

TECHNICAL APPENDIX 8.3: ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES

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1. Technical Appendix 8.3: Assessment of Landscape Character Types

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This appendix sets out the assessment findings for the Landscape Character Assessment included within the 2021 EIAR, outlining any changes to the assessment for the Proposed Varied Development.
- 1.1.2 Only one Landscape Character Type (LCTs) within the detailed study area was identified within the 2021 EIAR as potentially experiencing a landscape effect of Minor-Moderate or above as a result of the 2021 EIAR Layout (as illustrated in **Figure 8.5: Landscape Character Types within Detailed Study Area**):
- LCT 222: Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness.
- 1.1.3 Two additional LCTs have been included to assist with the assessment of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig Special Landscape Area (see **Technical Appendix 8.4: Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes**):
- LCT 224: Farmed and Wooded Foothills; and
 - LCT 225: Broad Steep-sided Glen.
- 1.1.4 The above areas are assessed in the following tables, in accordance with criteria outlined in the **2021 EIAR, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual, Section 8.5 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria**.
- 1.1.5 The assessment references the 18 turbine 2021 EIAR Layout. The Additional Information Report (AIR) submitted in 2022 did not identify any changes to landscape effects for the Consented Development resulting from the removal of three turbines.
- 1.1.6 Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes is detailed in **Technical Appendix 8.4: Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes**

1.2 Landscape Character Types

Table 1.2.1: LCT 222 – Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness (OWESG LCA LN10)

Landscape Baseline	
Description	<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 Beauldy-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>
Key Characteristics	<p>The key characteristics of the Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness LCT are noted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, gently rolling moorland plateaux with distinct edges descending to adjoining straths and glens or rising to merge with Rugged Massif. • Plateau with a patchy texture of small rocky outcrop hills, bogs and lochans in no clear hierarchy or discernible pattern. • Hilltops and upper slopes dominated by rocky heather moorland, except in the north east where extensive, contrasting conifer forests dominate. • Regenerating trees and scrub in glens with rivers and sheltered lower hillsides. • Strong contrast in landcover and settlement between the plateau and adjoining straths and glens. • Sparsely inhabited and little evidence of active land use. • A few historic sites indicating past settlement and land use. • Orientation is difficult due to the lack of hierarchy, pattern and foci in the landform and landcover. • Within the plateau distance and scale are generally difficult to perceive due to the lack of elements of known size. • Distinct edges isolate the plateau from the adjacent areas and give the sense of a vast remote, upland moor. • At the plateau edges, expansive views over inhabited straths and glens create surprise. • Eastern areas have a semi-exposed character with occasional views of distant hills framed by the distinct edges of conifer forests. • Perception of remoteness on the open plateau, from the rugged patchy texture and absence of obvious human artefacts.
Landscape Value	<p>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</p>

Landscape Baseline	
	reduce its sense of individuality, sense of remoteness and scenic quality to a degree. Landscape value is therefore considered Medium.
Changes to the Landscape Baseline since 2021 EIAR	No notable changes to the baseline have been observed within this LCT. There would be an increased wind turbine presence within the view due to the construction of Aberarder Wind Farm, now visible to the east.
Consented Development - Summary of Landscape Effects	
Summary of 2021 LVIA	<p>The 2021 LVIA identified a localised <u>Minor to Moderate</u> (not significant) effect during construction and during operation including north-east of the Proposed Development due to prominent turbines being visible in the southern skyline view. Overall, the landscape effect was anticipated to be <u>Minor</u> (not significant) across this LCT during construction and operation.</p> <p>Due to the presence of wind development in this LCT and adjacent landscapes, 2021 Proposed Development was considered unlikely to considerably alter the landscape character. New turbines and tracks would increase the developed footprint and result in these areas becoming more strongly characterised by wind turbines. From the majority of LCT, the 2021 Proposed Development turbines would be experienced in the context of the Operational Development and other wind farms visible on distant skylines. The 2021 Proposed Development would generally be experienced as larger and prominent within 5km and to the north, north-east, where would appear in front of or next to the Operational Development having some potential to alter the perception of scale and distance. From west, south-west, it would be experienced behind the Operational Development, appearing less prominent on the skyline. The 2021 Proposed Development would introduce new visibility of turbines to some lower slopes and valley areas to the north, east and south, and potentially increase evidence of active land use and obvious human artefacts. However, forestry would screen the Proposed Development from some north-easterly parts of Glen Coiltie, near Drumnadrochit and within the LCT sub-area north of Glen Urquhart.</p> <p>Sensitivity was noted to be Medium to both direct and indirect change. The remote characteristics make this LCT susceptible to change. However this is mitigated by the presence of existing wind turbines and forestry in the detailed study area.</p> <p>Magnitude of change was predicted to be Medium to the north and north-east and Low in areas to the west and south-west of the Proposed Development and LCT to the north of Glen Urquhart.</p>
Consented Layout	The consented layout of 15 turbines would not change the assessment or conclusions for this LCT.
Proposed Varied Development – Assessment of Landscape Effects	
Landscape Receptors	<p>The principal aspects of this LCT which may be affected by the Proposed Varied Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong contrast in landcover and settlement between the plateau and adjoining straths and glens. • Sense of remoteness due to sparse habitation, little evidence of active land use or obvious human artefacts and rugged, patchy texture. • Lack of focal points which makes orientation and sense of distance and scale difficult to perceive. • Distinct edges which isolate the plateau from adjacent areas and give the sense of a vast, remote, upland moor.

Landscape Baseline	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansive views over inhabited straths and glens from the plateau edges and occasional views of distant hills framed by the distinct edges of conifer forests from eastern areas.
Landscape Sensitivity	<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 Medium.</p>
Potential Effects	<p>Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct effects of the Proposed Varied Development within the LCT may increase evidence of active land use and obvious human artefacts. The Proposed Varied Development may appear and distract within expansive views or erode the contrast between upland and settled areas. The Proposed Varied Development may introduce additional focal points adjacent to the Operational Development, changing the perceived sense of scale and distance.
Magnitude of Change	<p>The Proposed Varied Development would result in both direct and indirect changes to the southern sub-area of this LCT, and indirect changes to the northern sub-area, across Glen Urquhart. Theoretical visibility for Consented Development was already shown to be widespread within the detailed study area, mostly within the southern sub-area of the LCT directly affected. The Proposed Varied Development ZTV indicates a very small increase in the extent of intervisibility within this LCT, compared to the Consented Development, in both the northern and southern sub-areas, mostly around the lower periphery of slopes where ZTV coverage of the Consented Development is already obtained. However, due to the taller height of Proposed Varied Development, there would typically be more turbines visible within the area of theoretical visibility than the Consented Development. Within more southerly and eastern areas to the north, the blades of Proposed Varied Development turbine would be more noticeable at close proximity, whereas within areas to the north-west and west, new areas of visibility would be limited to perceptible small tips or turbines seen in the context of the closer Operational Development.</p> <p>Within most areas affected, wind turbines are already a noticeable feature of the landscape and/or the wider context. The Proposed Varied Development would typically be seen within the context of the Operational Development, with the exception of some areas of lower ground, mostly located around the eastern part of the site, and within around 3 – 4 km to the east, north-east and south. However, the noticeably taller height of the Proposed Varied Development would lead to wind turbines becoming a more noticeable feature, particularly within the southern sub-area to the north-east, south, and east where the greater disparity in height would be seen. Within areas to the west, the change would be less notable because the Proposed Varied Development would usually be seen beyond the much more prominent turbines of the Operational Development and the difference in turbine height would be less apparent.</p> <p>Within the northern sub-area and more northerly parts of the southern sub-area, the Proposed Varied Development would occupy a similar extent of the southern skyline to the Consented Development, but the taller turbine height would be perceptible with turbines sitting higher above the skyline and likely to appear closer.</p> <p>The magnitude of change would vary across the Landscape Character Type (LCT). In the southern sub-area, directly affected by the Proposed Varied Development, landscape change would range from perceptible to notable in localised areas. In the immediate context of the site, and in the easterly and north-easterly context up to around 5 km, this would result in a Medium-High magnitude of landscape change</p>

Landscape Baseline	
	during both construction and operation in the southern LCT sub-area. In the northern sub-area and remaining parts of the southern sub-area where existing turbines are already influential, the magnitude of change would typically be Low.
Significance of Effect (summary of key changes)	<p>The taller stature of the Proposed Varied Development turbines would typically lead to these appearing more prominent than those of the Consented Development and would widen the area currently characterised by the wind turbines of the Operational Development. This would lead to a greater area where a more direct influence of wind farm development would be experienced, extending from the immediate area surrounding the site up to around 5 km to the north-east and east towards Meall Fuar-mhonaidh (see, VP3 (Figures V3a-3.1-3.5 and V3b-3.1-3.5)). This is likely to affect the sense of remoteness, in some localised low-lying areas where the Operational Development is not visible. The greater disparity in height between the Operational Development turbines and those of the Proposed Varied Development would lead to a greater perceived separation between these two wind farms. Therefore, within these more easterly parts of the LCT, whilst the Proposed Varied Development would appear much closer and more present, the Operational Development may conversely be perceived as further away, expanding the sense of distance. Nevertheless, this would contribute to a more widespread perception of wind farms characterising this LCT.</p> <p>The change would be less notable when experienced from areas further to the north, including the northern sub-area where, although taller and slightly more prominent than the Consented Development, the turbines of the Proposed Varied Development would have a similar effect on the southern skyline, seen adjacent to the Operational Development. Wind turbines already form a characteristic in this context and, although the Proposed Varied Development would increase their number and draw them eastwards along the skyline, it would not very noticeably increase the role of turbines as a landscape characteristic in these areas.</p> <p>In westerly areas, where the Proposed Varied Development would be seen through and in the context of the Operational Development, the greater numbers of turbines may be perceptible which may increase the depth and density of turbines seen to the east (see, for example VP1 (Figures V3a-1.1-1.4 and V3b-1.1-1.5)). However, it would not lead to a noticeably increased influence of wind turbines as a characteristic within these areas.</p> <p>The landscape effect is therefore anticipated to be Moderate (significant) during construction within a localised area around the Site and up to around 5 km to the east and north-east. However, for the more distant and less sensitive parts of southern LCT sub-area and northern LCT sub-area overall, the landscape effect is predicted to be Minor (not significant) during construction and operation.</p>
Change to Effect Significance	The Proposed Varied Development would lead to an increase from a localised Minor - Moderate (not significant) effect to a localised Moderate (significant) effect, with this effect predicted to cover a slightly wider area up to 5 km to the east and north-east. Elsewhere, the level of effect to the wider LCT would be unchanged at Minor (not significant).

Table 1.2.2: LCT 224 – Farmed and Wooded Foothills (OWESG LCA LN16)

Landscape Baseline	
Description	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

Landscape Baseline	
	mixture of agriculture and forestry. There is a long history of human settlement in the area as evidenced by archaeological findings. Present day settlements are relatively small and clustered around a network of minor roads.
Key Characteristics	<p>The key characteristics of the Farmed and Wooded Foothills LCT are noted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. • A diverse mix of woodland, agricultural land use and open moorland creating a balanced but complex range of open and enclosed spaces. • 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. • Many archaeological relics from prehistoric to 18th-19th Century periods. • 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. • A sense of care and prosperity in settled and farmed parts due to active agricultural land management.
Landscape Value	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 Medium-High.
Changes to the Landscape Baseline since 2021 EIAR	Whilst on-going management may have led to some changes in forest cover within the LCT, this has not led to any noticeable change in character, and therefore no noticeable changes in the baseline characteristics of the landscape have been observed.
Consented Development - Summary of Landscape Effects	
Summary of 2021 LVIA	<p>The 2021 LVIA identified a localised Negligible to Minor (not significant) effect for LCT 224 during construction and operation.</p> <p>The assessment noted that, due to the high proportion of woodland cover within the LCT, intervisibility with the Proposed Development would be largely limited to open slopes and higher elevations, including Carn an t-Suidhe (see VP 6, Figures V3a-5.1-5.4 and V3b-5.1-5.5), Creag Mhor north of Glendoe, around Loch Kemp and near some summits to the north, as well as by Loch Tarff. The Proposed Development would appear next to or in front of the Operational Development but would often be perceived to be larger in scale. However, this would be seen within a context where other existing wind farm developments are already experienced within the wider landscape.</p> <p>Overall, it was considered that the larger size and closer proximity of the 2021 Proposed Development 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. As a result, the perception of wind turbines in vistas from open, upper, exposed slopes may increase, but considering existing wind development within the surrounding context, this would not affect the character of this LCT.</p> <p>Sensitivity was noted to be Medium within this LCT, with the magnitude of change predicted to be locally Negligible-Low.</p>

Landscape Baseline	
Consented Layout	The consented layout of 15 turbines would not change the assessment or conclusions for this LCT.
Proposed Varied Development – Assessment of Landscape Effects	
Landscape Receptors	<p>The principal aspects of this LCT which may be affected by the Proposed Varied Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
Landscape Sensitivity	<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 Medium.</p>
Potential Effects	<p>Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wind turbines may appear and disrupt panoramic views from open, exposed upper slopes.
Magnitude of Change	<p>There would be no direct change to this LCT. The comparative ZTV indicates that there would be some localised areas of new intervisibility within areas towards the north of the LCT, within the detailed study area. These areas are mostly characterised by forest, although some intervisibility with more open farmland around the River Farigaig and Balchraggan are also indicated. In general terms, the Proposed Varied Development would appear similar to the Consented Development from more northerly parts of the LCT, appearing as tips or blades above the skyline to the south-west or west. However, the taller turbines would appear more noticeable from some southerly areas, particularly around Suidhe where their tall appearance would be more clearly discernible in relation to the smaller turbines of the Operational Development. This is likely to lead to turbines being seen as a more noticeable feature within the westerly context, albeit from only localised parts of the LCT. However, features within the more immediate landscape would continue to be more influential in defining the characteristics of the LCT</p> <p>The perceptible change in characteristics for a localised part of the surrounding context is considered to lead to a Low magnitude of landscape change during construction and operation.</p>
Significance of Effect (summary of key changes)	<p>Within areas towards the northern half of this LCT, generally to the north of Foyers, the appearance of the Proposed Varied Development would continue to be only occasionally experienced within the westerly context, typically as only a few blades or tips above the horizon. Although this may slightly increase the sense of wind farm development in this context, it is unlikely to noticeably alter the characteristics of the LCT in this area, as wind turbines are already experienced to a similar degree. Within the more southerly half of the LCT, the Proposed Varied Development would also be experienced only occasionally, due to the more prevalent forest and woodland cover. However, it would appear more noticeably taller and prominent in the north-western context of these areas, likely to form a greater focus and potentially altering perceptions of scale and distance due to its greater size in comparison to other surrounding developments, and particularly the Operational Development.</p> <p>Overall, the landscape effect is predicted to be Minor (not significant) for this LCT during construction and operation.</p>
Change to Effect Significance	The Proposed Varied Development would slightly increase the landscape effect for this LCT from a localised Negligible – Minor (not significant) effect to an overall Minor (not significant) effect. However, this would not lead to any new significant effects.

Table 1.2.3: LCT 225: Broad Steep-sided Glen (OWESG LCA LN19)

Landscape Baseline	
Description	<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>
Key Characteristics	<p>The key characteristics of the Broad Steep-sided Glen LCT are noted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clearly defined, broad, linear, steep sided, v-shaped glen and deep loch cutting through mountains and hills, with limited areas of flatter ground. • Large-scale conifer forests with small areas of open moorland covering most of the glen sides, particularly the lower slopes. • Small patches of broad leaved woodlands, mostly in side glens and close to the shore. • Agricultural land on less steep slopes, glen intersections and alluvial plains. • Few settlements, with a well-defined core, located at glen intersections and on gentler slopes, separated by long stretches of relatively uninhabited land. • 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. • Strong evidence of past settlement in the number and diversity of archaeological and historic sites from prehistoric times to the 20th Century. • Contrast between the visual and seasonal diversity of broadleaf woodland and bright, open pockets of farmland and the forested and moorland surroundings. • Contrast between the smaller scale landscapes of settled, lower slopes and the large scale moorland and forested backdrop. • 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. • Visual focus directed along the linear route of the glen or across the water to the opposite shore and up to the skyline.
Landscape Value	<p>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</p>

Landscape Baseline	
	and associations with Loch Ness and its famous monster give it a notable value. Landscape value is therefore considered to be High.
Changes to the Landscape Baseline since 2021 EIAR	Whilst on-going management may have led to some changes in forest and woodland cover within the LCT, this has not led to any noticeable change in character, and therefore no noticeable changes in the baseline characteristics of the landscape have been observed.
Consented Development - Summary of Landscape Effects	
Summary of 2021 LVIA	<p>The 2021 LVIA identified a localised Minor (not significant) effect for LCT 225 during construction and operation, affecting elevated areas of the eastern shore of Loch Ness, south of Dores, with a Negligible effect elsewhere.</p> <p>The assessment noted that, although the 2021 Proposed Development would be theoretically intervisible with small parts of the LCT, this would be very limited from lower lying areas, likely to comprise only a few glimpsed views of turbine tips. However, the turbines would be more notable from elevated parts of the LCT to the east of Loch Ness which may locally affect the perception of developed uplands experienced from these areas. This would be a localised effect and, on the whole, would not notably change the balance between the settled valley floor and uplands. The 2021 Proposed Development would be experienced in the context of the Operational Development and would not form a new 'interruption' on the skyline, although it may become slightly more of a visual focus. It was considered that this would be a localised change and would be unlikely to lead to any recognisable loss or reduction of any of the key characteristics of the LCT.</p> <p>Sensitivity was noted to be Medium – High for this LCT, with the magnitude of change being locally Low-Medium for elevated areas on the eastern shore south of Dores, but Negligible elsewhere.</p>
Consented Layout	The consented layout of 15 turbines would not change the assessment or conclusions for this LCT.
Proposed Varied Development – Assessment of Landscape Effects	
Landscape Receptors	<p>The principal aspects of this LCT which may be affected by the Proposed Varied Development comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contrast between the smaller scale landscapes of settled, lower slopes and the large scale moorland and forested backdrop. • The simple linear and enclosed visual composition of bands of land, water and sky with long skylines of even height. • Visual focus directed along the linear route of the glen or across the water to the opposite shore and up to the skyline.
Landscape Sensitivity	<p>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.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity to development of the type proposed is considered to be Medium-High.</p>
Potential Effects	<p>Potential effects which may result to this landscape comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • The presence of turbines along the skyline could interrupt the simple, linear composition and distract visual focus.

Landscape Baseline	
Magnitude of Change	<p>There would be no direct change to this LCT. The comparative ZTV (see Figure 8.3 – Comparative ZTV of the Consented Development and Varied Development) suggests that there would be minimal areas of increased intervisibility with this LCT, largely affecting the lower-lying edge of existing areas of intervisibility where the taller turbines of the Proposed Varied Development would be seen to crest the skyline. Within lower areas, around the loch shore and on the loch, the Proposed Varied Development would typically lead to a few hubs being seen, where previously, only blades or tips of the Consented Development might appear (see, for example VP2 (Figures V3a-2.1-2.4 and V3b-2.1-2.5) and VP8 (Figures V3a-7.1-7.4 and V3b-7.1-7.5)). Within more elevated areas, such as open areas above Drumnadrochit or Dores (see VP17 (Figures V3a-12.1-12.4 and V3b-12.1-12.5)), the visible turbines would appear taller and more prominent above the skyline, likely to lead to the Proposed Varied Development appearing closer and increasing the impression of turbines within the surrounding landscape when viewed from some higher areas around the northern end of Loch Ness. Nevertheless, the appearance of the Proposed Varied Development would continue to be infrequent, with trees and woodland around the loch likely to limit its appearance and would generally be seen contained between gaps in the enclosing hillside which would limit its prominence.</p> <p>Magnitude of Change is therefore considered to be locally Low - Medium for elevated areas around the northern end of Loch Ness, and Negligible elsewhere during construction and operation.</p>
Significance of Effect (summary of key changes)	<p>The effect of the Proposed Varied Development would continue to be localised with the majority of more noticeable effects occurring within elevated areas on the eastern side of Loch Ness, particularly at its northern end. The taller turbines of the Proposed Varied Development would appear occasionally more prominent and slightly closer than those of the Consented Development, but would appear clearly external to the LCT, seen within the surrounding upland context beyond the containment of the Great Glen. Occasional turbines are already present in this context and therefore, the Proposed Varied Development would not add a new characteristic to the LCT, though it may slightly increase the perception of a more developed upland context. Nevertheless, this is not predicted to change the contrast between the smaller scale inhabited landscapes of the LCT and the wider backdrop, because the turbines would be associated with this backdrop only, where existing turbines are already experienced when moving through the LCT.</p> <p>Similarly to the Consented Development, the turbines of the Proposed Varied Development would be experienced through low points and side glens which from breaks in enclosure of the steep glen-sides. Whilst the taller turbines would be slightly more noticeable and may form a visual focus, they would continue to be well contained by the topography and would not interrupt the linear composition.</p> <p>The landscape effect during construction and operation is predicted to be Minor (not significant), <i>localised</i> to areas around the north end of Loch Ness, and elsewhere Negligible.</p>
Change to Effect Significance	There would be no change to the landscape effect for this LCT.