

## APPENDIX 6.2 - VISUAL ASSESSMENT

**Table 1: Building-based Receptors**

Ref.	Location / Type / Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
B1	<b>Bowside Lodge</b> Visitors to the accommodation (temporary residents on holiday) <i>Note this property is currently undergoing renovation.</i>	The orientation of this property is west – east with principal windows on the ground and first floors on these façades (assumed for west elevation). Views are curtailed by mainly coniferous trees in the grounds but there are some views westwards to the forested hillside and views along the driveway to the track and rising ground to the east. Views southwards from outside the property within the garden ground would include the upper parts of turbines at Strathy Wood wind farm.	<b>Medium</b> Dwelling where a changed aspect is a less important element in the views due to the presence of detracting features (upper portions of wind turbines seen above the garden boundary vegetation when seen from the garden and vehicle movements seen passing the entrance to the property from the east facing windows).	<b>Construction: Negligible</b> Construction traffic would be seen in framed views along the driveway; change to the existing view from the house would be barely perceptible as there is existing construction activity associated with forest harvesting operations and activity related to the Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms and Strathy North substation. Changes to view from the garden ground would be unlikely to be perceptible in the context of the visible upper portions of wind turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm.	<b>Construction</b> Negligible Adverse Not significant
				<b>Operation: Negligible</b> Change to the existing view from within the property would be barely perceptible due to the screening effects of coniferous vegetation within the curtilage of the property. Changes to view from the garden ground would be unlikely to be perceptible due to the screening effects of garden vegetation and in the context of the visible upper portions of wind turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm.	<b>Operation</b> Negligible Adverse Not significant

Ref.	Location / Type / Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
B2	<b>The Bothy</b> Visitors to the accommodation (temporary residents on holiday)	This property is orientated north – south with principal windows on the south façade looking over the garden grounds with the upper slopes of the distant hills to the south and the upper portions of wind turbines at Strathy Wood (once constructed) seen above the garden boundary vegetation. There are secondary windows on the western and eastern sides which look over the garden area with views west curtailed by vegetation; views east are also limited by garden vegetation although there is a narrow slot view along the access track to the hill slope to the east. Bedroom windows face north and views are limited to the garden ground due to the presence of mature trees along the northern boundary.	<b>Medium</b> Dwelling where a changed aspect is a less important element in the views due to the presence of detracting features (upper portions of wind turbines seen above the garden boundary vegetation when seen from the garden).	<b>Construction: Negligible</b> Construction traffic would be seen in framed views along the driveway; change to the existing view from the house would be unlikely to be perceptible in the context of the visible upper portions of wind turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm.	<b>Construction</b> Negligible Adverse Not significant
				<b>Operation: Negligible</b> Change to the existing view would unlikely be perceptible due to the screening effects of garden vegetation and in the context of the visible upper portions of wind turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm.	<b>Operation</b> Negligible Adverse Not significant

Ref.	Location / Type / Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
B3	<b>Bowside Cottage (Gamekeepers Cottage)</b> Visitors to the accommodation. (temporary residents on holiday)  <i>Note this property is currently undergoing renovation.</i>	The orientation of this property is north – south with windows on the southern façade and a skylight on the northern side of the property. There is a north facing window in an outbuilding to the north of the cottage. Views south and south-west are along the access track over moorland vegetation and towards the operational Strathy North Wind Farm, the turbines of which are visible above the forest canopy. The turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm would also be visible interrupting the view towards Ben Griam Mòr and Ben Griam Beg; the view south would be of a man modified landscape dominated by wind turbines and commercial forest.	<b>Medium</b>  Dwelling where a changed aspect is a less important element in the views due to the presence of detracting features (wind turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood Wind Farms, commercial forest and tracks).	<b>Construction: Medium</b>  Construction activity would be seen from the south facing windows in the context of the wind turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms, the existing access track, and traffic moving on it, at distances exceeding 400 m. Work associated with the towers and poles to the west of the track would be prominent but would be seen in the context of the moving rotors of the wind turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms. Work associated with the more southerly towers would occupy a small extent of the horizontal view as the towers would 'line up'.	<b>Construction</b>  Moderate Adverse Significant
				<b>Operation: Low</b>  The towers and poles to the west of the existing access track would be seen in the context of the moving turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms. These would be partially backclothed by forested rising ground to the south-west. Towers further south would be seen with considerable overlapping or 'stacking' and they would also be skylining for the most part. Although occupying a small portion of the horizontal field of view, these elements would combine to form a more prominent feature due to the overlapping of the towers. They would also be present in the view towards Ben Griam Mòr and Ben Griam Beg which would be compromised by the presence of the Strathy Wood Wind Farm.  Refer to <b>Figure VL1 a-d (Volume 3a and 3b)</b> which show the view from the property with the turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm modelled into the wireline and photomontage.	<b>Operation</b>  Minor Adverse Not significant

Ref.	Location / Type / Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
B4	<b>Dallangwell</b> Residents  <i>Note: Formerly a keeper's cottage, this building was in use as site accommodation at the time of survey. It has been assumed for the purposes of the assessment that it will revert to residential accommodation post construction of Strathy South Wind Farm (i.e. after 2027).</i>	There are views eastwards from some parts of this property over moorland towards Beinn Ruadh. Forest felling and haulage activity can be seen looking down across the Strath. Turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm would be visible looking to the south.	<b>Medium</b>  Dwelling where a changed aspect is less important and where some detracting features are present (portacabins, machinery, laydown areas, Strathy substation, forest harvesting activity).	<b>Construction: Low</b>  Construction activity would be seen from this relatively elevated location with landform back clothing on the opposite side of the river at distances exceeding approximately 700 m. It would be seen in the context of vehicle movements associated with forest harvesting operations. Construction operations would be perceptible but would not detract from the existing view.	<b>Construction</b>  Minor Adverse  Not significant
				<b>Operation: Low</b>  The Proposed Development would be seen in the context of the turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm looking to the south-east. The closest tower would be more than 700 m distant.	<b>Operation</b>  Minor Adverse  Not significant

**Table 2: Route-based Receptors**

Ref.	Location / Type / Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
R1a	<b>Scottish Hill Track 334 – Strath Halladale (Trantlebeg) to Strathy south-bound</b> Cyclists, Walkers, and Forest workers.	<p>This track is orientated north – south and runs parallel and to the west of the River Strathy. It is currently being used as the haul track for forest extraction as well as forming the access to the properties described above, to the Strathy North Wind Farm and the substation buildings. It would also be used to access Strathy Wood Wind Farm.</p> <p>The view for cyclists and walkers, heading south, historically focussed on the long-range view to Ben Griam Mòr and Ben Griam Beg but the baseline view for the assessment would include the turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm which, together with the turbines at Strathy North Wind Farm would dominate the view.</p> <p>Views west are over the River Strathy flood plain, with small stands of scrub woodland to the forested rising slopes west of the River. The wind turbines at Strathy North Wind Farm are dominant man-made, moving features in the view. Other man-made elements include the few scattered buildings, the existing wood pole mounted overhead line and the track itself. The turbines at Strathy Wood Wind Farm would also be prominent.</p>	<b>Medium</b> Recreational route where a changed aspect is an important element in the view but there are some detracting features present (existing OHL, forest access tracks, forest plantations, Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms).	<b>Construction: Medium</b> Approaching the junction to Dallangwell, construction works would be either side of the route and thereafter would be upslope and very close to the eastern side of the track for a distance of approximately 6 km. Rounding the bend at the bailie bridge, users of the route would pass the southern extremity of the works and have no further views of construction activity. The Proposed Development would be prominent resulting in a noticeable deterioration of the quality of view, taking into account the presence of Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms, Strathy Wood plantation and the track itself.	<b>Construction</b> Moderate Adverse Significant
				<b>Operation: Medium</b> The Proposed Development would be seen in the context of the wind turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms from approximately 1 km north of Bowside until passing the southern end of scheme when users of the track would be heading away from Proposed Development. Visibility of the steel lattice towers would vary depending on whether they would be seen with back clothing or would be skylining. The Proposed Development would be most noticeable from around Bowside where the track is aligned such that the view would be of a large number of towers 'stacked' one in front of the other, creating a dense appearance of overlapping structures. Thereafter, the towers would be passed one by one in relatively close proximity to the track with the turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms on the other side of the Strath. The Proposed Development would be prominent, resulting in a noticeable deterioration of the quality of view, taking into account the presence of other visual amenity detractors	<b>Operation</b> Moderate Adverse Significant

Ref.	Location / Type / Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
				(Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms, Strathy Wood plantation and the track itself).	
R1b	<b>Scottish Hill Track 334 – Strath Halladale (Trantlebeg) to Strathy north-bound</b> Cyclists, Walkers, Forest workers	The view for cyclists and walkers heading north is dominated by the wind turbines in the forest to the west of the River Strathy. Receptors using the track would also pass in close proximity to Strathy Wood Wind Farm turbines and on-site substation. Other man-made elements would be notable as cyclists and walkers approach the scattered settlement at Bowside.  Views east for people travelling in both directions are curtailed by the rising moorland and grass covered slopes below Beinn Ruadh and lower summits to the north and south.	<b>Medium</b> Recreational route where a changed aspect is an important element in the view but there are some detracting features present (existing OHL, forest access tracks, forest plantations, Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms).	<b>Construction: Medium</b> Construction operations would come into view when passing through Strathy Wood Wind Farm on the approach to the baillie bridge at the southern end of the Proposed Development site. There would be continuous visibility of the works, initially to the west of the track, then to the east with construction activity at close range for approximately 5 km until just north of Bowside when users of the track would be heading away from the works. The Proposed Development would be prominent resulting in a noticeable deterioration of the quality of view, taking into account the presence of Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms Strathy Wood plantation and the track itself for the first part of the route and the track and forest for the remainder of the journey.	<b>Construction</b> Moderate Adverse Significant
				<b>Operation: Medium</b> From the approach to the baillie bridge through Strathy Wood Wind Farm at the southern end of the study area until passing Bowside there would be continuous visibility of towers, poles and conductors generally in close proximity to the track for approximately 5 km until just north of Bowside when users of the track would be heading away from the works. The Proposed Development would be prominent, resulting in a noticeable deterioration of the quality of view, taking into account the presence of other visual amenity detractors (Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms, Strathy Wood plantation and the track itself for the first part of the route and the track and forest for the remainder of the journey).	<b>Operation</b> Moderate Adverse Significant

Ref.	Location / Type / Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
R2	<b>Access Tracks from R1 to Dallangwell and Strathy North substation</b>  Forest and Wind Farm / Substation workers	Receptors using this route from the junction with the Scottish Hill Track 344 cross the strath of the River Strathy with views from the bailie bridge looking north and south along the forest edge, with wind turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood (once constructed) wind farms being prominent moving, man-made elements in views south. There are views towards the works compound and buildings at Dallangwell and the electricity substation buildings and perimeter fence, before the track enters the forest and views, are curtailed by vegetation.	<b>Low</b>  Route where a changed aspect is less important and where some detracting features are present (portacabins, machinery, laydown areas, Strathy substation, forest harvesting activity).	<b>Construction: Low</b>  Visibility of construction operations would vary along the length of the track and would be dependent on the direction of travel. A moderate to high number of tower and pole construction operations would be visible generally in sequential rather than simultaneous views as users of the tracks move along them. Construction operations would be perceptible but would not detract from the existing views.	<b>Construction</b>  Minor Adverse Not significant
				<b>Operation: Low</b>  Visibility of the Proposed Development would vary along the length of the track and would be dependent on the direction of travel. A moderate to high number of towers would be visible - generally in sequential rather than simultaneous views as users of the tracks move along them. The Proposed Development would be perceptible but would not detract from the existing views.	<b>Operation</b>  Minor Adverse Not significant



**Table 2: Recreation-based Receptors**

Ref.	Location/Type/Context	Nature of Main View	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Effect and Significance
Rec 1	River Strathy Fly fishers and ghillies.	Fly fishers and ghillies attention would be focussed on the river and immediate environs which comprise moorland and rough grassland interspersed with pockets of deciduous scrub and patches of self-seeded conifers. Bridges crossing the river at Dallangwell and Braerathy are notable features from adjacent beats. Wind turbines at Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms would be prominent features looking southwards from some stretches of the river.	<b>Medium</b>  Recreational location where a changed aspect is an important element in the view but there are some detracting features present (forest access track, forest plantations, Strathy North and Strathy Wood wind farms).	<b>Construction: Minor</b>  Depending on which beat of the River is being fished, construction operations would vary from not being visible at all to there being theoretical visibility of works associated with all of the towers. Where there is theoretical visibility of construction activity for all of the towers, this would not be experienced in simultaneous views: e.g. people fishing some of the beats in the centre of the study area would see construction of most of the Proposed Development in successive views (i.e. where they would have to turn their head to look over a 180 degree arc of view). The focus of the view for users of this recreation location would be on the river itself and as such, the construction works would be perceptible but would not detract from the existing views.	<b>Construction</b>  Minor Adverse  Not significant
				<b>Operation: Minor</b>  The number of towers and poles visible would depend on which beat of the river is being fished. From locations with theoretical visibility most of the Proposed Development the towers and poles would generally be seen in successive rather and simultaneous views. Looking southwards, the Proposed Development would be seen in the context of the turbines at Strathy Wood. Given that the focus of users of the River Strathy fly fishing beats would be on the river itself, it is considered that the Proposed Development would be perceptible but would not detract from the existing views.	<b>Operation</b>  Minor Adverse  Not significant