

Technical Appendix 4.7: Implications for Designated Landscapes

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1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Technical Appendix (TA) of **Chapter 4 Landscape and Visual, (EIAR Volume 2)** identifies and assesses designated landscapes within a 25 kilometre (km) Study Area from the outermost turbines. This TA sets out how conclusions were drawn with respect to effects on landscape designations.
- 1.1.2 The assessment of designated landscapes has been undertaken in accordance with the principles set out in **Technical Appendix 4.1 (EIAR Volume 4)** and is based on professional judgement.
- 1.1.3 This Technical Appendix should also be read in conjunction with the following:
 - Volume 1- Non-Technical Summary;
 - **Volume 2 - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report:**
 - Chapter 4: Landscape and Visual Amenity;
 - **Volume 3a: Figures (Figures 4.1 to 4.17);**
 - **Volume 3b: Visualisations (Figures 4.18.1 to 4.36.6);**
 - **Volume 4: Technical Appendices:**
 - TA 4.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology;
 - TA 4.2: Operational and Under-Construction Sites within 25 km
 - TA 4.3: Landscape Assessment;
 - TA 4.4: Visual Assessment;
 - TA 4.5: Cumulative Assessment;
 - TA 4.6: Aviation Lighting Assessment; and
 - TA 4.8: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.

1.2 Policy Context

- 1.2.1 The policy context as set out in National Planning Framework¹ (NPF4) in relation to local landscape areas is Policy 4 (Natural places). It sets out the following in relation to local designated areas:

'd) Development proposals that affect a site designated as a local nature conservation site or landscape area in the LDP will only be supported where:

 - i. Development will not have significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been identified; or
 - ii. Any significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of at least local importance.'
 - 1.2.2 In order to be able to assess the potential effect of the Proposed Development on designated areas, it is necessary to understand the '*special qualities of the area and the reasons for designation*', and this effectively provides the '*baseline*'. The baseline was informed by the Landscape Character Assessment (see **Technical Appendix 4.2: Landscape Assessment, (EIAR Volume 4)** and by the review of local landscape designations as set out in:
 - South Lanarkshire Validating Local Landscape Designations (Ironside Farrar, 2010)²; and

- Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2, Regional Scenic Areas, Technical Paper³.
- 1.2.3 Analysis of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping (see **Figure 4.5, (EIAR Volume 3a)**) established which of the designated landscapes within 25 km of the outermost turbines could potentially be affected, followed by verification on site and an assessment of each designated landscape considered.
- 1.2.4 No National Scenic Areas (NSAs) have been identified as receiving theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development.
- 1.2.5 Three Garden and Designed Landscapes (GDLs) have been identified within the 25 km Study Area as follows:
 - Scot's Mining Company House – 2.1 km from the nearest turbine to the northwest;
 - Drumlanrig Castle – 12.5 km from the nearest turbine to the southwest; and
 - The Falls of Clyde – 20.8 km from the nearest turbine to the north.
- 1.2.6 Scot's Mining Company House is predicted to receive theoretical visibility of 6-15 turbines of the proposed turbines and has been scoped in to the assessment.
- 1.2.7 Drumlanrig GDL is predicted to receive theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines from the southern side of the designation comprising 1-5 turbines where the landscape rises. However, a combination of policy woodland and intervening forestry would partially screen potential views of the proposed turbines. Therefore, it is not judged that the addition of the Proposed Development to the landscape would alter the special qualities that make the GDL distinctive.
- 1.2.8 The Falls of Clyde is predicted to receive widespread theoretical visibility of 1-10 turbines at a distance of 20.8 km, and it is not considered that the addition of the Proposed Development, which would be viewed beyond operational wind farms, would alter the special qualities of the designation and has therefore been scoped out of the assessment.
- 1.2.9 The Talla-Hart Fell Wild Land Area (WLA) is located approximately 15.4 km to the east of the Site. As the Proposed Development would not be located within a WLA, such that under NPF4 Policy 4 effects of Proposed Development on the Site would not be a '*significant consideration*'. A wild land assessment is therefore not included in the LVIA.
- 1.2.10 The majority of the Site (including all turbines) is located within the Leadhills and Lowther Hills Special Landscape Area (SLA), which has been included in the LVIA.
- 1.2.11 Analysis of the ZTV identified a further seven locally designated landscape areas with theoretical intervisibility of the Proposed Development, which are briefly considered in the LVIA as follows, distances from the nearest turbine proposed:
 - Upper Clyde Valley and Tinto SLA (South Lanarkshire) – 5 km to the northeast;
 - Douglas Valley SLA (South Lanarkshire) – 8 km to the northwest;

¹ Scottish Government (2023) National Planning Framework 4. Available online from: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/02/national-planning-framework-4/documents/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/govscot%3Adocument/national-planning-framework-4.pdf> [Accessed on 7th of April 2026]

² Ironside Farrar. (2010) South Lanarkshire Validating Local Landscape Designations. [South](#) Lanarkshire Council.

³ Dumfries and Galloway Council. (2018) Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Regional Scenic Areas, Technical Paper. Available from: https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-08/Regional_Scenic_Areas_Technical_Paper.pdf [Accessed: 7th of April 2026]

- Middle Clyde Valley SLA (South Lanarkshire) – 19.5 km to the north;
- Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA (Scottish Borders) – 10.2 km to the east;
- Thornhill Uplands Regional Scenic Area (RSA) – adjacent to the south of the Site;
- Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area (RSA) – 14.4 km to the southeast;
- Uplands and Moorlands Local Landscape Area (LLA) (East Ayrshire) – 14 km southwest;

1.2.12 The Upper Clyde Valley and Tinto, Douglas Valley and Middle Clyde SLAs in South Lanarkshire, Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA in the Scottish Borders, the Uplands and Moorlands LLA in East Ayrshire and the Moffat Hills RSA have all been scoped in due to distance to the Site and theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development predicted in the surrounding upland landscape.

1.3 Implications of the Findings of the LVIA

Scot's Mining Company House GDL

- 1.3.1 This GDL includes an example of virtually unaltered 18th Century garden layout that is associated with James Stirling, the agent and manager of Leadhills Mining Company located in the village of Leadhills.
- 1.3.2 The GDL is considered by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to be of outstanding importance for its historical, architectural, archaeological and scenic interest, high artistic interest with some horticultural value.
- 1.3.3 The Proposed Development would be located approximately 2.1 km to the northwest where the turbines would be visible above the surrounding hills to the northwest and northeast breaking the horizon. Views would be influenced by boundary vegetation, and the proposed turbines would be most visible during winter months when leaves are not on branches. This would be a visual effect from the GDL boundary and would not lead to a physical alteration of the gardens. Therefore, no change to the interest of the GDL is judged as a result of the Proposed Development.

Leadhills and Lowther Hills SLA

- 1.3.4 This local level landscape designation is identified by South Lanarkshire Council (SLC), and the Site is located within the southern part of the designation.
- 1.3.5 The Area is popular for walking with several summits and a section of the SUW which passes approximately 700 m to the south of the Site at its closest point. The landscape is typical of the wider location, undulating and includes a series of rounded hills characteristic of the Southern Uplands, including Ravengill Dod (538 m AOD), Harryburn Brae (499 m AOD), Wellgrain Dod (555 m AOD), Brown Dod (489 m AOD), Snarhead Hill (511 m AOD), and Sowen Dod (546 m AOD).
- 1.3.1 The Proposed Development would comprise up to 21 turbines, and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) along with associated infrastructure, arranged as illustrated on **Figure 2.1 (EIAR Volume 3a)** and detailed in **Chapter 2, EIAR Volume 2)**. The Proposed Development is described in **Chapter 2: Project Description, (EIAR Volume 2)**.
- 1.3.2 To support the assessment, several viewpoints within the SLA were considered, as follows:
- **Viewpoint 2: Crawfordjohn, (Figures 4.20.1-6 EIAR Volume 3b);**
 - **Viewpoint 6: B797 Road, (Figures 4.24.1-13 EIAR Volume 3b);**
 - **Viewpoint 9: B797 South of Leadhills near Glengonnar Station, (Figures 4.27.1-6 EIAR Volume 3b);**
 - **Viewpoint 10: B7040 Shortcleugh, (Figures 4.28.1-8 EIAR Volume 3b);**
 - **Viewpoint 11: B7040 east of the Hass, (Figures 4.29.1-6 EIAR Volume 3b);**

- **Viewpoint 13: Green Lowther (Figures 4.31.1-8, EIAR Volume 3b);**
- **Viewpoint 15: Core Path SL135 (Figures 4.33.1-5, EIAR Volume 3b);** and

1.3.3 **Viewpoint 16: Scottish Hill Track 58 (Figures 4.34.1-8, EIAR Volume 3b).** The landscape description of the SLA (page 19) places the area as part of the Lowther Hills range which in itself is part of the Southern Uplands Landscape Character Type (LCT) which extends into Dumfries and Galloway. This is characterised by steep hills with smooth rolling summits in contrast with the lower moors and plateaus to the north and west. Distinctive glacial valleys with steep slopes, crags, screes and waterfalls are largely derived from the underlying geology and glacial erosion. These features are in common with the general character of the Southern Uplands LCT. Due to the introduction of extensive coniferous forestry and of wind farms, parts of the Southern Uplands LCT have been redefined as 'sub' types such as for example Southern Uplands with Forestry. This refinement demonstrates the dynamic and evolving or changing nature of the landscapes.

1.3.4 The South Lanarkshire Validating Local Landscape Designations Report (Ironside Farrar, 2010), Figure 6vi, identifies that the significance of the designation arises from its '*special qualities*' as follows:

"The significance of the Leadhills / Lowther Hills area arises from:

- *"An extensive area of high, smooth, rolling, hills and varied upland glens with a sense of emptiness engendered by a lack of extensive forestry or windfarm development;*
- *Cultural features include the mining heritage surrounding Leadhills and remains of settlements on the sides of glens; Extensive areas of rough grassland and heather moorland vegetation;*
- *The Southern Upland Way and other walking routes accessible via the M74 and main roads passing through to the west; visitor attractions at Leadhills and fishing on the Daer reservoir."*

1.3.5 The citation for the SLA provides descriptions of the landscape and features within the SLA rather than special qualities. These descriptions date from 2010 and since then the landscape has continued to evolve.

1.3.6 The landscape assessment concluded that overall, the predicted landscape effect on the Site is judged to be **significant (Major)** during the operational phase. This is due to the extent of physical effects of the works within the Site which would involve a relatively small geographical proportion as whole comprising 36.92 ha which equates to 1.45 % overall. This would be associated with the change from moorland to moorland with a renewable energy generating site.

1.3.7 Within the wider landscape, the SLA is covered predominantly by LCT 217 Southern Uplands – Glasgow Clyde Valley, and a smaller extent by LCT 209 Upland Glen – Glasgow & Clyde Valley.

1.3.8 Beyond the Site, the effect on the character of the landscape within the SLA is judged as follows:

- LCT 209. Upland Glen - Glasgow & Clyde Valley - **Significant (Moderate)** within 5 km to the southwest, **Not significant (Negligible)** where no theoretical visibility predicted; and
- LCT 217 Southern Uplands – Glasgow & Clyde Valley - **Significant (Major)** for approximately 3-5 km surrounding the Site, and **Not significant (Negligible)** elsewhere in the LCT where no theoretical visibility predicted as a result of screening by landform.

1.3.9 This is due to potential effects on character being mainly associated with views of the proposed turbines which would have greatest visibility within the LCTs whilst the supporting infrastructure would be less visible due to a combination of screening by landform and forestry.

1.3.10 Several visual receptors were assessed within the SLA and include the following:

- A702 road;
- B797 road;
- B74040 road

- SUW;
 - Scottish Hill Tack (SHT) 58: Douglas to Wanlockhead;
 - SHT 63: Daer Reservoir to Durisdeer;
 - Core Paths within 5 km; and
 - Hills to the south.
- 1.3.11 The visual assessment detailed in **Technical Appendix 4.4 (EIAR Volume 4)** assesses the view from the A702 road as **significant (Moderate)** effects between Bower of Mandel to Abington, reducing to **not significant (Minor)** and **(Negligible)** for most of the road.
- 1.3.12 For the B797 road, a **significant (Major)** effect is predicted for sections of the road between Abington and Lettershaws, and between Wanlockhead and Leadhills, reducing to **significant (Moderate)** in between. South of Wanlockhead where not visible, a **not significant (Negligible)** effect would occur. For the B7040 road, a **significant (Major)** effect is predicted for this road.
- 1.3.13 Views from the SUW are predicted to be **significant (Major)** effects are predicted for a section between Hitteril Hill and Beld Knowe, and **not significant (Minor)** and **(Negligible)** elsewhere in the SLA. SHT 58, and Core Paths within 5 km are predicted to also receive a **significant (Major)** effect due to the footpath’s close proximity to the proposed turbines where largely uninterrupted views would be obtained.
- 1.3.14 The SHT 63 is not predicted to receive significant effects due to screening by landform.
- 1.3.15 Aviation lights would extend the significant effects into the hours of darkness for receptors mentioned above and would be experienced by a relatively low number of people in the hills or on footpaths.
- 1.3.16 Further windfarm developments including, Daer and Watchman both of which are at application stage are proposed further to the south.
- 1.3.17 The significance of the SLA include a lack of extensive forestry or wind farm development which engenders a sense of emptiness. The mining heritage, associated with the small-scale mining industry is readily visible around Leadhills, is one of the special qualities attributed to the SLA.
- 1.3.18 The proposed turbines are theoretically visible from the northern part of the SLA, reducing to the upper slopes and summits of hills around Daer Reservoir in the south where not all of the turbines would theoretically be visible due to intervening landform. From elevated areas, Clyde Wind Farm can be seen to the east.
- 1.3.1 As a result of this visibility, the Proposed Development would reduce the ‘*sense of emptiness*’ in of the SLA as identified in the description. However, it should be noted that views of wind farms are already a feature from the SLA and include Andershaw and Middle Muir Windfarms to the north, and Clyde Wind Farm to the east. The combination of visibility of the Proposed Development with Clyde Wind Farm effectively creates the boundary of the designated area. Neither Clyde, Middle Muir or Andershaw Wind Farms have given rise to further amendments of the SLA.
- 1.3.2 If the descriptions set out in the citation were treated as ‘special qualities’, then we would conclude that the Proposed Development does not affect the character of ‘high’, ‘smooth’, ‘rolling hills’ and ‘varied’ ‘upland Glen as this remains, but would lose some of it ‘sense of emptiness’. It should be noted though that the radar stations on Lowther and Green Lowther Hills are prominent features at higher elevation than the Proposed Development which is immediately to the north of the Radar Station.
- 1.3.3 Cultural heritage features related to mining and previous settlements would be unaffected.
- 1.3.4 No report, policy or other evidence is available to indicate that, based on detailed analysis, this area warrants designation. The listing and description of features within this area does not in any way assign

special value to this area, nor is it different from very large tracts of the Southern Uplands within Dumfries and Galloway or the Scottish Borders.

- 1.3.5 Following a review of both landscape and visual receptors, it is not considered that a significant adverse effect would occur to the significance of the SLA where the integrity is compromised as a result of the introduction of the Proposed Development.

Thornhill Uplands RSA

- 1.3.6 The Thornhill Uplands RSA is located adjacent to the south of the Site.
- 1.3.7 To support the assessment, several viewpoints were considered within the SLA as follows:
- Viewpoint 12: Southern Upland Way, Whing Head (**Figures 4.30.1-6, EIAR Volume 3b**); and
 - **Viewpoint 18: Glengaber Hill, SUW (Figures 4.36.1-6, EIAR Volume 3b)**;
- 1.3.8 This RSA abuts the southern boundary of the Site and is covered by the Wanlockhead Unit of LCT 177 Southern Uplands - Dumfries & Galloway. The landscape assessment concluded that, effects would be indirect and would be from views of turbines from elevated areas looking beyond the LCT. It is predicted that the effect on the character of the Wanlockhead Unit of LCT 177 Southern Uplands – Dumfries & Galloway would be **significant (Moderate)** for a localised area within 5 km to the southwest, thereafter, reducing to **not significant (Negligible)**[Several visual receptors were assessed within the RSA and include the following:
- B797 road;
 - SUW;
 - SHT 58: Douglas to Wanlockhead;
 - SHT 59:
 - SHT 61:
 - SHT 62:
 - Hills to the south.
- 1.3.9 The visual assessment detailed in **Technical Appendix 4.4 (EIAR Volume 4)** assesses the view from the B797 road views would be **significant (Major)** at Glengonnar Halt, reducing to **not significant (Minor)** and **(Negligible)** levels thereafter in the RSA.
- 1.3.10 From the SUW a **significant (Major)** effect would be experienced from a section at Glengaber Hill, and **not significant (Minor)** and **(Negligible)** elsewhere in the RSA. SHT 58, 59, 61 and 62 are all predicted to also receive a **significant (Major)** effect due to the footpath’s close proximity to the proposed turbines within 5 km in the RSA gradually reducing to **not significant (Minor)** and **(Negligible)** effects over short sections where visibility is predicted.
- 1.3.11 Aviation lights would extend the significant effects into the hours of darkness for receptors mentioned above and would be experienced by a relatively low number of people in the hills or on footpaths.
- 1.3.12 No special qualities are provided but the following description from a Technical Paper issued by Dumfries and Galloway Council discusses the RSA:
- ‘The designated area centres around the Middle and Upper Dale of the Nith from Mennock south to Auldgirth, and the series of glaciated Upland Glens of the Mennock, Dalveen, Scar, Shinnel, Dalwhat and Castlefairn which form its tributaries, carving their way southwards through the hills of the Southern Uplands. It is based on the Mid Nithsdale and Lowther Hills ARSS.
- The boundaries of the designated area were amended to include the entire valley floor and visual envelope of the Thornhill Middle Dale, south to the pinch point at Auldgirth; the visual envelopes of the Moniaive valley and the Scar, Shinnel and Dalwhat Upland Glens; and those parts of the Southern

Uplands in the north and east where the characteristics of the landscape type are most strongly expressed, including the summits of the uplands to the north of Queensberry.

The area encompasses varied and contrasting upland and valley scenery ranging from the exposed, remote summits of the Lowther Hills, through the wooded gorge of the Nith above Drumlanrig to the pastoral character of the wide, enclosed upper Cairn and Mid Nithsdale valleys. Overall, though there are strong contrasts in relief, the topography is smoother and rounder than the Galloway Uplands to the west and the area is more highly populated and has a more managed feel.

The hills of the Southern Uplands form large, smooth steep sided domes with complex spurs and ridges, dissected by numerous steeply sided clefts and several long, deep, U shaped Upland Glens. The uplands are patterned with a mosaic of rough grassland, bracken and rushes, combined with heather moorland on the higher areas. The lower slopes of the glens are enclosed by stone dykes, and some valley floor pastures have been improved. There is relatively little tree cover though the forestry plantations to the west have encroached on the heads and sides of certain valleys. Roads to the heads of the glens give access to isolated farms. Further south, the valleys become wider and less steeply sided and start coalescing to form Intimate Pastoral Valleys with scattered farms, hamlets and villages. The improved pastures of the valley sides are patterned with drystone dykes, and interspersed by farm and streamside woodlands. The intervening Foothills and Upland Fringe form open, sculptural ridges, though conifer plantations on the uplands outwith the designated area sometimes lap over the southern horizons.

The main valley of the Nith has a varied character of strong contrasts. In the north it forms a steep wooded gorge, before opening out to the policy woodlands of Drumlanrig. The broad valley centred around Thornhill has a lush feel near the town with hedgerows rather than dykes, woodland and a little arable land. Further afield the landscape becomes more open, with pastures enclosed by stone dykes and some plantation forestry, leading upwards to the remote, exposed landscape of the enclosing Southern Uplands.

The main valleys are accessible from Dumfries, and the Middle Dale and Intimate Pastoral Valleys and are subject to pressure for residential development, as well as being popular for informal recreation. The flanks of the valleys see continued demand for forestry, and the flanks and summits have seen interest from windfarm developers.'

- 1.3.13 The proposed turbines would be viewed partially above the ridgeline to the north and northeast beyond the designation introducing a new feature in views beyond the RSA. Theoretical visibility is predicted to be limited within the RSA owing to screening by intervening landform along a ridgeline between Glengaber Hill and Lowther Hill; a limited number of summits extending to Threehope Height approximately 7.1 km from the nearest turbine. Thereafter, theoretical visibility would be limited to a few summits where partial visibility is experienced within the RSA forming distant features.
- 1.3.14 As a result of the limited part of the RSA predicted to receive views, it is not judged that the addition of the Proposed Development to the baseline would alter the special qualities for which the landscape is designated.

References

Dumfries and Galloway Council (2018) Dumfries and Galloway Council, Local Development Plan 2, Regional Scenic Areas, Technical Paper. Available online from: https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-08/Regional_Scenic_Areas_Technical_Paper.pdf [Accessed: 7th of April 2026]

Ironside Farrar. (2010) South Lanarkshire Validating Local Landscape Designations. South Lanarkshire Council.