

EUCHANHEAD RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Technical Appendix 7.4: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

10/2020



A. Appendix 7.4: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

A.1.1 The sensitivity of the host landscape character types/area is assessed below. Landscape sensitivity is not absolute and can only be defined in relation to each development and its location. To assess the sensitivity of a particular landscape it is good practice to consider the value attached to the landscape and its susceptibility to the particular form of change likely to result from the proposed Development. Assessment text relates to sensitivity of the landscape receptor as a whole, to the proposed Development, with additional comments regarding the Site where relevant. In the main this has been taken from the Dumfries and Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study (2020) and SNH Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland digital map based LCA (2019) (quotes shown in italics) as well as from local sources and site assessment.

Host Landscape: SNH LCT 178 / D&G 19a Ken Southern Upland with Forest – Dumfries and Galloway

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Value attached to Landscapes				
Designated scenic quality	No specific designation	National or regional designation	<i>'This character type is largely free of landscape designations. The Galloway Hills RSA extends slightly over the western boundary of the Ken and Carsphairn units.'</i> <i>'There are some areas of more complex and smaller scale landscapes, with steep slopes enclosing heads of valleys, and/or where uplands remain open. These areas contribute diversity, local drama and scenic interest within the wider forest cover.'</i>	Community
Landscape condition/ quality	Landscape in a poor state of repair with incongruous elements	Landscape fully intact in good condition with limited incongruous elements	<i>'Poorly designed forest in the Ken unit'. 'There are some areas...where uplands remain open. These areas contribute diversity... within the wider forest cover.'</i>	Community
Rarity and/or representativeness	Commonplace elements, features, or the landscape itself. Not a good example of the landscape type.	Presence of rare elements or features or rarity of the landscape itself. Very representative landscape.	Whilst the Ken landscape unit is a good example of its type. This LCT itself shares most of its elements and features with other LCTs including the sharp relief features and heads of valleys.	Community
Conservation Interests	Low presence of wildlife, earth, archaeology or historical interests	High presence of wildlife, earth, archaeology or historical interests	<i>'Although generally less frequent than in the adjacent foothills' there is a 'particular concentration of evidence for late prehistoric settlement and agriculture in the hills east of the Water of Ken, together with some medieval to post-medieval shieling grounds.'</i>	Community
Cultural associations	No specific cultural associations.	Strong cultural associations which contribute to perceptions of natural beauty.	<i>'very little evidence of relict land-uses although there are a few archaeological sites of outstanding significance and distinctiveness.'</i> Allan's cairn is located on Site.	Community
Amenity and recreation	Limited amenity/recreational function where experience of the landscape is important	Well used for recreation where experience of the landscape is important. May contain National Trails or other long distance routes.	<i>'The SUW, Core Paths, the Striding Arches sculptures and promoted Heritage Routes lie within the Ken unit.'</i> The SUW extends through the Site, within an area of commercial forestry and in the vicinity of the Striding Arches sculptures which are located immediately south of the Site.	National
Wildness/ Sense of Remoteness / Tranquility	Busy evidence of human activity	Remote, peaceful or sense and tranquility, solitude and emptiness	There is little sense of wildness within this landscape, dominantly by commercial forestry. However, there is a strong sense of remoteness in this unit, due to the lack of settlement.	Regional/Community
Overall Judgement of Value				Community

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Susceptibility				
Scale	Large scale landscapes where the turbines may be in proportion with the landscape are generally less sensitive.	Small scale intimate landscapes are generally more sensitive to large scale structures.	<i>'This is a large scale landscape, although there is some confinement between the peaks.'</i> <i>'Expansive scale' characterised by 'conically shaped hills with sharp relief.' Hills are 'intercut by valleys and smaller scale local landscapes and dramatic corries at the heads of glens.'</i>	Medium/Low
Landform	Smooth regular flowing, flat or uniform landscapes	Dramatic, rugged and complex landscapes	<i>'Altitude ranges between 200 and 500 metres and is characterised by large smooth domed or slightly conically shaped hills. The hills have a strong relief, dissected by steeply sided clefts and glens, many of which have been enlarged by glacial erosion.'</i>	Medium
Openness/enclosure	Open and exposed landscapes	Enclosed and sheltered landscapes	This is a landscape which is predominantly enclosed, either by commercial forestry or steep landform. However, there are some summits and remaining open hill ground used for sheep grazing, where the landscapes become very open and exposed.	Medium
Land cover	Extensive areas of simple or regular landcover (including intensive farming and forestry)	Complex, intimate or mosaic cover	The dominant landcover is forestry. The forestry cover <i>'is predominantly Sitka spruce' which '...generally extend over the summits or are concentrated on the side slopes leaving the domed peaks exposed.'</i> These commercial plantations as such are simple, though <i>'the rotational nature of forest management provides long term textural and colour changes related to the felling and replanting coups.'</i>	Medium/Low
Complexity and patterns	Simple and sweeping lines, linear feature and patterns	Complex or irregular patterns	<i>'There are some areas of more complex and smaller scale landscape, within steep slopes enclosing heads of valleys, and/or where upland remain open.'</i>	Medium
Built Environment	Contemporary masts, pylons, industrial elements, buildings infrastructure, settlements	Established, traditional or historic built character	<i>'The landscape is very sparsely populated', with few occupied dwellings or settlement in close proximity to the Site. 'Large scale wind farms are key and at times defining characteristics of this Landscape Character Type'. 'Several late prehistoric forts, again more common in the surrounding foothills, are located in the lower fringes of this landscape.'</i>	Medium/low
Views intervisibility	Visually contained and have limited inward or outward views	Extensive views within or of the area with distant horizons.	Views out from this landscape tend to be curtailed by forestry or steep landform, unless on an open hillside or summit, where the views can be expansive. However, these landscapes are visible from more elevated surrounding landscapes.	Medium/Low
Landscapes that form settings, skylines, backdrops, focal points	Generally low lying landscapes without distinctive landform or horizon	Areas with strong features, focal points that define the setting or skyline	<i>'Occasional more well-defined hills occur close to the Moffat, Dalwhat and Upper Water of Ken Glens...are more prominent in views from surrounding roads and settlement'. But for the most part this landscape does not tend to form prominent skyline features, but instead is the middle ground of long distance views.</i>	Medium/Low
Overall Judgement of Susceptibility				Medium/low
Overall Judgement of Sensitivity				Medium/low