# **TECHNICAL APPENDIX 5.2: Summary of Scoping Process**

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## 1. Technical Appendix 5.2: Summary of Scoping Process

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This technical appendix sets out the process and rationale behind, and identification of, the scope for the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) and cumulative landscape and visual assessment (CLVIA) for the Proposed Varied Development. The aim of this appraisal is to focus the assessment on those receptors where potential changes in effects would be most likely to result in additional or increased significant effects compared with those identified for the Consented Development.

## 1.2 Study Area

- 1.2.1 A study area of 40km was used for the 2021 LVIA. This was considered to be the maximum distance within which any significant landscape or visual effects may be experienced for the Consented Development. A smaller study area of 20km (the detailed study area) was defined following initial review and site appraisal for a more targeted and fine-grained assessment.
- 1.2.2 It is considered that any significant effects for the Proposed Varied Development would still occur within the 40km study area and that the majority of significant effects would be most likely to occur within the detailed 20km study area, as the ZTV which has been run for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in the extent of theoretical visibility compared to the Consented Development. Therefore, the same study areas have been used for the Proposed Varied Development to allow for consistent comparison.

#### **Cumulative Assessment**

1.2.3 All landscape areas and VPs and routes included in the main assessment were considered for inclusion in the CLVIA. The scope of the cumulative landscape and visual assessments is detailed in Table 1.3.3 and Table 1.4.3.

## 1.3 Scope of Landscape Assessment

## **Designated and Protected Landscapes**

- 1.3.1 Designated and protected landscapes within the detailed study area (see Figure 5.4) are considered in Table 1.3.1 and reasoning provided for their inclusion or exclusion. Areas which were previously scoped out of the 2021 LVIA have not been considered further. These include:
  - Kyle of Tongue NSA
  - North West Sutherland NSA
  - WLA 29: Rhiddoroch Beinn Dearg Ben Wyvis
  - WLA 32: Inverpolly Glen Canisp
  - WLA 33: Quinag
  - WLA 35: Ben Klibreck Armine Forest
  - Ardross Castle GDL

- Balnagown Castle GDL
- Dunrobin Castle GDL
- Leckmelm GDL
- Novar GDL
- Skibo Castle GDL
- Ben Wyvis SLA
- Bens Griam and Loch nan Clar SLA
- Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA

Table 1.3.1: Designated and Protected Landscapes within the Wider Study Area

Designated / protected Landscape	Effect Identified within 2021 LVIA	Potential for Significant Effects	Inclusion in Detailed Assessment			
National Scenic Area (I	National Scenic Area (NSA)					
Assynt - Coigach NSA	Minor (not significant)	The 2021 EIAR concluded that effects on the Assynt - Coigach NSA would be Minor (not significant). While the ZTV does not indicate a substantial increase in the extent of theoretical visibility, the turbines would become more prominent features in the landscape, and the NSA is proposed to be included in the assessment. An assessment has been undertaken in line with the 2025 NatureScot Guidance.	Yes			
Dornoch Firth NSA	Negligible (not significant)	A Negligible effect was identified for this NSA in the 2021 EIAR where turbines would affect only low-lying coastal areas and surrounding hills in the western part of the area where they would be seen within the context of existing wind turbines. The ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development does not indicate a substantial increase in the extent of theoretical visibility, and due to the distance (approximately 20km) the overall likelihood for significant effects is considered to be low even with the introduction of turbine lighting.	No			
Wild Land Area (WLA)						
WLA 34: Reay – Cassley	Range from Moderate - Major and Moderate (significant) in	The Proposed Varied Development is within this WLA. Significant effects were identified within south-eastern parts of the WLA in the 2021 EIAR. The ZTV of the Proposed Varied	Yes			

Designated /	Effect	Potential for Significant Effects	Inclusion in
protected Landscape	Identified within 2021 LVIA		Detailed Assessment
	localised areas, to Minor (not significant) effects in some areas, elsewhere Negligible	Development indicates some increase in the extent of theoretical visibility mostly around the east of Glen Cassley upper plateau. As there is potential for increased effects on the WLA due to the larger turbines, a revised WLA has been included in the assessment of the Proposed Varied Development. The potential requirement for visible aviation lighting may additionally result in some new effects. Therefore, it has been included in the night-time assessment of visible aviation lighting.	
WLA 37: Foinaven – Ben Hee	Localised Minor (not significant)	Some localised Minor (not significant) indirect effects were identified within the 2021 EIAR from open and elevated parts of the WLA within 10-11km of the southern and southwestern boundaries. The preliminary ZTV of the Proposed Varied Development indicates a small increase in the extent of theoretical visibility. Although it is unlikely to result in a very noticeable change in distant views, there is potential for increased effects due to visible aviation lighting. Therefore, the WLA has been included in the night-time assessment of visible aviation lighting.	Yes
Special Landscape Are	a (SLA)		
Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA	Minor (not significant)	A Minor (not significant) effect was identified for this SLA overall within the 2021 assessment. Elsewhere within this SLA effects were considered to be Negligible. While the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development does not indicate a substantial increase in the extent of theoretical visibility, the turbines would become more prominent features in the landscape. The potential requirement for turbine lighting may result in some new effects. Therefore, the SLA has been included in the assessment.	Yes

Designated / protected Landscape	Effect Identified within 2021 LVIA	Potential for Significant Effects	Inclusion in Detailed Assessment
Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA	Negligible (not significant)	A Negligible effect was identified for this SLA in the 2021 assessment. The ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development does not indicate a substantial increase in the extent of theoretical visibility and the potential for significant effects overall is considered to be low.	No

## **Landscape Character**

- 1.3.2 NatureScot in conjunction with partner Councils, has undertaken detailed review and classification of various landscape areas and types of Scotland. Nine individual LCTs are identified within the detailed study area as shown on Figure 5.5).
- 1.3.3 LCTs and LCAs within the detailed study area which have been considered for inclusion within the assessment are included in Table 1.3.2 and reasoning provided for their inclusion or exclusion. LCTs which were previously scoped out of the 2021 LVIA have not been considered further. These include:
  - LCT 136: Rocky Hills and Moorland
  - LCT 330: Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes Ross & Cromarty

Table 1.3.2: Landscape Character Types (LCTs) within the Detailed Study Area

LCT / LCA	Effect Identified within 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusion in Detailed Assessment
LCT 134: Sweeping Moorland and Flows	Minor to Moderate (not significant) for western sub- area, Minor (not significant) for eastern sub- area	A Minor to Moderate (not significant) effect was identified within the western sub-area within the 2021 assessment. While the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates limited areas of new visibility, higher numbers of turbines would be visible within parts of this LCT and the taller turbines would become a more prominent feature in the landscape.	Yes

LCT / LCA	Effect Identified within 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusion in Detailed Assessment
LCT 135: Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland	Major (significant) within development site, Moderate (significant) within surrounding context up to 8km and up to 10km in localised areas west of Glen Cassley, beyond this Minor to Minor – Moderate (not significant), Negligible in areas with little or no visibility.	The 2021 assessment found effects ranging between Major (significant) within the development site and Minor – Moderate elsewhere where there was found to be visibility. The Proposed Varied Development is located within the LCT. The ZTV indicates some areas of new visibility, and higher numbers of turbines would be visible within some areas.	Yes
LCT 138: Lone Mountains	Minor (not significant)	A Minor (not significant) effect was previously identified within this LCT in the 2021 assessment. The ZTV does not indicate any areas of new visibility, and due to distance it is unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects within this LCT.	No

LCT / LCA	Effect Identified within 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusion in Detailed Assessment
LCT 139: Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness & Sutherland	Within the Ben Assynt sub-area: Minor (not significant) within around 15km, localised Minor to Moderate (not significant) around Meall an Aonaich. Negligible elsewhere. Within the Freevater — Glencalvie sub-area: Negligible (not significant)	A localised Minor to Moderate (not significant) effect was found within the Ben Assynt sub-area around Meall and Aonaich, with other effects ranging from Minor to Negligible (not significant) within the 2021 assessment. The ZTV indicates limited areas of new intervisibility, although higher numbers of turbines would be visible within some areas, with turbines likely to appear larger and more prominent.	Yes
LCT 142: Strath - Caithness & Sutherland	Locally Moderate (significant) between Badintagairt and Glenmuick within Glen Cassley. Minor (not significant) elsewhere in Glencassley, within transitional area between Glen Cassley, Strath Oykel and Kyle of Sutherland and in Strath Tirry. Negligible (not significant) elsewhere	Locally Moderate (significant) effects were found within parts of Glen Cassley, with effects ranging from Minor to Negligible elsewhere within the 2021 assessment. While the ZTV indicates few areas of new visibility, higher numbers of turbines would be visible particularly within parts of Glen Cassley and within Strath Tirry, with turbines appearing larger and more prominent.	Yes

LCT / LCA	Effect Identified within 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusion in Detailed Assessment
LCT 145: Farmed and Forested Slopes with Crofting	Minor (not significant) within Lairg sub-area, Negligible within Dornoch Firth sub-area	A Minor (not significant) effect was identified within the Lairg sub-area, and a Negligible (not significant) effect within Dornoch Firth in the 2021 assessment. The ZTV indicates some areas of new intervisiblity from lower slopes within the Lairg sub-area. However, it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects within this LCT.	No
LCT 329: Rounded Mountain Massif	Negligible (not significant)	A Negligible (not significant) effect was previously identified within this LCT in the 2021 assessment. The ZTV indicates a limited areas of new visibility, and while higher numbers of turbines would be visible, due to the distance it is unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects within this LCT.	No

## **Cumulative Landscape Assessment**

1.3.4 The cumulative landscape assessment has considered all designated or protected landscapes and LCTs / LCAs identified for inclusion within the landscape assessment and listed in Table 1.3.3.

Table 1.3.3: Designated / Protected Landscapes and LCTs / LCAs included in the Cumulative Landscape Assessment

Landscape Area	Name
Designated / Protect	ed Landscapes
National Scenic Area	Assynt - Coigach NSA.
Wild Land Area	WLA 34: Reay – Cassley; and
Special Landscape Area	Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA.
LCTs	
LCTs	LCT 134: Sweeping Moorland and Flows;
	LCT 135: Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland;
	<ul> <li>LCT 139: Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness &amp; Sutherland (Ben- More Assynt sub-area only);</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>LCT 142: Strath - Caithness &amp; Sutherland (Glen Cassley, Strath; and</li> </ul>
	Oykel and Kyle of Sutherland, and Strath Tirry sub-areas).

## 1.4 Scope of Visual Assessment

1.4.1 Potential VPs and visual receptor locations which were selected for inclusion in the assessment are detailed in this section along with the rationale for their inclusion or otherwise.

## **Viewpoint Selection**

- 1.4.2 VPs considered for inclusion in the assessment are outlined in Table 1.4.1. This includes those which were chosen for inclusion within the assessment, and those which were considered and not included. This includes VPs for which significant effects or Minor-Moderate effects were previously identified, as well as other locations where initial ZTVs for the Proposed Varied Development and wirelines indicate potential for increased effects in comparison with the Consented Development. It also includes VPs specifically requested for inclusion by NatureScot.
- 1.4.3 The final list of VPs has been confirmed with NatureScot and Highland Council (THC) (see Figure 5.6)

Table 1.4.1: Appraisal of Viewpoints Considered for the LVIA

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP1 A836 above the Crask Inn NC 52294 25050	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Minor (not significant)	Overlooking local stopping point on otherwise undeveloped route. ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility. Included given the sensitivity of the VP.	Yes
VP2 A836 bridge by Dalnessie entrance NC 57475 13940	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Minor to Moderate (not significant)	Representative of views obtained by travellers on the A836. The ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a small increase in number of turbine blade tips theoretically visible.	Yes

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP3 Saval NC 59173 08273	Included in 2021 assessment but proposed for exclusion in Scoping report.	Minor (not significant)	Representative of views from scattered residential properties. Excluded as based on the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP.	No
VP4 Rhilochan NC 74824 06805	Included in 2021 assessment but proposed for exclusion in Scoping report.	Negligible- (not significant)	Representative of views from residential area to east of Proposed Varied Development. Excluded as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development does not indicate an increase in number of turbine blade tips theoretically visible. It is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP.	No
VP5 Ben Hee NC 42655 33931	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Minor (not significant)	Illustrative of elevated views from popular Corbett summit within WLA 37 – Foinaven – Ben Hee. Included given the potential for increased effects on WLA 37 due to the increased scale of the turbines and associated visible aviation lighting.	Yes

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP6 Rosehall NC 47028 02032	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Moderate (significant)	Representative of views from small settlement and A837 'A' road close to the site. Included given the prior identification of potential significant effects and as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development and wirelines indicate an increase theoretically visibility and potential effects associated with visible aviation lighting.	Yes
VP7 High Road NC 60226 04804	Included in 2021 assessment but proposed for exclusion in Scoping report.	Minor (not significant)	Representative of scattered residential properties. Excluded as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility, and it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP.	No
VP8 A836 - A838 Junction NC 57326 09947	Included in 2021 assessment but proposed for exclusion in Scoping report.	Minor (not significant)	Views from public road junction and representative of scattered residential properties. Excluded as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility, and it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP.	No

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP9 Achnairn caravan and camping site entrance NC 55793 12701	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Moderate (significant)	Visitor gathering location and representative of scattered residential properties. Included given the increase in theoretical visibility illustrated on the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development and potential effects associated with visible aviation lighting.	Yes
VP10 Ben More Assynt NC 31833 20148	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Minor to Moderate (not significant)	Popular summit and Munro within the Assynt – Coigach NSA and WLA 34 – Reay – Cassley. Included given the potential for increased effects on the NSA and WLA 34 due to the increased scale of the turbines and associated visible aviation lighting.	Yes
VP11 Glencassley road to south of Castle NC 44489 06224	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Moderate (significant)	Representative of views from minor road and Glen Cassley. Included given the prior identification of potential significant effects and as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development and wirelines indicate an increase theoretically visibility.	Yes

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP12 Glencassley road by Langwell Hill NC 40664 12269	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Moderate (significant)	Representative of views from minor road and Glen Cassley. Included given the prior identification of potential significant effects and as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development and wirelines indicate an increase theoretically visibility.	Yes
VP13 Ben Klibreck NC 58527 29902	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Minor to Moderate (not significant)	Popular summit and Munro located on the edge of the Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA and within WLA 35 – Ben Klibreck - Armine Forest. ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility. Included given the sensitivity of the VP and the potential for additional effects due to visible aviation lighting.	Yes
V14 A838 near West Shinness NC 52823 15428	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Moderate (significant)	Visitor gathering location and representative of scattered residential properties. Included given the prior identification of potential significant effects and as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development and wirelines indicate an increase theoretically visibility.	Yes

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP15 B9176, Struie Viewpoint NC 65267 85756	Included in 2021 assessment but proposed for exclusion in Scoping report.	Negligible (not significant)	Stopping point and viewing location for travellers on the B9176 public road within Dornoch Firth NSA. Excluded as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility, and it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP.	No
VP16 Minor road at Inveroykel forest access NC47391 00319	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Minor to Moderate (not significant)	Minor road and representative of scattered residential properties. Also illustrative of cumulative effects. ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility. Included given the proximity to the Proposed Varied Development and the potential prominence of the turbines of the skyline.	Yes
VP17 A836 at Allt na Fearna NC 58238 01712	Included in 2021 assessment but proposed for exclusion in Scoping report.	Negligible (not significant)	Representative of views from section of A-road and Moray Firth National Tourist Route. Excluded as the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility, and it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP.	No

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP18 Carn Chuinneag NH 48364 83325	Included within 2021 assessment, originally proposed to be excluded in the Scoping Report but included to ensure adequate representation of views from the south in accordance with a request by NatureScot.	Minor (not significant)	Popular summit and Corbett within WLA 29 – Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis and on edge of Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA. While the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility, and it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP, it has been included to ensure views from the south of the study area are adequately represented.	Yes
VP19 Seana Bhràigh NH 28181 87872	Included within 2021 assessment, originally proposed to be excluded in the Scoping Report but included to ensure adequate representation of views from the south- west in accordance with a request by NatureScot.	Minor (not significant)	Popular summit and Munro within WLA 29 – Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis and Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA. While the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility, and it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP, it has been included to ensure views from the south-western part of the study area are adequately represented.	Yes

Viewpoint	Consultation History	Effect rating during operation in 2021 LVIA	Appraisal	Inclusio n in Detailed Assessm ent
VP20 Cul Mòr NC 53103 28638	Included within 2021 assessment, originally proposed to be excluded in the Scoping Report but included to ensure views from the west in accordance with a request by NatureScot.	Negligible (not significant)	Popular Corbett summit in Assynt Coigach NSA and WLA 32 – Inverpolly – Glencanisp. While it is considered unlikely that there would be a significant increase in effects experienced from this VP given the distance to the turbines and theoretical visibility shown on the ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development, it has been included to ensure adequate representation of views from the west.	Yes
VP21 Meall an Aonaich NC 33603 16417	Included in 2021 assessment and proposed for inclusion in Scoping Report.	Moderate (significant)	Summit within Assynt Coigach NSA and WLA 34 – Reay – Cassley. The 2021 assessment identified a Moderate (significant) effect. ZTV for the Proposed Varied Development indicates a limited increase in theoretically visibility. Included given the sensitivity of the VP and the potential for additional effects due to visible aviation lighting.	Yes

#### **Residential Locations and Settlements**

- 1.4.4 The 2021 assessment of residential locations was limited to the detailed study area as the potential for significant effects was considered very unlikely beyond this distance. The assessment of the Proposed Varied Development will focus on those receptors where impacts of Minor-Moderate or higher were identified for the Consented Development, as this is considered to capture any potential visual receptors which may experience an increased significant effect on visual amenity as a result of the Proposed Varied Development.
- 1.4.5 Residential and settlement areas scoped into the assessment (see Figure 5.8) therefore include:

RRL4: Dalmichy;RRL6: Achfrish;

- RRL7: Achnairn (upper);
- RRL8: Achnairn (lower);
- RRL9: Shinness Lodge and West Shinness;
- RRL28: Ochtow and Inveroykel Lodge; and
- RRL29: Rosehall village.

#### **Routes**

- 1.4.6 The visual effects on travellers using routes has been considered within the wider study area. The assessment of the Proposed Varied Development will focus on those receptors where impacts of Minor-Moderate or higher were identified for the Consented Development, as this is considered to capture any potential visual receptors which may experience an increased significant effect on visual amenity as a result of the Proposed Varied Development.
- 1.4.7 The following routes have been scoped into the assessment (see Figure 5.8):
  - R4: A838 Dalchork to Corrykinloch;
  - R9: U2117 Cassley Bridge Duchally Road;
  - R12: SU21.03: Allt an Tuir Burn Walk; and
  - R17: Scottish Hill Track 332.

## **Cumulative Visual Assessment**

1.4.8 The cumulative visual assessment has considered all VPs and routes identified for inclusion within the main assessment as listed in Table 1.4.3.

Table 1.4.2: VPs and Routes Included in the Cumulative Visual Assessment

Receptor Location	Name	
Viewpoints	VP1: A836 above the Crask Inn;	
	VP2: A836 bridge by Dalnessie entrance;	
	VP5: Ben Hee;	
	VP6: Rosehall;	
	VP7: High Road;	
	VP9: Achnairn caravan and camping site entrance;	
	VP10: Ben More Assynt;	
	VP11: Glencassley road to south of Castle;	
	VP12: Glencassley road by Langwell Hill;	
	VP13: Ben Klibreck;	
	VP14: A838 near West Shinness;	
	VP16: Minor road at Inveroykel forest access;	
	VP18: Carn Chuinneag;	
	VP19: Seana Bhràigh; and	
	VP21: Meall an Aonaich	

Receptor Location	Name
Routes	R4: A838 Dalchork to Corrykinloch;
	R8: C1136 Ardgay – Culrain – Doune – Brae Road;
	R9: U2117 Cassley Bridge – Duchally Road;
	R12: SU21.03: Allt an Tuir Burn Walk;
	R17: Scottish Hill Track 332.