MORAY WIND ENERGY LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY

Updated and Revised Final Appendix Report – Post Consultation

May 2017

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CONTENTS

Appendix A: References

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Various *Environmental Statements for wind farm developments* including those for the Dorenell, Meikle Hill, Hill of Glaschyle, Aultmore and Kellas wind farms

Appendix B: Review of SNH updated landscape character assessment

Background

The 1998 SNH Moray and Nairn Landscape Assessment

This study formed part of the national programme of landscape character assessment commissioned by SNH in partnership with local authorities. It identifies 10 landscape character types across Moray and Nairn. Local authority boundaries have since been redrawn with the Nairn area allocated to Highland Council. The south-western boundary shown in the Moray and Nairn landscape assessment has also changed with the new Moray boundary extending further up the Spey Valley to include Ben Rinnes to the Avon Valley which forms the boundary with the Cairngorms National Park.

Baseline characterisation used in the 2012 Moray Wind Energy Landscape Capacity Study (MWELCS)

The 1998 Moray and Nairn landscape assessment informed the definition of more detailed character areas for the sensitivity assessment undertaken as part of the 2012 MWELCS. The original names of the broad character types defined in the 1998 landscape assessment were adopted although sub-divisions of character types were introduced to better reflect key characteristics and the specific landscape context of landscapes which would potentially be sensitive to wind farm and turbine development. New characterisation was undertaken in 2012 following field assessment to fill 'gaps' where boundary changes had occurred. Some boundaries were also altered to better reflect landscape features seen on the ground.

The table below sets out how each of the landscape character types identified in the 1998 Moray Landscape Character Assessment formed the basis for the detailed sensitivity assessment undertaken as part of the 2012 MWELCS:

No	Character type	Approach adopted for assessment
1.	Soft Coastal Shore	This character type has been amalgamated with the 'Hard Coastal Shore' (2) and much of the 'Coastal Forest' (3) and a single sensitivity assessment undertaken.
2.	Hard Coastal Shore	As above
3	Coastal Forest	As above
4	Coastal Farmland	A sub-division of this character type has been defined to the east and is called the 'Coastal Farmland with Rolling Hills' (4a). This area has a more rolling landform and greater extent of woodland than the main type; it also lies in close proximity to the 'Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland'

		(8a). Separate sensitivity assessments have been undertaken for the main type (4) and this sub-type (4a)
5	Rolling Farmlands and Forest	Two sub-divisions of this character type have been defined; the 'Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys' (5a) and the 'Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Low Hills' (5b) to the west. The narrow band of rolling hill fringes found between the Spey and Lossie valleys has been retained as 'Rolling Farmlands and Forest' (5). Separate sensitivity assessments have been undertaken for the main type (5) and for sub-types (5a) and (5b).
6	Narrow Wooded Valley	This character type has been largely retained in the sensitivity assessment but with some minor amendments made to the boundaries
7	Broad Farmed Valley	This character type has been extended to include the Rinnes and Fiddich valleys and Ben Aigan which lies between these valleys and forms a key landmark feature.
8	Upland Farmland	The broad farmland centred on the shallow valley of the Isla and its northern tributaries has been retained as 'Upland Farmland' (8). Two sub-types have additionally been defined within this character type, the 'Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland' (8a) and the 'Valleys within Upland Farmland' (8b)
9	Upland Moorland and Forestry	This character type has been largely retained but with some amendments made to the southern boundary to exclude the settled hill fringes at the transition with the Spey Valley and to the northern boundary to exclude the settled valley of the Upper Lossie.
10	Open Uplands	The western part of this character type is retained as 'Open Uplands' (10). The eastern area of this character type has been sub-divided into the 'Open Uplands with Settled Valleys' (10a) and the 'Open Uplands with Steep-sided Slopes' (10b).

The SNH revised Moray and Nairn Landscape Character Assessment (2015)

A review was undertaken of the 1998 Moray and Nairn Landscape Assessment in 2014/15 by Deb Munro Landscape Architect. This review also considered adjacent landscape character assessments and the character areas defined in the 2012 MWELCS. The review has resulted in the amendment of detailed boundaries of the landscape character types within the original 1998 assessment so that they better reflect landscape features on the ground. The following more major changes to character classification have also been made:

- A reduction in area of the *Narrow River Valleys* landscape character type covering the River Findhorn with broader shoulders of densely forested land sitting above the incised valley defined as *Rolling Farmlands and Forest* and *Upland Moorlands and Forestry.*
- Definition of *Valley in Open Upland* and *Valley in Upland Farmland* character types covering the upper Deveron in the east and Glen Rinnes in the south-west of Moray. The review report does not provide any description of character for these areas. The Deveron valley extends into the adjoining Aberdeenshire area within the revised draft 2015 Aberdeenshire Landscape Character Assessment. (Glen Rinnes is defined as *Broad Farmed Valley* in the 2012 MWELCS while the Deveron is defined as 8b *Valleys within Upland Farmland*).
- Extension of the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest* (5) landscape character type to include Quarry Wood on the north-western edge of Elgin.
- Extension of the southern boundary of *Upland Moorlands and Forestry* (10) into the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) which covers the Spey Valley.
- Creation of a new landscape character type *Upland Farmed Valleys and Forested Hills* (9) covering the upper Isla valley/Drummuir/Hill of Towie and Dufftown area. This area currently comprises *Upland Farmland* in the 1998 LCA and is also largely *Upland Farmland* (and related sub-types) in the 2012 MWELCS.

Figure 9 (taken from the SNH 2014/15 final draft review of the Moray and Nairn landscape character assessment and included at the end of this appendix) shows the relationship between the 1998 Moray and Nairn landscape character assessment and the 2012 MWELCS. Figure 3 in the 2017 MWELCS Main Report shows the draft 2014/15 SNH landscape character classification.

Recommendations for baseline landscape characterisation for the updated 2015 Moray wind capacity study

It is proposed to adopt all the changes made to the boundaries of landscape character types 1-6, 8, 11-12 in the revised SNH LCA. There are some key differences with the 2012 MWELCS that cause some concern however. These comprise the definition of the new character type *Upland Farmed Valleys and Forested Hills* (9) in the Hill of Towie/Dufftown area, the classification of Glen Rinnes, the Deveron and the Deskford Valleys and changes made to the southern boundary of the *Upland Moorlands and Forestry* (10). Sub-division of some of the main 12 landscape character types identified in the 2014/15 SNH review will also still be required given the variation which occurs in key characteristics and context, therefore influencing sensitivity to wind energy development.

The following baseline characterisation for the purposes of the sensitivity assessment to be undertaken as part of the 2016 revised MWELCS is proposed:

- Retain the amalgamation of the *Soft/Hard Coastal Shore* (1/2) and *Coastal Forest* (3) character types and adopt all boundary revisions.
- Retain the sub-division of the *Coastal Farmland* (4) in the east and a renamed sub-division *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a) to cover the less expansive areas of coastal farmland backing Buckie and Cullen and covering the Deskford valley (the latter area formerly defined as *Valleys within Upland Farmland* 8b in the 2012 MWELCS). All boundary revisions to be adopted.
- Adopt the boundary changes to the *Narrow Wooded Valley* (6) and *Rolling Farmlands and Forestry* (5) landscape character types but retain the sub-divisions of LCT 5 into 5a *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys* and 5b *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills* set out in the 2012 MWELCS. The area of *Rolling Farmland and Forests* (5) which would then occur within Moray to the west of the Findhorn Valley (the Darnaway Forest area) should be included in sub-type 5b *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills.* It will be necessary to highlight the importance of the wooded policies within the western part of this landscape in providing the setting and backdrop to rare open views from the Findhorn and Dorback valleys.
- The SNH 2014/15 revised LCA extends the southern boundary of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* into the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) covering the Spey Valley to include Monahoudie Moss and the spur of wooded higher ground which forms a 'pinch-point' to the north-west of Telford Bridge at Craigellachie. Although these comprise more densely wooded areas within the wider Spey Valley, they are lower and much less extensive in scale than the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) LCT and also include some settlement/farmland. It was agreed with the Steering Group that the increased sensitivity of these outer upland edges should be stressed in the revised 2016 MWELCS.
- Adopt the revised boundary of the *Upland Farmland* (8) but define a sub-type *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) as in the 2012 MWELCS. It was agreed with the Steering Group that the *Valley in Upland Farmland* (River Deveron in the far eastern part of Moray) and the *Valley in Open Farmland* covering Glen Rinnes/Deveron should be amalgamated with the upper Isla, Rinnes and Fiddich valleys (lying within the new LCT 9 in the revised SNH LCA) to form a new landscape character type called *Narrow Farmed Valley* (13)
- The new *Upland Farmed Valleys and Forested Hills* LCT 9 will be adopted in part but with the upland areas of this character type being classified as the *Rolling Forested Hills* (9) and the valleys incorporated into the new character type *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13).
- All changes made to the classification and boundaries for landscape character type 11 *Open Rolling Upland* (which essentially follows the approach taken in the 2012 MWELCS) will be adopted.
- Landscape character type 12 *Open Upland and Farmed Valleys* will be sub-divided as done for the 2012 MWELCS into *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) and *Open Uplands with Settled Glens* (12b). These character sub-types and the proposed new *Narrow Farmed Valleys* character type covering Glen Rinnes will be extended to the Cairngorms National Park boundary (the 2014/15 SNH LCA review does not include all of the Moray area).

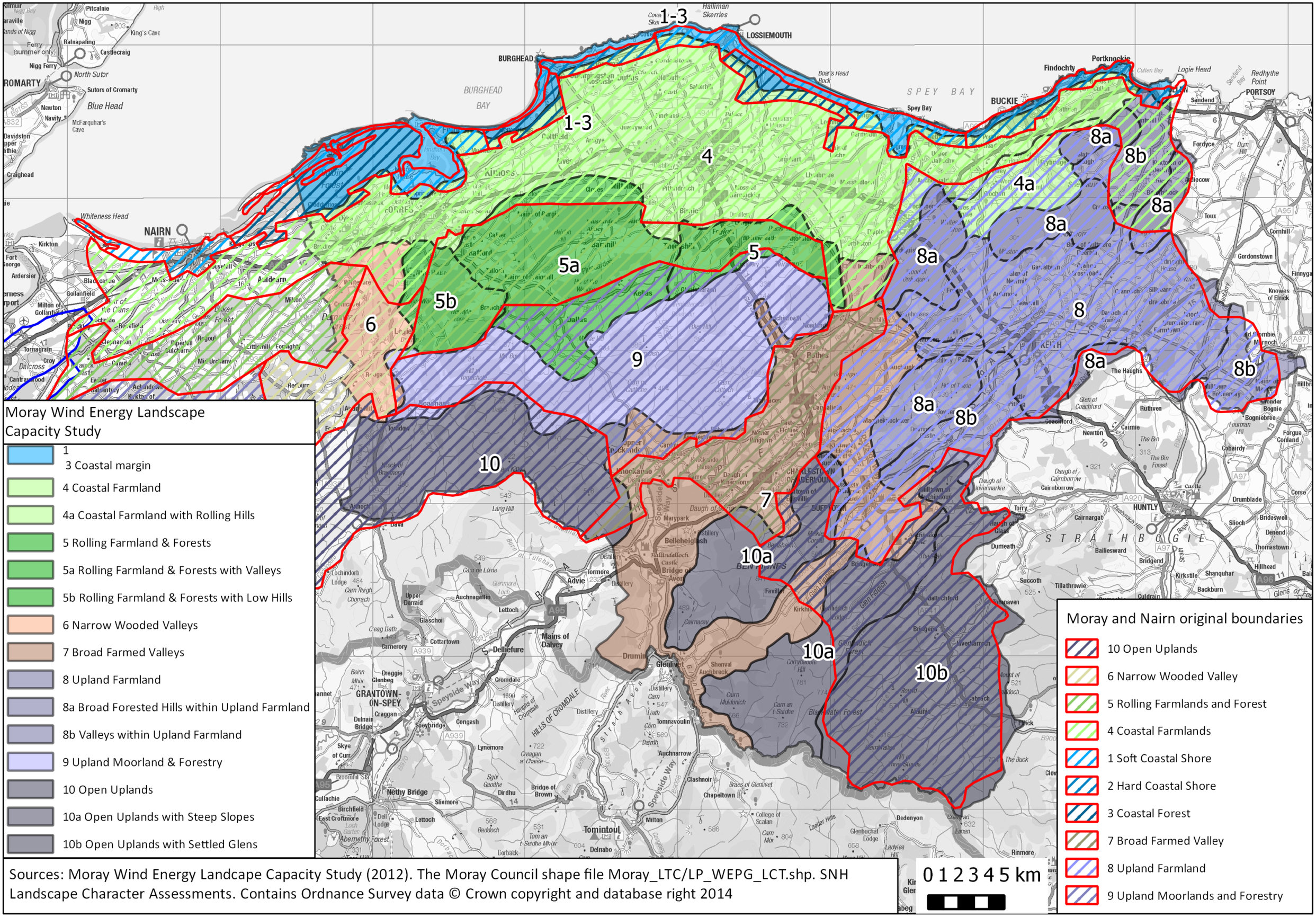


Figure 9: MWELCS LCTs and Moray and Nairn original LCTs

Appendix C: Detailed Sensitivity Tables

Character Type 1-3: Coastal Margin – Sensitivity assessment for large and medium typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of large typology (80m-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of medium typology (50m-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type forms a very narrow coastal margin largely defined by the low cliff of a raised beach in the east and a distinct ridge between Lossiemouth and Burghead. The character type is wider to the west where it includes the coastal forests, the most extensive of these being Culbin. This landscape lies adjacent to the *Coastal Farmland* (4) although inter-visibility between the two is often restricted by landform and forestry. There is greater inter-visibility of these two character types east of the River Spey due to the absence of screening features.	The narrowness of this character type increases sensitivity in terms of effects on adjoining landscapes. This typology is likely to have a significant impact on the *Coastal Farmland* (4), which although extensive and relatively simple in terms of its landform and land cover, is well settled and very open. Turbines of this size could detract from the landmark hill of the Bin of Cullen and the setting to Cullen House, within the *Coastal Farmland* (4) if sited in the eastern part of this character type.	***High-medium***	The narrowness of this character type increases sensitivity in terms of effects on adjoining landscapes. This typology is likely to have a significant impact on the *Coastal Farmland* (4), which although extensive and relatively simple in terms of its landform and land cover, is well settled and very open. Turbines of this size could detract from the landmark hill of the Bin of Cullen and the setting to Cullen House, within the *Coastal Farmland* (4) if sited in the eastern part of this character type.	***High-medium***
Scale and openness	The Moray Firth gives a sense of expansiveness to the overall seascape. Long even beaches are more open although more intricate sections of rocky indented coastline, narrow raised beaches and extensive dune systems also occur and these areas have a smaller scale. Dispersed buildings are rare although a regular pattern of small settlements is a characteristic of this coast. Forests and enclosed farmland also provide scale references.	Although this typology could relate to the scale of more open, long even sections of coastline and the wider Moray Firth, areas of more complex indented coastline, the low relief of the shoreline, raised beaches and low cliffs would be highly sensitive in terms of comparisons of scale to turbines of this size. Small settlements and other features would also be dwarfed by this typology.	***High***	Although this typology could relate to the scale of more open, long even sections of coastline and the wider Moray Firth, areas of more complex indented coastline, the low relief of the shoreline, raised beaches and low cliffs would be highly sensitive in terms of comparisons of scale to turbines of this size. Small settlements and other features would also be dwarfed by this typology.	***High***

Landform	A diverse and often complex landform with long sandy and banked stony beaches backed by complex sand dunes, spits and other transient geomorphological features in the Culbin, Findhorn and Spey estuary area. The coast is more indented and rocky to the east and between Lossiemouth and Burghead, featuring small coves, promontories and occasional craggy islets. A raised beach platform and associated low cliff occurs between Buckie and Cullen.	The complex form of dune systems and more intricate coastal features would be highly sensitive to this typology. Although turbines of this size would relate better to the more simple stretches of coast and the gently sloping immediate hinterland present in some areas, they could detract from nearby more complex landform appreciated in long views along the coast. The abrupt edges of cliff tops, the low, narrow ridge between Lossiemouth and Burghead and skylines overlooking the coast would be particularly sensitive to this typology.	***High***	The complex form of dune systems and more intricate coastal features would be highly sensitive to this typology. Although turbines of this size would relate better to the more simple stretches of coast and the gently sloping immediate hinterland present in some areas, they would detract from nearby more complex landform appreciated in long views along the coast. The abrupt edges of cliff tops, the low, narrow ridge between Lossiemouth and Burghead and skylines overlooking the coast would be particularly sensitive to this typology.	***High***
Landscape pattern	Cultivated fields, often enclosed by stone walls, slope gently down to the low cliffs of raised beaches in the east. Gorsey scrub colonises cliff tops and small knolls on seaward facing slopes and rocky knolls. Extensive pine forests planted on dunes and poorer soils and gravels back the coast in places and are particularly extensive to the west. Many of these forests are managed for their recreation and conservation value and are often diverse. Mudflats and saltmarsh form complex patterns within the tidal Findhorn Bay and Spey estuary. Golf courses are occasional features close to the coastal edge.	This typology would detract from the often diverse vegetation pattern which is closely associated with the landform of the *Coastal Margin*. More uniform forestry and less strongly enclosed farmland would be less sensitive.	***High-medium***	This typology would detract from the often diverse vegetation pattern which is closely associated with the landform of the *Coastal Margin*. More uniform forestry and less strongly enclosed farmland would be less sensitive.	***High-medium***

Built environment	There is a strong identity to the settlements which are regularly spaced along the coast. Many are of historic and architectural interest. Lossiemouth and Burghead are distinctively sited on promontories above sheltered harbours while the planned fishing ports to the east are tucked below cliffs on narrow raised beaches. Parts of the immediate hinterland are more developed, for example between Lossiemouth and Burghead, Findhorn and east of the Spey with MOD development, golf courses and caravan parks. The lighthouse west of Lossiemouth forms a landmark feature.	This typology would dominate the setting of architecturally distinctive settlements if sited nearby and/or on containing skylines. Turbines of this size, and particularly multiple turbines, could disrupt the regular pattern of largely compact settlements, often clearly associated with river mouths or sheltered natural harbours set along the coast by filling gaps of open land between. The lighthouse west of Lossiemouth would be sensitive to turbines sited nearby.	***High-medium***	This typology would dominate the setting of architecturally distinctive settlements if sited nearby and/or on containing skylines. Turbines of this size, and particularly multiple turbines, could disrupt the regular pattern of largely compact settlements, often clearly associated with river mouths or sheltered natural harbours set along the coast by filling gaps of open land between. The lighthouse west of Lossiemouth would be sensitive to turbines sited nearby.	***High-medium***
Perceptual qualities	The coastal edge has distinctive natural qualities and a sense of remoteness can also be experienced away from roads and settlement, where the hinterland is less visible.	Turbines of this scale could intrude on the sense of seclusion and naturalness experienced along parts of the coastline.	***High-medium***	Turbines of this scale could intrude on the sense of seclusion and naturalness experienced along parts of the coastline.	***High-medium***
Visual amenity	The *Coastal Margin* is well settled and the forests and coast are highly valued for recreational use. There are open views across the Moray Firth to the distant Sutherland coast and hills. Views between the Moray coast and hinterland, including the adjacent *Coastal Farmland* (4), are screened by landform and forestry in places although inter-visibility along the coast and the wider Moray landscape is increased along more	This size of turbine would be highly visible from roads, settlement and beaches within this character type where it would form a dominant feature. Turbines of this size would also be prominent in views from the *Coastal Farmland* (4) and from the north-facing settled slopes of the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a) and the *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a).	***High***	This size of turbine would be highly visible from roads, settlement and beaches within this character type where it would form a dominant feature. Turbines of this size would also be prominent in views from the *Coastal Farmland* (4) and from the north-facing settled slopes of the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a) and the *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a).	***High***

	open, long and even sections of coast. Binn Hill is prominent in these views.				
Cumulative effects	The small group of turbines at Findhorn are visible in the western part of this character type. The operational Rothes I and II and Hill of Towie wind farms are visible north and east of Elgin seen on the skyline of the distant uplands of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) but at distances of over 18km. Boyndie wind farm is located close to the coast in neighbouring Aberdeenshire.	Cumulative effects with existing wind farms sited within the upland landscapes to the south are unlikely to be significant due to the distances involved, the intermittent nature of open views to the hinterland and the extensiveness of views which lessens visual impact. This size of turbine sited in the western part of this character type would have cumulative effects with the smaller Findhorn turbines but also with other buildings and infrastructure associated with MOD development at Kinloss. Cumulative effects on views from key coastal routes may occur with wind farm developments sited in Aberdeenshire although views would be more likely to be sequential due to the screening provided by ridges and hills on the Moray boundary.	***Medium-low***	Cumulative effects with existing wind farms sited within the upland landscapes to the south are unlikely to be significant due to the distances involved, the intermittent nature of open views to the hinterland and the extensiveness of views which lessens visual impact. This size of turbine sited in the western part of this character type would have cumulative effects with the smaller Findhorn turbines but also with other buildings and infrastructure associated with MOD development at Kinloss. Cumulative effects on views from key coastal routes may occur with wind farm developments sited in Aberdeenshire although views would be more likely to be sequential due to the screening provided by ridges and hills on the Moray boundary.	***Medium-low***

Character Type 1-3: Coastal Margin – Sensitivity assessment for small-medium and small typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of small-medium typology (35m-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of small typology (20m-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type forms a very narrow coastal margin largely defined by the low cliff of a raised beach in the east and a distinct ridge between Lossiemouth and Burghead. The character type is wider to the west where it includes the coastal forests, the most extensive of these being Culbin. This landscape lies adjacent to the *Coastal Farmland* (4) although inter-visibility between the two is often restricted by landform and forestry. There is greater inter-visibility of these two character types east of the River Spey due to the absence of screening features.	This typology could be sited within broader sections of the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) to minimise effects on the *Coastal Farmland* (4) although these areas are largely forested and other sensitivities would therefore come into play. Turbines of this size could detract from the landmark Bin of Cullen and the setting to Cullen House if sited nearby or in key views.	***Medium***	Smaller turbines would have less of an effect on the adjoining *Coastal Farmland* (4) character type. There are increased opportunities to site turbines towards the lower height band of this typology to minimise effects on adjoining sensitive landmark hills and policies.	***Medium-low***
Scale and openness	The Moray Firth gives a sense of expansiveness to the overall seascape. Long even beaches are more open although more intricate sections of rocky indented coastline, narrow raised beaches and extensive dune systems also occur and these areas have a smaller scale. Dispersed buildings are rare although a regular pattern of small settlements is a characteristic of this coast. Forests and enclosed farmland also provide scale references.	Turbines of this size could relate to the scale of more open, long even sections of coastline and expansive flat hinterland areas. Small scale shoreline features such as the very narrow raised beaches, dunes and low cliffs would however be highly sensitive to this typology. Turbines of this size could overwhelm the scale of small settlements if sited nearby.	***High-medium***	Turbines of this size could relate to the scale of more open, long even sections of coastline and would have less of a dominant effect on more sensitive areas provided turbines were located well away from shoreline features such as the very narrow raised beaches, dunes and low cliffs.	***High-medium***
Landform	A diverse and often complex landform	The complex form of dune systems	***High-***	The complex form of dune systems	***High-***

	with long sandy and banked stony beaches backed by complex sand dunes, spits and other transient geomorphological features in the Culbin, Findhorn and Spey estuary area. The coast is more indented and rocky to the east and between Lossiemouth and Burghead, featuring small coves, promontories and occasional craggy islets. A raised beach platform and associated low cliff occurs between Buckie and Cullen.	and more intricate coastal features would be sensitive to this typology although this typology would relate better to simple sections of even coastline, flatter areas of open hinterland and more gently sloping land. The abrupt edges of cliff tops, the low, narrow ridge between Lossiemouth and Burghead and skylines overlooking the coast would be particularly sensitive.	***medium***	and more intricate coastal features including estuaries and basins would be sensitive even to this small typology although there are increased opportunities to relate turbines of this size to more even sections of coastline and more gently undulating sloping land without detracting from adjacent more complex areas of landform. The abrupt edges of cliff tops, the low, narrow ridge between Lossiemouth and Burghead and skylines overlooking the coast would be particularly sensitive.	***medium***
Landscape pattern	Cultivated fields, often enclosed by stone walls, slope gently down to the low cliffs of raised beaches in the east. Gorsey scrub colonises cliff tops and small knolls on seaward facing slopes and rocky knolls. Extensive pine forests planted on dunes and poorer soils and gravels back the coast in places and are particularly extensive to the west. Many of these forests are managed for their recreation and conservation value and are often diverse. Mudflats and saltmarsh form complex patterns within the tidal Findhorn Bay and Spey estuary. Golf courses are occasional features close to the coastal edge.	This typology would detract from the often diverse vegetation pattern which is closely associated with the landform of the Coastal Margin. More uniform forestry and open farmland would be less sensitive.	***Medium***	There is increased scope to locate this typology to avoid impact on more diverse vegetation pattern.	***Medium-low***
Built environment	There is a strong identity to the settlements which are regularly spaced	This typology would dominate the setting of architecturally distinctive	***High-medium***	This typology could dominate the setting of architecturally distinctive	***Medium***

	along the coast. Many are of historic and architectural interest. Lossiemouth and Burghead are distinctively sited on promontories above sheltered harbours while the planned fishing ports to the east are tucked below cliffs on narrow raised beaches. Parts of the immediate hinterland are more developed, for example between Lossiemouth and Burghead, Findhorn and east of the Spey with MOD facilities, golf courses and caravan parks. The lighthouse west of Lossiemouth forms a landmark feature.	settlements if sited nearby and/or on containing skylines. Multiple turbines of this size could disrupt the regular pattern of largely compact settlements, often clearly associated with river mouths or sheltered natural harbours set along the coast by filling gaps of open land between them. The lighthouse west of Lossiemouth would be sensitive to turbines sited nearby.		settlements if sited nearby and/or on containing skylines. Multiple turbines could disrupt the regular pattern of largely compact settlements although there is more scope to accommodate these smaller turbines to minimise effects on settlement pattern and setting. The lighthouse west of Lossiemouth would be sensitive to turbines sited nearby.	
Perceptual qualities	The coastal edge has distinctive natural qualities and a sense of remoteness can also be experienced away from roads and settlement, where the hinterland is less visible.	Turbines of this scale could intrude on the sense of seclusion and naturalness experienced along parts of the coastline.	***High-medium***	Turbines of this size could intrude on the sense of seclusion and naturalness experienced along parts of the coastline although there is increased scope for smaller turbines to be set back from the more sensitive coastal edge and thus minimise impacts on perceptual qualities.	***Medium***
Visual amenity	The *Coastal Margin* is well settled and the forests and coast are highly valued for recreational use. There are open views across the Moray Firth to the distant Sutherland coast and hills. Views between the Moray coast and hinterland, including the adjacent *Coastal Farmland* (4), are screened by landform and forestry in places although inter-visibility along	This typology would be intrusive from roads, settlements and areas used for recreation if sited on the edge of beaches, between the coast and the A942 or sited on ridge tops and within narrow raised beaches and on the abrupt edge of cliffs. Turbines of this size could also be prominent in views from the *Coastal Farmland* (4) and from the north-facing settled	***High***	Even turbines of this size would be intrusive from roads, settlements and areas used for recreation, particularly if sited on the edge of beaches, between the coast and the A942 or sited on ridge tops and within narrow raised beaches and on the abrupt edge of cliffs. This typology would, however, be less likely to be prominent in views from	***High-medium***

	the coast and the wider Moray landscape is increased along more open, long and even sections of coast. Binn Hill is prominent in these views.	slopes of the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a) and the *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a).		the *Coastal Farmland* (4) and from the north-facing settled slopes of the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a) and the *Rolling Coastal Farmland (*4a).	
Cumulative effects	The small group of turbines at Findhorn are visible in the western part of this character type. The operational Rothes I and II and Hill of Towie wind farms are visible north and east of Elgin seen on the skyline of the distant uplands of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) but at distances of over 18km. The consented extension to the Rothes wind farm will extend the numbers of turbines visible on the skyline in these views.	Cumulative issues with existing wind farms sited within the upland landscapes to the south would not be significant due to the distances involved, the very intermittent nature of open views to the hinterland and the extensiveness of views which lessens their visual impact. This size of turbine sited in the western part of this character type would be more compatible in size with the existing Findhorn turbines but could increase the clutter of built MOD infrastructure in the Kinloss area, potentially affecting views from more sensitive beaches. Sequential effects on views from key coastal routes may occur with wind farm developments sited in Aberdeenshire.	***Low***	Cumulative issues with existing wind farms sited within the upland landscapes to the south would not be significant due to the distances involved, the very intermittent nature of open views to the hinterland and the extensiveness of views which lessens their visual impact. This size of turbine would be smaller than the operational Findhorn turbines and could result in cumulative effects if sited close-by. They could also exacerbate the clutter of built infrastructure in the Kinloss area. Turbines of this size would be unlikely to have significant cumulative effects with coastal operational developments in Aberdeenshire.	***Low***

Character Type 4: Coastal Farmland – Sensitivity assessment for large and medium typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of large typology (80m-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of medium typology (50m-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type is geographically extensive apart from at its eastern end where it narrows between the coast and the northern edge of *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) and *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a). A low but distinct ridge forms a boundary between this character type and the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) between Lossiemouth and Burghead and this, together with the coastal forests planted on more low-lying areas, restricts close views inland to this character type from the coast. There is greater inter-visibility between these two character types east of the Spey due to the absence of screening features. The smaller scale landscapes of the *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a) and the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest* (5) and the prominent ridge of Heldon Hill within the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a) strongly contrast with the expansive low-lying plain of this character type.	The extensiveness of this character type would generally limit impact on adjoining character types. Sensitivity increases towards the east however where this band of *Coastal Farmland* (4) constricts and where there is more inter-visibility with the *Coastal Margin (*1-3). This typology could detract from the landmark feature of the Binn of Cullen within the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) in this eastern area. Turbines of this size sited towards the southern boundaries of this character type could impact on smaller scale adjoining landscapes (4a) and (5) and also detract from the prominent ridge of Heldon Hill within the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a).	***Medium***	The extensiveness of this character type would generally limit impact on adjoining character types. Sensitivity increases towards the east however where this band of *Coastal Farmland* (4) constricts and where there is more inter-visibility with the *Coastal Margin (*1-3). This typology could detract from the landmark feature of the Binn of Cullen within the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) in this eastern area. Turbines of this size sited towards the southern boundaries of this character type could impact on smaller scale adjoining landscapes (4a) and (5) and also detract from the prominent ridge of Heldon Hill within the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a).	***Medium***
Scale and openness	A generally open and expansive coastal plain but with more rolling landform, occasional outcrop hills and	Although this typology could relate to the scale of the landform, settlement and other land cover features would	***High-medium***	Turbines towards the lower height band of this typology could relate to broader low-lying basins where	***High-medium***

	woodlands providing containment in some areas. A lower lying linear shallow basin extending south/west to north/east is larger in scale and particularly open. This landscape is well settled with a regular pattern of farms, houses and settlements providing ready scale references.	be dominated by these very tall turbines. If sited on or nearby the small outcrop hills which are landmark features within this landscape, turbines of this size would overwhelm their low vertical scale. Areas of more rolling landform similarly have a smaller scale which would be dominated by turbines of this size.		settlement is sparser although this typology in general would appear very large in relation to buildings and woodlands. If sited on or nearby the small outcrop hills which are landmark features within this landscape, turbines of this size would overwhelm their low vertical scale. Areas of more rolling landform similarly have a smaller scale which would be dominated by turbines of this size.	
Landform	This landscape has a predominantly subtly undulating landform but with some occasional landmark hills and ridges including Hill of Spynie close to Elgin and Tappoch and Binn Hill closer to the coast. Pockets of more complex rolling landform occur in the Urquhart and Lhanbryde area and small knolly hills NE of Elgin. The broad floodplains of the Spey and Lossie and a band of very low-lying drained land between Lossiemouth and Kinloss have a particularly simple landform.	The generally simple gently undulating to flat landform of this character type reduces sensitivity although this typology would detract from the prominent hills and ridges and small areas of more complex rolling landform if sited on or nearby them.	***Medium-low***	The generally simple gently undulating landform of this character type reduces sensitivity although this typology would detract from the prominent hills and ridges and small areas of more complex rolling landform if sited on or nearby them.	***Medium-low***
Landscape pattern	A simple land cover pattern of large arable fields interspersed with small blocks of conifers. Some larger coniferous plantations occur close to the coast and the Spey Valley. Small pockets of more diverse land cover pattern are associated with the policies of mixed shelterbelts, parkland	This typology could relate to the simple and generally open character of farmland although policy features and more natural vegetation cover would be more sensitive.	***Medium-low***	This typology could relate to the simple and generally open character of farmland although policy woodlands and more natural vegetation cover would be more sensitive.	***Medium-low***

	and avenues of Innes House, Gordon Castle, Brodie Castle and Gordonstoun, the more naturalistic moss and woodland of the Bauds of Cullen and Spynie Moss and broadleaved woodlands, scrub and wetlands along the Spey.				
Built environment	RAF air fields and associated buildings and infrastructure including tall masts are concentrated in the Kinloss, Lossiemouth and Burghead area. Dispersed farms, houses, small and larger settlements and occasional historical buildings including the Old Castle of Duffus, Palace of Spynie and grand houses/castles with designed landscapes as well as church spires form landmark features. Larger warehouses, maltings and some quarrying and landfill sites form occasional features and there is a well-developed network of roads and some transmission lines.	This typology would dominate the setting of small settlements, farms and houses in this well settled landscape. Historic built features would also be sensitive to intrusion on their setting although these features are widely dispersed. The presence of some infrastructure and industrial development in this landscape reduces sensitivity to an extent, although the introduction of large turbines would accentuate this aspect of landscape character. Multiple developments of single and small groups of turbines could significantly increase the clutter of disparate elements in this landscape.	***High-medium***	This typology would dominate the setting of small settlements, farms and houses in this well settled landscape. Historic built features would also be sensitive to intrusion on their setting although these features are widely dispersed. The presence of some infrastructure and industrial development in this landscape reduces sensitivity to an extent, although the introduction of large turbines would accentuate this aspect of landscape character and (particularly if multiple developments of single and small groups of turbines occurred) could significantly increase the clutter of disparate elements in this landscape.	***High-medium***
Perceptual qualities	This is a well-settled and highly managed landscape with no sense of wildness or other strong perceptual qualities.	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of sensitive perceptual qualities.	***Low***	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of sensitive perceptual qualities.	***Low***
Visual amenity	This landscape can be very open in places with extensive and unimpeded views possible from major roads such	This size of turbine would be highly visible from roads and settlement within this open landscape where it	***High***	This size of turbine would be highly visible from roads and settlement within this open landscape. There	***High***

	as the A96 and from the dense network of minor roads which criss-cross this character type. Forestry and subtle ridges limit the extent of views in other areas. The prominent hills of Binn Hill and Tappoch form focal features in views across this landscape. There are views to the uplands of Moray to the south from this area, with Ben Rinnes, Ben Aigan and Brown Muir hills forming key features. The Moray Firth and distant Sutherland coast also feature in views to the north. Infrastructure and buildings associated with the RAF are highly visible as are the wind turbines at Findhorn and masts in the western part of this landscape towards the coast. Close views to this landscape are limited from the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) due to screening provided by forests and landform to the west of the Spey. Some inter-visibility between the coast and this landscape occurs east of the Spey however. The north-facing settled slopes of Heldon Hill within the *Rolling Farmland and Forest with Valleys* (5a), the *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5) and the *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a) have open and elevated views across this landscape and over the Moray Firth.	could compete with the foci of prominent hills and would be likely to form a dominant feature. Turbines of this size would also be highly visible from the often well-settled north-facing slopes of adjacent character types. Although close views from the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) are likely to be screened by forest and a coastal ridge west of the Spey, this typology would be visible from sections of the coast east of the Spey and they would also be seen in longer and more open views along the coast from promontories and bays where the hinterland is more visible.		may be more scope to site turbines towards the lower height of this typology to minimise effects on existing foci. Turbines of this size would be highly visible from the often well-settled north-facing slopes of adjacent character types. Although close views from the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) are likely to be screened by forest and a coastal ridge west of the Spey, this typology would be more visible from sections of the coast east of the Spey and they would also be seen in longer and more open views along the coast from promontories and bays where the hinterland is more visible.	
Cumulative	The group of small wind turbines at	Cumulative issues with wind farms	***Medium-low***	Cumulative issues with wind farms	***Medium-low***

effects	Findhorn sited in the adjacent *Coastal Margin* (1-3) are visible from settlements and roads in the western part of Moray. The Rothes and Hill of Towie wind farms are visible north and east of Elgin seen on the skyline of the distant uplands of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) at distances of between10-18km. The Boyndie wind farm is sited approximately 11km to the east of Moray with limited visibility from this low-lying character type.	already sited within the upland landscapes to the south are unlikely to be significant over much of this character type due to the distances involved and the extensiveness of views which lessens their visual impact. The area south and east of Elgin and the Spey Valley are more sensitive. Sequential effects on views from the A98 may occur with wind farm developments sited in Aberdeenshire.		already sited within the upland landscapes to the south are unlikely to be significant over much of this character type due to the distances involved and the extensiveness of views which lessens their visual impact. The area south and east of Elgin and the Spey Valley are more sensitive. Sequential effects on views from the A98 may occur with wind farm developments sited in Aberdeenshire.	

Character Type 4: Coastal Farmland – Sensitivity assessment for small-medium and small typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of small-medium typology (35m-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of small typology (20m-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type is geographically extensive apart from at its eastern end where it narrows between the coast and the northern edge of *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) and *Rolling Coastal Farmland*(4a). A low but distinct ridge forms a boundary between this character type and the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) between Lossiemouth and Burghead and this, together with the coastal forests planted on more low-lying areas, restricts close views inland to this character type from the coast. There is greater inter-visibility between these two character types east of the Spey due to the absence of screening features. The smaller scale landscapes of the *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a) and the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest* (5) and the prominent ridge of Heldon Hill within the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a) strongly contrast with the expansive low-lying plain of this character type.	There would be increased scope for this typology to be sited within this extensive landscape to avoid significant impact on adjoining more sensitive smaller scale landscapes. Sensitive skylines seen from the less built up sections of coast within the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) would still need to be avoided and turbines of this size could also still detract from key landmark features if sited nearby.	***Medium-low***	This size of turbine would have minimal effects on adjoining smaller scale landscapes and there is scope also to site them on gentler lower slopes of the more pronounced hills and ridges. Sensitive skylines seen from the less built up sections of coast within the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) would still need to be avoided however.	***Low***
Scale and openness	A generally open and expansive coastal plain but with more rolling landform, occasional outcrop hills and woodlands providing containment in	This typology could relate to broader low-lying basins where settlement is sparser although turbines of this size would still appear large in relation to	***Medium***	There are increased opportunities to accommodate the smaller turbines of this typology to minimise scale effects on smaller scale	***Medium-low***

	some areas. A lower lying linear shallow basin extending south/west to north/east is larger in scale and particularly open. This landscape is well settled with a regular pattern of farms, houses and settlements providing ready scale references.	buildings and woodlands and also to the smaller prominent hills (which do not rise above 100m) and smaller scale rolling landform.		features such as woodlands and buildings.	
Landform	This landscape has a predominantly subtly undulating landform but with some occasional landmark hills and ridges including Spynie Ridge close to Elgin and Tappoch and Binn Hill closer to the coast. Pockets of more complex rolling landform occur in the Urquhart and Lhanbryde area and small knolly hills NE of Elgin. The broad floodplains of the Spey and Lossie and a band of very low-lying drained land between Lossiemouth and Kinloss have a particularly simple landform.	The generally simple gently undulating landform of this character type reduces sensitivity although this typology would detract from the prominent hills and ridges and small areas of more complex rolling landform if sited on or nearby them.	***Medium-low***	The generally simple gently undulating landform of this character type reduces sensitivity although even these smaller turbines would detract from the prominent hills and ridges and small areas of more complex rolling landform if sited on hill or ridge tops although there may be some limited scope to site turbines towards the lower height band of this typology on lower less prominent slopes.	***Low***
Landscape pattern	A simple land cover pattern of large arable fields interspersed with small blocks of conifers. Some larger coniferous plantations occur close to the coast and the Spey Valley. Small pockets of more diverse land cover pattern are associated with the policies of mixed shelterbelts, parkland and avenues of Innes House, Gordon Castle, Brodie Castle and Gordonstoun, the more naturalistic moss and woodland of the Bauds of Cullen and broadleaved woodlands, scrub and wetlands against the Spey.	This typology could relate to the simple and generally open character of farmland although policy features and more natural vegetation cover would be more sensitive.	***Medium-low***	There is increased scope to locate this smaller typology to avoid effects on policy features and areas with a more naturalistic vegetation cover.	***Low***

Built environment	RAF air fields and associated buildings and infrastructure including tall masts are concentrated in the Kinloss, Lossiemouth and Burghead area. Dispersed farms, houses, small and larger settlements and occasional historical buildings including the Old Castle of Duffus, Palace of Spynie and grand houses/castles with designed landscapes and church spires form landmark features. Larger warehouses, maltings and some quarrying and landfill sites form occasional features and there is a well-developed network of roads and some transmission lines.	This typology would dominate the setting of small settlements, farms and houses in this well settled landscape if sited nearby. Historic built features would also be sensitive to intrusion on their setting although these features are widely dispersed and there may be increased scope to site this typology to minimise effects on their setting. This typology could accentuate industrial character and clutter in parts of this landscape. Single turbines towards the lower height band of this typology and closely related to existing industrial development, would have a better scale relationship to these buildings and would minimise the spread of built infrastructure.	***Medium***	There is increased scope to site the smaller turbines of this typology to minimise effects on the setting of settlement and landmark historical features. The more fragmented character of disparate built structures could be exacerbated in places although there are opportunities to site this size of turbine so they are visually associated with existing built development thus reducing widespread clutter.	***Medium-low***
Perceptual qualities	This is a well-settled and highly managed landscape with no sense of wildness or other strong perceptual qualities.	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of these perceptual qualities.	***Low***	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of these perceptual qualities.	***Low***
Visual amenity	This landscape can be very open in places with extensive and unimpeded views possible from major roads such as the A96 and from the dense network of minor roads which criss-cross this character type. Forestry and subtle ridges limit the extent of views in other areas. The prominent hills of Binn Hill and Tappoch form focal features in views across this	This size of turbine would be highly visible from roads and settlement within this open landscape although there would be increased scope to site this typology to minimise effects on existing foci. Turbines of this size would also be visible from the often well-settled north-facing slopes of adjacent character types although they would	***High-medium***	Although turbines of this size would generally be taller than woodlands, they would be unlikely to be visually prominent providing they were carefully sited to avoid hill and ridge tops. There would be greater scope to accommodate multiple turbines of this size to minimise effects on views.	***Medium***

	landscape. There are views to the uplands of Moray to the south from this area, with Ben Rinnes, Ben Aigan and Brown Muir hills forming key features. The Moray Firth and distant Sutherland coast also feature in views to the north. Infrastructure and buildings associated with the RAF are highly visible as are the wind turbines at Findhorn and masts in the western part of this landscape towards the coast. In terms of views to this landscape from the surrounding area, close views are limited from the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) due to screening provided by forests and landform to the west of the Spey. Some inter-visibility between the coast and this landscape occurs east of the Spey however. The north-facing settled slopes of Heldon Hill within the *Rolling Farmland and Forest with Valleys* (5a), the *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5) and the *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a) have open and elevated views across this landscape and over the Moray Firth.	be less prominent than larger typologies. This typology would be visible from sections of the coast east of the Spey and may also be seen in longer and more open views along the coast from promontories and bays where the hinterland is more visible although, again, they would be less prominent than the larger typologies in these expansive views.			
Cumulative effects	The small group of turbines at Findhorn sited in the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) are visible from settlements and roads in the western part of Moray. The Rothes and Hill of Towie wind farms are visible north and east of Elgin seen on the skyline of the distant uplands of the *Upland Moorland and*	Cumulative issues with existing wind farms sited within the upland landscapes to the south are unlikely to be significant over much of this character type due to the distances involved and the extensiveness of views which lessens their visual impact.	***Low***	Cumulative issues with existing wind farms sited within the upland landscapes to the south are unlikely to be significant over much of this character type due to the distances involved and the extensiveness of views which lessens their visual impact.	***Low***

	Forestry (10) and *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) at distances of between 10 and18km. The Boyndie wind farm is sited approximately 11km to the east of Moray with limited visibility from this low-lying character type.	Sequential effects on views from the A98 may occur with wind farm developments sited in Aberdeenshire although the smaller size of this typology would be likely to reduce cumulative impacts.		Sequential effects associated with wind farm development within Aberdeenshire would not be significant.	

Character Type 4a: Rolling Coastal Farmland – Sensitivity assessment for large and medium typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of large typology (80m-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of medium typology (50m-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type comprises a small area of north-facing rolling hills and the undulating Deskford Valley which fringe the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a). It forms the foreground to views of the landmark hill of Bin of Cullen which is located in LCT (8a). The *Coastal Farmland* (4) abuts this landscape to the north and forms a narrow band in this area which is fringed by the *Coastal Margin* (1-3).	The adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) generally has a simple landform and land cover and are very sparsely settled reducing sensitivity. However the Bin of Cullen which is also classified as LCT 8a forms a landmark hill which would be highly sensitive to larger turbine typologies sited both on it and close-by it. Turbines of this size would also impact on the *Coastal Farmland* (4), which is well settled and open, increasing sensitivity. There would be limited effects on the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) due to its visual containment and distance from this LCT.	***High-medium***	The adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) generally has a simple landform and land cover and are very sparsely settled reducing sensitivity. However the Bin of Cullen which is also classified as LCT 8a forms a landmark hill which would be highly sensitive to larger turbine typologies sited both on it and close-by it. Turbines of this size would also impact on the *Coastal Farmland* (4), which is well settled and open, increasing sensitivity. There would be limited effects on the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) due to its visual containment and distance from this LCT.	***High-medium***
Scale and openness	A rolling landform with small hills cut by narrow valleys offers a degree of containment and reduces scale. This landscape is well-settled with a dispersed pattern of small farms and these, together with woodlands, provide ready scale references. The landscape becomes more open on upper hill slopes which are broader at the transition with the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a).	This typology would dominate the largely small to medium scale of this landscape. The consistent presence of small features, including dispersed settlement, is a further sensitivity.	***High***	This typology would dominate the largely small to medium scale of this landscape. The consistent presence of small features, including dispersed settlement, is a further sensitivity.	***High***

Landform	Small rounded interlocking hills are cut by narrow incised burns – the Deskford Valley is broader but with undulating slopes. Landform is generally more complex on the lower slopes with broader, more even gradients on upper slopes and occasional small flatter areas.	Broader upper hill slopes and small areas of flatter ground are limited in extent reducing scope to accommodate multiple turbines of this size. The pattern of more complex rolling landform and narrow valleys is a further sensitivity.	***High***	Broader upper hill slopes and small areas of flatter ground are limited in extent reducing scope to accommodate multiple turbines of this size. The pattern of more complex rolling landform and narrow valleys is a further sensitivity.	***High***
Landscape pattern	Cultivated fields alternate with woodlands. Woodlands are often diverse comprising mixed conifers and broadleaves in valleys and forming the policies of Letterfourie, Cullen and Cairnfield Houses set on lower hill slopes.	This typology could impact on more diverse woodlands and parkland associated with designed landscapes although more extensive upland pastures on upper hill slopes would be less sensitive.	***High-medium***	This typology could impact on more diverse woodlands and parkland associated with designed landscapes although more extensive upland pastures on upper hill slopes would be less sensitive.	***High-medium***
Built environment	This landscape is well-settled with a regular pattern of dispersed farms and houses and small settlements such as Drybridge and Clochan tucked down on lower hill slopes. Public roads are generally very narrow and winding.	More sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features although turbines of this size would be likely to be seen in relative proximity to built features given settlement density and the limited extent of the character type. Narrow roads could result in landscape and visual effects associated with access improvements for vehicles required to transport this typology.	***High***	More sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features although turbines of this size would be likely to be seen in relative proximity to built features given settlement density and the limited extent of the character type. Narrow roads could result in landscape and visual effects associated with access improvements for vehicles required to transport this typology.	***High***
Perceptual qualities	This is a well-settled and highly managed landscape with little sense of wildness or other strong perceptual qualities.	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of these perceptual qualities.	***Low***	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of these perceptual qualities.	***Low***

Visual amenity	There is a degree of visual containment offered by the rolling landform, incised valleys and woodlands when travelling on the narrow roads within this character type. The *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) forms an even and predominantly wooded low skyline to this landscape and also limits long views from roads and settlement. The A98 and B9018 offer close views of this landscape and the northern slopes are visible from well settled coastal areas.	This size of turbine would be highly visible from more open roads and elevated settlement within this landscape. This typology would also be highly visible from the well-settled *Coastal Farmland* (4) and the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) and could impact on key views to the Bin of Cullen if sited on lower hill slopes. Turbines of this size may also be seen on the skyline from the *Upland Farmland* (8) to the south although would be likely to perceived as being associated *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland*(8a) which forms a fairly uniform forested skyline in these views.	***High***	This size of turbine would be highly visible from more open roads and elevated settlement within this landscape. This typology would also be highly visible from the well-settled *Coastal Farmland* (4) and the *Coastal Margin* (1-3) and could impact on key views to the Bin of Cullen if sited on lower hill slopes. Turbines of this size may also be seen on the skyline from the *Upland Farmland* (8) to the south although would be likely to perceived as being associated *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland*(8a) which forms a fairly uniform forested skyline in these views.	***High***
Cumulative effects	The consented Aultmore wind farm will be visible in close proximity from parts of this LCT.	Significant cumulative effects would be likely to occur with consented wind farm development sited in the adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a).	***High***	Significant cumulative effects would be likely to occur with consented wind farm development sited in the adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a).	***High***

Character Type 4a: Rolling Coastal Farmland – Sensitivity assessment for small-medium and small typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of small-medium typology (35m-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of small typology (20m-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type comprises a small area of north-facing rolling hills and the undulating Deskford Valley which fringe the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a). It forms the foreground to views of the landmark hill of Bin of Cullen which is located in LCT (8a). The *Coastal Farmland* (4) abuts this landscape to the north and forms a narrow band in this area which is fringed by the *Coastal Margin* (1-3).	This typology would have a limited effect on the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) provided turbines were located to avoid intrusion on key views to the landmark hill of the Bin of Cullen. Turbines of this size, sited on lower hills would impact on the *Coastal Farmland* (4) although there is some scope to reduce impacts by siting this typology on upper hill slopes at the transition with the simpler low ridges of the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a).	***Medium***	This typology would have a limited effect on the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) provided it was located to avoid intrusion on key views to the landmark hill of the Bin of Cullen. Turbines of this size would be likely to have minimal effects on the *Coastal Farmland* (4).	***Medium-low***
Scale and openness	A rolling landform with small hills cut by narrow valleys offers a degree of containment and reduces scale. This landscape is well-settled with a dispersed pattern of small farms and these, together with woodlands, provide ready scale references. The landscape becomes more open on upper hill slopes which are broader at the transition with the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a).	This typology would appear very large in relation to smaller hills, settlement and woodlands although broader more open upper hill slopes at the transition with the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) would be less sensitive. The consistent presence of small features, including dispersed settlement, is a further sensitivity.	***High-medium***	There is increased scope to site this typology within broader upper hill slopes but also on more open areas on lower farmed slopes. Narrow valleys and small rolling hills remain sensitive. While this typology would appear large in relation to domestic buildings if sited nearby they could relate better to the occasional larger agricultural sheds present in this landscape.	***Medium***
Landform	Small rounded interlocking hills are cut by narrow incised burns – the Deskford Valley is broader but with undulating slopes. Landform is generally more complex on the lower slopes with	Single and small groups <3 turbines of this typology could relate to broader, upper hill slopes although this size of turbine would be likely to detract from nearby more complex	***High-medium***	There would be increased scope to locate this typology to minimise effects on more complex landform.	***Medium***

	broader, more even gradients on upper slopes and occasional small flatter areas.	landform if sited on small areas of flatter ground on lower slopes.			
Landscape pattern	Cultivated fields alternate with woodlands. Woodlands are often diverse comprising mixed conifers and broadleaves in valleys and forming the policies of Letterfourie, Cullen and Cairnfield Houses set on lower hill slopes.	Turbines of this size could also impact on more diverse woodlands and parkland associated with designed landscapes although more extensive upland pastures on upper hill slopes would be less sensitive.	***High-medium***	Although designed landscape features would be sensitive to all development typologies sited within their boundaries, turbines towards the lower height band of this typology would be less likely to impact on these features if sited nearby, helped by the partial screening likely to be provided by landform and woodlands.	***Medium***
Built environment	This landscape is well-settled with a regular pattern of dispersed farms and houses and small settlements such as Drybridge and Clochan tucked down on lower hill slopes. Public roads are generally very narrow and winding.	More sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features.	***High-medium***	There is increased scope to site the smaller turbines of this typology to minimise effects on the setting of settlement.	***Medium***
Perceptual qualities	This is a well-settled and highly managed landscape with little sense of wildness or other strong perceptual qualities.	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of these perceptual qualities.	***Low***	Sensitivity is reduced due to the absence of these perceptual qualities.	***Low***
Visual amenity	There is a degree of visual containment offered by the rolling landform, incised valleys and woodlands when travelling on the narrow roads within this character type. The *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) forms an even and predominantly wooded low skyline to this landscape and also limits long views from roads and settlement. The A98 and B9018 offer close views of	Although this size of turbine would be visible from more open roads and elevated settlement within this landscape, there would be increased scope to site them to avoid prominent skyline locations. This typology would not be visible from the *Upland Farmland* (8) to the south although it could impact on views to the landmark hill of the Bin of Cullen if sited on lower hill slopes.	***High-medium***	This typology (and particularly turbines towards the lower height band of <25m) would be more likely to be partially screened by coalescing woodlands and landform in views from within this landscape and from the *Coastal Farmland* (4), limiting their visual intrusion.	***Medium***

	this landscape and the northern slopes are visible from well settled coastal areas.	Turbines would be likely to form prominent features in views from the well-settled *Coastal Farmland* (4) although intrusion could be limited by careful siting below the skyline.			
Cumulative effects	The consented Aultmore wind farm will be visible in close proximity from parts of this LCT.	Significant cumulative effects could be avoided by siting this size of turbine away from lower slopes directly below the Aultmore wind farm.	***Medium***	There are likely to be few potential cumulative effects associated with this small typology although they should also be sited away from slopes directly below the Aultmore wind farm.	***Medium-low***

Character Type 5: Rolling Farmland and Forests – Sensitivity assessment for large and medium typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of large typology (80m-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of medium typology (50m-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This landscape forms a narrow fringe of small rolling hills and slopes between the higher hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and the low-lying coastal plain of the *Coastal Farmlands* (4). While its well-settled and farmed character distinctly contrasts with (10) it merges more gradually with (4). The steep-sided landmark hill of Brown Muir located within the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) provides a prominent backdrop to this character type.	The narrowness of this landscape means that turbines of this size would impact on adjacent landscapes with impacts more likely to occur on the *Coastal Farmlands* (4) which, although extensive and open, is also well-settled thus reducing scale. Although the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) has a more expansive scale better able to accommodate this typology, turbines of this size could impact on the landmark hill of Brown Muir which provides a prominent backdrop to the *Rolling Farmland and Forests* (5) but also the *Coastal Farmland* (4).	***High-medium***	The narrowness of this landscape means that turbines of this size would impact on adjacent landscapes with impacts more likely to occur on the *Coastal Farmlands* (4) which, although extensive and open, is also well-settled thus reducing scale. Although the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) has a more expansive scale better able to accommodate this typology, turbines of this size could impact on the landmark hill of Brown Muir which provides a prominent backdrop to the *Rolling Farmland and Forests* (5) but also the *Coastal Farmland* (4).	***High-medium***
Scale and openness	The landform is quite rolling in places limiting scale and this, together with fairly extensive woodland cover, reduces openness. This landscape is well-settled with a dispersed pattern of small farms (a number of abandoned farm buildings on upper eastern slopes) and many new houses which, together with enclosed fields and small woodlands, provide ready scale references. Scale increases at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) where settlement is	This typology would dominate the largely small to medium scale of this landscape. The consistent presence of small features, including dispersed settlement, is a further sensitivity.	***High***	This typology would dominate the largely small to medium scale of this landscape. The consistent presence of small features, including dispersed settlement, is a further sensitivity.	***High***

	sparser and hill slopes broader.				
Landform	This landscape has a very varied landform comprising gently undulating hills slopes with occasional more rounded small hills which rise gradually to the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) to the south. Pockets of more knolly landform occur and narrow valleys are filled with small water bodies at Millbuies and Blackhills.	Broader gently undulating hill slopes could more easily accommodate this typology although turbines of this size would detract from the more complex landform of knolls, narrow valleys with small water bodies and occasional small rounded hills.	***High-medium***	Broader gently undulating hill slopes could more easily accommodate this typology although turbines of this size would detract from the more complex landform of knolls, narrow valleys with small water bodies and occasional small rounded hills.	***High-medium***
Landscape pattern	Almost equal proportions of pasture and arable fields interspersed with small coniferous woodlands. Farmland is more marginal and the coniferous plantations become more extensive at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). Small pocket of policy woodland occur at Blackhills although generally this landscape has limited diversity and few landmark features.	Sensitivity is reduced due to the relatively simple patterns of forest cover and farmland although this typology could detract from small pockets of policy woodland if sited close-by.	***Medium-low***	Sensitivity is reduced due to the relatively simple patterns of forest cover and farmland although this typology could detract from small pockets of policy woodland if sited close-by.	***Medium-low***
Built environment	This landscape is well-settled with a regular pattern of dispersed farms and houses and also some small settlements, including larger distillery buildings. Settlement is sparser at the transition with the adjacent *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) although there are pockets of recent residential development. Public roads are generally very narrow and winding.	More sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features although turbines of this size would be likely to be seen in relative proximity to built features given settlement density and pattern across this landscape. Narrow roads could result in landscape and visual effects associated with access improvements for vehicles required	***High-medium***	More sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features although turbines of this size would be likely to be seen in relative proximity to built features given settlement density and pattern across this landscape. Narrow roads could result in landscape and visual effects associated with access	***High-medium***

		to transport this typology.		improvements for vehicles required to transport this typology.	
Perceptual qualities	This is a well-settled and managed landscape with few naturalistic features and little sense of seclusion or distinct sense of place.	Wildland and other perceptual qualities are not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***	Wildland and other perceptual qualities are not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***
Visual amenity	Woodland and landform limits views from roads and settlement within this landscape although upper hill slopes provide extensive views over the *Coastal Farmland* (4) to the Moray Firth. The backdrop of steeper edge slopes of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) forms a consistent feature seen from this landscape with the hill of Brown Muir being particularly prominent. This landscape forms a narrow band of hill fringes which are widely visible from roads and settlement within the adjacent *Coastal Farmland* (4) to the north.	Turbines of this size would form dominant features in views from settlement and roads in this and the adjacent open landscape of the *Coastal Farmland* (4). They could intrude on the sensitive skyline of the upland backdrop and detract from the focus provided by the hill of Brown Muir.	***High***	Turbines of this size could also form dominant features in views from settlement and roads in this and the adjacent open landscape of the *Coastal Farmland* (4). They could intrude on the sensitive skyline of the upland backdrop and detract from the focus provided by the hill of Brown Muir particularly if sited on upper hill slopes.	***High***
Cumulative effects	The Rothes I and II wind farm is seen in close proximity from the more open western slopes of this landscape.	Turbines of this size sited in this LCT would be highly visible from roads and settlement both within this character type and the adjacent *Coastal Farmland* (4). They would be inter-visible with the operational Rothes I and II wind farm and would contrast with the clear upland context of these operational turbines, resulting in cumulative effects on landscape character and on views.	***High***	Turbines of this size sited in this LCT would be highly visible from roads and settlement both within this character type and the adjacent *Coastal Farmland* (4). They would be inter-visible with the operational Rothes I and II wind farm and may also contrast in terms of turbine size, design and location resulting in cumulative effects on landscape character and on views.	***High***

Character Type 5: Rolling Farmland and Forests – Sensitivity assessment for small-medium and small typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of small-medium typology (35m-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of small typology (20m-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This landscape forms a narrow fringe of small rolling hills and slopes between the higher hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and the low-lying coastal plain of the *Coastal Farmlands* (4). While its well-settled and farmed character distinctly contrasts with (10) it merges more gradually with (4). The steep-sided landmark hill of Brown Muir located within the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) provides a prominent backdrop to this character type.	Turbines of this size would have less of an impact on adjacent landscapes due to their increased compatibility with the scale of the *Coastal Farmland* (4). The landmark hill of Brown Muir would still be sensitive to turbines sited nearby however.	***Medium***	With careful siting, this smaller typology would be likely to have minimal impacts on the landmark hill of Brown Muir. Effects on the *Coastal Farmland* (4) would also be reduced due to the relatively small size of turbines and their compatibility with the increased scale of this adjoining landscape.	***Medium-low***
Scale and openness	The landform is quite rolling in places limiting scale and this, together with fairly extensive woodland cover, reduces openness. This landscape is well-settled with a dispersed pattern of small farms (a number of abandoned farm buildings on upper eastern slopes) and many new houses which, together with enclosed fields and woodlands, provide ready scale references. Scale increases at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) where settlement is sparser and hill slopes are broader.	This typology would appear large in relation to the scale of landform, woodlands, land cover pattern and settlement within this landscape although impacts on smaller scale elements could be reduced if turbines were associated with more expansive upper hill slopes.	***High-medium***	Turbines of this size would have a better scale relationship to this landscape although smaller scale landforms would still be sensitive.	***Medium***
Landform	Gently undulating hills slopes with occasional more rounded small hills rise gradually to the *Upland Moorland*	Broader gently undulating hill slopes could more easily accommodate this typology although turbines of this	***Medium***	There are increased opportunities to associate this size of turbine with less extensive slopes, small natural	***Medium-low***

	and Forestry (10) to the south. Pockets of more knolly landform occur and narrow valleys are filled with small water bodies at Millbuies and Blackhills.	size would detract from the more complex landform of knolls, narrow valleys with small water bodies and occasional small rounded hills.		terraces and the side of small hills. They would still detract from more complex knolls and narrow valleys and the tops of small rounded hills would also be sensitive.	
Landscape pattern	Almost equal proportions of pasture and arable fields interspersed with small coniferous woodlands. Farmland is more marginal and the coniferous plantations become more extensive at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). Small pocket of policy woodland occur at Blackhills although generally this landscape has limited diversity and few landmark features.	Sensitivity is reduced due to the relatively simple patterns of forest cover and farmland although this typology could detract from small pockets of policy woodland if sited close-by.	***Medium-low***	Sensitivity is reduced due to the relatively simple patterns of forest cover and farmland although this typology could detract from small pockets of policy woodland if sited close-by.	***Medium-low***
Built environment	This landscape is well-settled with a regular pattern of dispersed farms and houses and also some small settlements, including larger distillery buildings. Settlement is sparser at the transition with the adjacent *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) although there are pockets of recent residential development. Public roads are generally very narrow and winding.	More sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features although turbines of this size would be likely to be seen in relative proximity to built features given settlement density and pattern across this landscape.	***High-medium***	This typology would have less of an effect on the setting of settlements. They could be sited relatively close to distillery buildings although would need to be set back from smaller buildings to avoid conflicts of scale and effects on setting.	***Medium***
Perceptual qualities	This is a well-settled and managed landscape with few naturalistic features and little sense of seclusion or distinct sense of place.	Wildland and other perceptual qualities are not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***	Wildland and other perceptual qualities are not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***
Visual amenity	Woodland and landform limits views from roads and settlement within this landscape although upper hill slopes provide extensive views over the	Turbines of this size would form highly visible features in close views from settlement and roads in this landscape and parts of the adjacent	***High-medium***	Turbines of this size would be less visually prominent in views from settlement and roads in this character type and would be likely	***Medium***

	Coastal Farmland (4) to the Moray Firth. The backdrop of steeper edge slopes of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) forms a consistent feature seen from this landscape with the hill of Brown Muir being particularly prominent. This landscape forms a narrow band of hill fringes which are widely visible from roads and settlement within the adjacent *Coastal Farmland* (4) to the north.	open landscape of the *Coastal Farmland* (4). They could however be sited to avoid intrusion on the sensitive skyline of the upland backdrop and to avoid detracting from the focus provided by the hill of Brown Muir.		to have minimal effects on views from the Coastal Farmland (4) providing they avoided small hill tops and were back-clothed by rising ground.	
Cumulative effects	The Rothes I and II wind farm is seen in close proximity from the more open western slopes of this landscape.	There is some limited scope to site turbines of this size to minimise cumulative effects with the operational Rothes I and II wind farm as inter-visibility between developments from close views would be likely to reduce further east. The more open upper hill slopes of the western part of this landscape are more sensitive due to the closer proximity to operational wind farm development and also the transmission line where they could exacerbate the visual clutter of disparate structures in the landscape.	***High-medium***	There is increased scope to site turbines of this size to avoid significant cumulative impacts although the more open upper hill slopes of the western part of this landscape remain sensitive due to the proximity of operational wind farm development and also the transmission line where they could exacerbate the visual clutter of disparate structures in the landscape.	***Medium***

Character Type 5a: Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys – Sensitivity assessment for large and medium typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of large typology (80m-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of medium typology (50m-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This landscape comprises the broad valleys of Pluscarden and the upper Lossie and the two ridges which divide them. It extends northwards to include the low hill of Quarry Wood which wraps around Elgin. It forms a transition between the higher hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and the low-lying coastal plain of the *Coastal Farmlands* (4). This landscape is distinct from adjoining character types with the northern ridge of Heldon Hill forming a prominent backdrop to the settled *Coastal Farmlands* (4) and the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Low Hills* (5b) and the settled upper Lossie valley contrasting with the more open uplands of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) to the south. The ridges are also prominent from the *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5) to the east.	The prominence of the distinct ridges of this landscape, together with the relatively small extent of this landscape type, limits scope to accommodate this typology without it impacting on adjacent landscapes (and particularly the *Coastal Farmland* (4) where views are more open). The valleys are more self-contained with views into them from surrounding areas limited.	***High-Medium***	The prominence of the distinct ridges of this landscape, together with the relatively small extent of this landscape type, limits scope to accommodate this typology without it impacting on adjacent landscapes (and particularly the *Coastal Farmland* (4) where views are more open). The valleys are more self-contained with views into them from surrounding areas limited.	***High-Medium***
Scale and openness	The northern ridge of Heldon Hill (which is most prominent from the *Coastal Farmland* (4)) only rises to around 230m while the southern ridge is slightly higher at 300m. The curving ridge of Quarry Wood which wraps around Elgin is very low despite its prominence. The valleys are strongly	This size of turbine would detract from the relatively low relief of the northern ridge. It would also dominate the limited extent of the open valley floor. The presence of smaller scale features within the valleys increases sensitivity to this typology.	***High***	This size of turbine would have a better scale relationship with the relief of the higher ridges. It would however still be likely to dominate the limited extent of open valley floors. The presence of smaller scale features within the valleys increases sensitivity to this	***High-medium***

	contained by the ridges and occasional 'pinch points' occur where the valley is incised and constricted by steep densely wooded hill slopes. Extensive woodland cover limits openness. The more open valley floors and lower sides accommodate a dispersed pattern of small farms and houses, enclosed fields and woodlands.			typology.	
Landform	The landform of this character type comprises an alternate pattern of two ridges separated by the valleys of the Upper Lossie and the Pluscarden. Both ridges feature a steep south-east facing scarp slopes and long gentler dip slopes to the north-west. Ridge tops are narrow and very gently undulating with the Hill of the Wangie and Heldon Hill forming subtle rounded summits. The Hill of Mulundy forms a western outlier to the southern ridge and the low curving ridge of Quarry Wood extends to the north. The valleys of the upper Lossie and Pluscarden have flat floodplains although narrow and deeply incised side valleys also occasionally occur. Small complex knolls and river terraces pattern the lower southern slopes of the Lossie in the Kellas area.	The main ridges and the outlying Hill of Mulundy and Quarry Wood form prominent landform features and there would be physical constraints to siting this typology on steep scarp slopes, narrow ridge tops and confined summits. While this typology would be better able to be physically sited on gentler dip slopes and broader flat valley bottoms it could detract from the steep scarp slopes of the ridges and the flat open floodplain. The more complex landform of knolls and terraces associated with the Lossie and the narrow deeply incised side valleys would be highly sensitive to this typology.	***High-medium***	The ridges and the outlying Hill of Mulundy and Quarry Wood form prominent landform features and there would be physical constraints to siting this typology on steep scarp slopes, narrow ridge tops and confined summits. While this typology would be better able to be physically sited on gentler dip slopes and broader flat valley bottoms it could detract from the steep scarp slopes of the ridges and the flat open floodplain. The more complex landform of knolls and terraces associated with the Lossie and the narrow deeply incised side valleys would be highly sensitive to this typology.	***High-medium***
Landscape pattern	The ridges are largely forested, predominantly comprising coniferous plantations, but with some mixed and policy woodlands occurring on lower	The open farmed valley floors are important in the contrast they provide with the densely forested ridges and this size of turbine could detract from	***Medium***	The open farmed valley floors are important in the contrast they provide with the densely forested ridges and this size of turbine could	***Medium***

	slopes on the edge of the valleys and within deeply incised side valleys. Flat valley floors and lower slopes are farmed and gently undulating pastures occur on the north-west facing long dip slopes of the ridges and at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10).	this and from occasional policy features. The more uniform coniferous forest cover is generally less sensitive.		detract from this and from occasional policy features. The more uniform coniferous forest cover is generally less sensitive.	
Built environment	The valleys are well settled and feature a regular pattern of small farms, cottages and small settlements such as Dallas and Rafford. There are a number of historic houses with associated designed landscapes, the 'landmark' feature of Pluscarden Abbey and archaeological features. Public roads are very narrow and private tracks are often steep within the forested ridges.	Settlement is focussed within the valleys and this size of turbine would detract from the setting of settlements, historic houses, Pluscarden Abbey and archaeological features if sited within these areas. Sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features although turbines of this size would be likely to be seen in relative proximity to built features given settlement density and pattern across this landscape. Narrow roads and steep terrain could result in landscape and visual effects associated with access improvements for vehicles required to transport this typology.	***High***	Settlement is focussed within the valleys and this size of turbine would detract from the setting of settlements, historic houses, Pluscarden Abbey and archaeological features if sited within these areas. Sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features. Narrow roads and steep terrain could result in landscape and visual effects associated with access improvements for vehicles required to transport this typology.	***High-medium***
Perceptual qualities	Although the valleys are strongly contained and can feel secluded in some places, they are generally well-settled. Extensive forestry and also wind farm development and a transmission line visible from the	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion and the historical dimension felt in parts of this landscape although in general wildland qualities are not pronounced.	***Medium***	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion and the historical dimension felt in parts of this landscape although in general wildland qualities are not pronounced.	***Medium***

	Lossie valley lessens the sense of naturalness. The Pluscarden area has distinct historical associations.				
Visual amenity	The valleys are well settled and feature a network of narrow roads, some of these elevated and offering open views along and across the valleys to the ridges. Extensive woodland and the ridge landform limits open views in places although Forestry Commission owned woodlands on the ridges appear well-used for recreation. A promoted viewpoint is located on the western end of the Heldon Hill ridge. The upper Lossie valley is particularly open and features views to the adjacent *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) including the operational Rothes wind farm. The northern ridge of Heldon Hill is prominent from the settled *Coastal Farmland* (4) to the north and both ridges are seen from minor roads and settlement within the *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5) to the east. Views are more limited from the west. The Hill of Mulundy forms a focal feature from the B9010 while Quarry Wood is important in providing the immediate setting to Elgin.	This typology would be highly visible if sited within the more open and well-settled valleys, significantly intruding on long views from roads and from settlement. Turbines of this size would be prominent from settlements and roads in this and adjacent character areas if sited on the ridges.	***High***	This typology would be highly visible if sited within the more open and well-settled valleys, significantly intruding on long views from roads and from settlement. Turbines of this size would be prominent from settlements and roads in this and adjacent character areas if sited on the ridges. There may be some limited scope to site turbines towards the smaller height band of this typology to avoid intrusion on prominent skylines and limiting views from the more settled valleys of this character type.	***High-medium***
Cumulative effects	The Paul's Hill wind farm can be glimpsed from the minor road at the upper end of the Pluscarden Valley near Hazelbank. The Rothes I and II	There would be close inter-visibility between any turbines located in the upper Lossie valley and the operational Rothes wind farm.	***High***	There would be close inter-visibility between any turbines located in the upper Lossie valley and the operational Rothes wind farm.	***High***

	wind farm is seen in close proximity to the upper Lossie valley and the consented Kellas and Meikle Hill wind farms will also increase the extent of turbines seen on the skyline particularly in the Dallas area. These wind farms are not visible from the more contained Pluscarden valley.	Cumulative effects could also occur if this typology was located on the ridges of this character area where it would be seen together in longer views from the *Coastal Farmland* (4) and *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5).		Cumulative effects could also occur if this typology was located on the ridges of this character area where it would be seen together in longer views from the *Coastal Farmland* (4) and *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5).	

Character Type 5a: Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys – Sensitivity assessment for small-medium and small typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of small-medium typology (35m-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of small typology (20m-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This landscape comprises the broad valleys of Pluscarden and the upper Lossie and the two ridges which divide them. It extends northwards to include the low hill of Quarry Wood which wraps around Elgin. It forms a transition between the higher hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and the low-lying coastal plain of the *Coastal Farmlands* (4). This landscape is distinct from adjoining character types with the northern ridge of Heldon Hill forming a prominent backdrop to the settled *Coastal Farmlands* (4) and the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Low Hills* (5b) and the settled upper Lossie valley contrasting with the more open uplands of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) to the south. The ridges are also prominent from the *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5) to the east.	While the prominent ridges of this landscape would be sensitive to turbines of this size, the valleys are more contained and this typology could be located on more inward facing dip slopes without impacting visually on adjacent landscape types.	***Medium***	There are greater opportunities to site this size of turbine on lower slopes of the prominent ridges and within the valleys to minimise impacts on adjacent landscape types.	***Medium-low***
Scale and openness	The northern ridge of Heldon Hill (which is most prominent from the *Coastal Farmland* (4)) only rises to around 230m while the southern ridge is slightly higher at 300m. The curving ridge of Quarry Wood which wraps around Elgin is very low despite its prominence. The valleys are strongly	This typology could fit with the scale of less densely settled broader dip slopes of the ridges. Turbines of this size would still appear large in relation to the scale of relatively narrow flood plains and smaller landscape features within the valleys such as woodlands and buildings.	***High-medium***	There are increased opportunities for this size of turbine to fit with the scale of less densely settled broader dip slopes of the ridges. Turbines towards the lower height band of this typology <25m could also be accommodated on farmland on lower valley sides (but avoiding	***Medium***

	contained by the ridges and occasional 'pinch points' occur where the valley is incised and constricted by steep densely wooded hill slopes. Extensive woodland cover limits openness. The more open valley floors and lower sides accommodate a dispersed pattern of small farms and houses, enclosed fields and woodlands.			the open floodplain)	
Landform	The landform of this character type comprises an alternate pattern of two ridges separated by the valleys of the Upper Lossie and the Pluscarden. Both ridges feature a steep south-east facing scarp slopes and long gentler dip slopes to the north-west. Ridge tops are narrow and very gently undulating with the Hill of the Wangie and Heldon Hill forming subtle rounded summits. The Hill of Mulundy forms a western outlier to the southern ridge and the low curving ridge of Quarry Wood extends to the north. The valleys of the upper Lossie and Pluscarden have flat floodplains although narrow and deeply incised side valleys also occasionally occur. Small complex knolls and river terraces pattern the lower southern slopes of the Lossie in the Kellas area.	The ridges form prominent landform features and there would be physical constraints to siting this typology on steep scarp slopes, narrow ridge tops and confined summits. The gentler dip slopes and broader flat valley bottoms would be less sensitive to this typology providing turbines were sited to avoid detracting on key views to the steep scarp slopes and the flat floodplain of the valleys. The more complex landform of knolls and terraces associated with the Lossie and the narrow deeply incised side valleys would be highly sensitive however.	***Medium***	Turbines of this size (and particularly those towards the lower height band of this typology) would be likely to have less of a detractive effect on key landform features. The prominent ridge tops, steep scarp slopes and more complex landform features would still be sensitive to any turbine sited on these features or nearby them.	***Medium***
Landscape pattern	The ridges are largely forested, predominantly comprising coniferous plantations, but with some mixed and policy woodlands occurring on lower	The open farmed valley floors are important in the contrast they provide with the densely forested ridges and this size of turbine could detract from	***Medium***	There is more opportunity to site the smaller turbines of this typology to minimise effects on more notable land cover. The open farmed valley	***Medium-low***

	slopes on the edge of the valleys and within deeply incised side valleys. Flat valley floors and lower slopes are farmed and gently undulating pastures occur on the north-west facing long dip slopes of the ridges and at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10).	this and from occasional policy features. The more uniform coniferous forest cover is generally less sensitive.		floor and policy features would still be sensitive to any turbine development however.	
Built environment	The valleys are well settled and feature a regular pattern of small farms, cottages and small settlements such as Dallas and Rafford. There are a number of historic houses with associated designed landscapes and the 'landmark' feature of Pluscarden Abbey. Public roads are very narrow and private tracks are often steep within the forested ridges.	Settlement is focussed within the valleys and this size of turbine would detract from the setting of settlements, historic houses and Pluscarden Abbey if sited within these areas. Sparsely settled upper hill slopes would be less sensitive in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements and other built features.	***Medium***	While the setting of key historic and archaeological built features would still be highly sensitive to intrusion, this typology would have less of an effect on other built features if sited either within less well-settled areas or if they comprised turbines towards the lower height band <25m.	***Medium-low***
Perceptual qualities	Although the valleys are strongly contained and can feel secluded in some places, they are generally well-settled. Extensive forestry and also wind farm development and a transmission line visible from the upper Lossie valley lessens the sense of naturalness. The Pluscarden area has distinct historical associations.	Wildland qualities are not pronounced and turbines of this size would be unlikely to have a significant effect on this, and other perceptual qualities, provided they were carefully sited.	***Low***	Wildland qualities are not pronounced and turbines of this size would be unlikely to have a significant effect on this, and other perceptual qualities, provided they were carefully sited.	***Low***
Visual amenity	The valleys are well settled and feature a network of narrow roads, some of these elevated and offering open views along and across the valleys to the ridges. Extensive woodland and the ridge landform limits open views in places although Forestry Commission	This typology would be highly visible if sited within the more open and well-settled valleys and could intrude on long views from roads and from settlement although there is increased scope to site turbines of this size in less well-settled areas to	***High-medium***	Turbines of this size would have a reduced effect on views as they could be sited on lower hill slopes to avoid intrusion on long views from roads aligned through the valleys. Even turbines of this size would be intrusive however if sited	***Medium***

	owned woodlands on the ridges appear well-used for recreation. A promoted viewpoint is located on the western end of the Heldon Hill ridge. The upper Lossie valley is particularly open and features views to the adjacent *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) including the operational Rothes wind farm. The northern ridge of Heldon Hill is prominent from the settled *Coastal Farmland* (4) to the north and both ridges are seen from minor roads and settlement within the *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5) to the east. Views are more limited from the west. The Hill of Mulundy forms a focal feature from the B9010 while Quarry Wood is important in providing the immediate setting to Elgin.	minimise visibility. Turbines of this size would be prominent from settlements and roads in this and adjacent character areas if sited on the ridges and particularly if seen on the skyline.		on ridge tops so seen against the sky.	
Cumulative effects	The Paul's Hill wind farm can be glimpsed from the minor road at the upper end of the Pluscarden Valley near Hazelbank. The Rothes I and II wind farm is seen in close proximity to the upper Lossie valley and the consented Kellas and Meikle Hill wind farms will also increase the extent of turbines seen on the skyline particularly in the Dallas area. These wind farms are not visible from the more contained Pluscarden valley.	There would be close inter-visibility between this typology located in the upper Lossie valley and operational and consented wind farms located in the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) with even turbines of this size appearing large when viewed from within this character area. Cumulative effects could also occur if this typology was located on the prominent ridges which are visible from the *Coastal Farmland* (4) and *Rolling Farmland and Forest* (5). The dip slopes of the ridges offer some	***High-medium***	There is increased scope to site turbines of this size to avoid significant cumulative impacts. The Lossie Valley remains sensitive however due to the close proximity of operational and consented wind farm developments.	***Medium***

		scope to accommodate this typology provided they could be sited to avoid impacts on sensitive skylines.			

Character Type 5b: Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills – Sensitivity assessment for large and medium typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of large typology (80m-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of medium typology (50m-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This landscape forms a transition between the higher hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and the *Coastal Farmlands* (4). The undulating landform and extensive woodland limit inter-visibility with adjacent landscape types, although this landscape forms low wooded skylines to the *Narrow Wooded Valleys* (6) of the Findhorn and Dorback/Divie Burns. The wider visual prominence of Romach Hill is an exception, as it forms a prominent 'landmark' hill which is easily recognisable outwith the area and is visible more widely across western Moray. It also provides a visual 'buffer' between the lowland landscapes and the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) to the south from some lower viewpoints including public roads. The relatively small scale of hill forms and spaces contrasts with larger hill forms and bolder pattern of extensive forest and open moorland to the south. This landscape type is relatively small in extent.	The small extent of this landscape type limits scope to accommodate this typology without it impacting on the adjacent *Narrow Wooded Valley* (6) to the west or *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys* (5a) to the east. Romach Hill is a landmark hill, easily recognisable and visible in views outwith this LCT. It is a sensitive feature because of its wide visibility and straegic role as a visual foreground to more extensive upland areas. Otherwise, this landscape character type is relatively self-contained, with views into it limited by the hilly landform and woodland.	***High-Medium***	The small extent of this landscape type limits scope to accommodate this typology without it impacting on the adjacent *Narrow Wooded Valley* (6) to the west or *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys* (5a) to the east. Romach Hill is a landmark hill, easily recognisable and visible in views outwith this LCT. It is a sensitive feature because of its wide visibility and straegic role as a visual foreground to more extensive upland areas. Otherwise, this landscape character type is relatively self- contained, with views into it limited by the hilly landform and woodland.	***High-Medium***
Scale and openness	Very small scale, undulating and hummocky landform skirting around the base of Romach Hill and extending	This size of turbine would impact on the small scale of much of this character type. In particular, this	***High***	This size of turbine would impact on the small scale of much of this character type. In particular, this	***High***

	north towards the outskirts of Forres. The small scale of this landscape is reinforced by the low relief, with landform undulating between 90m and 190m. The exception is Romach Hill, which rises in a pronounced dome to 315m. The extensive framework of mixed woodland, within which lie improved grass fields which appear to have been carved out of the forest, further emphasises the small scale. The constant presence of trees, and where there are open spaces, buildings provide consistent small scale features.	typology would dominate the low relief, small scale landform and pattern of small spaces characteristic of this landscape.		typology would dominate the low relief, small scale landform and pattern of small spaces characteristic of this landscape.	
Landform	A consistent pattern of rolling small hills, knolls and hummocks, which are rounded in shape occurs to the east of the Findhorn valley. Landform tends to be more gently undulating to the west. There are occasional more pronounced knolls and higher hills, notably Romach Hill, which are more visually prominent. Fields tend to be more gently graded and sometimes relatively level especially around Darnaway Castle.	The more prominent hills, the frequent low summits and the complex knolly and interlocking landforms are sensitive to this typology.	***High***	The more prominent hills, the frequent low summits and the complex knolly and interlocking landforms are sensitive to this typology.	***High***
Landscape pattern	This landscape is strongly characterised by the pattern of open grazed fields alternating with forested areas which creates a distinct and consistent spatial sequence. The mixed woodland, including	The diversity of the pattern of vegetation and the importance of the open spaces within the woodland limits opportunities for this typology, which would quickly dominate the sense of openness within the spaces.	***High***	The diversity of the pattern of vegetation and the importance of the open spaces within the woodland limits opportunities for this typology, which would quickly dominate the sense of openness	***High***

	broadleaves and mixed conifers as well as occasional policy-type mixes, and wide range of age structure, offers diversity which is further enhanced by the range of woodland – extending from small clumps of trees to more extensive forest. The open spaces are frequently irregular and often 'organic' in shape, increasing the sense of interlock. More extensive farmland and parkland is associated with Darnaway Castle. Occasional water bodies, including the deep trough of the Romach Loch, are features within this landscape.	The integrity of the designed landscape around Darnaway Castle and Altyre House is an additional sensitivity.		within the spaces. The integrity of the designed landscape around Darnaway Castle and Altyre House is an additional sensitivity.	
Built environment	This landscape is not heavily settled, with farms, houses and even small crofts generally located at the edge of the open spaces overlooking the fields. Darnaway Castle, Altyre House and their associated designed landscapes, as well as occasional historical and archaeological features, including churches and distillery buildings add to the diversity of the built environment within this landscape. Both public and private roads are very narrow.	The small size of many of the houses and farms are a constraint as this typology is likely to dominate the small size of the built features. This landscape type is however not well settled, although the settlement is focussed on existing open spaces, more extensive wooded areas may therefore be less sensitive even to this size of typology in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements. Historic buildings and designed landscapes would be highly sensitive to turbines of this size which impacted on their setting. The narrowness and winding character of the road network is likely to be compromised by improvements	***High-medium***	The small size of many of the houses and farms are a constraint as this typology is likely to dominate the small size of the built features. This landscape type is however not well settled, although the settlement is focussed on existing open spaces, more extensive wooded areas may therefore be less sensitive even to this size of typology in terms of avoiding impact on the immediate setting of settlements. Historic buildings and designed landscapes would be highly sensitive to turbines of this size which impacted on their setting. The narrowness and winding character of the road network is	***High-medium***

		to accommodate the large vehicles required to transport this typology.		likely to be compromised by improvements to accommodate the large vehicles required to transport this typology.	
Perceptual qualities	The self contained character of this landscape increases the sense of seclusion in a landscape which, because of the degree of enclosure, can quickly feel 'set apart' from the rest of Moray. This is reinforced by the sparse network of public roads, with opportunities to explore the forests largely limited to non-vehicular access. Travelling through the well defined spatial sequence is a particular experiential characteristic of this landscape which is strongly linked to its identity.	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape. The pattern of spaces is a particular quality of this landscape, and this typology could easily dominate and reduce the contrast of the open spaces to the forested areas.	***High-Medium***	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape. The pattern of spaces is a particular quality of this landscape, and this typology could easily dominate and reduce the contrast of the open spaces to the forested areas.	***High-Medium***
Visual amenity	Views within this landscape area are very limited and are often intermittent due to the enclosure created by both landform and woodland.	The low hills and woodland often screen parts of this landscape, so that views from the roads, for example, are intermittent. However, the height of this typology means that it is likely to appear above many of these smaller features and may be relatively widely and consistently visible.	***High-Medium***	The low hills and woodland often screen parts of this landscape, so that views from the roads, for example, are intermittent. The smaller height of this typology means that while it is likely to appear above many of these smaller features and may be relatively widely and consistently visible, but less so than the 'Large' typology.	***Medium***
Cumulative effects	Views of operational wind farms located in LCTs 10 and 11 are limited from within this enclosed landscape. The four turbines at Findhorn in the *Coastal farmland* (4) can be seen from	There is limited inter-visibility between this typology and wind farm developments in neighbouring LCTs although cumulative effects could occur on sensitive skylines above the	***Medium***	There is limited inter-visibility between this typology and wind farm developments in neighbouring LCTs although cumulative effects could occur on sensitive skylines	***Medium***

	some locations and the consented Hill of Glaschyle wind farm located in the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) will be visible from more open areas.	*Narrow Wooded Valley* (6) with the consented Hill of Glaschyle wind farm.		above the *Narrow Wooded Valley* (6) with the consented Hill of Glaschyle wind farm.	

Character Type 5b: Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills – Sensitivity assessment for small-medium and small typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of small-medium typology (35m-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of small typology (20m-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This landscape forms a transition between the higher hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and the *Coastal Farmlands* (4). The undulating landform and extensive woodland limit inter-visibility with adjacent landscape types, although this landscape forms low wooded skylines to the *Narrow Wooded Valleys* (6) of the Findhorn and Dorback/Divie Burns. The wider visual prominence of Romach Hill is an exception, as it forms a prominent 'landmark' hill which is easily recognisable outwith the area and is visible more widely across western Moray. It also provides a visual 'buffer' between the lowland landscapes and the *Upland Moor and Forestry* (10) to the south from some lower viewpoints including public roads. The relatively small scale of hill forms and spaces contrasts with larger hill forms and bolder pattern of extensive forest and open moorland to the south. This landscape type is relatively small in extent.	This landscape character type is relatively self-contained, with views into the type limited by the undulating landform and woodland and partly hidden from the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) by Romach Hill. While the landscape type is relatively small in extent, this typology could be located in the interior without impacting visually on adjacent landscape types. Romach Hill remains a sensitive feature, however, even to this size of typology, because of its wide visibility and role as a visual foreground to more extensive upland areas.	***Medium***	This landscape character type is relatively self-contained, with views into the type limited by the undulating landform and woodland and partly hidden from the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) by Romach Hill. While the landscape type is relatively small in extent, this typology could be located without impacting visually on adjacent landscape types.	***Medium-low***
Scale and openness	Very small scale, undulating and hummocky landform skirting around the base of Romach Hill and extending	This size of turbine would impact on the small scale of this character type. In particular, this typology would	***High-medium***	This size of turbine might impact on the small scale of some of the more intimately scaled areas of this	***Medium***

	north towards the outskirts of Forres. The small scale of this landscape is reinforced by the low relief, with landform undulating between 90m and 190m. The exception is Romach Hill, which rises in a pronounced dome to 315m. The extensive framework of mixed woodland, within which lie improved grass fields which appear to have been carved out of the forest, further emphasises the small scale. The constant presence of trees, and where there are open spaces, buildings provide consistent small scale features.	appear tall compared to the low relief and smaller open spaces characteristic of this landscape. The consistent presence of small features – including trees and buildings – would make it difficult to accommodate this size of typology without it appearing much larger than these features. More open, larger spaces associated with rising ground and along the lower slopes of larger hills offer more potential for this typology. The smaller turbines in this typology range would have less impact on scale.		character type. There is likely to be most scope to accommodate turbines of this type in the larger open spaces, along the lower slopes of larger hills, with turbines towards the lower height band of this typology having the least potential impact.	
Landform	A consistent pattern of rolling small hills, knolls and hummocks, which are rounded in shape occurs to the east of the Findhorn valley. Landform tends to be more gently undulating to the west. There are occasional more pronounced knolls and higher hills, notably Romach Hill, which are more visually prominent. Fields tend to be more gently graded and sometimes relatively level especially around Darnaway Castle.	The more prominent hills, the frequent low summits and the complex knolly and interlocking landforms are sensitive to this typology. Long evenly graded and gentle slopes with occasional terraces are likely to offer more potential than areas of intricate and complex landform.	***High-Medium***	The more prominent hills, the frequent low summits and the complex knolly and interlocking landforms are sensitive to this typology. Long evenly graded and gentle slopes with occasional terraces are likely to offer more potential than areas of intricate and complex landform. There is likely to be additional potential to accommodate this typology on the side slopes of gentle, less prominent low hills.	***Medium***
Landscape pattern	This landscape is strongly characterised by the pattern of open grazed fields alternating with forested areas which creates a distinct and	The diversity of the pattern of vegetation and the importance of the open spaces within the woodland limits opportunities for this typology,	***Medium***	The diversity of the pattern of vegetation and the importance of the open spaces within the woodland limits opportunities for	***Medium-low***

	consistent spatial sequence. The mixed woodland, including broadleaves and mixed conifers as well as occasional policy-type mixes, and wide range of age structure, offers diversity which is further enhanced by the range of woodland – extending from small clumps of trees to more extensive forest. The open spaces are frequently irregular and often 'organic' in shape, increasing the sense of interlock. More extensive farmland and parkland is associated with Darnaway Castle. Occasional water bodies, including the deep trough of the Romach Loch, are features within this landscape.	which could dominate the sense of openness within the spaces. The integrity of the designed landscape around Altyre House is an additional sensitivity. More open and simple land cover, especially more extensive grazing, may provide some scope for this typology.		this typology, which could dominate the sense of openness within the spaces. The integrity of the designed landscape around Altyre House is an additional sensitivity. More open and simple land cover, especially more extensive grazing is likely to provide scope for this typology. This size of typology is less likely to interrupt or fragment the landcover pattern than taller typologies	
Built environment	This landscape is not heavily settled, with farms, houses and even small crofts generally located at the edge of the open spaces overlooking the fields. Darnaway Castle, Altyre House and their associated designed landscapes, as well as occasional historical and archaeological features, including churches and distillery buildings add to the diversity of the built environment within this landscape. Both public and private roads are very narrow.	The small size of many of the houses and farms are a constraint as this typology is likely to dominate the small size of the built features. This landscape type is however not well settled, although the settlement is focussed on existing open spaces, therefore there is likely to be opportunities to site this size of typology without impacting on the setting of settlements. There is likely to be scope to site this typology where it does not relate to the small size of the buildings.	***Medium-low***	The small size of many of the houses and farms are a constraint as this typology is likely to dominate the small size of the built features. This landscape type is however not well settled, although the settlement is focussed on existing open spaces, therefore there is likely to be opportunities to site this size of typology without impacting on the setting of settlements. The height of this typology is likely to relate to larger farm buildings and there is likely to be scope to site this typology where it does not relate to the size of smaller buildings.	***Low***

Perceptual qualities	The self-contained character of this landscape increases the sense of seclusion in a landscape which, because of the degree of enclosure, can quickly feel 'set apart' from the rest of Moray. This is reinforced by the sparse network of public roads, with opportunities to explore the mixed woodland forests largely limited to non-vehicular access. Travelling through the well-defined spatial sequence is a particular experiential characteristic of this landscape which is strongly linked to its identity.	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape. The pattern of spaces is a particular quality of this landscape, and this typology could dominate and reduce the contrast of the open spaces to the forested areas. Elsewhere, on larger areas of open farmed and settled land, there is likely to be less impact on these qualities.	***Medium***	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape. The pattern of spaces is a particular quality of this landscape, and this typology could dominate and reduce the contrast of the open spaces to the forested areas. Elsewhere, on larger areas of open farmed and settled land, there is likely to be less impact on these qualities.	***Medium***
Visual amenity	Views into and within this landscape are very limited and are often intermittent due to the enclosure created by both landform and woodland.	The low hills and woodland often screen parts of this landscape, so that views from the road, for example, are intermittent. Views of this height of turbine are therefore likely to be intermittent and reduced by the screening effects of landform and trees, although the sensitivity assessment recognises that trees will be felled, opening up new views for a period. The smaller turbines in this typology range would have less visual impact.	***Medium***	The low hills and woodland often screen parts of this landscape, so that views from the road, for example, are intermittent. Views of this height of turbine are therefore likely to be intermittent and reduced by the screening effects of landform and trees, although the sensitivity assessment recognises that trees will be felled, opening up new views for a period. The lower height of this typology reduces potential visual impact. The smaller turbines in this typology range would have less visual impact.	***Medium-low***
Cumulative effects	Views of operational wind farms located in LCTs 10 and 11 are limited	There is only limited inter-visibility between this typology and any	***Medium-low***	There is only limited inter-visibility between this typology and any	***Low***

	from within this enclosed landscape. The four turbines at Findhorn in the *Coastal farmland* (4) can be seen from some locations and the consented Hill of Glaschyle wind farm located in the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) will be visible from more open areas.	development in neighbouring LCTs. Cumulative effects with the consented Hill of Glaschyle wind farm could be avoided by careful siting.		development in neighbouring LCTs – this size of turbine would be less likely to incur cumulative effects with any visible wind farms sited within adjacent landscapes.	

Character Type 6: Narrow Wooded Valleys – Sensitivity assessment for large and medium typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of large typology (80m-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of medium typology (50m-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	These narrow deeply incised valleys are relatively self-contained. The *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills* (5b) forms the immediate skyline either side of these valleys while the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and *Open Rolling Uplands* (11) also abut the south-eastern corner of this landscape. This LCT, especially to the south, is overlooked from high points, including the Knock of Braemoray and is inter-visible with the low western hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). The wooded character of this landscape merges with the adjacent *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills* (5b), and the valley itself extends into neighbouring Nairn. This landscape forms a key 'gateway' to Moray from the south experienced from the A940 which extends over the dramatic open expanse of the Dava Moor before descending into the richly wooded valleys of the Dorback Burn and Findhorn.	This landscape character type is relatively self-contained, with views into this type from neighbouring LCTs limited by woodland, although higher hills on adjacent types to the south overlook this low-lying character type. The small extent of this character type would be quickly dominated by this typology. Turbines of this size would also impact on the approach and sense of arrival to Moray.	***High-Medium***	This landscape character type is relatively self-contained, with views into this type from neighbouring LCTs limited by the woodland, although higher hills on adjacent types to the south overlook this low-lying character type. The small extent of this type would be quickly dominated by this typology. Turbines of this size would also impact on the approach and sense of arrival to Moray.	***High-Medium***
Scale and openness	The scale of the landform becomes progressively smaller as the undulations become more complex and the valley becomes narrower and	This size of turbine would impact on the small scale of much of this character type. In particular, this typology would dominate the low	***High***	This size of turbine would impact on the small scale of much of this character type. In particular, this typology would dominate the low	***High***

	more enclosed, closer to the rivers. The medium to small scale of the topography is reinforced by the low relief, with landform generally undulating between 100m and 150m in elevation, although it is lower to the north. Woodland creates considerable containment reducing the scale of the experience of this landscape and open areas of farmland within woodland are small. Trees and buildings provide consistent reference points against which size of turbines can be judged.	relief, the small scale landform and the open spaces within this landscape. The consistent presence of small features – including trees and buildings – would make it difficult to accommodate this size of typology without it dominating these features.		relief, the small scale landform and the open spaces within this landscape. The consistent presence of small features – including trees and buildings – would make it difficult to accommodate this size of typology without it dominating these features.	
Landform	Landform is particularly complex at the conjunction of the rivers and tributaries with steep slopes and incised rocky gorges. Valley sides are undulating but, in places interlocking and complex, with occasional more gently sloping fields on the shoulders of the valley.	The irregular and small scale landforms and steep sided river valleys and their immediate setting are all sensitive to this typology. Larger turbines would detract from complex and dramatic landform features even if sited on more gently sloping upper slopes.	***High***	The irregular and small scale landforms and steep sided river valleys and their immediate setting are all sensitive to this typology. Larger turbines would detract from complex and dramatic landform features even if sited on more gently sloping upper slopes.	***High***
Landscape pattern	This landscape is strongly characterised by the variety of woodland, which ranges from extensive pine forest of different ages, to riparian woodland and policies. The woodland alternates with cultivated and grazed fields, some of which are relatively small pockets and some of which are larger more extensive areas of open fields. These open spaces are frequently irregular in shape, increasing the sense of interlock. The rivers are a	The diversity of the pattern of vegetation and the importance of the open spaces within the woodland limits opportunities for this typology, which would quickly dominate the sense of openness within the spaces. The integrity of the policy woodland, and the setting of the dramatic gorges and their wooded surroundings is additionally sensitive.	***High***	The diversity of the pattern of vegetation and the importance of the open spaces within the woodland limits opportunities for this typology, which would quickly dominate the sense of openness within the spaces. The integrity of the policy woodland, and the setting of the dramatic gorges and their wooded surroundings is additionally sensitive.	***High***

	particular feature, forming sinuous and well-defined gorges with steep sides clothed with broadleaved woodland. Feature trees are associated with some of the policy woods and designed landscapes.				
Built environment	This landscape is not extensively settled, with farms and houses generally located at the edge of the open spaces overlooking the fields. Historic houses – such as Logie and Relugas are strongly associated with the river valleys, often located to overlook dramatic stretches of gorge. There are additional buildings and built features associated with these estates, including the bridge at Relugas. The main A940 extends through the eastern side of this character type, in places overlooking the steep sided river valley. Some of the public and private roads are narrow and winding.	The small size of many of the houses and farms are a constraint as this typology is likely to dominate the small size of the built features. The historic buildings and their settings are an additional sensitivity. This landscape type is however not extensively settled and there may be opportunities to site even this size of turbine without impacting on the immediate setting of settlements. The character of some of the road network is likely to be compromised by improvements to accommodate large vehicles required to transport this typology. It is also unlikely that large vehicles could negotiate the historic bridges.	***High-medium***	The small size of many of the houses and farms are a constraint as this typology is likely to dominate the small size of the built features. The historic buildings and their settings are an additional sensitivity.This landscape type is however not extensively settled and there may be opportunities to site even this size of turbine without impacting on the immediate setting of settlements. The character of some of the road network is likely to be compromised by improvements to accommodate large vehicles required to transport this typology. It is also unlikely that large vehicles could negotiate the historic bridges.	***High-medium***
Perceptual qualities	The more extensive woodland creates a sense of seclusion in this landscape because of the degree of enclosure. This is reinforced by the sparse network of public roads, with opportunities to explore the forests largely limited to non-vehicular access. The most striking features are the steep-sided river valleys, which are dramatic and naturalistic in character.	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape, and the sense of naturalness and drama associated with the river gorges. The sequential pattern of spaces is a quality of this landscape and this typology could easily dominate the open spaces and reduce the contrast between the open spaces and the forested areas	***High-medium***	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape, and the sense of naturalness and drama associated with the river gorges. The sequential pattern of spaces is a quality of this landscape and this typology could easily dominate the open spaces and reduce the contrast between the open spaces	***High-medium***

	Travelling through the sequence of open spaces and woodland is a key experience of this character.			and the forested areas.	
Visual amenity	The woodland limits wide visibility, although there are views from open spaces to the higher ground in the adjacent *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). The occasional long views, especially to the pronounced hills of *Open Rolling Uplands* (11) and the Knock of Braemoray, a landmark hill, at the southern end of the valley, are unexpected and revelatory. Views within this landscape type are partly limited and are often intermittent due to the enclosure created primarily by woodland, but also containment created by landform along the spine of the river valleys. Views along the rivers; from bridges and access routes; to and from the historic buildings; and from the A940, including the arrival into Moray, are all important.	The woodland often screens parts of this landscape, so that views from the A940, for example, are intermittent. However, the height of this typology means that it is likely to appear above many of these smaller features, or encroach upon the setting of key visual features and may be relatively widely and consistently visible.	***High-Medium***	The woodland often screens parts of this landscape, so that views from the A940, for example, are intermittent. However, the height of this typology means that it is likely to appear above many of these smaller features, or encroach upon the setting of key visual features and may be relatively widely and consistently visible.	***High-Medium***
Cumulative effects	A small single turbine is located at Logie. The operational wind farm of Berry Burn is partially visible (at some distance) from some elevated open areas of this character type. The consented Hill of Glaschyle wind farm will also be visible from similar open areas but seen at much closer distances.	Cumulative effects would principally arise on views from open farmland and on views from the A940 which forms an important scenic approach to Moray. The limited extent of this character type and presence of operational and consented developments seen on containing skylines are key constraints to the large turbines of this typology.	***High***	Cumulative effects would principally arise on views from open farmland and on views from the A940 which forms an important scenic approach to Moray. The presence of operational and consented wind farm developments, seen on containing skylines, are key constraints to the larger turbines of this typology.	***High***

Character Type 6: Narrow Wooded Valley – Sensitivity assessment for small-medium and small typologies

Topic	Summary description	Assessment of small-medium typology (35m-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Assessment of small typology (20m-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	These narrow deeply incised valleys are relatively self-contained. The *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills* (5b) forms the immediate skyline either side of these valleys while the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and *Open Rolling Uplands* (11) also abut the south-eastern corner of this landscape. This LCT, especially to the south, is overlooked from high points, including the Knock of Braemoray and is inter-visible with the low western hills of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). The wooded character of this landscape merges with the adjacent *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Low Hills* (5b), and the valley itself extends into neighbouring Nairn. This landscape forms a key 'gateway' to Moray from the south experienced from the A940 which extends over the dramatic open expanse of the Dava Moor before descending into the richly wooded valleys of the Dorback Burn and Findhorn.	This landscape character type is relatively self-contained, with views into this type from neighbouring LCTs limited by extensive woodland. While the landscape type is relatively small in extent, this typology could be located in the interior without impacting visually on adjacent landscape types, however the approach and sense of arrival to Moray remains a key contextual sensitivity.	***High-medium***	This landscape character type is relatively self-contained, with views into this type from neighbouring LCTs limited by the woodland. While the landscape type is relatively small in extent, this typology could be located in the interior without impacting visually on adjacent landscape types. There are some opportunities to site this small typology to minimise impact on views from the A940.	***Medium***
Scale and openness	The scale of the landform becomes progressively smaller as the undulations become more complex and the valley becomes narrower and	This size of turbine would impact on the small scale of much of this character type. In particular, this typology would	***High***	This size of turbine might impact on the small scale of some of the more intimately scaled areas of this character type.	***High-medium***

	more enclosed, closer to the rivers. The medium to small scale of the topography is reinforced by the low relief, with landform generally undulating between 100m and 150m in elevation, although it is lower to the north. Woodland creates considerable containment reducing the scale of the experience of this landscape and open areas of farmland within woodland are small. Trees and buildings provide consistent reference points against which size of turbines can be judged.	dominate the low relief, the small scale landforms and the open spaces within this landscape. The consistent presence of small features – including trees and buildings – would make it difficult to accommodate this size of typology without it appearing much larger than these features.		There is likely to be most scope to accommodate turbines of this type in the larger open spaces with the smallest size of turbines having the least potential impact.	
Landform	Landform is particularly complex at the conjunction of the rivers and tributaries with steep slopes and incised rocky gorges. Valley sides are undulating but, in places interlocking and complex, with occasional more gently sloping fields on the shoulders of the valley.	The more irregular and smaller scale landforms and the steep sided river valleys and their immediate setting are sensitive to this typology. More level and gentle slopes on upper valley sides may offer limited scope for siting this typology.	***High-Medium***	The more irregular and smaller scale landforms and the steep sided river valleys and their immediate setting are sensitive to this typology. Gently graded slopes and terraces on upper valley sides may offer scope for siting small turbines so that they do not detract from more complex landform features.	***Medium***
Landscape pattern	This landscape is strongly characterised by the variety of woodland, which ranges from extensive pine forest of different ages, to riparian woodland and policies. The woodland alternates with cultivated and grazed fields, some of which are relatively small pockets and some of which are larger more extensive areas of open fields. These open spaces are frequently	The diversity of the pattern of vegetation and the importance of the open spaces within the woodland limits opportunities for this typology, which could dominate the sense of openness within the spaces. The integrity of the policy woodland, including individual or small group landmark trees and the setting of the dramatic gorges and their wooded surroundings is additionally sensitive.	***High-medium***	The integrity of the policy woodland, and the setting of the dramatic gorges and their wooded surroundings is sensitive. The integrity of the policy woodland, including individual or small group landmark trees and the setting of the dramatic gorges and their wooded surroundings is additionally sensitive. More open and simple land cover may provide	***High-medium***

	irregular in shape, increasing the sense of interlock. The rivers are a particular feature, forming sinuous and well-defined gorges with steep sides clothed with broadleaved woodland. Feature trees are associated with some of the policy woods and designed landscapes.	More open and simple land cover may provide some scope for this typology.		some scope for this typology.	
Built environment	This landscape is not extensively settled, with farms and houses generally located at the edge of the open spaces overlooking the fields. Historic houses – such as Logie and Relugas are strongly associated with the river valleys, often located to overlook dramatic stretches of gorge. There are additional buildings and built features associated with these estates, including the bridge at Relugas. The main A940 extends through the eastern side of this character type, in places overlooking the steep sided river valley. Some of the public and private roads are narrow and winding.	The small size of many of the houses and farms are a constraint as this typology is likely to dominate the small size of the built features. Historic buildings and their settings are an additional sensitivity. This landscape type is however not extensively settled and there may be opportunities to site this size of typology without impacting on the immediate setting of settlements.	***Medium***	This landscape type is not densely settled, therefore there are likely to be opportunities to site this size of typology without impacting on the setting of smaller buildings. The height of this typology is likely to relate to larger farm buildings. Historic buildings and their settings remain an additional sensitivity even for turbines of this height.	***Medium-low***
Perceptual qualities	The more extensive woodland creates a sense of seclusion in this landscape because of the degree of enclosure. This is reinforced by the sparse network of public roads, with opportunities to explore the forests largely limited to non-vehicular access. The most striking features are the steep-sided river valleys, which are dramatic and naturalistic in character.	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape, and the sense of naturalness and drama associated with the river gorges. The sequential pattern of spaces is a quality of this landscape and this typology could dominate smaller spaces and reduce the contrast between the open spaces and the forested areas.	***High***	This typology could affect the sense of seclusion in this landscape, and the sense of naturalness and drama associated with the river gorges. The sequential pattern of spaces is a quality of this landscape and this typology could reduce the contrast between small open spaces and the forested areas. These smaller	***High-medium***

	Travelling through the sequence of open spaces is a key experience of this character.			turbines would be likely to have less impact on these qualities if sited on more extensive areas of open farmed and settled land set well away from the valleys	
Visual amenity	The woodland limits wide visibility, although there are views from open spaces to the higher ground in the adjacent *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). The occasional long views, especially to the pronounced hills of *Open Rolling Uplands* (11) and the Knock of Braemoray, a landmark hill, at the southern end of the valley, are unexpected and revelatory. Views within this landscape type are partly limited and are often intermittent due to the enclosure created primarily by woodland, but also containment created by landform along the spine of the river valleys. Views along the rivers; from bridges and access routes; to and from the historic buildings; and from the A940, including the arrival into Moray, are all important.	Views of this height of turbine are likely to be intermittent from the A940 and other roads and reduced by the screening effects of landform and trees, although the sensitivity assessment recognises that trees will be felled, opening up new views for a period. From more open areas, the height of this typology means that it is likely to appear above many of the smaller features, or encroach upon the setting of key visual features and may be relatively widely visible. Key visual sensitivities, such as the settings of the gorges and the historic buildings, remain sensitive to even this typology.	***High-medium***	Views of this height of turbine are likely to be intermittent from the A940 and other roads and reduced by the screening effects of landform and trees, although the sensitivity assessment recognises that trees will be felled, opening up new views for a period. From more open areas, turbines of this size would still be likely to appear above woodland. Key visual sensitivities, such as the settings of the gorges and historic buildings and associated designed landscapes, remain sensitive to even this typology although there may be some limited scope to set smaller turbines well away from these features so as to minimise visual impact.	***Medium***
Cumulative effects	A single small turbine is located at Logie. The operational wind farm of Berry Burn is partially visible (at some distance) from some elevated open areas within this character type. The consented Hill of Glaschyle wind farm will also be visible from similar areas but seen at much closer distances.	Cumulative effects would principally arise on views from open farmland and on views from the A940 which forms an important scenic approach to Moray. Turbines of this size may be able to be sited to minimise cumulative effects although the limited extent of this character type	***High-medium***	There would be scope to site the small turbines of this typology so as to limit cumulative effects although given the limited extent of this character type and presence of operational and consented wind energy developments, careful monitoring of the cumulative	***Medium***

		and presence of operational and consented developments seen on containing skylines are key constraints to multiple developments		situation is necessary.	

Landscape character type 7: Broad Farmed Valley – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic	Summary description	Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type is visually contained by adjacent uplands, limiting its influence on the wider landscape. However, where these uplands form distinctive high hills with steep slopes, this can create highly scenic landscapes in their juxtaposition and contrast with the richly patterned settled landscapes of this valley. This notably occurs where the upper Spey is back-dropped by Ben Aigan, Ben Rinnes and Paul's Hill which all form key 'landmark' features.	Although the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) has relatively limited influence on surrounding landscapes, turbines of this size sited within this character type could detract from the setting of adjacent landmark hills, would be visible from surrounding higher hills and could diminish the visual composition in areas where a rich scenic juxtaposition occurs between these valleys and the uplands. The relatively small extent of some valleys is an additional sensitivity for this typology as turbines of this size could have a greater impact on adjacent upland character types, for example the steep scarp slopes of the *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) seen from Glen Rinnes.	***Medium***	Although the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) has relatively limited influence on surrounding landscapes, turbines of this size sited within this character type could detract from the setting of adjacent landmark hills, would be visible from surrounding higher hills and could diminish the visual composition in areas where a rich scenic juxtaposition occurs between these valleys and the uplands. The relatively small extent of some valleys is an additional sensitivity for this typology as turbines of this size could have a greater impact on adjacent upland character types, for example the steep scarp slopes of the *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) seen from Glen Rinnes.	***Medium***
Scale and openness	The Spey valley is strongly contained in places by steep and predominantly wooded side slopes although it opens out to form a broad floodplain north of Craigellachie. It is also broader and more open south-west of Aberlour where undulating side slopes merge more gradually with adjacent uplands. The Spey Valley is well-wooded and settled with a regular pattern of farms and other buildings	This typology would dominate the small to medium scale of much of this landscape including the more open flat floodplain of the Spey. The even dispersal of buildings and other small features across this well-settled landscape increases sensitivity to turbines of this size.	***High***	This typology would dominate the small to medium scale of much of this landscape including the more open flat floodplain of the Spey. Although turbines of this size could relate to broader sections of the Spey Valley on more open upper valley sides at the transition with adjacent upland character types, the even dispersal of buildings and other small features across this well-settled landscape increases sensitivity.	***High***

	contributing to its small scale. Scale increases on broader upper slopes at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) where settlement is less dense and the land cover pattern more extensive.				
Landform	The Spey Valley has a flat open floodplain to the north which the river meanders across. The floodplain narrows in the upper reaches of the Spey and is occasionally contained by steep scarp slopes. Rolling lower slopes step up to a broader more gently undulating elevated terrace in the Archiestown area and a number of tributaries cut narrow valleys in the upper Spey area. Small, rounded hills occur on the edge of the Spey Valley and fringing the broader upland LCTs (9), (10) and (11).	This typology would detract from more distinctive landform features including more deeply incised sections of the Spey, steep scarp slopes and more complex rolling landform commonly found within the valley floor and lower slopes of the upper Spey. Turbines of this size would also detract from the strong contrast that occurs between the open flat floodplain and steep containing side slopes in the lower reaches of the Spey. More gently undulating upper slopes at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) would be less sensitive.	***High-medium***	This typology would detract from more distinctive landform features including more deeply incised sections of the Spey, steep scarp slopes and more complex rolling landform commonly found within the valley floor and lower slopes of the upper Spey. Turbines of this size would also detract from the strong contrast that occurs between the open flat floodplain and steep containing side slopes in the lower reaches of the Spey. More gently undulating upper slopes at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) would be less sensitive.	***High-medium***
Landscape pattern	This landscape is characterised by enclosed farmland (with smaller fields on lower slopes), broadleaved and coniferous woodlands including distinctive mixed policy plantings in places. The often diverse vegetation pattern reinforces the small scale of this landscape.	This typology would detract from areas with a more diverse land cover pattern although simpler and more extensive pastures on upper slopes would be less sensitive.	***Medium***	This typology would detract from areas with a more diverse land cover pattern although simpler and more extensive pastures on upper slopes would be less sensitive.	***Medium***
Built environment	A well-settled landscape with a regular pattern of small towns sited next to the Spey including Charlestown of Aberlour, Craigellachie and Rothes and with	Turbines of this size could affect the setting of settlements and other historic built features, including characteristic distillery buildings which reflect the region's identity.	***High***	Turbines of this size could affect the setting of settlements and other historic built features although sensitivity would be reduced to turbines towards the lower height	***High-medium***

	occasional smaller settlements on upper hill slopes and side valleys. Historic houses, castles, bridges and traditional distillery buildings often form repeated landmark features within these valleys. Some more recent distillery buildings have a more industrial appearance.			band of this typology if sited on less well-settled upper valley sides and away from key views to settlements and landmark built features.	
Perceptual qualities	Although there is no pronounced sense of wildness in these well-settled and farmed valleys, a distinct sense of place may be associated with the production of whisky.	Large turbines could affect the sense of place associated with these valleys and their whisky heritage.	***Medium***	Large turbines could affect the strong sense of place associated with the Spey Valley and its whisky heritage.	***Medium***
Visual amenity	This is a well-settled landscape with a network of roads located within the valley floor and also on the broader valley sides of the upper Spey. This valley is well wooded and this can often screen views from lower roads such as the A95 although views along the valley floors from the A941 and B9015 are more open. The Spey Valley is particularly attractive for tourists and people engaged in recreational activities including fishing, cycling and walking. The Speyside Way long distance footpath is aligned through this character type. The immediate skyline formed by upper valley sides and the outer edge hills and slopes of the adjacent upland landscapes are prominent from the valley floor but more expansive views are possible from more elevated settlements,	Turbines of this size would be highly visible in views across and along these valleys from roads and settlement. They would also be seen in relative proximity from more elevated views from popular hill walking routes and also from sections of the Speyside Way. The well-settled nature of this valley and its popularity for tourism and recreation increases visual sensitivity.	***High***	Turbines of this size would be highly visible in views across and along these valleys from roads and settlement. They would also be seen in relative proximity from more elevated views from popular hill walking routes and also from sections of the Speyside Way. The well-settled nature of this valley and its popularity for tourism and recreation increases visual sensitivity.	***High***

	walking routes and roads.				
Cumulative effects	The operational wind farms of Paul's Hill, Berry Burn, Rothes I and II and Hill of Towie are visible from parts of this landscape. Operational large turbines are clearly associated with sparsely populated and relatively simple upland character types in views from this landscape.	Cumulative landscape effects would occur if turbines of this size were introduced to this character type as this would weaken the clear association of large typologies with more simple and expansive upland landscapes. Inter-visibility between operational/consented developments largely seen on upland skylines and large turbines sited in these valleys would also be likely to result in significant cumulative visual effects.	***High***	Cumulative landscape effects would occur if turbines of this size were introduced to this character type as this would weaken the clear association of large typologies with more simple and expansive upland landscapes. Inter-visibility between operational/consented developments largely seen on upland skylines and large turbines sited in these valleys would also be likely to result in significant cumulative visual effects.	***High***

Landscape character type 7: Broad Farmed Valley – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies

Topic	Summary description	Small-medium scale typology assessment (35-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Small scale typology assessment (20-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type is visually contained by adjacent uplands, limiting its influence on the wider landscape. However, where these uplands form distinctive high hills with steep slopes, this can create highly scenic landscapes in their juxtaposition and contrast with the richly patterned settled landscapes of this valley. This notably occurs where the upper Spey is back-dropped by Ben Aigan, Ben Rinnes and Paul's Hill which all form key 'landmark' features.	Turbines of this size could detract from the setting of adjacent landmark hills and visual composition in areas where a rich scenic juxtaposition occurs with the more dramatic steep-sided hills of the *Open Rolling Uplands* (11). This typology would have less of an effect in terms of landscape context where the valley is broader and backed by more gently undulating upland areas.	***Medium***	This typology could be more easily accommodated to minimise effects on more dramatic scenery and on landmark hills.	***Medium-low***
Scale and openness	The Spey Valley is strongly contained in places by steep and predominantly wooded side slopes although it opens out to form a broad floodplain north of Craigellachie. It is also broader and more open south-west of Aberlour where undulating side slopes merge more gradually with adjacent uplands. The Spey Valley is well-wooded and settled with a regular pattern of farms and other buildings contributing to its small scale. Scale increases on broader upper slopes at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) where settlement is less dense and the land cover pattern more extensive.	This typology would appear very large in relation to the small scale of lower slopes and narrower valley floors and the small buildings which are evenly dispersed across much of this landscape. The broader sections of the Spey Valley and less densely settled upper slopes at the transition with the adjacent upland areas would be less sensitive to turbines of this size however.	***High-med***	The small scale of lower slopes and narrower and incised valley floors would be sensitive even to turbines of this size. There are greater opportunities to site the smaller turbines of this typology within this character type provided they were set back from small buildings on valley sides and within more extensive areas of farmland.	***Medium***

Landform	The Spey Valley has a flat open floodplain to the north which the river meanders across. The floodplain narrows in the upper reaches of the Spey and is occasionally contained by steep scarp slopes. Rolling lower slopes step up to a broader more gently undulating elevated terrace in the Archiestown area and a number of tributaries cut narrow valleys in the upper Spey area. Small, rounded hills occur on the edge of the Spey Valley and fringing the broader upland LCTs (9), (10) and (11).	Broader, more gently undulating valley sides at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) would be less sensitive to this typology. More deeply incised sections of the Spey, steep scarp slopes and the complex rolling landform commonly found within the valley floor and lower slopes of the upper Spey remain sensitive however.	***Medium***	Broader, more gently undulating valley sides at the transition with the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) would be less sensitive to this typology. More deeply incised sections of the Spey, steep scarp slopes and the complex rolling landform commonly found within the valley floor and lower slopes of the upper Spey remain sensitive however. Although this size of turbine could relate to the simple flat openness of floodplain areas, they would detract from the scenic contrast these areas provide with often steep-sided well wooded or rolling farmed valley sides.	***Medium***
Landscape pattern	This landscape is characterised by enclosed farmland (with smaller fields on lower slopes), broadleaved and coniferous woodlands including distinctive mixed policy plantings in places. The often diverse vegetation pattern reinforces the small scale of this landscape.	This typology would detract from areas with a more diverse land cover pattern although simpler and more extensive pastures on upper slopes would be less sensitive.	***Medium***	Smaller turbines of this typology could fit within more complex areas of land cover without detracting from them.	***Medium-low***
Built environment	A well-settled landscape with a regular pattern of small towns sited next to the Spey including Charlestown of Aberlour, Craigellachie and Rothes and with occasional smaller settlements on upper hill slopes and side valleys. Historic houses, castles, bridges and traditional distillery buildings often form repeated landmark features within these valleys. Some more recent distillery	There are some limited opportunities to site turbines of this size on less well-settled upper valley sides at the transition with adjacent upland areas and away from key views to settlements and landmark built features.	***High-med***	There are increased opportunities to site turbines of this size on less well-settled upper valley sides and away from key views to settlements and landmark built features.	***Medium***

	buildings have a more industrial appearance.				
Perceptual qualities	Although there is no pronounced sense of wildness in these well-settled and farmed valleys, a distinct sense of place may be associated with the production of whisky.	This typology is less likely to affect the 'sense of place' that may be experienced by some people particularly if turbines were carefully sited to minimise visibility from key tourist routes and destinations.	***Medium-low***	This typology is less likely to affect the sense of place that may be experienced by some people.	***Low***
Visual amenity	This is a well-settled landscape with a network of roads located within the valley floor and also on the broader valley sides of the upper Spey. This valley is well wooded and this can often screen views from lower roads such as the A95 although views along the valley floors from the A941 and B9015 are more open. The Spey Valley is particularly attractive for tourists and people engaged in recreational activities including fishing, cycling and walking. The Speyside Way long distance footpath is aligned through this character type. The immediate skyline formed by upper valley sides and the outer edge hills and slopes of the adjacent upland landscapes are prominent from the valley floor but more expansive views are possible from more elevated settlements, walking routes and roads.	Turbines of this size would be significantly larger than other landscape features and could be prominent if sited within the more densely settled and traversed lower valley areas. They would be likely to be less intrusive if sited on upper valley sides at the transition with adjacent uplands where rising ground could reduce visual prominence in key views from key roads and settlement.	***High-med***	This size of turbine would be generally less prominent in views from roads and settlement provided they were well-sited. They would be likely to be less visible if sited on valley sides where rising ground could reduce visual prominence in key views from key roads and settlement.	***Medium***
Cumulative effects	The operational wind farms of Paul's Hill, Rothes I and II and Hill of Towie are visible from parts of the Spey Valley. Operational large turbines are clearly associated with	This typology could have cumulative impacts with larger turbines sited in adjacent upland character types if sited close-by. They could also affect the setting	***High-medium***	There are increased opportunities to accommodate turbines of this size to minimise cumulative effects with larger turbines sited in adjacent upland character types. This typology	***Medium***

	sparsely populated and relatively simple upland character types in views from this landscape.	and design integrity of operational wind farms by introducing different heights/designs and a new pattern of development, for example, appearing to ‘spill’ down lower hill slopes below fairly contained groupings of wind farms sited in adjacent upland areas. Although there is scope to site this typology to avoid impacts on design and integrity, turbines towards the upper height band of this typology would still appear very large from settlements and roads within the Spey valley and could affect the present clear rationale of large turbines being associated with upland areas.		would also have a clearer size differential with operational/consented turbines and this would increase scope for multiple turbines to be accommodated more successfully.	

Landscape character type 8: Upland Farmland – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic	Summary description	Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type is contained by the higher ground of the adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) character type and therefore has limited inter-visibility and influence on wider landscape character, including neighbouring Aberdeenshire. Although LCT 8a is generally sparsely settled and densely forested, thus limiting views to the *Upland Farmland* (8), it includes the landmark hills of the Bin of Cullen and Meikle Balloch which are popular for recreation.	This landscape has little influence on surrounding landscapes. Turbines of this size would however appear to diminish the vertical scale and detract from more distinctive defined landmark hills within the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) if sited close-by.	***Medium***	This landscape has little influence on surrounding landscapes. Turbines of this size would however appear to diminish the vertical scale and detract from more distinctive defined landmark hills within the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) if sited close-by.	***Medium***
Scale and openness	The gently undulating shallow valleys of this landscape are expansive and open although the presence of a regular pattern of small farms and houses provide ready scale references and reduce the overall scale of the landscape. Some narrower and more contained valleys occur in places and a number of small well-defined hills are occasional features.	Although this typology could relate to the broad scale of the generally gently undulating landform, it would dominate small houses and farms which are evenly dispersed across this landscape. The more contained valley floors, including the valley of the River Isla and the relatively small hills which occasionally occur, would additionally be sensitive to this typology.	***High-medium***	Although this typology could relate to the broad scale of the generally gently undulating landform, it would dominate small houses and farms which are evenly dispersed across this landscape. The more contained valley floors, including the valley of the River Isla and the relatively small hills which occasionally occur, would additionally be sensitive to this typology.	***High-medium***
Landform	This gently undulating landscape encompasses the flat-bottomed valley of the River Isla, the broad slopes which provide its wider setting and the shallow valleys of visually insignificant tributaries running from the north which are divided by long, low ridges with	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of this character type although they would significantly detract from Knock Hill and from the smaller, yet distinctive, hills and ridges if sited on or close-by them.	***Medium***	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of this character type although they would significantly detract from Knock Hill and from the smaller, yet distinctive, hills and ridges if sited on or close-by them.	***Medium***

	gentle and smooth slopes. Occasional well-defined small hills and ridges occur - the most distinctive of these being the landmark hill of Knock Hill on the border with Aberdeenshire. The small hills of Mulderie, Cairds Wood, Gallow Hill and the ridge of Sillyean Wood also stand out within the generally gently undulating landform of this landscape.				
Landscape pattern	This landscape has a simple land cover of large fields of pasture and some arable land. Small geometric coniferous shelterbelts and woods pattern the farmland although it generally has an open and simple pattern.	The simple land cover pattern of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology.	***Medium-low***	The simple land cover pattern of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology.	***Medium-low***
Built environment	Keith, sited either side of the River Isla, is the only sizeable settlement within this landscape although there is an even dispersal of farms across this character type. There are few obvious archaeological or historic features which make a strong contribution to landscape character. Existing tall wind turbines are situated in the north-eastern part of this landscape character type and high voltage transmission lines and large substation are highly visible features in the area around Keith.	Turbines of this size would exacerbate the discordant clutter of transmission lines in the area around Keith, further diminishing its landscape setting. The setting of smaller settlements and individual buildings could also be affected, particularly by multiple turbines and this is considered further under 'cumulative effects'.	***Medium***	Turbines of this size would exacerbate the discordant clutter of transmission lines in the area around Keith, further diminishing its landscape setting. The setting of smaller settlements and individual buildings could also be affected, particularly by multiple turbines and this is considered further under 'cumulative effects'.	***Medium***
Perceptual qualities	There is no sense of wildness or a strong sense of place associated with this landscape.	There would be no significant effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***	There would be no significant effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***

Visual amenity	This is a very open landscape with long views possible from roads and elevated settlement across much of the character type. The distinctive summits of Knock Hill, Meikle Balloch, Bin of Cullen and Lurg Hill (the majority of these located in the adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a)) and the distant Ben Rinnes form key foci in these views. The shallow valleys north of the River Isla are more contained, limiting views from the B9018 and B9017 to some extent.	Turbines of this height would be highly visible within this open landscape and would be seen in close proximity to settlement and roads increasing potential impact. Turbines of this size could interrupt key views to focal hills within this character type and the landmark hills within the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a).	***High***	Turbines of this height would be highly visible within this open landscape and would be seen in close proximity to settlement and roads increasing potential impact. Turbines of this size could interrupt key views to focal hills within this character type and the landmark hills within the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a).	***High***
Cumulative effects	Four operational large turbines (70-92m high) and the under construction Edintore wind farm located in this character type and the consented Aultmore wind farm sited in the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) are/will be widely visible across this open landscape. The Hill of Towie wind farm located in the *Rolling Forested Hills* (9) is also prominent on the skyline in views from this landscape.	Existing and consented developments of larger turbines sited in this landscape have incurred significant landscape and visual impacts and conflict with the predominant pattern within Moray of larger typologies being associated with more expansive and simple upland landscapes. Operational and consented wind farms located in adjacent character types also strongly influence character and views. Additional turbines of this size sited in the *Upland Farmland* (8) would exacerbate these impacts.	***High***	Existing and consented developments of larger turbines sited in this landscape have incurred significant landscape and visual impacts and conflict with the predominant pattern within Moray of larger typologies being associated with more expansive and simple upland landscapes. Operational and consented wind farms located in adjacent character types also strongly influence character and views. Additional turbines of this size sited in the *Upland Farmland* (8) would exacerbate these impacts.	***High***

Landscape character type 8: Upland Farmland – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies

Topic	Summary description	Small-Medium scale typology assessment (35-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Small scale typology assessment (20-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This character type is contained by the higher ground of the adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) character type and therefore has limited inter-visibility and influence on wider landscape character, including neighbouring Aberdeenshire. Although LCT 8a is generally sparsely settled and densely forested, thus limiting views to the *Upland Farmland* (8), it includes the landmark hills of the Bin of Cullen and Meikle Balloch which are popular for recreation.	Turbines of this size could still detract from the landmark hills within the adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) if sited nearby although there are increased opportunities for this typology to avoid such impacts.	***Medium-low***	Turbines of this size would be likely to have little effect on the landmark hills within this character type and the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) providing they were sited well away from them.	***Low***
Scale and openness	The gently undulating shallow valleys of this landscape are expansive and open although the presence of a regular pattern of small farms and houses provide ready scale references and reduce the overall scale of the landscape. Some narrower and more contained valleys occur in places and a number of small well-defined hills are occasional features.	This typology would still appear very large in relation to small houses and farms in this landscape. The even dispersal of buildings across this well-settled landscape increases sensitivity although more sparsely settled areas at the transition with the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) provide some opportunities to site turbines of this size.	***Medium***	This size of turbine would have less of an impact on the scale of small farms and houses and there are consequently increased opportunities to accommodate this typology.	***Medium-low***
Landform	This gently undulating landscape encompasses the flat-bottomed valley of the River Isla, the broad slopes which provide its wider setting and the shallow valleys of visually insignificant tributaries running from the north which are	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of this character type although more contained valley floors and small well-defined hills remain sensitive.	***Medium-low***	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of this character type.	***Low***

	divided by long, low ridges with gentle and smooth slopes. Occasional well-defined small hills and ridges occur - the most distinctive of these being the landmark hill of Knock Hill on the border with Aberdeenshire. The small hills of Mulderie, Cairds Wood, Gallow Hill and the ridge of Sillyean Wood also stand out within the generally gently undulating landform of this landscape.				
Landscape pattern	This landscape has a simple land cover of large fields of pasture and some arable land. Small geometric coniferous shelterbelts and woods pattern the farmland although it generally has an open and simple pattern.	The simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology.	***Medium-low***	The simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology. This size of turbine would be less likely to detract from areas with a more distinct field enclosure or woodland pattern.	***Low***
Built environment	Keith, sited either side of the River Isla, is the only sizeable settlement within this landscape although there is an even dispersal of farms across this character type. There are few obvious archaeological or historic features which make a strong contribution to landscape character. Existing tall turbines are situated in the north-eastern part of this landscape character type and high voltage transmission lines and large substation are highly visible features in the area around Keith.	Turbines of this size would exacerbate the discordant clutter of transmission lines in the area around Keith, further diminishing its landscape setting. The setting of smaller settlements and individual buildings could also be affected, particularly by multiple turbines and this is considered further under ‘cumulative effects’.	***Medium***	Turbines of this size are less likely to affect the setting of individual settlements and farms. Multiple turbines of this typology, and particularly turbines towards the lower height of 20m, would have less of an impact on the setting of settlement.	***Medium-low***
Perceptual qualities	There is no sense of wildness or a strong sense of place associated with this landscape.	There would be no effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***	There would be no effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***

Visual amenity	This is a very open landscape with long views possible from roads and elevated settlement across much of the character type. The distinctive summits of Knock Hill, Meikle Balloch, Bin of Cullen and Lurg Hill (the majority of these located in the adjacent *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a)) and the distant Ben Rinnes form key foci in these views. The shallow valleys north of the River Isla are more contained, limiting views from the B9018 and B9017 to some extent.	Turbines of this height would still be prominent within this landscape. Multiple turbines of this size associated with a number of land holdings could have significant cumulative effects on views as this landscape is open and highly visible from settlement and major roads. Turbines of this size could interrupt key views to focal hills within LCT 8a.	***High-medium***	Turbines of this height would be less prominent within this open landscape and would be unlikely to impact on key views to landmark hills.	***Medium***
Cumulative effects	Four operational large turbines (70-92m high) located in this character type, the under construction Edintore wind farm and the consented Aultmore wind farm sited in the *Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland* (8a) are/will be widely visible across this open landscape. The Hill of Towie wind farm located in the *Rolling Forested Hills* (9) is also prominent on the skyline in views from this landscape.	This typology could have cumulative impacts with larger turbines sited in adjacent upland character types if sited close-by. Turbines towards the upper height band of this typology would still appear very large from settlements and roads within this landscape and could exacerbate cumulative effects in some parts of this landscape.	***High-medium***	There are increased opportunities to accommodate turbines of this size to minimise cumulative effects with larger turbines sited in adjacent upland character types. This typology would have a clearer size differential with operational/consented turbines and this would increase scope for multiple turbines to be accommodated more successfully.	***Medium-low***

Landscape character type 8a: Broad Forested Hills within Upland Farmland – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic and summary description	Very Large scale typology assessment (>130m)	Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)	Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)
Landscape context The elevation of this character sub-type increases its visual influence on adjacent landscapes. This character type includes narrower ridges as well as broader plateaux although in general these upland areas are not extensive. These upland areas are important in forming a simple backdrop to more complex smaller scale settled landscapes including the *Upland Farmland* (8), *Broad Farmed Valley* (7), *Rolling Coastal Farmland* (4a) and the *Coastal Farmland* (4). In general however the simpler plateau and broader ridges make a lesser contribution to wider scenic character than the particularly distinctive 'landmark' hills of Bin of Cullen and Meikle Balloch which also provide an important backdrop to the Moray Coast and neighbouring Aberdeenshire. The densely wooded Whiteash Hill is additionally important in providing the setting to Gordon Castle designed landscape and to Fochabers.	Turbines of this size would be likely to have a significant impact on adjacent smaller scale, settled landscapes and the coast both in Moray and neighbouring Aberdeenshire. Turbines of this size sited on or nearby the landmark hills or in the Whiteash Hill area would have a significant effect on adjoining landscapes. ***High sensitivity***	Turbines of this size would be likely to have a greater impact on adjacent landscapes particularly where the upland area is less extensive or if sited on or nearby the landmark hills of Bin of Cullen and Meikle Balloch or in the Whiteash Hill area. ***High-medium sensitivity***	This typology would be likely to have a reduced impact on adjacent landscapes particularly if sited within the core of more extensive upland plateaux. Turbines sited on or nearby the landmark hills or the Whiteash Hill area would have a significant effect on adjoining landscapes. ***Medium sensitivity***
Scale and openness The more expansive plateaux and broad ridges have a large scale although scale is reduced where	While turbines around 130m could potentially relate to the scale of broader plateaux areas, turbines significantly over this height would	This typology could relate to the scale of more extensive plateaux but would dominate the narrow, low ridges, occasional settled areas and	There is increased scope to site turbines of this size to reduce effects on scale although more defined hills remain sensitive.

ridges are narrower and where hills have more defined summits and are generally smaller in extent.	dominate the limited extent and relief of narrow, low ridges, occasional settled areas and the vertical scale of the landmark hills. ***High sensitivity***	the more defined summits of the landmark hills. ***High-medium sensitivity***	***Medium sensitivity***
Landform This landscape generally features smooth gently graded slopes and subtly rounded indistinct hill tops within broader plateaux. However, more distinctive hills with steeper slopes and defined summits also occur and include Lurg Hill and the landmark conical hills of Bin of Cullen and Meikle Balloch.	While this typology could relate to the generally simple landform of much of this character type, turbines of this size would be likely to significantly detract from the more defined hills which form landmark features within this landscape. ***High-medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of much of this character type although turbines of this size would detract from more defined hills which form landmark features within this landscape if sited on or close-by them. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of much of this character type although turbines of this size would detract from more defined hills which form landmark features within this landscape if sited on or close-by them. ***Medium sensitivity***
Landscape pattern This landscape has a simple land cover of extensive coniferous forestry with some small areas of moorland on the summits of more defined hills. Semi-improved fields of pasture occur on lower slopes at the transition with the *Upland Farmland* (8).	The generally simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology. ***Low sensitivity***	The generally simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology. ***Low sensitivity***	The generally simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology. ***Low sensitivity***
Built environment A sparsely settled landscape with few prominent archaeological and historic built features evident.	The sparsely settled nature of this landscape reduces sensitivity in relation to the setting of settlements and other built features. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The sparsely settled nature of this landscape reduces sensitivity in relation to the setting of settlements and other built features. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The sparsely settled nature of this landscape reduces sensitivity in relation to the setting of settlements and other built features. ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Perceptual qualities Although parts of this landscape may feel secluded away from adjoining settled landscapes, the presence of extensive commercial forestry and wind farm development in some areas limits any sense of wildness.	There would be no significant effects on this sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	There would be no significant effects on this sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	There would be no significant effects on this sensitivity ***Low sensitivity.***

Visual amenity Views from within this landscape are restricted due to the extensive coniferous forest covering much of these upland areas but also because few roads and settlement are present. The exception to this is some of the hills likely to be popular with walkers, including Bin of Cullen and Meikle Balloch. This character type generally forms low even forested skylines seen from surrounding settled and farmed landscapes – the exception to this being the landmark hills.	Turbines would be highly intrusive if sited on more defined hills which are likely to be popular with walkers and also form key foci in views. This typology would be likely to be prominent in views from roads and settlement in surrounding character types including the *Coastal Farmland* (4), *Upland Farmland* (8) and *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13). ***High sensitivity***	Turbines would be highly intrusive if sited on more defined hills which are likely to be popular with walkers and also form key foci in views. This typology would be likely to be prominent in views from roads and settlement in surrounding character types including the *Coastal Farmland* (4), *Upland Farmland* (8) and *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13). ***High sensitivity***	Turbines sited in these upland areas would be particularly intrusive if sited on more defined hills which are likely to be popular with walkers and also form key foci in views. Turbines of this size would be likely to have less of a visual impact provided they were set well back within the core of more extensive forested plateaux. ***High-medium sensitivity***
Cumulative effects The consented Aultmore wind farm will occupy one of the broader plateau-like hills within this character area. The operational Hill of Towie wind farm is located in the nearby *Rolling Forested Hills* (9) and a number of large turbines and the under construction Edintore wind farm are also located in the adjacent *Upland Farmland* (8).	There are few undeveloped areas of this landscape character type remaining without major landscape and visual constraints (for example the setting of landmark hills and Fochabers). The extent of operational and consented wind farms visible on hills immediately surrounding the *Upland Farmland* (8) increases the likelihood of significant cumulative effects being associated with any additional developments in this landscape. The introduction of very large turbines (either as new or repowered schemes) to this landscape could additionally incur contrasts of scale, layout and blade rotation speed with smaller turbines sited in this LCT and the adjacent *Upland Farmland* (8). ***High sensitivity***	There are few undeveloped areas of this landscape character type remaining without major landscape and visual constraints (for example the setting of the landmark hills and Fochabers). The extent of operational and consented wind farm developments visible on hills immediately surrounding the *Upland Farmland* (8) increases the likelihood of significant cumulative effects being associated with additional developments in this landscape. Views from roads and settlement in nearby well-settled landscapes and from recreational routes on hills would be principally affected. ***High-medium sensitivity***	There are few undeveloped areas of this landscape character type remaining without major landscape and visual constraints (landmark hills, setting to Fochabers etc). The extent of operational and consented wind farm developments visible on hills immediately surrounding the *Upland Farmland* (8) increases the likelihood of significant cumulative effects being associated with additional developments in this landscape. Views from roads and settlement in nearby well-settled landscapes and from recreational routes on nearby hills would be principally affected. The smaller turbines of this typology could also appear discordant with larger consented and operational wind turbines if sited nearby ***High-medium sensitivity***

Landscape character type 9: Rolling Forested Hills – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic and summary description	Very Large scale typology assessment (>130m)	Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)	Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)
Landscape context The elevation of this character type increases its visual influence on adjacent landscapes. These hills are important in forming a simple backdrop to more complex smaller scale settled landscapes including the *Upland Farmland* (8) and *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) and *Narrow Farmed Valley* (13). This landscape includes the landmark hill of Ben Aigan which is prominent in views from the Spey Valley and also from the wider Moray coastal plain to the north.	Additional turbines of this size would have a greater impact on adjacent landscapes as the less sensitive interior upland area already accommodates wind farm development. Repowered schemes may reduce impact although the limited extent of these uplands increases sensitivity in relation to effects on adjacent landscapes. The landmark hill of Ben Aigan is a key sensitivity with turbines of this size likely to dominate if sited nearby. ***High sensitivity***	Turbines of this size would be likely to impact on adjacent landscapes particularly where the upland area is less extensive, if sited close to the outer edges of the hills or if sited on or nearby the landmark hill of Ben Aigan. ***High-medium sensitivity***	Turbines of this size (which are more likely to comprise single and small groups of turbines) would be likely to have a reduced impact on adjacent landscapes if sited within the core of more extensive upland plateaux (although much of this area is already occupied by wind farm development and cumulative effects would arise – see below). The outer edges of this character type and the landmark hill of Ben Aigan have an increased sensitivity. ***Medium sensitivity***
Scale and openness The more expansive rolling plateaux have a large scale although scale is reduced within narrow valleys and on lower hill slopes where farmland, buildings and smaller woodlands are present.	Turbines of this size as part of new and repowered proposals (and particularly turbines above 150m) would dominate the vertical scale and limited extent of these uplands (see Appendix E). They would also dominate settled and farmed upper slopes and valleys and the scale of the landmark hills. ***High sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the scale of more extensive plateaux (although much of these areas are already occupied by wind farm development). Turbines of this size would dominate settled and farmed upper slopes and valleys and the more defined summits of the landmark hills. ***High-medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the scale of more extensive plateaux (although much of these areas are already occupied by wind farm development). Turbines towards the lower height band of this typology could also relate to the reduced scale of sparsely settled upper hill slopes but would still dominate the more defined summits of the landmark hills. ***Medium sensitivity***
Landform A prominent group of rounded hills, aligned north east – south west, with relatively steep sides and conical or rounded summits, and separated by a network of long and	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of much of this character type although turbines of this size would detract from more defined hills which form landmark features within this	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of much of this character type although turbines of this size would detract from more defined hills which form landmark features within this	This typology could relate to the generally simple landform of much of this character type although turbines of this size would detract from more defined hills which form landmark features within this landscape if sited

connected valleys	landscape if sited on or close-by them. ***High-medium sensitivity***	landscape if sited on or close-by them. ***High-medium sensitivity***	on or close-by them. ***High-medium sensitivity***
Landscape pattern This landscape generally has a simple land cover of extensive coniferous forestry with areas of heather moorland on the summits of more defined hills. Semi-improved fields of pasture are interspersed with smaller woodlands on lower slopes at the transition with the settled valleys which cut into these hills.	The simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology although more patterned farmland and woodland on lower hill slopes has an increased sensitivity ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology although more patterned farmland and woodland on lower hill slopes has an increased sensitivity ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The simple land cover of this landscape reduces sensitivity to this typology although more patterned farmland and woodland on lower hill slopes has an increased sensitivity ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Built environment A sparsely settled upland landscape with occasional farms located on lower slopes and within valleys.	The sparsely settled nature of this landscape reduces sensitivity in relation to the setting of settlements and other built features located within this character type. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The sparsely settled nature of this landscape reduces sensitivity in relation to the setting of settlements and other built features located within this character type. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The sparsely settled nature of this landscape reduces sensitivity in relation to the setting of settlements and other built features within this character type. ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Perceptual qualities Although parts of this landscape may feel secluded away from adjoining settled landscapes, the presence of extensive commercial forestry and wind farm development in some areas limits any sense of wildness.	There would be no significant effects on this sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	There would be no significant effects on this sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	There would be no significant effects on this sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***
Visual amenity Views from within this landscape are restricted due to the coniferous forest covering much of these upland areas but also because few roads and settlement are present. The exception to this is some of the hills popular with walkers, including Ben Aigan. This character type	Turbines would be highly intrusive if sited on more defined hills which are popular with walkers and also form key foci in views from adjacent valleys. This typology would be likely to be prominent in views from roads and settlement in surrounding character types including the *Upland Farmland* (8), *Broad*	Turbines would be highly intrusive if sited on more defined hills which are popular with walkers and also form key foci in views. This typology would be likely to be prominent in views from roads and settlement in surrounding character types including the *Upland Farmland* (8), *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) and the	Turbines would be highly intrusive if sited on more defined hills which are popular with walkers and also form key foci in views. The presence of operational wind farm development within the more extensive and less visually sensitive upland plateau centred on the Hill of Towie, reduces scope to site additional turbines in this

generally forms low even forested skylines seen from surrounding settled and farmed landscapes – the exception to this being the landmark hills.	*Farmed Valley* (7) and the *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13). The presence of operational wind farm development within the more extensive and less visually sensitive upland plateau centred on the Hill of Towie, reduces scope to site additional turbines in this landscape without significant visual intrusion on adjacent settled valleys. Repowering of operational wind farm development may reduce visual intrusion although the limited extent of these hills and their proximity to more sensitive landscapes increases visual sensitivity to very large turbines, and particularly those >150m. ***High sensitivity***	*Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13). The presence of operational wind farm development within the more extensive and less visually sensitive upland plateau centred on the Hill of Towie, reduces scope to site additional turbines in this landscape without significant visual intrusion on adjacent settled valleys. ***High sensitivity***	landscape without significant visual intrusion on adjacent settled valleys. There may however be some limited scope to locate single and small groups of turbines in this height band to minimise visual intrusion. ***High-medium sensitivity***
Cumulative effects The Hill of Towie wind farm, which is located in this character type, is prominent in views from parts of the *Broad Valley Farmland* (7), the *Upland Farmland* (8) and the *Narrow Farmed Valley*s (13). The under-construction Edintore wind farm located in the *Upland Farmland* (8) will be closely inter-visible with the Hill of Towie wind farm, principally in views from hills such as Ben Aigan. A variety of small farm turbines are located on hill slopes to the SW of the A95 in the Maggieknockater area and around Mulben in the adjacent *Upland Farmland* (8).	Additional very large turbines could exacerbate the clutter which already occurs with smaller turbines sited on lower slopes and in the Mulben area of the *Upland Farmland* (8). It could also increase the extent of turbines visible on sensitive skylines resulting in significant cumulative effects from roads and settlement. Larger additional turbines >150m would also be likely to result in cumulative effects with smaller turbines within the operational Hill of Towie wind farm. Repowering of this wind farm would reduce cumulative effects to some degree. ***High to High-medium sensitivity***	Additional large turbines could exacerbate the clutter which already occurs with smaller turbines sited on valley sides and in the Mulben area of the *Upland Farmland* (8). It could also increase the extent of turbines visible on sensitive skylines resulting in significant cumulative effects from roads and settlement. ***High-medium sensitivity***	This typology would contrast with the size of turbines within the operational Hill of Towie wind farm and the nearby Edintore wind farm and could result in significant cumulative effects if closely inter-visible with these developments and also with smaller single and small groups of turbines located on lower hill slopes. There may be scope to locate single and small groups of this typology in less developed parts of this LCT to minimise cumulative effects. ***High-medium sensitivity***

Landscape character type 10: Upland Moorland and Forestry – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Summary description	Very Large scale typology assessment (>130m)	Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)	Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)
Landscape context This landscape forms a relatively low backdrop of extensively forested and open hills to the more richly patterned and smaller scale hill fringes of LCTs 5, 5a, 5b and 6 to the north and west and to LCT 7 to the south. These uplands form a distant long low ridge seen from the well-settled *Coastal Farmlands* (4) to the north. Visibility into the interior of these uplands is limited from these surrounding landscapes. The more defined hills of Mill Buie, Brown Muir and Carn na Calliche stand out as easily recognisable and frequently visible 'landmark' hills on the edge of this character type. This character type is relatively extensive, a characteristic which is reinforced where it adjoins *Rolling Open Uplands* (11), which has a similar vegetation pattern.	Larger turbines sited on the occasional more pronounced hills such as Brown Muir and Mill Buie would affect the backdrop provided to well-settled landscapes to the north. Smaller scale valleys such as the Lossie Valley, which is particularly diverse in its upper reaches, could also be dominated by very large turbines located on the outer hills of this character type. The outward-facing hill slopes and the landmark hills of Carn na Calliche and Hunt Hill seen from the *Broad Valley Farmland* (7) of the Spey Valley would also be sensitive to turbines of this size. While the relative extensiveness of this character type generally reduces sensitivity, very large turbines towards 200m high would be likely to have a greater impact on adjoining more sensitive landscapes even if located within the 'interior' of the uplands (see Appendix E). ***High-medium sensitivity***	Larger turbines sited on the occasional more pronounced hills such as Brown Muir and Mill Buie would affect the backdrop provided to well-settled landscapes to the north. Smaller scale valleys such as the Lossie Valley, which is particularly diverse in its upper reaches, could also be dominated by large turbines located on the outer hills of this character type. The outward-facing hill slopes and the landmark hill of Carn na Calliche and Hunt Hill seen from the *Broad Valley Farmland* (7) of the Spey Valley would also be sensitive to turbines of this size. In general however, the extensiveness of this character type reduces sensitivity provided development were located within the 'interior' of the uplands and set well back from more sensitive hill tops and slopes on the fringes of this character type to minimise effects on adjoining smaller scale landscapes. ***Medium sensitivity***	The landmark hills on the periphery of this LCT would also be sensitive to this size of turbine if sited nearby. There may be increased scope to site single and small groups of this of this typology to minimise effects on more sensitive adjoining landscapes. ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Scale and openness A large scale gently undulating upland plateau rising to between 300-400m. Slightly lower hills occur on the northern edge of this	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the interior plateau, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller glens and hills.	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the interior plateau, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller glens and hills.	This typology could relate to the expansiveness of the interior plateau. Turbines of this size would have less of an effect on the relatively low relief of smaller edge hills but would still

character type. Scale is reduced within occasional narrow glens such as the Glen of Rothes and at the transition with the upper Lossie Valley where landform is more complex.	***Medium-low sensitivity***	***Medium-low sensitivity***	dominate the scale of narrow glens ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Landform These uplands form a simple undulating plateau with broad gentle slopes, shallow basins and rounded summits. Landform is more complex at the transition with the *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys* (5a) to the south-west of Dallas where incised valleys, more knolly topography and lochans occur. The narrow incised Glen of Rothes and steep-sided and pronounced hills of Mill Buie, Brown Muir and Carn na Cailliche form landmark features.	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of this gently undulating plateau. Turbines of this size would however dominate and detract from the landmark hills of Brown Muir, Mill Buie, Hunt Hill and Carn na Cailliche, the deep trough of the Glen of Rothes and pockets of more complex landform, if sited on or nearby these features. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of this gently undulating plateau. Turbines of this size would detract from the landmark hills of Brown Muir, Mill Buie and Carn na Cailliche, the deep trough of the Glen of Rothes and pockets of more complex landform, if sited on or nearby these features. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of this gently undulating plateau. Turbines of this size would detract from the landmark hills of Brown Muir, Mill Buie and Carn na Cailliche, the deep trough of the Glen of Rothes and pockets of more complex landform, if sited on or nearby these features. ***Medium sensitivity***
Landscape pattern Extensive coniferous forestry and grass/heather moorland with occasional boggy basins between hills.	This typology could fit with the simple land cover found within the upland interior of this character type. ***Low sensitivity***	This typology could fit with the simple land cover found within the upland interior of this character type. ***Low sensitivity***	This typology could fit with the simple land cover found within the upland interior of this character type. ***Low sensitivity***
Built environment A very sparsely settled landscape with isolated farms located within the Glen of Rothes and on hill slopes above the *Broad Farmland Valley* (7) and the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest* (5). The A941 and a narrow minor road cross this landscape although access is restricted generally within the upland core. The operational Rothes I and II wind	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farm development and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farm development and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farms and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***

farm, masts and power lines are located within this character type.			
Perceptual qualities Although access is relatively restricted within this landscape and it can feel secluded, the presence of extensive commercial forestry and wind farm development negates any sense of wildness.	Although in places secluded, 'wildland' character is generally not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	Although in places secluded, 'wildland' character is generally not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	Although in places secluded, 'wildland' character is generally not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity. ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Visual amenity This upland landscape is sparsely settled. It is crossed by two public roads; the A941 is aligned through Glen of Rothes and has restricted views while views from the single-track unclassified road between the Spey Valley and Dallas are more open and the existing Rothes I and II wind farm (and the Berry Burn and Paul's Hill wind farms in the adjacent *Open Rolling Uplands* (11)) are visible from this route. Forest and wind farm tracks provide access to the interior of these hills although public access is likely to be fairly limited. Views from more settled lowland areas and valleys into the interior of these uplands are restricted by the more defined or higher 'edge' hills, such as Brown Muir and Mill Buie. These are important in views from surrounding settled lowland areas and also visually contain the operational Rothes wind farm.	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower basin-like landform within the interior of these uplands from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity. The higher or more pronounced hills on the northern edge of this character type are more visually sensitive however as they either form landmark hills in their own right when viewed from the north or contain views of the operational Rothes I and II wind farm development (as in the case of Carn na Cailliche 404m) from the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7). New developments of very large turbines (and particularly turbines towards 200m high) would be likely to be more intrusive from roads and settlement (see Appendix E). Turbines around 150m high forming repowering schemes could potentially occupy less sensitive interior upland areas thus reducing visual intrusion.	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower basin-like landform within the interior of these uplands from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity. The higher or more pronounced hills on the northern edge of this character type are more visually sensitive however as they either form landmark hills in their own right when viewed from the north or contain views of the operational Rothes I and II wind farm development (as in the case of Carn na Cailliche 404m) from the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7). ***Medium sensitivity***	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower basin-like landform within the interior of these uplands from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity. The higher or more pronounced hills on the northern edge of this character type are more visually sensitive however as they either form landmark hills in their own right when viewed from the north or contain views of the operational Rothes I and II wind farm development (as in the case of Carn na Cailliche 404m) from the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7). There may be increased scope for this typology to limit impacts on key views (although smaller turbines could have cumulative impacts with existing/consented developments sited in this landscape if seen in close proximity from key views – see below). ***Medium sensitivity***

	High-medium to Medium sensitivity		
Cumulative effects The operational Rothes I and II wind farm is sited within the interior of this upland plateau and this generally limits their impact on adjoining more sensitive settled landscapes. There is very limited visibility of this wind farm from the *Broad Valley Farmland* (7) of the Spey Valley although it is more visible in views from the north within LCTs (4), (5) and (5a). The consented Kellas and Meikle Hill wind farms will increase the extent, and in some areas, also the prominence of large turbines close to the Lossie Valley in the Dallas area. Close views of the operational Rothes I and II wind farm development occur from the unclassified road between the Spey Valley and Dallas and these developments are seen with the Paul's Hill and Berry Burn operational wind farms sited in the adjacent *Open Rolling Uplands* (11) from this route. Operational wind farms are generally set back from this road (particularly those developments in the *Open Rolling Uplands* (11)) although the consented development of Meikle Hill will be sited much closer to this road.	New developments of very large turbines sited within this character type would have impacts on the skyline this landscape provides to LCT (5) and (5a) (extensive forest cover limits views from LCT (5b)). Avoidance of landmark hills such as Mill Buie would limit cumulative impacts by containing and separating wind farm developments seen in views from the north. Cumulative effects could occur if development encroached closer on both sides of the unclassified road between Spey Valley and Dallas, creating a dominant corridor effect of large and very large turbines affecting views and the experience of travelling on this remote and scenic route. Very large turbines could significantly contribute to these effects as turbine size, spacing and design may be obvious in close views from this road. Cumulative effects could occur from the Dava Way Trail where wind farms in LCT 11 and this landscape were seen simultaneously or sequentially from this recreational route. Repowering of operational wind farms located in the interior of these uplands and therefore distant from roads and settlement, may reduce cumulative effects. Replacing	Any additional turbine development sited within this character type could have impacts on the skyline this landscape provides to LCT (5) and (5a) (extensive forest cover limits views from LCT (5b)). Avoidance of landmark hills such as Mill Buie would limit cumulative impacts by containing and separating wind farm developments. Cumulative effects could occur if development encroached closer on both sides of the unclassified road between Spey Valley and Dallas, creating a dominant corridor effect of large turbines affecting views and the experience of travelling on this remote and scenic route. Cumulative effects could occur from the Dava Way Trail where wind farms in LCT 11 and this landscape were seen simultaneously or sequentially from this recreational route. ***Medium sensitivity***	Any additional turbine development sited within this character type could have impacts on the skyline this landscape provides to LCT (5) and (5a) (extensive forest cover limits views from LCT (5b)). Avoidance of landmark hills such as Mill Buie would limit cumulative impacts by containing and separating wind farm developments. Cumulative effects could occur if development encroached closer on both sides of the unclassified road between Spey Valley and Dallas, creating a dominant corridor effect of large turbines affecting views and the experience of travelling on this remote and scenic route. Cumulative effects could occur from the Dava Way Trail where wind farms in LCT 11 and this landscape were seen simultaneously or sequentially from this recreational route. This size of turbine would contrast with larger turbines within operational and consented wind farms if seen close-by from key views. ***Medium sensitivity***

	existing 100m turbines with turbines around 200m would however be likely to increase inter-visibility with other wind farms located on the periphery of these uplands and incur cumulative effects. ***High-medium sensitivity***		

Landscape character type 11: Open Rolling Uplands – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic and summary description	Very Large scale typology assessment (>130m)	Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)	Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)
Landscape context This upland landscape has a similar character to the adjacent uplands within Highland Council area to the south and west. The extensiveness of this landscape also increases where it adjoins the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) to the east and north. Within Moray, this landscape forms a backdrop of predominantly open and shapely hills to the more richly patterned and smaller scale hill fringes of the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) of the Spey Valley to the south. These uplands also form a distant long ridge seen from the well-settled *Coastal Farmlands* (4) to the north. The more defined hills of Knock of Braemoray, Roy's Hill and the conical peak of Carn Kitty stand out in views from surrounding landscapes although visibility into the interior of these uplands is fairly limited. The hills on the southern edge of this landscape provide a distant backdrop to the Cairngorms National Park while those on the western boundary of Moray form a prominent 'edge' to the expansive basin of Dava Moor and Lochindorb within the Highland Council area.	Very large turbines sited on the more pronounced hills which lie on the outer edges of this character type would affect the backdrop provided to the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7), dominating this adjacent settled and richly diverse landscape. The landmark hill of Knock of Braemoray is also prominent in views across Dava Moor, Lochindorb and from the *Narrow Wooded Valley* (6) and parts of the coastal plain of Moray and would be highly sensitive to nearby development. The limited visibility of the lower-lying interior of these uplands reduces effects on adjoining landscapes although operational wind farm development is already accommodated within part of this area. This typology sited on the higher southern hills could affect views from the Cairngorms National Park and its wider landscape setting. ***High-medium sensitivity***	Large turbines sited on the more pronounced hills which lie on the outer edges of this character type would affect the backdrop provided to the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7), dominating this adjacent settled and richly diverse landscape. The landmark hill of Knock of Braemoray is also prominent in views across Dava Moor, Lochindorb and from the *Narrow Wooded Valley* (6) and parts of the coastal plain of Moray and would be highly sensitive to nearby development. The limited visibility of the lower-lying interior of these uplands reduces effects on adjoining landscapes although operational wind farm development is already accommodated within part of this area. This typology sited on the higher southern hills could affect views from the Cairngorms National Park and its wider landscape setting. ***High-medium sensitivity***	This typology, which is more likely to comprise single and small groups of turbines, could be sited to minimise effects on adjoining landscapes although the more pronounced hills which lie on the outer edges of this character type remain sensitive to any development. ***High-medium sensitivity***

Scale and openness A large scale gently undulating upland plateau with rounded hills rising generally to between 400-520m. The low-lying basin of Moidach More is very open and expansive. Scale is reduced within the shallow valleys of the Divie and Dorback Burn where settlement, woodlands and enclosed farmland introduce smaller scale features. More complex knolly landform and lochans to the north of Carn Kitty also influence the smaller scale landscape found to the north of Carn Kitty.	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the interior plateau, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller scale valleys and small but prominent hills. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the interior plateau, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller scale valleys and small but prominent hills. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the expansiveness of the interior plateau. Turbines of this size would have less of an effect on the relatively low relief of smaller edge hills but would still dominate the scale of shallow settled valleys ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Landform These uplands form a simple undulating plateau with broad gentle slopes, shallow basins, flat mosses and rounded summits. The steep-sided hills of Knock of Braemoray and Roy's Hill have a well-defined shape and some more complex areas of smaller scale knolls and lochans occur to the north of Carn Kitty.	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of low-lying basins and broad hill slopes although turbines of this size would detract from more pronounced higher or steep-sided hills and areas of more complex landform if sited on or near them. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of low-lying basins and broad hill slopes although turbines of this size would detract from more pronounced higher or steep-sided hills and areas of more complex landform if sited on or near them. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of low-lying basins and broad hill slopes although turbines would detract from more pronounced higher or steep-sided hills and areas of more complex landform if sited on or near them. ***Medium sensitivity***
Landscape pattern This landscape has a predominantly simple land cover of grass/heather moorland with areas of moss and deep peat, patterned with small lochans and wetland, and occasional semi-improved fields and small coniferous woodlands within shallow valleys. Native pine woodland is a feature within the	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to this typology although turbines of this size could detract from more patterned lochans and wetland within Moidach More and native pine woodland within the valley of the Dorback Burn. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to this typology although turbines of this size could detract from more patterned lochans and wetland within Moidach More and native pine woodland within the valley of the Dorback Burn. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to this typology although turbines of this size could detract from more patterned lochans and wetland within Moidach More and native pine woodland within the valley of the Dorback Burn. ***Medium-low sensitivity***

valley of the Dorback Burn			
Built environment A very sparsely settled landscape with isolated farms associated with the shallow valleys of the River Divie and Dorback Burn. The A940 is aligned close to the western edge of this character type. The operational Paul's Hill and Berry Burn wind farms are located in this landscape. A transmission line is aligned in the north-west of this character type.	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farms and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farms and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farms and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity. ***Low sensitivity***
Perceptual qualities Access is relatively restricted within this landscape and it can feel secluded. A sense of naturalness can be associated with some features, for example the moss of Moidach More although the presence of wind farm development reduces the sense of wildness overall.	Although in places secluded and appearing natural, the presence of operational wind farm development reduces wildland qualities. ***Medium sensitivity***	Although in places secluded and appearing natural, the presence of operational wind farm development reduces wildland qualities. ***Medium sensitivity***	Although in places secluded and appearing natural, the presence of operational wind farm development reduces wildland qualities. ***Medium sensitivity***
Visual amenity This upland landscape is sparsely settled and access is generally limited. It forms the threshold to Moray seen from the A940, although the prominent hills of the Knock of Braemoray and Carn Biorach restrict views into the interior of this character type. The Dava Way Trail, aligned on a former railway route, is popular with walkers and cyclists and provides access into the interior basin of Moidach More.	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower interior hills and basin from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity although views are possible from the Dava Way Trail. The higher and/or more pronounced hills on the fringes of this character type are more visually sensitive. Very large turbines towards 200m high could significantly intrude on views from surrounding roads and settlement	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower interior hills and basin from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity although views are possible from the Dava Way Trail. The higher and/or more pronounced hills on the fringes of this character type are more visually sensitive. ***Medium sensitivity***	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower interior hills and basin from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity although views are possible from the Dava Way Trail. The higher and/or more pronounced hills on the fringes of this character type are more visually sensitive. ***Medium sensitivity***

A single-track road between Upper Knockando and Dallas provides more open views of these uplands from the east. The operational Paul's Hill and Berry Burn wind farms are visible from this road but appear set back into the upland core. Views from more settled lowland areas and valleys into the interior of these uplands are restricted by the more defined or higher 'edge' hills including Knock of Braemoray and Roy's Hill and these hills are also important in views from surrounding settled lowland areas and also visually contain operational wind farm developments. Views from more settled landscapes to the north are reduced by the 'buffer' provided by the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) which directly abuts the *Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys* (5a).	(see Appendix E). ***High-medium sensitivity***		
Cumulative effects The operational Paul's Hill and Berry Burn wind farms are located in this character type. The Paul's Hill wind farm is principally visible from the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) of the Spey Valley. The Berry Burn wind farm has a relatively limited extent of visibility although distant views are possible from the Lochindorb area to the west which has a distinct sense of wildness. The Rothes I and II wind farm and the consented Meikle Hill wind farm	Potential cumulative effects include those affecting the design integrity of existing wind farms as well as effects on views from the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7), the sensitive Lochindorb and Dava Moor area, the Dava Way Trail and minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas. ***High-medium sensitivity***	Potential cumulative effects include those affecting the design integrity of existing wind farms as well as effects on views from the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7), the sensitive Lochindorb and Dava Moor area, the Dava Way Trail and minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas. ***High-medium sensitivity***	Potential cumulative effects include those affecting the design integrity of these wind farms as well as effects on views from the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7), the sensitive Lochindorb and Dava Moor area, the Dava Way Trail and minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas. Turbines of this size would be likely to be closely inter-visible with existing large turbines (given landscape and visual constraints in the remaining undeveloped areas of this landscape) and could result in clutter and

are located in the adjacent *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). These wind farms are principally seen together from the minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas.			unacceptable visual confusion. ***High sensitivity***

Landscape character type 12a: Open Uplands with Steep Slopes – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic	Summary description	Large typology assessment (80-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Medium typology assessment (50-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	This upland landscape is narrow and limited in extent, in part because it occupies two areas on either side of Glen Rinnes. Nevertheless, it appears more expansive where it merges with the *Open Uplands with Settled Glens* (12b) to the east and the Ladder Hills within the Cairngorms National Park to the south. It becomes narrower and more constrained in extent to the north. This character type forms the containing edge and ridges to the *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13) of Glen Rinnes and a backdrop to the *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) of the Spey Valley. It also overlooks Glenlivet within the nearby Cairngorms National Park. The rugged hill group of Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conval and Little Conval are an outlier group of landmark hills which are widely visible and easily recognisable.	These uplands merge with adjacent hills to the east and south to create an upland landscape which appears more expansive because of the adjacent hills. This large typology, however, would affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscapes of the adjacent *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) and *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13). This large typology could also affect the setting of the smaller scale, settled glen of Glenlivet in the Cairngorms National Park. The sensitivity of the setting of Ben Rinnes, and smaller hills within this group, also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it is widely recognisable hill feature across lowland areas of Moray.	***High***	These uplands merge with adjacent hills to the east and south to create an upland landscape which appears more expansive because of the adjacent hills. This typology, however, would affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscapes of the adjacent *Broad Farmed Valley* (7) and *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13). It could also affect the setting of the smaller scale, settled glen of Glenlivet in the Cairngorms National Park. The sensitivity of the setting of Ben Rinnes, and smaller hills within this group, also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it is a widely recognisable hill feature across lowland areas of Moray.	***High***
Scale and openness	Large scale, strongly vertical sided long, open but often narrow ridges rise directly up from the adjacent valleys to an elevation of over 700m in the south, dropping to lower relief associated with lower ridges (487m) in the north. Ben Rinnes rises to 840m, forming	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and high relief of the long ridges and open hills, although turbines of this size would dominate the narrow ridgelines, the enclosed glens and passes, smaller foothills and the lower relief of the hills to the north.	***Medium***	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and high relief of the long ridges and open hills, although turbines of this size would dominate the narrow ridgelines, the enclosed glens and passes, smaller foothills and the lower relief of the hills to the north.	***Medium***

	the highest point of an outlying group of steep sided open hill summits. Scale is reduced by increased containment created by narrow glens and passes. Woodland and smaller topographical features, including smaller stand-alone hills which provide the back drop to Dufftown, also reduce the scale along the transition between these slopes and adjacent valleys.				
Landform	These uplands form long, sloping but relatively even ridgelines to the east of Glen Rinnes. The rugged profile formed by more complex gradients rise to the pronounced summit of Ben Rinnes to the west. The character type is dominated by steep slopes, with only occasional areas of more gentle gradients. More complex landform, including smaller hills, occur at the northern end of Glen Rinnes.	The more complex landforms and steeper slopes are sensitive to this typology, although it could relate to the simple landform of long ridges and the occasional more gentle slopes and gradients. Tracks and platforms sited on the steeper slopes are likely to require extensive earth works.	***High-Medium***	The more complex landforms and steeper slopes are sensitive to this typology, although it could relate to the simple landform of long ridges and the occasional more gentle slopes and gradients. Tracks and platforms sited on the steeper slopes are likely to require extensive earth works.	***High-Medium***
Landscape pattern	This landscape has a predominantly simple land cover of heather moorland across the upper slopes and summits, with occasional improved grassland fields along the lower hill slopes. These blend seamlessly with grass fields within the farmed low-lying land. Coniferous woodlands, some of which are quite extensive, and smaller shelter woods are to be	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size.	***Medium-low***	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size.	***Medium-low***

	found along the lower slopes.				
Built environment	A very sparsely settled landscape with isolated farms associated with the occasional sheltered valley on the periphery of this type. There are farm and forestry tracks in this character type, but only short stretches of public road which extend through narrow passes. The consented Dorenell wind farm lies close to this character type.	There is limited settlement within this character type. If built, the adjacent consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed character in the south eastern uplands, which reduces sensitivity in this area.	***Low***	There is limited settlement within this character type. If built, the adjacent consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed character in the south eastern uplands, which reduces sensitivity in this area.	***Low***
Perceptual qualities	Access to the upland areas and the more remote, unsettled glens is limited, and the moorland is semi-natural in character. This increases the sense of wildness and relative seclusion, but the area is relatively narrow in extent and never far from settled lowlands. If built, the presence of the consented wind farm at Dorenell will reduce wild land qualities within the Glen Fiddich forest and its potential widespread visibility limits the sense of wildness elsewhere in this type.	These less accessible ridges, summits and unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural, but if built, the presence of the consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce the sense of wildness.	***Medium***	These less accessible ridges, summits and unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural, but if built, the presence of the consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce the sense of wildness.	***Medium***
Visual amenity	There is limited settlement and public road access to this area, but the summits and the high ridgelines are walking routes. Ben Rinnes is a popular, high summit which stands above the surrounding glens offering fine views. The consented Dorenell wind farm, within the adjacent *Open Uplands with Settled Glens* (12b) will be visible and prominent from Ben	The ridges and hill summits are both highly inter-visible and are viewpoints in their own right, therefore it is likely to be difficult to locate this typology where it does not have a visual impact.	***High***	The ridges and hill summits are both highly inter-visible and are viewpoints in their own right, therefore it is likely to be difficult to locate this typology where it does not have a visual impact.	***High***

	Rinnes and other high points in this character type. Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conval and Little Conval also stand out as a landmark hills from elsewhere in the type, because of their distinctive shape and 'stand-alone' setting.				
Cumulative effects	The consented Dorenell wind farm lies on the western edge of the neighbouring *Open Uplands with Settled Glens* (12b). This is an extensive wind farm which would stretch along a north-south ridge overlooking the glen of Glen Fiddich and Glen Suie. The ridge along the east side of Glen Rinnes provides a visual screen to Dorenell, limiting its impact on the smaller scale settled valley of Glen Rinnes. From Ben Rinnes, an accessible and relatively well used walking route, it is also possible to see Paul's Hill, Rothes I and II, the Hill of Towie, Berry Burn and Clashindarroch wind farms within 10 - 15km of the summit.	The presence of a large consented wind farm on the edge of this character type increases sensitivity to cumulative effects, especially in terms of further development on the adjacent ridge which forms the eastern flank of Glen Rinnes. It is noted that this ridge also limits impacts of Dorenell on the smaller scale adjacent *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13) of Glen Rinnes by providing a visual separation between Dorenell and Glen Rinnes. Visual cumulative effects from Ben Rinnes are also sensitive, as this key viewpoint has a sequence of wind farms arrayed on high points along its north-western through to its eastern views. This high and rugged landscape forms the last remaining tract of uplands in Moray which does not accommodate wind farm development.	***High***	The presence of a large consented wind farm on the edge of this character type increases sensitivity to cumulative effects, especially in terms of further development on the adjacent ridge which forms the eastern flank of Glen Rinnes. It is noted that this ridge also limits impacts of Dorenell on the smaller scale adjacent *Narrow Farmed Valley* (13) of Glen Rinnes by providing a visual separation between Dorenell and Glen Rinnes. Visual cumulative effects from Ben Rinnes are also sensitive, as this key viewpoint has a sequence of wind farms arrayed on high points along its north-western through to its eastern views. This high and rugged landscape forms one of the last remaining tract of uplands in Moray which does not accommodate wind farm development.	***High***

Landscape character type 12b: Open Uplands with Settled Glens – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic and summary description	Very Large scale typology assessment (>130m)	Large typology assessment (80-130m)	Medium typology assessment (50-80m)
Landscape context This upland landscape is larger in extent to the south. The extensiveness of this landscape also increases where it merges with *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) to the west and with the Ladder Hills within the Cairngorms National Park to the south. It becomes narrower in extent to the north, where it forms the upland edge to the smaller scale *Narrow Farmed Valleys* (13) and well-settled farmland within Aberdeenshire and is more frequently seen within this lowland context. The consented Dorenell wind farm limits the extent of remaining undeveloped uplands in this character type. The conical, higher landmark hill of The Buck stands out in views from the surrounding area, including adjacent Aberdeenshire. The area forms dramatic gateways to Moray from Aberdeenshire, across the high passes of The Cabrach (A941) and A920 at Corsemaul. This LCT contributes to the setting of the Ladder Hills and its southern boundary forms the ridgeline which	The broader uplands to the south merge with adjacent hills to the west to create an expansive upland landscape. The consented Doronell wind farm will occupy much of the more expansive upland area within this LCT. Very large turbines sited on remaining undeveloped parts of this landscape would be likely to significantly affect small scaled and more settled lowland landscape character types. These include the diverse Deveron and Fiddich valleys, including the setting of Dufftown and Auchindoun Castle, which lie close to the narrower northern end of this character type. Turbines of this size, and particularly those towards 200m high, would also significantly affect the wider setting of the northern Ladder Hills if located on the southern border of Moray, as well as being likely to intrude on the smaller scale, settled glen of Glen Buchat and the Braes of Glenlivet in the Cairngorms National Park. The landmark hill of The Buck, which partially lies in Aberdeenshire, could additionally be dominated by very large turbines sited nearby.	The broader uplands to the south merge with adjacent hills to the west to create an expansive upland landscape. The consented Doronell wind farm will occupy much of the more expansive upland area within this LCT. Large turbines sited on remaining undeveloped parts of this landscape would be likely to significantly affect small scaled and more settled lowland landscape character types. These include the diverse Deveron and Fiddich valleys, including the setting of Dufftown and Auchindoun Castle, which lie close to the narrower northern end of this character type. This large typology would affect the wider setting of the northern Ladder Hills if located on the southern border of Moray, as well as potentially intrude on the smaller scale, settled glen of Glen Buchat and the Braes of Glenlivet in the Cairngorms National Park. The setting of the landmark hill of The Buck could be adversely affected by large turbines sited nearby in views from Aberdeenshire. ***High-medium sensitivity***	There may be more opportunities for single and small groups of turbines of this height to be accommodated to minimise effects on adjacent smaller scale landscapes. Prominent skylines above small settled valleys (including parts of the Cairngorms National Park) and The Buck remain sensitivity however. ***Medium sensitivity***

encloses Glen Buchat and Braes of Glenlivet all of which lie within the adjacent Cairngorms National Park.	***High sensitivity***		
Scale and openness Large scale gently undulating ridges create a sense of sweeping horizontal scale emphasised by open uplands, rising generally to between 500 – 630m, although the ridge above Blackwater extends to 755m at Cooks Cairn and The Buck stands out as a high, stand-alone hill at 721m. The lower-lying basin of Cabrach is expansive, but at only 200m or so below the height of the containing hills the basin is shallow. Scale is reduced within the gently enclosed, shallow valleys of the Deveron and the Treble Burn where scattered settlement, shelter woodlands and fields introduce smaller scale features.	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the long ridges, although very large turbines (and particularly those towards 200m high) would significantly dominate smaller scale valleys, the shallow bowl of the Cabrach and small topographical features. The extent of remaining undeveloped larger scale uplands is limited by the consented Dorenell wind farm. ***High-medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the long ridges, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller scale valleys, the shallow bowl of the Cabrach and small topographical features. The extent of remaining undeveloped larger scale uplands is limited by the consented Dorenell wind farm. ***Medium sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the long ridges, although the larger turbines of this typology would dominate smaller scale valleys and small topographical features. The extent of remaining undeveloped larger scale uplands is limited by the consented Dorenell wind farm. ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Landform These uplands form undulating ridges with broad rounded slopes containing shallow valleys and bowls. Steeper slopes contain the glen of the Black Water and become more steep westwards over the Dorenell/Glen Fiddich ridge to form a transition between this type and the neighbouring *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) type. The steeper sided and more pronounced summit of the Buck	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of undulating ridges and broad smooth hill slopes, although the steeper western slopes are more sensitive and may also require extensive earth works to accommodate tracks and platforms. The more rugged landform and conical shape of The Buck, which contrasts with the more gentle undulations of nearby ridges, is more sensitive. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of undulating ridges and broad smooth hill slopes, although the steeper western slopes are more sensitive and may also require extensive earth works to accommodate tracks and platforms. The more rugged landform and conical shape of The Buck, which contrasts with the more gentle undulations of nearby ridges, is more sensitive. ***Medium-low sensitivity***	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of undulating ridges and broad smooth hill slopes, although the steeper western slopes are more sensitive and may also require extensive earth works to accommodate tracks and platforms. The more rugged landform and conical shape of the Buck, which contrasts with the more gentle undulations of nearby ridges, is more sensitive. ***Medium-low sensitivity***

stands out as a landmark hill.			
Landscape pattern This landscape has a predominantly simple land cover of heather moorland across the upper slopes and summits, with improved grassland fields along the lower hill slopes. These blend seamlessly with grass fields within the farmed low-lying land. Small coniferous shelter woodlands and occasional larger woods lie within the sheltered shallow bowls and settled glens.	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size, although the farmed glens and shallow bowls have a more complex pattern which is more sensitive to development of this size. ***Medium sensitivity***	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size, although the farmed glens and shallow bowls have a more complex pattern which is more sensitive to development of this size. ***Medium sensitivity***	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size, although the farmed glens and shallow bowls have a more complex pattern which is more sensitive to development of this size. ***Medium sensitivity***
Built environment Settlement is limited to dispersed farms and small settlements, associated with the farmed low-lying glens and shallow basin of the Cabrach. The A941 and A920 pass through this character type, and there are several minor roads and farm tracks associated with the glens.The consented Dorenell wind farm lies within this character type.	The dispersed but widespread settlement increases sensitivity in the settled low-lying glens and basin of the Cabrach. The consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed upland character which will influence the southern part of this type and reduce sensitivity in this area. ***Medium sensitivity***	The dispersed but widespread settlement increases sensitivity in the settled low-lying glens and basin of the Cabrach. The consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed upland character which will influence the southern part of this type and reduce sensitivity in this area. ***Medium sensitivity***	The dispersed but widespread settlement increases sensitivity in the settled low-lying glens and basin of the Cabrach. If built, the consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed upland character which will influence the southern part of this type and reduce sensitivity in this area. ***Medium-low sensitivity***
Perceptual qualities The lower-lying glens and bowl of the Cabrach are settled and accessible. Access to the upland areas and the more remote, unsettled glens is limited, and the moorland is semi-natural in character. This increases the sense of wildness and relative seclusion. The presence of wind farm development will reduce the sense of wildness in the southern part of	The more remote uplands and the less accessible and enclosed unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural. The consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce wild land qualities on the more remote ridges and in the Black Water glen. ***Medium sensitivity***	The more remote uplands and the less accessible and enclosed unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural. The consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce wild land qualities on the more remote ridges and in the Black Water glen. ***Medium sensitivity***	The more remote uplands and the less accessible and enclosed unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural. The consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce wild land qualities on the more remote ridges and in the Black Water glen. ***Medium sensitivity***

this character type, assuming the Dorenell wind farm is built.			
Visual amenity The dispersed but widespread settlement is located largely on the lower lying slopes and glen floors, but the shallow sides of these glens permit long views onto the upper ridges. The threshold or 'sense of arrival' to Moray as experienced from the A941 at the Cabrach and the A920 at Corsemaul is sensitive because of the panorama revealed on cresting the top of these passes. The consented Dorenell wind farm, will be very visible and prominent from the A941 pass at the Cabrach and also visible elsewhere along this road. The prominent hill of The Buck is sensitive.	While the Doronell wind farm will reduce visual sensitivity to some degree once constructed, additional very large turbines could significantly impact on views from the high passes along the A920 and A941 particularly as views westwards into Moray are elevated and panoramic. Views from surrounding hills, including The Buck, which is popular with walkers, increase sensitivity. Turbines of this size located on the remaining undeveloped peripheral upland areas of this character type are more likely to significantly intrude on sensitive skylines above the settled valleys lying within this LCT. ***High-medium sensitivity***	While the Doronell wind farm will reduce visual sensitivity to some degree once constructed, additional very large turbines could significantly impact on views from the high passes along the A920 and A941 particularly as views westwards into Moray are elevated and panoramic. Views from surrounding hills, including The Buck, which is popular with walkers, increase sensitivity. Turbines of this size located on the remaining undeveloped peripheral upland areas of this character type are more likely to significantly intrude on sensitive skylines above the settled valleys lying within this LCT. ***High-medium sensitivity***	The Doronell wind farm will reduce visual sensitivity to some degree once constructed. This typology is more likely to comprise single and small groups of turbines which could be more discretely sited to limit intrusion. Views from the high passes along the A920 and A941 remain sensitive (especially as cumulative effects between turbines of different size could occur with operational and consented wind farms – see below). Views from surrounding hills, including The Buck, which is popular with walkers, increase sensitivity. Turbines of this size located on more prominent ridges on the periphery of this character type could intrude on sensitive skylines above settled valleys within this LCT. ***Medium sensitivity***
Cumulative effects The consented Dorenell wind farm will extend along a north-south aligned ridge between the glens of Glen Fiddich and the Black Water. The turbines will not be seen from within much of the upper Deveron Valley and parts of the lower basin of the Cabrach. However, because of the height of the ridge on which the wind farm is located, there is no visual buffer to the east or from higher elevations to the north. This wind farm will be	The presence of a large consented wind farm within the broader upland core of this character type increases sensitivity as remaining undeveloped parts of this landscape lie closer to more sensitive receptors. Cumulative effects are likely to principally arise on the A941, The Buck (which is well-used by walkers) and the Cabrach area where the Dorenell and Clashindarroch (and in some locations, also the Kildrummy) wind farms will be seen in combination or	The presence of a large consented wind farm within the broader upland core of this character type increases sensitivity as remaining undeveloped parts of this landscape lie closer to more sensitive receptors. Cumulative effects are likely to principally arise on the A941, The Buck (which is well-used by walkers) and the Cabrach area where the Dorenell and Clashindarroch (and in some locations, also the Kildrummy) wind farms will be seen in combination or	There may be some limited scope to locate single and very small numbers of turbines towards the lower height band of this typology to minimise cumulative effects with operational and consented wind farms. Widespread development of this size of turbine could create a cluttered appearance when seen in close proximity with operational and consented wind farms. ***High-medium sensitivity***

highly visible from the high pass at the Cabrach as well as from other locations within this landscape character type, including from the A941.The operational Clashindarroch wind farm is located in Aberdeenshire but lies close to the Moray boundary.	sequentially. Cumulative effects could also arise on parts of the Cairngorms National Park and on LCT 13 (including the Fiddich and Deveron Valleys) where additional development might increase the extent of development seen on containing ridgelines. Potential cumulative effects that could arise with turbines of this size are likely to include creation of a dominant corridor effect experienced from the A941 (particularly if development extended onto lower hill slopes either side of the road) or near encirclement of the Cabrach basin where turbine development extended substantially along highly visible ridgelines. Very large turbines towards 200m could additionally incur significant cumulative impacts with operational wind farms due to perceived differences in turbine size or layout. ***High sensitivity***	sequentially. Cumulative effects could also arise on parts of the Cairngorms National Park and on LCT 13 (including the Fiddich and Deveron Valleys) where additional development might increase the extent of development seen on containing ridgelines. Potential cumulative effects that could arise with turbines of this size are likely to include creation of a dominant corridor effect experienced from the A941 (particularly if development extended onto lower hill slopes either side of the road) or near encirclement of the Cabrach basin where turbine development extended substantially along highly visible ridgelines. ***High-medium sensitivity***	

Landscape character type 13: Narrow Farmed Valleys – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies

Topic	Summary description	Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)	Sensitivity rating	Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	These valleys have a limited influence on adjacent character types due to their strong containment. They are seen in conjunction with the adjacent upland area of *Rolling Forested Hills* (9) and the *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) and *Open Uplands with Settled Glens* (12b). Where these smaller scale and more diverse valleys are juxtaposed with the more defined edge hills of LCTs 12a and 12b, scenic composition is enhanced.	The containment of these valleys generally limits effects on adjacent landscapes. Turbines of this size could detract from key views to the more distinctive hills, including the landmark hills of Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conval and Little Conval, and dramatic scarp slopes within the *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) and diminish the scenic composition with valleys such as Glen Rinnes.	***Medium***	The containment of these valleys generally limits effects on adjacent landscapes. Turbines of this size could detract from key views to the more distinctive hills, including the landmark hills of Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conval and Little Conval, and dramatic scarp slopes within the *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) and diminish the scenic composition with valleys such as Glen Rinnes.	***Medium***
Scale and openness	These narrow valleys are strongly contained by adjacent upland areas. The upper Isla, Glen Fiddich and the Deveron form winding valleys which limit visibility and give an intimate scale in places. Glen Rinnes is broader and more open in character but dramatically contained by steep slopes and high hills. The often well-wooded character of these valleys and the presence of small houses and farms further reduce scale.	This typology would dominate the small scale of these contained and well-settled valleys.	***High***	This typology would dominate the small scale of these contained and well-settled valleys.	***High***
Landform	Valley floors are narrow with occasional flatter floodplain areas. Steep lower slopes often give way to more rolling broader upper slopes on the south-east side of the Isla and in Glen Rinnes. Landform is	It would be physically difficult to accommodate turbines of this size on steep slopes. This typology would detract from areas of more complex interlocking landform and from the small open floodplain	***High***	It would be physically difficult to accommodate turbines of this size on steep slopes. This typology would detract from areas of more complex interlocking landform and from the small open floodplain areas which	***High***

	more complex, with steep slopes and interlocking hills in places within the Deveron valley. Small rounded hills and ridges on the edge of these valleys at the transition with LCTs 9, 12a and 12b contain and provide the backdrop to these valleys.	areas which contribute to the diversity of these landscapes. Broader, more gently undulating upper hill slopes and terraces would be less sensitive although these areas are not extensive and the numbers of turbines that could be accommodated would be limited.		contribute to the diversity of these landscapes. Broader, more gently undulating upper hill slopes and terraces would be less sensitive although these areas are not extensive and the numbers of turbines that could be accommodated would be limited.	
Landscape pattern	This landscape is often richly patterned with a mix of enclosed pastures and some arable land and small woodlands. Policy woodlands, a strong pattern of shelterbelts, field trees and avenue plantings occur in the upper Isla and Deveron valleys. Small pockets of wetland and riparian woodlands are present on the floor of some of these valleys.	This typology would detract from more diverse areas where policy woodlands and a strong pattern of shelterbelts, field trees and avenues are present. Multiple developments of large turbines across these valleys would have a greater effect.	***High-medium***	This typology would detract from more diverse areas where policy woodlands and a strong pattern of shelterbelts, field trees and avenues are present. Multiple developments of large turbines across these valleys would have a greater effect.	***High-medium***
Built environment	These valleys are well-settled with small villages, dispersed farms and houses and occasional grand houses and castles evenly distributed across the slopes above the floodplain. Archaeological features are more visually evident in the Deveron Valley. Roads are aligned through these valleys.	The setting of small settlements, mansion houses/castles and their designed landscapes and archaeological features which make a contribution to character would be sensitive to this typology. There are few less settled areas within these valleys where larger typologies could be accommodated without affecting settlement and other features.	***High-medium***	The setting of small settlements, grand houses/castles and their designed landscapes and archaeological features which make a contribution to character would be sensitive to this typology. There are few less settled areas within these valleys where larger typologies could be accommodated without affecting settlement and other features.	***High-medium***
Perceptual qualities	Although these well-settled and managed valleys have no pronounced sense of wildness, the steep-sided sinuous valley of the Deveron, together with its rich built heritage and designed landscapes, can instil a distinct sense of place.	There would be limited effects on key perceptual qualities within the majority of these valleys.	***Medium-low***	There would be limited effects on key perceptual qualities within the majority of these valleys.	***Medium-low***
Visual	These valleys are well-settled and	Turbines of this height would be	***High***	Turbines of this height would be	***High***

amenity	also contain a number of main roads. Many of the roads form popular tourist routes. Views beyond the valley are limited however due to their containment by adjacent upland areas. There are few views to these valleys from adjacent character types although the more popularly walked hills, such as Ben Rinnes, provide elevated views over Glen Rinnes and Glen Fiddich.	highly visible within these valleys and would be seen in close proximity to settlement and roads increasing impact. Turbines of this size could interrupt key views to the landmark hills although views from adjacent character types into these valleys are generally limited.		highly visible within these valleys and would be seen in close proximity to settlement and roads increasing impact. Turbines of this size could interrupt key views to the landmark hills although views from adjacent character types into these valleys are generally limited.	
Cumulative effects	The operational Hill of Towie wind farm is prominent in views from the upper Isla valley and from Glen Fiddich. The consented Dorenell wind farm will be visible from parts of Glen Fiddich.	Cumulative effects could principally arise in the Isla and Glen Fiddich valleys with operational and consented wind farm developments sited in adjacent upland landscape character types.	***Medium***	Cumulative effects could principally arise in the Isla and Glen Fiddich valleys with operational and consented wind farm developments sited in adjacent upland landscape character types.	***Medium***

Landscape character type 13: Narrow Farmed Valleys – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies

Topic	Summary description	Small-medium typology assessment (35-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Small scale typology assessment (20-35m)	Sensitivity rating
Landscape context	These valleys have a limited influence on adjacent character types due to their strong containment. They are seen in conjunction with the adjacent upland area of *Rolling Forested Hills* (9) and the *Open Uplands with Steep Slopes* (12a) and *Open Uplands with Settled Glens* (12b). Where these smaller scale and more diverse valleys are juxtaposed with the more defined edge hills of LCTs 12a and 12b, scenic composition is enhanced.	Turbines of this size could detract from the backdrop of more distinctive hills within LCTs 12a and 12b where these are scenically juxtaposed with the valleys although there is increased scope to site turbines of this size to avoid such impacts. Cumulative effects could arise in the Isla with existing wind farm development if turbines were sited on upper slopes and seen close-by.	***Medium-low***	There would be greater opportunities to locate this typology to avoid impact on adjacent character types and overall scenic composition.	***Low***
Scale and openness	These narrow valleys are strongly contained by adjacent upland areas. The upper Isla, Glen Fiddich and the Deveron form winding valleys which limit visibility and give an intimate scale in places. Glen Rinnes is broader and more open in character but dramatically contained by steep slopes and high hills. The often well-wooded character of these valleys and the presence of small houses and farms further reduce scale.	This typology would dominate the small scale of these valleys where they are strongly contained by steep slopes within the valley floor and lower slopes. Turbines of this size would appear large in relation to houses and woodlands. There are few less well-settled areas within these valleys although gently graded upper hill slopes at the transition with adjacent uplands LCTs 9, 12a and 12b would be less sensitive. Multiple turbines of this size associated with a number of land holdings could appear to 'fill' the narrow extent of these valleys.	***High-medium***	Turbines towards the upper height band of this typology would also appear large in relation to settlement and woodlands and could dominate the more strongly contained lower parts of these valleys. There would be increased scope to accommodate this small typology within the broader, less densely settled upper hill slopes at the transition with LCTs 9, 12a and 12b where turbines of this size would have less of an effect on landscape scale. There would also be greater scope to accommodate multiple turbines towards the lower height band of this typology to avoid cumulative impacts.	***Medium***
Landform	Valley floors are narrow with occasional flatter floodplain areas.	Turbines would detract from areas of more complex interlocking	***High-medium***	Turbines would detract from areas of more complex interlocking landform,	***Medium***

	Steep lower slopes often give way to more rolling broader upper slopes on the south-east side of the Isla and in Glen Rinnes. Landform is more complex, with steep slopes and interlocking hills in places within the Deveron Valley. Small rounded hills and ridges on the edge of these valleys at the transition with LCTs 9, 12a and 12b contain and provide the backdrop to these valleys.	landform, steep slopes and from the small open floodplain areas which contribute to the diversity of these landscapes. Broader, more gently undulating upper hill slopes and terraces would be less sensitive.		steep slopes and from the small open floodplain areas which contribute to the diversity of these landscapes although there is greater scope to accommodate turbines of this size within broader, more gently undulating upper hill slopes and terraces.	
Landscape pattern	This landscape is often richly patterned with a mix of enclosed pastures and some arable land and small woodlands. Policy woodlands, a strong pattern of shelterbelts, field trees and avenue plantings occur in the upper Isla and Deveron Valleys. Small pockets of wetland and riparian woodlands are present on the floor of some of these valleys.	There are opportunities for this typology to minimise effects on areas with a more diverse land cover pattern although multiple turbines of this size repeated across these valleys would still introduce new features that could cumulatively detract from the rich land cover pattern characteristic of these valleys.	***Medium***	There are greater opportunities to locate this small typology to avoid impacts on more diverse land cover. Multiple turbines towards the lower height band of this typology would be likely to have reduced cumulative effects.	***Medium-low***
Built environment	These valleys are well-settled with small villages, dispersed farms and houses and occasional grand houses and castles evenly distributed across the slopes above the floodplain. Archaeological features are more visually evident in the Deveron Valley. Roads are aligned through these valleys.	The setting of small settlements, grand houses/castles and their designed landscapes would be sensitive to this typology. There is scope to site turbines of this size to minimise impacts on more densely settled areas and on other built features.	***Medium***	Less densely settled upper slopes offer opportunities for this typology to be sited while minimising effects on the setting of built features.	***Medium-low***
Perceptual qualities	Although these well-settled and managed valleys have no pronounced sense of wildness, the steep-sided sinuous valley of the Deveron, together with its rich built heritage and designed landscapes, can instil a distinct sense of place.	There would be no effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***	There would be no effect on this sensitivity.	***Low***

Visual amenity	These valleys are well-settled and also contain a number of main roads. Many of the roads form popular tourist routes. Views beyond the valley are limited however due to their containment by adjacent upland areas. There are few views to these valleys from adjacent character types although the more popularly walked hills, such as Ben Rinnes, provide elevated views over Glen Rinnes and Glen Fiddich.	Turbines of this height would be highly visible if sited in the lower valley areas although broader upper hill slopes set back from main concentrations of settlement and main roads would be less visually sensitive. Views from adjacent character types would be likely to be limited due to the visual containment of these valleys.	***High-med***	This typology would have less of an effect on views from settlement and roads provided turbines were set back on broader upper slopes and terraces and avoided intrusion on key views to landmark hills within LCT 12a. Views from adjacent character types would be likely to be limited due to the visual containment of these valleys and these smaller turbines would be less intrusive from elevated views.	***Medium***
Cumulative effects	The operational Hill of Towie wind farm is prominent in views from the upper Isla Valley and from Glen Fiddich. The consented Dorenell wind farm will be visible from parts of Glen Fiddich.	Turbines of this size could have cumulative effects with operational and consented wind farms in adjacent character types if sited nearby. There is scope to avoid cumulative effects however.	***Medium-low***	Cumulative visual effects with existing wind farm developments sited in adjacent uplands would be reduced due to the clear size differential between turbines. Turbines should be located well away from operational and consented wind farms though.	***Low***

Appendix D: Guidance on the micro-siting of smaller turbines

Introduction

The height of turbines relative to other structures in the landscape is a key consideration in terms of landscape 'fit'. With this in mind, five types of 'small' turbines were initially considered when developing the methodology for this landscape capacity assessment. These are:

- Domestic systems — Roof/wall mounted systems
- Micro wind — Freestanding up to 12m to blade tip
- Micro-small wind turbines — 12m – 20m to blade tip
- Small wind turbine — 20m – 35m to blade tip
- Small-medium wind turbine — 35m – 50m to blade tip

Domestic systems

Domestic roof/wall mounted systems are most likely to have an impact on townscape and add to cumulative effects especially in urban areas. They have not been included in this landscape capacity assessment, as it is difficult to identify a robust list of sensitivities for this size of development which can be properly assessed at the strategic scale required for this locational guidance.

Micro wind developments

Freestanding turbines up to 12m high relate well to the size of existing buildings in the landscape, including farm buildings. These turbines are just over twice the height of a single storey house, while a two storey house is about 9m high to roof pitch. This height of turbine is also similar to small telephone masts and tall telegraph poles[1]. This size of turbine has not been included in the landscape sensitivity assessments.

A single turbine of this height is most likely to be used to contribute to the energy needs of a residential house, farm or other rural based small business. The size means that it is relatively easy to accommodate in a settled landscape, if sited to be associated with such a building cluster. It is therefore likely that any assessment of landscape sensitivity will conclude that this size of turbine could be readily accommodated – perhaps, at the most, subject to siting considerations to encourage the turbines to be located where they can be visually seen to be part of a group of buildings, or clearly linked to an individual house.

Therefore, while it is recognised that the free standing turbines of up to 12m may have cumulative effects on the landscape, they have been excluded from the landscape sensitivity assessments.

[1] Telegraph poles are available in heights from 6m to 25m, although based on site observations most appear to be 10m or less in height.

Guidance for micro-small turbines (12m – 20m in height to blade tip)

Freestanding turbines between 12m and around 20m in height to blade tip can be, at its highest, over twice the height of a two storey house. This size of turbine is therefore likely to be prominent and may appear above buildings. However, a well grown, mature forest, broadleaved or conifer tree is also about 15-20m in height. Turbines are likely to be similar in height to these trees, even more so in fertile lowland landscapes where trees often achieve good growth. Other structures of a similar height include taller communications masts and small pylons.

It is likely that proposals for this height of turbine will only come forward in settled lowland landscapes or hill fringes, and in these locations, trees and other structures will provide an appropriate scale reference. Specific landscape sensitivity assessments for this size of turbine were therefore not carried out within each of the landscape character types. Nevertheless, this size of turbine has been considered within the guidance offered in the lowland landscape sensitivity assessments carried out for this study. Generic guidance for this height of turbine is provided below.

Background

Within the Moray landscape, the following issues have been identified as being particularly influential in terms of detailed siting of this typology within character types identified as being appropriate for this typology:

- *Association with existing built development*
- *Turbine height in relation to the scale of the landscape*
- *Landform shape*
- *Settlement and land use pattern and features*
- *Visibility*
- *Potential cumulative issues*

Association with existing built development

Wherever possible, a turbine of less than 20m high will 'fit' into the landscape more successfully if it forms part of a 'cluster' of development and is visually associated with other built structures in the landscape. This is best achieved if the size of the turbine is in proportion to the size of individual features, such as buildings, trees and even pylons and other structures.

Image 1*: A turbine illustrated at an indicative 2x height of the house from this view, or a taller turbine located behind the ridge to reduce overall height from this view. The turbine is well scaled in relation to the size of other individual features. It is also located on the side of the hill, rather than the hill top, where it can be 'read' in conjunction with the farm buildings. This forms a 'cluster' of development, which reduces landscape and visual impact.*

Turbine height in relation to the scale of the landscape

Understanding scale, and the relative proportions of features in the landscape, is important in siting this typology. Landscape scale is made up of two factors, the scale of the landform and the scale of the pattern of land use.

Assessing the scale of the landform involves assessing the perceived vertical height and horizontal expanse of the topography, as well as the degree of openness and containment created by topographical relief.

The pattern of land use creates an additional layer of possible enclosure, for example where woodland, hedges and field walls provide containment. Conversely, low-growing vegetation, such as moorland, can reinforce openness. In addition, while we often assess sense of scale relative to ourselves within the landscape, individual elements, from trees to pylons, can provide reference points against which the scale of the landscape or size of other elements is perceived and understood.

In Moray, the scale of the landform is a significant factor in defining landscape character. More enclosed and steep-sided river valleys, small scale hummocky landforms and low hills, as well as more complex landform along some of the foothills, create areas of relatively small scale character. Plateau moorlands, more expansive hills, long undulating ridges are characteristic of upland areas. Relatively expansive but undulating low-lying landscape is more characteristic of the lowland farmed plains.

Trees and woodland, field pattern, settlements and farms are located on the lower fringes of the uplands, within the glens and across the farmed plains. The consistent and recurring presence of these elements creates a pattern which reduces the scale in these areas, and the individual elements provide scale reference points against which height can be judged.

As shown in Image 1 above, turbines of this height (12m – 20m) are still small enough to be sited where they can be associated with buildings and trees. Although they may be bigger than these elements, they are proportionately unlikely to be more than three times the size of

any building or tree, and within a wider landscape setting, this size relationship can usually be accommodated unless there are site-specific scale sensitivities.

On the coastal fringe, landform relief tends to be very low, with raised beaches or sand dunes, some of which are forested, forming a backdrop to the beach. Even where cliffs and more pronounced landform is present, the scale is sensitive, and a turbine can easily diminish the sense of height.

As a result, the landscape sensitivity assessment for the Coastal Fringe (1-3), concludes that turbines of no more than 20m high to blade tip are appropriate for this area. Turbines should be set back from the crest of a raised beach, promontory, cliff or other key landform feature.

Wherever possible, they should be sited where they can be associated with existing development. Buildings along the coast are often small, and even trees can be 'wind shorn' and struggle to reach full height in exposed locations. This further emphasises the need to use only small turbines in the coastal landscape, to reflect the relative size of these features.

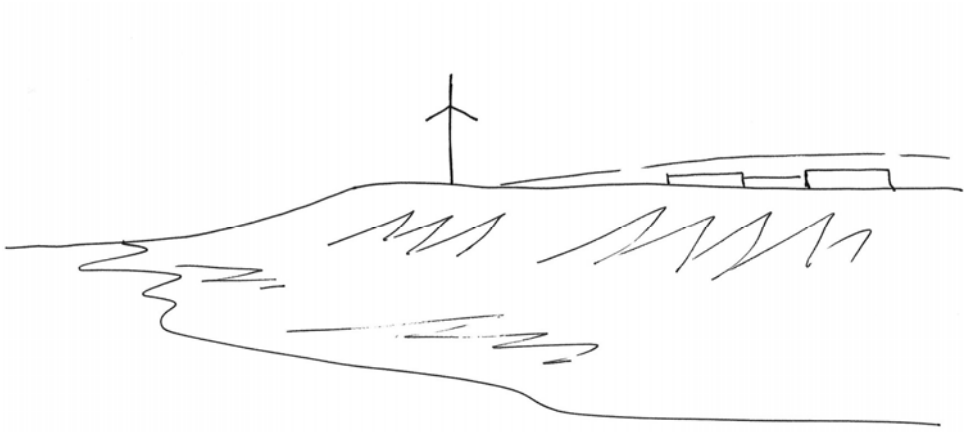


Image 2 – Coastal landscapes*: This turbine is perched on top of the raised beach and although it is quite small, instantly dominates the view and overlooks, or appears to 'hover above', the coast.*

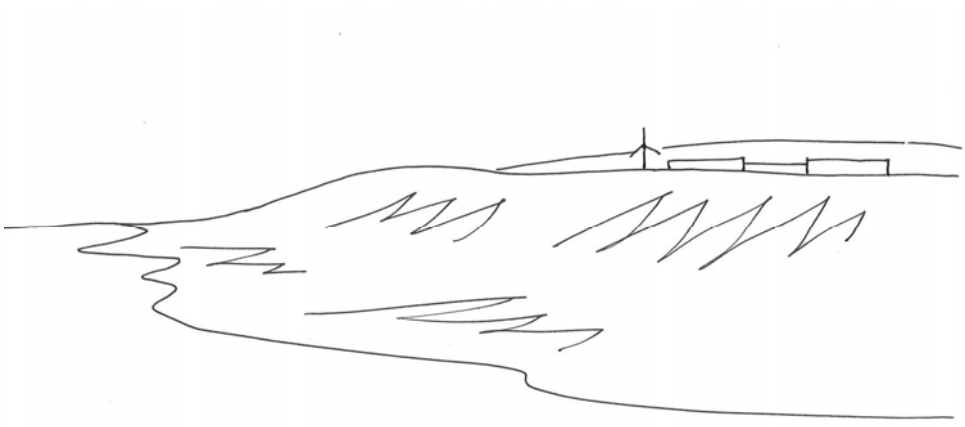


Image 3 – Coastal landscapes*: The same turbine set back from the immediate coastal edge and associated with buildings is a less intrusive impact on the coast. The buildings along the coast are often small and low, therefore smaller turbines are more acceptable in terms of relative scale.*

Landform shape

The farms and settlements where turbines of this height (12m – 20m) are most likely to be located are generally associated with lower hill slopes or valley floors. Some valleys have broad upper terraces, across which are scattered small farms, and where some of the steadings have fallen into disuse. The more extensive farmed coastal plains are gently undulating, often with subtle terraces or smaller areas of more complex landform created by deposits. There are also occasional long ridges, where settlement can extend far up the slopes, for example in *Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys* (5b).

These farmed slopes and valley or glen floors often have terraces, narrow ledges, folds and subtle hollows, distinct changes in gradient associated with rising slopes or dips within undulations. These changes in gradient all have the potential to create natural platforms for siting turbines of this height (12m – 20m) within the settled landscape.

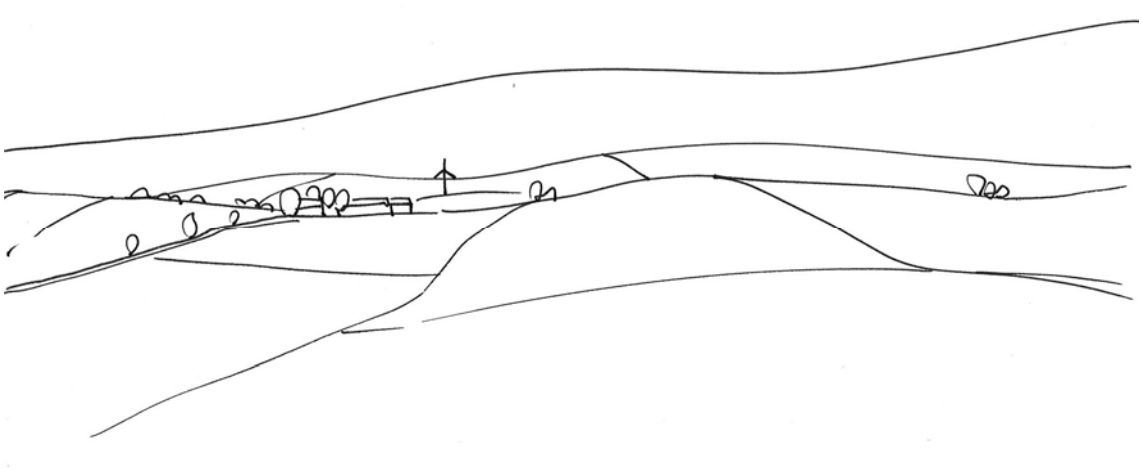


Image 4 – landform shape – locating turbines on changes of gradient*: This turbine (an indicative 2 x the size of the two storey house), is located at the distinct change in gradient close to the farm buildings. This means that the turbine reinforces the presence of the existing change of gradient or break in slope, rather than detract from it.*

When siting turbines in this landscape, avoid locating them on the tops of knolls. Side slopes of low hill and ridges, and terraces or places where there is a marked change in gradient offer good opportunities.

On the more expansive farmed landscapes – such as the Coastal Farmland (4) and the Upland Farmland (8) – landform is more subtle, with long low ridges and undulating forms, as well as occasional more pronounced ridges. Turbines of this height (12m – 20m) should aim to be linked to existing building groups, and should avoid the tops of ridges except where this is a characteristic of settlement pattern. These turbines will be more easily accommodated if they are sited on the side slopes of ridges.

Settlement and land use pattern and features

Turbines of this height (12m – 20m) are most easily accommodated in areas where there is existing settlement and other infrastructure. In such areas, the distribution of existing built development can form a recognisable pattern to which wind turbines can be visually and physically linked.

In Moray, there is frequently a clear link between settlement and landform, for example, buildings may be located at a natural break in slope, the side slopes of the glens or associated with watercourses. In more extensive farmed areas, farm buildings may be relatively evenly dispersed across the landscape. Along the coast, settlement is located on harder rocky terrain, near the mouths of rivers and sheltered coastal locations.

Larger farm buildings, industrial buildings and distilleries are also to be found in Moray, and these building groups can even include tall stacks or other masts.

While even turbines of this height (12m – 20m) may be larger than most domestic and farm buildings, it is likely to still be appropriate to establish a visual relationship between a turbine and a farm or other group of buildings in this type of landscape. It is desirable to support the existing pattern of built development, where turbines of a similar size are consistently associated with a commonly occurring detailed landform or built features associated with the farms or small settlements in an area. Note that proximity to 'regularly occupied' buildings will also need to be balanced with a noise buffer zone.

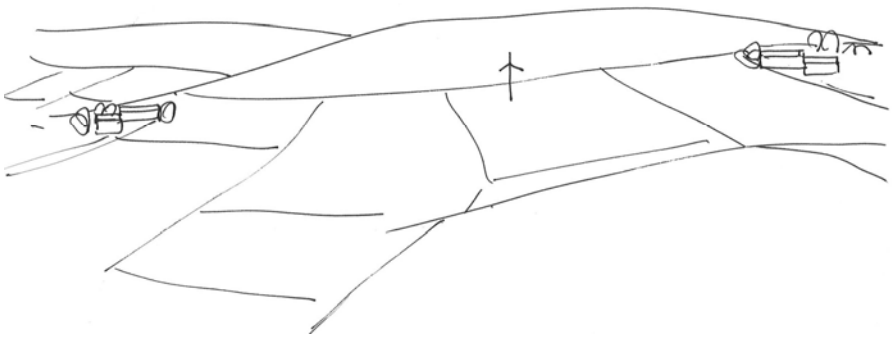


Image 5 – Poor relationship with settlement pattern*. Here a turbine is located in between two farms, and is not associated with either. It appears to 'drift' unattached in the landscape as it does not reflect the existing pattern of built development. Instead, the turbine is setting up a new pattern of development which conflicts with the existing well-established pattern.*

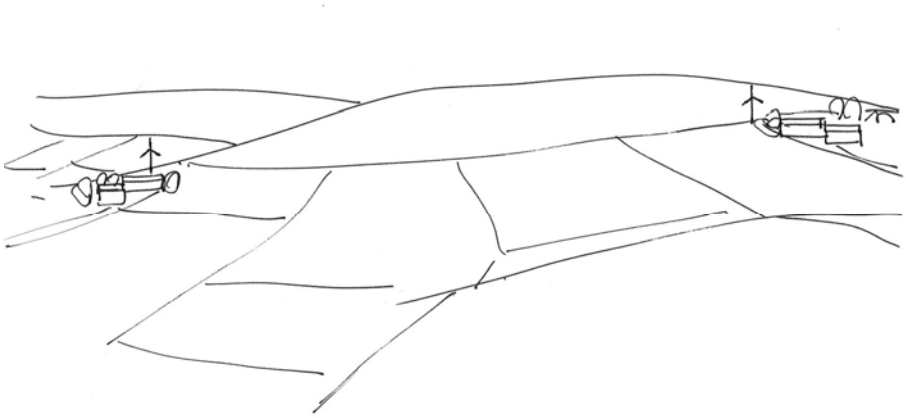


Image 6 – Strong relationship with settlement pattern*. The same landscape, with a turbine sited to each of the farms, close to the buildings, each of which now form 'building clusters'. Here the turbines reflect the existing pattern of settlement, emphasising this, rather than starting a new built pattern which conflicts with the existing pattern. Micro-siting will need to balance creating a development cluster with the need to apply a recommended 'noise buffer' zone.*

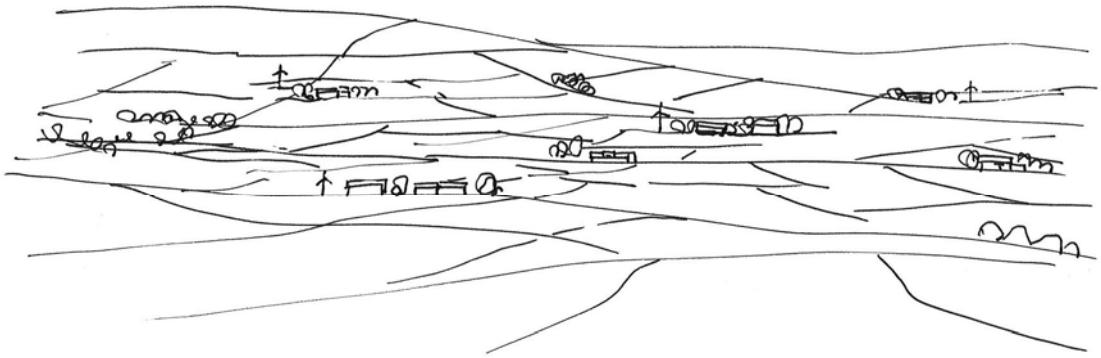


Image 7 – Settlement pattern on extensive low-lying farmed landscapes: *Most farms are located away from the top of the high ridges, and landform is relatively subtle. Micro-small turbines (12 – 20 m) can be located relatively close to buildings, to form 'clusters of development' consistently placed across the more expansive farmland areas. Consistent siting and association with existing farms will limit negative cumulative landscape effects. Micro-siting will need to balance creating a development cluster with the need to apply a recommended 'noise buffer' zone.*

In some landscapes, this consistency can be further reinforced if turbines are located at a similar elevation, especially if this relates to the existing elevation of farms, settlements or another major feature, such as the head dyke, which forms the boundary between fields and open hill ground, and is often located at a break in slope.

It is important to assess and understand the existing settlement pattern at the outset, and consider how a number of turbines could be sited in a landscape. Careful and consistent siting will limit potential negative cumulative effects on landscape character.

Visibility

Unsurprisingly, these micro-small turbines are likely to be less visible than the larger ones over a wider area. Turbines which are 20m or less are more likely to be able to be screened or partially hidden by the low ridges and more undulating landform within the settled landscapes of Moray. Tree cover, including sometimes extensive woodland, also limits visibility, although this can be sparse in more open farmed areas.

Hiding turbines *per se* is not more important than choosing a turbine of the right size in relation to landform or other landscape features, or than good micro-siting in relation to landform and settlement pattern. However, reducing sustained visibility of turbines helps limit potential cumulative visual impacts.

Siting turbines on the sides of ridges and low hills, rather than their summits and high points overall reduces visual cumulative effects – turbines are partially screened from some viewpoints to the lee of the hill and slopes in these locations. If several turbines are visible in an area, broad consistency of turbine design, height and location can help mitigate potential visual impacts.

Potential cumulative issues

Micro-small turbines may become a frequent and common occurrence in farmed landscapes. Key cumulative issues for small turbines are likely to relate strongly to potential clutter in the landscape. Issues may include:

- *Several individual, or small groups of turbines, could begin to dominate local character;*
- *The landscape could appear 'cluttered' if single or groups of turbines were associated with the majority of land holdings, especially where holdings are small and therefore closer together;*
- *Lack of a clear siting strategy could lead to fragmentation of an existing robust, recognisable, consistent and characteristic pattern of settlement, especially if turbines do not relate well to existing buildings and established pattern of built development;*
- *While one turbine breaching a skyline may be a focal point, a number of diverse structures, all spinning at different speeds – or even several of the same type of turbine – or appearing at irregular intervals along a prominent or important skyline will become a visual distraction from other landscape features or from perceived visual amenity, especially from key viewpoints;*
- *The variety of potential different types of wind turbines within the landscape could lead to clutter with different styles, sizes of structures and speeds of blade movement dotted across a landscape;*
- *There may be the added complication of increased visual clutter created by a wide range of different heights of turbine within a farmed landscape with micro-, small and small/medium sized turbines;*
- *Potential clutter may also be exacerbated if there are other masts, such as telecoms masts, overhead wires and pylons within the same vicinity*

The sensitivity assessment has assumed that single turbines and some groups of up to 3 micro-small (below 20m to blade tip) turbines are most likely to be associated with this typology and will have the most potential to be accommodated in the landscape. The assessment has also assumed that this size of turbine is most likely to be associated with farmed and settled landscapes.

Proposals for 'wind farms/crofts' of micro-small turbines over 3 in number are likely to have more significant adverse impacts on the landscape character, including on cumulative effects.

Guidance for small turbines (20m – 35m in height to blade tip)

The sensitivity of the landscape to this development scenario has been included in all assessments carried out in settled and farmed lowland landscape and coastal character types. Less settled upland landscape character types were not assessed for this size of development, as this size of turbine is associated with more settled landscapes and applications are unlikely to come forward in areas where there are no farms or other settlement.

Background

Within the Moray landscape, the following issues have been identified as being particularly influential in terms of detailed siting of this typology within character types identified as being appropriate for this typology:

- *Turbine height in relation to the scale of the landscape*
- *Landform shape*
- *Settlement and land use pattern and features*
- *Visibility*
- *Potential cumulative issues*

Turbine height in relation to the scale of the landscape

Turbines of between 20m and 35m are going to be one of the tallest structures in any Moray landscape. They are going to be taller than most buildings and trees. They are still, however, similar in height to some taller pylons and communications masts. In addition, especially on the coastal farmland, there are taller communication masts and structures associated with military activity.

Understanding scale, and the relative proportions of features in the landscape, is therefore important in siting this typology. Landscape scale is made up of two factors, the scale of the landform and the scale of the pattern of land use.

Assessing the scale of the landform involves assessing the perceived vertical height and horizontal expanse of the topography, as well as the degree of openness and containment created by topographical relief.

The pattern of land use creates an additional layer of possible enclosure, for example where woodland, hedges and field walls provide containment. Conversely, low-growing vegetation, such as moorland, can reinforce openness. In addition, while we often assess sense of scale relative to ourselves within the landscape, individual elements, from trees to pylons, can offer reference points against which the scale of the landscape or size of other elements is perceived and understood.

In Moray, the scale of the landform is a significant factor in defining landscape character. More enclosed and steep-sided river valleys, small scale hummocky landforms and low hills, as well as more complex landform along some of the foothills, create areas of relatively small scale character. Plateau moorlands, more expansive hills and long undulating ridges are characteristic of upland areas. Relatively expansive but undulating low-lying landform is more characteristic of the lowland farmed plains.

Turbines of this size (20m – 35m), even in small groups of up to three turbines, may be able to take advantage of the degree of relief created by small and medium scaled landforms, for example the broad slopes of foothills and lower fringes of upland areas, lower side slopes of valleys or the sides of undulating ridges and more subtle landforms of *Upland Farmland* (8) and the *Coastal Farmland* (4).

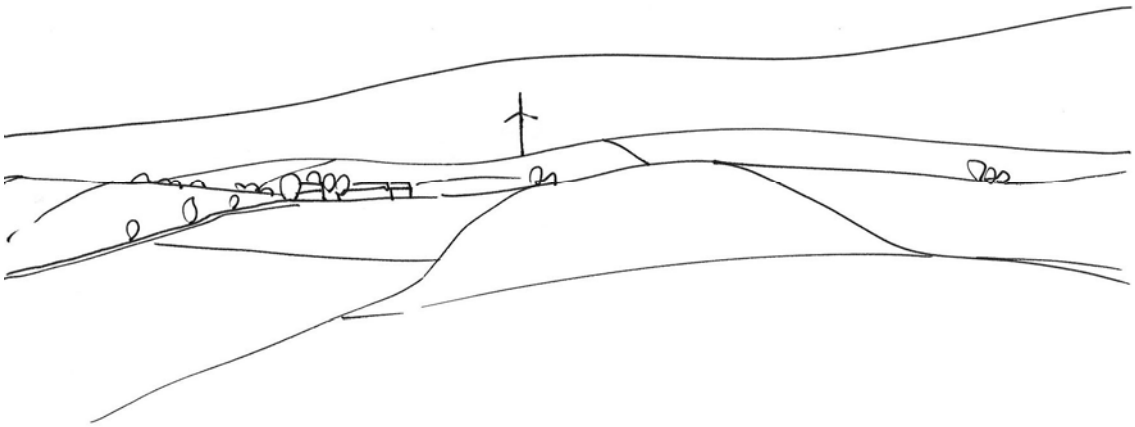


Image 8 – Landscape scale and size of features: *A 'small typology' (20m – 35m) turbine located on a low-lying ridgeline set back from but still associated with the pattern of settlement. In this location, the turbine is linked to the scale of the landform and there are no features in the immediate proximity against which to judge turbine height. It is sited at a slight dip in the ridge, and back-dropped in this view by higher ground. It is located away from the house, to avoid overwhelming the buildings in terms of scale.*

Trees and woodland, field pattern, settlements and farms are located on the lower fringes of the uplands, within the glens and across the farmed plains. The consistent and recurring presence of these elements creates a pattern which reduces the scale in these areas, and the individual elements provide scale reference points against which height can be judged. Care should be taken to site 20m – 35m high turbines where they do not dominate individual buildings, trees or other features, although some association with broad settlement pattern is still considered appropriate.

On more marginal farmed landscapes characteristic of the settled areas of Moray, buildings and tree cover are likely to be sparse and often are smaller in size than more fertile lowland farmlands. Trees may also be limited in height by exposure or poor soils and buildings are often low, either due to exposure, or due to the poorer quality farmland, which is often reflected in the characteristically more modest building style.

In these locations, the relationship between small turbines (20m – 35m) and landscape features is likely to be very sensitive, as this size of turbines could easily overwhelm the small stature and scale of individual elements which are key characteristics of these landscapes.

Where larger farm buildings, and even industrial and distillery buildings are located in more expansive landscapes or broader valleys, there are increased opportunities to site this height of turbine (20m – 35m) closer to buildings.

Overall, turbines of this height (20m – 35m) can most readily be accommodated by micro-siting them to relate to the scale of landforms or where present, larger buildings and woodlands, rather than trying to link them to the size of small structures, buildings and small trees.

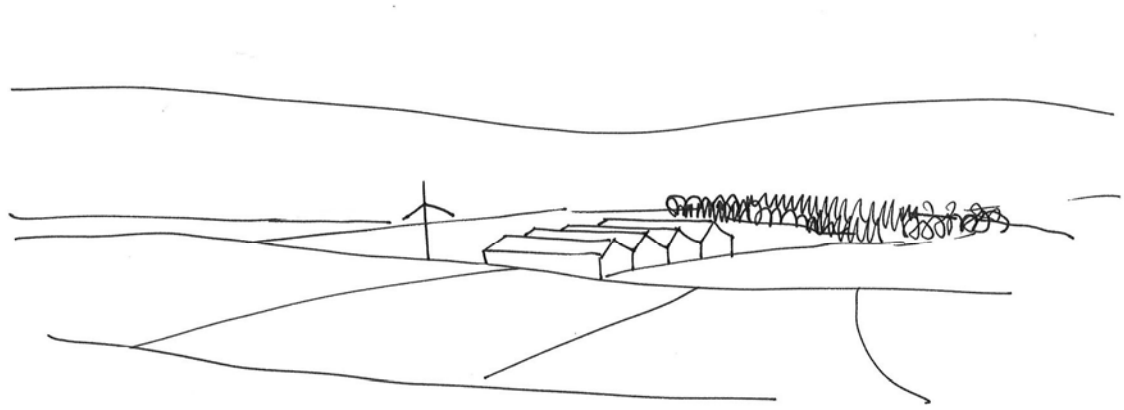


Image 9 – Landscape scale – larger buildings: *A turbine of this height (20 – 35m), could be associated with larger buildings in more simple landscapes, for example where larger woodlands are also present.*

Turbines of this height are likely to be more difficult to accommodate within very small scale and complex topography, along the floor of very narrow glens and passes, on the coast, or where small landscape scale is created by small fields, diverse land use and dense settlement pattern.

For this typology, if there is doubt about the potential impact of a turbine on the scale of the landscape, a photomontage or wireline of the turbine taken from a key viewpoint will help the assessment of potential impacts.

Landform shape

This size of turbine is more likely to fit with the landscape if they are sited to clearly relate to a specific landform. Turbines of this size could be accommodated on low hills or ridgelines across the more expansive farmed areas, or in the wider and more extensive areas of farmed valleys. Other opportunities include the rising ground which provides the immediate backdrop to the farmed lowland areas and valley floors, especially if they are back-dropped by larger hills.

Distinct changes in gradient associated with rising slopes, well defined dips within undulations or more expansive concave landforms, long ridges and interim hills along the lower edges of the foothills, as well as the edges of more expansive plateaux all provide potential opportunities for micro-siting turbines of this size.

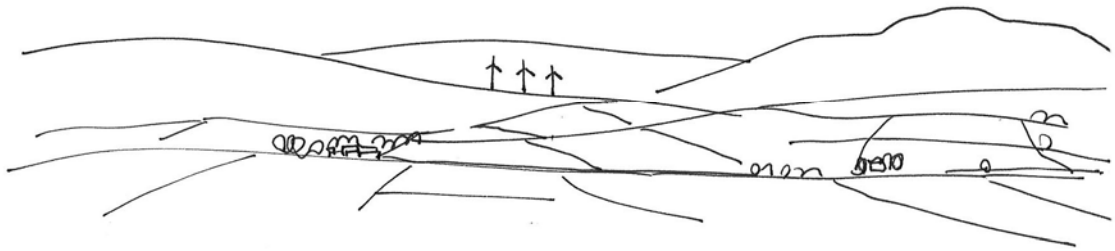


Image 10 – Landform shape and scale: *A cluster of indicative small (20 – 35m high) typology turbines located on the side of a hill, sited where there is a distinct, relatively level ridge and at a low point in the landform. The turbines have been located where they are not likely to interrupt key views of the 'landmark hills' to the right. They are also in scale with the landform, although they are at the upper end of this typology in terms of size.*

Settlement and land use pattern and features

In Moray, there is frequently a link between settlement and landform, for example, buildings may be located at a natural break in slope, the side slopes of the glens or associated with watercourses. In more extensive farmed areas, farm buildings may be relatively evenly dispersed across the landscape. Along the coast, settlement is located on harder rocky terrain, near the mouths of rivers and sheltered coastal locations.

Larger farm buildings, industrial buildings and distilleries are also to be found in Moray, and these building groups can even include tall stacks or other masts.

This height of turbine (20m – 35m height to blade tip) is larger than most buildings found in rural areas. They therefore should be sited where they can more readily be accommodated by landform scale, and avoid overshadowing or dominating smaller elements in the landscape, including small and complex landforms, small fields and settlement. It is more likely that these small sized turbines will be located on low ridges, the side slopes of hills, set slightly apart from farms or settlements.

The alignment of tracks and location of other infrastructure, as well as the turbines themselves, are also more likely to be an issue than with smaller turbine sizes.

Developing a recognisable pattern of development – for example, locating turbines at a similar elevation, and/or on similar topographical features across a landscape type will help create a pattern of development which will appear less cluttered and will also develop a distinctive and consistent landscape characteristic over time. Proximity to 'regularly occupied' buildings will need to be balanced with a noise buffer zone.

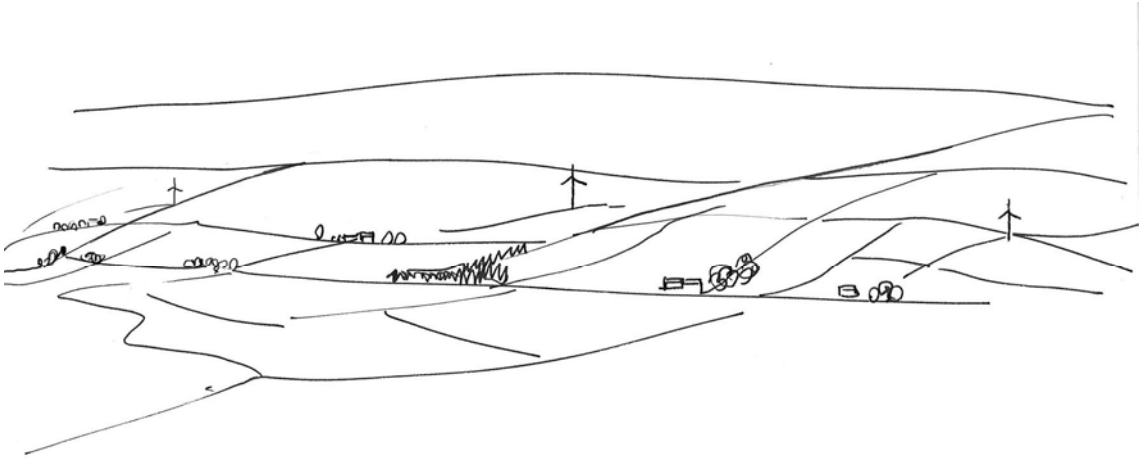


Image 11 – Developing a landscape pattern*: These indicative 35m high turbines are located at a similar elevation on this hillside. They are also loosely associated with the location of the farms. This similarity in size, location and elevation helps to maintain the unity of the landscape pattern. Consistent association with watercourses, low hills or breaks in slope, head dykes or other features will help increase unity in the landscape and reduce negative cumulative landscape effects.*

Visibility

Turbines which are more than 20m in height are taller than most trees and large farm buildings, and are therefore likely to have wider visibility than those turbines less than 20m in height.

As applicants may own farms or larger land holdings, there may be the potential to screen turbines from viewpoints if required, for example to reduce cumulative visual impacts, by establishing trees adjacent to the viewpoint (for quicker, maximum screening affect).

Potential cumulative issues

These small sized turbines may become a frequent and common occurrence, especially in farmed landscapes. Key cumulative issues are likely to relate strongly to potential clutter in the landscape and the visual relationship with other wind turbines. Issues are similar to those identified in the analysis of micro-small wind turbines, but because of the larger size of these turbines the issues are likely to occur more quickly and may include:

- *Several individual, or small groups of turbines, could begin to dominate local character;*
- *Lack of a clear siting strategy could lead to fragmentation of an existing robust and recognisable landscape pattern – where possible, it is important to site turbines on similar landforms, at similar elevations and with a similar relationship to the existing settlement pattern;*
- *Diverse designs of turbine, all spinning at different speeds – or even several turbines of the same type – strung along a prominent or important skyline could become a visual*

distraction from other landscape features or from perceived visual amenity, especially from key viewpoints;

- *The larger the turbine, the harder it is likely to be to accommodate a number of them in a single view or recognisable tract of landscape without them becoming the dominant feature. It is also harder to accommodate the turbines in a sequence of views experienced, for example, when travelling along a road;*
- *The variety of potential different types of wind turbines within the landscape could lead to clutter with different styles, sizes of structures and speeds of blade movement dotted across a landscape;*
- *Potential clutter may also be easily created if there are other masts, such as telecoms masts, overhead wires and pylons within the same vicinity;*
- *There may be the added complication of increased visual clutter created by a wide range of different heights of turbine within a farmed landscape with micro-, small and small/medium sized turbines;*
- *An additional complication may be the visual interrelationship with larger wind farms of large and medium sized turbines, especially along the upper edge of farmland adjacent to upland character types.*

Other landscape issues associated with this typology

Undergrounding electricity cables to a suitable off-site location to connect with the grid should also be undertaken in order to avoid a clutter of disparate built elements in the landscape.

Guidance for small-medium turbines (35m – 50m in height to blade tip)

The sensitivity of the landscape to this development scenario has been included in all assessments carried out in settled lowland landscape and coastal character types. Less settled upland landscape character types, however, were not assessed for this size of development, as this size of turbine is associated with more settled landscapes and applications are unlikely to come forward in areas where there are no farms or other settlements.

Background

Within the Moray landscape, the following issues have been identified as being particularly influential in terms of detailed siting of this typology within character types identified as being appropriate for this typology:

- *Turbine height in relation to the scale of the landscape*
- *Landform shape*
- *Settlement and land use pattern and features*
- *Visibility*
- *Cumulative issues*

Turbine height in relation to the scale of the landscape

Turbines of between 35m and 50m are going to often be the tallest structures in any Moray landscape. They are going to be taller than buildings and trees. They will also be taller than most communication masts and pylons, although there are some very tall masts associated with military installations on the Coastal Farmland (4) in Moray.

Understanding scale, and the relative proportions of features in the landscape, is therefore important in siting this typology. Landscape scale is made up of two factors, the scale of the landform and the scale of the pattern of land use.

Assessing the scale of the landform involves assessing the perceived vertical height and horizontal expanse of the topography, as well as the degree of openness and containment created by topographical relief.

The pattern of land use creates an additional layer of possible enclosure, for example where woodland, hedges and field walls provide containment. Conversely, low-growing vegetation, such as moorland, can reinforce openness. In addition, while we often assess sense of scale relative to ourselves within the landscape, individual elements, from trees to pylons, can offer reference points against which the scale of the landscape or size of other elements is perceived and understood.

In Moray, the scale of the landform is a significant factor in defining landscape character. More enclosed and steep-sided river valleys, small scale hummocky landforms and low hills, as well as more complex landform along some of the foothills, create areas of relatively small scale character. Plateau moorlands, more expansive hills and long undulating ridges are characteristic of upland areas. Relatively expansive but undulating low-lying landscape is more characteristic of the lowland plains.

Turbines of this height (35m – 50m) can therefore be accommodated most readily by relating the height of the turbines to the scale of the landform. If well sited, turbines of this size, even in small groups of up to three turbines, may be able to take advantage of the degree of relief created by medium scaled landforms. Examples include the broad slopes of larger scale foothills and fringes of extensive upland areas and plateaux or the transition between smaller scale farmed or settled landscapes and the edge of larger scale upland landscapes.

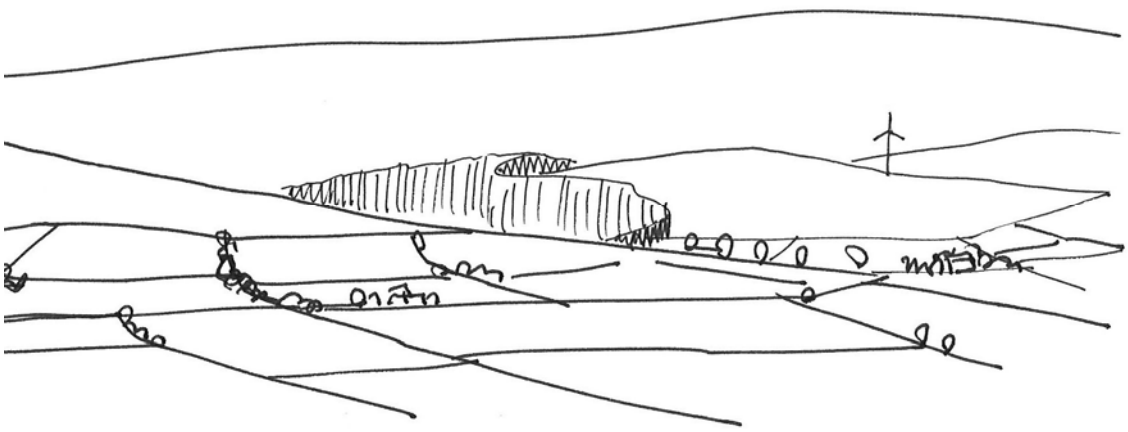


Image 12 – Landscape scale and size of features: *A 'medium-small' (35 – 50m high) turbine located where it is readily associated with the scale of the landform rather than individual features within the low-lying farmland. This size of turbine is more easily accommodated if it is not located close to farms and trees, but can be seen in the context of landform and more simple landcover, such as moorland and larger woods, for example at the transition between upland and lowland landscapes. This turbine has also been placed where it avoids the hill top, and at a clear break in slope along the ridgeline.*

Trees and woodland, field pattern, settlements and farms are located on the lower fringes of the uplands, within the glens and across the farmed plains. The consistent and recurring presence of these elements creates a pattern which reduces the scale in these areas, and the individual elements provide scale reference points against which height can be judged.

On more marginal farmed landscapes characteristic of the settled areas of Moray, buildings and tree cover are likely to be sparse and often are smaller in size than more fertile lowland farmlands. Trees may also be limited in height by exposure or poor soils and buildings are often low, either due to exposure, or due to the poorer quality farmland, which is often reflected in the characteristically more modest building style.

In settled and farmed locations, the relationship between small-medium turbines (35m – 50m) and individual smaller scale elements is likely to be very sensitive, as this size of turbines could easily overwhelm the size of individual elements, such as farms, other buildings, trees, small woods and policy features which are key characteristics of these landscapes.

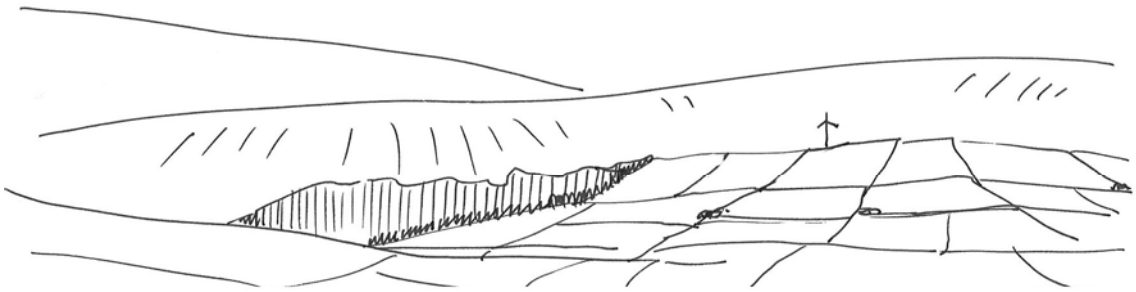
Turbines of this height (35m – 50m) can therefore be accommodated most readily by relating the height of the turbines to the scale of the landform, and away from the setting of farms, other buildings, trees and woodland, as shown in image 12 above.

For this typology, if there is doubt about the potential impact of a turbine on the scale of the landscape, a photomontage, wireline or photowire taken from a key viewpoint will help the assessment of potential impacts.

Landform shape

This size of turbine (35m - 50m to blade tip) is likely to be more readily accommodated in medium scaled landscapes or the transition between smaller scale farmed or settled landscapes and the edge of larger scale upland landscapes. In these locations, they are more likely to fit with the landscape if they are sited to clearly relate to a specific land form. Turbines of this size could be accommodated on low hills or ridgelines which provide the immediate backdrop to the farmed lowland areas, especially if they, too, are back-dropped by larger hills or more sweeping plateaux.

Distinct changes in gradient associated with rising slopes, well defined dips within undulations, natural terraces or more expansive concave landforms, long ridges, and interim hills and foothills, as well as the edges of more expansive plateaux all provide potential opportunities for micro-siting turbines of this size.



Landform shape and scale: *An indicative medium-small turbine (height 35 – 50m) shown at the break in slope at the transition between more accessible farmed land and steeper hillsides.*

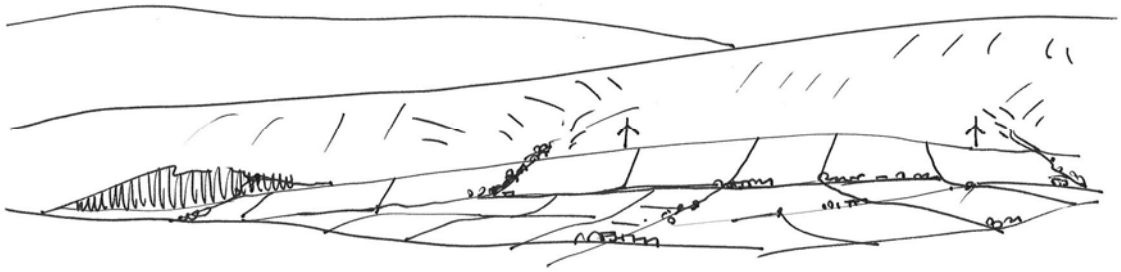
Settlement and land use pattern and features

Wherever possible, this size of turbine will 'fit' in the landscape more successfully if it is strongly associated with the scale of the landform and not individual features such as settlement. This will mean locating this typology away from the setting individual farms and buildings and woodland features.

This size of turbine (35-50m) is most likely to be accommodated where the pattern of built development becomes more sparse, for example in the upland fringe, or where farm holdings are large with very dispersed settlement pattern set within more open, large scale lowland landscapes. Other opportunities include where the pattern of fields gives way to more extensive forestry, open hills and moorland.

The alignment of tracks and location of other infrastructure, as well as the turbines themselves, are also more likely to be an issue than with smaller turbine sizes.

Developing a recognisable pattern of development – for example, locating turbines at a similar elevation, and/or on similar topographical features across a landscape type will help create a pattern of development which will appear less cluttered and will also develop a distinctive and consistent landscape characteristic over time.



Landscape pattern*: These two indicative 35-50m high turbines are located at the break in slope, reinforced by the change from field pattern to open ground. They are also broadly linked to watercourses on this hillside, therefore a pattern is emerging.*

Visibility

Turbines of this height are likely to be widely visible, as they are difficult to screen with smaller landform. Good siting is therefore very important, as the relationship with landform and wider landscape setting will be very visible.

Cumulative issues

Small-medium sized turbines may become a more common occurrence. Key cumulative issues are likely to relate strongly to potential clutter in the landscape and the visual relationship with wind farms of larger turbines or individual and small groups of small turbines. Cumulative issues may include:

- *Several individual, or small groups of turbines, could begin to dominate local character;*
- *Diverse designs of turbine, all spinning at different speeds – or even several turbines of the same type – strung along a prominent or important skyline could become a visual distraction from other landscape features or from perceived visual amenity, especially from key viewpoints;*
- *Lack of a clear siting strategy could lead to fragmentation of an existing robust and recognisable landscape pattern – where possible, it is important to site turbines on similar landforms, at similar elevations and with a similar relationship to the existing settlement pattern;*

- *The larger the turbine, the harder it is likely to be to accommodate a number of them in a single view or recognisable tract of landscape without them becoming the dominant feature. It is also harder to accommodate the turbines in a sequence of views experienced, for example, when travelling along a road;*
- *The variety of potential different types of wind turbines within the landscape could lead to clutter with different styles, sizes of structures and speeds of blade movement dotted across a landscape;*
- *Potential clutter may also be easily created if there are other masts, such as telecoms masts, overhead wires and pylons within the same vicinity – this is likely to be a bigger problem with these small turbines than larger ones;*
- *There may be the added complication of increased visual clutter created by a wide range of different heights of turbine within a farmed landscape with micro-, small and small/medium sized turbines;*
- *Other complications may be the visual interrelationship with larger wind farms of large and medium sized turbines, especially along the upper edge of farmland adjacent to upland character types.*

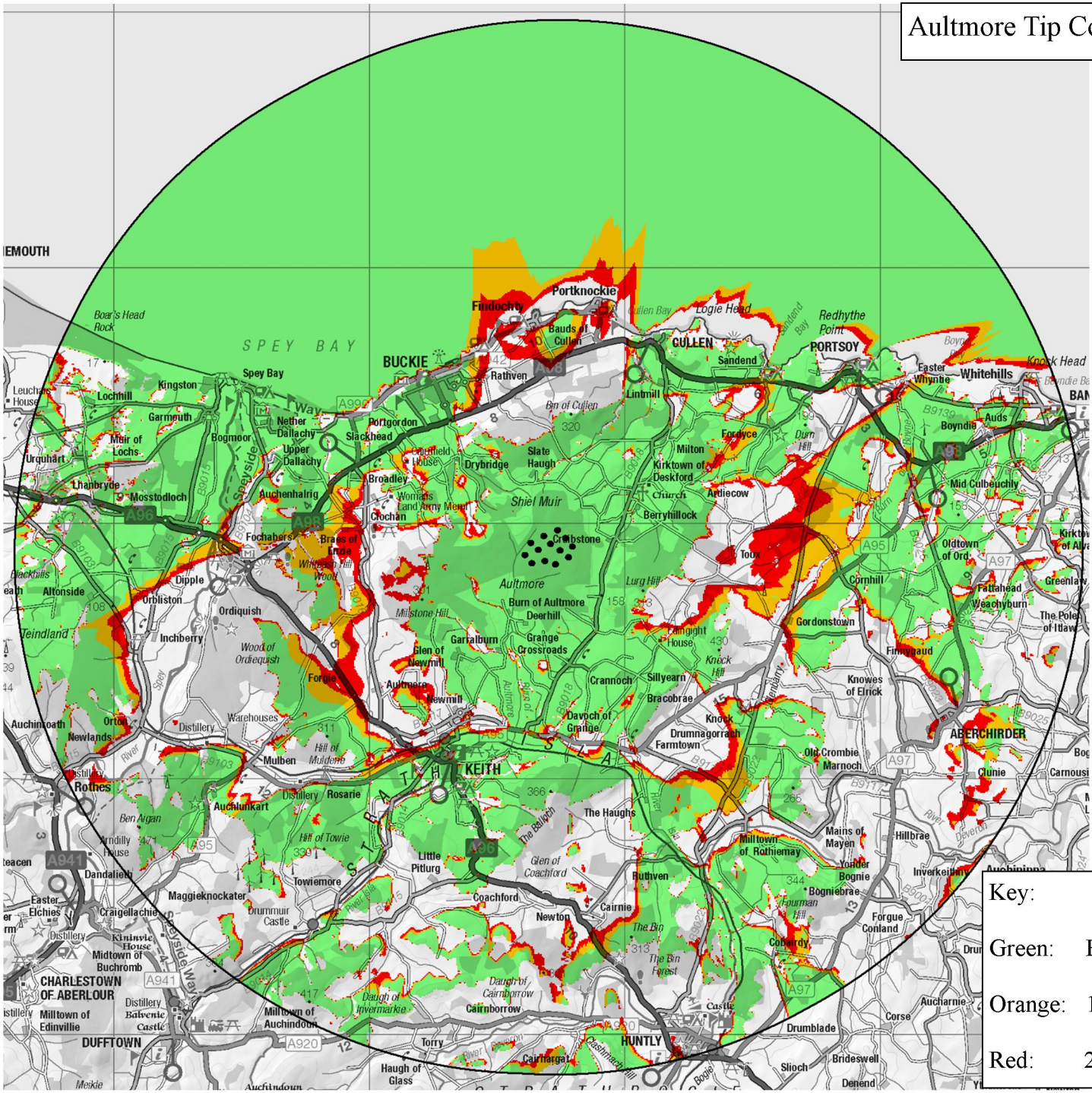
Other landscape issues associated with this typology

More complex landform, such as the areas of small-scale deposits and knolls will be particularly sensitive to the construction of access tracks for this size of wind turbine development. The construction of new access tracks should be minimised by careful siting of turbines to use existing tracks and to avoid more difficult or steep terrain. Care should also be taken in the alignment and design of any access tracks to ensure that sensitive landform and vegetation is not adversely affected and that intrusion on key views is avoided.

Undergrounding electricity cables to a suitable off-site location to connect with the grid should also be undertaken in order to avoid a clutter of disparate built elements in the landscape.

Appendix E: Repowering appraisal ZTVs and visualisations

Aultmore Tip Comparison ZTV



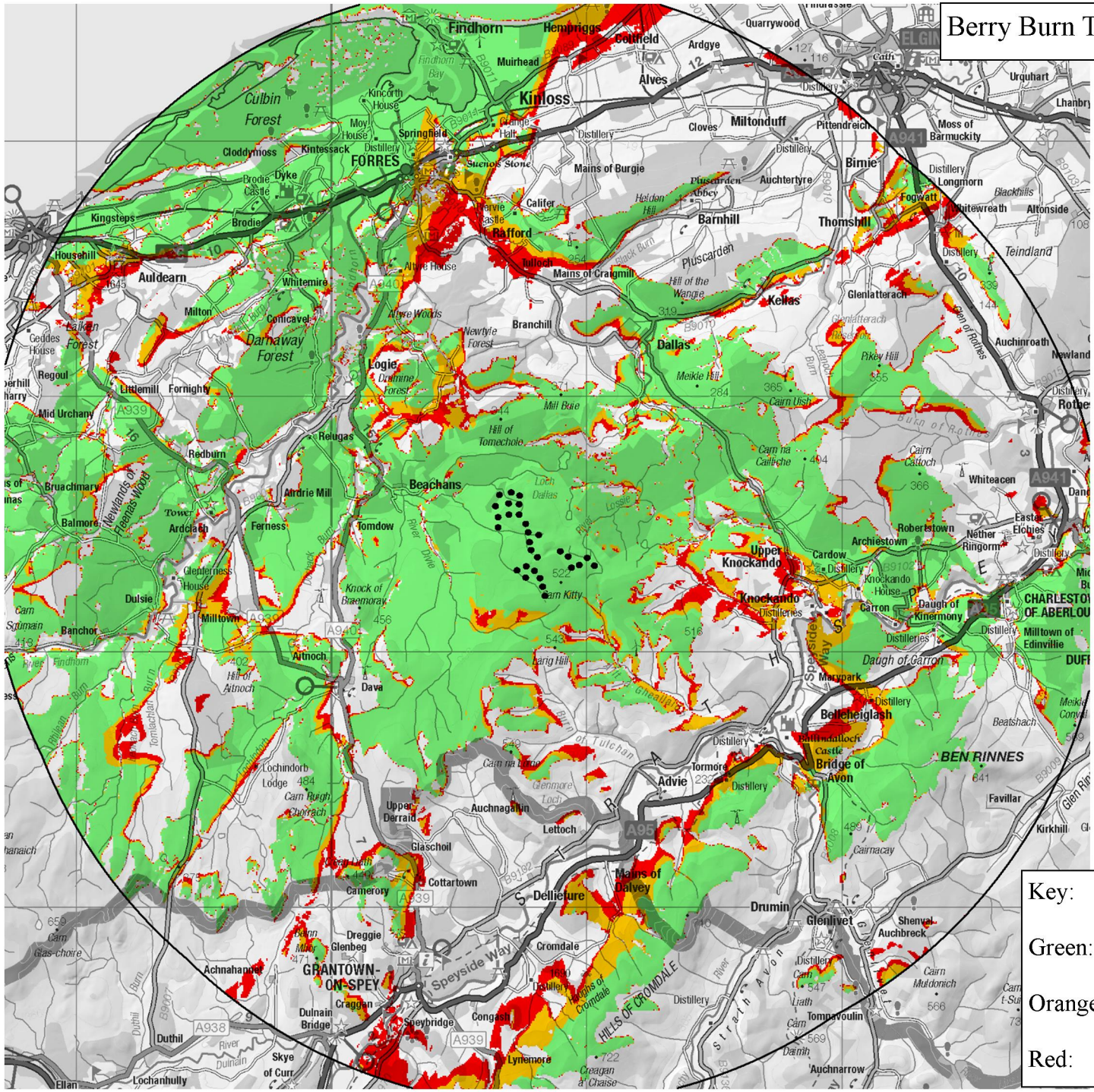
Key:

Green: Existing visibility

Orange: 150m turbine height

Red: 200m turbine height

Berry Burn Tip Comparison ZTV



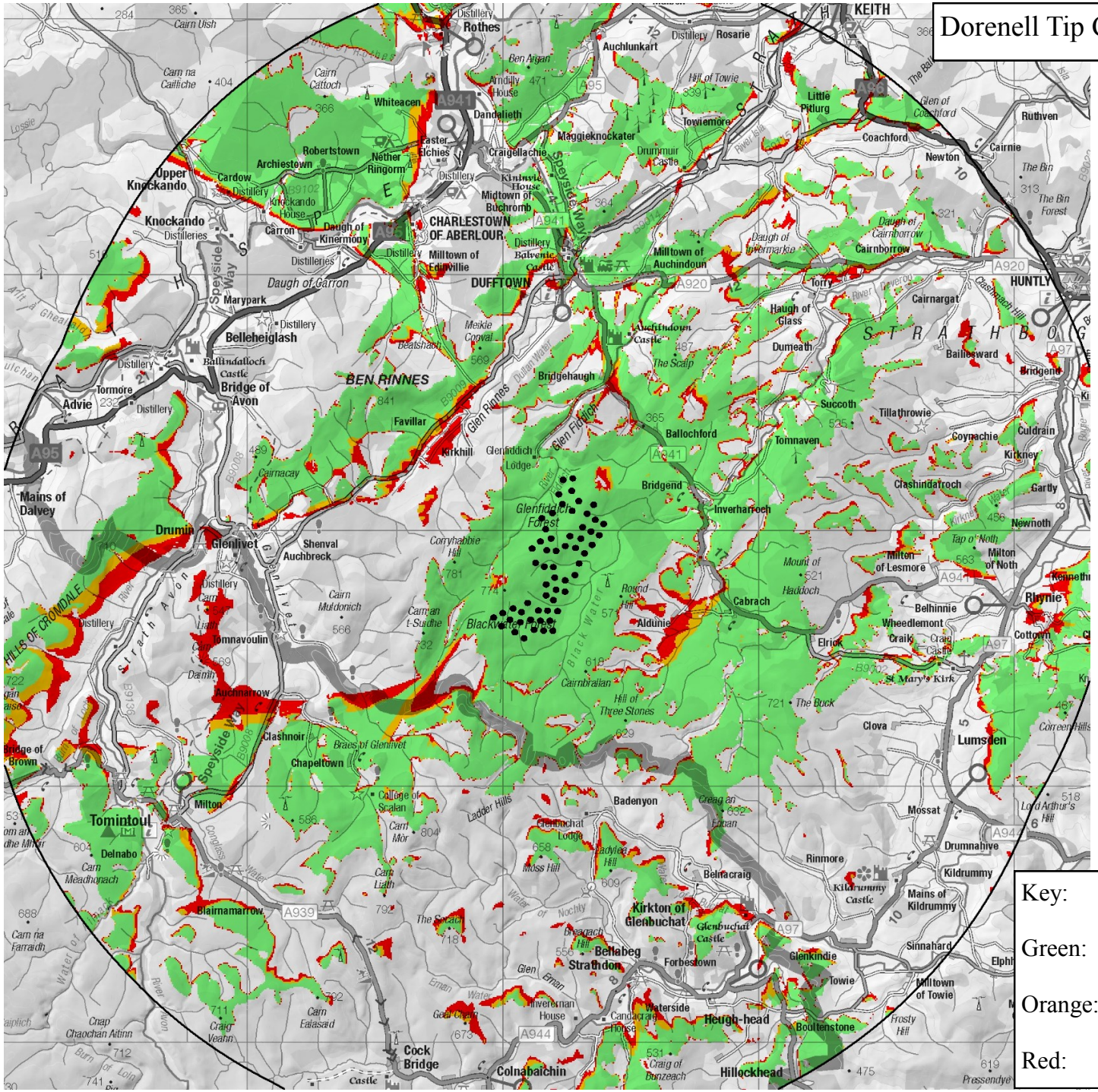
Key:

Green: Existing visibility

Orange: 150m turbine height

Red: 200m turbine height

Dorenell Tip Comparison ZTV



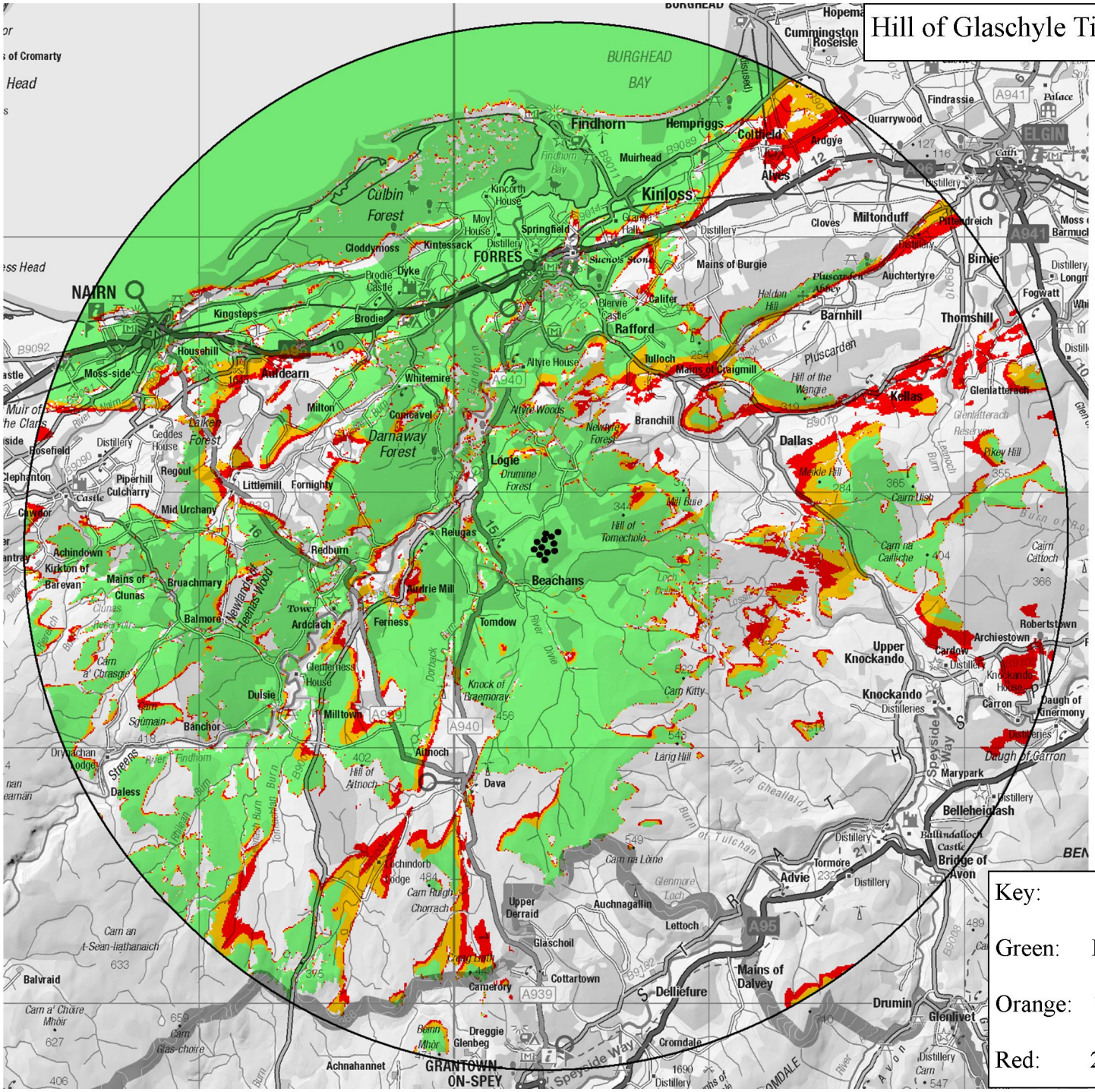
Key:

Green: Existing visibility

Orange: 150m turbine height

Red: 200m turbine height

Hill of Glaschyle Tip Comparison ZTV



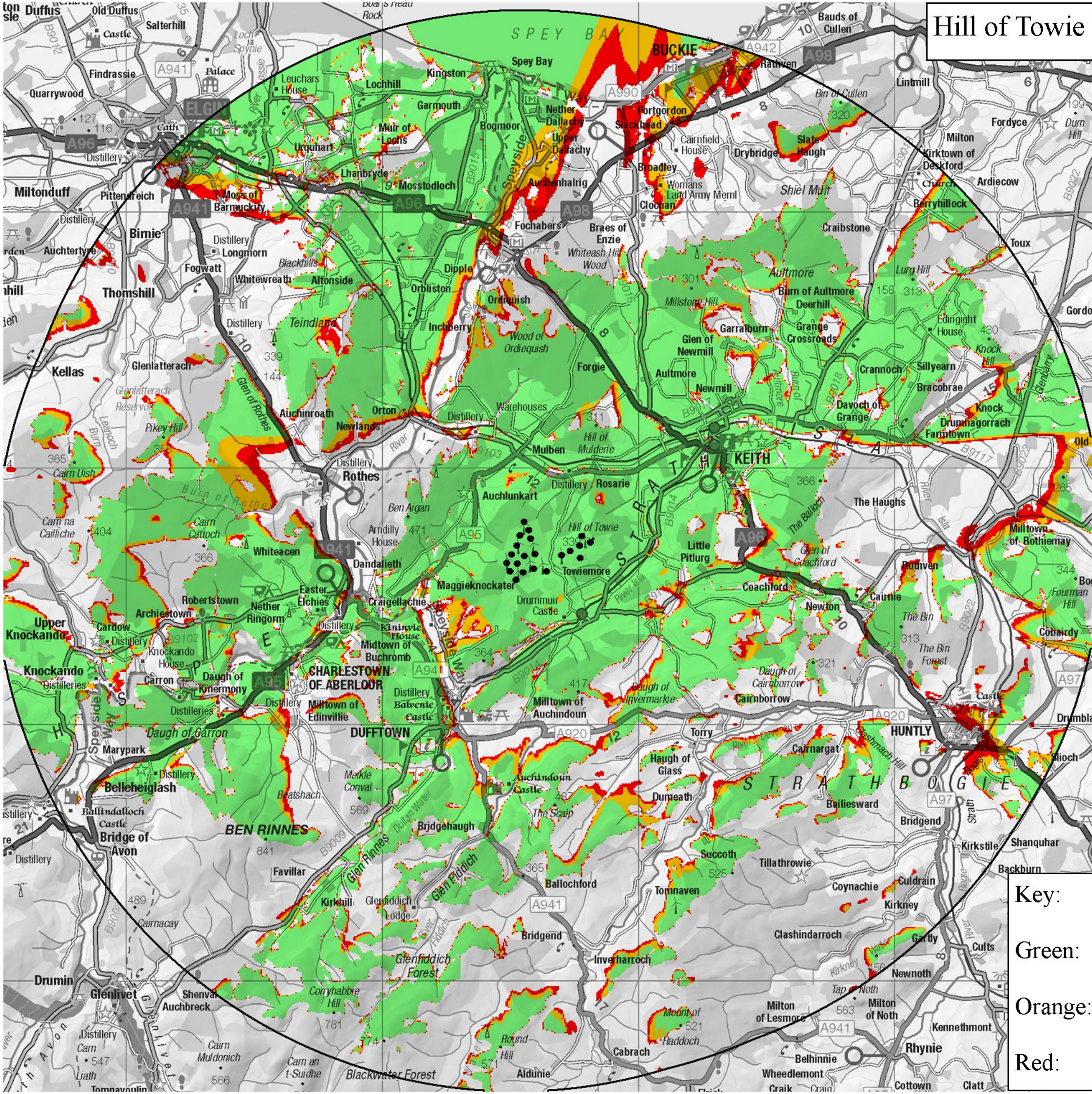
Key:

Green: Existing visibility

Orange: 150m turbine height

Red: 200m turbine height

Hill of Towie Tip Comparison ZTV



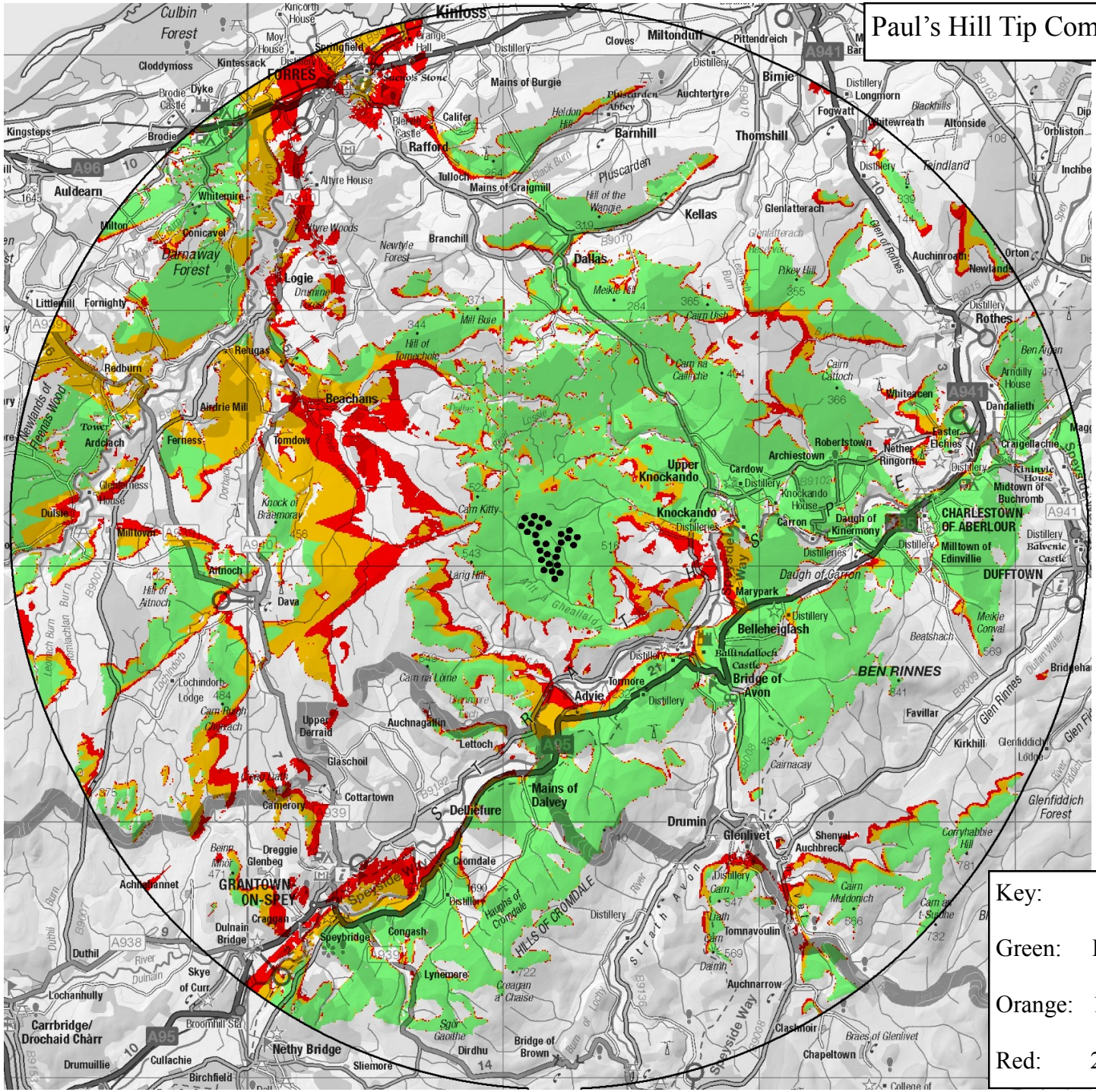
Key:

Green: Existing visibility

Orange: 150m turbine height

Red: 200m turbine height

Paul's Hill Tip Comparison ZTV



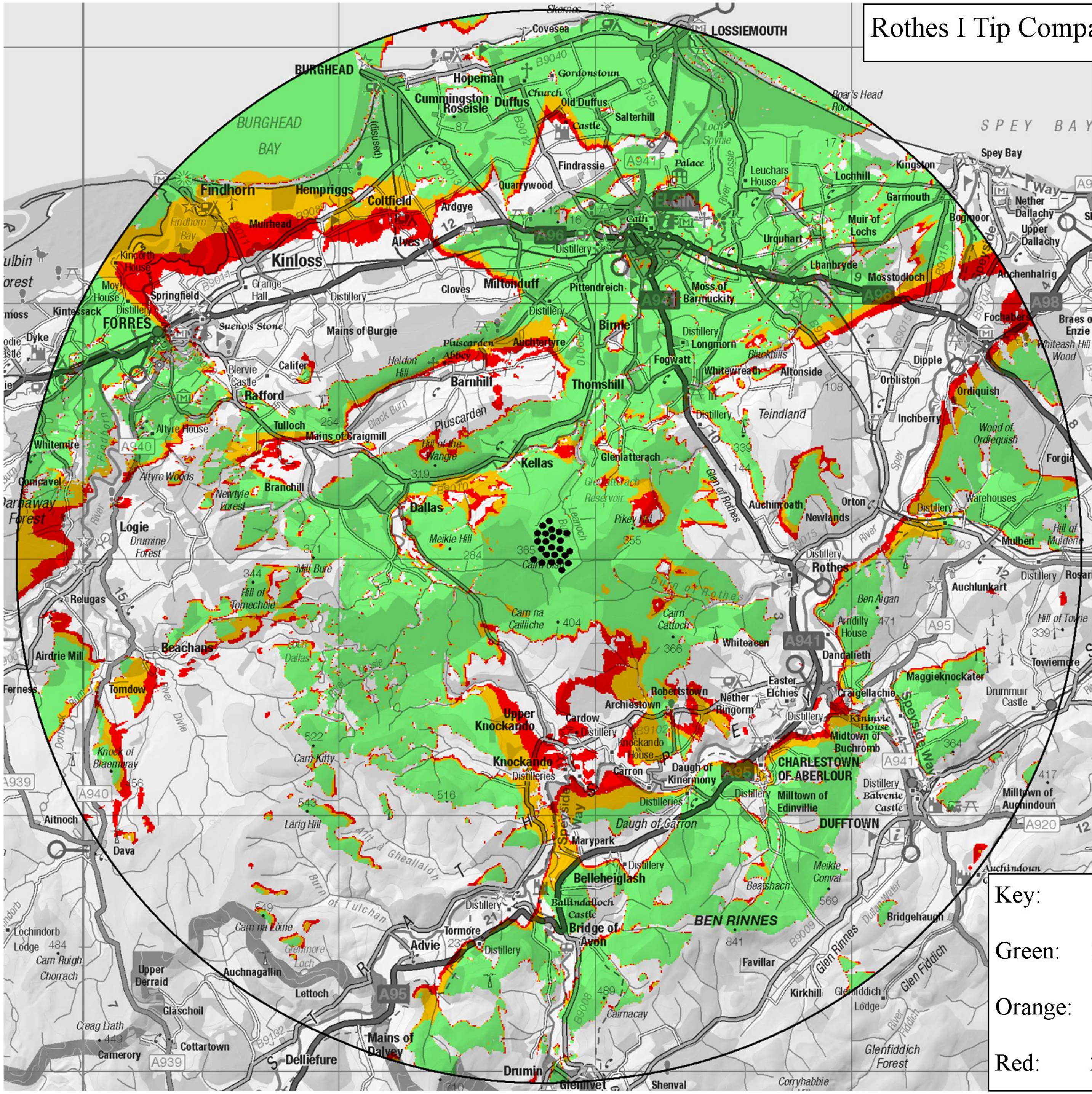
Key:

Green: Existing visibility

Orange: 150m turbine height

Red: 200m turbine height

Rothes I Tip Comparison ZTV



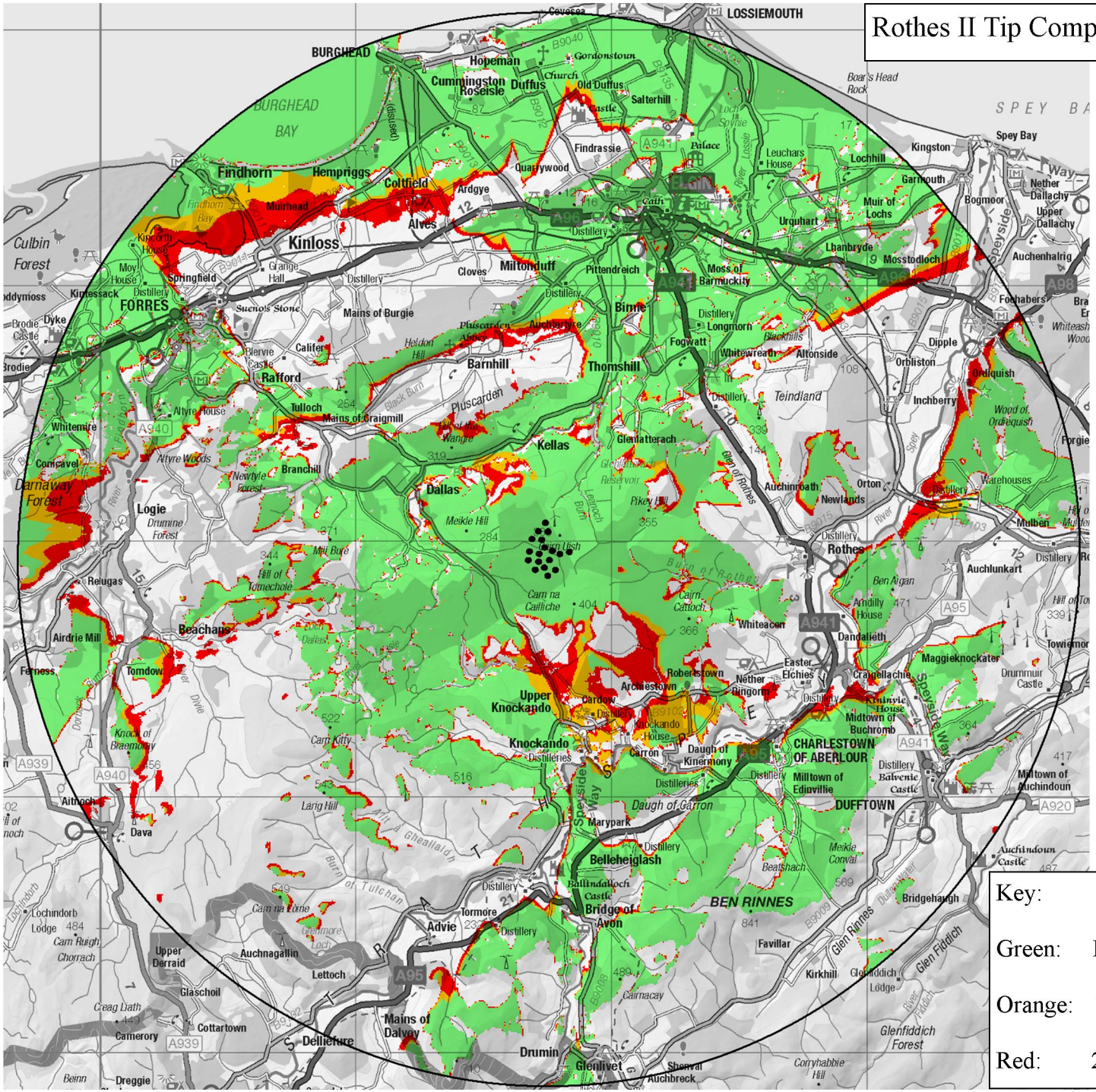
Key:

Green: Existing visibility

Orange: 150m turbine height

Red: 200m turbine height

Rothes II Tip Comparison ZTV



Viewpoint 1 A95 Tormore – Paul's Hill: Current Turbines

Viewpoint 1 A95 Tormore – Paul's Hill: 150m High Turbines


Viewpoint 1 A95 Tormore – Paul's Hill: 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 2 A95 SW Aberlour – Rothes I and II: Current Turbines

Viewpoint 2 A95 SW Aberlour – Rothes I and II: 150m High Turbines


Viewpoint 2 A95 SW Aberlour – Rothes I and II: 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 3 B9009 Glen Rinnes – Dorenell : Current Turbines

Viewpoint 3 B9009 Glen Rinnes – Dorenell : 150m High Turbines

Viewpoint 3 B9009 Glen Rinnes – Dorenell : 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 4 B9009 Dufftown – Hill of Towie: Current Turbines


Viewpoint 4 B9009 Dufftown – Hill of Towie: 150m High Turbines

Viewpoint 4 B9009 Dufftown – Hill of Towie: 200m High Turbines


Viewpoint 5 B9018 Grange Crossroads - Aultmore : Current Turbines


Viewpoint 5 B9018 Grange Crossroads - Aultmore : 150m High Turbines

Viewpoint 5 B9018 Grange Crossroads - Aultmore : 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 6 Buckie – Aultmore : Current Turbines


Viewpoint 6 Buckie – Aultmore : 150m High Turbines


Viewpoint 6 Buckie – Aultmore : 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 7 A96 Easter Bauds – Hill of Towie : Current Turbines

Viewpoint 7 A96 Easter Bauds – Hill of Towie : 150m High Turbines

Viewpoint 7 A96 Easter Bauds – Hill of Towie : 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 8 Elgin – Rothes I and II : Current Turbines

Viewpoint 8 Elgin – Rothes I and II : 150m High Turbines

Viewpoint 8 Elgin – Rothes I and II : 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 9 B9010 Crofts of Buinach – Rothes I and II : Current Turbines

Viewpoint 9 B9010 Crofts of Buinach – Rothes I and II : 150m High Turbines

Viewpoint 9 B9010 Crofts of Buinach – Rothes I and II : 200m High Turbines

Viewpoint 10 B9007 Lochindorb – Berry Burn: Current Turbines

Viewpoint 10 B9007 Lochindorb – Berry Burn: 150m High Turbines

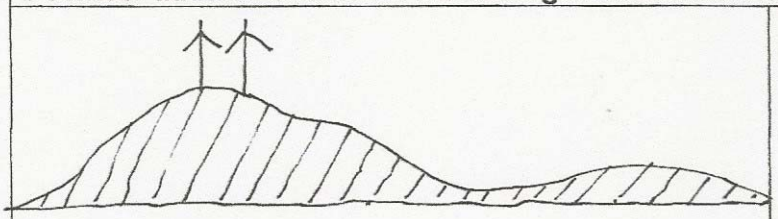
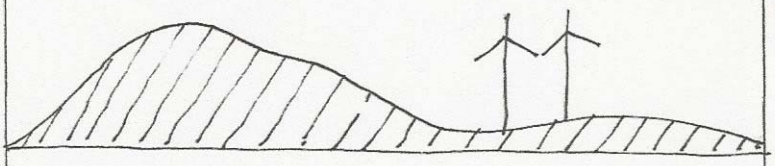
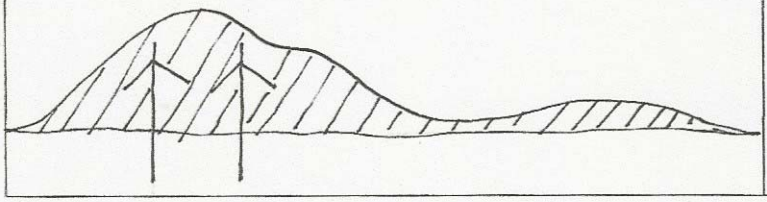
Viewpoint 10 B9007 Lochindorb – Berry Burn: 200m High Turbines

Appendix F: Detailed description of Landmark Hills

Knock Hill	A distinctive conical and isolated hill which rises out of lower-lying farmland on the border of Moray and Aberdeenshire and is widely visible across both areas.
Bin of Cullen	The shapely conical form of this hill forms a prominent feature seen widely across eastern Moray. It is important in forming an immediate backdrop to the Moray coast and to Cullen House and its designed landscape. This hill is popular with walkers and its open rocky summit (lower slopes are densely wooded) offers expansive views over the coast and the Moray Firth.
Meikle Balloch	This rounded and largely forested hill lies close to Keith. The boundary between Moray and Aberdeenshire is aligned through the summit of this hill. Footpaths and tracks on the hill are well-used and the open summit offers extensive views.
Ben Rinnes	The highest hill in Moray, classified as a 'Corbett' and thus very popular with walkers. The smaller hills of Little Conval and Meikle Conval extend from Ben Rinnes, forming a long heather-clad rolling ridge on the west side of Glen Rinnes. Ben Rinnes has a smooth and rounded form with steep slopes. A number of Tors form distinctive features on its curving ridge. This hill is important in forming the backdrop to Glen Rinnes and the Spey valley and especially dramatic views to it are possible when travelling south on the minor road from Dallas to Upper Knockando. This hill is particularly spectacular when the heather is in flower and in snowy conditions.
The Buck	The distinctive pointed profile of this hill together with its 'stand-alone' position amidst more rolling upland plateaux, contribute to the landmark status of this hill. The Buck lies on the border of Aberdeenshire and Moray and is popular with walkers, offering extensive views.
Ben Aigan	Ben Aigan rises to 471m and forms a prominent feature seen across the coastal plain of Moray and from the Spey Valley. The hill is largely forested but has an open heathery summit offering extensive views. Mountain bike trails and footpaths are well-used and the Speyside Way is aligned on the western and northern slopes of the hill.
Romach Hill and Mill Buie	These densely wooded rounded hills lie close to each other in the western part of Moray. They are most prominent when seen from longer views across the coastal plain of Moray near Findhorn and Forres where they form distinct high points along the upland backdrop.
Carn Kitty	Not widely visible but forms distinct high point within the *Open Rolling Uplands* (11) and is glimpsed from the Upper Knockando to Dallas road. This hill is surrounded by the operational wind farms of Berry Burn and Paul's Hill.
Roy's Hill	Prominent in views from the Spey Valley and tourist routes such as the A95 where its steep open heathery slopes form an immediate backdrop to the Spey and also Ballindalloch Castle designed landscape. This hill is additionally important in visually containing the Paul's Hill wind farm. Wind farm access tracks appear to be used by mountain bikers and walkers. The summit of this hill has extensive views to the Cairngorms.
Carn na Cailliche	This gently rounded hill lies on the southern edge of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10) and is most prominent from the Upper Knockando area and in distant views from the A95 from the south. It is important in visually containing operational wind farm development lying at the core of this character type from the Spey Valley.
Brown Muir	Not high at 338m but prominent in views from the north across the central coastal plain of Moray due to its steep northern slopes and pronounced peaky summit (topped by a mast). This

	hill does not appear to be popular with walkers despite offering panoramic views across Moray and the Moray Firth to Sutherland and Caithness. Brown Muir appears less prominent in views from the south and south-east where its more gentle slopes merge gradually with the surrounding landscape.
Knock of Braemorary	Distinctive conical hill prominent in views from the A940 on the approach to Moray and widely visible from the open low-lying Dava Moor and Lochindorb area. This hill forms a visual 'buffer' to less prominent upland areas and screens operational wind farms sited in the *Open Rolling Uplands* (10). Although this hill offers an excellent vantage point, it does not appear to be well-sued by walkers.
Carn Biorach	Carn Biorach lies close to the Knock of Braemoray. The boundary between Highland Council and Moray is aligned through this hill. This hill is prominent in views from the A940 and, like the Knock of Braemorary, it is important in partially screening operational wind farms located in the *Open Rolling Uplands* (11) from the wider Dava Moor area.
Binn Hill and Tappoch	These small hills rise out of the low-lying Moray coastal plain and are visible across a wide area including from parts of the coast.
Quarry Wood	A small but prominent hill rising to just 127m but important in providing an immediate landscape setting to Elgin. The Community Woodland on this hill provides a valuable recreational resource close to housing.
Hunt Hill	Hunt Hill lies in a similar location to Carn na Cailliche on the southern edge of the *Upland Moorland and Forestry* (10). It is subtly rounded with the summit (lying at 365m) forming a twin peak with Cairn Cattoch which is of a similar height. The gentle southern and western slopes of Hunt Hill are densely forested. While this hill does not form a distinctive landmark feature in wider views across Moray, it is seen from Speyside and from the A95 south-west of Aberlour where it backdrops more settled valley landscapes and visually contains the lower basin lying at the core of the *Upland Moorland and Forest* (10) and operational wind farm development.

Potential adverse effects on the setting and character of Landmark Hills

	*Wind turbines sited on top of the Landmark Hill would appear very prominent and would significantly affect the character of the hill.*
	*Large wind turbines sited close to the Landmark Hill would detract from its focus and diminish its scale and prominence*
	*Large wind turbines set away from the Landmark Hill but in the foreground of a key view to the hill, detracting from its focus and diminishing its apparent size. These effects are particularly significant where the hill is not high but rises dramatically from low-lying ground*