheral part of the regionally designated Loch Lochy and Loch Oich SLA and is valued as a backdrop to the Great Glen. A larger part of it also falls within WLA 19: Braeroy – Glenshirra – Creag Meagaidh, although signs of human influence such as conifer plantations, roads and transmission lines reduce perceptions of wildness in some areas. The landscape value is considered to be <b>medium-high</b> .
<b>Assessment of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>Landscape Receptors</b>	The principal aspects of this landscape which may be affected by the Proposed Development comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Simple, large scale landscape pattern dictated by uniform landcover and uncomplicated landform"</i>.</li> <li>• <i>"Smooth open slopes which are highly visible."</i></li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Sensitivity</b>	This LCT contains some areas which are highly valued. Its simple, smooth landform and lack of existing development in its interior make it very susceptible to change of the type proposed although the large scale is theoretically accommodating of large scale development. Presence of other structures and development in some areas (such as the north-east part) may also reduce sensitivity locally, particularly to indirect change, as well as a number of wind farm developments present in the wider landscape. Landscape sensitivity is therefore considered to be <b>medium-high</b> .
<b>Potential Effects</b>	Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearance of wind turbines in the wider landscape may interrupt the simple and smooth landform of this large scale landscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	There would be no direct change to this LCT. Indirect change would result from intervisibility of turbines in the landscape context to the north. The ZTV indicates relatively extensive ZTV coverage on north-facing slopes within the detailed study area. The Proposed Development would usually be seen from locations where the Operational Development can already be seen, appearing adjacent to Operational Development turbines and slightly larger in scale (see VP 15), thereby increasing the prominence of wind development in this direction. There would be some additional areas of intervisibility on some of the lower slopes although this would mainly consist of tips. The turbines would also usually be experienced in the context of existing wind developments, including Corrimony to the north and Beinneun (and Extension) and Millennium Wind Farms to the north-west. The Proposed Development would be introduced to a context featuring other wind development but would result in perceptible intensification of wind development as a landscape characteristic experienced from this LCT. Magnitude of change is predicted to be <b>low</b> .
<b>Effect Significance</b>	Effects on this LCA would be indirect, resulting from the appearance of turbines in the wider landscape context to the north, next to the Operational Development. Given their scale and position next to existing turbines, they would potentially increase the perceived influence of wind development in the wider context. However, given the presence of other wind developments it is considered that the Proposed Development would not result in a noticeable change to the key characteristics of the LCT, including the perception of a simple and smooth landform. The landscape effect would therefore be <b>minor</b> for this LCT, during construction and operation.