Chapter 7

Landscape and visual impact assessment

SCOTTISHPOWER RENEWABLES

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7.1 Executive Summary

1. The proposed Development has been carefully sited and designed so as to present a coherent relationship with the existing Freasdail Windfarm within the core of the Kintyre peninsula, located within the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic Landscape Character Type (LCT). The proposed Development represents a good design fit and adheres to much of the design guidance within the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study for very large wind energy development within Upland Forest Moor Mosaic. Given the location adjacent to Freasdail and approximately 8 km between wind turbines from Cour Windfarm, the strategic pattern of wind energy development would be maintained on the Kintyre peninsula, albeit larger clusters would be present where they exist. Whilst there would be some noticeable differences in turbine sizes, this would not be readily apparent from areas to north of the proposed Development. The areas where this would occur to the south would be limited or more distant where the effect would not be so noticeable. There would be limited additional areas affected by the proposed Development, which are not already influenced by renewable energy development.

2. The extent of operational effects upon landscape character would be limited by the topographic containment of the Kintyre peninsula and Significant effects would be contained within approximately 6 km from the proposed Development. This would include a Significant effect upon localised parts of the LCT 6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic and LCT 20 Rocky Mosaic which are considered to be of Medium or High/Medium sensitivity and both of which are already influenced by renewable energy development. Beyond this there would be No Significant effects on landscape character in the wider parts of these LCTs or any other landscape character type.

3. There would be a Significant effect on part of West Loch Tarbert within the national coastal landscape character type 9: Sounds, Narrows and Islands. Effects within other parts of the national coastal landscape character type 9 would be Not Significant. There would be limited additional areas affected by the proposed Development, which are not already influenced by renewable energy development within this character type.

4. In terms of visual effects, the Significant operational visual effects would be contained within a 6 km – 7 km radius of the proposed Development, mainly to the north and west. These would include receptors in Whitehouse and surrounding area, and in the areas of scattered settlement to the north near Gartavaich and to the west along parts of the South Knapdale peninsula. Whilst there would be views from a few properties in Clachan, most views would be screened by extensive tree cover in the valley and significant effects are not predicted. There would be open views from parts of North Arran, but at over 10 km away these views would not be considered to have a significant effect. Views from Gigha would be intermittent and not significant.

5. In terms of transport routes, there would be a Significant visual effect on users of the A83 between Whitehouse and Ronachan and on the first 5 km of the route of ferry from Kennacraig. Users of other ferry routes would not experience a significant effect. Recreational users on the Kintyre Way would also experience a Significant effect between the Site and the A83 at Ronachan, but elsewhere the effect would be Minor. Users of the National Cycle Network would not be significantly affected. There would also be a Significant effect on views from Dun Skeig, but not on the other specific viewpoints in the study area.

6. No significant effects would occur on any designated landscapes.

7. In terms of the cumulative effects with the fully consented baseline, no additional significant landscape or visual effects were identified The existing pattern of clustered development with clear and generous spaces between them would be maintained, albeit larger clusters would be present.

8. In terms of the cumulative effects with the other proposals with submitted planning applications, a significant effect upon the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT was identified with High Constellation. There was also an increased scale of change for both landscape and visual receptors near the B8001 in connection with the Inverary – Crossaig OHL but these did not result in an elevated level of effect due to the addition of the proposed Development. The addition of the proposed Development would not encroach on any of the strategic gaps among the main clusters within the Kintyre peninsula, thereby maintaining a clear separation between them.

9. The changes arising from a project may engender positive or negative responses depending on individual perceptions regarding the merits of renewable energy. However, the assessment has taken a precautionary approach in considering that all effects on the landscape and on views which would result from the construction and operation of the proposed Development would be adverse; however, not all people would consider the effects to be so.

10. Overall, the scale and topography of the receiving landscape is considered appropriate to accommodate the proposed Development. Whilst there would be some significant effects identified on both landscape and visual receptors within the study area, it is evident from this assessment that due to the site selection and careful design, the extent of significant landscape and visual effects have been minimised as a result.

7.2 Introduction

7.2.1 Background

11. Stephenson Halliday was commissioned, as part of the EIA team, in April 2019 following a handover from the early design and assessment work carried out by Lindsey Guthrie at SLR (now retired). Stephenson Halliday prepared the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) of Sheirdrim Renewable Energy Development on behalf of ScottishPower Renewables (UK) Ltd (SPR).

12. This assessment defines the existing landscape and visual baseline environments; assesses their sensitivity to change; describes the key landscape and visual related aspects of the proposed development; describes the nature of the anticipated changes and assesses the effects arising during construction and once completed.

7.2.2 The Site and Proposals

13. **Figure 3.1** places the proposed Development within its local context. The Site forms part of a ridgeline of relatively remote upland plateau, on the northern Kintyre peninsula, comprising widespread coniferous plantation and some areas of open moorland. The Site is characterised by upland moorland/wet grassland within the eastern and south eastern extent of the Site, with commercial plantation forestry in the western extent of the Site, including Sheirdrim Hill. The proposed Development would comprise 16 three-bladed horizontal axis turbines up to 149.9m tip height and 3 turbines up to 135 m tip height (designed to minimise landscape and amenity effects) with a combined rated output of around 114 MW, with the incorporation of around 20 MW of ground mounted Solar and around 38 MW of battery storage. There would also be associated infrastructure including access tracks, control buildings and construction components. It is not proposed to time limit any consent.

7.2.3 Competence

14. This Chapter along with the design and mitigation of the proposed Development has been prepared by Chartered Landscape Architects at Stephenson Halliday. The Practice has over 24 years of experience working on wind energy proposals for over 200 wind energy proposals throughout the UK. Key individuals working on this project have over 18 years of experience as chartered landscape architects.

15. The Practice is a Landscape Institute and IEMA registered practice and all work is prepared and reviewed internally by senior highly experienced landscape planners with Public Inquiry experience. The Practice is also ISO 9001 accredited.

16. To inform the assessment, site visits were made to various locations within the study area including, but not restricted to, representative viewpoints by Stephenson Halliday's assessment team from May – October 2019.

7.2.4 Stakeholder Consultation

17. Information regarding Consultation and Scoping (submitted in April 2019) is included in **Chapter 6, Scoping and Consultation**. Following feedback from this, further consultation was undertaken in July 2019 to refine the scope of the assessment with SNH, A&BC and ECU to agree the representative viewpoint locations, scope of the cumulative and wild land assessments and the landscape and visual receptors to be included in the LVIA. The key responses are detailed in **Table 7.1**: Summary of Stakeholder Consultation.

Consultee	Issue	How this is addressed
SNH	**Landscape Character Type (LCT) boundaries**: It was requested that the LCT boundaries should be as defined in the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study (2017).	This has been adopted for the assessment of effects. The latest 2019 SNH LCA has also been used as part of the suite of baseline documents.
SNH	**Wild Land Assessment:** Further information was requested. This was provided and it was agreed that a Wild Land Assessment was not required.	This has not been included in the assessment, as agreed.
SNH and A&BC	**Viewpoints and Visualisations:** Further dialogue was undertaken with SNH and A&BC to agree the final list of viewpoints and the scope of visualisations included in the assessment.	Viewpoints and visualisations included in the assessment; Ferry routes with supporting wireframes have been included in the assessment; Supporting wireframes have also been included in the assessment in addition to Viewpoints;
SNH and A&BC	**Cumulative Assessment Scenarios and Graphic Material:** It was agreed the main influencing distance for the potential for significant cumulative effects are those windfarms located within a 10-15 km radius of the proposed Development, as well as the proposed Inverary – Crossaig Overhead Power Line. The cumulative cut-off date was agreed at the end of July. The LVIA baseline should include 'operational + under construction'. The LVIA baseline **should not include** consented schemes due to the reduced level of certainty. The scope of cumulative material was agreed.	Cumulative research was updated to the agreed cumulative cut-off. LVIA baseline and cumulative assessment included as requested.
SNH and A&BC	**Landscape Receptors**: It was agreed which receptors to be included in the assessment.	These receptors are included in the assessment.
SNH and A&BC	**Landscape Designations**: It was agreed which designations to be included in the assessment.	These receptors are included in the assessment.
SNH and A&BC	**Visual Receptors**: It was agreed which visual receptors to be included in the assessment.	These receptors are included in the assessment.

Table 7.1: Summary of Stakeholder Consultation

7.2.5 Study Area

18. It is accepted practice within landscape and visual assessment work that the extent of the study area for a development proposal is broadly defined by the visual envelope of the proposed Development. In this case a study area of 40 km has been used (as shown by **Figures 7.1 – 7.7**). This study area was based on recommendations contained within SNH's publication Visual Representation of Wind Farms (Version 2.2) (SNH, 2017) and was confirmed by the Scoping Opinion received from the Energy Consents Unit.

19. More detailed study areas have been agreed for the detailed cumulative assessment and residential visual amenity, as noted later in this Chapter.

7.2.6 Report Structure and Terminology

20. This Chapter is structured as set out in the table of contents. The Chapter is supported by the **Figures** and **Visualisations** in **Volume 3.**

21. Supporting Technical Appendices have been prepared to supplement the sections regarding methodology, landscape baseline, landscape sensitivity, viewpoint analysis, ferry route wireframes, and residential visual amenity. The Technical Appendices are important to the assessment and should be read alongside this Chapter.

22. Key terms used within the assessment are described in **Technical Appendix 7.1** within the methodology.

7.3 Methodology

23. The detail of the methodology is described in **Technical Appendix 7.1**. A summary of the primary judgements is provided in the following sections.

7.3.1 Sensitivity

24. Sensitivity is judged taking into account the component judgments about the value and susceptibility of the receptor as illustrated by **Table 7.2**. Where sensitivity is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment will be adopted.

		Susceptibility		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
Value	**National**	High	High/Medium	Medium
	Regional	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
	Community	High/Medium	Medium	Low

Table 7.2: Sensitivity

7.3.2 Magnitude

25. Scale of effect is the first factor in determining magnitude; which may be higher if the effect is particularly widespread and/or long lasting, or lower if it is constrained in geographic extent and/or timescale. Where magnitude is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment will be adopted.

7.3.3 Significance of Effects

26. The significance of any identified landscape or visual effect is assessed as major, moderate, minor or negligible. These categories are based on the consideration of sensitivity with the predicted magnitude of change. **Table 7.3** is not used as a prescriptive tool and illustrates the typical outcomes, allowing for the exercise of professional judgement. In some instances a particular parameter may be considered as having a determining effect on the analysis.

		Magnitude of Change			
		Substantial	**Moderate**	**Slight**	**Negligible**
Receptor Sensitivity	**High**	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor/ Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible

Table 7.3: Significance

27. Where the effect has been classified as Major or Major/Moderate this is considered to be equivalent to likely significant effects referred to in the EIA Regulations. Where 'Moderate' effects are predicted, professional judgement will be applied to ensure that the potential for significant effects arising has been thoroughly considered.

7.3.4 Beneficial/Adverse

28. Landscape and visual effects can be beneficial or adverse and in some instances may be considered neutral. Taking a precautionary stance changes to rural landscapes involving construction of man-made objects of a large scale are generally considered to be adverse.

29. With regard to the visual effects of windfarms generally, it is important to recognise the differing views revealed by extensive available research and to take into account that for other developments incorporating wind turbines, some may view the impact as adverse, some as beneficial and yet others as neutral. This depends to some extent on the viewer's predisposition towards landscape change but also their opinion regarding the principle of renewable energy developments in the landscape. Taking a precautionary approach in making an assessment of the 'worst case scenario', the assessment considers that all effects on views which would result from the construction and operation of the proposed Development to be adverse, unless specified otherwise in the text. It should be noted, however, that not all people would consider the effects to be adverse.

7.3.5 Cumulative Assessment

30. Cumulative assessment relates to the assessment of the effects of more than one development. The Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) is presented in full in **Section 7.8**. The CLVIA describes the likely combined cumulative effects of the proposed Development in association with operational, consented and other proposed developments.

31. It is important to differentiate between the assessment of cumulative effects arising from the proposed Development with other developments that are:

- Scenario 1 (current baseline): Operational or under construction, which have been included as part of the baseline assessed in the LVIA Chapter;
- Scenario 2 (future baseline): Consented, which can be considered as part of a scenario with some certainty; and
- Scenario 3: Proposed, of which there can be little certainty.

32. The approach to the CLVIA follows SNH guidance (2012). As such, it focuses upon those wind turbine developments that have the potential to give rise to significant cumulative effects and those likely to influence decision making, rather than an assessment of every potential cumulative effect.

33. It has been clear from the outset that cumulative is a key issue for this proposed Development. It was agreed with SNH and A&BC during the scope refinement in July 2019 that the potential for significant cumulative effects would be contained within a 15 km radius. The proposed Inverary – Crossaig 275kV Overhead Line and the list of wind energy sites in **Table 7.4** to be considered within the cumulative assessment was agreed at that time. The cumulative data cut-off date of 31 July 2019 was also agreed.

Windfarm	Status	Number of turbines	Tip height (m)	Hub height
Operational and Consented				
Freasdail	Operational	11	100	60
Gartnagrenach Farm	Operational	1	34.2	22.6
Cour	Operational	10	111.25	65
Deucheran Hill	Operational	9	79; 93	46; 60
Gigha and Extension	Operational	3 + 1	57; 53.8	30; 37.8
Eascairt	Consented	13	100	60
Kilchamaig Farm	Consented	1	23.8	18
Proposals (with submitted/validated Planning Applications or at Appeal)				
High Constellation	Proposed	10	149.5	81.5
Airigh	Proposed	14	131; 138.5; 149.9	72.5; 80; 91
Killean	Proposed	15	149.5	91.5
Clachaig Glen	Proposed	14	115.5; 126.5	65; 76

Table 7.4: Windfarms considered within the detailed cumulative assessment in LVIA –End July 2019

34. It was also requested by SNH that the baseline for the main LVIA (Scenario 1) is the existing operational baseline and that the consented and proposed developments (with submitted planning applications) should be considered in the cumulative assessment. As a result the cumulative scenarios which are assessed in the CLVIA would be those:

- Scenario 2: Operational, under construction and consented which can be considered as part of a future scenario with some certainty; and
- Scenario 3: Proposed 'In Planning' as different potential scenarios, but about which there can be little certainty.

35. Scoping and pre-planning windfarms have little or no fixed proposals and, therefore, are not considered in detailed assessments or illustrations.

7.3.6 Residential Amenity

36. As set out within LI Technical Guidance Note 02/19 'Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)':

"Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' …

It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."

37. The methodology for and assessment of effects on residential visual amenity for the most affected properties within 2 km is included in **Technical Appendix 7.7**.

7.3.7 Distances

38. Where distances are given in the assessment, these are approximate distances between the nearest wind turbine and the nearest part of the receptor in question, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

7.3.8 Visual Aids

39. Photographs of the existing views and photomontages showing the proposed Development are included in shown in a separate document which accompanies the application. The method of visualisation selected has been informed by Landscape Institute Technical Note 02/17 Visual representation, with photomontages being selected as being the most appropriate approach given the scale of the development and public interest. There is also a range of wireframes, sequential images, and figures used to support the assessment.

40. The methodology for production for the photomontage visualisations and figures (undertaken by SLR) are including in **Technical Appendix 7.2.**

7.4 Planning Policy

7.4.1 National Planning Policy

41. Relevant national planning policy is set out in **Chapter 4 Renewable Energy and Planning Policy**.

7.4.2 Local Planning Policy

42. Current local planning policy is described in the following adopted and emerging policy documents:

- Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan Adopted 2015;
- Argyll and Bute Supplementary Guidance Adopted March 2016; and
- North Ayrshire Council Local Development Plan Adopted May 2014.

Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan Adopted 2015

43. Relevant landscape specific policies include;

- 3.2 Policy LDP 3 – Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment – with the aim of protecting conserving and where possible enhancing the built, human and natural environment.

Argyll and Bute Supplementary Guidance Adopted March 2016

44. These polices provide additional detail to policy LDP 3 Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment.

- SG LDP ENV 13 Development Impact on Areas of Panoramic Quality (APQs) – aims to provide locally important landscapes in Argyll and Bute, with adequate protection against damaging development that would diminish their very high scenic value. These APQs are important not only for their physical landforms and scenic value, but also for the environmental assets that they represent. These qualities could easily be destroyed or damaged by even a relatively small, insensitive development. They therefore must be protected.
- SG LDP ENV 14 Landscape 30 – aims to provide the varied landscapes in Argyll and Bute with adequate protection against development that would undermine distinctive landscape character.

North Ayrshire Council Local Development Plan Adopted May 2014

- POLICY ENV 7: Special Landscape Areas – aims to protect the intrinsic landscape quality of the area's Special Landscape Areas (SLA) and National Scenic Areas (NSA).

7.4.3 Local Guidance and Baseline Studies

45. In addition to the policy documents identified above, there are relevant local guidance and baseline documents as follows:

- Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study (2017);
- SNH Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland digital map based LCA (2019);
- The special qualities of the National Scenic Areas, SNH Commissioned Report No. 374 (2010).

46. The Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study 2017 (ABLWECS) considers the sensitivity of landscape character types to different sizes of wind turbine development to inform strategic planning for wind energy and some guidance when considering specific developments. The proposed Development Site is within LCT6: Upland Forest Moor Mosaic. Further review of this document is provided in **Sections 7.6.3.4 and 7.7.5.1**.

47. SNH recently republished their National Programme of Landscape Character Assessments as a digital map based LCA in 2019. This data was reviewed to take account of intervening technical improvements in website mapping to produce a revised national suite of landscape character type at 1:50,000 scale. This information was created in collaboration and consultation with FLS and HES as well as all local authorities. This also included a more consistent baseline description across Scotland. The key characteristics of baseline landscape character have been used from this document. As this is an online document, an extract of the landscape character citations for each character area assessed have been included in **Technical Appendix 7.2**.

48. SNH set out the 'special qualities' of the NSAs across Scotland and this forms the basis of the assessment on this designation.

49. Whilst the Argyll and Bute Supplementary Guidance (2016) sets out policy SG LDP ENV 13 with regard to the potential effect on an APQ, there is no document which sets out the 'special qualities' of these APQs.

Local policy and guidance considerations

50. The design response to the considerations set out in the policies and guidance identified above is reviewed in **Section 7.6.3.4** of this assessment. Effects on landscape character and views are considered within **Sections 7.7.5 and 7.12** of this report. Effects on identified NSA are considered at **Section 7.14** of this assessment.

7.5 Baseline

7.5.1 Introduction

51. An overview of the baseline study results is provided in this section with the full baseline description of the individual landscape and visual receptors for ease of reference.

52. This section provides a review of the key local baseline studies and guidance documents and identifies those landscape and visual receptors which merit detailed consideration in the assessment of effects as agreed with Consultees.

53. Both this baseline section and the effects section describe landscape character and visual receptors before considering designated areas as it is common for designations to encompass both character and visual considerations within their special qualities or purposes of designation.

7.5.2 ZTV study

54. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) study was generated based on the design of the wind turbines only of the proposed Development. These are shown on **Figures 7.4 - 7.7** and indicate areas of potential visibility. The analysis was carried out using a topographic model.

55. The ZTV study was used to aid the identification of those receptors that are likely to be most affected by the proposed Development and those that do not require detailed consideration. It should be noted that some areas shown as having potential visibility may have visibility of the proposed Development screened by the extensive forestry in the study area. An additional ZTV, shown on **Figure 7.8**, including the screening effects of forestry/woodland has also been prepared to aid the assessment.

56. The ZTVs for the proposed wind turbines shows that the main area of visibility extends to areas within the northern part of the Kintyre peninsula, south east facing slopes of the South Knapdale, east facing slopes of Gigha and north west facing slopes of northern Arran. There is a notable lack of visibility from the majority of the coastline and coastal settlements on the Kintyre peninsula.

57. There is also very distant visibility (over 25 km away) from the south eastern side of Islay, east facing slopes of Jura, parts of the north Ayrshire coast between Ardrossan and Wemyss Bay, west facing slopes in the southern part of Bute, and west facing slopes on Great and Little Cumbrae Islands.

58. The hub height ZTVs illustrate a similar pattern but reduced extent of visibility.

59. Effects on landscape or visual receptors outside the areas of visibility shown on the ZTV study would not be affected and are not assessed.

7.5.3 Landscape Character

60. Local landscape character type/areas in the study area are shown on **Figure 7.2**. SNH have requested that the older A&BC Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study (2017) is used as the basis for both landscape character boundaries and labels of landscape character receptors in this assessment, despite their online publication of a new updated national Landscape Character Assessment in March 2019. This request has been accommodated within A&BC area but within North Ayrshire, the latest SNH 2019 boundaries and labels have been used. The baseline landscape character descriptions and key characteristics will be used from this latest online publication (SNH 2019) and relevant extracts are included in **Technical Appendix 7.3** to this assessment.

61. The proposed Development lies wholly within Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) or LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019).

62. As agreed in the scope refinement July 2019, the effects on the following character areas are considered within **Section 7.7.5**, with baseline description provided alongside the assessment of effects for ease of reference:

- Host: AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019);
- AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019);
- AGC22 Coastal Parallel Ridges (A&BC 2017) / LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges(SNH 2019);
- LCT 59 Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (SNH 2019);
- LCT 62 Coastal Headlands (SNH 2019); and
- LCT 83 Rugged Upland – Ayrshire (SNH 2019).

63. The effect on seascapes is also considered where there is the potential for significant effects.

64. Representative viewpoints have been selected to aid the assessment of effects on landscape and seascape receptors.

7.5.4 Visual Receptors

65. Visual receptors are "*the different groups of people who may experience views of the development*" (GLVIA, 3rd edition, para 6.3). In order to identify those groups who may be significantly affected the ZTV study, baseline desk study and site visits have been used.

66. The different types of groups assessed within this report encompass local residents; people using key routes such as roads; cycle ways, people within accessible or recreational landscapes; people using Rights of Way (RoW); or people visiting key viewpoints. In dealing with areas of settlement, RoW and local roads, receptors are grouped into areas where effects might be expected to be broadly similar, or areas which share particular factors in common.

67. Representative viewpoints have been selected to aid the assessment of effects on visual receptors.

7.5.5 Baseline Visual Environment

68. As shown on **Figure 7.1**, the Site is located on the northern part of the Kintyre peninsula and south of the operational Freasdail Windfarm and west of the consented Eascairt Windfarm. It is located east of the A83 (between Clachan and Whitehouse) and west/north of the Kintyre Way and south of the B8001. The Site itself is on the upland plateau, east of the afforested summit of Sheirdrim Hill on part afforested and part open moorland. There is limited visual connection with the eastern side of the Kintyre peninsula and visibility along the western coast is also limited due to the steepness of the slopes. All settlement is located on the coasts with access limited within the core of the peninsula itself.

69. There are other windfarms located along the core of the peninsula, including operational, consented and proposed in planning.

7.5.6 Visual Receptor Groups

70. The following visual receptor groups are located within the study area and are likely to have visibility of the proposed Development, as shown on the ZTV study **on Figure 7.6** and are considered further in **Section 7.7.12**. The scope of receptors included within the assessment has been agreed with SNH and A&BC during the scope refinement in July 2019.

- Clachan – includes the settlement and local roads and core paths within the vicinity;
- Whitehouse – includes the settlement and local roads and core paths within the vicinity;
- Gartavaich – includes dispersed settlement, local roads and core paths along the B8001 corridor;
- South Knapdale – includes dispersed settlement, local roads and core paths along the south and south east side of the peninsula ;
- Lochranza / Catacol, Arran – includes areas of settlement, local roads and core paths on the north Arran coast;
- Pirnmill, Arran – includes areas of settlement, local roads and core paths on the north west Arran coast; and
- Gigha - includes areas of settlement, local roads and core paths on Gigha.

7.5.7 Key routes

71. As shown on **Figure 7.11**, the following key routes have been agreed with SNH and A&BC during the scope refinement in July 2019 to be included within the assessment:

- A83;
- ferry route between Lochranza to Claonaig;
- ferry route Kennacraig to Port Askaig;
- ferry route Kennacraig to Port Ellen;
- ferry route Tayinloan to Ardminish (Gigha);
- National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way) (B8001 & B8023); and
- Kintyre Way.

7.5.8 Specific viewpoints

72. The area is a popular visitor location and the following specific viewpoints (some of which were identified by Consultees) are included within the assessment:

- Dun Skeig, Kintyre;
- Newton Point, Arran;
- Tarmore Hill Viewpoint, Bute; and
- Summit of Goat Fell, Arran.

7.5.9 Landscape Designations

73. The Site itself is not covered by any landscape designation. Landscape designations within the study area are illustrated on **Figure 7.1.**

74. During the scope refinement in July 2019, it was agreed with SNH and A&BC that the following landscape designations would be assessed within this LVIA:

- North Arran NSA;
- Knapdale/ Melfort APQ (Argyll and Bute Council); and
- North Arran SLA (North Ayrshire Council).

7.6 The Proposed Development

7.6.1 The Proposed Development

75. The proposed Development is described in detail in **Chapter 3 Proposed Development** in detail and illustrated on **Figure 3.1** and comprises around 114 MW of wind energy, around 20 MW of solar energy, around 38 MW battery storage and associated infrastructure including access tracks, control buildings, borrow pits and construction components. The proposed Development

would re-use and share existing infrastructure from the existing onsite forestry operations and Cour Windfarm access tracks where possible.

76. The components of the proposed Development with the potential for landscape and visual effects include:

- Up to 19 wind turbines with tip heights up to 135 m and 149.9 m. The candidate turbine used for assessment purposes has rotor diameter of 120 m and variable hub heights of 89.9 m and 75 m and is representative of the turbine dimensions that may be used on Site. However the final turbine selection would be made following the granting of planning permission and the geometry below the blade tip height would be variable. The Applicant wishes to ensure that they maintain flexibility in the choice of turbine model available for installation. The proposed Development is described in detail in **Chapter 3 Proposed Development**.
- Two areas of ground mounted solar arrays totalling around 20 MW. The solar arrays would be spaced between 5 m and 7 m apart and would be located between 0.5 m to 1 m above the ground and are indicatively illustrated in **Figure 3.8**;
- Battery storage units (similar to shipping containers typically 17 m x 8 m x 4 m) adjacent to the substation / control building with a storage capacity of around 38 MW;
- Foundations and crane hardstandings for wind turbine installation;
- Transformer/switchgear housings located adjacent to turbines & solar arrays;
- New and upgraded access tracks including watercourse crossings where necessary, passing places and turning heads (4.4 km of upgraded track, 13.6 km of new track);
- Two access points proposed off the A83 but only one to be used. New access point proposed to improve access alignment and also to minimise effects on Glebe Cottage which is immediately adjacent to the existing access;
- Underground electrical cabling;
- Compound containing substation, control building (single storey approximately 14 m x 24 m x 7 m) and battery storage surrounded by 3 m security fencing;
- One site construction compound;
- Up to two temporary power performance masts up to 90 m high if required;
- Search areas for up to five borrow pits with one being retained for longer term use on Site;
- Micro-siting of up to 50 m of all site infrastructure;
- Compensatory planting for 95 m radius of open ground required for wind turbines would be located either on or off Site and some forward felling would be required in the amended Felling Plans;
- Recreational access paths providing access to the Site from the Kintyre Way and walker's shelter close to the Kintyre Way;
- Signage and access to archaeological features adjacent to the Site;
- Bird watchers hide and habitat improvements, including broadleaf tree planting and the re-wetting of peat areas previously drained.

77. The construction phase is expected to last approximately 22 months, refer to **Chapter 3 Proposed Development**. The activities and temporary features with the potential to cause an effect on landscape and visual amenity include HGV & abnormal load deliveries to the Site, the movement of vehicles therein and construction of all elements of the proposed Development including the use of cranes for erection of wind turbines.

78. The operational phase would follow and there is no proposal to limit the lifetime of the proposed Development.

7.6.2 Operational Phase - Design Process

79. The description of the Site selection rationale and the iterative design process is described within **Chapter 2 Site Description and Design Evolution**. The design of the proposed Development has been a staged process with the aim of arriving at an optimal design configuration in respect of landscape and visual effects, and a range of other environmental, yield and technical factors. Mitigation measures (including embedded mitigation) as proposed by the Applicant to reduce the level of potential impacts and to inform the assessment of residual effects which would occur with mitigation in place are described in the following sections.

7.6.3 Design Approach and Mitigation

80. The design approach is described in full within **Chapter 2 Site Description and Design Evolution.** The following identifies the landscape and visual specific aspects of the Mitigation and Design.

Design Principles

81. Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape Version 3 (SNH, 2017) provides a framework for the consideration of key design issues including wind turbine size, layout composition, relating windfarm design to landscape character, forestry and designing for multiple windfarms. Further information regarding good forestry design published by Forestry Commission has also been considered. The fundamental design issues to be addressed from a landscape and visual perspective may be summarised as follows:

- The proposed layout of wind turbines should present a clearly structured, balanced arrangement which relates to: the underlying landscape characteristics of a similar scale and/or prominence; landform composition; and, the key characteristics of the landscape of the Site and surrounding area;
- The layout design should respond to the key landscape features, forestry and grain of local topography;
- The design of a windfarm composition from key viewpoints and sequential routes should be an overriding factor in the windfarm's composition in order to achieve a simple balanced composition in terms of the overlapping relationship between turbines, skyline effects and back-grounding;
- Careful consideration is needed in the siting and design of windfarms, and between windfarms, to avoid confusing the sense of visual perspective;
- When designing with multiple windfarms with an established pattern, compatibility of design is very important within an area to limit visual confusion and reinforce each development seeking to improve the overall pattern and character of development;
- Where windfarms are proposed within or near woodland, the effect on the forest is an important consideration in the design of the windfarm and the redesign of the forest management plan itself;
- Attention should be given to other design issues, including: turbine colour, size and siting; the design and form of the substation/control building; and the alignment of access tracks to ensure these proposed features relate to the key characteristics of the landscape; and
- With regard to aviation lighting, effects are likely to be more significant in areas with less artificial lighting. Lit turbines may lessen the contrast between developed and undeveloped areas.

Mitigation during Operation

82. The operational period of the proposed Development would not be time limited and would include site and forestry management to ensure the adequate maintenance of site facilities and landscape features such as access tracks, field boundaries, gates, and signage. Measures to reduce landscape and visual impacts have been embedded into the design of the proposed Development and include;

- Design compatibility with the operational Freasdail and consented Eascairt windfarms, as the proposed Development has been designed to be read in the context of the operational and consented arrays. However, it has also been designed as a self-contained standalone array, or in combination with one or the other in the situation that either or both were not present in the landscape;
- Turbines at both 135 m and 149.9 m to tip for improved compatibility of design with the scale of the receiving landscape and adjacent arrays, whilst ensuring the proposal is commercially viable.
- Landscape context of turbines located on a part afforested and part open moorland site, which acts as a bridge in landscape context between Freasdail Windfarm which is within an afforested context and Eascairt Windfarm within open moorland.

- Adjustments and reduction in turbines numbers to improve visual composition and minimise inconsistent turbine spacing, such as, relatively large gaps, outliers or excessive overlapping turbines and ensure a balanced/compact array especially from key views and sequential receptors;
- Turbines are set back from the closest residential properties and located to the south west of Sheirdrim Hill to take advantage of the screening to reduce effects on some of the nearest residents;
- Turbines 3 and 4 are reduced height to lessen effects on nearest residents including Clachan. Turbine 6 is also reduced in height to lessen effects on nearest residents including Whitehouse and improve views from South Knapdale;
- 50 m micro-siting of turbines except for turbines T1, T3, T4, T7, and T11 which should move no closer to nearest residents but free to move in other directions.
- New site entrance proposed to lessen effects on nearby resident, subject to consultation with relevant authorities;
- The forestry in the vicinity of T1-T6 is predominantly scheduled to be felled with limited forward felling required, in accordance with the Forestry Plan, whilst still retaining the forestry on the western slopes of Sheirdrim Hill until later phases.;
- The track layout makes use of the existing tracks where possible (to be upgraded for the delivery of wind turbine components), to minimise the requirement for new tracks within the Site;
- Turbine heights retained under 150 m to tip to better fit into the receiving landscape with the added benefit of avoiding the necessity for aviation lighting on the turbines;
- Location of substation amongst the forestry areas, to minimise effects on landscape fabric and to provide a backdrop and screening when forestry is re-planted and colour and finish of substation/control building to be visually recessive ;
- Location of solar control building located near an existing building;
- Longer term retention of borrow pit search area 3 in amongst the forestry with limited visibility out with the Site.
- Location of solar arrays primarily contained within the core of the Site with limited visibility out with the Site; and
- New recreational features within the Site including a new viewpoint on Cruach nam Fiadh, shelter, path and interpretation of cultural heritage features, and bird hide accessible off the Kintyre Way.

Mitigation during Construction

83. Construction of the proposed Development would follow an agreed construction method statement that would include arrangements for implementation of various aspects of the works to mitigate local adverse impacts during construction. These would be designed in agreement with A&BC and other statutory agencies. Specific mitigation measures during construction would include:

- Protection of valued features that are to be retained within the Site and minimising land clearance/vegetation removal as far as possible;
- Location of construction compound and laydown areas where they already exist or in visually discreet parts of the Site and in areas of forestry to minimise effects on landscape fabric;
- Location of borrow pits search areas either where these features already exist or would be visually discreet.
- Restoration of all borrow pits post-construction, with an overall aim of creating a naturalistic and sympathetically designed landscape profile. Reinstatement would be carried out as soon as possible after sections of work are complete;
- Maintaining the Site and construction compound in a tidy and contained condition;
- Removing all temporary construction materials from the Site once work is completed; and
- Controlling construction lighting so that it does not impinge into sensitive views (e.g. from residential dwellings).

Design Considerations

84. This section of the appraisal considers the fit with guidance provided in respect of strategic guidance contained within the Capacity Study (ABLWECS). The proposed Development Site is within LCT6: Upland Forest Moor Mosaic. The guidance on development for this LCT states that whilst there may be 'very limited' scope for Very Large turbines (over 130m).

Concerns raised in ABLWECS	How this is addressed
'Very large turbines in many locations would be likely to significantly intrude on the views from both Gigha and Arran, considerable extending effects and potentially affecting the 'space and cluster' spatial pattern of existing wind farm development evident in the north part of the peninsula in views from Arran'.	As illustrated in **Viewpoints 11 and 12** from Arran and **Viewpoints 13 and 15** from Gigha, the proposed Development would be clearly seen from both of these islands. However, given the separation distances of nearly 10 km from Arran and 13.5 km from Gigha and they would not significantly intrude on views, which from many parts of these islands are extensive and panoramic. The location of the proposed Development does not form a particularly key part of the views from either Arran or Gigha. They would also be seen either in front of, or in close association with the operational Freasdail Windfarm, maintaining the 'space and cluster' spatial patter of existing windfarm development.
'Turbines over 150m may be able to be accommodated provided they are set well into the centre of the peninsula and occupy more contained sites which would minimise the effect of turbines of this size on the coastal fringes of Kintyre and on views from Arran and Gigha. Many such sites are already occupied and scope for this size of turbine is likely to be restricted to repowering of operational wind farms.'	The proposed Development is located in the centre of the peninsula in the east/west direction. It is located at the northern end of the peninsula but still south of the B8001. As this Site is located adjacent to an operational windfarm, so whilst not a repowering proposed, it will appear as a visual extension to an already established site. Turbine size of the proposed Development has been kept between 135m -150m to better accord with the scale of the receiving landscape and improve the relationship with the *'relief of the northern part of this upland plateau'*, compared to the 'very large' typology of up to 200m.
'Cumulative effects with operational wind farms including effects on layout, spacing between developments and avoiding noticeable difference in turbine design and size, would need to be carefully considered. '	This has been an important part of the design process as noted above. From areas to the north of the Site, there is limited change in the scale between the operational turbines and proposed Development noticeable. From the south, the scale change is more evident, but the design rational and proportions would remain similar and continue across the two sites.
'Any additional development of Very Large typologies should avoid more complex irregular small hills found on the outer edge of the Kintyre peninsula'	The proposed Development is located in the core of the peninsula and has avoided the small irregular or complex hills.
'Turbines should not be sited on, or close-by, the more pronounced and higher hill summits found in the southern and northern part of this character type…..'	The proposed Development is located south of Cnoc a Bhaile Shios (422m) which screens the proposal from most areas to the north.
'Turbines should also be sited to avoid any intrusion on views to and from the rugged and remote coast between Skipness and Tarbert…'	The proposed Development if further south than this area.
The smaller scale and settle Barr Glen and Glen Lussa, which lie within this character type, would also be sensitive to larger typologies on containing hills and ridges which provide immediate skylines.'	As illustrated in **Figures 7.4-7.7, t**here would be no intervisibility with Barr Glen or Glen Lussa.

Concerns raised in ABLWECS	How this is addressed
'Development should additional be sited to avoid significant intrusion and cumulative effects on views from the B8001.'	As illustrated in **Viewpoint 3**, the proposed Development would be clearly visible from the elevated section of the B8001. The proposed Development would appear behind the operational Freasdail windfarm, and whilst they would extend and intensify the array visible, the scale difference would not appear very noticeable. Views to the Paps of Jura and Arran mountains would remain largely unaffected.
Effects on adjacent landscapes: '*significant intrusion on the setting and views from the adjacent settled and small scale Rocky Mosaic (20) and the Hidden Glens (3) and on Arran and Gigha should be avoided by siting larger turbines well back into the interior of these uplands'*	As illustrated in **Figure 7.11**, there would be no intervisibility with the Hidden Glens (3) landscape type. The effect on the Rocky Mosaic (20) is assessed within the landscape character assessment and significant effects are found on a localised part of this type but not for the type as a whole. As noted before, the proposed Development is located in the interior of the peninsula and whilst there would be intervisibility with parts of Gigha and Arran, the proposed Development would not significantly alter the landscape character of these areas.

Table 7.5: Review of Design against Capacity Study

85. Overall, the proposed Development adheres to much of the guidance regarding very large wind energy development within LCT6: Upland Forest Moor Mosaic.

7.7 Landscape and Visual Effects

7.7.1 Introduction

86. This section sets out the effects that the proposed development would have on landscape and visual receptors.

87. Effects during construction and for the completed development are considered for each landscape and visual receptor.

7.7.2 Effects on Site Fabric

88. Changes to landscape fabric occur where there would be physical changes to the landscape. In this instance, changes to landscape fabric would predominantly occur within the Site.

89. The proposed Development would result in the minor loss of young or planned re-stocking of coniferous forestry plantation to accommodate the open ground required for wind turbines, as illustrated in **Figure 3.2.6, Technical Appendix 3.2, Forestry**. Compensatory planting would be provided (either on or off Site) and would fully mitigate those losses in forestry but details of this would be dealt with by way of a suspensive condition.

90. There would be some loss of moorland for the new access tracks, infrastructure at the bases of each turbine, and the substation/control building compound. There would be changes as a result of the solar array shading the ground from sun, but this would likely result in a change to the vegetation type rather than a wholesale loss of vegetation.

91. The proposed turbines and temporary masts would represent the addition of new man-made elements of considerable scale into the local landscape. However, their introduction would only directly affect a small portion of the existing landscape fabric and would not result in the loss of features of notable landscape value, as the bases of the turbines have avoided the areas of deepest peat and higher quality bog in so far as has been reasonably possible.

92. The proposed solar would also represent the addition of new man-made elements which would result in a change to the ground vegetation beneath them. However, this would not result in the loss of features of notable landscape value, as these areas of solar development have also avoided the areas of deepest peat and higher quality bog.

93. Associated infrastructure (such as the tracks and substation compound) would represent further man-made features within a part man-modified Site, with limited qualities of wildness. There would be approximately 13.6 km of new and 4.4 km of upgraded access track required to maintain the wind turbines and solar arrays. Electricity cables, meanwhile, would all be laid underground in trenches alongside the new tracks, which would limit effects. There would be some limited alterations to the Forestry Plan on Site.

94. In addition to the operational effects above, during construction there would be short term effects on the landscape fabric as a result of the temporary construction-phase features, such as the borrow pits. As illustrated in **Figure 3.1**, most of these temporary features are located within areas of commercial forestry to limit landscape and visual effects.

7.7.3 Construction Stage Effects

Landscape Construction Stage Effects

95. The construction stage of the proposed Development would result in some short-term effects within the host Upland Forest Moor Mosaic and on adjacent Rocky Mosaic. The effects would result primarily from either the erection of the wind turbines or the ground level construction activities such as, borrow pits, construction compound within forestry areas, construction of the solar arrays and control building compound, as well as the activity and movement of large construction vehicles/ cranes within the upland Site and the A83. These activities would disturb the quieter and more static qualities of landscape character; however, given that this is an area with extensive commercial forest activity, some of this activity would be difficult to distinguish from the baseline.

96. The landscape character of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic is considered to be of Medium landscape sensitivity to short term construction activity. The surrounding forestry and topography would substantially limit the influence of construction operations, particularly ground-level operations from most vantage points outside of the Site within this landscape type. The effects of construction activity are considered to be Large/Medium in scale but only over a limited extent of this landscape type in the short term. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Slight, which gives rise to Moderate/ Minor and not significant effects for the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT.

97. The landscape character of the Rocky Mosaic is considered to be of High/Medium landscape sensitivity to short term construction activity. The forestry and topography surrounding the Site would substantially limit the influence of construction operations, particularly ground-level operations from most vantage points within this landscape type but there may be some influence on the nearest areas along the Kintyre peninsula. The effects of construction activity are considered to be Medium in scale but only over a limited extent of this landscape type in the short term. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Slight, which gives rise to Moderate/Minor and not significant effects Rocky Mosaic LCT.

Visual Construction Stage Effects

98. In terms of visual receptors users of the Kintyre Way, A83 and residents of some of the nearby houses, notably Glebe Cottage, Achaglass and possibly Achavraid (depending on the phase of forestry) would be likely to see vehicle movements and some of the ground level construction works in nearby parts of the Site during construction. These effects would be different in nature to those experienced once the proposed Development was complete. Much of the preliminary construction work, turbine foundations, borrow pit extraction, electrical infrastructure and solar array construction (pre erection of wind turbines) would be at ground level and in some areas screened by retained forestry and/or landform. For users of the Kintyre Way, the effects of ground level construction activity are considered to be Large in scale due to the contrast with the baseline but only over a limited extent of this path in the Short term. Accordingly, the magnitude of change is considered to be Moderate/Slight, which would give rise to Moderate but Not Significant effect. The effect on individual residents is presented within **Technical Appendix 7.7**.

99. The erection of the proposed wind turbines involving the use of large cranes would be another component of the construction stage. Compared to the ground level construction activities noted above, the visual influence of this activity would be available to a wider range of receptors, more similar to the operational phase. However, the duration of these effects would be short term and therefore would result in a lower magnitude of change and level of effect compared to the operational stage effects. These construction effects would occur for the same visual receptors as reported in the operational phase below, and therefore have not been repeated here.

7.7.4 Viewpoint Analysis

100. Viewpoint analysis has been undertaken from a total of 18 viewpoints. The final list of viewpoints was prepared following consultation with SNH, A&BC and ECU and was agreed in the Gatecheck report response received from these consultees, as noted in **Table 7.1** and outlined in **Chapter 6, Scoping and consultation**.

101. The viewpoint locations are illustrated on **Figures 7.4 – 7.7**. The visualisations from the agreed viewpoints, comprise photographs of the existing view, wireframes and photomontages from most locations and are located with **Volume 3**.

102. The full viewpoint analysis is contained within **Technical Appendix 7.5: Viewpoint Analysis**. The findings are summarised below in **Table 7.6**: Viewpoint Analysis Summary. In each case, distances are listed in relation to the nearest turbine.

Please note that **Technical Appendix 7.5: Viewpoint Analysis** considers the sensitivity of the receptors, and the nature and the scale of changes to character and views at each viewpoint location only. The wider extent of the effect (beyond the individual viewpoint location) and its duration are considered in the main body of the assessment text below as part of the consideration of the magnitude and significance of effects.

Viewpoint No.	Viewpoint	Distance from Nearest Turbine	Landscape Character Type \ Designated Landscape	Scale of Landscape Change	Visual Receptors	Scale of Visual Change
1	Kintyre Way	0.6 km	LCT AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019)	Large	Users of the Kintyre Way	Large
2	A83 north of Clachan	1.8 km	LCT AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019)	Large/Medium	Users of the A83; Clachan receptor group	Large/Medium (Large if nearby forestry felled)
3	B8001 north of Site	2.7 km	LCT AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019)	Small	Users of National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way); Gartavaich receptor group	Medium
4	A83 at Whitehouse	3.0 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019)	Medium/Small	Whitehouse receptor group	Large/Medium
5	B8024, Rubha Riabhach	3.9 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019) West Loch Tarbert (seascape)	Medium/Small	Users of National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way); South Knapdale receptor group; Kennacraig ferry routes;	Large/Medium
6	Dun Skeig	4.0 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019) West Kintyre (Coast) APQ	Medium/Small	Specific viewpoint	Large/Medium
7	Kennacraig Ferry Terminal, West Loch Tarbert	4.0 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019) West Loch Tarbert (seascape)	Medium/Small	Kennacraig ferry routes; users of the A83; Whitehouse receptor group	Medium
8	A83 south west of Clachan	4.4 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) /LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019) West Kintyre (Coast) APQ	Medium/Small	Users of the A83; users of the Kintyre Way; Clachan receptor group	Large/Medium
9	B8024, high point south of Kilberry	8.5 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019) Knapdale / Melfort APQ	Small/Negligible	Users of National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way); South Knapdale receptor group	Medium/Small
10	Dubhchladach, South Knapdale	10.1 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019) West Loch Tarbert (seascape)	Small	Users of National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way); South Knapdale receptor group	Medium/Small
11	Thundergay, Arran	10.7 km	LCT 59 Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (SNH 2019) North Arran NSA and SLA Kilbrannan Sound (seascape)	Small/Negligible	Pirnmill receptor group	Small
12	Lochranza Ferry Terminal, Arran	10.7 km	LCT 59 Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (SNH 2019) and LCT 62 Coastal Headlands (SNH 2019) North Arran NSA and SLA Kilbrannan Sound (seascape)	Small/Negligible	Lochranza to Claonaig ferry route; Lochranza/Catacol receptor group	Small
13	Northern point of Gigha	13.4 km	AGC22. Coastal Parallel Ridges (A&BC 2017) / LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges (SNH 2019) Sound of Gigha (seascape)	Small/Negligible	Kennacraig ferry routes; Ardminish receptor group	Small
14	Loch na Naich, Kintyre Way	14.7 km	LCT AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019)	Small/Negligible	Users of the Kintyre Way	Small/Negligible

Viewpoint No.	Viewpoint	Distance from Nearest Turbine	Landscape Character Type \ Designated Landscape	Scale of Landscape Change	Visual Receptors	Scale of Visual Change
15	Ardminish, Gigha	16.8 km	AGC22. Coastal Parallel Ridges (A&BC 2017) / LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges (SNH 2019)	Negligible	Tayinloan to Ardminish ferry route; Ardminish receptor group	Small/Negligible
16	Mullach Buidhe (Beinn Bharrain), Arran	15.1 km	LCT 83 Rugged Upland – Ayrshire (SNH 2019) North Arran NSA and SLA	Negligible	Recreational receptors	Small/Negligible
17	Carradale Harbour	17.2 km	AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 36 Coastal Glens (SNH 2019) Kilbrannan Sound (seascape)	Negligible	Recreational receptors	Small/Negligible
18	Craighouse, Jura	28.3 km	Jura (A&BC 2017) / LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges (SNH 2019) Sound of Jura (seascape)	Negligible	Recreational receptors	Negligible

Table 7.6 Viewpoint Analysis Summary

103. Each of the viewpoints is a 'sample' of the potential effects, representing a wide range of receptors – including not only those actually at the viewpoint, but also those nearby, at a similar distance and/or direction. From these viewpoints it can be seen that the distribution of effects would be as follows:

7.7.5 Effects on Landscape Character

104. Descriptions for each of the assessed LCTs are briefly summarised in the following sections, along with further observations from site based work.

AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019)

105. As shown on **Figure 7.11**, this LCT includes the Site and core of the Kintyre peninsula. Intervisibility of the proposed turbines with this LCT is limited to the rising slopes to Cnoc a Bhaile-shios to the north; the edges of the plateau to the east and west and south along the Kintyre peninsula within approximately 10 km plus some isolated summits extending 20 km away to the south.

106. The ABLWECS (2017) assesses landscape sensitivity, potential cumulative effects, constraints and opportunities and provides guidance on potential capacity of development to different sized turbine typologies. The results are provided for each LCT. The 'inherent' sensitivity and strategic recommendation regarding capacity for each LCT provide a useful guide and starting point to a site specific assessment. However, as stated in the ABLWECS,' *the purposes of assessing sensitivity in the wider areas of landscape planning is different to that undertaken as landscape and visual impact assessment which is specific to a particular project or development and its location.*' It is a well held planning principle that each proposal should be considered on their own merit. Within the ABLWECS, the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic is considered to have a high/medium sensitivity to large turbines (80-130m) and very large turbines (130m+) topologies.

107. **Technical Appendix 7.4: Landscape Sensitivity** sets out a site and project specific assessment of landscape sensitivity which draws on the ABLWECS and SNH baseline LCA. As identified within **Technical Appendix 7.4**, the susceptibility of this LCT is judged to be medium. The scale and simplicity of landscape/landcover is large in scale and settlement is sparse but this area is visible from a number of surrounding landscapes. As described within **Technical Appendix 7.4**, the value of the LCT within this character type is judged to be regional. There are no national or regional landscape designations on the Site and there is little wildness character but there are some valued aspects such as blanket bog, local cultural associations and the Kintyre Way. Considering susceptibility and value together the sensitivity is judged to be medium, but recognises this is on the higher end of medium.

108. **Table 7.7** outlines the local characterising effect the proposed Development would have on the key characteristics of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic, as stated in the SNH LCA 2019 for LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (recorded in **Technical Appendix 7.3**).

Key Characteristic	Effect of the proposed Development
Upland plateau with rounded ridges, craggy outcrops and an irregular slope profile.	The Site is located within the upland plateau but this key character would remain intact.
Upland lochs.	There are several small upland lochs on Site but stand-offs from the proposed Development have been implemented to minimise effect on these.
Winding narrow glens and wider glens with rivers.	The Site is mainly within the upland plateau, with no glens on Site. There would be some influence on the Clachan Burn, which contains extensive tree cover along the burn. Other glens within this LCT would be unaffected.
Extensive, large-scale mosaic of open moorland and forestry.	The mosaic of forestry and open moorland would be affected very little, but there would be a change in footprint, as a result of the open areas required beneath the turbines and the compensation planting would be located either on or off Site.
No field boundaries.	No effect on this key characteristic.
Very few buildings; occasional isolated dwellings on edges of moor.	The proposal includes a new control building and substation compound, which has been sited on the edge of the forestry to provide some backdrop to it. The two areas of solar development would also be present, one within the curtilage of the forestry and one in between two areas of forestry, to keep development out with the moorland areas. The control building for the solar has been located near an existing building on Site.
Small enclosed pastures and occasional farms and houses on lower hill slopes at the transition with adjacent character types and within the narrow glens which dissect these uplands.	No effect on this key characteristic.
Little access; roads follow shorelines	The main track into and through the site would use an existing access track for forestry and Cour Windfarm. There would be some change to this key characteristic, as new tracks on site would increase access to this part of the upland plateau. Improved recreational access has also been provided to take advantage of this change.

Table 7.7: Effects on Key Characteristics of LCT AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) /LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019)

109. The proposed Development would increase the presence and influence of renewable energy generation within the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT but the effect on the key characteristics would be relatively limited. The proposed turbines and solar arrays would be located in the northern part of this LCT between Sheirdrim Hill and Larachmor Burn. The operational Freasdail Windfarm is located in the forestry immediately north of the Site. There are other operational windfarms located within this LCT, the nearest being Cour, 8 km[1] south of the Site and Deucheran Hill 13 km south of the Site in the centre of the Kintyre peninsula. At the southern end of the Kintyre peninsula, over 20 km from the Site lies the Beinn An Tuirc group and Tangy.

110. The Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT is characterised by forestry, rounded ridges, craggy outcrops and an irregular slope profiles, all of which create a screening effect within this LCT which limits the influence of these turbine groupings within this LCT. **Figure 7.11** illustrates the extent of theoretical visibility of the proposed Development in relation to the LCT boundaries and the screening effect of forestry would reduce this extent even further as illustrated by **Figure 7.8**.

111. **Viewpoints 1-3 and 14** are located within this LCT and the nature of the change at these viewpoints is described in detail within **Technical Appendix 7.4: Viewpoint Analysis.** Views from within the Site or on the boundary are represented by **Viewpoint 1** from the Kintyre Way. Views on the nearby edge of the upland plateau are represented by **Viewpoint 2** on the A83, north of Clachan. Views from the areas to the north are represented by **Viewpoint 3** on B8001. Views from more distant summits within the centre of the Kintyre peninsula are represented by **Viewpoint 14** from the Kintyre Way.

112. Where visible from surrounding open hilltops, rising ground and open areas immediately surrounding the Site, the proposed turbines and solar arrays would represent additional large scale features in this large scale landscape such as the landform and landcover. The wind turbines would also accord with the exposed nature of the landscape and the other wind turbine development on the peninsula. However, the vertical aspect and movement of the turbines would contrast with the more horizontal and static elements on the Site, which the solar array would be more in keeping with. The influence of the solar arrays would be predominantly confined within the Site itself, but there would be some visibility of solar array to the south and west locally.

113. The proposed Development would appear in close proximity to Freasdail Windfarm. From areas north, the increased size of the turbines would not be so noticeable as illustrated in **Viewpoint 3**. However, from areas to the south this would be more apparent as illustrated in **Viewpoint 2**.

114. Areas to the north of the proposed Development are already influenced by the presence of Freasdail Windfarm and the addition of the proposed Development would only increase the scale of influence a small amount, given the baseline situation. As illustrated in **Figure 7.11** and there would be a limited increase in the extent of this LCT influenced, mainly to the south and west. Within approximately a 6 km radius extending to the south west there would be a Large or Large/ Medium scale of change over a Wide extent of this area. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Substantial/ Moderate magnitude of change within the Site and within 6 km to the south west. For this LCT of Medium sensitivity, this would lead to a Major/ Moderate to Moderate effect, which would be Significant. However, this effect would be localised in nature and not extending beyond 6 km from the proposed Development.

115. From other areas either to the north of Freasdail Windfarm or beyond 6 km to the south west from proposed Development within the upland plateau, influence would be much more limited by landform and/or distance, or the influence of existing wind turbine development. This is illustrated in **Viewpoint 14** from the Kintyre Way crossing the plateau. Here Cour and Deucheran Windfarms have some influence on local landscape character. Due to this existing influence and Small/Negligible scale of change, and Limited extent of effect, the magnitude of change as a result of the proposed Development would reduce to Slight/Negligible. The sensitivity of the landscape is Medium, leading to a Minor effect which is Not Significant on this part of the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic.

116. With regard to the overall pattern of development with the operational baseline and overall effect on this landscape type, the localised influence created by Freasdail would coalesce with those of the proposed Development but would not increase their extent or widen their influence beyond the effects of the two sites individually. They would appear together as an increased array with a wider influence on local landscape character to the south west but would be read together in the landscape. This group would remain discrete from Cour Windfarm and appear as a separate cluster, as illustrated in the **Viewpoints 2, 3, 6, 9, and 11-18**. Despite a localised significant effect, the change overall on the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (AGC6)/ Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (39) LCT, compared to the operational baseline would be Not Significant.

[1] distances are between nearest turbines

AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019)

117. As shown on **Figure 7.11**, this LCT includes much of the western coast and some of the eastern coast of the Kintyre peninsula, the South Knapdale coast, Tarbert, parts of South Cowal and Inchmamock. However, intervisibility of the proposed wind turbines would be limited to intermittent parts of the western Kintyre coast and South Knapdale coast alongside West Loch Tarbert and Loch Stornoway. Views from the remaining parts of the western and eastern side of the Kintyre peninsula would be predominantly screened by landform and tree cover. Views from South Cowal would also be predominantly screened by landform and further by vegetation but there may be some distant intervisibility with Inchmamock.

118. The susceptibility of this LCT is judged to be high/medium. This is as a result of the relatively smaller scale and increased complexity of these landscapes along the coast and extent of settlement. The value of the landscapes within this LCT is judged to be regional. Whilst there are no national landscape designations, some parts of these landscapes are designated as APQ regionally by A&BC which reflects the visual quality of coastal views and extent of amenity and recreation, conservation and cultural associations. Considering susceptibility and value together the sensitivity is judged to be high/medium.

119. The operational Freasdail Windfarm, as well as other operational windfarms are visible along the upland plateau of the Kintyre peninsula but there are no large scale windfarms within this landscape type in the study area.

120. **Table 7.8** outlines the local characterising effect the proposed Development would have on the key characteristics of the Rocky Mosaic, as stated in the SNH LCA 2019 for LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (recorded in **Technical Appendix 7.3**).

Key Characteristic	Effect of the proposed Development
Uneven, hummocky landform with rocky outcrops and narrow glens.	No effect
Raised beaches, cliffs and distinctive rounded knolls.	No effect
Rocky, indented coastline with offshore islands and small sandy bays.	No effect
Relatively small-scale landscape with a diverse mix of colours and textures.	The large scale of this development could contrast with some of the medium/small scale elements of this characteristic
Steep wooded cliffs and hummocky, gorse-covered slopes.	No effect
Stone walls provide partial enclosure.	No effect
Relatively well-settled, with scattered isolated farm buildings and small villages in sheltered sites.	No effect
A wide variety of archaeological sites.	No effect
Complex transitional landscape.	The proposed Development could lead to some further complexity within this transitional landscape.

Table 7.8: Effects on Key Characteristics of LCT AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019)

121. The proposed Development would increase the presence and influence of renewable energy generation visible within the adjacent upland landscapes with only some potentially limited effects on the key characteristics of this LCT. However, the potential for these effects to occur would be limited by the screening effect of landform, as illustrated in **Figure 7.11,** and screened even further by the extensive intervening tree cover and forestry as illustrated by **Figure 7.8**.

122. **Viewpoints 4-10 and 17** are located within this LCT and the nature of the change at these viewpoints is described in detail within **Appendix 7.4: Viewpoint Analysis.** Views from the areas within this LCT on the Kintyre peninsula are represented by **Viewpoints 4, 6 - 8**. Views from the areas within this LCT on the South Knapdale peninsula are represented by **Viewpoints 5, 9, 10 and 17**.

123. The proposed Development would appear within the context of Freasdail Windfarm. From areas to the north west of the Site, the increased size of the turbines would not be so noticeable, as illustrated in **Viewpoints 4 and 7**. However, from areas to the south west this would be more apparent, as illustrated in **Viewpoints 6 and 8**.

124. Where intervisibility would occur with the proposed Development, mainly the turbines but also solar area 2, it would represent additional large scale features in the adjacent large scale landscape which generally forms the background or horizon of views. From some locations, the Freasdail turbines are already visible in the background and already have an influence on parts of the Rocky Mosaic. From locations on the South Knapdale part of the Rocky Mosaic, the water of West Loch Tarbert provides a physical barrier and sense of separation from the landscapes on the Kintyre peninsula, which would reduce the impact.

125. For both the South Knapdale and Kintyre areas of this LCT, the association with the upland landscapes is secondary compared to the association with the expansive seaward context. In most cases, the proposed Development does not interfere with the transition of this rocky coastline between the upland landscapes of the Kintyre and South Knapdale and their adjacent lochs, bays and sounds. However, there would be some influence on this landscape type, often as a result of the contrast in scales between the proposed development and the local landscape of this type.

126. As a result, there would be some areas within the Rocky Mosaic LCT within approximately 6 km of the proposed Development where the scale of change would be Medium/Small over Localised parts of this LCT. These changes are Permanent and would lead to a Moderate/Slight magnitude of change within the Rocky Mosaic LCT within a 6 km radius of the proposed Development. The sensitivity of the LCT is High/Medium, leading to a Moderate effect which is considered to be Significant on this part of the Rocky Mosaic LCT.

127. Beyond a 6 km radius of the proposed Development within the Rocky Mosaic LCT, influence would be much reduced and the proposed Development would have little characterising influence on local landscape character, as illustrated in **Viewpoints 9, 10, 17**. Due to screening by landform and tree cover, there would be limited areas within this LCT where intervisibility would occur. Due to this Small/Negligible scale of change and Limited extent of effect, the magnitude of change as a result of the proposed Development would reduce to Slight/Negligible. The sensitivity of the landscape is High/Medium, leading to a Moderate/Minor effect which is not significant on remaining parts of the Rocky Mosaic LCT.

7.7.6 AGC22. Coastal Parallel Ridges (A&BC 2017) / LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges (SNH 2019)

128. As shown on **Figure 7.11**, this LCT includes the Isle of Gigha (c. 13 km away) and the south eastern part of Islay (c. 30 km away). There would be some intervisibility from east facing slopes but given the nature of the landscape type, intervisibility would be very patchy. **Viewpoints 13 and 15** are located within this LCT and represent the views from the northern and central part of Gigha.

129. The susceptibility of this LCT is judged to be high/medium. This is as a result of the relatively smaller scale and highly complex landscapes along the islands to development on the Kintyre peninsula. The value of the landscapes within this LCT is judged to be regional/community. Whilst there are no national landscape designations, the Islay area is designated as an APQ regionally by A&BC which reflects the visual quality of coastal views and extent of amenity and cultural associations. Considering susceptibility and value together the sensitivity is judged to be medium.

130. There are three operational turbines on Gigha (The Dancing Ladies) less then 60m high within this LCT. There are also some areas where there are existing visual connections with the operational windfarms along the upland plateau of the Kintyre peninsula.

131. There would be no effect on any of the key characteristics of this LCT as stated in the SNH LCA 2019 for LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges LCT (recorded in **Technical Appendix 7.3**).

132. Where intervisibility would occur with the proposed Development within the Gigha area of this landscape type, it would be clear the proposed Development was located within a separate LCT and the water of the Sound of Gigha would add a further physical separation from this LCT. Whilst the wind turbines of the proposed Development would be visible from parts of Gigha, at distances of over 13 km away the proposed Development within the interior upland of the Kintyre peninsula would have little influence on local landscape character on Gigha.

133. As a result, there would be some areas within the Coastal Parallel Ridges of Gigha where there would be a Small/Negligible scale of change over an Intermediate extent of the island. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Slight/Negligible magnitude of change within the Coastal Parallel Ridges LCT of Gigha. The sensitivity of the LCT is Medium, leading to a Minor effect which would be Not Significant.

134. The effect on the eastern edge of Islay, at over 30 km away, would be Negligible and Not Significant.

7.7.7 LCT 59 Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (SNH 2019)

135. As shown on **Figure 7.11**, this LCT includes the northern western and eastern edges of Arran, over 10 km away from the proposed Development and the Ayrshire coast north of West Kilbride. However there would be no intervisibility with the eastern side of Arran or on the mainland coast north of West Kilbride. **Viewpoints 11 and 12** are located on the north western coast within this LCT.

136. The susceptibility of this LCT is judged to be high/medium. This is as a result of the highly complex coastal landscape of this island of variable scales. The value of the landscapes within this LCT is judged to be national. This is as a result of this landscape forming part of the North Arran NSA and SLA (North Ayrshire Council) and extent of amenity, recreational and cultural associations. Considering susceptibility and value together the sensitivity is judged to be high.

137. The operational Freasdail Windfarm, as well as other operational windfarms are visible along the upland plateau of the Kintyre peninsula but there are no large scale windfarms within this LCT in the study area.

138. At approximately 10 km away from the proposed Development, it has the greatest potential to affect the key characteristic of '*Views tend to be longer distance and focussed seaward'*, as stated in the SNH LCA 2019 for LCT 59 Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (recorded in **Technical Appendix 7.3**). These views often include the Kintyre peninsula, as well as the other islands of the Clyde. At this distance, there would be no effect on any of the other key characteristics of this landscape type.

139. As illustrated in **Viewpoints 11 and 12**, it would be clear the development was located within a separate LCT and the water of the Kilbrannan Sound would add a further physical separation from this LCT. Whilst the wind turbines of the proposed Development would be visible from much of the north western coast, at distances of over 10 km away, the proposed Development within the interior upland of the Kintyre peninsula would have little influence on local landscape character on Arran. It would, however, affect views from Arran but they would remain both long distance and seaward focussed and this key characteristic would not be altered.

140. However, there would be some limited influence on the views from this LCT but the scale of change would be Small/Negligible over an Intermediate extent of this landscape type. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Slight/Negligible magnitude of change within the Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs LCT on the north western side of Arran. The sensitivity of the landscape is High, leading to a Moderate/Minor effect which would be Not Significant.

7.7.8 LCT 62 Coastal Headlands (SNH 2019)

141. As shown on **Figure 7.11**, this LCT includes the northern headland of Arran, over 10 km away. **Viewpoint 12** is located on the edge of this LCT and representative of the nature of effects in this landscape type.

142. The susceptibility of this LCT is judged to be high/medium. This is as a result of the complex landform and landcover of variable scales with strong intervisibility and focal points. The value of the landscapes within this LCT is judged to be national. This is as a result of this landscape forming part of the North Arran NSA and SLA (North Ayrshire Council) and extent of amenity, recreational and cultural associations. Considering susceptibility and value together the sensitivity is judged to be high.

143. The operational Freasdail Windfarm, as well as other operational windfarms are visible along the upland plateau of the Kintyre peninsula and the mainland coast but there are no large scale windfarms within this LCT in the study area.

144. At approximately 10 km-15 km away, the proposed Development has the greatest potential to affect the key characteristic of '*Exposed, open and highly visible landscape, with panoramic views over the coastal edge and Firth of Clyde*', as stated in the SNH LCA 2019 for LCT 62 Coastal Headlands (recorded in **Technical Appendix 7.3**). At this distance, there would be no effect on any of the other key characteristics of this LCT.

145. As illustrated in **Viewpoint 12**, it would be clear the development was located within a separate LCT and the Kilbrannan Sound would add a further physical separation from this landscape type. Whilst the wind turbines of the proposed Development would be visible from a few of the north west facing slopes of this area, at distances of over 10 km away, the proposed Development within the interior upland of the Kintyre peninsula would have little influence on local landscape character on Arran. It would, however, affect views from Arran but they would remain intact with little alteration to the character of views. As a result this key characteristic would not be altered.

146. However, there would be some limited influence on the views from this LCT but the scale of change would be Small/Negligible over a Localised extent of this landscape type. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Negligible magnitude of change within the Coastal Headlands LCT on the north western side of Arran. The sensitivity of the landscape is High, leading to a Minor effect which would be Not Significant.

7.7.9 LCT 83 Rugged Upland – Ayrshire (SNH 2019)

147. As shown on **Figure 7.11**, this character area includes the northern mountains of Arran, over 10 km away. **Viewpoint 16** is located on the summit of Mullach Buidhe (Beinn Bharrain) and representative of the nature of effects in this landscape type.

148. The susceptibility of this LCT is judged to be high. This is as a result of the complex and rugged landform with strong intervisibility and focal points. The value of the landscapes within this LCT is judged to be national. This is as a result of this landscape forming part of the North Arran NSA and SLA (North Ayrshire Council) and extent of amenity, recreational and cultural associations. Considering susceptibility and value together the sensitivity is judged to be high.

149. The operational Freasdail Windfarm, as well as other operational windfarms are visible along the upland plateau of the Kintyre peninsula and the mainland coast but there are no large scale windfarms within this area of this LCT.

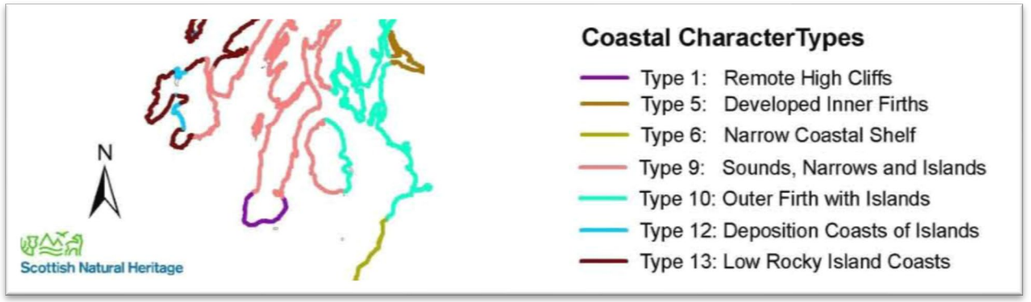
150. At approximately 10 km-20 km away, the proposed Development has the greatest potential to affect the key characteristic of '*Grand, large scale, remote landscape with wild character, from the summits there are dramatic and extensive views in all directions*', as stated in the SNH LCA 2019 for LCT 83 Rugged Upland – Ayrshire (recorded in **Technical Appendix 7.3**). At this distance, there would be no effect on any of the other key characteristics of this LCT.

151. As illustrated in **Viewpoint 16**, it would be clear the proposed Development was located within a separate LCT and the Kilbrannan Sound would add a further physical separation from this LCT. Whilst the wind turbines of the proposed Development would be visible from some of the summits and north west facing slopes of this area, at distances of 10 km to 20 km away, the proposed Development within the interior upland of the Kintyre peninsula would have little influence on local landscape character on Arran. It would, however, affect views from Arran but they would remain intact with little alteration to the character of views. Given the separation distance and the physical separation between the proposed Development and this landscape, the wildness would not be notably affected in this landscape. As a result this key characteristic would not be altered.

152. There would be some limited influence on the views from this LCT but the scale of change would be Negligible over a Localised extent of this LCT. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Negligible magnitude of change within the Rugged Upland LCT on the north western side of Arran. The sensitivity of the LCT is High, leading to a Minor effect which would be Not Significant.

7.7.10 Effects on Seascape Character

153. As stated in SNH Guidance Note Coastal Character Assessment (2017), in Scotland the focus is on the coast and its interaction with sea and hinterland, relationships that are quite distinctive in the Scottish context, especially on the West coast.' The northern part of the Kintyre peninsula sits amongst the National Coastal Character (NCC) Type 9: Sounds, Narrows and Islands, identified in 2005, (see **Box 7.1**).



Box 7.1 National Coastal Character Types (SNH, 2005)

154. The description for national coastal character type 9: Sounds, Narrows and Islands, is included in **Technical Appendix 7.3**.

155. The baseline assessment describes this coastal character as, '*the coastline is generally low and rocky and is often an 'incidental' feature, the focus being the narrow elongated stretches of open water which act as a visual foil to the often diverse landform of mountains and craggy islands.' 'Views of islands tend to be the focus from the Mainland and vice versa'.*

156. The susceptibility of this national coastal character type is judged to be high/medium. This is as a result of the relatively smaller scale seascapes and increased complexity of the coastal landscapes with views which can often be restricted or have a very directional focus. The value of the seascapes within this character type is judged to be either national or regional. This is as a result of the NSAs which include some of the coasts around North Arran, Jura and Knapdale and the landscapes on South Knapdale and coastal parts of the Kintyre peninsula, designated as APQ regionally by A&BC, as well as the extent of amenity and recreation, conservation and cultural associations. Considering susceptibility and value together the sensitivity is judged to be High or High/Medium depending on the location of the seascape.

157. There are smaller regional and local seascape/coastal character areas which would have intervisibility with the proposed Development. These include the Kilbrannan Sound (between Kintyre peninsula and Arran), Sound of Bute (between Kintyre peninsula/Arran and Bute), West Loch Tarbert (Between Kintyre peninsula and South Knapdale), Sound of Gigha (between Kintyre peninsula and Gigha) and the wider Sound of Jura (between Jura/Islay and Gigha/Knapdale).

158. Whilst some of these more distant areas would have visibility of the proposed Development, due to the separation distance for areas such as the Sound of Bute and the Sound of Jura, the effects on their character would not be significant and, therefore, are not assessed in further detail.

West Loch Tarbert

159. This area is illustrated with **Viewpoints 5, 7 and 10** on both coasts of West Loch Tarbert. The first few wireframes from ferry route between Kennacraig and Islay within **Technical Appendix 7.6** are also relevant to the potential effects on this local coastal character area. The ZTVs in **Figures 7.4 - 7.7** illustrate that not all of West Loch Tarbert would have the potential for intervisibility with the proposed Development, particularly the south western end.

160. The existing Freasdail turbines are visible in the background and have an influence on parts of the West Loch Tarbert. The proposed Development would appear in the context of Freasdail Windfarm where they would be visible together.

161. Where intervisibility would occur with the proposed Development, mainly the turbines, it would represent additional large scale features in the adjacent large scale landscape which generally forms the background or horizon of views inland. It would rarely form the focus of views from West Loch Tarbert. The exception to this might be at either end of this area, such as at **Viewpoint 10** at the north end of West Loch Tarbert or at the mouth of the loch near Gigha where the proposed Development does fall within the main focus of views. The increased separation distance and extent of intervening screening does provide some mitigation in these views. The scale of the proposed Development tends not to contrast with the local landscape at these distances.

162. There would be some areas within West Loch Tarbert within approximately 6 km of the proposed Development where the scale of change would be Medium/Small over an Intermediate extent of this area. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Moderate magnitude of change within the West Loch Tarbert within a 6 km radius of the proposed Development. The sensitivity of the seascape is High/Medium, leading to a Moderate effect which is considered to be Significant on this part of West Loch Tarbert.

Sound of Gigha

163. This area is illustrated with **Viewpoint 13** on the north coast of Gigha. The wireframes from ferry route between Tayinloan (Kintyre peninsula) and Gigha within **Technical Appendix 7.6** are also relevant to the potential effects on this character area. The ZTVs in **Figures 7.4 - 7.7** illustrate that not all of the sound of Gigha would have the potential for intervisibility with the proposed Development, particularly the south western end or areas near the Kintyre peninsula.

164. There are three operational turbines on Gigha (The Dancing Ladies) less than 60 m high. There are also some areas where there are existing visual connections with the operational windfarms along the upland plateau of the Kintyre peninsula.

165. Where intervisibility would occur with the proposed Development, it would represent additional large scale features in the adjacent large scale landscape which generally forms the background or horizon of views inland. However, it would rarely form the focus of views from the Sound of Gigha which tends to be focussed up or down (north/ south) the sound, rather than across (east) to the Kintyre peninsula. The exception to this might be at the northern end, such as at **Viewpoint 13** where the proposed Development does fall near the main focus of views towards West Loch Tarbert. However, the increased separation distance does provide some mitigation in these views as the scale of the proposed Development would accord better with the larger scale of the seascape in this area.

166. These changes within the nearby large scale of the upland Kintyre peninsula would have a more limited potential to affect changes in the character of the Gigha Sound seascape. As a result, there would be some areas within the northern part of the Gigha Sound (Localised extent) where the scale of change would be Small. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Slight magnitude of change within the Gigha Sound. The sensitivity of the seascape is High/Medium, leading to a Moderate/Minor effect which is considered to be Not Significant.

Kilbrannan Sound

167. This area is illustrated with **Viewpoints 11** and **12** both on the coast of Arran and **Viewpoint 17** at Carradale Harbour on the east coast of the Kintyre peninsula. The wireframes from ferry route between Claonaig (Kintyre) and Lochranza within **Technical Appendix 7.6** are also relevant to the potential effects on this character area. The ZTVs in **Figures 7.4 - 7.7** illustrate that much of the Kilbrannan Sound would have some potential for intervisibility with the proposed Development.

168. The existing Cour and Deucheran Hill turbines are visible in the background within the middle of the Kintyre peninsula and have an influence on parts of the Kilbrannan Sound. In the northern part of the Kintyre peninsula, the Freasdail turbines are also visible from some parts of the sound and the proposed Development would appear in the context of Freasdail Windfarm where they are both visible together.

169. Where the proposed Development would be visible, it would represent additional large scale features in the adjacent large scale landscape which generally forms the background or horizon of views inland. The Kilbrannan Sound is a wide body of water and as a result views are less focussed up and down the sound and views across the sound to the Kintyre peninsula or Arran are more noticeable.

170. Whilst the ZTVs indicate that much of the Kilbrannan Sound would have some potential for intervisibility with the proposed Development, it tends to be partially screened by the steep coastal slopes on the eastern side of the Kintyre peninsula, and in some cases even further by vegetation on the top of the coastal slope. Only the turbines on the eastern side of the Site tend to be visible from the Kilbrannan Sound and as illustrated in **Viewpoints 11, 12** and **17**. From these areas, the separation distance and extent of screening by landform does provide mitigation in these views as the scale of the proposed Development would accord with the larger scale of the seascape in this area.

171. As a result, these changes within the nearby large scale of the upland Kintyre peninsula would have a limited potential to affect changes in the character of the Kilbrannan Sound seascape. Whilst the effect would be Widespread, the scale of change would be Small/Negligible on the character of the Kilbrannan Sound. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Moderate/Slight magnitude of change within the Kilbrannan Sound. The sensitivity of the seascape is High/Medium, leading to a Moderate effect which is considered to be Not Significant.

[2] distances are between nearest turbines

7.7.11 Landscape Summary and Conclusions

172. The proposed Development represents a good design fit and adheres to much of the design guidance within the ABLWECS for very large wind energy development within LCT 6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic. Given the location adjacent to Freasdail and 8 km[2] from Cour Windfarm, the strategic pattern of wind energy development would be maintained on the Kintyre peninsula, albeit larger arrays would be present where they exist. Whilst there would be some noticeable differences in turbine sizes, this would not be readily apparent from areas to north of the proposed Development. The areas where this would occur to the south would be limited or more distant where the effect would not be so noticeable. There are limited additional areas affected by the proposed Development, which are not already influenced by renewable energy development.

173. The extent of operational effects upon landscape character would be limited by the topographic containment of the Kintyre peninsula and Significant effects would be contained within approximately 6 km from the Proposed Development. This would include a Significant effect upon localised parts of the LCT 6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic and LCT 20 Rocky Mosaic which are considered to be of Medium or High/Medium sensitivity and both of which are already influenced by renewable energy development. Beyond this there would be No Significant effects on landscape character in the wider parts of these LCTs or any other landscape character types.

174. There would be a Significant effect on part of West Loch Tarbert within the national coastal character type 9: Sounds, Narrows and Islands. Effects within other parts of the national coastal character type would be Not Significant.

175. The construction effects would be limited to the host area Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT and on the adjacent Rocky Mosaic LCT where limited effects would be experienced, which would be Not Significant.

Landscape Character Type/Seascape	Sensitivity	Level of Effect
Host: AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019);	**Medium**	**Major/ Moderate to Moderate within 6 km radius to south west- Significant** Beyond 6 km Minor – Not Significant
AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019);	**High/Medium**	**Moderate within 6 km radius - Significant** Beyond 6 km Moderate/Minor – Not Significant
AGC 22 Coastal Parallel Ridges (A&BC 2017) / LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges(SNH 2019);	Medium	Minor - Not Significant
LCT 59 Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (SNH 2019);	High	Moderate/Minor - Not Significant
LCT 62 Coastal Headlands (SNH 2019); and	High	Minor - Not Significant
LCT 83 Rugged Upland – Ayrshire (SNH 2019).	High	Minor - Not Significant
West Loch Tarbert	**High/Medium**	**Moderate within 6 km radius - Significant** Beyond 6 km Moderate/Minor – Not Significant
Sound of Gigha	High/Medium	Moderate/Minor - Not Significant
Kilbrannan Sound	High/Medium	Moderate - Not Significant

Table 7.9: Summary of Landscape and Seascape Effects

7.7.12 Visual Effects

Visual Receptor Groups

176. This assessment focuses on effects on groups of visual receptors. The assessment of effects focuses on the visual amenity from public spaces, though views from groups of dwellings are noted in the descriptions. Receptors are generally assessed as being of High susceptibility and Community value resulting in a High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed development unless stated otherwise. Effects on private residential visual amenity are a separate matter, and are assessed within **Technical Appendix 7.7.**

177. **Clachan receptor group** (2.5 km, south west of the proposed turbines) – receptors within this group comprise local residents and recreational users of local roads and paths in and around Clachan that would be of High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development. The ZTVs indicate there would be some visibility of the proposed turbines from Clachan; however, the core area of the settlement is located within a well vegetated valley which, in reality would provide considerable screening of views to the Site, as illustrated by **Figure 7.8,** which is why no viewpoints have been identified within the settlement itself. Glimpsed views of wind turbines may be possible from more open parts of the settlement, such as near the primary school, although these are likely to be limited. Views from part of the settlement on rising ground above the primary school to the north would tend to be screened by landform and the extensive deciduous tree cover along the hillside. Further north along the minor road and from a few dwellings there would be some views of the proposed Development above the local landform, but these would be predominantly screened by the local landform, as indicated on the ZTVs.

178. From the core paths around Dun Skeig views would be variable with open views from the climb to the summit, as illustrated at **Viewpoint 6.** However, views from around the base and across to the coast would be more screened by hedges and landform and would result in only a few of the proposed turbines being visible. Views from the more elevated valley sides to the south of the settlement area would tend to be very limited due to the extensive screening of intervening vegetation.

179. The impact on this receptor group would be notably lower than illustrated at any of the viewpoints on high ground surrounding the settlement, such as **Viewpoints 2, 6, 8**, which offer more open views and elevated views. The scale of change would be no greater than Medium, over a Limited extent of the receptor group. These changes would be Permanent and would result in a Moderate/Slight magnitude of change. This would represent a Moderate effect but it would be Not Significant.

180. **Whitehouse receptor group** (2.3 km, north of the proposed turbines) – receptors within this group primarily comprise local residents that would be of High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development. The ZTVs indicate potential visibility of turbines across this group although this is likely to be more limited in reality due to the deciduous tree cover, particularly from the core part of Whitehouse which sits within a shallow valley. Extensive vegetation within the area would provide notable screening of the proposed Development from the core settlement area and also from the area of more dispersed settlement that runs up the lane to the northern side of Whitehouse Burn, as illustrated by **Figure 7.8**. The most open views occur at the northern and southern edges of Whitehouse, adjacent to the A83, where the land is more elevated. Views from these more elevated and open areas are illustrated by **Viewpoint 4**. The scale of change on this receptor group would be Large/Medium over a Localised extent and would be Permanent. The effects would be of Moderate magnitude and would result in a Major/Moderate effect which would be Significant.

181. **Gartavaich receptor group** (2.6 km, north east of the proposed turbines) – the main receptors in this group include residents and recreational visitors to the north east, notably road users on B8001 travelling to/from the ferry terminal at Claonaig and users of a core path near Gartavaich; these would be of High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development. The ZTVs indicate that there would be extensive visibility from this area and while occasional woodland blocks and roadside vegetation provide some intermittent screening along the B8001 corridor the proposed turbines would be widely visible. As illustrated at **Viewpoint 3**, the proposed turbines would be seen beyond or adjacent to the existing Freasdail turbines when seen from this area and would appear as a visual extension to the existing scheme. They would not appear to be larger in scale than the Freasdail turbines and largely contained behind the current array. Users of the core path that extends north east of the B8001 between Glenreasdell Mains and the Kintyre Way would experience open views of the proposed turbines. Road users on the B8001 would also obtain open views whilst the route extends across the upland of the Kintyre peninsula views would quickly disappear at either end towards the coasts. Permanent effects on this receptor group would be Medium scale, as at **Viewpoint 3**, and would occur over a Wide extent. These would be Substantial/Moderate in magnitude and result in a Major/Moderate effect which would be Significant.

182. **South Knapdale receptor group** (2.9 km, north west of the proposed turbines) – receptors in this group comprise local residents and recreational users of the B8024 / NCR 78 and any users of forestry tracks on South Knapdale; these would be of High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development. The ZTVs indicate that there would be extensive visibility from the coastal areas around the south and south east of the peninsula and from elevated areas inland. However, extensive forestry cover within the interior and coastal woodland on the southern part of the peninsula mean that in reality the degree of visibility would be considerably less and extremely intermittent. As illustrated in **Figure 7.7**, the southern part of the peninsula is afforded much more screening and visibility would be limited mainly to blade tips where open views are possible. Travelling on the B8024 adjacent to West Loch Tarbert, and passing through the dispersed settlement adjacent to it, there is a thick belt of deciduous tree cover between the road and the coast that generally screens views towards the proposed Development (less so in some places in winter). Occasionally there are brief gaps that afford a view out, such as that illustrated by **Viewpoint 10** (on the shore of West Loch Tarbert). There are also a few open areas such as at Rubha Riabhach near Dunmore, illustrated by **Viewpoint 5**, where the proposed turbines would be visible within the Kintyre peninsula across West Loch Tarbert and adjacent to existing turbines. The most elevated publicly available position is illustrated by **Viewpoint 9,** where there would be an open view when travelling east from Kilberry. Some private properties are set either right on the coast or in elevated positions above the road and would gain similar open views but not all residents in this area would experience such views, most would be afforded some screening by landform and deciduous tree cover. Views in the vicinity of private residences at the southern end of the peninsula around Achadh-Chaorann Bay would be predominantly screened by landform on the Kintyre peninsula with some turbine hubs but mainly blade tips visible.

183. There would be a very Limited extent of the east facing slopes of South Knapdale around Dunmore where more open views towards the proposed Development would be available and this would result in a Large/Medium scale of change, as illustrated in **Viewpoint 5**. However, over the wider group views would occur over only a Localised extent and the scale of effect would reduce to Medium/Small, as illustrated at **Viewpoints 9** and **10**. Overall these Permanent effects would be Moderate in magnitude and result in a Major/Moderate effect which would be Significant.

184. **Lochranza / Catacol, Arran receptor group** (10.1 km, south east of the proposed turbines) – receptors in this group comprise local residents and recreational users of local roads, paths, visitors to Lochranza Castle and water craft moored in Loch Ranza. Some of the recreational receptors would be of High sensitivity whilst the local residents would be High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development. The main area of settlement at Lochranza runs alongside the A841 and is oriented to the north or north east with views towards the proposed Development restricted by the hill rising to the south of the settlement, as illustrated by the ZTVs. More open views are possible from Loch Ranza itself and from the area of settlement north of this, extending along Newton Road towards Newton Point. Similar open views are possible from the western end of the settlement in the vicinity of the ferry terminal as illustrated by **Viewpoint 12**. The settlement at Catacol looks west, directly across Kilbrannan Sound towards the Kintyre peninsula and the Site with the potential for open views, similar to those illustrated at **Viewpoints 11** and **12**. There are a number of recreational paths within this group including those that follow the coast and those that extend inland. These are largely located at greater elevation than the main areas of settlement along the coast and while occasionally routes pass through woodland or valley landforms they offer up frequent open views towards the Site. This group would experience a Small scale change over a Wide extent of the group which would be Permanent. These changes would be Moderate/Slight in magnitude and result in a Moderate effect which would be Not Significant.

185. **Pirnmill, Arran receptor group** (10.2 km, south east of the proposed turbines) – receptors in this group comprise local residents and recreational users of local roads and paths in and around Thundergay and Pirnmill. Some of the recreational receptors would be of High sensitivity whilst some of the local residents would be of High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development. The main areas of settlement in this group experience westerly views, directly across Kilbrannan Sound towards the Kintyre peninsula and the Site, as described above for the Lochranza/Catacol group although the proposed turbines would be seen at more of an oblique angle, similar to the view illustrated in **Viewpoint 11**, and fewer turbines would be openly visible. In this area, other existing wind turbine development on the Kintyre peninsula, including Cour Windfarm and Deucheran Hill Windfarm, are also closer and more prominent in views than from further north. Permanent effects on this receptor group would occur over a Wide extent and would be Small scale. This would represent a Slight magnitude and a Moderate effect which would be Not Significant.

186. **Gigha receptor group** (13.1 km, south west of the proposed turbines) – the main receptors within this group include residents and recreational visitors to the island that would be of High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development. The ZTV indicates potential visibility of the proposed turbines would be largely confined to the eastern side of the island with only the most elevated locations to the west having potential views of the proposed Development. The most open views would be from the northern end of the island in the vicinity of North End and Palmtree Beach where views would be similar to those illustrated at **Viewpoint 13** and the turbines would appear across the water, within the upland of the Kintyre peninsula. Similar views to these would also be possible from land around East Tarbert Bay and Bagh Druim Eoin while south of this, nearby landform is more likely to provide some additional screening of views towards the site, as illustrated at **Viewpoint 15**. Views from the main area of settlement on the island at Adrminish would be similar to those illustrated by **Viewpoint 15** although these would be intermittent with intervening topography and buildings screening many views. Similarly, views from the main north-south road would be intermittent due to intervening landform and roadside vegetation. There would be open views towards the proposed Development from the summit of Creag Bhan, the high point on the island, where the proposed turbines would be seen closely associated with the existing Freasdail turbines which are clearly visible from here on a clear day.

187. As illustrated by the two viewpoints on the island, the Permanent effects on this receptor group would be, at most, Small scale and would occur over a Localised extent. This would result in a Slight magnitude and a Moderate/Minor effect which would be Not Significant.

Key Routes

188. **A83** (0.9 km, west of the proposed turbines) – this is the main road route on the Kintyre peninsula and extends from Campbeltown at the southern end of the study area, along the western coast of the peninsula as far as Tarbert then follows the western shore of Loch Fyne to the north and out of the study area. At its closest point it is located approximately 0.9 km west of proposed Solar Area 2 and around 1.4 km from the nearest of the proposed turbines; the site access also joins onto this road. Views from this road are judged to be Regional value due to notable sections passing through APQs as it passes through the study area and users would be of Medium susceptibility due to the moderate speed of traffic on this main route down the peninsula. Overall, users of the road are considered to be of Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development.

189. There are notable sections where views are much more open including extensive panoramic views out to the west (in the opposite direction), taking in the islands and South Knapdale. Inland views tend not to be the focus of views from this route and these remain intermittent due to rising topography and extensive areas of forestry and tree cover. The ZTVs indicate that there would be the potential for visibility of the proposed turbines along the route between Ronachan, around 5.5 km south west, and West Tarbert, around 9.8 km north. However, along this section of the route the undulating terrain and extensive roadside vegetation mean that views would be frequently constrained to intermittent short stretches of the road and visibility of the proposed Development would be much less extensive than illustrated in the ZTVs.

190. The most notable views of the proposed Development would occur for northbound road users travelling between Ronachan and Clachan where the proposed turbines would be clearly visible across the hilltops directly in front, as illustrated by **Viewpoint 8**. The existing turbines at Freasdail Windfarm are already seen from here although the proposed turbines would appear much larger and extend across a greater part of the view. Moving north of Clachan and passing to the west of the Site, views of the proposed Development would be visible intermittently and seen off to one side of the road where gaps in vegetation allow open views. These would be similar to those illustrated by **Viewpoints 2 and 4** where the turbines would be very noticeable and situated at relatively close proximity to the road. Solar Area 2 would be visible in conjunction with the turbines from short sections in the vicinity of **Viewpoints 2 and 8** and many views would also feature the Freasdail turbines.

191. Between Whitehouse and West Tarbert, views of the proposed Development would be predominantly screened by landform and roadside vegetation, with some glimpsed views possible, mainly in winter.

192. Outside of this stretch, between Ronachan and West Tarbert, the ZTVs indicate that there would be occasional short sections along the A83 where views of the proposed turbines would be theoretically visible although these are unlikely in reality due to the extent of intervening vegetation. If the turbines are visible from these distant locations the scale of change would generally be Negligible.

193. The intermittent change in views inland from the A83 between Whitehouse and Ronachan, would be of up to Large/Medium scale, as illustrated at the three viewpoints, which represents a Localised extent of the route within the study area. These Permanent effects would be of Moderate magnitude and result in a Moderate effect which would be Significant. However, beyond this 10 km section of the route the effects would drop away almost completely.

194. **Ferry route Lochranza to Claonaig** (4.1 km east of the proposed turbines) – this route extends between the northern end of Arran and the Kintyre peninsula serving a variety of users including a large proportion of tourists and recreational visitors. Receptors using this route of Regional value would have High susceptibility to the proposed Development and would be High/Medium sensitivity. The ZTVs indicate that there would be views of turbines on the majority of this route; the most open views would occur at greater distances and closer to Arran (similar to those illustrated at **Viewpoint 12**) with the number of turbines and the degree of visibility reducing due to intervening landform, as the route gets closer to Claonaig, as illustrated in **Technical Appendix 7.6: Ferry Route Wireframes**. Permanent changes to views would occur over a Wide extent of the route would be no greater than Medium scale although approaching Claonaig these would reduce to Medium/Small and Small as the degree of visibility would reduce. These would be Moderate magnitude and the effects would be Moderate which would be Not Significant.

195. **Ferry route Kennacraig to Port Askaig and Port Ellen** (2.5 km, west of proposed turbines) - This route extends between Kennacraig (south of Tarbert) on the western Kintyre peninsula to Islay. Ferries run all year round between these two ports on Islay with reduced frequency in winter. They are approximately 45 km -50 km long and take 2-2.5 hrs. The assessment of effects is illustrated with reference to **Viewpoints 5 and 7** and wireframes and photographs in **Technical Appendix 7.6: Ferry Route Wireframes**. Views to the west (islands) would be unaffected, only those looking east to the mainland would experience any views of the proposed Development. Receptors using this route of Regional value would have High susceptibility to the proposed Development and would be High/Medium sensitivity.

196. From the Kennacraig ferry terminal, existing views in West Loch Tarbert tend to be focussed down the loch towards Creag Bhan, Gigha, eventually opening up towards Islay and Jura in Dunskeig Bay. Views inland tend to be secondary to those views of the islands. In views inland, the Freasdail turbines and the single small turbine at Gartnagrenach Farm are visible near the ferry terminal but fade as the route extends south. Here views there would be open views to the proposed Development, partially screened and often adjacent to the Freasdail turbines. The proposed development would be clearly visible on the Kintyre peninsula. In the southern part of West Loch Tarbert, both Sheirdrim Hill and Dun Skeig provide notable screening to the proposed Development, which is illustrated in the ZTVs.

197. With increasing distance from the mainland on both routes, more of the proposed Development becomes visible set amongst the interior of the Kintyre peninsula. Whilst there would be more of the proposed Development visible, the separation distance would be over 11 km away and it would be part of the wider panoramic views within the Jura Sound. In clear weather conditions the turbines on Gigha can be visible as well as some of the other windfarms within the interior of the Kintyre peninsula.

198. The changes to the view as a result of the proposed Development would be Medium in scale along a Localised 5 km length of the ferry journey from the Kennacraig terminal. These changes are considered to be Permanent which would lead to a Moderate magnitude of change along these two ferries routes, leading to a Moderate effect which is considered to be Significant.

199. **Ferry route Tayinloan to Ardminish** (14.9 km, south west of the proposed turbines) – this provides the sole, public link between Gigha and the mainland. It is primarily used by local residents and recreational visitors to the island, receptors using this route of Regional value would have High susceptibility to the proposed Development and would be High/Medium sensitivity. The ZTVs indicate that there would be views of the proposed turbines from around two thirds of the route with the eastern end, closest to the mainland having no visibility. Views would be limited to a relatively small number of blade tips seen distantly over hilltops for the majority of the route, as illustrated in **Technical Appendix 7.6: Ferry Route Wireframes**. Approaching Gigha the views become more open with a greater number of turbines visible and some towers and hubs also seen. The most open views would be from the final approach into Ardminish Bay where views would be similar to those illustrated at **Viewpoint 15**. The Permanent change to views would be Small-Negligible scale over an Intermediate extent of the route. The effects would be Slight magnitude, Moderate-Minor significance and would be Not Significant.

200. **National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way)** (2.6 km, north east of the proposed turbines) – this route extends north from Campbeltown, in the far south of the study area, along the B842 on the eastern coast of the Kintyre peninsula. When it reaches Claonaig it turns west, following the B8001, and passing within 2.6 km of the nearest proposed turbines. Turning north again at Redhouse it follows the A83 for around 7 km before joining the B8024 and looping around the Knapdale peninsula before carrying on north, out of the study area. Given the relatively low speed of travel on this recreational cycle route of National value, and that it passes through a number of APQ's, users are considered to be of High/Medium susceptibility and High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development.

201. The ZTVs indicate that there would be some intermittent, largely blade tip, visibility on the section of this route passing along the east Kintyre coast although in reality views are likely to be very limited here due to roadside and other intervening vegetation. The section of the route passing along the B8001 would experience the most open views and would be the same as those described for the Gartavaich receptor group. There would also be intermittent views of the proposed turbines from the section of the route on the Knapdale peninsula which would be the same as those described for the South Knapdale receptor group. Overall the Permanent effects would be of up to Medium scale over a Limited extent of the route. These would be Slight in magnitude and Moderate significance but would be Not Significant.

202. **Kintyre Way** (adjacent to the proposed turbines) – this 161 km long route is one of Scotland's Great Trails and follows a winding route that extends between Campbeltown and Tarbert and crosses between the eastern and western sides of the Kintyre on a number of occasions. It passes through both coastal and upland landscapes and passes through, and in close

proximity to, a number of existing windfarm's. Recreational users of this National value route would have a High susceptibility to the proposed Development and would be of High sensitivity.

203. As illustrated on the ZTV in **Figure 7.12**, visibility from this route would be significantly limited by landform and further notable screening would also be provided by existing forestry, as illustrated by **Figure 7.8**. The section between Tarbert and Claonaig would be fully screened by landform and forestry.

204. The section between Claonaig and A83 at Ronachan would be the greatest affected with views of the existing Freasdail Windfarm already available from here. Heading south from Claonaig, there would be views of the proposed turbines on the summit near Cruach Chaorainn and these views would continue where forestry allows and become very close range views, as illustrated by **Viewpoint 1** on the eastern Site boundary. Here there would be a new shelter for users of the path, a new path to the summit of Cruach nam Fiadh through the array, a new path and interpretation board to an archaeological feature on site and a new bird hide near Lochan Fraoich. These close range views would continue to Lochan Fraoich but beyond this the route, extends through forestry and views outwith would be affected by the phase of the forestry. Beyond Loch Ciaran and Clachan, views along Allt Mor would be fully screened by landform. There would be views of the proposed Development on the route between Clachan and Ronachan along the A83, as illustrated in **Viewpoint 8.**

205. There would be no views to the proposed Development between the A83 at Ronachan and Tayinloan along the west coast. From Tayinloan, the route crosses the Kintyre peninsula to Carradale. There are views to Cour and notably Deucheran Hill on this section. There would be views of the proposed Development from some short sections of the route on the highest parts of the plateau, as illustrated in **Viewpoint 14**. However, even when visible, the proposed Development would be more limited and distant, at 14 km away. South of Carradale, the route again crosses on the Kintyre upland via Lussa Loch to Campbeltown with potential for views to Beinn an Tuirc Windfarm, but there would be no views of the proposed Development on this section.

206. In summary, there would be a 4 km section of this route, between the summit near Cruach Chaorainn and Lochan Fraoich, where very close range views of the proposed turbines and site infrastructure would be available leading to a Large scale of change. Between Lochan Fraoich and Allt Mor this 5 km section of the route would have views when the forestry is young. For the 2 km section of the route along the A83 between Ronachan and Clachan, there would be a Large/Medium scale of change in the view. As a result there would be a Large to Large/Medium scale of change over an Intermediate extent of the route between the summit near Cruach Chaorainn and A83 between Ronachan. This permanent change would lead to a Substantial/Moderate magnitude of change, which would lead to a Major effect which would be Significant.

207. However, beyond this area views would be limited to distant or no views along the remaining length. As a result, the effect would reduce to Small/Negligible for the majority of this route with a Negligible magnitude of change leading to a Minor effect (Not Significant).

Specific Viewpoints

208. **Dun Skeig** (4 km, west of the proposed turbines) – the view from this location is illustrated by **Viewpoint 6**. As set out in **Technical Appendix 7.4: Viewpoint Analysis**, the scale of change at this viewpoint is assessed to be Medium. Although this location was identified by SNH at the scoping stage as being a popular panoramic viewpoint, it is not identified on OS mapping as a panoramic viewpoint and locally there is no promotion of it nor is there any clearly marked access, however it is located on a Corepath. Visitors will be of High susceptibility as they will have visited for the most part to see the view and it is judged that the view is of Regional value due to being within the locally designated APQ. Visitors to this viewpoint are judged to have a High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development.

209. When at this location the main focus on the view is out across the end of West Loch Tarbert and the Sound of Gigha towards the Knapdale peninsula and the distant islands, particularly the Paps of Jura. The upland mosaic of the interior of the Kintyre peninsula, where the Site is located, provides the least visually interesting portion of this wide panoramic view. However the proposed Development would be clearly visible and represent a new feature on the Kintyre peninsula. Given the 360° panorama, the Limited extent of the view in which the proposed Development would be visible and its presence in the least interesting part of the view adjacent to an existing windfarm, the Permanent change to views would be of Moderate magnitude resulting in a Moderate effect. Whilst the proposed Development is not located within the main focus of views, its introduction would be clearly noticeable and the effect is considered to be Significant.

210. **Newton Point, Arran** (10.9 km, south east of the proposed turbines) – this location is marked on OS maps as a panoramic viewpoint with views out to the north and west, towards the Kintyre peninsula and the Site. It is accessed via a well maintained coastal path, popular with recreational visitors, and the viewpoint is marked with a toposcope plaque indicating distances and directions to local points of interest. Visitors will be of High susceptibility as they will have visited for the most part to see the view and given the popularity with recreational visitors, well maintained access and orientation marker and the location of the viewpoint within the designated NSA, it is judged that the viewpoint is of National value. Visitors to this viewpoint are judged to have High sensitivity to the proposed Development.

211. The view from this location is very similar to that illustrated by **Viewpoint 12** and described within **Technical Appendix 7.5** although part of the settlement of Lochranza is seen in relatively close proximity to the far side of Loch Ranza. The proposed turbines would be seen in the upland plateau of the Kintyre peninsula interior to the south of the existing Freasdail turbines. The difference in scale with the existing turbines would be discernible but generally the proposed Development would be appreciated as a visual extension to the existing windfarm. The more distant turbines, to the western side of the array, would be largely screened from view by the intervening landform of the peninsula with 8 of the proposed turbines on the eastern side seen in relatively open view on top of the upland plateau. The proposed Development would notably extend the spread of turbines seen in a small section of the view but would remain a relatively distant feature seen within a large scale landscape setting. The Permanent change to the view would be Small scale within a Limited extent of the wide panorama, the change would be of Slight/Negligible magnitude and result in Moderate effects that would be Not Significant.

212. **Tarmore Hill Viewpoint, Bute** (21.5 km, east of the proposed turbines) – this location is marked on OS maps as a panoramic viewpoint with 360° views out across Bute and, to the south and west, across the Sound of Bute towards Arran, the Kintyre peninsula and the Site. It is accessed from a small car park off the A844 around 400 m to the south and the location is marked by a toposcope indicating distances and directions to local points of interest. Visitors will be of High susceptibility as they will have visited for the most part to see the view; although it may often be visited by recreational visitors from off the island it is not within an area designated for its visual qualities and it is situated in one of the more remote parts of the island, as such it is judged to be of Regional/Community value. Visitors to this viewpoint are judged have High/Medium sensitivity to the proposed Development.

213. The wireframe presented in **Volume 3**, illustrates that the existing turbines at Cour Windfarm are visible from here sitting within the interior plateau of the Kintyre peninsula and blade tips of turbines at Freasdail Windfarm are also just visible, appearing over the skyline, further north. The proposed Development would be seen just south (left) and adjacent to the blades of the Freasdail turbines and would introduce turbines here that are in open view. These would be seen standing on the skyline and extending beyond with some of the turbines to the western side of the array screened from view by the landform of the peninsula. The proposed Development would occupy a small proportion of the 360° panorama seen from here where wind energy development is already apparent. Although it would be a discernible feature within the view it would be distant and is only likely to be seen on clear days. The Permanent change to the view here would be Small/Negligible scale over a Limited extent of the panorama, it would be of Negligible magnitude resulting in Minor effects that would be Not Significant.

214. **Goat Fell, Arran** (21.6 km, south east of the proposed turbines) – this viewpoint is located at the summit of Goat Fell, the highest peak on Arran. It is a popular peak for recreational visitors and accessed via good footpaths for most of the route and the summit is marked with a trig point and toposcope. As views form an important aspect for visitors to this location fell walkers are judged to be of High susceptibility. Given the popularity of the peak and that it is located within the North Arran NSA this location is considered to be of National value. Visitors to this viewpoint are judged have High sensitivity to the proposed Development.

215. The wireframe presented in **Volume 3**, illustrates that the dramatic landform and rocky outcrops of the hills surrounding Goat Fell are a prominent feature in views north west and, these screen some views of the Kintyre peninsula. At the summit, existing wind turbines on the Kintyre peninsula can be seen in between summits on North Arran revealing views of both Cour and Freasdail Windfarms in places. The proposed Development would introduce further wind turbines into the 360° panoramic view, to the south of the existing Freasdail turbines, and these would be visible from some positions on this elevated location. Although the turbines would be a discernible feature within the view they would be distant and only likely to be seen on clear days. The Permanent change to the view here would be Small/Negligible in scale over a Limited extent of the panorama; it would be of Negligible magnitude resulting in Minor effects that would be Not Significant.

7.7.13 Visual Summary and Conclusions

216. In summary, there would be Significant visual effects within Whitehouse and surrounding area and in the scattered settlement to the north near Gartavaich and to the west along parts of the South Knapdale peninsula. Whilst there would be views from a few properties in Clachan, most views would be screened by extensive tree cover in the valley and significant effects are not predicted. There would be open views from parts of North Arran, but at over 10 km away these views would not be considered to have a significant effect. Views from Gigha would be intermittent and not significant.

217. In terms of transport routes, there would be a Significant effect on users of the A83 between Whitehouse and Ronachan and on the first 5 km of the route of ferry from Kennacraig. Users of other ferry routes would not experience a significant effect. Recreational users on the Kintyre Way would also experience a Significant effect between the Site and the A83 at Ronachan, but elsewhere the effect would be Minor. Users of the National Cycle Network would not be significantly affected. There would also be a Significant effect on views from Dun Skeig, but not on the other specific viewpoints in the study area.

218. The residential visual amenity assessment considered the effects for private residents at 13 properties within 2 km of the proposed Development. The assessment found that assuming the existing landscape baseline only two of these, would have notable views of turbines and experience visual effects of greater than Slight magnitude. Taking into account the future landscape baseline of anticipated forestry felling, two further properties would also experience significant visual effects.

219. Overall the Significant operational visual effects would be contained within a 6 km – 7 km radius of the proposed Development, mainly to the north and west.

220. The significant construction effects would be limited to a few of the nearest private residents and users of the Kintyre Way.

Visual receptor	Sensitivity	Level of Effect
Clachan group	High/Medium	Moderate – Not Significant
Whitehouse group	**High/Medium**	**Major/Moderate - Significant**
Gartavaich group	**High/Medium**	**Major/Moderate - Significant**
South Knapdale group	**High/Medium**	**Major/Moderate - Significant**
Lochranza / Catacol group	High/Medium	Moderate – Not Significant
Pirnmill group	High/Medium	Moderate – Not Significant
Gigha group	High/Medium	Moderate – Not Significant
A83	**Medium**	**Moderate – Significant** (between Whitehouse and Ronachan)
Ferry route Lochranza to Claonaig	High/Medium	Moderate – Not Significant
Ferry route Kennacraig to Port Askaig and Port Ellen	**High/Medium**	**Moderate – Significant** (5 km length near Kennacraig)
Ferry route Tayinloan to Ardminish	High/Medium	Moderate/Minor – Not Significant
National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way)	High/Medium	Moderate – Not Significant
Kintyre Way	**High**	**Major – Significant** (near Site) Minor – Not Significant (wider route)
Dun Skeig	**High/Medium**	**Moderate – Significant**
Newton Point, Arran	High	Moderate – Not Significant
Tarmore Hill, Bute	High/Medium	Minor – Not Significant
Goat Fell, Arran	High/Medium	Minor – Not Significant

Table 7.10: Summary of Visual Effects

7.7.14 Designated Areas

North Arran National Scenic Area and North Arran Special Landscape Area

221. The North Arran NSA (7.3 km, SE) and North Arran SLA (North Ayrshire Council) – (9.8 km SE) – The designations are shown on **Figure 7.1** and with ZTV on **Figure 7.10**. This designated landscape is considered to be of High sensitivity on account of it having a National value as a national designation for landscape quality and a High/Medium susceptibility as set out within the landscape character assessment in **Section 7.7.5**. Within the description of the North Arran NSA, '*the island of Arran makes a major contribution to the wider landscape character of the Firth of Clyde'…'These mountains fill the whole centre of the island and there is only a narrow coastal plain before the boulder-strewn slopes sweep upward to the shapely serrated peaks like Goat Fell (874m) and Cir Mhor (798m)'… 'If the island contributes to all its neighbouring districts by its dramatic presence, it must also be said that views from it to Bute, Cowal and Kintyre also add to the quality of the scene in Arran.*'

222. The Site is not within the designation so the physical integrity of the NSA/SLA as a whole would remain intact. The only potential for effects would occur as a result of intervisibility between the SLA/NSA and the turbines of the proposed Development on the Kintyre peninsula.

223. **Table 7.11** considers effects on each of the Special Qualities of the NSA as set out within Special Quality of the NSA, SNH (2010).

Special Qualities	Effect of the proposed Development
A mountain presence that dominates the Firth of Clyde	No effect
The contrast between the wild highland interior and the populated coastal strip	No effect
The historical landscape in miniature	No effect
A dramatic, compact mountain area	No effect
A distinctive coastline with a rich variety of forms	No effect
One of the most important geological areas in Britain	No effect
An exceptional area for outdoor recreation	There would be views from popular summits such as Goat Fell, but the proposed Development would not hinder recreational enjoyment of these fells.
The experience of highland and island wildlife at close hand	The proposed Development might be visible whilst wildlife watching but would not hamper views of it.

Table 7.11 Effects on Special Qualities of North Arran National Scenic Area

224. As noted in the description of this NSA, Bute, Cowal and Kintyre does contribute to the quality of scenery in Arran. As illustrated in **Viewpoints 11, 12, and 16** and additional wireframes from the summits of Goat Fell and Caisteal Abhail, these panoramic views do contain views to the Kintyre peninsula and the proposed Development would be noticeable. However, when visible, the proposed Development would form a relatively minor component within views from North Arran.

225. The impact on recreational users at these locations and viewpoints is considered within **Section 7.7.12** Visual Assessment. This concluded that there would be some Moderate, but Not Significant, effects for recreational users on the northern coast of Arran and Moderate/Minor to Minor effects for recreational users in the upland areas/summits.

226. The impact on the LCTs which makes up the NSA is considered within **Section 7.7.5** Landscape Assessment. This concluded that there would be no significant effects on any landscape character types or seascapes which make up the NSA.

227. When considered in the context of the NSA/SLA as a whole, this would not result in any significant material effects upon the NSA's special qualities. Overall there would be no material effect on the purpose of the NSA/SLA to safeguard the special qualities of this landscape and would not compromise the overall integrity of this NSA/SLA.

Knapdale/ Melfort Area of Panoramic Quality (Argyll and Bute Council)

228. The Knapdale/ Melfort APQ is located over 3 km west of the proposed Development. The designations are shown on **Figure 7.1** and with ZTV on **Figure 7.10**. This designated landscape is considered to be of High/Medium sensitivity on account of it having a regional value as a regional designation for landscape quality and a High/Medium susceptibility as set out within the landscape character assessment in **Section 7.7.5**.

229. There is no document which sets out the 'special qualities' of the APQs, but they have been designated to protect the regionally important scenic quality they represent. This APQ is located on the western side of South Knapdale with views west

across the Jura Sound, north to Knapdale and south west across the bottom end of West Loch Tarbert. The APQ comprises areas of Rocky Mosaic LCT which contains significant amounts of deciduous woodland, particularly in more protected areas, and Knapdale Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT which contains a significant amount of forestry and woodland. Views outwith this area is not extensive but dramatic when they are available, as illustrated in **Viewpoint 9**. Here the views are focused to the coast and across the Jura Sound, with views inland very secondary.

230. The ZTV (bare earth) in **Figure 7.10** illustrates that only some of the south east facing slopes would have the potential for views of the proposed Development. Tree cover and forestry would significantly reduce the extent of this area with views of the proposed Development. From nearest areas towards Ardpatrick Point on the coast would be predominantly screened by steep landform on the Kintyre peninsula. However, from high points, views would be more similar to those represented by **Viewpoint 9**, where there a Medium/Small scale of change in the views.

231. The proposed Development is not within the designation so the physical integrity of the APQ as a whole would remain intact. The only potential for effects would occur as a result of intervisibility with the turbines of the proposed Development on the Kintyre peninsula and a potential effect on the regionally important views of the seascapes.

232. Based on these considerations, the effects on the purposes of designation of the APQ would be Medium/Small in scale in a Localised area and this Permanent change is likely to have a Slight magnitude of change. This would result in a Moderate effect, which would be Not Significant. The scenic qualities of the APQ would not be significantly altered and, therefore, the proposed Development would not result in any significant material effects upon the Knapdale/ Melfort APQ and would not compromise the overall integrity of this APQ.

Designated Area	Sensitivity	Significant effect?
North Arran NSA and North Arran SLA	High	No
Knapdale/ Melfort APQ	High/Medium	No

Table 7.12: Summary of Effects on Designated Areas

7.8 Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects

7.8.1 Introduction

233. In line with GLVIA3 (paragraph 7.5) and SNH guidance on Assessing the Cumulative Impact of Onshore Wind Energy Developments (paragraph 33), the assessment of cumulative effects should focus on whether there are any likely significant cumulative impacts which are reasonably foreseeable and which are likely to influence the decision making of the proposed Development, rather than an assessment of every potential cumulative effect. As recommended by the SNH cumulative guidance, this assessment focusses on the '*additional cumulative change which would be brought about by the proposed development*' (paragraph 70).

234. In this section, the proposed Development is referred to as the Sheirdrim Renewable Energy Development (RED) in order to prevent confusion and differentiate it from other proposed developments that are being considered.

7.8.2 Assessment Scenarios

235. It is important to differentiate between the assessment of cumulative effects arising from the Sheirdrim RED with projects that are operational or under construction and have been included as part of the baseline; and those which are consented and can be considered as part of a scenario with some certainty; and those that are proposed and about which there can be little certainty. Accordingly the assessment distinguishes between; the predicted cumulative effects arising from the Sheirdrim RED with operational windfarms (which has been included as part of the LVIA); and the effects arising from Sheirdrim RED with the operational and consented wind turbines; and finally, the effects arising from Sheirdrim RED with the operational, consented and other proposed windfarms. The assessment has not included consideration of proposals at scoping stage, as there is no certainty that these proposals will progress to planning submissions and the nature of the proposed schemes may be subject to change.

236. The scenarios considered within this part of the assessment are as follows:

- Scenario 2 (future baseline) – this considers the proposed Development along with all operational and consented developments; and
- Scenario 3 – this considers the proposed Development along with all operational, consented and proposed developments with a submitted planning application.

237. As noted in **Section 7.3.5**, the potential for significant cumulative effects would be contained within a 15 km radius and include the proposed Inverary – Crossaig 275kV Overhead Line (OHL) and the cumulative windfarms are listed in **Table 7.4**. The location of these potential developments is illustrated on **Figure 7.9.** The cumulative ZTVs presented in **Figures 7.13 – 7.18** replicate the various assessment scenarios to be assessed.

238. Scenario 2 contains two consented developments listed in **Table 7.4,** in addition to the operational baseline. Scenario 3 consists of a further four renewable energy proposals and one OHL to be considered. Of these additional proposals Killean and Clachaig Glen Windfarms are located immediately adjacent to one another, 12 km from the Sheirdrim RED. As illustrated in **Viewpoints 6, 9, 13 - 16, and 18** and by the ZTVs on **Figures 7.17 and 7.18**, these two proposals have a very similar pattern of theoretical visibility and the cumulative effect with Sheirdrim RED would be similar. In order to simplify the assessment, these two schemes are considered together within the cumulative assessment.

7.8.3 Cumulative landscape and visual effects

239. In landscape terms, significant cumulative effects can occur when the introduction of the proposed Development would: extend the geographic limits of existing character effects; or when its presence would influence prevailing local characterising effects to such an extent whereby the baseline landscape character type/area would be transformed or redefined, resulting in a change to its classification.

240. Sheirdrim RED is located within the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT. The location of other windfarm projects in relation to LCTs and planning designations within an approximate 10 km radius is illustrated within **Figures 7.10 and 7.11**.

241. Significant cumulative effects on visual amenity would potentially arise where either in combination or sequentially with the assessment scenario, the additional effect of Sheirdrim RED would become visually significant for the receptor. Notable cumulative interactions with the consented sites would primarily consist of Eascairt, which is located adjacent to (east) the Sheirdrim RED. Interactions with the consented single turbine at Kilchamaig Farm (23.8 m to tip) are likely to be very limited and localised and unlikely to result in significant cumulative effects. Notable cumulative interactions with the other proposals would include High Constellation, Airigh, Killean and Clachaig Glen. The location of other windfarm projects in relation to recreational route receptors is illustrated within **Figure 7.12.**

242. The following assessment focuses on the likely significant cumulative interactions on landscape character and key visual receptors including local residents, key tourist routes and local roads. The steepness of landform which forms the Kintyre peninsula leads to a lack of intervisibility with most of the coastal settlements and roads, and reduces the potential for likely significant cumulative interactions with many landscape and visual receptors.

Scenario 2: Fully Consented Future Baseline

Landscape Character

243. As set out in the LVIA Chapter, the extent of significant effects upon landscape character from the addition of Sheirdrim RED would be limited by topography and extent of operational renewable energy development already present in this part of the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT. The operational Freasdail Windfarm is located adjacent to the proposed Development and other operational developments are also located further south within this LCT, including Cour and Deucheran Hill. The landscape effect of Sheirdrim RED would be considered significant within a 6 km radius south west of the proposed Development, within the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT and would coalesce with the influence of Freasdail. Adding in the consented Eascairt Windfarm, the Sheirdrim RED would sit in between these two developments, visually linking them into appearing as a larger combined array. Assuming the prior presence of the operational and consented developments, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would increase the influence of renewable energy development further south west within the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT but still contained within the same area to the north and east. However, this influence would remain separate from the localised

characterising influence of Cour Windfarm, 8 km[3] south separated by Crossaig Glen. As a result, the addition of Sheirdrim RED to the fully consented baseline would remain at Major/Moderate to Moderate effect (Significant) and would not raise the effect.

244. Eascairt would have some greater effects on parts of the Kilbrannan Sound but the Sheirdrim RED would be partially screened and seen behind this array from most of this area, as illustrated by **Figure 7.20**. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented scenario, and the effect as a result of the Sheirdrim RED on the Kilbrannan Sound would remain at Moderate and Not Significant and would not raise the effect.

245. In terms of the strategic pattern of wind energy development, assuming the fully consented scenario the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would maintain the existing pattern of development along the Kintyre peninsula, albeit larger arrays would be present where they exist. However, the existing pattern of clustered development with clear and generous spaces between them would be maintained. As illustrated in the **Figure 7.14**, there would be limited additional areas affected by the proposed Development, which would not already be influenced by renewable energy development.

Visual Effects

246. The main visual change occurring by adding Sheirdrim RED to the fully consented baseline would result from the visual linking of Freasdail and Eascairt into a single larger array. This change would generally only be appreciated from nearby receptors to the north; the Gartavaich receptor group; the Kintyre Way; at elevated locations such as Dun Skeig; or in very distant views where the addition of Sheirdrim RED would have little influence.

247. In the Gartavaich receptor group Sheirdrim RED would generally appear to fill a small gap between the two schemes and to slightly extend the spread of turbines within the cluster. The introduction of Sheirdrim RED into views from Dun Skeig would result in the gap between Freasdail and Eascairt being filled and the creation of a single larger cluster of development in that location. However, there would still be a noticeable gap between Cour and Deucheran Hill – seen spread out along the interior of the Kintyre peninsula. Overall, the level of effect would be much the same as that described in the main LVIA for the current baseline and would remain unchanged.

248. The most notable change from a distant receptor group would occur at the Lochranza / Catacol receptor group, here the visual change would be similar in nature with Sheirdrim RED appearing to fill a gap between Eascairt and Freasdail to form a contiguous cluster of development but not extending the spread of development. Again the level of effect reported in the main LVIA for the current baseline would remain unchanged.

249. With regard to the Kintyre Way, the addition of Eascairt in close proximity to this route would lead to close range views of this proposed Development in combination with Freasdail from the route whilst within the upland area. This would add to sequential views of other operational windfarms on the peninsula notably Deucheran Hill. The addition of the Sheirdrim RED to this scenario (Significant with the operational baseline) would add views of Sheirdrim RED from the same section of the route where close range views of Eascairt in combination with Freasdail would occur. The route would extend through the enlarged Freasdail/Eascairt/Sheirdrim RED array intensifying the renewable energy experience. However, as illustrated in the Cumulative ZTV in **Figure 7.14,** the length of route affected by additional views of renewable energy would only be extended by a short section between Ronachan and Clachan on the A83. Whilst the visual experience on the route would be more intense, the additional length of route affected sequentially would be limited. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline, the addition of Sheirdrim RED to this would result in a similar level of effect as reported for the main LVIA and no additional significant cumulative effects would occur on users of the Kintyre Way.

Landscape Designations

250. With regard to the potential effect on the North Arran NSA/SLA in Scenario 2, Eascairt would be visible on the Kintyre peninsula. The Sheirdrim RED would generally be seen either behind Eascairt, or in between Eascairt and Freasdail appearing as an enlarged array, as illustrated in **Viewpoints 11, 12, and 16** and additional wireframes from the summits of Goat Fell and Caisteal Abhail. This enlarged combined array would appear as a larger feature amongst the upland of the Kintyre peninsula in views to the north west; however, it would not appear to coalesce with Cour, which would remain a very distinct cluster with clear separation between the groups. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would not result in any additional significant or material effects upon the NSA's special qualities.

[3] distances are between nearest turbines

Scenario 3: Consented Baseline with other Proposals

High Constellation

251. **Landscape Character**: In Scenario 3 with High Constellation, the characterising influence of this proposed array would coalesce with Cour to create an enlarged combined array with an increased influence on the eastern side of the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT. The addition of the Sheirdrim RED would enlarge the Eascairt/Freasdail array with increased influence on the western side of the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT. Whilst these two enlarged clusters would remain visually distinct with clear separation between the enlarged arrays, the characterising influence on landscape character would coalesce to form a larger area of renewable energy influence. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and High Constellation, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would result in a Significant (Major/moderate) cumulative effect on the northern part of the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT. However, this effect would remain localised to the northern part of this LCT and would not be sufficient to transform this occurrence of the LCT as a whole.

252. In terms of the strategic pattern of wind energy development, assuming the fully consented baseline and High Constellation, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would maintain the existing pattern of development along the Kintyre peninsula, albeit larger arrays would be present where they currently exist but they would remain visually distinct.

253. **Visual Effects**: High Constellation would result in additional turbine development to the north of the existing cluster of turbines at Cour Windfarm. There are few nearby receptors where combined views of Sheirdrim RED and High Constellation would be possible, generally limited to some elevated locations such as Dun Skeig.

254. In views from Dun Skeig the cluster of development comprising High Constellation and Cour would be notably larger than in the current baseline. Adding Sheirdrim RED to this scenario would create another large cluster in conjunction with Freasdail and Eascairt, as described in Scenario 2. There would be a clear gap between these two clusters and the overall pattern of wind energy development on the Kintyre peninsula would be of a small number of large clusters. Overall, the level of effect here would be much the same as that described in the main LVIA for the current baseline and would remain unchanged.

255. In other locations, on and off shore, where the current pattern of wind energy development along the Kintyre peninsula is visible, comprising clusters and gaps, the changes would be very similar to those described at Dun Skeig.

256. **North Arran NSA/SLA:** High Constellation would be seen in close association with Cour Windfarm, appearing as an enlarged array, as illustrated in **Viewpoints 11, 12 and 16**. The addition of the Sheirdrim RED would enlarge the Eascairt/Freasdail array but these two enlarged clusters would remain visually distinct with clear separation between the enlarged arrays. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and High Constellation, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would not result in any additional significant or material effects upon the NSA's special qualities.

Airigh

257. **Landscape Character**: In Scenario 2 with Airigh, this addition would result in a localised characterising influence in the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT at Knapdale. With the addition of the Sheirdrim RED, this influence would remain separate from the localised characterising influence in the Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT on the Kintyre peninsula. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and Airigh, the addition of Sheirdrim RED would remain as reported in the LVIA for the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT.

258. **Visual Effects**: Introducing Airigh into the existing and consented baseline would extend the strategic pattern of clusters and gaps beyond the Kintyre peninsula onto South Knapdale with clear separation between clusters. In elevated or distant views (on and off shore), where this pattern is clearly seen, the addition of Sheirdrim RED would result in an enlarged Freasdail/Escairt/Sheirdrim RED array which would remain visually separate from Airigh. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and Airigh, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would result in the overall level of effect remaining the same as described in the main LVIA for the current baseline.

259. Combined views of Airigh and Sheirdrim RED from nearby receptors are generally very limited. There would be some successive views possible along the A83 between Ronachan and West Tarbert although intervening vegetation and landform would generally screen one development or the other so these would only occur very occasionally. Sequentially, the addition of Sheirdrim RED would result in more frequent views of turbines along this stretch of the route and Sheirdrim would generally be seen more prominently than Airigh. Overall, however, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED to the consented baseline with

Airigh would result in a level of effects which would not be increased from those described for the current baseline within the LVIA.

260. **Knapdale/ Melfort APQ**: Airigh is located within this APQ, as illustrated in **Figure 7.9**. As views tend to be focussed to the south and west, neither Airigh nor Sheirdrim RED would appear in main views from this designated landscape. There would be limited on-shore locations where both of these sites would be visible but they would be more widely visible from off-shore locations including the Gigha or Jura Sound. Where they would be visible from the same locations, such as from Viewpoints 6, 8 or 13, they both appear in a similar landscape context but well separated. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and Airigh, with the addition of the Sheirdrim RED, the level of effect on the APQ would remain at Slight and would not represent a significant effect.

Killean and Clachaig Glen

261. **Landscape Character**: The Killean and Clachaig Glen cluster would appear visually contiguous as a single array but there would be a gap with Deucheran Hill. From some locations they may appear as a single enlarged array but from others they would appear as two separate arrays. In either case, the characterising influence of these two proposed arrays would likely coalesce with Deucheran Hill (although less likely if Clachaig Glen were on its own) with an increased influence on the western side of the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT in the centre of the Kintyre peninsula. Cour would remain on its own further north from this group.

262. The addition of the Sheirdrim RED would enlarge the Eascairt/Freasdail array with increased influence on the western side of the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT in the northern part of the Kintyre peninsula. These two enlarged clusters would remain visually distinct with clear separation between the enlarged arrays and Cour located in the middle. The localised characterising influence on landscape character would also remain separate. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and Killean / Clachaig Glen, the addition of Sheirdrim RED to would remain as reported in the LVIA for the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT.

263. In terms of the strategic pattern of wind energy development, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED to this Scenario would maintain the existing pattern of development along the Kintyre peninsula, albeit larger clusters would be present where they exist they would remain visually distinct.

264. **Visual Effects**: Introducing Killean and Clachaig Glen would form an enlarged cluster of development with Deucheran within the interior plateau of the Kintyre peninsula. The only locations where combined views with Sheirdrim RED would be possible would be elevated or distant locations on or off shore where the wider pattern of wind energy development on the peninsula is visible. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and Killean / Clachaig Glen, the addition of Sheirdrim RED to these views would not lead to any increased levels of effect to those within the current baseline within the LVIA.

265. With regard to the Kintyre Way, the addition of Killean and Clachaig Glen in close association with Deucheran Hill would lead to an intensification of views of renewable energy on the section of the route east of Tayinloan towards Deucheran Hill, which already contains some close range views to renewable energy development. The addition of Sheirdrim RED would add views of Sheirdrim from the same section of the route where close range views of Eascairt in combination with Freasdail occur. This would result in an intensified view of renewable energy; however, as illustrated in the Cumulative ZTV in **Figures 7.17 and 7.18**, the additional length of route affected by views of renewable energy would only be extended by a short section between Ronachan and Clachan on the A83. Whilst the visual experience on the route would be more intense, the additional length of route affected sequentially would be more limited. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and Killean / Clachaig Glen, the addition of Sheirdrim RED to this baseline would result in a similar level of effect as reported for the main LVIA and no additional significant cumulative effects would occur on users of the Kintyre Way.

266. There would be some limited views of the Killean/Clachaig Glen cluster from the A83 in the southern part of the cumulative study area, notably to the of Tayinloan. The addition of the Sheirdrim RED would result in slightly increased sequential views along this route although the intermittency of these and the large gap between areas of visibility for the different clusters would not result in any increased levels of effect to those described with the current baseline within the LVIA.

Inverary – Crossaig OHL

267. **Landscape Character**: The Inverary – Crossaig OHL extends through the Forest Moor Mosaic LCT around 1 km to the north of the Sheirdrim RED and in this area the proposed alignment is similar to the existing line. As illustrated in **Viewpoints 1, 3-5 and 7,** the increased height would be noticeable in the same part of the landscape as the Sheirdrim RED. The increased scale of the OHL would add another larger scale feature to this large scale landscape. In the landscape between the Site and the B8001 this would lead to additional complexity to the landscape. However, in the other parts of the landscape it would not. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and the OHL, the addition of the Sheirdrim RED would lead to an increased intensity of development in the area between the Site and the B8001. This would increase the level of landscape effect in this area to Moderate which is considered Not Significant.

268. **Visual Effects**: The Inverary – Crossaig OHL would be seen from a wide variety of locations within the cumulative study area although usually there would only be brief glimpses of a small number of pylons on the horizon or amongst forestry and woodland. The most notable views of the Inverary – Crossaig OHL would occur from the Gartavaich receptor group where it would be seen in front of Freasdail and Eascairt and there would be an increased degree of visual clutter. Adding Sheirdrim RED to this scenario would result in a notable addition to the visual clutter although would not fundamentally change the nature of the views. The addition of Sheirdrim RED in this scenario would increase the scale of change from Medium to Large/Medium for receptors in the Gartavaich group but the overall level of effect would remain at Major/Moderate as reported for the current baseline within the LVIA. NCR 78 users would also experience an increased scale of change on the section of the route along the B8001 but the overall effect on users would remain at Moderate and Not significant.

Potential Cumulative Combinations

269. **Landscape Character**: The operational pattern of development has established a clustered pattern of development within the upland spine of the Kintyre peninsula, clearly separated from one another. With the addition of the consented developments (mainly Eascairt in the north) the pattern of clustered developments clearly separated would be maintained but there would be some enlargement of the clusters. In the event that all of the other proposals with submitted planning applications were consented and constructed the overall strategic pattern of wind energy along the Kintyre peninsula would remain predominantly intact, albeit each cluster would be notably enlarged. Each enlarged cluster would be visually distinct from one another with a Freasdail/Eascairt group, a Cour/High Constellation group, a Deucheran/Killean/Clachaig group, a Beinn An Tuirc group and a Tangy group along the length of the Kintyre peninsula. However, this would result in a transformation of this occurrence of Upland Forest Moor Mosaic LCT to one ‘with Wind Turbines’, whereby renewable energy generation was a key characteristic of landscape character, but not of sufficient dominance to be the defining feature. The addition of the Sheirdrim RED would create an enlarged cluster with Freasdail and Eascairt which would be more in line with the scale of the other main clusters created by proposed developments and existing turbines and it would not encroach into any of the strategic gaps between these. Assuming the prior presence of all operational, consented and other proposed wind turbines, the addition of Sheirdrim to this scenario would reinforce this pre-existing effect on the LCT by enlarging one of the already established groups but would not alter the overall pattern of development, nor transform it any further. As a result the level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA.

270. **Visual Effects**: If all proposed developments with submitted planning applications were consented and constructed the visual effects arising from the addition of Sheirdrim RED would typically be similar to the other scenarios. The cluster created with Freasdail and Eascairt would be more in line with the scale of the other main clusters created by proposed developments and existing turbines and it would not encroach into any of the strategic gaps between these. Whilst there would be some increase in the sequential effects for some users, given the variable areas of influence of the different clusters, the level of effects would be similar to those described in the other scenarios.

271. **Landscape Designations**: With regard to the potential effect on the North Arran NSA/SLA, there would be no direct effects on the physical integrity of these designations with any of the cumulative developments under consideration. The potential effect would result in the views from North Arran to the Kintyre peninsula which does contribute to the quality of the scenery in Arran. As illustrated in Viewpoints 11, 12 and 16, the strategic pattern of renewable energy would remain predominantly intact, even if the other proposals with submitted planning applications were consented and constructed. The addition of Sheirdrim would lead to an increase in the size of the Freasdail/Eascairt cluster, but it would remain clearly separated from the other clusters. As a result the level of effect would remain the same as reported in the LVIA.

Receptor	Scenario 1 (LVIA): Operational Baseline	Scenario 2 (Cumulative): Fully Consented Baseline	Scenario 3 (Cumulative): Other Proposals
Host: AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019);	**Major/ Moderate to Moderate within 6 km radius to south west- Significant** Beyond 6 km Minor – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	**Significant (Major/Moderate) cumulative effect with High Constellation.** Increased scale of change with OHL south of B8001 but Not Significant.
AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019);	**Moderate within 6 km radius - Significant** Beyond 6 km Moderate/Minor – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
AGC 22 Coastal Parallel Ridges (A&BC 2017) / LCT 55 Coastal Parallel Ridges(SNH 2019);	Minor - Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
LCT 59 Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (SNH 2019);	Moderate/Minor - Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
LCT 62 Coastal Headlands (SNH 2019); and	Minor - Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
LCT 83 Rugged Upland – Ayrshire (SNH 2019).	Minor - Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
West Loch Tarbert	**Moderate within 6 km radius - Significant** Beyond 6 km Moderate/Minor – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Sound of Gigha	Moderate/Minor - Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Kilbrannan Sound	Moderate - Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Clachan group	Moderate – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Whitehouse group	**Major/Moderate - Significant**	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Gartavaich group	**Major/Moderate - Significant**	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
South Knapdale group	**Major/Moderate - Significant**	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Lochranza / Catacol group	Moderate – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Pirnmill group	Moderate – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Gigha group	Moderate – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
A83	**Moderate – Significant** (between Whitehouse and Ronachan)	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Ferry route Lochranza to Claonaig	Moderate – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Ferry route Kennacraig to Port Askaig and Port Ellen	**Moderate – Significant** (5 km length near Kennacraig)	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Ferry route Tayinloan to Ardminish	Moderate/Minor – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
National Cycle Route 78 (Caledonia Way)	Moderate – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Kintyre Way	**Major – Significant** (near Site) Minor – Not Significant (wider route)	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Dun Skeig	**Moderate – Significant**	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Newton Point, Arran	Moderate – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Tarmore Hill, Bute	Minor – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
Goat Fell, Arran	Minor – Not Significant	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA	Level of effect remains the same as reported in the LVIA
North Arran NSA and North Arran SLA	No significant effects	No significant effects	No significant effects
Knapdale/ Melfort APQ	No significant effects	No significant effects	No significant effects

Table 7.13: Summary of Additional Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects

7.9 Statement of Significance

272. It should be noted that an effect may be locally significant or significant with respect to a small number of receptors, but may not be significant when judged in a wider context. The conclusion that some effects are 'significant' must not be taken to imply that they should warrant refusal in any decision making process. Overall, the scale and topography of the receiving landscape is considered appropriate to accommodate the proposed Development. Whilst there would be some significant effects identified on both landscape and visual receptors within the study area, it is evident from this assessment that due to the site selection and careful design, the extent of significant landscape and visual effects have been minimised as a result.

7.9.1 Landscape Effects

273. The proposed Development would result in Major/ Moderate to Moderate effects within a 6 km radius to the south west on the host character area, AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019) which would be Significant.

274. Moderate effects would also occur within a 6 km radius on the adjacent character area, AGC 20 Rocky Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 53 Rocky Coastland – Argyll (SNH 2019), and the seascape of West Loch Tarbert. These effects would be Significant.

275. Elsewhere, effects on landscape and seascape character would be Not Significant.

7.9.2 Visual Effects

276. The visual receptor groups of Whitehouse, Gartavaich and South Knapdale would all experience Major/Moderate effects as a result of the proposed Development that would be Significant.

277. The proposed Development would result in Moderate effects on the A83 on the stretch of the route between Whitehouse and Ronachan, which would be Significant. Moderate effects would also occur within 5 km of Kennacraig on the ferry routes from Kennacraig to Port Askaig and Port Ellen and would be Significant.

278. The Kintyre Way would experience Major effects on the sections of the route with open views of the proposed Development as it passes along the boundary of the proposed Development and also where it runs parallel to the A83 to the north east of Rhonachan. These effects would be significant.

279. Moderate effects on views would occur at the summit of Dun Skeig which would be Significant.

280. Elsewhere, effects on visual receptors would be Not Significant.

7.9.3 Designated Areas

281. Effects on all designated areas would be Not Significant.

7.9.4 Cumulative Effects

282. Major/Moderate cumulative effects with High Constellation would occur within the host character area, AGC6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (SNH 2019), and these would be Significant.

283. All other cumulative effects would be Not Significant.

7.10 References

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