

APPENDIX 4.1: LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT TABLES

1. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES

1.1 LCT 220: Rugged Massif - Inverness

Table 1: LCT 220: Rugged Massif - Inverness

Baseline Description	
Description	<p>This LCT comprises a series of rounded summits and connecting ridges which form a range of large-scale mountains located between Glen Moriston and the Great Glen. The terrain is rugged and irregular, and characterised by crags and rocky outcrops. Vegetation cover consists mainly of heather and grassland, with fragments of birch woodland. Settlement is limited to lower elevations, while the interior is harder to access, and there is a sense of wildness and remoteness.</p> <p>The area within the study area is atypical of this LCT, covering lower hills and reduced sense of wildness and remoteness due to the presence of nearby forestry and associated tracks, OHLs nearby and crossing the LCT, and wind turbines at Millennium (outside the study area) which signal human activity in the LCT.</p>
Key Characteristics	<p>NatureScot (2019) have identified the following characteristics for this LCT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Parallel ranges of massive mountains of irregular landform divided by deep glaciated valleys.</i> • <i>Mainly broad, sometimes rounded rugged summits connected by long ridges and relatively few individual mountain peaks, particularly in the east.</i> • <i>Steep terrain with many mountain-side burns and occasional lochans in corries and depressions.</i> • <i>Landcover of rock outcrops, glacial debris, deer-grazed heather and rough grassland create a smooth surface with mottled texture, with alpine habitats on high land to the west.</i> • <i>Almost uniform texture and cover from lower to upper levels in the east makes the size of the hills difficult to perceive.</i> • <i>Tracts of Caledonian pinewoods and occasional small patches of open birch woodland add colour, texture and seasonal diversity.</i> • <i>Largely uninhabited, few signs of human activity or human artefacts in the interior, and sparse archaeological evidence”</i> (this characteristic is less present within the study area, given the presence of OHLs and wind turbines within /near the study area, which contribute to a sense of connectivity) • <i>“Hill ranges combine to create a fairly even undulating skyline and a sense of enclosure when viewed from straths.</i> • <i>Views from the hill tops at the edges of the massif offer expansive views of the adjacent straths and surrounding landscape character types.</i> • <i>A sense of remoteness and wildness which is particularly strong within the interior”</i> (this characteristic is less present within the study area, given the presence of OHLs and wind turbines within /near the study area, which contribute to a sense of connectivity and development)
Landscape Value	<p>The eastern part of this LCT (outside the study area) falls within the south-western edge of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA. The LCT is also somewhat valued as a setting to the Great Glen and Glen Moriston, and is appreciated within the local context for recreational opportunities and scenic qualities. It is generally valued for its remote and wild qualities, although the character of the LCT within the study area is influenced by forestry, OHLs and wind development, thereby reducing these qualities.</p> <p>Landscape Value is therefore considered to be Medium.</p>
Assessment of Effects	
Possible Landscape Receptors	Potential Effects

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sense of connectivity and development within a confined part of this LCT, due to the presence of OHLs crossing this LCT, and nearby turbines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wood pole OHL and construction activities within this LCT may increase the prominence of development and perception of connectivity within part of this LCT.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception of a fairly even undulating skyline when viewed from straths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wood pole OHL and construction activities within this LCT may decrease the perception of an even undulating skyline, by drawing focus to a corridor of OHLs when viewed from straths.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varied texture, colour and pattern of tree cover on hill slopes (including Caledonian pinewoods, birch woodland, and conifer forestry) which contribute to some degree of naturalness in places. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wood pole OHL and construction activities within this LCT, and associated tree felling, may diminish the perception of variety and naturalness.
Landscape Sensitivity	<p>This is a moderately valued landscape, already affected by OHLs through a distinct corridor in the LCT. However, other parts which are not influenced by forest and existing OHLs, such as the high open slopes and summits, in particular those which are important as a setting to Loch Ness, Fort Augustus and the Great Glen and Glen Moriston, are more susceptible to direct change of the type proposed, especially where the skyline would be affected when seen from these areas.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity therefore ranges between Low (through the distinct corridor of OHLs) to Medium (across the higher open slopes and summits). This balances out to be Low-Medium across the LCT.</p>
Nature and Magnitude of Change	<p>Construction works would lead to activity and movement in this LCT, and in an adjacent LCT, including the use of temporary routes and existing routes and tree felling.</p> <p>In the long term, during operation, the Proposed Development would largely follow a similar alignment to existing steel lattice OHLs, which it would run between, crossing this LCT. This change would be perceptible, but aligned with other similar (albeit larger) structures.</p> <p>Magnitude of change would be Low-Medium during construction and Low during operation.</p>
Significance of Effect	<p>Construction works within this LCT would temporarily form a new focus and distraction within the local area, likely to slightly increase the prominence of development.</p> <p>In the long term, during operation, the new OHL and would be experienced alongside other existing OHLs, and would marginally increase the prominence of development and perception of connectivity within a small part of this LCT. The Proposed Development, including associated tree felling, may draw more focus to the corridor of OHLs, particularly when viewed from straths. Tree felling would result in a more prominent 'stripe' on the hillside, and would slightly diminish the fragmented / naturalistic areas of planting, when seen on the glen slopes.</p> <p>The effect would be Minor Adverse (not-significant) during construction and Negligible-Minor Adverse (not significant) during operation.</p>

1.2 LCT 222: Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness

Table 2: LCT 222: Rocky Moorland Plateau - Inverness

Baseline Description	
Description	<p>This LCT comprises an open, gently rolling and undulating moorland plateau with distinct edges featuring small rocky hills and lochans, bog and occasional patches of scrubby woodland which give a complex pattern with no clear visual focus.</p> <p>Within the study area, this LCT is dominated by the existing Bhlaraidh Wind Farm turbines. The influence of turbines would be increased by the presence of the proposed Bhlaraidh Extension Wind Farm.</p>

Key Characteristics	<p>NatureScot (2019) have identified the following characteristics for this LCT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Open, gently rolling moorland plateaux with distinct edges descending to adjoining straths and glens or rising to merge with Rugged Massif;</i> • <i>Plateau with a patchy texture of small rocky outcrop hills, bogs and lochans in no clear hierarchy or discernible pattern;</i> • <i>Hilltops and upper slopes dominated by rocky heather moorland, except in the north east where extensive, contrasting conifer forests dominate;</i> • <i>Regenerating trees and scrub in glens with rivers and sheltered lower hillsides;</i> • <i>Strong contrast in landcover and settlement between the plateau and adjoining straths and glens;</i> • <i>Sparsely inhabited and little evidence of active landuse”</i> (this characteristic is less present within the study area, given the presence of wind turbines and dam infrastructure); • <i>“A few historic sites indicating past settlement and land use;</i> • <i>Orientation is difficult due to the lack of hierarchy, pattern and foci in the landform and landcover;”</i> (this characteristic is less present within the study area, given the presence of wind turbines); • <i>“Within the plateau distance and scale are generally difficult to perceive due to the lack of elements of known size”</i> (this characteristic is less present within the study area, given the presence of wind turbines); • <i>“Distinct edges isolate the plateau from adjacent areas and give the sense of a vast, remote, upland moor;</i> • <i>At the plateau edges, expansive views over inhabited straths and glens create surprise;</i> • <i>Eastern areas have a semi-exposed character with occasional views of distant hills framed by the distinct edges of conifer forests; and</i> • <i>Perception of remoteness on the open plateau, from the rugged patchy texture and absence of obvious human artefacts”</i> (this characteristic is less present within the study area, given the presence of wind turbines).
Landscape Value	<p>This LCT does not fall within any landscape designations. While its upland sense of place and remoteness may give it certain value in the wider area, existing wind farm development within the study area reduces these qualities.</p> <p>Landscape Value is therefore considered to be Medium.</p>
Assessment of Effects	
Possible Landscape Receptors	Potential Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sparse habitation and little evidence of active landuse, contrasting with concentration of built features and active landuse (at Bhlaraidh Wind Farm and proposed Extension). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wood pole OHL and construction activities in a peripheral part of this LCT may extend the perceived influence of an active and inhabited landscape.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty perceiving distance and scale within the plateau, contrasting with the sense of scale and distance experienced in a concentrated area (at Bhlaraidh Wind Farm and proposed Extension). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wood pole OHL and construction activities in a peripheral part of this LCT may add scale indicators and alter the perception of scale and distance on the periphery of the LCT.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with orientation due to the lack of hierarchy, pattern and foci in the landform and landcover, contrasting with the presence of focal features in a concentrated area (at Bhlaraidh Wind Farm and proposed Extension). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wood pole OHL and construction activities in a peripheral part of this LCT may alter the pattern and hierarchy of landscape features and add focal features adjacent to a concentration of other focal features (at Bhlaraidh Wind Farm and proposed Extension).
Landscape Sensitivity	<p>This is a moderately valued landscape with some sense of remoteness. The open upland qualities are susceptible to some degree of change of the type proposed. However, the presence of existing wind turbines and those that would be present as part of Bhlaraidh Extension Wind Farm would reduce this susceptibility locally.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity is therefore Low-Medium.</p>

<p>Nature and Magnitude of Change</p>	<p>Construction works would lead to activity and movement in a peripheral part of this LCT, and in an adjacent LCT, including the construction and use of temporary and existing routes and tree felling.</p> <p>In the long term, during operation, the Proposed Development would be noticeable in a small peripheral part of this LCT, next to an existing OHL. This change would affect a localised area that is already influenced by the presence of turbines and dam infrastructure, and OHL.</p> <p>Magnitude of change would be Low during construction and Negligible-Low during operation.</p>
<p>Significance of Effect</p>	<p>Construction works within this LCT would temporarily form a new focus and distraction within the local area, likely to increase the prominence and extend the influence of development.</p> <p>In the long term, during operation, the new OHL would be experienced adjacent to other development (wind, hydro and grid) and would very slightly extend the perceived influence of an active and inhabited landscape, although it would locally increase the perceptibility of development. The new OHL would also add further scale indicators and focal features to a localised part of this LCT and marginally increase the perception of development locally, through the addition of human artefacts. Effects would be limited by its context immediately adjacent to wind turbines and would be localised, but there would nevertheless be a slight intensification of development on the edge of the LCT.</p> <p>The effect would be locally Negligible-Minor Adverse (not-significant) during construction and operation within the immediate area surrounding the proposed OHL; and elsewhere Negligible (not significant) during construction and operation.</p>

1.3 LCT 226: Wooded Glen – Inverness

Table 3: LCT 226: Wooded Glen – Inverness

Baseline Description	
Description	Covering the area of Glen Moriston within the study area, this LCT is comprised of long east – west orientated glens with steep upper slopes and a narrow floor with meandering river and an intimate and semi-enclosed character. Glen-sides are usually wooded while settlement and rough pasture land occurs on the lower valley floors which provide important communication corridors for road connections and existing OHLs.
Key Characteristics	<p>NatureScot (2019) have identified the following characteristics for this LCT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Long glens set within uplands and mountains, divided into upper and lower glens by a cross-cutting narrow farmed strath;</i> • <i>Lower glens broader, with steep upper slopes, undulating lower slopes and a narrow floor mostly occupied by river terraces; upper glens are narrower and more rugged, influenced by the surrounding mountains;</i> • <i>Rivers, water bodies (lochs and sometimes reservoirs), river flats and areas of wetland in valley floors;</i> • <i>Balance between open and enclosed space formed by the diverse mix of landscape patterns, land uses, conifer forests, woodlands and fields.</i> • <i>Distinctive mix of rugged hillsides, extensive Caledonian pine forest and lochs in the upper glens.</i> • <i>Actively farmed and relatively settled lower glen floors, with small clusters of houses near roads, and farms and crofts in open areas at the base of slopes.</i> • <i>Contrast between the settled and farmed floor of lower glens and their open heather moorland and forests of the upper slopes.</i> • <i>Sparse settlement in upper glens, limited to a few farms and crofts, isolated lodges and clusters of estate buildings usually sheltered by trees or woodland.</i> • <i>Central, major through-road in lower glens, with minor roads along the glen sides which are integrated with the landform and settlement pattern.</i> • <i>Single track road along the base of the upper glens, terminating at the upper edge of the glen.</i> • <i>Large number and range of archaeological remains in the lower glens.</i> • <i>Strong sense of history in upper glens created by the Caledonian pinewood stands.</i> • <i>Intimate, semi-enclosed landscape within the glen floor with limited visibility, due to the screening effect of trees and landform.</i> • <i>Distant views along the glens from open hill ground creating a feeling of openness and exposure.</i> • <i>Increasing sense of naturalness and remoteness traversing the upper glens into mountainous interior.”</i>
Landscape Value	<p>This LCT does not fall within any area designated for landscape value. However, its small scale and intimate character with rural settlement is likely to be valued locally. There are a number of areas of Caledonian Pine woodland which add additional landscape value.</p> <p>Landscape Value is considered to be Medium-High.</p>
Assessment of Effects	
Possible Landscape Receptors	Potential Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central, major through-road in lower glen, with minor roads along the glen sides which are integrated with the landform and settlement pattern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary access, existing access upgrades and construction activities on glen sides, extending up slopes into other LCTs, may alter the perceived pattern of settlement and landform.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forested glen slopes with wooded glen floor, with some felled corridors through which OHLs run. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wood pole OHL and construction activities may add or widen felled corridors on glen floors and glen slopes, increasing prominence of development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sense of naturalness associated with meandering rivers along valley floors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New wood pole OHL and construction activities near watercourses may reduce sense of naturalness.
<p>Landscape Sensitivity</p>	<p>This is a relatively valued landscape. However, its variable, wooded character which already provides a route for a number of OHLs and roads reduces its susceptibility to change of the type proposed. However, there may also be a sensitivity to further development, should it exceed the areas capacity for this type of development.</p> <p>Landscape sensitivity is therefore Medium.</p>
<p>Nature and Magnitude of Change</p>	<p>Construction works would lead to activity and movement through this LCT including the construction and use of temporary and existing routes (some requiring upgrades) and tree felling. These activities may be somewhat similar to existing forestry operations in the LCT</p> <p>In the long term, during operation, the Proposed Development would be perceptible in localised areas, but would generally be clustered next to existing OHLs, and largely screened by trees. Tree felling along the operational corridor (particularly adjacent to the Beaully-Denny OHL) would be noticeable. It is unlikely to represent a perceptible change next to watercourses, where an existing OHL is visible, and trees would continue to screen the new OHL. The Proposed Development would also be perceptible in the adjacent LCT, running within an existing wayleave corridor next to existing OHLs.</p> <p>Magnitude of change would be Low during construction and Negligible-Low during operation.</p>
<p>Significance of Effect</p>	<p>Construction works within this LCT would temporarily form focal features and distraction within the local area, although this would be somewhat contained by woodland.</p> <p>In the long term, during operation, the new OHL would be experienced adjacent to other development (alongside other OHLs, near dam infrastructure and in the context of wind turbines) and would generally be in keeping with the characteristics of this LCT, although it may marginally intensify the sense of development. This intensification may be most notable where the OHL and tracks would be experienced extending up glen slopes to the north and south. New and widened felled corridors may be perceptible, but would follow a similar pattern to existing corridors, and the prominence of development would only increase very slightly. The Proposed Development would not affect the sense of naturalness near watercourses, given the retention of trees and clustering with existing OHLs.</p> <p>The effect would be Minor Adverse (not significant) during construction and Negligible (not significant) during operation.</p>