

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Beinneun 2 Wind Farm

Volume 3

Technical Appendix A5.3: Landscape Sensitivity

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The sensitivity of the landscape character types which may receive significant landscape effects are assessed below. Landscape sensitivity is not absolute and can only be defined in relation to each development and its location. To assess the sensitivity of a particular landscape it is good practice to consider the value attached to the landscape and its susceptibility to the particular form of change likely to result from the proposed development. As set out in section 5.7.3 of Chapter 5, a detailed consideration of landscape value is provided for the host LCT. For other LCTs, landscape value is informed by the presence or absence of landscape designations.

Assessment text relates to sensitivity of the landscape receptor as a whole, to the proposed development, with additional comments regarding the Site where relevant. In the main this has been taken from the NatureScot (NS) LCT descriptions and site assessment as well as from the Highland Council (THC) Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG): Part 2b, quotes are shown in italics. The criteria below are based on relevant guidance (see Technical Appendix A5.1 to the LVIA).

Host Landscape: LCT237 Rocky Moorland – Lochaber (LN11 Rocky Moorland, High ground around north and west of Glen Garry)

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Value Indicators				
Designated scenic quality	No specific designation	National or regional designation	Small areas at the edges of the LCT are located within a LLAs and WLA. The majority of the LCT is undesignated.	Community
Natural Heritage	Low presence of ecological or geological / geomorphological interest.	High presence of ecological or geological / geomorphological interest.	Small areas are located within SSSI and SPA designations, but the majority of this LCT has no particular recognised natural heritage value.	Community
Cultural Heritage	Low presence of archaeology or historical interests	High presence of archaeology or historical interests	No specific heritage value beyond the presence of relict field systems, shieling huts and two listed buildings.	Community
Landscape condition/quality	Landscape in a poor state of repair with incongruous elements	Landscape fully intact in good condition with limited incongruous elements	Generally good condition, everyday landscape with elements of existing infrastructure.	Community

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Cultural associations	No strong associations with notable people, events or the arts.	Strong cultural associations with notable people, events or the arts, which contribute to perceptions of natural beauty.	No specific cultural associations are noted.	Community
Distinctiveness	Commonplace elements and features, or the landscape itself. Lacking distinctive and strongly expressed character and with no important relationship to a settlement.	Presence of rare elements or features or rarity of the landscape itself. Landscape with a distinctive and clearly expressed character and/or with an important relationship to a settlement.	The LCT includes no particularly distinctive features.	Community
Amenity and recreation	Limited amenity/recreational function where experience of the landscape is important	Well used for recreation where experience of the landscape is important; or forms part of a view that is important to a recreational experience. May contain National Trails or other long distance routes.	The Scottish National Trail crosses through the eastern and western extents of the LCT. The Great Glen Way and Great Glen Canoe Trail route along the eastern edge of the area. Beyond the short sections of these national trails there is limited formal access.	Regional/ community
Perceptual (Scenic)	Landscape with no particular scenic / visual appeal.	Landscape with strong appeal to the senses, particular visual.	No noted scenic appeal.	Community
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquility)	Busy with evidence of human activity, well-lit.	Remote, peaceful or with a sense of wildness. Dark skies.	The western part of this LCT is located within a Wild Land Area and has a more wild character. This is reduced in the east due to the proximity to settlement, transport routes and energy infrastructure.	Regional

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Function	No important blue/green infrastructure function or important relationship with national landscape designation.	Landscape with important blue/green infrastructure function or strong relationship that is important to a national landscape designation.	No specific landscape function.	Community
Overall Judgement of Value				Community
Susceptibility Indicators				
Scale	Large scale landscapes where the turbines may be in proportion	Small scale intimate landscapes	<i>"...large scale and simplicity"</i> (THC).	Low
Landform	Smooth regular flowing, flat or uniform landscapes	Dramatic, rugged and complex landscapes	<i>"Rugged, undulating plateaux of heather moorland with a textured and crinkled skyline and no distinct summits or peaks"</i> (NS).	Medium
Openness/ enclosure	Open and exposed landscapes	Enclosed and sheltered landscapes	Open slopes and hill tops with some enclosure provided by areas of woodland.	High
Land cover	Simple or regular landcover. Simple and sweeping lines, linear feature and patterns.	Complex, intimate or mosaic cover. Complex or irregular patterns.	<i>"Uniform expanses of marshy grassland, sedges and rushes, rocky outcrops and stunted trees"</i> (NS). Forestry in lower-lying areas.	Low
Built Environment	Contemporary masts, pylons, industrial elements, buildings infrastructure, settlements	Established, traditional or historic built character	Minimal elements of farming and settlement. <i>"The A87 crosses through the centre of the mainland area ..."</i> and there is <i>"Infrastructure and engineered structures associated with hydro-electricity schemes such as pylons, dams and sub-stations"</i> (NS). There are existing wind farms across the nearby hills to the north.	Low

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Views and intervisibility	Visually contained and have limited inward or outward views	Extensive views within or of the area with distant horizons.	<i>"The area between Loch Ness and Loch Lochy is significant in the transition of landscape character experienced when moving along the Great Glen."</i> (OWESG)	High/medium
Landscapes that form settings, skylines, backdrops, focal points	Lower lying landscapes without distinctive landform or horizon	Areas with strong features, focal points that define the setting or skyline	This transitional landscape has a <i>"crinkled skyline and no distinct summits or peaks"</i> (NS). <i>"The LCA is important to the setting of Loch Garry and its interaction with other LCTs."</i> (OWESG)	Medium
Overall Judgement of Susceptibility				Medium
Overall Judgement of Sensitivity				Medium/low

LCT235 Broad Forested Strath (LN20 Great Glen around Loch Oich, Broad Forested Strath)

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Overall Judgement of Value – Small areas at the eastern and western edges of this unit of the LCT lie within LLAs. A very minor part to the south lies within a WLA. The majority of this unit is undesignated.				Community
Susceptibility Indicators				
Scale	Large scale landscapes where the turbines may be in proportion	Small scale intimate landscapes	Generally large scale.	Low
Landform	Smooth regular flowing, flat or uniform landscapes	Dramatic, rugged and complex landscapes	<i>"...subdued terrain compared to the surrounding relief, creating low smooth ridges and broad drumlins within a rolling landform between the high sides"</i> (NS).	Medium/low
Openness/ enclosure	Open and exposed landscapes	Enclosed and sheltered landscapes	The lochs and upper valleys sides are open, but much of the area is wooded.	Medium/low

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Land cover	Simple or regular landcover. Simple and sweeping lines, linear feature and patterns.	Complex, intimate or mosaic cover. Complex or irregular patterns.	<i>"Simple, large scale mosaic of forested ridges, rolling pastures and heather moorland, but dominated by swathes of forestry"</i> (NS).	Medium/low
Built Environment	Contemporary masts, pylons, industrial elements, buildings infrastructure, settlements	Established, traditional or historic built character	Linear settlement along roads and strath, generally concentrated at the eastern end of this unit. Elements of linear infrastructure including transmission lines, major road and canal corridors.	Medium
Views and intervisibility	Visually contained and have limited inward or outward views	Extensive views within or of the area with distant horizons.	<i>"Long distance views from surrounding hills over the glens, which are framed by steep glen sides"</i> (NS).	High
Landscapes that form settings, skylines, backdrops, focal points	Lower lying landscapes without distinctive landform or horizon	Areas with strong features, focal points that define the setting or skyline	Loch Garry forms a key focus of the views within the LCT and the steep glen sides frame long distance views.	High/medium
Overall Judgement of Susceptibility				Medium
Overall Judgement of Sensitivity				Medium/low