Volume 2: Chapter 9 - Landscape and Visual Amenity

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9. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 This Chapter considers the potential effects of the proposed Kintore to Tealing 400 kV overhead line (OHL) ('the Proposed Development', as defined in **paragraph 9.1.10** below) on landscape and visual amenity. The assessment includes potential effects on landscape and visual receptors, including landscape character and views experienced by people.

9.1.2 The Chapter objectives with regard to the Proposed Development are as follows:

- describe the landscape and visual baseline, informed by desk-based studies and field surveys;
- describe how consultation has informed the scope of the assessment;
- describe the assessment methodology and significance criteria used in assessing effects on landscape and visual receptors;
- describe the mitigation measures proposed to address potential significant effects (if required);
- describe the residual effects (including cumulative effects) on landscape character and resources, including effects upon the physical elements, character and/or special qualities of the landscape (including landscape designations); and
- describe the residual effects (including cumulative effects) on visual amenity, including effects upon potential receptors (people) and viewing groups caused by change in the appearance of the landscape.

9.1.3 Landscape character and resources are considered to be of importance in their own right and are valued independently of whether they are seen by people. Effects on views and visual amenity as perceived by people are clearly distinguished from, although closely linked to, effects on landscape character and resources. The assessment of these two components of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) are therefore separate but connected processes. Accordingly, this Chapter deals with landscape and visual effects separately, including an assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects. The detailed assessments are presented in the following appendices:

- **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment; and**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment.**

9.1.4 This Chapter and the above appendices are also supported by the following appendices:

- **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology;** and
- **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide.**

9.1.5 This Chapter and associated appendices are supported by **Volume 3, Figures 9.1 - 9.4b.6.** Accompanying visualisations are illustrated as **Volume 4 a-b, Figures 9.05a – 9.42c** and have been prepared in accordance with the methodology set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology.**

9.1.6 The assessment methodology for the LVIA has been developed in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013) (GLVIA3)[1], and is detailed in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology.**

9.1.7 This Chapter presents information relevant to the Proposed Development. It should be read in conjunction with **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description** of the EIAR for full details of the Proposed Development.

9.1.8 This Chapter should also be read in conjunction with the following chapters:

- **Chapter 4: Alternatives and the Routeing Process;**
- **Chapter 8: Forestry;**
- **Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage;**
- **Chapter 11: Ecology;** and

[1] Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013. *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition)*.

- **Chapter 12: Ornithology.**

9.1.9 The LVIA was undertaken by LUC. It was prepared and overseen by experienced landscape planners and architects with appropriate memberships of the Landscape Institute, and experience of LVIA in the context of grid connection, wind farm, and mixed-use developments. Field surveys and data collection were undertaken by landscape professionals who have extensive experience in undertaking site work and viewpoint photography, and in the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

9.1.10 The following terminology will be referred to throughout this Chapter:

- Proposed Development – the Kintore to Tealing 400 kV OHL and associated infrastructure as described in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description.**
- Alignment – the OHL as designed, including the location of steel lattice towers along the centre line.
- Landscape character – a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
- Magnitude of Change – the degree of change on landscape and visual receptors as a result of the Proposed Development, informed by scale of change, geographical extent, duration and reversibility.
- Receptor – a distinct part of the environment on which effects could occur and which can be the subject of specific assessments. Examples of landscape receptors within an LVIA include constituent elements of the landscape, landscape character types (LCTs), and national, regional or local landscape designations. Visual receptors within an LVIA are people, often categorised further such as residents, those using areas for amenity or recreation, or those travelling along roads.
- Sensitivity – a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed, and the value related to that receptor.
- Study area – the geographical area in which the landscape and visual impacts of the Proposed Development will be assessed, defined in 9.2.3 below.
- Susceptibility – the ability of the receptor to accommodate the type of development proposed without undue negative consequences.
- Value – the relative value that is attached to a landscape or a view by society.
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) – a ZTV indicates areas from where the Proposed Development would be theoretically visible, but does not indicate the nature or magnitude of landscape or visual impact.

9.2 Scope of the Assessment

Effects Assessed in Full

9.2.1 As confirmed in the EIA Scoping Opinion, and through understanding of baseline conditions and application of professional judgement, the following effects have been identified for detailed assessment:

- effects on the physical landscape of the study area during construction and operation;
- effects on the landscape character of the study area during construction and operation;
- physical and perceptual effects on the key characteristics and special qualities of local landscape designations;
- effects on visual amenity experienced by receptors (people) within or moving around the study area (including residents in properties, settlements and communities, recreational receptors on core paths and at hill summits, and people travelling along roads) with reference to Visual Receptor Areas (VRAs) and representative viewpoints, during construction and operation;
- effects on the landscape character and views at night-time arising during the construction period of the Proposed Development;
- effects on residential visual amenity at the properties which are closest to the Proposed Development; and,
- cumulative effects on landscape character, landscape designations and visual receptors during both construction and operation.

Effects Scoped Out

9.2.2 On the basis of the desk based and field survey work undertaken, the professional judgement of the EIA team, experience from other relevant projects and policy guidance or standards, and feedback received from consultees, the following effects have been 'scoped out' of detailed assessment, as confirmed in the EIA Scoping Opinion:

- effects on landscape character, landscape designations, and visual receptors (including cumulative) outside the study area, where it is judged that significant visual effects are unlikely to occur;
- effects on landscape and visual receptors that have minimal or no theoretical visibility (as predicted by the ZTV) and are therefore unlikely to be subject to significant effects; and
- effects on landscape character and visual amenity at night during the operational phase of the Proposed Development, since no operational lighting is proposed.

Study Area

9.2.3 The study area for the LVIA is defined as a 5 km wide offset to either side of the Alignment of the Kintore to Tealing 400 kV OHL, as requested by Angus Council (see **Table 9.1: Summary of Relevant Consultation**). The study area is shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area**. Although the study area is based on the Alignment, access tracks and other associated infrastructure have also been considered within the LVIA.

9.2.4 The Proposed Development and the study area are located primarily within the Angus Council and Aberdeenshire Council areas. A small portion of the study area is located within the most westerly extents of Aberdeen City Council area.

9.2.5 The 5 km study area has been informed by professional judgement, the scale of the Proposed Development (as described in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**), desk-based studies including ZTV analysis, field studies and recommendations made within the EIA Scoping Opinion. Observations of existing high voltage OHLs in the surrounding landscape and their influence on landscape and visual amenity informed the study area. These suggest that visibility of open lattice towers recedes relatively quickly, and this type of structure is not prominent in longer-distance views. Based on these observations, and an understanding of the landscape, it is considered that significant landscape and visual effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be unlikely beyond 5 km.

9.2.6 The Scoping Report proposed that 3 km be used as the study area as significant effects beyond that were not considered likely, although more distant viewpoints up to 5 km were to be considered when appropriate. While accepted by Aberdeenshire Council, Angus Council requested an extension of the study area to 5 km either side of the Alignment. It was therefore considered appropriate to adopt that approach in both local authority areas to provide a precautionary approach.

9.2.7 ZTV mapping has been used to illustrate areas from which the Proposed Development may be visible. Refer to:

- **Volume 3, Figure 9.2c.1 to 9.2c.6: Landscape Character Types with Overhead Line Tower Height Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)**;
- **Volume 3, Figure 9.3b.1 to 9.3b.6: Visual Receptor Area, Viewpoint Locations and other Visual Receptors with Overhead Line Tower Height Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)**; and
- **Volume 3, Figure 9.4b.1 to 9.4b.6: Designated Landscapes with Overhead Line Tower Height Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)**.

9.2.8 The ZTV has been prepared based on the location of the Alignment, ie individual tower positions, and the design heights of the towers as per the tower schedule set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 3.1: Tower Schedule**. The average height for the ASTI SSE400 tower suite is approximately 57 m (see **Volume 3, Figure 3.4.1 to 3.4.3: Tower Design**). There will be a maximum vertical Limit of Deviation (VLOD) of 9 m and the horizontal LOD (HLOD) (as further explained in **Section 9.3: Assessment Methodology**) allows for horizontal micro-siting up to a maximum of 55 m for suspension towers and 100 m for angle towers. The maximum height increases and horizontal movement allowed for by the vertical and horizontal LODs would not result in extensive or notable differences to theoretical visibility as presented in the ZTV.

9.2.9 The ZTV is based on bare earth terrain data and does not take into account the screening effects of vegetation, buildings, or other local features that may limit or reduce visibility. Further information on the ZTV is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology.** The ZTV is used as a tool for understanding where visual effects may occur, rather than

as an indicator of the level of effect. Receptors which are outside the ZTV would not be affected by the Proposed Development and are therefore not considered further in this LVIA. Whilst the ZTV indicates intermittent theoretical visibility beyond 5 km, based on professional judgement and experience of assessing transmission infrastructure, significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity at these distances (ie >5 km) are unlikely.

9.3 Assessment Methodology

9.3.1 This section lists the legislation, policy and guidance that has informed the LVIA, and summarises the consultation that has taken place in relation to the LVIA. It then sets out the broad principles of the methodology for the LVIA, which are expanded on in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology**.

Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Legislation

9.3.2 This assessment is carried out in accordance with the following legislation:

- *The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations* 2017[2]; and
- *Electricity Act 1989* (Section 37)[3],

Policy

9.3.3 The following policies of relevance to the assessment have been considered:

- National Planning Framework 4[4] (NPF4) (esp. Policy 4 and 11);
- Angus Council Local Development Plan[5];
- Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan[6]; and
- Aberdeen City Local Development Plan[7].

Guidance

9.3.4 This assessment is carried out in accordance with the principles contained within the following documents:

- Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition* ('GLVIA3');
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (2018) *A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment, Appendix 2: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, Version 5;
- NatureScot (2021) *Assessing the cumulative impact of onshore wind energy developments*;
- Landscape Institute (2019) *Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual representation of development proposals*;
- Landscape Institute (2019) *Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) Technical Guidance Note 2/19*;
- Landscape Institute (2021) *Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations, Technical Guidance Note 02/21;* and

[2] UK Government, 2017. *The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations (2017)*. [Online] Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/101/contents.
[3] UK Government, 1989. *Electricity Act 1989, Section 37.* [Online] Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/29/section/37.
[4] Scottish Government, 2023. National Planning Framework 4. [Online] Available at: https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/02/national-planning-framework-4/documents/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/govscot%3Adocument/national-planning-framework-4.pdf.
[5] Angus Council, 2016. Angus Local Development Plan. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/angus-cms/files/Angus%20local%20development%20plan%20adopted%20September%202016.pdf.
[6] Aberdeenshire Council, 2023. Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. [Online] Available at: https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans-and-policies/ldp-2023.
[7] Aberdeen City Council, 2023. Aberdeen City Local Development Plan [Online] Available at: https://aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan.

- SSEN Transmission (2023) *Procedures for Routeing Overhead Lines and Underground cables of 132 kV and above* particularly *Annex 1: Holford Rules: Guidelines for the Routeing of New High Voltage Overhead Transmission Lines with NGC 1992 and SHETL 2003 Notes*.

Consultation

9.3.5 In undertaking the assessment, consideration has been given to the relevant responses and feedback to the pre-scoping, scoping and pre-application consultation undertaken, as detailed in **Table 9.1: Summary of Relevant Consultation.** A full summary of consultation is provided in **Volume 1, Chapter 6: Scope and Consultation.**

Table 9.1: Summary of Relevant Consultation

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
Aberdeen City Council 10 April 2024	Pre-scoping consultation	Recommended widening the LVIA study area to be more informative for Aberdeen City Council in showing views from the city.	The study area has been increased to 5 km either side of the Alignment, which is considered proportionate to the scale of the Proposed Development and will cover the area where likely significant effects are anticipated to occur. The LVIA study area is illustrated on **Volume 3, Figure 9.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area**.
Aberdeenshire Council 11 April 2024	Pre-scoping consultation	Agree with the proposed 3 km study area for the LVIA, and acknowledge that some representative viewpoints may be located up to 5 km of the proposed transmission line if deemed necessary in terms of the extent of visibility and high sensitivity of receptors.	Agreement noted. Study area has since been increased from 3 km to 5 km. The LVIA study area is illustrated on **Volume 3, Figure 9.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area**.
		Recommended an additional viewpoint is located between Glenbervie and Nether Wyndings looking northwest towards the proposed Hurlie substation, as there may be views and the area is likely to be affected by cumulative effects with the existing and proposed substations and a number of converging transmission lines.	An additional viewpoint is included on the minor road near Jacksbank (VP27). The final list of viewpoints was supplied to Aberdeenshire Council on 18 October 2024. No response was received from the Council on the final viewpoint list, therefore it was assumed they had no further comments on the list of viewpoints. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations**.
		An additional viewpoint close to the Dee crossing, possibly from the bridge carrying a minor road over the river at approximately GR798983 to the west of the Proposed Development and/or from the B9077 approximately 1.5 km to the west of the proposed transmission line (depending on the degree of screening by woodland). There is potential for cumulative effects to be experienced in this area due to the presence of two existing overhead transmission lines crossing the Dee within a broad 5 km corridor.	Since this consultation comment was received, the Alignment has changed, however the Proposed Development still crosses over the River Dee. An additional viewpoint has been included from Durris Bridge (VP30) which represents views experienced along the River Dee and around Crathes, as well as cumulative effects with existing vertical elements in the landscape. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations**.

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		The woodland surrounding Drum Castle and its designed landscape is extensive and would provide effective screening if the OHL were aligned to the west of the estate. However, cumulative effects with an existing OHL which is aligned across farmland east of Banchory and on the lower slopes of the Hill of Fare (where it is particularly intrusive) need to be carefully considered in this area.	An additional viewpoint is included from Drum Castle (VP32), which is used to inform the assessment of landscape and visual and cumulative effects in this area. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
Angus Council 2 May 2024	Pre-scoping consultation	Consider that the proposed 3 km wide offset either side of the OHL seems relatively modest for structures of this height (average 57 m up to a maximum of 70 m) and raised concerns that significant effects may occur beyond 3 km. It is noted that more distant viewpoints up to 5 km will be included where the assessor considers visual effects to arise beyond the 3 km area. The Council consider that the study area more generally should be increased to 5 km either side of the Proposed Development, as significant effects are likely to extend beyond 3 km.	The study area has been increased to 5 km either side of the Alignment, which is considered proportionate to the scale of the Proposed Development and will cover the area where likely significant effects are anticipated to occur. The LVIA study area is illustrated on **Volume 3, Figure 9.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area**.
		The Council note that the study area (at time of consultation) is centred on the baseline route and in some places the alternative routes deviate significantly (around or in excess of 1 km) from the baseline route. They suggest a wider study area would take account of implications from the different options.	The LVIA study area is based on the Alignment, and has been increased to 5 km, which will cover the area where likely significant effects are anticipated to occur The LVIA study area is illustrated on **Volume 3, Figure 9.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area**.
		For the scale of development proposed, it is considered that there are relatively few viewpoints and consideration should be given to increasing the number in order to provide a better representation of the nature and significance of effects. The Council requested additional viewpoints in areas close to the proposed Emmock substation, in the area around the public road between Kirkton of Auchterhouse and Kirkton of Tealing NW of the proposed substation; and something which is more representative of residential receptors within the small settlements around Tealing.	An additional viewpoint has been included to the north of Balnuith (VP2) to represent views experienced by visual receptors around small settlements near Tealing. It is considered that views from areas to the northwest of the proposed Emmock substation are represented by VP3 at the summit of Balkello Hill. The final list of viewpoints was supplied to Angus Council on 18 October 2024. No response was received from the Council on the final viewpoint list, therefore it was assumed they had no further comments on the list of viewpoints. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		Viewpoints to the northwest and southeast of the proposed viewpoints at the A928 near Lumley Den and A94 near Jericho were requested.	Additional viewpoints have been included at Milton of Ogilvie (VP5) and Mains of Glamis (VP7). In addition, the original A94 near Jericho viewpoint has been relocated further east towards Douglastown (VP6). The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Consideration of a viewpoint which would consider impact on the HGDL at Glamis Castle.	An additional viewpoint has been included at the Mains of Glamis (VP7). The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Additional viewpoints to the northwest and east of the proposed Padanaram viewpoint were requested.	The number and spread of representative viewpoints selected are proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. As such, it is considered that the existing viewpoint at Padanaram (VP9) is suitable as a proxy to represent views experienced across the wider area around Padanaram. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		An additional VP from Balmashanner Hill on the southern edge of Forfar is requested.	An additional viewpoint has been included at Balmashanner Hill (VP8). The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Requested an additional viewpoint from the cemetery at Kirri Hill, Kirriemuir.	Due to the close proximity of the requested viewpoint to VP10: B957, near Kirriemuir, and the screening around the cemetery which would filter views, it was decided not to take this request forward.
		Agreed with the location of the Tannadice viewpoint but requested a wireline to illustrate impacts on the Tannadice Conservation Area.	The Tannadice viewpoint (VP13) has been relocated to support the assessment of potential impacts on visual amenity experienced by people in and around the village. VP13 also represents views experienced from the northeastern edge of the Tannadice Conservation area. Impacts on Conservation Areas are considered within **Volume 5, Appendix 10.10: Detailed Assessment of Designated Heritage Assets in the Outer Study Area**.
		Requested an additional viewpoint from Angus Hill layby off the B9134 (Grid ref: NO5336356796).	An additional viewpoint has been included at Angus Hill Layby, B9134 (VP14). The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Requested an additional viewpoint between Tannadice and	An additional viewpoint has been included at Balhall Crescent (VP16).

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		Little Brechin, somewhere along the C30 near Bogton of Balhall.	The final list of viewpoints was supplied to Angus Council on 18 October 2024. No response was received from the Council on the final viewpoint list, therefore it was assumed they had no further comments on the list of viewpoints. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Noted that the proposed viewpoint at White Caterthun is welcomed.	Agreement noted. Due to close proximity between White Caterthun and Brown Caterthun VP18: White Caterthun serves to represent views from both hill forts which offer similar views. White Caterthun was selected for the viewpoint due to the higher elevation of its summit.
		Noted that the precise location of the proposed viewpoint at Edzell will need to be carefully considered due to established tree planting at Edzell.	VP20: Inveriscandye Road, southeastern edge of Edzell, has been microsited to enable maximum visibility of the Proposed Development.
		Requested an additional viewpoint on the C30 at Hill of Stracathro.	Due to the presence of commercial forestry on the hill, it is likely views would be limited. Therefore, this viewpoint request was not taken forward.
		Requested an additional viewpoint from the A90.	An additional viewpoint has been included along the A90 at the base of Carse Hill (VP11). The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Requested an additional viewpoint at Inchbare.	An additional viewpoint has been included at Inchbare (VP19). The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
Aberdeenshire Council 24 May 2024	Pre-application advice	Raised concerns about cumulative effects on landscape character due to the concentration of large-scale infrastructure developments in existence and proposed in the Fetteresso Forest.	The cumulative assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment** considers cumulative landscape and visual effects arising during both construction and operation. A summary of the findings is provided in **Section 9.12: Assessment of Likely Cumulative Effects.**
		Raised concerns about the crossing of the Dee, which is likely to involve the removal of woodland and the introduction of large towers, and the potential significant effects which may occur on people using recreational routes within the valley. Potential effects on the special qualities of the Dee Valley	The landscape assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** considers effects on the special qualities of the Dee Valley SLA, as well as effects as a result of the loss of landscape features including woodland. Effects on landscape features were also considered as part of the routeing process as detailed in **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Alternatives and the Routeing Process**. Landscape mitigation design

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		Special Landscape Area (SLA) will need to be fully considered.	principles to reduce the effect on landscape features are presented in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** of this LVIA and **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6 Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**. The visual assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment** considers effects on recreational receptors. A summary of the landscape findings is provided in **Sections 9.6: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Construction** and **9.7: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Operation.**
		Raised concerns about the effects of the proposal on the Dunecht Inventory listed Garden and Designed Landscape and on the character of the smaller scale rolling landform and diverse landcover pattern of the wider Dunecht/Barmekin Hill area.	The landscape and visual assessments set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment** consider the presence of the Dunecht House Inventory listed Garden and Designed Landscape. **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage** considers effects on the heritage value of the Dunecht House Inventory listed Garden and Designed Landscape.
		Recommended off-site mitigation, such as planting of woodlands and hedgerows/ tree lines, should be considered to help provide screening.	Information on off-site planting and biodiversity measures has been included in **Volume 5, Appendix 11.5: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement Plan.** Information on on-site landscape restoration and enhancement has been included in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**. Information regarding key landscape and visual considerations that have informed mitigation measures are set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** of this LVIA. Embedded mitigation measures adopted during the routeing and design process are set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** of this LVIA and **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Alternatives and the Routeing Process**.
Aberdeen City Council 4 June 2024	Pre-scoping consultation	Consider that there should be an LVIA viewpoint produced from within the boundary of the City, looking westwards towards the OHL. Near to the River Dee and Little Eddieston were suggested as potential locations.	An additional viewpoint is included at Little Eddieston (VP33). Following review of the River Dee area within the Aberdeen City Council boundary, it is considered that publicly accessible locations along the river, with open views west towards the proposed OHL, are limited. Riparian woodland is likely to filter and/ or screen most public views to the west. As such, a viewpoint from near the River Dee within the Aberdeen City Council area was not included.

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
			The final list of viewpoints was supplied to Aberdeen City Council on 18 October 2024. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
Angus Council 9 October 2024	Scoping response	The Angus Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) approved by Angus Council in April 2024 are no longer subject to change and should be scoped into the LVIA.	The landscape assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** considers effects on the special qualities of the Angus LLAs. A summary of the landscape findings is provided in **Sections 9.6: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Construction** and **9.7: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Operation**.
		The proposed 170 m general threshold for the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) may not capture all significant impacts on housing.	The purpose of RVAA is not to identify significant impacts on views, but to establish where such impacts may be so great as to affect the 'living conditions' experienced by residents. Since the scoping report was published, the approach to RVAA has developed. A proposed 'case by case' approach was outlined in previous correspondence with Angus Council. However, during the assessment process it became apparent that this would not result in a robust and comprehensive assessment, and that a distance-based study area was a more consistent basis for inclusion. As such, the RVAA study area is now based on a distance of 225 m from the Alignment at suspension towers and 270 m at angle towers. The study area distances have also been informed by relevant guidance (see below), the average height of proposed towers and the HLOD. Further information on the RVAA study area is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment**.
Aberdeenshire Council 15 October 2024	Scoping response	The Council recommended that thorough consideration is given to undergrounding sections of the line to minimise effects on the most sensitive landscape and visual interests.	Alternative technology options and design solutions are considered in **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Established Need for the Proposed Development**
		Noted that the Braes of Mearns SLA is a principal constraint with potential effects on the integrity of the distinctive pattern of policy woodlands around Fettercairn, the setting of this settlement and nearby designed landscapes a key concern. Views from well-known viewpoints within the SLA and views (both from within and outside the SLA) where the appreciation of the contrast between the Highland Boundary	The landscape assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** considers effects on the special qualities of the Braes of the Mearns SLA. A summary of the landscape findings is provided in **Sections 9.6: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Construction** and **9.7: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Operation**.

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		Fault and the Howe of Mearns is strongest are also sensitive to a development of this scale and nature.	
		Noted that the design of the Proposed Development should seek to minimise effects on the special qualities of the Dee Valley SLA including the integrity of woodland on valley sides and along the river's banks and views and landscape perception experienced from recreational routes along the Dee.	The landscape assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** considers effects on the special qualities of the Dee Valley SLA. A summary of the landscape findings is provided in **Sections 9.6: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Construction** and **9.7: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Operation**.
		Expressed the view that landscape mitigation and enhancement measures should form a key part of the proposals. This should include off-site woodland and hedgerow planting to assist with screening from roads and residential properties.	Information on off-site planting and biodiversity measures has been included in **Volume 5, Appendix 11.5: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement Plan.** Information on on-site landscape restoration and enhancement has been included in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**. Landscaping beyond reinstatement of existing ground conditions is subject to landowners' agreement. Information regarding key landscape and visual considerations that have informed mitigation measures are set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** of this LVIA. Embedded mitigation measures adopted during the routeing and design process are set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** of this LVIA and **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Alternatives and the Routeing Process**.
		The Council confirmed that the proposed methodology and the scope of the landscape and visual interests to be considered in the LVIA is satisfactory. They welcome the opportunity to agree final representative assessment viewpoints as noted in paragraph 5.4.3 of the Scoping Report.	Agreement noted. The final list of viewpoints was supplied to the council on 18 October 2024. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		The Council notes that the Applicant intends to consider 'Additional Mitigation' following further assessment work where this could potentially mitigate significant landscape and visual effects. The Council would reiterate their request that not just landscape mitigation of the effects of the proposal should be considered but also wider landscape and biodiversity enhancement measures in	Information on off-site planting and biodiversity measures has been included in **Volume 5, Appendix 11.5: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement Plan.** Information on on-site landscape restoration and enhancement has been included in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**. Landscaping beyond reinstatement of existing ground conditions is subject to landowners' agreement.

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		accordance with the requirements of NPF4. Similarly, the location, design and composition of compensatory planting should be carefully considered given the likely removal of woodland on the route of the Proposed Development.	Information on compensatory planting is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 8.1: Compensatory Planting Management Strategy**. Information regarding key landscape and visual considerations that have informed mitigation measures are set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** of this LVIA. Embedded mitigation measures adopted during the routeing and design process are set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** of this LVIA and **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Alternatives and the Routeing Process**.
NatureScot 9 October 2024	Scoping response	SSEN Transmission's ongoing approach to engagement means that NatureScot considers that the right level of information is being gathered to inform their Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). They agree with the topics and issues proposed to be scoped in and out and are not aware of any further information they hold that could assist with the preparation of their EIA.	Noted.
Aberlemno and District Community Council 9 October 2024	Scoping response	All assessments should include consideration of local, national and international designations.	The landscape, visual and cumulative assessments set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment** and **Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment** consider local and/or national landscape designations.
		Noted that the Proposed Development would impact extensive farmland and foothills of the Angus Glens and that visual impact may be significant.	The landscape assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** considers effects on the special qualities of the Angus Glens LLA. A summary of the landscape findings is provided in **Sections 9.6: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Construction** and **9.7: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Operation**.
		Proposed Development should seek to avoid skylines, communities, and dominating views from roads, viewpoint and properties.	The visual assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment** considers the views that visual receptors within the study area would experience.
		It should be clear why proposed viewpoint locations were chosen and agreed with relevant bodies. Views from outwith the study area corridor should be considered eg, the hill forts on Finavon and Caterthuns, other historic sites; footpaths and leisure routes etc.	Angus Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council were consulted on the viewpoint locations to be included within the LVIA. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
Crathes, Drumoak, Durris Community Council 8 October 2024	Scoping response	Consider that effects on landscape character and visual amenity should be scoped in during construction and operation, noting that the area is important for viewing the aurora borealis and that an OHL would have a detrimental effect.	The landscape, visual and cumulative assessments set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment** and **Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment** consider effects on landscape character and visual amenity during both construction and operation. A summary of the assessment findings is provided in **Sections 9.6: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Construction, 9.7: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Operation** and **Section 9.12: Assessment of Likely Cumulative Effects**. Effects on landscape character and visual amenity at night, including views of the aurora borealis, during the operational phase of the Proposed Development are not considered in the LVIA given that no operational lighting in hours of darkness is proposed.
		Consider that visual impacts should be considered up to 5 km from the Proposed Development noting that the maximum height of towers may be 70 m.	The LVIA study area has been increased to 5 km and therefore considers visual impacts within this distance. The LVIA study area is illustrated on **Volume 3, Figure 9.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area**.
		26 additional viewpoints were requested, including two from Drum Castle and two from Dunecht Primary School and its playing field. The remaining 22 viewpoints requested were from the properties of members of the local community.	The LVIA includes a viewpoint from near Dunecht Primary School (VP37), and Drum Castle (VP32). The number and spread of representative viewpoints selected for inclusion in the LVIA are proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. As such, it is considered the representative viewpoints located within the Crathes, Drumoak, Durris Community Council area are suitable as a proxy to represent views experienced across this area. The rest of the viewpoints requested are representative of views from private properties. The visual impact on properties is considered in the RVAA set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**. Representative wirelines from properties assessed in the RVAA are provided in **Volume 4, Figures A9.3.2 to A9.3.74.**
		Have concerns that the properties within 500 m of the Proposed Development should be included within the RVAA given the height of the towers up to 70 m.	The purpose of RVAA is not to identify significant impacts on views, but to establish where such impacts may be so great as to affect the 'living conditions' experienced by residents. **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment** considers the effects on residential visual amenity from properties within 225 m from the Alignment at suspension towers and

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
			270 m at angle towers, for towers as part of the Proposed Development, the Kintore - Fetteresso 275 kV/400 kV Overhead Line Realignment and the Kintore - Tealing 275 kV Overhead Line Realignment. These distances have been informed by relevant guidance (as detailed in the **Guidance** section of this Chapter), the average height of proposed towers and the HLOD. Further information on the RVAA study area is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment**.
		With relation to cumulative impact, it is considered that projects under construction should be considered in the cumulative impact assessment.	Given the high level of certainty with projects which are already under construction, these have been considered as part of the baseline in the main landscape and visual assessments set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment.** The consideration of under construction developments in the baseline is standard practice and advocated in GLVIA3.
Tealing Community Council 9 October 2024	Scoping response	Requested additional viewpoints be considered within the landscape and visual impact assessment including: • Lochty; • Lochty Cottages; • Montboy Cottages; • Gardeners Cottage near Noranside; • Hilton of Fern Agri Tech Centre; • Tourism business near Careston Castle; • Balnuith Alpacas, Tealing; • North Quilkoe; • Craigeassie Farm; and • Coldstream, Hillside of Prieston.	These requested viewpoints are all from private residential properties or businesses. LVIA viewpoints are taken from publicly accessible locations as recommended in best practice including GLVIA3. Effects on visual receptors are considered in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2 Visual Assessment**. The potential for impact on 'living conditions' at properties within 225 m of the Proposed Development are considered in the RVAA set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.**
		Requested additional viewpoints be considered at Careston Castle and Law of Windsor.	These locations are not publicly accessible and are therefore not considered within the LVIA. Both however are cultural heritage assets and impacts on their heritage value are discussed within **Volume 2**, **Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage.**
		Requested additional viewpoints be considered within the landscape and visual impact assessment including: • The outlook from near Little Brechin, Piperton and Brathinch;	The LVIA includes representative viewpoints from the requested locations or from closer locations (see VPs 3, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 19) which would experience similar views.

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		• Taigh Gleusta, near Tannadice; • Aberlemno layby; • Inchbare; • Fern to Tigerton Road; • Edzell Road (behind Tigerton); and • Craigowl Hill.	The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Two viewpoints were requested from the A90 (A90 layby Parkford and A90 from Glamis Junction heading north to Mearns)	These viewpoint requests have not been taken forward, as the Parkford layby has mature vegetation along its northern side which would screen visibility in summer and filter visibility in winter even with reduced leaf cover. There is no safe stopping location near the Glamis Junction. VP11: A90 near base of Carse Hill represents views from the A90. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		A viewpoint was requested from the B957	An additional viewpoint on the B957 near Cairnhill (VP12) has been included. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
Inveresk Community Council 15 October 2024	Scoping response	The Community Council requested several additional viewpoints, including from: Lochty and Lochty Cottages; and Montboy Cottages	The requested viewpoints are representative of views from private properties. LVIA viewpoints are taken from publicly accessible locations as per best practice and as recommended in GLVIA3. Effects on visual receptors are considered in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2 Visual Assessment**. The potential for impact on 'living conditions' at properties within 225 m of the Proposed Development are considered in the RVAA set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.**
		Careston and Waterstone	A viewpoint to the east of Careston (VP15) has been included in the LVIA assessment. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Inchbare	A viewpoint from Inchbare (VP19) has been included in the LVIA assessment. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
		Fern to Tigerton (C30) & Tigerton to Edzell	A viewpoint from Balhall Crescent (VP16) has been included in the LVIA assessment, and represents views from

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
			along the C30 between Fern and Tigerton. The full list of representative viewpoints is set out in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations.**
Mearns Community Council 23 October 2024	Scoping response	Requested 12 additional viewpoints be considered within the landscape and visual impact assessment	All the viewpoints requested are representative of views from private properties. LVIA viewpoints are taken from publicly accessible locations as per best practice and as recommended in GLVIA3. Effects on visual receptors are considered in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2 Visual Assessment**. The potential for impact on 'living conditions' at properties within 225 m of the Proposed Development are considered in the RVAA set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.**
Cairngorms National Park Authority 1 October 2024	Scoping response	No comments.	Noted.
Energy Consents Unit (ECU) 25 June 2025	Post-scoping consultation	A finalised list of cumulative developments to be included within the cumulative assessment were sent to stakeholders. The ECU confirmed upon receipt of this that they would not be commenting on which proposals should or should not be included within the cumulative assessment.	Noted. The finalised list of cumulative developments considered in the cumulative assessment are set out in **Table 9.4.1: Intra and Inter Developments considered in the cumulative LVIA** in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment.**
Aberdeenshire Council 4 July 2025	Post-scoping consultation	A finalised list of cumulative developments to be included within the cumulative assessment were sent to stakeholders. Aberdeenshire Council did not consider any additional schemes were needing to be included in the cumulative assessment, however flagged that Womblehill Farm BESS has changed status from scoping to application submitted.	The application for Womblehill Farm BESS was submitted after the cumulative cut off date of 31 May 2025. The cumulative assessment assesses cumulative effects arising from interactions with Womblehill Farm BESS, however this scheme was assessed as being at scoping stage. The finalised list of cumulative developments considered in the cumulative assessment are set out in **Table 9.4.1: Intra and Inter Developments considered in the cumulative LVIA** in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment.**
Angus Council 9 July 2025	Post-scoping consultation	A finalised list of cumulative developments to be included within the cumulative assessment were sent to stakeholders. It was flagged by Angus Council that Cossans Solar Farm and BESS is proposed directly underneath the route of the Proposed Development. In addition, the	Cossans Solar Farm and BESS has been included within the cumulative assessment set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment.** The Muir of Pert BESS is located beyond our 3 km cumulative study area and

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	How Issue has been Addressed
		Council flagged that Muir of Pert BESS had now been submitted.	therefore has not been included within the assessment. The finalised list of cumulative developments considered in the cumulative assessment are set out in **Table 9.4.1: Intra and Inter Developments considered in the cumulative LVIA** in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment.**

Desk Based Research and Data Sources

9.3.6 The following data sources have informed the assessment:

- Ordnance Survey (OS) Maps (2025);
- OS Terrain® 5 mid-resolution height data (DTM);
- Angus Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, and the Energy Consents Unit (websites) to provide information of projects considered in the cumulative assessment;
- Aerial photography, Google Earth and Google Maps Street View;
- Scottish Natural Heritage (2012) Landscapes of Scotland – descriptions;
- NatureScot (2019) Scottish Landscape Character Types, Map and Descriptions;
- Angus Council (adopted 2016) Local Development Plan;
- Angus Council (2024) Local Landscape Areas in Angus;
- Aberdeenshire Council (adopted 2023) Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan;
- Aberdeenshire Council (2022) Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023. Appendix 13 Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas; and
- Aberdeen City Council (adopted 2023) Local Development Plan.

Field Survey

9.3.7 Field surveys were carried out to inform this assessment between December 2023 and February 2025. Visualisation photography was generally captured at times when trees were not in leaf, to present maximum potential visibility, though some summertime photography was also undertaken to illustrate seasonal variation. Site visits were undertaken in a range of weather conditions, including on clear, dry and bright days.

9.3.8 Field survey work included visits to the viewpoints, designated landscapes and extensive travel around the study area to consider potential effects on landscape character and on experiences of views seen from designated landscapes, settlements, nearby residential properties and routes.

Methodological Overview

9.3.9 As noted in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: EIA Process and Methodology**, this Chapter uses a discipline specific assessment methodology which is set out in detail in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology**. Whilst the assessment process differs and involves professional judgement, the outputs of the assessment have parity with the levels of significance set out in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: EIA Process and Methodology, Table 5.1: Matrix for Determining the Significance of Effects** (which describes significance levels in the EIAR).

9.3.10 The methodology for the production of accompanying visualisations is based on current good practice guidance as set out by NatureScot and the Landscape Institute. Detailed information about the approach to viewpoint photography and ZTV and visualisation production is also provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology**.

9.3.11 The key steps in the methodology for assessing landscape and visual effects are as follows:

- the landscape baseline of the study area is analysed, and landscape receptors identified, informed by desk and field surveys;
- the area over which the Proposed Development would potentially be visible is established through the creation of an initial ZTV plan;
- the visual baseline is recorded in terms of the different receptors (groups of people) who may experience views of the development (informed by the initial ZTV) and the nature of their existing views and visual amenity;
- VRAs are defined to group visual receptors, based on their geographical location, similarities between the likely nature and extent of views, and distance from the Proposed Development (refer to **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment** for a list of VRAs);
- Assessment viewpoints are selected, as advocated by GLVIA3, to represent a range of different receptors and views, in consultation with statutory consultees;
  - **"*Representative viewpoints*,** *selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptor, where larger numbers of viewpoints cannot all be included individually and where the Significant effects are unlikely to differ - for example, certain points may be chosen to represent the views of users of particular public footpaths and bridleways;*
  - ***Specific viewpoints**, chosen because they are key and sometimes promoted viewpoints within the landscape, including for example specific local visitor attractions, viewpoints in areas of particularly noteworthy visual and/or recreational amenity such as landscapes with statutory landscape designations, or viewpoints with particular cultural landscape associations; and*
  - ***Illustrative viewpoints**, chosen specifically to demonstrate a particular effect or specific issues, which might, for example, be the restricted visibility at certain locations*" (GLVIA3, Para 6.19, Page 109).
- likely significant effects (including cumulative) on both the landscape as a resource (in terms of both physical and perceptual effects) and visual receptors are identified; and
- the level (and significance) of landscape and visual effects are judged with reference to the nature of the receptor (commonly referred to as the sensitivity of the receptor), which considers both susceptibility and value, and the nature of the impact (commonly referred to as the magnitude of change), which considers a combination of judgements including scale, geographical extent, duration, and reversibility.

9.3.12 The assessment of landscape and visual effects includes consideration of effects arising during both the construction phase and the operational phase of the Proposed Development. Construction effects would be temporary and short-term (5 year construction period) and are expected to arise from activities such as site clearance, construction of access tracks, construction compounds and tower foundations. Upon completion of construction, and where possible, disturbed landscape features such as ground cover and vegetation would be returned to their original condition. As such, construction effects are considered to be partially reversible. Operational effects would be experienced over the lifetime of the Proposed Development and would primarily relate to the presence of towers, conductors and permanent access tracks in the landscape. As such, operational effects are considered to be long-term and partially reversible.

Assessing Significance

9.3.13 The predicted significance of effects is determined through the method of assessment detailed in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisation Methodology**. The determination is based on professional judgement, considering both sensitivity of the receptor and magnitude of change as detailed below in **Plate 9.1: Judging levels of effect - Landscape or Visual (including cumulative)**.

Sensitivity

9.3.14 The sensitivity of the baseline conditions, including the importance of environmental features within the study area or the sensitivity of potentially affected receptors, are assessed in line with best practice guidance, legislation, statutory designations and professional judgement.

9.3.15 Judgements regarding the sensitivity of landscape or visual receptors require consideration of both the susceptibility of the landscape or visual receptor to the type of development proposed and the value attached to the landscape receptor or view. Judgements are recorded as high, medium, or low. Detailed information about the approach to assessment of sensitivity is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology.**

Magnitude of change

9.3.16 The magnitude of change is identified through consideration of the Proposed Development, the degree of change to baseline conditions predicted as a result of the Proposed Development, the duration and reversibility of an effect and best practice guidance and legislation.

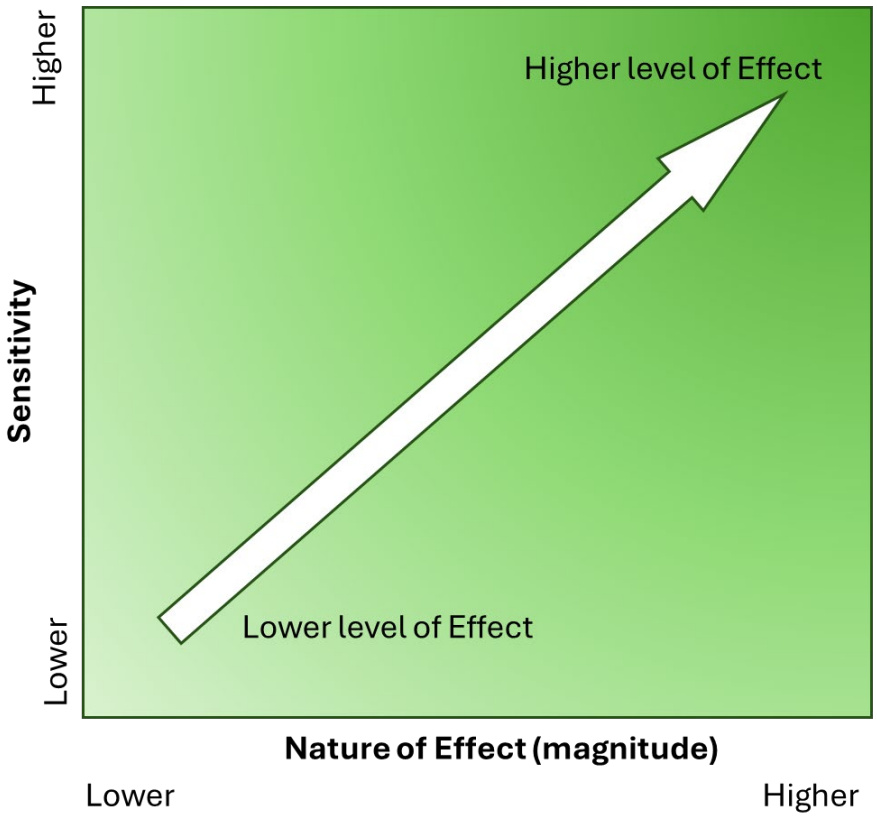
9.3.17 Judgements regarding the magnitude of landscape or visual change are recorded as High, Medium, Low or Barely Perceptible, and combine an assessment of the scale and geographical extent of the landscape or visual effect, its duration and reversibility. Detailed information about the approach to assessment of magnitude is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology.**

Significance

9.3.18 The sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the change are used as a guide to predict the significance of the likely effects. Although a numerical or scaled weighting system is not applied, consideration of the relative importance of each aspect is made to feed into the overall decision. This determination requires the application of professional judgement and experience to take on board the many different variables which need to be considered, and which are given different weight according to site-specific and location-specific considerations in every instance. Judgements are made on a case-by-case basis, guided by the principles set out in **Plate 9.1: Judging levels of effect - Landscape or Visual (including cumulative)** above and in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology.**

9.3.19 Levels of effect are identified as Negligible, Minor, Moderate or Major. Moderate and Major effects are considered Significant in the context of the EIA Regulations.

Plate 9.1: Judging levels of effect - Landscape or Visual (including cumulative)



Direction of Effects

9.3.20 As required by the EIA Regulations, the assessment must identify the direction of effect as either beneficial or adverse. The direction of landscape, visual and cumulative effects is determined in relation to the degree to which the proposal fits with the existing landscape character or views, and the contribution to the landscape or views that the Proposed Development makes,

even if it is in contrast to the existing character of the landscape or views. LVIA is required to take an objective approach. Therefore, to cover the 'maximum case effect' situation, potential landscape and visual effects relating to electricity transmission infrastructure are assumed to be adverse unless otherwise stated.

Assessment Assumptions and Limitations

Assessment Assumptions

9.3.21 The following assumptions have been made when undertaking the assessment of effects:

- construction of the Proposed Development would take place over a five-year period. Further detail is set out in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**; and
- the Proposed Development would not have a fixed operational life. As set out in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description,** the effects associated with the construction phase can be considered to be representative of worst-case decommissioning effects, and therefore no separate assessment on decommissioning has been undertaken as part of this LVIA.

Assessment Limitations

9.3.22 No substantial information gaps have been identified during the preparation of baseline information or undertaking of the assessment, and no material limitations were experienced during field surveys. It is considered that there is sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be taken in relation to the identification and assessment of likely significant effects on landscape and visual amenity.

Limits of Deviation

9.3.23 The LVIA assesses the effects of the Proposed Development as it is described in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**, and shown on **Volume 3, Figure 1.1: Overview of the Proposed Development.** The description and figures show tower locations along the alignment, and the height of each tower. The Proposed Alignment is modelled into the visualisations and has informed the assessment of effects. The LVIA also considers the HLOD and VLOD. Full details of the horizontal and vertical LODs are provided in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**, and are summarised below:

- the HLOD allows for micrositing of the Operational Corridor (OC) up to 100 m either side of the OHL alignment centre for suspension towers and OHL conductors, and 200 m for angle towers [8]; and
- the VLOD allows for an increase or decrease in tower height up to a maximum of 9 m.

9.3.24 The HLOD would be applied where there is a technical or environmental issue identified post consent, that could be avoided through a minor change to the tower position. The HLOD distance includes the Operational Corridor, which extends 45 m to each side of the centreline. As such, the maximum that an individual suspension tower could be moved would be 55 m. The HLOD for angle towers allows for a maximum horizontal movement of 100 m. Across the length of the Proposed Development, a number of further restrictions to the HLOD have been applied to exclude a number of sensitive landscape and visual receptors from the available micrositing zone, as well as a number of wider sensitivities identified within the EIA. These exclusions are detailed in **Table 3.1: Overview of the LOD Variations** in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description** and presented on **Volume 3, Figures 3.3.1 to 3.3.29**: **Overview of the LOD Variations**. and **Volume 3, Figure A9.3.1a to A9.3.1y: Residential Properties within 225 m of Proposed Development)**.

9.3.25 Where the horizontal or vertical LODs are considered to allow a design that would result in a different level of effect than that found for the Proposed Development, commentary on this and a secondary judgment is provided.

9.3.26 The VLOD is indicated as a marker above each tower on visualisations for viewpoints within 2 km of the Alignment. It is considered that from viewpoints beyond 2 km from the Alignment, potential increases or decreases in tower height of up to 9 m would not result in findings that differ from the assessment of the designed tower heights. The LVIA visualisation package is presented in **Volume 4: Visualisations**.

9.3.27 The HLOD is not illustrated in the LVIA visualisation package. Although the HLOD provides flexibility for micrositing of infrastructure, the location of towers as per the Alignment is considered to be the most realistic and likely project scenario.

[8] The Operational Corridor (45 m either side of the centre line) would not extend outside of the horizontal LOD (See **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**)

Given that the EIAR requires consideration of likely significant effects, the visualisations therefore illustrate the most realistic and likely locations of towers based on the designed Alignment and not the HLOD. The extent of the HLOD, including agreed restrictions, is shown on **Figures 9.1-9.4 (Volume 3)** and **A9.3.1a to A9.3.1y: Residential Properties within 225 m of Proposed Development (Volume 3)**.

9.3.28 It should also be noted that prior to any change being made to the Proposed Development within the HLOD or VLOD, a change control process would be undertaken to ensure that there is no unacceptable increase in adverse impacts as a result of the change. Where there is a requirement to vary the location (or height) of infrastructure within the LODs, the relevant environmental information within the EIAR would be reviewed to establish any potential constraints or significant adverse change in effect compared with those reported in the EIAR.

9.3.29 Areas of infrastructure and management felling as part of the Proposed Development have also been modelled in visualisations where such felling would be clearly visible and could contribute to impacts. Proposed permanent access tracks have been modelled into visualisations where such tracks are considered to form notable features in the view and could contribute to significant effects. In views where permanent access tracks would form distant or barely perceptible features in the view, they have not been illustrated in the visualisations.

9.4 Baseline Conditions

9.4.1 This section presents an overview of the landscape and visual baseline receptors located within the study area (as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area**). The baseline overview is broken down into Sections A-F as illustrated on **Volume 3, Figure 1.1: Overview of the Proposed Development – Section A to F.** An overview of each Section is provided in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description.**

9.4.2 Further detail regarding the baseline for landscape and visual receptors is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Volume 5, Appendix 2: Visual Assessment,** respectively**.**

Section A

Landscape Character

9.4.3 The majority of Section A is located in LCT 382: Lowland Hill Ranges between the Sidlaw Hills in the south and Glamis in the north as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.2b.1: Landscape Character Types**.[9] Within this area, the landscape largely comprises a series of lowland hills such as Craigowl Hill (455 m above ordnance datum (AOD)) and Balkello Hill (395 m AOD) which form a prominent and characteristic ridgeline as part of the Sidlaw Hills. These hills subside into productive agricultural lowland characterised by open fields that range from medium to large scale. Pockets and lines of broadleaf trees are limited to hill slopes, field boundaries and watercourses. Blocks of commercial forestry are also scattered across hill slopes. Settlement is generally limited to scattered farm buildings and small groups of properties, with more concentrated settlement at Kirkton of Auchterhouse and Milton of Ogilvie. Two existing high voltage OHLs to the east of the Proposed Development pass through this LCT in a north to south alignment, connecting at the existing Tealing Substation which forms part of a developed area with a concentration of infrastructure, which also includes Seagreen Substation. A small area in the south of Section A sits within LCT 387: Dipslope Farmland which comprises a mosaic of geometric arable and pastoral fields. The northern end of Section A extends into LCT 386: Low Moorland Hills which comprises smooth rounded hills, as well as LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside which is characterised by low lying arable fields, policy woodlands and designed landscapes, including at Glamis Castle.

Designated Landscapes

9.4.4 Angus Council's Sidlaw LLA is located approximately 1 km to the west of the Proposed Development at its closest point in Section A, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.4a.1: Designated Landscapes**. The LLA generally extends from Balkello Hill westwards beyond the study area to Lundie, incorporating a number of distinctive hills that are popular for recreation with strong cultural heritage associations, including Balkello Hill, Kinpurney Hill (345 m AOD) and Auchterhouse Hill (426 m AOD). The special qualities for the Sidlaw LLA are set out in Angus Council's Local Landscape Areas in Angus report (2024). Those of relevance to the Proposed Development include:

[9] Landscape character types are from NatureScot (2019) Scottish Landscape Character Types, Map and Descriptions.

- "*Distinctive profile of smooth rounded hills with panoramic views;*
- *Often pasture with a strong pattern of enclosure by dykes which creates scenic landscape topology;*
- *Often arable and improved pasture on lower slopes but with semi-natural pasture and extensive areas of heath on higher ground;*
- *A popular recreational area… Auchterhouse Hill being a popular hilltop destinations and often the focal point of path networks. Balkello Community Woodland… is also an important recreational area*"[10].

9.4.5 With relation to Forces for Change[11] and Landscape Guidance, the report notes that *"As well as issues of creating a developed character and reducing wildness, tall structures can adversely affect the perception of scale, particularly when placed on top of hills or in a position where visual comparison is possible".*

Visual Receptors and Views

9.4.6 Concentrated settlements and communities within this Section include Bridgefoot to the south of the Proposed Development, Tealing and Inveraldie to the southeast, Douglastown to the east, Jericho, Glamis, Charleston and Milton of Ogilvie to the west, and Kirkton of Auchterhouse to the southwest. Elsewhere, settlement comprises smaller groups of properties and scattered individual dwellings and farmsteads across the landscape, generally located across the lower lying farmland. The A90 broadly follows the eastern edge of the study area and enters the study area near Tealing and again near Forfar further north. The A928 passes through the study area as it traverses between Finlarg Hill and Ironside Hill at Lumley Den, before descending west towards Milton of Ogilvie and Glamis. Further north, the A94 passes through the study area providing a connection between the A90 to the east and Glamis to the west. There is also an extensive network of B-roads and minor roads.

9.4.7 There are a number of Core Paths within the study area as well as some popular hill summits and visitor attractions, including the promoted viewpoint at the summit of Balkello Hill at the southern end of the Section and Glamis Castle further north. The nature of views within this Section varies including longer range views experienced by recreational receptors at hill summits, affording views across the Strathmore and the Mearns to the north and towards the coast to the east, as well as open elevated views across Strathmore from the Section of the A928 at Lumley Den. From lower lying areas, views are typically shorter range and often foreshortened by intervening landform, such as the Sidlaw Hills, or obscured by intervening woodland and vegetation; however, some longer ranging views are afforded across the lowland of Strathmore and up towards the Angus Glens to the northeast, including from some sections of the minor road network and the A90.

Key Landscape and Visual Considerations

9.4.8 The following are considered to be the key landscape and visual considerations within Section A:

- the Sidlaw Hills as a landmark hill range, forming a distinctive backdrop to lower lying areas to the north and south;
- the elevated and panoramic views afforded from hill summits within the Sidlaw Hills, including the promoted viewpoint at Balkello Hill;
- effects on road users of the A928 at Lumley Den where open elevated views across Strathmore are afforded; and
- effects on residents at Tealing, Glamis, Jericho and Douglastown, and elsewhere along Section A.

Section B

Landscape Character

9.4.9 Section B is located within LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside (which is split into two sub-units, Brechin unit and Forfar unit, for the purposes of this report), with smaller extents located within LCT 379: Foothills Tayside, and LCT 386: Low Moorland Hills, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.2b.2: Landscape Character Types**. LCT 384 is centred along the wide strath of the River South Esk and its tributaries, stretching between the foothills of the Mounth Highlands to the north and northwest, and the lower slopes of the Forfar Hills to the southeast. Within this area, the landscape is largely comprised of fertile river plains in

[10] Angus Council, 2024. Local Landscape Areas in Angus, Final Report. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/Report%20109_24%20Local%20Landscape%20Areas%20in%20Angus_App%202.pdf (pages 14-16).

[11] 'Forces for Change' are those factors affecting the evolution of the landscape and which may, consequently, affect the perception of the landscape in the near or distant future.

arable use, interspersed with small blocks of forestry, and larger settlements located at the edges of the study area. The landform of the area is predominantly low-lying and flat, however it is more varied further north towards the hills of the Mounth, becoming increasingly undulating with distinctive local ridgelines and landform features, for example the low but distinctive ridgeline at Careston and in the Battledykes area. There are areas of localised elevation in adjacent LCTs that contain the study area in the northwest and southeast, where the descending slopes of the Hill of Menmuir (271 m AOD), Deuchar Hill (298 m AOD), Shandford Hill (308 m AOD), and the Hill of Finavon (229 m AOD), meet the valley floor.

9.4.10 The landscape pattern throughout this area is generally large-scale, and comprises mainly regular arable fields except for meandering bands of woodland and scrub along the watercourses which break up the otherwise geometric field pattern. Settlement throughout the study area is limited to smaller villages and individual properties strung along the minor road network, as well as the larger towns of Brechin, Kirriemuir and Forfar, which sit at the edges of the study area to the south and northeast. There are two existing high voltage OHLs which broadly follow the study area north-south, across the foothills to the northwest and to the southeast. Taller structures within the area are limited to individual wind turbines and telecom masts, which generally sit just beyond the study area but are visible against the darker backdrop of rising foothills. The northwestern edge of the study area extends into LCT 379: Foothills Tayside, which comprises the foothills of the Mounth Highlands, marking the Highland Boundary Fault. A small extent of the southeastern edge of the study area extends into LCT 386: Low Moorland Hills, and a small extent of the northwestern fringes of the study area extend into LCT 376: Summits and Plateaux – Tayside.

Designated Landscapes

9.4.11 Angus Council's River South Esk LLA stretches east-west across the study area in Section B, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.4a.2: Designated Landscapes.** The Angus Glens LLA is located approximately 0.8 km from the Proposed Development to the northwest.

9.4.12 The River South Esk LLA begins and ends beyond the study area, generally extending from Cortachy and the Angus Glens in the west and past Brechin in the east, following along the River South Esk and incorporating designed landscapes at Brechin Castle and Kinnaird and some areas of higher elevation with cultural heritage associations, including at Aberlemno. The special qualities for the River South Esk LLA are set out in Angus Council's Local Landscape Areas in Angus report (2024). Those of relevance to the Proposed Development include:

- "*The River South Esk has large sweeping meanders lined with trees and narrow woodland strips which visually connect the two designed landscapes;*
- *Scenic views from higher ground, most notably from Angus Hill, Aberlemno and Burghill which also provides a setting for Brechin… Views to the south towards the Braes of Angus are highly scenic;*
- *A strong rural character outwith Brechin … houses are often associated with groups of trees which help integrate them into the landscape;*
- *The River South Esk and its tributaries, together with associated riparian habitats form a blue/ green network which is often a focal feature in views*"[12].

9.4.13 With relation to Forces for Change and Landscape Guidance, the report notes that "*tall structures can adversely affect the perception of scale, particularly when placed on top of hills or in a position where visual comparison is possible*".

9.4.14 The Angus Glens LLA stretches from the Cairngorms National Park beyond the study area to the northwest, to Strathmore within the study area to the southeast. The LLA extends across a broad and undulating plateau, incorporating numerous hilltops and glens. The special qualities for the Angus Glens LLA are set out in Angus Council's Local Landscape Areas in Angus report (2024). Those of relevance to the Proposed Development include:

- "*An extensive elevated plateau and rounded hill tops which has strong unity despite being regularly incised by the Angus Glens;*
- *Often fringed by dramatic cliffs and crags which contrast with the more tamed glen floor adding picturesque qualities;*

[12] Angus Council, 2024. Local Landscape Areas in Angus, Final Report. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/Report%20109_24%20Local%20Landscape%20Areas%20in%20Angus_App%202.pdf (pages 11-13).

- *A mosaic of pasture, native woodland and heath combine in views to form patterns and scenic views with strong gestalt properties;*
- *Views to and from the Cairngorms National Park, including panoramic views from the elevated plateau and framed views along the glens;*
- *The dramatic Highland Boundary Fault [where] The Highland Foothills are strongly associated with the Highland Boundary Fault;*
- *A popular hillwalking landscape, with a number of hilltop destinations and nationally promoted routes;*
- *There are several historic 'Mounth Roads' which in crossing between Strathmore and Deeside, use the Angus glens… The Caterthuns near Edzell are popular tourist and recreational attractions*"[13].

9.4.15 With relation to Forces for Change and Landscape Guidance, the report notes that "*As well as issues of creating a developed character and reducing wildness, tall structures can adversely affect the perception of scale, particularly when placed on top of hills or in a position where visual comparison is possible*".

Visual Receptors and Views

9.4.16 Settlements within this Section are primarily concentrated within the larger towns east of the Proposed Development at Forfar and Brechin, and west of the Proposed Development at Kirriemuir. Beyond this, properties are generally located along the minor road network which crosses the strath, primarily comprised of farmsteads and small villages, as well as a small number of estates. Transit corridors comprise the A90, which roughly follows along the eastern boundary of the study area, and the A926 which connects Kirriemuir and Forfar in the southern part of the study area. A dense minor road network provides connections between smaller communities and dispersed properties.

9.4.17 Core Paths within Section B are limited, with short sections near Forfar and Brechin. Informal footpaths are primarily concentrated along the northern edge of Kirriemuir and across the southern slopes of the Angus Glens LLA. Forfar Loch Country Park is located along the western edge of Forfar. The nature of outlooks across these areas are varied, with views along the minor road network across the strath being relatively open across the gently undulating floodplains, and more enclosed views within the wooded estates near Kirriemuir and Forfar. In general, where longer distance views are available, views are directed to the west, towards the rising forms of the Braes of Angus and the more distant Cairngorms, as well as to the rising forms of the Grampians in the north.

Key Landscape and Visual Considerations

9.4.18 The following are considered to be the key landscape and visual considerations within Section B:

- River South Esk LLA and its "*strong rural character*" and the "*River South Esk and its tributaries*" as a "*focal feature in views*";
- meandering watercourses and the bands of woodland and scrub that follow these, which break up the otherwise geometric field pattern;
- small yet locally distinctive undulations and ridgelines, including around King's Seat, Battledykes and Hilton of Fern;
- wide, expansive views across the floor of Strathmore, offering long distance views towards the rising forms of the Braes of Angus, the more distant Cairngorms, and glimpses of the rising forms of the Grampians in the north; and
- effects on residents, recreational receptors and road users along the length of the Proposed Development around and between Padanaram, Foreside of Cairn, Craigeassie, Duns Wood and Lochty Wood.

Section C

Landscape Character

9.4.19 Section C lies within the Strathmore and the Mearns area which sits between the coast to the east and the Highland Boundary Fault to the northwest. Section C extends across LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside in the southwest (which is split into two sub-units, Brechin unit and Forfar unit, for the purposes of this report), and LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire

[13] Angus Council, 2024. Local Landscape Areas in Angus, Final Report. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/Report%20109_24%20Local%20Landscape%20Areas%20in%20Angus_App%202.pdf (pages 7-10).

in the northeast, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.2b.3: Landscape Character Types**. The southwestern part of Section C that sits within the LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside, between West Muir and Edzell, largely comprises broad straths, loosely enclosed by the foothills and uplands of the Grampian Mountains to the northwest, and lower hill ridges to the south. The fertile lowland areas are dominated by arable agriculture, with large fields and woodland limited to scattered pockets and along watercourses. Native birch woodlands can also be found in unimproved land within the straths. Scattered geometric blocks of commercial forestry are also present across this landscape such as at Edzell Wood.

9.4.20 The northeastern part of Section C, between Edzell and Laurencekirk, sits within LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire. Within this LCT, the landscape largely comprises broad and generally gently undulating strath with some flatter basins. The low-lying and gently undulating relief of this broad valley is emphasised by the steep moorland slopes of the Mounth which rise abruptly to the northwest, marking the line of the Highland Boundary Fault. These straths have highly fertile soils and are in arable agricultural use, across a pattern of large geometric fields. The farmland is interspersed with small blocks of commercial forestry, including but not limited to Capo Plantation, Inverury Wood and Little Thornton Wood.

9.4.21 Settlement throughout the study area within Section C is limited to scattered individual farmsteads, and towns and villages typically constructed of warm red sandstone, such as Edzell and Fettercairn along the northern edge of the study area and the larger settlement of Laurencekirk on the southern edge of the study area. The landscape of both LCT 384 and LCT 22 forms part of a major transport corridor, with the A90 running along near the south-eastern edge of the LCTs in a broadly south-west to north-east orientation – broadly similar to the orientation of the LCT areas. Additionally, OHLs run along the southern edges of these LCTs. Within LCT 22 there is a radio transmissions tower within the disused Edzell Airfield, as well as a number of single large commercial wind turbines which are prominent both within the landscape and in views to the adjacent foothills. A small extent of the northwestern edge of the study area in Section C extends into LCT 379: Foothills - Tayside which comprises a narrow series of foothills at the base of the Highland Boundary Fault, and a small extent of the southeastern fringes of the study area in this Section extends into LCT 387: Dipslope Farmland which comprises an extensive area of lowland farmland running parallel to the coastline. Additionally, a small extent of the western fringes of the study area in this section extend into LCT 371: Mid Upland Glens.

Designated Landscapes

9.4.22 Angus Council's Angus Glens LLA is located approximately 2 km to the northwest of the Proposed Development in Section C, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.4a.3: Designated Landscape**. The proposed LLA generally extends from Strathmore, within the study area, to the northwest to the Cairngorms National Park beyond the study area, across a broad and undulating plateau, incorporating numerous hilltops and glens. The special qualities for the Angus Glens LLA are set out in Angus Council's Local Landscape Areas in Angus report (2024). Those of relevance to the Proposed Development are quoted at **paragraph 9.4.14**.

9.4.23 Aberdeenshire Council's Braes of the Mearns SLA lies approximately 1.5 km northwest of the Proposed Development in Section C, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.4a.3: Designated Landscape.** The southeastern boundary of the Braes of the Mearns SLA follows the alignment of the B966 road, which lies parallel to the Proposed Development. The SLA includes the enclosing ridge of the Mounth which forms part of the foothills of the Grampian Mountains, marking the Highland Boundary Fault, and contrasting with the flat farmed valley of the Howe of the Mearns. Outside the study area the SLA extends northwest into the uplands. The aspect and features of this landscape considered worthy of recognition through SLA designation are set out in in Aberdeenshire Council's Special Landscape Areas Supplementary Guidance (2023). Those of relevance to the Proposed Development include:

- "*Strong contrast between the distinctive flat Howe and the dramatic ridge of the Mounth to the north;*
- *Clear expression of the Highland Boundary Fault, where Highland and Lowland Scotland meet;*
- *Intact historic farmed landscape of the Howe of the Mearns, with a strong structure of beech woodland and avenues along the foot of the slopes;*
- *Highly visible ridge viewed from across the landscape to the southeast, including from the A90, which defines the Howe of the Mearns;*

- *Wooded estate landscapes including Fasque, Fettercairn and Drumtochty whose distinctive policies and tree belts give a richness and cultural diversity, which reinforces the contrast of landscape character with the simplicity of land cover of the adjacent uplands*" [14].

9.4.24 With relation to Forces for Change and Management Recommendations, the report notes that "*Development of renewable energy technologies (e.g. onshore wind turbines and associated infrastructure)*" is a force for change, and the following as relevant management recommendations:

- "*The strong contrast between the distinctive flat Howe and the ridge of the Mounth to the north should be maintained;*
- *Development proposals should maintain the intact farmed landscape of the Howe of the Mearns, with its strong structure of beech woodland and avenues;* and
- *Due to high visual sensitivity of the ridgeline and qualities of wildness and remoteness, development proposals need to be carefully considered, sited and designed so as to avoid adverse impacts".*

Visual Receptors and Views

9.4.25 Concentrated settlements and communities within this Section include small towns and villages such as Laurencekirk and Luthermuir to the east of the Proposed Development, Inchbare and Little Brechin to the south and Edzell, Edzell Woods and Fettercairn to the northwest. Elsewhere, settlement comprises smaller groups of properties and isolated dwellings including farmsteads, traditional cottages as well as some manor houses across the landscape, typically in the lower-lying areas and the broad, open strath which form the Howe of the Mearns.

9.4.26 The A90 lies to the southeast of the Proposed Development, running broadly parallel to the Proposed Development and the study area boundary, and briefly exiting the study area at Laurencekirk. There is also an extensive network of B roads and minor roads within the study area which provide connections between smaller communities and dispersed properties. Core Paths within Section C are limited, with short sections near Little Brechin, Edzell, Laurencekirk and Fettercairn.

9.4.27 The nature of outlooks is varied, with views along the minor road network across the strath being relatively open across the gently undulating floodplains and mosaics of agricultural fields. Views are broken up by intermittent blocks of commercial forestry and broadleaved woodland. Within more wooded and forested areas, for example around Edzell Wood, views are typically more contained. There are also views west and northwest towards the enclosing foothills of the Grampians which form a contrasting backdrop to the open broad views across the lowland strath. Where longer distance views are available beyond the immediate foothills, views are directed to the west, towards the rising forms of the Braes of Angus and the more distant Cairngorms.

Key Landscape and Visual Considerations

9.4.28 The following are considered to be the key landscape and visual considerations within Section C:

- the elevated and panoramic views afforded from the southern fringes of Braes of Angus, including White and Brown Caterthun;
- effects on the rolling wooded and settled farmland of Strathmore;
- views from the low-lying floor of Strathmore and the Mearns towards the steep moorland slopes of the Mounth, marking the line of the Highland Boundary Fault and forming a prominent backdrop in views to the north and northwest; and
- effects on residents, recreational receptors and road users along the length of the Proposed Development around and between Little Brechin Wood, Inchbare, Inverury Wood and Haughhead.

Section D

Landscape Character

9.4.29 Section D of the Proposed Development passes through LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands - Aberdeenshire, from northwest of Laurencekirk in the south to east of Auchenblae in the north. It then travels though LCT 24: Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills –

[14] Aberdeenshire Council, 2022. Local Development Plan 2023 (2023) Appendix 13: Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas. [Online] Available at: https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/LDP2021/Appendix13AberdeenshireSpecialLandscapeAreas.pdf (pages 1120-1125).

Aberdeenshire, to the north, between Auchenblae and the Fetteresso Forest, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.2b.4: Landscape Character Types**.

9.4.30 The southern part to Section D, within LCT 22, forms part of the Howe of the Mearns, where the landform comprises a broad and gently undulating strath. Landcover is predominantly arable agriculture with a distinctive patchwork of medium to large open fields, divided by ditches and fences. There are some intermittent areas of pastoral fields. The large-scale landscape is broken up intermittently by small broadleaved and coniferous woodlands. These woodland pockets, alongside riparian woodlands aligning watercourses, stand out amongst the broad and expansive plains. The settlement pattern is typically made up of scattered farmsteads and small towns and villages, including Laurencekirk and Fordoun, with many traditional dwellings and structures built from warm red sandstone. The area provides a transport corridor, with the A90, East Coast Railway and a high voltage OHL running closer to the eastern boundary of LCT 22.

9.4.31 The northern part of Section D within LCT 24 is large scale and open, comprising smoothly rolling ridges and shallow valleys. Lowland Hills, including Herscha Hill (220 m AOD), Knock Hill (218 m AOD), Droop Hill (224 m AOD) and Carmont Hill (236 m AOD) are prominent landforms amongst the gently undulating farmland, often giving away sharply to watercourses and ravines (primarily associated with the Bervie Water, Luther Water and Carron Water), with some steep valley slopes. Woodland cover is sparse, but coniferous shelterbelts planted on local ridgelines, and broadleaf woodlands aligning watercourses and planted on knolls, emphasise the landform. Settlement pattern is scattered, but generally concentrated within the southern part of the LCT, including the settlements of Glenbervie, Drumlithie and Auchenblae. Otherwise, isolated dwellings sparsely populate the landscape, and comprise a range of architectural forms, including manor houses, farmsteads and traditional cottages. The A90 is situated to the southeast of the Proposed Development and is supported by a comprehensive network of minor roads. There are frequent single and small groups of wind turbines which are prominent built features within the landscape including Jacksbank Windfarm (three turbines, 99 m tip height), Herscha Hill windfarm (two turbines, 80 m tip height), Droop Hill windfarm (two turbines, 100 m tip height and Clochna Hill (four turbines, 76 m tip height). There is also a high voltage OHL which passes through the western part of LCT, between Mains of Drumtochty and Fetteresso Forest.

9.4.32 A portion of the study area to the west falls within LCT 29: Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire. This area contrasts strikingly with the expansive strath and gently undulating landforms to the east. A range of smooth rounded hills contribute to an expansive upland plateau which forms the foreground to the Cairngorms National Park further west. The commercial forests of Drumelzie Wood, Drumtochty Forest and Fetteresso Forest which cover the rounded slopes act to enclose the landscape to the northwest.

Designated Landscapes

9.4.33 Aberdeenshire Council's Braes of the Mearns SLA is located approximately 1.4 km to the northwest of the Proposed Development in Section D, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.4a.4: Designated Landscape**. The southeastern boundary of the Braes of the Mearns SLA follows the alignment of the B966 road, which lies parallel to the Proposed Development, and continues northeast towards the settlement of Auchenblae within the study area. The SLA sits across the foothills of the Grampian Mountains and marks the Highland Boundary Fault. Outside the study area the SLA extends northwest into the uplands. The aspect and features of this landscape considered worthy of recognition through SLA designation are set out in Aberdeenshire Council's Special Landscape Areas Supplementary Guidance (2023). Those relevant to the Proposed Development are quoted at **paragraph 9.4.23**. Relevant Forces for Change and Management Recommendations are quoted in **paragraph 9.4.24**.

Visual Receptors and Views

9.4.34 Concentrated settlements and communities within this Section include small towns and villages such as Laurencekirk to the south of the Proposed Development, Fordoun, Glenbervie and Drumlithie to the east, and West Cairnbeg and Auchenblae to the west. Elsewhere, settlement comprises smaller groups of properties and isolated dwellings including farmsteads, traditional cottages as well as some manor houses across the landscape, typically in the lower-lying areas and the broad, open strath which form the Howe of the Mearns.

9.4.35 The A90 lies to the east of the Proposed Development, entering the study area east of Laurencekirk, where it travels through Fordoun, before exiting the study area northwards at Bridge of Mondynes and continuing northeastwards towards Stonehaven. There is an extensive network of B roads and minor roads within the study area. The East Coast Railway broadly follows the A90

and enters the study area at Laurencekirk at the south of Section D, travelling northwards before exiting the study area to the west of Stonehaven.

9.4.36 There are a number of Core Paths within the study area, as well as some unclassified routes typically associated with the uplands and forests within the study area to the west of the Proposed Development.

9.4.37 The views experienced vary across the Section. These include long-range views from areas of higher land and hill summits such as Droop Hill and Carmont Hill as well as the upland fringes on the western edge of the study area. From these elevated locations open, extensive, and sometimes panoramic, views are afforded across the Howe of the Mearns, with the broad, expansive plain visible extending to the coast beyond. From within the strath, particularly in the southern part of the Section between Laurencekirk and Fordoun, the views are typically open in nature, capturing the vast mosaic of large-scale, agricultural fields, with the uplands to the east and west forming distinctive backdrops and horizons. Views are broken up by intermittent blocks of commercial forestry and broadleaved woodland, which although sparse, do act as distinctive vertical features. They are seen in the context of built forms including electrical infrastructure such steel lattice OHL towers and wind turbines present within the strath. Broadleaf and mixed woodland is more prevalent to the north, associated with Bervie Water and its tributaries. More complex topography combined with these broadleaved and mixed woodlands and commercial forestry curtail some views, for example from the settlements of Glenbervie and Drumlithie.

Key Landscape and Visual Considerations

9.4.38 The following are considered to be the key landscape and visual considerations within Section D:

- the undulating landform comprising smoothly rolling ridges, lowland hills and shallow valleys;
- views from the low-lying Howe of the Mearns towards the steep moorland slopes of the Mounth, marking the line of the Highland Boundary Fault and forming a prominent backdrop in views to the north and northwest;
- long-ranging views from areas of higher land and hill summits such as Hill of Garvock, Droop Hill and Carmont Hill as well as the southwestern fringes of the Grampians; and
- effects on residents, recreational receptors and road users along the length of the Proposed Development around and between north of Laurencekirk, Woods of Redhall, Droop Hill and Fetteresso Forest.

Section E

Landscape Character

9.4.39 The southern half of Section E is located in LCT 29: Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire, stretching between Fetteresso Forest in the south to the north of Durris Forest, as shown on **Volume 3, Figures 9.2b.4 to 9.2b.5: Landscape Character Types**. Within this area, the landscape largely comprises upland hills associated with the Mounth range and Grampian foothills in the southwest, which form the northern extent of the Highland Boundary Fault. Prominent hills within the Section E study area are concentrated in the west and include Cairn-mon-earn (378 m AOD) and the Hill of Trusta (321 m AOD), both situated within Fetteresso Forest. Landcover largely comprises commercial plantation forestry and open expanses of heather moorland. The eastern part of this area is transitional in nature, formed of sloping pastoral fields interspersed with low-lying hills and ridges which are typically covered with rough grazing.

9.4.40 The northern half of Section E is located within LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley, which encompasses a section of the Dee Valley between Crathes in the west and Aberdeen in the east. The section of this LCT is characterised by the wide strath formed by the River Dee, enclosed by undulating valleys slopes. On these slopes and along the valley floor, arable and pastoral fields are punctuated with pockets of broadleaved woodland and smaller blocks of commercial forestry. Settlement within the study area of Section E consists of scattered farmsteads and small groups of properties such as Rickarton in the south and more concentrated settlement at Kirkton of Durris and Crathes in the north. Two existing high voltage OHLs run in a north to south alignment through these LCTs. Towards the southeast of Section E (LCT 29), approaching the edge of the study area, the operational Meikle Carewe Wind Farm (10 turbines, 70 m tip height) is located on the slopes of Meikle Carewe Hill (266 m AOD). A number of telecommunication masts are also located within this LCT, including at the summit of Cairn-mon-earn and Hill of Mossmaud (343 m AOD). A small area of the eastern extent of the study area, north of Durris Forest, sits within LCT 27: Farmed Moorland Edge – Aberdeenshire which comprises a mix of broad, regular arable and pastoral fields interspersed with forestry blocks.

Designated Landscapes

9.4.41 The study area crosses Aberdeenshire Council's Dee Valley SLA in the north of Section E, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.4a.5: Designated Landscapes.** The Dee Valley SLA extends beyond the study area to both the east and west. The special qualities for the Dee Valley are set out in Aberdeenshire Council's Special Landscape Areas Supplementary Guidance (2023). Those of relevance to the Proposed Development include:

- "*Broad, meandering river, with wooded banks rising to moorland hills and occasional limestone outcrops;*
- *Broadleaf woodland contributes to visual diversity and habitat value all along the valley, and reflect the long history of estate development;*
- *The woodland along the Dee forms part of an intact habitat network, including policy woodland, plantations and riparian woodland, providing connectivity between the lowlands and uplands of Aberdeenshire. Mature woodland also provides diversity and richness of landscape character;*
- *Deeside is representative of Aberdeenshire's identity, and is a popular tourist destination, both in itself and as a link between Aberdeen and the National Park;*
- *Locations along the River Dee are host to some of the most photographed places in Aberdeenshire;*
- *Key routes through the valley include the Royal Deeside Railway, the Deeside Tourist Route, long-distance walking, cycling and horse riding trails. The valley is seen by large numbers of people using these routes;* and
- *The pattern of historic routeways running north to south across the Dee at strategic crossing points highlights, more than anywhere else, the connection between the highlands and the lowlands*"[15].

9.4.42 With relation to Forces for Change and Management Recommendations, the report notes that "*Development of renewable energy technologies on enclosing slopes to the river (e.g. onshore wind turbines, grid connection and associated infrastructure) and indirect views along the river (e.g. hydro) affect views to and from the SLA*". The report additionally notes:

- "*The Dee Valley SLA is classed as a valley landscape type. As such, emphasis should be on maintaining the current patterns of land use and settlement, with development focussed within existing towns and villages. Elsewhere, development should be located on lower slopes or the floor of the valley and carefully sited, designed and landscaped to integrate within the wider valley landscape. Development proposed in surrounding upland areas should be assessed to minimise the visual impact on the SLA, including views and vistas along the valley;*
- *Proposals should not impact on the sense of place provided by the river and wooded banks, rising to moorland hills;*
- *Development should contribute to the distinctive form of policy woodland plantations and riparian woodland in the area*".

Visual Receptors and Views

9.4.43 Settlement within this Section consists of dispersed farmsteads and smaller communities, including Rickarton near the northern edge of Fetteresso Forest and Kirkton of Durris and Crathes to the south of the River Dee. Properties are primarily located across the lower-lying farmland in the east and in the northern part of Section E and the landform gradually descends towards and into the Dee Valley. There is limited presence of settlement across the forested hills in the western part of the study area across Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest. Transit corridors through Section E are limited to the A957 which passes east-west through the Grampian foothills along the northern edge of Fetteresso Forest, before travelling northwards to the Dee Valley where it connects to the A93. The A93, along with a network of B roads and minor roads, generally runs in an east-west orientation, following the River Dee along the floor of the valley.

9.4.44 There are limited Core Paths within the study area. National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 195 crosses the Proposed Development as it travels through the Dee Valley. There are also multiple areas of open access forestry land throughout Section E which offer informal tracks for recreational use, including Durris Forest and Fetteresso Forest. Within this Section, the nature of outlooks is varied. From the forested hills in the west, views are generally enclosed and shorter range, although occasional longer distance views across lower-lying farmland to the east are afforded from gaps in trees. Across the lower-lying arable and pastoral slopes views are often restricted by intervening landform or woodland. Directed views along the Dee Valley or from

[15] Aberdeenshire Council, 2022. Local Development Plan 2023 (2023) Appendix 13: Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas. [Online] Available at: https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/LDP2021/Appendix13AberdeenshireSpecialLandscapeAreas.pdf (pages 1104-1111).

localised areas of elevation extend to greater distance. In general, where longer distance views are available, views are directed to the east towards the lower-lying coastline and North Sea, or to the northwest towards the elevated forms comprising the Highland Boundary Fault.

Key Landscape and Visual Considerations

9.4.45 The following are considered to be the key landscape and visual considerations within Section E:

- the upland ridge at Fetteresso and Durris Forest which forms the northern extent of the Highland Boundary Fault and a prominent landscape feature when viewed from the lower lying areas to the north and south;
- the wide strath formed by the River Dee, and Dee Valley SLA that covers this area with its "*broad, meandering river, with wooded banks"* and *"key routes through the valley… long-distance walking, cycling and horse riding trails"*;
- views along the Dee Valley, including those experienced by residents and recreational users within and travelling along the valley; and
- effects on residents, recreational receptors and road users along the length of the Proposed Development around and between Fetteresso Forest, Kirkton of Durris and West Park.

Section F

Landscape Character

9.4.46 The majority of Section F is located in LCT 26: Wooded Estates Aberdeen between the settlement of Kintore in the north and Drumoak in the south, as shown on **Volume 3, Figures 9.2b.5 to 9.2b.6: Landscape Character Types**. Within this area, the landscape comprises a mosaic of broad valleys, floodplains, dense woodland and mosses, and a series of low, gently rounded hills such as Barmekin Hill (274 m AOD). The landscape pattern is varied as a result, with areas of open arable fields contrasted by small pastoral fields enclosed by drystone dykes and woodland providing a consistent feature throughout. These areas of woodland take the form of small coniferous and mixed broadleaf woodlands including policy woodlands, copses, beech shelterbelts, and riparian woodland associated with the River Dee. Within Section F are several Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDL) including Dunecht House and Drum Castle, within this LCT. Settlement is widespread with recent housing developments fringing larger towns and scattered throughout the countryside. There are numerous existing high voltage OHLs throughout that become increasingly concentrated at Kintore Substation where they terminate.

9.4.47 A smaller area in the south of Section F sits within LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley, a large-scale valley which comprises a combination of farmland and mixed woodland. An agricultural basin opens and extends towards the lower Dee where it enters the city of Aberdeen to the east, outside of the study area. Within this LCT, riparian woodland along the River Dee forms a key feature, along with a distinct pattern of settlement along the river valley. A small part of the study area enters into LCT 33: Broad Wooded Valley with Estates to the west of the Proposed Development, which encompasses the larger scale part of the Dee Valley surrounded by granite hills. A small part of the study area to the east of Section F overlaps with LCT 06: Undulating Open Farmland which comprises open, gently undulating farmland and well-wooded areas around estates, and LCT 4: River Valley - Aberdeen. A small section of the study area to the west of Section F overlaps LCT 28: Outlying Hills and Ridges which forms a transitional landscape of moorland spurs between low farmland to the east and the high mountains of the Cairngorms to the west. Commercial forestry covers the distinctive slopes, interspersed with varying degrees of heather moorland.

Designated Landscapes

9.4.48 Aberdeenshire Council's Dee Valley SLA traverses the southern end of Section F from west to east, extending to the edge of the study area in the east, as shown on **Volume 3, Figure 9.4a.5: Designated Landscapes**. The SLA incorporates a number of hills particularly between Aboyne and Banchory, including Birken Hill (170 m AOD) and Tom's Cairn (310 m AOD). The aspect and features of this landscape considered worthy of recognition through SLA designation are set out in Aberdeenshire Council's Special Landscape Areas Supplementary Guidance (2023). Those of relevance to the Proposed Development are quoted at **paragraph 9.4.41**. Relevant Forces for Change and Management Recommendations are quoted in **paragraph 9.4.42**.

Visual Receptors and Views

9.4.49 Concentrated settlements and communities within this Section include: Drumoak to the east of the Proposed Development and Crathes to the west in the southern end of Section F; Echt to the west and Dunecht to the east further north; Lyne of Skene and

Leylodge to the east of the Proposed Development; and Kintore to the north. Elsewhere settlement comprises smaller groups of properties and scattered individual dwellings and farmstead across the landscape, generally located across the lower lying farmland. The A944 passes through the study area west to east between Alford and Aberdeen, providing connection to the A90, A980 and A97. Further south, the A93 passes through the study area west to east providing connection between Banchory and Aberdeen, as well as to the A90. There is also an extensive network of B-roads and minor roads.

9.4.50 There are a number of Core Paths, popular hill summits and visitor attractions within the study area, including the Deeside Way Long Distance Path and NCN Route 195 within the Dee Valley. Drum Castle Estate and Gardens is towards the southern end of the Section and the Castle Fraser National Trust site is at the northwestern edge of the study area. The nature of views within this Section varies. Longer range views are experienced by recreational receptors at hill summits such as Meikle Tap (359 m AOD) and Barmekin Hill and from the core path network in more open and elevated arable fields, affording views across the rolling wooded landform as well as distant views of the Highland Boundary Fault at the edge of the Grampian Mountains to the southwest. Shorter range views are experienced from lower lying areas, and in places are enclosed or obscured due to intervening woodland and vegetation, stone wall field boundaries, or intervening landform. Views along the River Dee are typically enclosed by surrounding woodland. Some longer range views up and down the river, framed by the enclosing woodland on the river banks, are afforded from the banks and bridges that cross the River Dee.

Key Landscape and Visual Considerations

9.4.51 The following are considered to be the key landscape and visual considerations within Section F:

- the wide strath formed by the River Dee, and Dee Valley SLA that covers this area with its "*broad, meandering river, with wooded banks"* and *"key routes through the valley… long-distance walking, cycling and horse riding trails"*;
- views along the Dee Valley, including those experienced by residents and recreational users within and travelling along the valley;
- the elevated and panoramic views afforded from hill summits including Meikle Tap and Barmekin Hill; and
- effects on residents, recreational receptors and road users along the length of the Proposed Development around and between Drumoak, Echt, Dunecht and Kintore.

Selection of Representative Viewpoints to Inform the Assessment

9.4.52 This Section sets out the viewpoints that are used to represent and assess the visual effects of the Proposed Development. The viewpoint list is a representative selection of locations that have been consulted on with the statutory consultees; it is not an exhaustive list of locations from which the Proposed Development would be visible and is intended as a representative list of locations from a variety of VRAs across the study area. Impacts on viewpoints are not assessed directly, but visualisations from each location (refer to **Volume 4 a-b, Figures 9.05a to 9.42c**) inform the detailed assessment of effects on views (as provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment)** from VRAs across the study area.

9.4.53 A total of 38 viewpoints were selected across the LVIA study area following analysis of the ZTV and engagement with consultees (see **Table 9.1: Summary of Relevant Consultation**). Two out of the 38 viewpoints are located just beyond the 5 km study area to represent more distant elevated views. These locations were accepted or suggested by consultees prior to the alignment of the Proposed Development being finalised. These viewpoints are all publicly accessible, as advocated by GLVIA3[16].

9.4.54 The viewpoints are listed in **Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations** and shown alongside the ZTV in **Volume 3, Figure 9.3b.1 to 9.3b.6: Visual Receptor Area, Viewpoint Locations and other Visual Receptors with Overhead Line Tower Height Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)**.

[16] Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, 2013. *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3), Routledge.

Table 9.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations

No.	Name	Grid Reference		Distance (km) from the Proposed Development	Landscape Character Type (LCT) the viewpoint is in	Reasons for selection
Section A						
1	Myreton of Claverhouse	339412	736749	1.1	LCT 387 - Dipslope Farmland	Represents views to the north and northwest experienced by recreational receptors and road users around the southwest of Tealing.
2	North of Balnuith	339752	738145	0.8	LCT 387 - Dipslope Farmland	Represents views to the east experienced by residential receptors at the small settlements around Tealing and users of the road network.
3	Cairns, Balkello Hill	336183	739448	2	LCT 382 - Lowland Hill Ranges	Represents views experienced by recreational receptors at the promoted viewpoint at the summit of Balkello Hill where expansive panoramic views are available.
4	A928 near Lumley Den	339897	741772	<0.1	LCT 382 - Lowland Hill Ranges	Represents views experienced by road users travelling along the A928 where open elevated views across the southern part of Strathmore and the Mearns to the northwest and north are available.
5	Milton of Ogilvie	338559	743581	2	LCT 382 - Lowland Hill Ranges	Represents views experienced by road users travelling southeast on the A928 and residents at Milton of Ogilvie.
6	Douglastown	341426	747356	0.3	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the north, west and south experienced by residential receptors in and around Douglastown and Jericho and those travelling along the A94.
7	Mains of Glamis	339432	747159	1.6	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views from the eastern edge of Glamis Garden and Designed Landscape and residents at Mains of Glamis.
Section B						
8	Balmashanner Hill	345934	749437	4.5	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents more distant and elevated views from south of Forfar from the promoted viewpoint on Balmashanner Hill.
9	Padanaram	342600	751564	0.5	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the northwest experienced by residential receptors at the village of Padanaram.
10	B957, near Kirriemuir	339319	754418	3.6	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the southeast experienced by residential receptors at the town of Kirriemuir and road users travelling along the B957.

No.	Name	Grid Reference		Distance (km) from the Proposed Development	Landscape Character Type (LCT) the viewpoint is in	Reasons for selection
11	A90 near base of Carse Hill	346018	754305	1.7	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents open and slightly elevated views northwest across Strathmore experienced by road users travelling along the A90.
12	B957, near Carinhill	344259	756131	0.5	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the east experienced by road users travelling along the B957, within the River South Esk LLA.
13	Tannadice	347564	758280	0.9	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the north experienced by residents at the village of Tannadice and other visual receptors travelling in and around the village.
14	Angus Hill Layby, B9134	353363	756796	5.3	LCT 386 - Low Moorland Hills	Represents elevated and open views experienced by road users and residents in the area.
15	Minor Road, east of Careston	354789	760448	1.9	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the north experienced by road users travelling along the minor road between Careston and the A90.
16	Balhall Crescent	351610	763785	1.8	LCT 379 - Foothills - Tayside	Represents views to the south and southeast experienced by residents on the elevated landform at Balhall.
Section C						
17	Western edge of Little Brechin	357588	762470	0.8	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the northwest experienced by residential receptors at the village of Little Brechin.
18	White Caterthun	354787	766038	3.4	LCT 379 - Foothills - Tayside	Represents views to the south-southeast and southwest experienced by recreational receptors at the White Caterthun hill fort.
19	Inchbare	360505	765589	0.6	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the north and northwest experienced by residential receptors from Inchbare.
20	Inveriscandye Road, southeastern edge of Edzell	360474	768509	2.3	LCT 384 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside	Represents views to the east, southeast and northeast experienced by residential receptors in and around Edzell.
21	Hill of Garvock	373878	770626	4.9	LCT 24 - Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the northwest experienced by visitors to this documented roadside viewpoint and picnic area which offers views across the Howe of the Mearns towards the Mounth and the Highland Boundary Fault.
22	B9120, western edge	370767	771463	2.5	LCT 22 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the northwest experienced by residential receptors and road

No.	Name	Grid Reference		Distance (km) from the Proposed Development	Landscape Character Type (LCT) the viewpoint is in	Reasons for selection
	of Laurencekirk					users at the western edge of Laurencekirk.
23	Minor road, west of Mains of Balnakettle	362171	774301	5.1	LCT 22 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the south experienced by scattered residential properties at a more elevated location, and within the Braes of the Mearns SLA.
Section D						
24	Minor road, northwest of Fordoun	374779	776155	1	LCT 22 - Broad Valley Lowlands - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the southwest and northwest experienced by residential receptors in and around Fordoun.
25	Footpath off Hill View Road, Auchenblae	372940	779027	1.8	LCT 24 - Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the east experienced by residential receptors at the village of Auchenblae, accessed via a footpath off Hill View Road.
26	Glenbervie Road, west of Glenbervie	375281	780187	0.4	LCT 24 - Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire	Represents open elevated views to the north experienced by residential receptors to the west of Glenbervie and those travelling along Glenbervie Road, as well as cumulative effects with existing vertical elements in the landscape.
27	Minor road near Jacksbank	376715	783388	0.4	LCT 24 - Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the northeast experienced by scattered residential receptors near Jacksbank and road users travelling along the minor road.
28	Nether Wyndings	381601	785337	2.2	LCT 24 - Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the northwest experienced by residential receptors along the minor road to the south around Nether Wyndings, and road users travelling along the minor road.
Section E						
29	Slug Road (A957), west of Roadside Cottage	379118	789311	0.1	LCT 29 - Summits and Plateaux - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the south, west and north experienced by residential receptors along the Slug Road near Roadside Cottage, and road users travelling along the Slug Road.
30	Durris Bridge	375259	795808	1.5	LCT 31 - Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley	Represents views to the east experienced along the River Dee and around Crathes, as well as cumulative effects with existing vertical elements in the landscape.
Section F						

No.	Name	Grid Reference		Distance (km) from the Proposed Development	Landscape Character Type (LCT) the viewpoint is in	Reasons for selection
31	Couper's Road	377488	798501	0.1	LCT 31 - Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley	Represents views to the north, south and west experienced by residential receptors around Loch of Park.
32	Drum Castle	379626	800510	2.3	LCT 26 - Wooded Estates - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the south and west experienced by visitors to Drum Castle as well as cumulative effects with existing OHLs in the landscape.
33	Little Eddieston	378479	802402	1.2	LCT 6 - Undulating Open Farmland	Represents views to the west experienced by residential receptors in and around Little Eddieston.
34	Meikle Tap	372245	802553	3.5	LCT 28 - Outlying Hills & Ridges	Represents elevated views to the east experienced by recreational receptors at the summit of Meikle Tap.
35	Footpath north of Echt	373871	805873	0.7	LCT 26 - Wooded Estates - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the east experienced by residential receptors in Echt, and those travelling along the minor footpath to the village (adjacent to the B977).
36	Barmekin Hill	372603	807137	1	LCT 26 - Wooded Estates - Aberdeenshire	Represents open elevated views to the east experienced by recreational receptors at the summit of Barmekin Hill.
37	Dunecht near the Primary School	374642	809311	0.5	LCT 26 - Wooded Estates - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the west experienced by residential receptors in Dunecht, and road users travelling along the A944.
38	North Leylodge	377013	813612	0.4	LCT 26 - Wooded Estates - Aberdeenshire	Represents views to the north and northwest experienced by residential receptors around Leylodge and road users travelling along the B977.

Future Baseline in the Absence of the Proposed Development

9.4.55 In the absence of the Proposed Development, it is likely that the land would continue under the same land use and the character is therefore likely to continue as primarily farmland with arable land use, with some more extensive areas of commercial forestry. Over time, the landscape and visual amenity of the study area is likely to be influenced by a number of Forces for Change'. Forces for Change are those factors affecting the evolution of the landscape and which may, consequently, affect the perception of the study area in the near or distant future. Although prediction of these is necessarily speculative, those of particular relevance are discussed below.

9.4.56 As stated in **Volume 2, Chapter 8: Forestry**, it is assumed that if the Proposed Development were not to proceed, commercial forests will continue to be managed principally in-line with commercial objectives and woodland restructuring, including their felling and replanting with similar species.

9.4.57 Settlement is likely to continue to locally change the nature of the study area, particularly given the Proposed Development's proximity to the cities of Dundee and Aberdeen, and towns of Forfar, Brechin, Laurencekirk, and Stonehaven. Land allocations

for future housing development, as set out in the Local Development Plans for Angus Council[17], Aberdeenshire Council[18] and Aberdeen City Council[19], indicate the pressure for new housing. The potential future expansion of settlements, even if small in scale, is likely to increase the presence of settlement across the study area. Changes in farming and land management practices, driven by policy regimes or climate change, may affect the appearance of the agricultural landscape, for example, an increase in polytunnels.

9.4.58 Increased emphasis on net zero targets is likely to result in the continued increase in the number of commercial-scale onshore renewable developments, including solar farms, wind farms and battery energy storage system (BESS). Furthermore, as farmers diversify income and seek opportunities to generate energy for domestic and commercial use, interest in solar energy, small-scale wind energy development and BESS may continue.

9.4.59 As set out in the National Energy System Operator (NESO) Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design report[20], and in **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Established Need for the Proposed Development**, there is a need for further reinforcement and extension of the electricity transmission network in the UK, predominantly to connect further renewable energy generation. As such, additional electrical infrastructure may be necessary within the study area to connect future offshore and onshore wind farms into the grid network.

Implications of Climate Change for Baseline Conditions

9.4.60 The UK Climate Projections (2018) for Scotland project that by 2050, summer will become hotter with decreased rainfall, while winter will become colder with increased rainfall. The increase in winter rainfall is expected to be lower for the east of Scotland in comparison to the west[21].

9.4.61 The Landscape Institute's Position Statement on Climate Change[22] acknowledges that changes in average temperatures, precipitation and extreme weather events will have an effect on the landscape. However, whilst a change in rainfall and rising temperatures are anticipated, it is not considered that this will appreciably change the baseline landscape conditions.

9.4.62 The Angus Council Local Climate Impacts Profile, 2nd edition[23] (LCLIP) (2012) highlights the regions vulnerability to severe weather events and the impact it has on infrastructure, based on the 2009 Met Office Climate Projections and analysis of severe weather in the council area from 2009-12. It notes that the most frequently experienced severe weather in Angus was high winds, heavy rain, and heavy snow – all of which '*significantly affect infrastructure*'[24]. Damage to infrastructure, which includes roads, railways and utilities and communications infrastructure, was noted as the second largest affected service. The damage includes structural and access issues as a result of fallen trees/ windblown forestry and damage to road surfaces. An updated LCLIP based on the 2018 Climate Projections has not been provided.

9.4.63 The Aberdeenshire Council LCLIP[25] (2024) highlights the region's vulnerability to severe weather events and the impact it has on infrastructure, based on the 2018 Met Office Climate Projections and analysis of severe weather in the council area from 2019-22. It notes that 2019-22 saw more extreme weather events per year than the previous LCLIP (2012-18). The most

[17] Angus Council, 2016. Angus Council Loval Development Plan. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Angus%20local%20development%20plan%20adopted%20September%202016.pdf
[18] Aberdeenshire Council. 2023, Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. [Online] Available at: https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/LDP2021/AberdeenshireLocalDevelopmentPlan2023IntroductionAndPolicies.pdf
[19] Aberdeen City, 2023. Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023. [Online] Available at: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan
[20] National Grid Electrical System Operator (ESO), 2022. Pathway to 2030 – A holistic network design to support offshore wind deployment for net zero. [Online] Available at: https://www.nationalgrideso.com/document/262676/download
[21] Adaption Scotland, 2021. *Climate Projections for Scotland*. [Online] Available at: https://www.adaptationscotland.org.uk/application/files/1316/3956/5418/LOW_RES_4656_Climate_Projections_report_SINGLE_PAGE_DEC21.pdf.
[22] Landscape Institute, 2021. How Landscape Practice Can Respond to the Climate Crisis. [Online] Available at: https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2021/04/12510-LANDSCAPE-2030_v6.pdf.
[23] Angus Council, 2012. Angus Council Local Climate Impacts Profile. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2017-06/Local%20Climate%20Impacts%20Profile%202nd%20edition.pdf.
[24] Angus Council, 2012. Angus Council Local Climate Impacts Profile. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LCLIP.pdf
[25] Aberdeenshire Council, 2024. Aberdeenshire Council Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) 2019-2022. [Online] Available at: https://aberdeenshirestorage.blob.core.windows.net/acblobstorage/4209a2d3-9811-419f-a171-5614962cce76/lclip-2019---2022.pdf.

frequently experienced severe weather in Aberdeenshire was storms and high winds, and excessive rainfall, which have had a negative effect on infrastructure, including power lines, roads, railways and communications networks. The damage includes structural and access issues as a result of fallen trees and damage to roads.

9.4.64 A number of the aforementioned 'Forces for Change' are likely to occur as consequence of climate change, and from the actions responding to climate change. Potential physical and perceptible long-term changes to the landscape may occur, such as changes in soils and vegetation, and the distribution of agricultural land use and forestry.

9.5 Mitigation and Monitoring

9.5.1 In formulating the proposals, the Applicant has given careful consideration to the mitigation of any adverse effects, and has considered its statutory duties and relevant policy in doing so. This includes its duties under the Electricity Act 1989. Of particular relevance to this Chapter are the Applicant's duties under Schedule 9 to the 1989 Act to have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, and to do what it reasonably can to mitigate any effect on the natural beauty of the countryside. This has also included the need under Policy 11 e) i) of NPF4 to demonstrate how project design and mitigation has addressed significant landscape and visual impacts. The mitigation measures have also been formulated in the context of the mitigation hierarchy set out on NPF4 which sets out four key stages: avoid, minimise, restore, offset. The embedded mitigation measures aim to avoid and minimise landscape and visual impacts as far as possible, with applied mitigation serving to restore and offset.

Embedded Mitigation

9.5.2 Topic specific embedded mitigation (mitigation achieved through design of the selected alignment during the routeing and alignment process, as detailed in **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Alternatives and the Routeing Process**) is outlined below. A comprehensive schedule of embedded mitigation is provided in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: EIA Process and Methodology.**

9.5.3 **LV1**: The mitigation of potential landscape and visual effects has been approached through the design of the OHL and ancillary infrastructure, including the selection of the alignment. The LVIA process has informed modifications and refinements to the detailed design of the Proposed Development, including consideration of individual tower locations and access tracks during the design and assessment process. The Holford Rules[26] were used to inform the siting and design of the alignment to minimise potential landscape and visual effects. In particular, alignment design sought to apply the following principles:

- Avoid hill summits and elevated ridgelines where possible to reduce the prominence of the Proposed Development on elevated skylines and its influence on landscape character and views, including from local landscape designations, settled areas, and key recreational locations (Rule 4).
- Where possible, utilise opportunities to backcloth the Proposed Development against areas of woodland and forestry and/ or higher landform to reduce the Proposed Development's prominence and position along open skylines (Rule 4).

9.5.4 Additional principles were developed to reflect the sensitivity of the local landscape of the study area, including:

- Avoid key landscape features such as locally distinctive landforms and areas of broadleaved and coniferous woodland that contribute to landscape character, especially when noted as a key characteristic of an LCT or special quality of a landscape designation.
- Avoid routeing over the prominent hill summits and ridgeline of the Sidlaw Hills in the south, instead using the landform to provide backclothing where possible and minimise how much of the Proposed Development would be seen against the elevated skyline.
- Avoid localised and sensitive landform features within the study area, notably the locally prominent ridgeline at Hilton of Fern/ Careston and the locally distinctive undulating land near Battledykes.
- Avoid routeing along higher parts and across key hill summits on the scarp of the prominent Highland Boundary Fault which marks a distinct boundary between the uplands of the Grampian Mountains and the lowlands of the Howe of the

[26] SSEN Transmission (2023) Procedures for Routeing Overhead Lines and Underground cables of 132kV and above, Annex 1: Holford Rules: Guidelines for the Routeing of New High Voltage Overhead Transmission Lines with NGC 1992 and SHETL 2003 Notes

Mearns. Route across lower and less prominent parts of this landform to reduce the prominence of the Proposed Development along this elevated horizon and to take advantage of any backclothing this landform can provide.

- When crossing higher or undulating land, route across the low points of ridgelines, for example between Herscha Hill and Knock Hill and around Droop Hill.
- Where possible, parallel existing OHLs (eg around Fetteresso and Durris Forest) to assist in concentrating landscape and visual effects, rather than extending these across a wider area, and reducing the amount of forestry felling which would be required.
- Cross important linear features, such as the River Dee, perpendicularly so as to reduce effects in these sensitive areas.
- With regards to access tracks, seek to construct the majority of access tracks on a temporary basis and ensure that any land disturbed is reinstated to its original land use following construction to minimise landscape and visual effects.

Applied Mitigation

9.5.5 In addition to embedded mitigation, standard good practice measures will be implemented during construction and operation of the Proposed Development, and are detailed in **Volume 2, Chapter 17: Schedule of Mitigation** and **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**. The General Applied Mitigation measures, as set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 17: Schedule of Mitigation,** include the application of SSEN Transmission's General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) and Species Protection Plans (SPPs).

9.5.6 It is proposed that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be produced in compliance with the requirements of a condition on any consent granted for the Proposed Development, in discussion with statutory stakeholders, prior to the commencement of the construction of the Proposed Development. The following will be key features of the CEMP, with several (points 1-3 and 7-8 below) forming key design objectives in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**:

1. Existing landscape features such as hedgerows, woodland, tree belts and stone dyke field enclosures will be retained as far as practical.
2. Any temporary disturbance to or temporary removal of existing field boundaries (eg hedgerows or fences) will be undertaken sensitively to ensure successful reinstatement of these features following completion of construction activities.
3. Following the introduction of the main components of the Proposed Development, construction works (eg construction working areas, access tracks) and previously disturbed areas will be restored and revegetated during the reinstatement phase.
4. Construction vehicles will not track across undisturbed areas outside their defined working areas and access corridor.
5. Materials and machinery will be stored tidily during the works and will not be left in place for longer than required for construction purposes to minimise effects on views and visual amenity.
6. As set out in SSEN Transmission's GEMPs for soil management, topsoil, and the seedbank within it, will be carefully stripped and will be stored within pre-identified and agreed areas to ensure safe storage.
7. Stored topsoil will be used for the progressive restoration of disturbed areas. Soft materials will be used to regrade slopes prior to promotion of natural recolonisation of vegetation.
8. Seeding will be undertaken using locally native species of plants, and to tie in with adjacent vegetation types, where considered appropriate and essential to prevent erosion.
9. On completion of the construction phase, all equipment and temporary infrastructure not required for future operational use will be dismantled and removed, including removal of construction waste and its appropriate disposal.

Table 9.3: Applied Mitigation

Mitigation Measure	Project Stage/Timing	Responsibility
• **LV2:** Adherence to all relevant SSEN Transmission GEMPs, including soil management, working in sensitive habitats, forestry, and restoration as well as best practice principles on restoration following construction as set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**.	Construction	Principal Contractors

Mitigation Measure	Project Stage/Timing	Responsibility
• **LV3:** Preparation and implementation of CEMP which shall include but not be limited to the following: protection and reinstatement of landscape features, soil management, ecological management and general construction practices (including storage of machinery and materials, vehicle movements and removal of construction waste) (see points 1-9 above). Post consent, a Landscape Mitigation Plan to sit alongside the CEMP will be produced in accordance with the best practice principles set out in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide, Volume 5**, **Appendix 3.3: Outline Site Restoration Plan** and the Visual Impact Management Plan to be included within the CEMP.	Construction	Principal Contractors
• **LV4:** Adherence to NatureScot's 2013 Constructed tracks in the Scottish Uplands[27] guidance for construction of permanent access tracks in upland areas.	Construction	Principal Contractors

9.5.7 No off-site landscape and visual mitigation measures have been proposed as part of the project mitigation. Off-site landscape and visual mitigation (eg screening of the Proposed Development in key views or enhancement of key landscape character features) would need to be placed in specific locations outside of the Operational Corridor in order to be effective. Given that off-site proposals are subject to landowner agreement, specific types and locations of landscape and visual mitigation cannot be committed to at this stage and are therefore not included in the EIAR.

Further Survey Requirements and Monitoring

Table 9.4: Monitoring

Monitoring Measure	Project Stage/Timing	Responsibility
• **LV5** Survey and monitoring of the proposed landscape restoration and enhancement proposals within the Operational Corridor, to ensure the proposals are implemented successfully and the predicted mitigation of landscape and visual effects is delivered. Monitoring shall apply to Applied Mitigation.	Ongoing during construction. Post-construction on an annual basis for five years.	Principal Contractors/landowner

9.6 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects - Construction

9.6.1 This section summarises the likely significant effects which have been identified during the construction phase, based on the project description as outlined in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**. Unless otherwise stated, effects identified are considered to be adverse. The full assessment of likely effects on landscape and visual receptors during construction is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**.

9.6.2 During construction (five-year period) the following elements have the potential to result in effects on the physical fabric of the landscape, as well as the landscape character and/or visual amenity within the wider study area:

- Site clearance including vegetation clearance such as felling of woodland and forestry;
- Construction of new access tracks (permanent and temporary);
- Construction of site infrastructure;
- Construction of laydown areas;
- Excavation and construction of tower foundations;
- Erection of towers;
- HGV and abnormal load deliveries to site and movement of vehicles on site; and

[27] Scottish Natural Heritage (2015) Constructed tracks in the Scottish Uplands. [Online] Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20221020132020/https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2022-09/final%20-%20Publication%202015%20-%20Constructed%20tracks%20in%20the%20Scottish%20Uplands.pdf

- Reinstatement work, including restoration of temporary tracks and other areas, removal of temporary accommodation works, reinstatement of disturbed areas, and establishment of replacement forest/woodland planting (as required).

9.6.3 Unless stated otherwise, construction effects are considered to be short-term and partially reversible. Most of the effects occurring during this phase relate to physical disturbance of existing landcover and potential for long term change or loss of characteristic landscape features, including woodland and vegetation. Such effects would also have consequent perceptual effects on the landscape character and visual amenity within the study area. The degree of effects however would vary throughout the construction period due to the nature of different construction activities and their duration at any one location within the study area. A large proportion of the construction effects would be managed through adoption of good practice and careful construction management and monitoring regimes (such as those presented in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** above and in **Volume 2, Chapter 17: Schedule of Mitigation**).

9.6.4 With regards to visual effects during construction, it is acknowledged that commercial forestry influences the nature and extent of visibility across some parts of the study area, particularly from areas within and around Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest in Section E. As such, the degree of visibility of the construction of the Proposed Development across the study area would vary over the construction phase due to rotational forestry felling and restocking regimes that would influence the degree of screening. This has been considered where necessary in the detailed visual assessment presented in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**.

Predicted Construction Effects

Section A

Landscape

9.6.5 The construction of the Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 387: Dipslope Farmland (Tealing Unit) and LCT 382: Lowland Hill Ranges. Generally, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, around Tealing, Balkello and Myreton of Claverhouse within LCT 387 and between North Balluderon and Jericho within LCT 382. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features such as disturbance to ground cover, felling of coniferous woodland and broadleaved trees and construction of steel lattice towers and access tracks. **Significant** perceptual effects as a result of visibility of partially constructed steel lattice towers would also occur within these LCTs as well as within LCT 386: Low Moorland Hills. Beyond 1 km of the construction works, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of construction activity.

9.6.6 The Sidlaw LLA is located approximately 1 km west of the Proposed Development. The assessment did not assess effects of construction on the Sidlaw LLA due to the Proposed Development not passing through the designated area, and any construction effects being temporary in nature. As such, effects as a result of construction activity would be perceptual, as a result of visibility of the construction works from the LLA. Given the temporary nature of construction activities, it is not expected that they would significantly affect the special qualities to an extent that it would affect the integrity of the LLA.

Visual

9.6.7 The construction of the Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section A, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between Myreton of Claverhouse and Haughs of Cossans. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect receptors within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development (eg A6 (Balkemback), A8 (Ark Hill, Balkello, Craigowl and Gallow Hills), A13 (Meikle Kilmundie to Arniefoul Mill), and A18 (Douglastown and Kirkton) where close-to-middle distance views of construction activity would be available. Such effects would be the result of the visibility of construction activity including the erection of steel lattice towers, creation and upgrading of access tracks, vehicle movements and lighting in hours of darkness, particularly where the Proposed Development crosses the elevated landform of the Sidlaw Hills in the southern part of Section A, as well the elevated areas of Finlarg Hill and Hayston Hill. From more distant receptors beyond 1 km (eg, Kinettles, Kinaldrum, Gateside, and Invereighty), these elevated areas, as well as intervening features such as pockets of broadleaved woodland and roadside vegetation, would partially or fully screen construction works, particularly ground level activity. The perceptibility of construction activity would reduce as the distance between the Proposed Development and receptors increases, with many views limited to the erection of steel lattice towers and installation of conductors.

Section B

Landscape

9.6.8 The construction of the Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside (Forfar Unit and Brechin Unit). The Brechin Unit also extends into Section C. **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development over an area between Jericho and west of Tannadice within the Forfar Unit of LCT 384 and over an area between Finavon and Inveriscandye (near Stracathro) in the Brechin Unit of LCT 384. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features such as disturbance to ground cover, including arable fields, and felling of areas of broadleaved woodland including, but not limited to, at Dunswood and Lochty Wood, as well as the construction of steel lattice towers and access tracks. **Significant** perceptual effects as a result of visibility of partially constructed steel lattice towers would also occur within these LCTs. Beyond 1 km from the construction works, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of construction activity.

9.6.9 The Proposed Development would cross the River South Esk LLA between Wolflaw and Murthill. As such, effects as a result of construction activity on the River South Esk LLA would be both physical and perceptual. The Proposed Development would result in localised impacts on the special qualities of the River South Esk LLA during construction, and would have **Significant** effects on the *"sweeping meanders lined with trees"* and the *"strong rural character"* special qualities, within the area between Inshewan, Quarryhill and Craigeassie. These effects would be localised and temporary. The Angus Glens LLA is located approximately 0.8 km northwest of the Proposed Development and as such effects as a result of construction activity would be perceptual. Given the temporary nature of construction activities, it is expected that they would have **Not Significant** effects on the special qualities of the Angus Glens LLA. Overall, it is considered that the construction of the Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation

Visual

9.6.10 The construction of the Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section B, including residents, road users and recreational receptors between Haughs of Cossans and West Muir. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors, within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close views of construction activity would be available. For example, from receptors in VRAs B9 (Redford to Woodside), B18 (Meikle Coull to Knowehead), and B29 (Montboy to Mill of Cruick). In addition, in views from some more distant locations beyond 1 km where higher sensitivity receptors experience open expansive views across Strathmore (eg, VRA B22 (Noranbank to Careston)), construction activity would be visible in the middle distance and would result in some localised **Significant** effects. Such effects would be the result of the visibility of construction activity including the erection of steel lattice towers, creation and upgrading of access tracks, vehicle movements and lighting in hours of darkness. From some receptors (eg, VRA B27 (Trusta, Afflonchie, Shandford, and Menmuir)), visibility would be reduced by intervening features such as pockets of broadleaved woodland, commercial forestry and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen construction works, particularly ground level activity. The perceptibility of construction activity would reduce as the distance between the Proposed Development and receptors increases, with many more distant views limited to the erection of steel lattice towers and therefore are expected to be **Not Significant**.

Section C

Landscape

9.6.11 The construction of the Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside (Brechin Unit), as discussed above in **paragraph 9.6.8**, and on LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire. Within LCT 22, which also extends into Section D, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, over an area between Inveriscandye and Burnhead of Monboddo. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features such as disturbance to ground cover, including arable fields and felling of areas of broadleaved woodland and commercial forestry, including within blocks southeast of Edzell and at Lady Jane's Plantation, as well as the construction of steel lattice towers and access tracks. Significant perceptual effects as a result of visibility of partially constructed steel lattice towers would also occur within LCT 22. Beyond 1 km of the construction works, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of construction activity.

9.6.12 The Braes of the Mearns SLA is located approximately 1.4 km north of the Proposed Development. The assessment did not assess effects of construction on the Braes of the Mearns SLA due to the Proposed Development not passing through the designated area, and any construction effects being temporary in nature. As such, effects as a result of construction activity would be perceptual, as a result of visibility of the construction works from the SLA. Given the temporary nature of construction activities, it is not expected that they would significantly affect the special qualities to an extent that it would affect the integrity of the SLA.

Visual

9.6.13 The construction of the Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section C, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between Balrownie and Woodside of Thornton. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors, within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close views of construction activity would be available. For example, from receptors in VRAs C2 (Belliehill to Balrownie), C17 (Westside Edzell), and C26 (North of Lady Jane's Plantation). In addition, views from some more distant locations beyond 1 km would be experienced by higher sensitivity receptors where open expansive views across Strathmore are available (eg, VRA C22 (Black Burn and Craigmoston Burn)), construction activity would be seen in the middle distance, resulting in some localised **Significant** effects. Such effects would be the result of the visibility of construction activity including the erection of steel lattice towers, creation and upgrading of access tracks, vehicle movements and lighting in hours of darkness. From some receptors (eg, in VRA C12 (Castletoun of Balzeordie to Bonhard), visibility would be reduced by intervening features such as pockets of broadleaved woodland, commercial forestry and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen construction works, particularly ground level activity. The perceptibility of construction activity would reduce as the distance between the Proposed Development and receptors increases, with many more distant views limited to the erection of steel lattice towers and therefore are not expected to be significant.

Section D

Landscape

9.6.14 The construction of the Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire, as discussed above in **paragraph 9.6.11**, and on LCT 24 - Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire. Within LCT 24, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, over an area between Burnhead of Monboddo and Elf Hill. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features such as disturbance to ground cover, including arable fields and felling of areas of woodland, including riparian woodland along the Bervie Water, as well as the construction of steel lattice towers and access tracks. **Significant** perceptual effects as a result of visibility of partially constructed steel lattice towers would also occur within LCT 24 within 1 km of the construction works. Beyond 1 km of the construction works, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of construction activity.

9.6.15 The Braes of the Mearns SLA is around 1.4 km from Section D of the Proposed Development. Effects on the SLA as a result of the construction of the Proposed Development are discussed in **paragraph 9.6.12** above.

Visual

9.6.16 The construction of the Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section D, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between Bent and the southern edge of Fetteresso Forest. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors, within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close views of construction activity would be available, for example in VRA D4 around Westerton, and VRA D7 around Woods of Redhall. In addition, in views from some more distant locations beyond 1 km where higher sensitivity receptors experience more expansive and elevated views, construction activity would be visible in the middle distance and would result in some localised significant effects, such as from around Carmont Hill in VRA D23. Such effects would be the result of the visibility of construction activity including the erection of steel lattice towers, creation and upgrading of access tracks, vehicle movements and lighting in hours of darkness. Due to the more undulating landform within Section D, visibility would be reduced in some areas due to intervening landform, including, but not limited to, around Drumlithie and Glenbervie. Some views are also obscured by intervening features such as pockets of broadleaved woodland and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen construction works, particularly ground

level activity. Generally, the perceptibility of construction activity would reduce as the distance between the Proposed Development and receptors increases, with many more distant views limited to the erection of steel lattice towers and therefore are expected to be **Not Significant**.

Section E

Landscape

9.6.17 The construction of the Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 29: Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire and LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley. Within these LCTs, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, over an area that extends across Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest within LCT 29 and an area between Calladrum and Loch of Park within LCT 31. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features such as disturbance to ground cover, including open moorland, felling of commercial forestry within Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest and felling of broadleaved and riparian woodland, including along the River Dee. Physical changes also include the construction of steel lattice towers and access tracks. **Significant** perceptual effects as a result of visibility of partially constructed steel lattice towers would also occur within these LCTs as well as within LCT 27: Farmed Moorland Edge – Aberdeenshire. Beyond 1 km of the construction works, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of construction activity.

9.6.18 The Proposed Development would cross the Dee Valley SLA, and as such, effects as a result of construction activity on the SLA would be both physical and perceptual. Given the temporary nature of construction activities however, it is expected that effects on the special qualities of the Dee Valley SLA would be **Not Significant**. Overall, it is considered that the construction of the Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

Visual

9.6.19 The construction of the Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section E, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between the southern edge of Fetteresso Forest and the River Dee. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors, within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close views of construction activity would be available, for example in VRA E3 around Mergie and VRA E13 around Milton. In addition, from some more distant locations beyond 1 km, higher sensitivity receptors would have views of the construction work along the upland ridge of Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest, which is visually distinctive landscape feature with a wider extent of intervisibility, for example in VRA E5 around Strathgyle Wood and Hill of Auquhollie. Such effects would be the result of the visibility of construction activity including the erection of steel lattice towers, creation and upgrading of access tracks, forestry felling, vehicle movements and lighting in hours of darkness. The extent of commercial forest cover across Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest, as well as further pockets of commercial forest and broadleaved woodland within the Dee Valley however would reduce the visibility of construction works in some views, particularly ground level activity. Generally, the perceptibility of construction activity would reduce as the distance between the Proposed Development and receptors increases, with many more distant views limited to the erection of steel lattice towers and therefore are not expected to be significant.

Section F

Landscape

9.6.20 The construction of the Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley, as discussed above in **paragraph 9.6.17** and on LCT 26: Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire (Echt Unit and Kintore Unit). Within LCT 26, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur no more than 1 km from the Proposed Development, over an area between Coldstream Plantation and the A944 in the Echt Unit of LCT 26, and over an area between the A944 and Kintore in the Kintore Unit. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features such as disturbance to ground cover, as well as felling of small pockets of broadleaf woodland at Loch of Park and blocks of coniferous and mixed woodland, including at Coldstream Plantation in the Echt Unit. In the Kintore Unit there would also be felling of blocks of coniferous and mixed woodland, including near Hillhead. Physical changes also include the construction of steel lattice towers and access tracks. **Significant** perceptual effects as a result of visibility of partially constructed steel lattice towers would also occur within these LCT units. Beyond 1 km of the construction works,

effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of construction activity.

9.6.21 The Dee Valley SLA is partially located within the southern edge of Section F. Effects on the SLA as a result of the construction of the Proposed Development are discussed in **paragraph 9.6.18** above.

9.6.22 The Bennachie SLA is located approximately 3.3 km northwest of the Proposed Development and as such effects as a result of construction activity would be perceptual. Given the temporary nature of construction activities, it is expected that effects on the special qualities of the Bennachie SLA would be **Not Significant**. Overall, it is considered that the construction of the Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

Visual

9.6.23 The construction of the Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section F, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between the River Dee and Kintore. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors, within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close views of construction activity would be available, for example in VRA F1 around Upper Park and Beechgrove Cottages and VRA F19 around Monecht and South Monecht. Such effects would be the result of the visibility of construction activity including the erection of steel lattice towers, creation and upgrading of access tracks, vehicle movements and lighting in hours of darkness. From some receptors, visibility would be reduced by intervening features such as pockets of broadleaved woodland, commercial forestry and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen construction works, particularly ground level activity, from example in VRA F13 around Garlogie and Woods of Cairnie. Additionally, beyond 1 km, the rolling nature of the landform would play a role in reducing the extent of visibility from more distant receptors as intervening slopes and undulations would partially or fully screen views, for example in VRA F24. Generally, the perceptibility of construction activity would reduce as the distance between the Proposed Development and receptors increases, with many more distant views limited to the erection of steel lattice towers and therefore are expected to be **Not Significant**.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Construction Effects

9.6.24 There is no proposed additional mitigation during construction, above and beyond the embedded and applied mitigation measures set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring**. As such, the residual effects as a result of construction would remain the same as identified in the assessments set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**.

9.7 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects - Operation

9.7.1 The below summaries the likely significant effects which have been identified during the operational phase, based on the project description as outlined in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description.** Unless otherwise stated, operational effects identified are considered to be adverse, long-term and partially reversible. The full assessment of likely effects on landscape and visual receptors during operation is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**.

9.7.2 With regard to visual effects during operation, it is acknowledged that commercial forestry influences the nature and extent of visibility across some parts of the study area, particularly from areas within and around Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest in Section E. As such, the degree of visibility of the Proposed Development across the study area would vary over time due to rotational forestry felling and restocking regimes that would influence the degree of screening. This has been considered where necessary in the detailed visual assessment presented in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**.

9.7.3 As set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 12: Ornithology**, bird flight diverters (BFD), such as Hawk Eye ™, would be installed on the OHL as embedded mitigation to reduce bird collisions with the OHL. BFD devices would be installed on the OHL at 'hot-spots' as detailed in **Volume 2, Chapter 12: Ornithology** and in **Volume 3, Figure A12.7.1 to A12.7.5: Bird Flight Diverter Placement**. It is considered that although visible to humans, the size and scale of such devices on the OHL would not result in visual effects that would be any greater than that of the towers. During the hours of darkness, the perceptibility of any luminescent features on the BFDs would be limited and would not result in significant visual effects.

Section A

Landscape

9.7.4 The Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 387: Dipslope Farmland (Tealing Unit) and LCT 382: Lowland Hill Ranges. **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, within the area between Kirkton of Tealing, Myreton of Claverhouse, Balkemback, Prieston and Balluderon within LCT 387 and between the slopes of Craigowl Hill and Hayston Hill within LCT 382. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features including the introduction of large scale vertical infrastructure into the landscape, which would alter the distinctive profile of the Sidlaw Hills in LCT 382, and loss of coniferous woodland and broadleaved trees across the LCT 387 and 382. Perceptual effects would also contribute to **Significant** effects in these LCTs, as well as within LCT 386: Low Moorland Hills in the Douglastown, Kirkton and the west side of Brigton Hill, due to the perceived large scale of the Proposed Development in relation to the medium scale of the underlying landscape, particularly as it crosses the Sidlaw Hills where the Proposed Development would have increased prominence. The Proposed Development would also increase the influence of vertical infrastructure within these LCTs. Beyond 1 km of the Proposed Development, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of the Proposed Development.

9.7.5 The Sidlaw LLA is located approximately 1 km west of the Proposed Development. As such, effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be perceptual. Visibility of the Proposed Development would affect views from hill summits within the LLA; however, the prominence of the Proposed Development would be reduced as it would be backclothed against distant landform beyond. Additionally, the Proposed Development would be located within the setting of the LLA to the southeast and would be seen in views towards the Sidlaw LLA. Given that the Proposed Development would be seen largely backclothed and in the context of existing OHL infrastructure, it is considered that effects on the special qualities of the LLA are judged to be **Not Significant**, and the Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

Visual

9.7.6 The Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section A, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between Myreton of Claverhouse and Haughs of Cossans. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would occur within 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close-to-middle distance views of the Proposed Development would be available, for example from VRAs A6 (Balkemback), A12 (Upper Hayston Farm to Nether Hayston) and A20 (Haughs of Cossans). Such effects would be the result of the introduction of large scale vertical features that would be prominent in views as the Proposed Development crosses the Sidlaw Hills (as illustrated by VP1: Myreton of Claverhouse, southwest of Tealing in VRA A2 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.05a-d: VP1: Myreton of Claverhouse, southwest of Tealing**) and VP2: North of Balnuith in VRA A3 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.06-a-h: VP2: North of Balnuith**)), the slopes of Finlarg Hill and Hayston Hill (as illustrated by VP4: A928 near Lumley Den in VRA A10 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.08a-e: VP4: A928 near Lumley Den**) and the agricultural fields around Jericho and Glamis (as illustrated by VP6: Douglastown in VRA A18 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.10a-i: VP6: Douglastown**) and VP7: Mains of Glamis in VRA A20 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.11a-f: VP7: Mains of Glamis**)). From more distant and elevated locations (generally beyond 1 km) including from Balkello Hill (VRA A10: Ark Hill, Balkello, Craigowl and Gallow Hills), the intervening distance and the backclothing provided by distant landform would reduce the perceptibility of the Proposed Development (as illustrated by VP3: Cairns, Balkello Hill in VRA A8 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.07a-c: VP3: Cairns, Balkello Hill)**. Additionally, from other locations generally beyond 1 km (eg, VRA A11 (Kinettles, Kinaldrum, Gateside, and Invereighty), visibility of the Proposed Development would reduce due to the intervening landform of Sidlaw Hills, Finlarg Hill and Hayston Hill as well as pockets of broadleaved woodland and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen the Proposed Development in views, as illustrated by VP5: Milton of Ogilvie in VRA A14 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.09a-f: VP5: Milton of Ogilvie**). Effects on these more distant and obscured views are considered to be **Not Significant**.

Section B

Landscape

9.7.7 The Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside (Forfar Unit and Brechin Unit). The Brechin Unit also extends into Section C. **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, over an area between Douglastown and Tannadice within the Forfar Unit of LCT 384 and over an area between Tannadice and the River North Esk in the Brechin Unit of

LCT 384. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features including the introduction of large scale vertical infrastructure into the landscape, which would alter the floor of Strathmore, and loss of areas of broadleaved woodland including, but not limited to, at Dunswood and Lochty Wood. Perceptual effects would also contribute to significant effects in these LCTs, due to the perceived large scale of the Proposed Development in relation to the medium scale of the underlying landscape. The Proposed Development would also increase the influence of vertical infrastructure within these LCTs. Beyond 1 km of the Proposed Development, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of the Proposed Development.

9.7.8 An approximate 2.3 km length of the Proposed Development would be located within the River South Esk LLA where it crosses the River South Esk at Craigeassie. As such, effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be both physical and perceptual. Physical effects would include the ongoing change from the Operational Corridor felling, as well as the presence of six steel towers and conductors within the designated area. The extent of woodland loss within the LLA would be small and localised, and the towers would have a local influence on meander between Inshewan and Craigeassie. It is considered that the Proposed Development would have localised **Significant** effects on the *"sweeping meanders lined with trees"* and the *"strong rural character"* special qualities. These effects would be localised to the area between Cairn Farm, Inshewan, Craigeassie and East Murthill. Effects on other special qualities would be **Not Significant**, and the wider LLA would be largely unaffected. The Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

9.7.9 The Angus Glens LLA is located approximately 0.8 km northwest of the Proposed Development. As such, effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be perceptual. Visibility of the Proposed Development would affect the "*scenic views*"[28] available from the foothills of the Angus Glens, and its special quality as a *"popular hillwalking landscape, with a number of hilltop destinations"*. From the southeastern extents of the LLA, the Proposed Development would be seen generally backclothed by landform and seen at lower elevations in the view, the prominence of the infrastructure would be reduced as it would be backclothed against distant landform beyond. Additionally, the Proposed Development would be located within the setting of the LLA to the southeast, and therefore would affect views of the "*dramatic Highland Boundary Fault*" when viewed from the south, in the foreground of the LLA. Despite the visibility of the Proposed Development from the LLA, and in views as close as 0.8 km, the lower elevation of the Proposed Development in views and the backclothing provided by distant landform beyond reduces the prominence of the Proposed Development in the setting of the LLA. As such, it is considered that the Proposed Development would have **Not Significant** effects on any of the special qualities of the LLA. The Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

Visual

9.7.10 The Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section B, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between Myreton of Claverhouse and Haughs of Cossans and West Muir. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would be generally widespread across the study area, including on both views within close proximity of the Proposed Development (within approximately 1 km), for example from VRAs B9 (Redford to Woodside), B18 (Meikle Coull to Knowehead), and B29 (Montboy to Mill of Cruick). In addition, views from more distant locations beyond 1 km where receptors experience open expansive views across Strathmore (eg, VRA B22 (Noranbank to Careston)), would have views of the Proposed Development in the middle distance. Such effects would be the result of the introduction of large scale vertical features that would be prominent in views as the Proposed Development crosses Strathmore, and in many views seen to break the skyline. Such views are illustrated by viewpoints including, but not limited to, VP12: B957, near Cairnhill in VRA B16 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.16a-f VP: 12 B957, near Cairnhill**) and VP13: Tannadice in VRA B19 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.17a-i: VP13: Tannadice**). From some more distant and elevated VRAs, including but not limited to, around Hillbarns to the southeast the Proposed Development, as illustrated by VP14: Angus Hill Layby, B9134 in VRA B21 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.18a-f: VP14: Angus Hill Layby, B9134**) and around Mains of Balhall to the northwest, as illustrated by VP16: Balhall Crescent in VRA B27 (**Volume 4a, Figure 9.20a-h: VP16: Balhall Crescent**), the Proposed Development would not form prominent features in views due to the intervening distance and the backclothing provided by distant landform which would reduce the perceptibility of the Proposed Development. Effects on these more distant and elevated views are considered to be

[28] Angus Council (2024) Local Landscape Areas in Angus, Final Report. [Online] Available at: https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/Report%20109_24%20Local%20Landscape%20Areas%20in%20Angus_App%202.pdf (pages 7-10)

Not Significant. In addition, in some views throughout Section B, visibility would be reduced by intervening features such as pockets of broadleaved woodland, commercial forestry and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen the Proposed Development.

Section C

Landscape

9.7.11 The Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside (Brechin Unit) as discussed above in **paragraph 9.7.7**, and on LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire. Within LCT 22, which also extends into Section D, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, particularly over an area between the River North Esk and Auchenblae. Such **Significant** effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features including the introduction of large scale vertical structures into the landscape, which would affect the *"distinctive patchwork of large open fields".* In addition, there would be the loss of areas of broadleaved woodland and commercial forestry, including southeast of Edzell and at Lady Jane's Plantation. The introduction of a large scale OHL in a medium scale landscape would contribute towards perceptual effects, however it is unlikely that the Proposed Development would diminish the perceived scale of the landscape . The Proposed Development would also increase the influence of vertical infrastructure within LCT 22. Beyond 1 km of the Proposed Development, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of the Proposed Development.

9.7.12 The Braes of the Mearns SLA is located approximately 1.4 km north of the Proposed Development. As such, effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be perceptual. Given that the Proposed Development would be located within the setting of the SLA to the southeast, it would affect the "s*trong contrast"* between the flat agricultural land of the Howe in the south, and the *"ridge of the Mounth"*[29] in the north, which marks the Highland Boundary Fault however these effects are considered to be **Not Significant**. The Proposed Development is considered to have **Not Significant** effects on the "*highly visible ridge…from across the landscape to the southeast*"[29] as the effect would be localised to a small number of such views, where it would be seen partially backclothed by the landform of the Mounth, or potentially breaking the skyline. Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

Visual

9.7.13 The Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section C, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between Balrownie and Woodside of Thornton. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would be generally widespread across the study area, including on both views within close proximity of the Proposed Development (within approximately 1 km). For example, from receptors in VRAs C2 (Belliehill to Balrownie), C17 (Westside Edzell), and C35 (North of Lady Jane's Plantation). In addition, views from some distant locations beyond 1 km where receptors experience open expansive views across Strathmore (eg, VRA C22 (Black Burn and Craigmoston Burn)) would have views of the Proposed Development in the middle distance. Such effects would be the result of the introduction of large scale vertical features that would be prominent in views as the Proposed Development crosses Strathmore, and in many views seen to break the skyline. Such views are illustrated by viewpoints including, but not limited to, VP17: Western edge of Little Brechin in VRA C5 (**Volume 4a, Figure: 9.21a-f: VP17: Western edge of Little Brechin**) and VP19: Inchbare in VRA C9 (**Volume 4a, Figure: 9.23a-f: VP19 Inchbare**). From some more distant and elevated VRAs, including but not limited to, in the Braes of Angus to the northwest of the Proposed Development, as illustrated by VP18: White Caterthun in VRA C13 (**Volume 4a, Figure: 9.22a-d: VP18: White Caterthun**) and further north in the Braes of the Mearns, as illustrated by VP23: Minor road, west of Mains of Balnakettle in C24 (**Volume 4 b, Figure 9.27a-d: VP23: Minor road, west of Mains of Balnakettle**), the Proposed Development would not form prominent features in views due to the intervening distance and the backclothing provided by distant landform which would reduce the perceptibility of the Proposed Development. Effects on these more distant and elevated views are considered to be **Not Significant**. In addition, in some views throughout Section C, visibility would be reduced by intervening features such as pockets of broadleaved woodland, commercial forestry and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen the Proposed Development.

[29] Aberdeenshire Council (2022) Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023. Appendix 13 Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas. (Online) Available at: https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/LDP2021/Appendix13AberdeenshireSpecialLandscapeAreas.pdf (page 1121).

Section D

Landscape

9.7.14 The Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire, as discussed above in **paragraph 9.7.11**, and on LCT 24 - Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills – Aberdeenshire. Within LCT 24, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur no more than 1 km from the Proposed Development, particularly over an area between Burnhead of Monboddo and Elf Hill. Such significant effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features including the introduction of large scale vertical infrastructure into the landscape, and loss of areas of woodland including riparian woodland along the Bervie Water. Perceptual effects would also contribute to **Significant** effects in LCT 24, due to the effects on views to the west across the Howe of the Mearns. The Proposed Development would also increase the influence of vertical infrastructure within LCT 24. Beyond 1 km of the Proposed Development, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of the Proposed Development.

9.7.15 The Braes of the Mearns SLA is around 1.4 km from Section D of the Proposed Development. Effects on the SLA as a result of the Proposed Development are discussed in **paragraph 9.7.12** above.

Visual

9.7.16 The Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section D, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between Bent and the southern edge of Fetteresso Forest. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors, within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close views of the Proposed Development would be available, for example in VRA D5 along the minor roads and properties northwest of Cammackmuir Plantation and VRA D16 between Auchtochter and Saw Mill. In addition, in views from some more distant locations beyond 1 km where higher sensitivity receptors experience more expansive and elevated views, the Proposed Development would be visible in the middle distance and would result in some localised significant effects, such as from around Carmont Hill in VRA D23. Such effects would be the result of the introduction of large scale vertical features that would be prominent in views where the Proposed Development extends across local undulations and hills including Droop Hill and Jacksbank and would be seen breaking the skyline. Such views are illustrated by viewpoints including VP26: Glenbervie Road, west of Glenbervie in VRA D16 (**Volume 4b, Figure 9.30a-i: VP26: Glenbervie Road, west of Glenbervie**) and VP27: Minor road near Jacksbank in VRA D21 (**Volume 4b, Figure 9.31a-i: VP27: Minor road near Jacksbank**). In some views to the northwest, however the Proposed Development would be partially or fully backclothed by the foothills of the Braes of Angus and Mounth Range, reducing the prominence of the steel lattice towers, illustrated by VP24: Minor road, northwest of Fordoun in VRA D9 (**Volume 4b, Figure 9.28a-f: VP24: Minor road, northwest of Fordoun**). Effects on views including and similar to VP24 are considered to be **Not Significant.** From some VRAs, visibility would be reduced by intervening features such as intervening landform or pockets of broadleaved woodland, that would partially or fully screen the Proposed Development.

Section E

Landscape

9.7.17 The Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 29: Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire and LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley. Within LCT 29, **Significant** effects on landscape character would generally be focused within 1 km of the Proposed Development, particularly over an area that extends across Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest, due to the elevated nature of the landform in these areas and the role they play in forming the eastern edge of the Highland Boundary Fault. Within LCT 31, **Significant** effects on landscape character would generally be focused within 1 km over an area between Calladrum and Loch of Park. Such significant effects within both LCT 29 and LCT 31 would be the result of physical changes to landscape features including the introduction of large scale vertical infrastructure into the landscape. Perceptual effects would also contribute to **Significant** effects in these LCTs as the Proposed Development would increase the influence of vertical infrastructure within these LCTs. Beyond 1 km of the Proposed Development in these LCTs, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of the Proposed Development. Within LCT 27: Farmed Moorland Edge – Aberdeenshire, perceptual effects would also be **Not Significant** due to the greater distance between this LCT and Proposed Development and the decreased perceptibility of the Proposed Development in longer-distance views.

9.7.18 An approximate length of 3.1 km of the Proposed Development would be located within the Dee Valley SLA. As such, effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be both physical and perceptual. Physical effects would include woodland loss along the River Dee, which is considered to result in **Significant** effects on the *"broad, meandering river, with wooded banks"*[30] of the river. The loss of this woodland would result in the fragmentation of woodland, therefore perceptually affecting its visual relationship with the River Dee, detracting from the *"visual diversity"* and *"richness of landscape character"*[30] of the SLA, particularly within the part of the SLA near Kirkton of Durris. Overall, it is judged that the Proposed Development would have localised **Significant** effects on the above special qualities of the SLA between Funach Wood, Kirkton of Durris, Mills of Drum and Loch of Park. Effects on the remaining special qualities of the SLA are judged to be **Not Significant**. Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

Visual

9.7.19 The Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section E, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between the southern edge of Fetteresso Forest and the River Dee. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors, within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close views of the Proposed Development would be available, for example in VRA E3 around Mergie and VRA E13 around Milton. In addition, from some more distant locations beyond 1 km, higher sensitivity receptors would have views of the Proposed Development as it crosses the upland ridge of Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest, which is a visually distinctive landscape feature with a wider extent of intervisibility, and would result in some localised significant effects, for example in VRA E5 around Strathgyle Wood and Hill of Auquhollie. Such effects would be the result of the introduction of large scale vertical features that would be prominent in views where the Proposed Development extends across the elevated landform of Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest which forms the eastern edge of the Highland Boundary Fault. Such views are illustrated by VP29: Slug Road (A957) west of Roadside Cottage in VRA E4 (**Volume 4b, Figure 9.33a-f: VP29: Slug Road (A957) west of Roadside Cottage**). The extent of commercial forest cover across Fetteresso Forest and Durris Forest, would provide partial or full screening of the Proposed Development from some locations in these areas. Within the Dee Valley, the Proposed Development would be visible as it descends the southern slopes of the valley and crosses the River Dee, with steel lattice towers appearing as prominent large scale features. Pockets of broadleaved and riparian woodland within the Dee Valley however would serve to fully or partially screen the Proposed Development in some views, as illustrated by VP30: Durris Bridge in VRA E14 (**Volume 4b, Figure 9.34a-f: VP30: Durris Bridge**) and views with such screening are considered to be **Not Significant**.

Section F

Landscape

9.7.20 The Proposed Development would have both physical and perceptual effects on the landscape character of LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley, as discussed above in **paragraph 9.7.17** and on LCT 26: Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire (Echt and Kintore Unit). Within LCT 26, **Significant** effects on landscape character would occur within 1 km from the Proposed Development, particularly over an area between Coldstream Plantation and the A944 in the Echt Unit of LCT 26, and over an area between the A944 and Kintore in the Kintore Unit. Such significant effects would be the result of physical changes to landscape features including the introduction of large scale vertical infrastructure across the rolling landform of LCT 26, and loss of areas of broadleaf, coniferous and mixed woodland across the units. Perceptual effects would also contribute to **Significant** effects in LCT 26, due to the perceived large scale of the Proposed Development in relation to the medium scale of the underlying landscape and the rolling nature of the landform. Beyond 1 km, effects on landscape character would reduce and would be **Not Significant** due to the decreased perceptibility of the Proposed Development.

9.7.21 The Dee Valley SLA is partially located within the southern edge of Section F. Effects on the SLA as a result of the Proposed Development are discussed in **paragraph 9.7.18** above.

9.7.22 The Bennachie SLA is located approximately 3.3 km north of the Proposed Development. As such, effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be perceptual. Visibility of the Proposed Development from the SLA would be limited due to the woodland and forestry cover within the designation. Given the limited visibility and distance, it is considered that effects on the

[30] Aberdeenshire Council (2022) Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. Appendix 13 Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas. (Online) Available at: https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/LDP2021/Appendix13AberdeenshireSpecialLandscapeAreas.pdf

special qualities of the SLA would be **Not Significant**, and the Proposed Development would not affect the integrity of this local landscape designation.

Visual

9.7.23 The Proposed Development would have visual effects on a range of visual receptors within the VRAs in Section F, including residents, road users and recreational receptors broadly between the River Dee and Kintore. **Significant** effects on views and visual amenity would affect high sensitivity receptors such as residents and recreational receptors within approximately 1 km of the Proposed Development, where close proximity views of the Proposed Development would be available, for example in VRA F1 around Upper Park and Beechgrove Cottages and VRA F19 around Monecht and South Monecht. Such effects would be the result of the introduction of large scale vertical features that would be prominent in views and seen to break the skyline. The Proposed Development would be particularly prominent in views where it crosses undulating landform within Section F, including, but not limited to the gently rising landform north of the River Dee and a locally prominent hillock east of Echt, as illustrated by VP35: Footpath north of Echt in VRA F21 (**Volume 4 b, Figure 9.39a-f: VP35: Footpath north of Echt**). From more distant and elevated views including from Meikle Tap in VRA F16 (**Volume 4 b, Figure 9.38a-d: VP34: Meikle Tap**) and Barmekin Hill in VRA F23 (**Volume 4 b, Figure 9.40a-f: VP36: Barmekin Hill**) the Proposed Development would be visible in middle-to-longer distance views along the lower lying landscape and would be backclothed against more distant landform, reducing the overall prominence of the steel lattice towers. Effects on these more distant and elevated views are considered to be **Not Significant**. Additionally, from some VRAs, particularly those beyond 1 km, visibility would be reduced by intervening features such as intervening landform or pockets of broadleaved woodland, commercial forestry and roadside vegetation, that would partially or fully screen the Proposed Development, for example in VRA F24.

9.8 Sequential Effects

9.8.1 Sequential effects on views, as experienced from key routes, are discussed below. These sections draw on the VRA assessments presented in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**. Sequential effects arise from repeated or continuous views of a development, seen as the viewer moves along a route, and are particularly relevant to linear infrastructure projects. This section identifies the key routes, discusses the sensitivity of users, and presents a narrative description of likely views from each route, and the resulting significance of effect.

9.8.2 Key routes have been selected as follows:

- A roads within the study area;
- B roads where these would have substantive interaction with the Proposed Development (eg following the route, or multiple crossings);
- Railway lines within the study area;
- National Cycle Network (NCN) routes within the study area; and
- Promoted walking routes (shown on OS mapping) within the study area.

9.8.3 The sensitivity of people on these routes is assessed in accordance with the methodology in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology**. Their susceptibility is a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the views and the extent to which their attention is focused on views. Road users, particularly on faster main roads, are of low susceptibility as their views are seen in passing. People using cycling or walking routes would be of higher susceptibility as they will be moving more slowly and are more likely to take an interest in the view. The value of views experienced from routes varies. For the purposes of these sequential assessments, the sensitivity of road users in vehicles is judged to be **Medium**, and the sensitivity of people using cycling or walking routes is judged to be **High**.

A90 (Dundee to Stonehaven)

9.8.4 The A90 is a key route through eastern Scotland and is within the study area between Dundee and Stonehaven. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development over almost all of this route.

9.8.5 From southwest to northeast, road users would initially see the Proposed Development as it passes in front of and over the Sidlaw Hills. Towers would be seen on the skyline at distances of 2.5 to 5 km, with towers likely to appear larger than existing towers that are visible on this skyline (Tealing to Kintore 275kV OHL). Beyond Petterden, the Proposed Development will be on the opposite side of the eastern Sidlaw Hills and is unlikely to be clearly visible. The Proposed Development would be glimpsed

in oblique views to the west, in combination with the Tealing to Kintore 275kV OHL and closer Tealing to Lunanhead East 132kV OHL. The latter OHL crosses the A90 near Gateside, where there would be theoretical views of the Proposed Development further west, at Douglastown. Actual visibility is likely to be limited due to the wooded landscape of Kinettles. Further north, Brigton Hill separates the A90 from the Proposed Development, which would potentially be visible again west of Forfar, where there are views across Strathmore. The Proposed Development would be some 2 km from the road, with the Tealing to Kintore 275 kV OHL seen in front. Towards Padanaram, both the Proposed Development and the existing OHL are closer to the road, and the latter crosses over the carriageway. Between Padanaram and a cutting near Carse Hill (approx. 2 km of the road), the Proposed Development would be around 1 km to the northwest and would be seen in front of the distant Braes of Angus. Beyond this cutting, the A90 and the Proposed Development diverge again. They are generally over 3 km apart and the Proposed Development would only be glimpsed in distant views until north of Brechin. Around Stracathro, the Proposed Development is again within 2 km of the road and would be seen in the context of open northward views towards the Angus Glens, though at this distance would not be prominent. The Tealing to Kintore 275kV OHL is close to this section of the A90. It runs on the south side, then crosses over twice near the River North Esk. The Proposed Development would be seen behind the existing OHL from around Pert, but would be more distant and separated by plantations at Inverury Wood. North of Laurencekirk, and around Fordoun, the Proposed Development is within 2 km to the north, with the Tealing to Kintore 275 kV OHL a similar distance to the south. The Proposed Development would be seen in front of the Braes of Angus, across open arable farmland. At the closest point north of Fordoun, the A90 runs below the railway embankment, with limited views to the northwest. Beyond the Bervie Water, road users are unlikely to experience more than glimpses of the Proposed Development to the north.

9.8.6 Although the Proposed Development would be intermittently visible over long sections of the A90, it would seldom be closer than 2 km, and only over short stretches. In the short stretches within 2 km, where the Proposed Development would be more prominent, the scale of change is judged to be **Medium** and over a **Small** geographical extent. Elsewhere along the route, the Proposed Development is unlikely to be a prominent feature in any views from this fast moving road. As such, the scale of change judged to be **Small** over a **Large** geographical extent of the remaining stretches of the route. Overall, the magnitude of change is judged to be **Low**. Taking account of the **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A90 would be **Minor (Not Significant)** overall for the route.

A928 (Petterden to Kirriemuir)

9.8.7 The A928 is a main road which runs between Petterden and Kirriemuir, at the southern end of the study area. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development over almost the entirety of this route.

9.8.8 When travelling from the southeast (near Petterden) towards the northwest, road users would initially see the Proposed Development as it routes around and over the southeastern slopes of the Sidlaw Hills at distances of approximately 0.7 km to 4 km. The Proposed Development would be seen behind the existing Tealing to Kintore 275kV OHL, but at higher elevations. Views travelling through Lumley Den are channelled along the valley, framed by the slopes of Ironside Hill and Finlarg Hill. These slopes would help to screen visibility of the Proposed Development, however towers would be visible above the elevated skyline, and conductors seen crossing over Lumley Den further west. As drivers emerge at the western end of Lumley Den, the Proposed Development would be seen in close proximity views as receptors travel under the conductors and immediately adjacent to towers.

9.8.9 Between Lumley Den and Glamis, the Proposed Development would be seen at an oblique angle to the direction of travel (eg, southeast to northwest or vice versa), and for much of this stretch would be seen running broadly parallel to the east of the road. The Proposed Development would be seen at distances of between 0.5 km and 2.5 km, where it would be seen to the west of Hayston Hill and Finlarg Hill. Although the Proposed Development would traverse some of the mid slopes of these hills, and would be seen against the skyline, it would be partially backclothed by the landform of these hills and afforded some screening of the lower towers by intervening blocks of woodland.

9.8.10 Between Glamis and Kirriemuir, the Proposed Development would be seen at an oblique angle at distances of approximately 3 km to 3.7 km. Given the flatter nature of the landscape in this area, and the presence of woodland and forestry, the Proposed Development would not be as visible, often screened by roadside vegetation and buildings in settlements. Where more open views are afforded, the Proposed Development would be seen largely screened by intervening vegetation, however the upper extents of the towers would be visible above the treeline and against the skyline.

9.8.11 Although the Proposed Development would be intermittently visible over sections of the A928, it would seldom be closer than 1.5 km, and only over short stretches. The Proposed Development would be a prominent feature between Milton of Ogilvie and Lumley Den, where people would pass under the Proposed Development as it crosses the road, resulting in a **Large** scale of change over a **Small** geographical extent. Along this localised stretch of the road, the magnitude of change is judged to be **High**. Elsewhere along the route, the scale of change is judged to be **Low** over a **Medium** geographical extent due to the greater distances between the road and the Proposed Development and reduced visibility afforded by screening features. The magnitude of change for remaining stretches of the road is judged to be **Low**. Taking account of **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A928 would be **Moderate (Significant)** between Lumley Den and Charleston, and **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere.

A94 (Glamis to Forfar)

9.8.12 The A94 is a main road which runs between Forfar in the east and Glamis and Eassie in the west. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development along the entirety of this route. When travelling from the west around Glamis, woodland and forestry largely screens longer views to the east. East of Glamis, the Proposed Development would be visible in views as people travel east or westbound along the route. The Proposed Development would be seen in direct views in the direction of travel, and in close proximity views as it crosses over the road between Jericho and Douglastown. Here the Proposed Development would be seen in close proximity views against the skyline, forming a prominent feature. The scale of change would be **Large** over a **Small** geographical extent between Jericho and Douglastown. The Proposed Development would be seen in the context of the existing Tealing to Kintore 275kV OHL which would be visible in the foreground of the Proposed Development when travelling westbound from Forfar. Elsewhere where the Proposed Development would be visible in the direction of travel, roadside vegetation, particularly between Glamis and Jericho would filter views. The Proposed Development is unlikely to be a prominent feature in more distant views (eg, from near Glamis and Forfar) from this fast moving road. As such, the scale of change is judged to be **Small** across a **Medium** geographical extent for remaining stretches of the road.

9.8.13 The magnitude of change is judged to be **High** between Jericho and Douglastown and **Low** elsewhere along the route. Taking account of the **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A94 would be **Moderate (Significant)** between Jericho and Douglastown, and **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere along the route.

A926 (Kirriemuir to Forfar)

9.8.14 The A926 is a main road which runs between Forfar in the southeast and Kirriemuir in the northwest. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development along the entirety of this route. The Proposed Development would cross over this road to the west of Padanaram, and the Proposed Development would be approximately 3.5 km from the Kirriemuir and Forfar ends of the route.

9.8.15 Views along this route are largely open, extending across the surrounding gently undulating agricultural land. Distant views are available towards the Sidlaw Hills in the south and the hills of the Mounth in the north. Mature roadside vegetation is relatively limited, however localised short sections of the road have high hedgerows running adjacent to them which would prevent longer ranging views. Open views of the Proposed Development would be available from much of the route. Mature vegetation and the more undulating landform around Kirriemuir would largely screen visibility of the Proposed Development, however the Proposed Development would become more prominent in views from the Ballinshoe area through to the A90, including where the Proposed Development crosses the road west of Padanaram. Along this stretch of the road, the Proposed Development would result in a **Large** scale of change over a **Small** geographical extent between Padanaram and Ballinshoe. When travelling eastbound from Kirriemuir the Proposed Development would be visible in more distant direct and oblique views crossing large scale fields. The towers would be afforded some backclothing by the distant Dunnichen Hill ridge reducing the prominence of the towers. When travelling northwest bound from Forfar, the Proposed Development would be experienced at greater distances of approximately 2.5 km and would be seen behind the existing Tealing to Kintore 275kV OHL which would appear closer and of a larger scale. The scale of change from the remaining stretches of the route is judged to be **Small** over a **Medium** geographical extent.

9.8.16 The magnitude of change is judged to be **High** between Padanaram and Ballinshoe, reducing to **Low** elsewhere along the route. Taking account of **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A926 would be **Moderate (Significant)** between Padanaram and Ballinshoe, and **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere along the route.

B957 (Kirriemuir to Finavon)

9.8.17 The B957 is a rural minor road that connects Kirriemuir in the southwest with Finavon in the northeast. The ZTV indicates visibility along the entirety of the route. The Proposed Development would cross over this road to the southeast of Cairn Farm.

9.8.18 East of Kirriemuir, views are more open and the Proposed Development would be seen in the far distance in the east. Further east, around the woodland near Couttston and Cairnhill, the Proposed Development would not be visible as the surrounding woodland would provide screening. East of Cairnhill, where views from the road become more open the Proposed Development would be seen in close proximity and as large scale prominent features, particularly where it crosses the road at Foreside of Cairn. Along this stretch of the road, the Proposed Development would result in a **Large** scale of change over a **Small** geographical extent between Cairnhill and Quarryhill. Where the road passes through Craigeassie, views of the Proposed Development would become more intermittent as belts of woodland lining the road and along the River South Esk would fully and partially screen the Proposed Development along this stretch of the road. As views become more open northeast of Murthill, the Proposed Development would be visible in the middle distance before views become more enclosed around Tannadice. Between Tannadice and Finavon, the Proposed Development would be seen in middle to long distance views to the west with some partial backclothing afforded by the Braes of Angus. Closer to Finavon, more extensive woodland would provide filtering. The scale of change from the remaining stretches of the route is judged to be **Small** over a **Medium** geographical extent.

9.8.19 The magnitude of change is judged to be **High** between Cairnhill and Quarryhill, reducing to **Low** along the rest of the route. Taking into account the **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the B957 would be **Moderate (Significant)** between Cairnhill and Quarryhill, reducing to **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere along the route.

B966 (Brechin to A90 via Edzell and Fettercairn)

9.8.20 The B966 passes through the Howe of the Mearns, connecting Brechin with the A90 in the northeast via Edzell and Fettercairn. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development across almost the entirety of the route. The Proposed Development crosses the B966 in two places: north of Westwater Bridge and east of The Neuk.

9.8.21 In the southwesterly extents of the route, north of Brechin, road users travelling north would glimpse the Proposed Development in the far distance; although, it would mostly be screened by woodland blocks adjacent to the road. Between Keithock and Edzell Wood, views north are more open, however intermittent filtering of views is provided by tree-lined avenues and shelterbelts along the road or within adjacent fields and where visible, the Proposed Development would be backclothed by the Ridge of the Mounth. Where the Proposed Development crosses the road north of Westwater Bridge, it would appear prominent and large scale upon approach. Around Edzell and Gannochy views of the Proposed Development would be limited due to surrounding blocks of forestry and buildings within Edzell that would screen view towards the Proposed Development. From Gannochy to near Phesdo, the Proposed Development would be glimpsed in the far distance as roadside trees and intervening woodland blocks would provide filtering. From Phesdo to Crossroads, views are more open as the Proposed Development would be afforded minimal screening but would be backclothed by the Hill of Garvock. Along this stretch it would be visible in middle-to-longer distance views before coming closer to the Proposed Development at The Neuk. Here the Proposed Development crosses the road where towers would appear as prominent large scale features. This section of road over which the Proposed Development crosses is also a length of a Core Path: Fordoun: Monboddo Link Road link. Therefore, people along this section of the road will be of **High** sensitivity to changes in the view.

9.8.22 Where the Proposed Development crosses the B966 (north of Westwater Bridge and east of The Neuk) the scale of change would be **Large** across a **Small** geographical extent, resulting in a **High** magnitude of change. Elsewhere along the route, the scale of change would be **Small** across a **Medium** geographical extent, resulting in a **Low** magnitude of change. Taking account of **Medium** sensitivity of road users and the **High** sensitivity of walkers along the Core Path, the effect on views experienced by users of the B966 would be **Major (Significant)** to the east of The Neuk, **Moderate (Significant)** north of Westwater Bridge and **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere.

A957 Slug Road

9.8.23 The A957, known as Slug Road, is one of the ancient passes of the Mounth connecting Angus to Deeside. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development over almost all of this route.

9.8.24 Along the glen of Cowton Burn views of the Proposed Development would be filtered and screened by riparian woodland and the valley sides. Around Rickarton, views are more open and road users would see the Proposed Development in the middle distance where it would be visible along the skyline as it passes over the northern slopes of Fetteresso Forest. As the road travels further west from Rickarton towards the Proposed Development, towers would be visible at closer distances, however with intermittent screening provided by forestry along a short stretch west of Millsburn. South of Craigneil, the Proposed Development would cross the road and would appear very large-scale and prominent along the horizon, as towers descend the northern slopes of Fetteresso Forest before ascending the southern slopes of Craigneil. The scale of change would be **Large** over a **Small** geographical extent in the stretch south of Craigneil. Northward travellers would see the existing high voltage OHL, Kintore Fetteresso 2 275 kV, behind the Proposed Development, which would seem larger scale in comparison. Conversely, southbound road users would see Kintore Fetteresso 2 275 kV first and the Proposed Development would appear smaller in scale. Short sections of both OHLs would be visible in this area as the rolling landform would screen their farther extents. As the road passes through Durris Forest, the Proposed Development would only be glimpsed as surrounding forestry would provide much screening, depending on restocking regimes. Northwest of Durris Forest, views become more open and the Proposed Development would be seen in the middle distance descending Mundernal. Pockets and belts of woodland along the road however would provide intermittent screening and filtering of the Proposed Development. Further north, where Slug Road crosses the River Dee at Durris Bridge, the Proposed Development would be visible in glimpsed middle distant views beyond intervening riparian woodland. The scale of change from these remaining stretches of the route is judged to be **Small** over a **Medium** geographical extent.

9.8.25 Although the Proposed Development would be visible from most points along Slug Road, in most instances only relatively short sections of it would be visible at a time owing to the rolling landform and screening and filtering afforded by woodland blocks. The magnitude of change is judged to be **High** where the Proposed Development crosses Slug Road south of Craigneil, reducing to **Low** throughout the rest of the route. Taking account of **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A957, Slug Road, would be **Moderate (Significant)** south of Craigneil, reducing to **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere.

A93 (Peterculter to Banchory)

9.8.26 The A93 is a main road which runs between Peterculter in the northeast and Banchory in the south-west within the study area. The ZTV indicates widespread visibility of the Proposed Development along the entirety of the route. The Proposed Development would cross over the road between the settlements of Drumoak (to the northeast) and Crathes (to the south-west), in a broadly north-south orientation. At its closest, the Proposed Development would be immediately adjacent to the route.

9.8.27 Outward views from the route vary, although roadside vegetation including deciduous trees as well as lower lying shrubs commonly line the route on both sides, enclosing the road from the surrounding landscape. The enclosing nature of the roadside vegetation provides a narrow angle of view in the direction of travel towards the Proposed Development. From the eastern part of the route, particularly between Peterculter and Drumoak, views north are more open due to sparser roadside vegetation, affording views across the undulating open farmland. Existing OHL infrastructure can be seen across the open fields, and against the medium to far distance horizon. The Proposed Development would be in the same direction of the view as existing infrastructure when travelling east or westbound. From the western part of the route, between Banchory and Crathes, denser roadside vegetation is present.

9.8.28 Where the Proposed Development crosses the route near West Park, it would be visible in the immediate distance, and would be seen extending north, reaching the horizon in the middle distance. Within this section of the route, to the north of the road the Proposed Development would almost run parallel to the road for a short distance, and would appear in more prolonged views, rather than briefly glimpsed. As such, the scale of change in this section of the route is judged to be **Large** over a **Small** geographical extent. Elsewhere along the route, the scale of change is judged to be **Small** across a **Medium** geographical extent due to intervening vegetation and greater distances from the Proposed Development.

9.8.29 The magnitude of change is judged to be **High** for a short section of the route near West Park, in the area within 1.5 km of the Proposed Development, reducing to **Low** for the rest of the route. Taking into account the **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A93 would be **Moderate (Significant)** around West Park, reducing to **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere along the route.

NCN Route 195 and Deeside Way

9.8.30 The National Cycle Network Route 195, also known as the Deeside Way, is a long-distance walking and cycling route between Peterculter and Banchory within the study area. For the most part, it follows a similar alignment to the A93 and the River Dee, positioned between the two, which both travel broadly northeast to south-west across the study area. The route is a mix of on-road and traffic-free, with the part between Drumoak and Peterculter located further away from the main road. The ZTV indicates widespread visibility of the Proposed Development along the entirety of the route within the study area. The Proposed Development would cross over the route near West Park where the route is directly south of the A93. At its closest, the Proposed Development would be immediately adjacent to the route.

9.8.31 From the section of the route which closely follows the A93 between Drumoak and Crathes, outward views north are largely screened by lines of deciduous trees lining the route and the A93. As such the Proposed Development would be filtered in northward views. There would however be some glimpsed views north towards the Proposed Development between West Park and Crathes, where vegetation on the north of the route is more limited. In this same section, views south and south-east are more open, and the Proposed Development would be seen across open fields, rising above the vegetation lining the River Dee. Where the Proposed Development crosses the route near West Park, it would be seen in the immediate distance from both directions of travel however due to the enclosure from adjacent tree lines it would only be seen in such a close distance view from a narrow angle. At Bridgend, where the route departs from the A93, views west towards the Proposed Development would be largely screened and filtered by dense belts of trees and pockets of woodland and forestry. Where views towards the Proposed Development are more open, towers would be seen in longer distance views.

9.8.32 Where the Proposed Development crosses the route near West Park, the scale of change is judged to be **Large** over **Small** geographical extent, resulting in a **High** magnitude of change. Elsewhere along the route, the scale of change is judged to be **Small** over a **Medium** geographical extent, resulting in a **Low** magnitude of change. Taking into account the **High** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the NCN Route 195/ Deeside Way would be **Major (Significant)** around West Park, **Moderate (Significant)** for the area around Crathes, reducing to **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere along the route.

B977 (B9125 junction to Kintore)

9.8.33 The B977 is a long minor road connecting the B9125 at the Birks to Kintore. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development throughout most of the route. The Proposed Development crosses the B977 around Mains, north of Echt.

9.8.34 From the B9125 junction to Landerberry, the Proposed Development would be seen in the middle distance and visible against the sky, with intervening woodland blocks providing partial filtering and screening. Between Landerberry and Echt, the Proposed Development would be closer to the road and so would appear more prominent. The existing high voltage OHL Craigiebuckler - Tarland South 132 kV however would be closer to receptors and would appear larger in scale than the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development would be afforded some partial filtering and screening from intervening woodland blocks. Where the Proposed Development crosses the B977 north of Echt views are open, the Proposed Development would be clearly visible as prominent and a large scale feature with limited screening features. The Proposed Development would also be prominent in close proximity views where it runs broadly parallel between Culfosie and Dunecht, however scattered pockets of woodland and shelterbelts would offer occasional and momentary filtering. However, the Proposed Development would be in proximity and would appear prominent and large-scale. From Dunecht to Broomhill, there is also more woodland and shelterbelts and the Proposed Development is further away, in some views the Proposed Development would be seen in the middle distance and in others woodland would provide much screening. From Broomhill to Fordtown the Proposed Development would be closer to the B977 before it terminates at Kintore Substation. North of Broomhill, the Kintore to Tealing 275 kV OHL would cross the road and would appear more prominent and large-scale than the Proposed Development. South of Burnside, views are more open and the Proposed Development would be visible against the sky. Here, it would be seen in front of Kintore – Fetteresso 275 kV / 400 kV OHL and would appear larger in scale. At Burnside, the Proposed Development would be afforded screening from roadside woodland and trees. South of Leylodge, the Proposed Development would appear behind the Kintore - Tealing 275 kV OHL and in front of the Kintore – Fetteresso 275 kV / 400 kV OHL. North of Kintore substation, the Proposed Development would be visible in the context of a number of other OHLs and energy related infrastructure.

9.8.35 Where the Proposed Development crosses the route north of Echt, the scale of change is judged to be **Large** over a **Small** geographical extent between Echt and Dunecht, resulting in a **High** magnitude of change. Elsewhere along the route, the scale

of change is judged to be **Small** over a **Medium** geographical extent, given the filtering provided by woodland and forestry, as well as the context of existing OHL infrastructure in the northern extents of the routes. As such the magnitude of change for the remaining sections of the route are judged to be **Low**. Taking into account the **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the B977 would be **Moderate (Significant)** between Echt and Dunecht, reducing to **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere**.**

A944 (Westhill to Sauchen)

9.8.36 The A944 is a major road connecting Aberdeen to Alford and is within the study area between Westhill and Sauchen. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development over the entirety of the Westhill to Sauchen section. The Proposed Development crosses the A944 at Tillybrig.

9.8.37 Along the western extent of the route, north of Loch of Skene, the Proposed Development would be visible in long distance views (over 3 km) forming barely perceptible features which would be partially or fully screened by woodland surrounding Loch of Skene. West of the Loch of Skene, there is less woodland and views are more open. The Proposed Development would be in the far distance, only a relatively short length would be visible owing to the rolling landform and filtering and screening that would be provided by roadside trees and woodland. Around and within Dunecht, the Proposed Development would be closer and would appear more prominent and large-scale, particularly where the Proposed Development passes overhead as it crosses the road near Tilly Brig. West of Tillybrig Wood, much of the Proposed Development would be screened by the woodland and forestry. From Tillybrig Wood to Leggerdale, only a very short section of the Proposed Development would be visible owing to the rolling landform and screening afforded by woodland.

9.8.38 Between Dunecht and Tilly Brig, including where the Proposed Development crosses the route, the scale of change is judged to be **Large** over a **Small** geographical extent, resulting in a **High** magnitude of change. Elsewhere along the route, the scale of change is judged to be **Small** over a **Medium** geographical extent, either due to filtering provided by woodland and forestry, or the distance between the route and the Proposed Development. As such the magnitude of change for the remaining sections of the route is judged to be **Low**. Taking into account the **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A944 would be **Moderate (Significant)** between Dunecht and Tilly Brig, reducing to **Minor (Not Significant)** elsewhere**.**

A96

9.8.39 The A96 is a major road that connects Inverness with Aberdeen and is one of the key routes in Scotland. The section that runs through the study area begins in Kinellar in the southeast and ends in the northwest at Broomend, south of Port Elphinstone. The ZTV indicates visibility of the Proposed Development throughout much of this route.

9.8.40 Between Kinella and Denhead the Proposed Development would be visible in the far distance and would be afforded filtering from roadside trees. Other OHLs would be seen on either side of the road, compared to which the Proposed Development would appear smaller in scale. Around Denhead, surrounding woodland would provide much screening. Closer OHLs that cross the road at this point would appear much more prominent and large-scale than the Proposed Development. On the southwestern extents of Kintore, the most northerly extents of the Proposed Development would be seen in the middle distance; although, intervening woodland would provide much filtering and screening. From the northwestern extents of Kintore to Broomend, the Proposed Development would not be visible due to screening by the intervening rolling landform. This is with the exception of a relatively short length of the A96 between Tavelty and Murrayfield, where the Proposed Development would be glimpsed in the far distance in views to the southwest; although, intervening woodland and trees would provide much filtering and screening (barely perceptible). The scale of change is judged to be **Small** over a **Medium** geographical extent.

9.8.41 The Proposed Development is unlikely to be a prominent feature in views from the A96 as it would mostly only be visible in the far distance and much filtering and screening would be provided by intervening vegetation and the rolling landform. The magnitude of change is judged to be **Low**. Taking account of **Medium** sensitivity, the effect on views experienced by users of the A90 would be **Minor (Not Significant)**.

9.9 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment

9.9.1 This section summarises the findings of the RVAA which is presented in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment**.

9.9.2 The RVAA has been undertaken in accordance with the principles contained within the Landscape Institute's Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) Technical Guidance Note 2/19 (LI TGN 2/19)[31]. The RVAA considers whether the visual effects of the Proposed Development, as seen from residential properties, are so great as to affect the 'living conditions' experienced by residents at those properties. If such an effect would correspond to a breach of the 'Residential Visual Amenity Threshold' (RVAT) as described in LI TGN 2/19, it is intended that this judgement may assist the decision maker in coming to the wider planning judgement on overall residential amenity, when considered alongside potential effects on other visual components.

9.9.3 The assessment includes consideration of the changes in views and visual amenity from all properties up to 225 m from the proposed Kintore to Tealing 400 kV Alignment at suspension towers and 270 m from the Alignment at angle towers. These study area distances also apply to the Kintore - Fetteresso 275 kV/400 kV OHL Realignment at Kirkton of Durris and the Kintore - Tealing 275 kV OHL Realignment at Kintore, which also form part of the Section 37 Consent application for the Proposed Development. The study area distance has been informed by guidance, the height of the towers of the Proposed Development and the HLOD. Further information on the selection of the study area is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.3: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment**.

Section A

9.9.4 The Alignment would be visible from five residential properties/ property groups within the RVAA study area (225 m from suspension towers and 270 m from angle towers) in Section A. From each of these properties the Alignment would result in a **High** magnitude of change however would not be so overbearing or dominant in views as to breach the RVAT. At the property of Dunian, located to the south of the Sidlaw Hills this conclusion has been made based on the position of proposed towers in oblique views rather than in direct views from the primary elevation of the property, as well as a sense of separation afforded by the intervening minor road that is located between the property and the Proposed Development. The conclusion also takes into account a restriction on the HLOD which would limit movement of the Alignment to 15 m. From Prieston Hill, given the closest tower would be seen to the northwest, views from the primary elevation would be more distant and oblique, and as southeastern views would be unaffected, no breach of the RVAT is expected. From Grieve's House, the closest towers would sit behind the immediate skyline, creating a sense of separation. As such there would be no breach of the RVAT at this property. The conclusion also takes into account a restriction on the HLOD which would limit movement of the Alignment to 25 m. From 5 Plans for Thornton, views of the Alignment from the primary elevation of the property would be oblique and partially screened by intervening vegetation, resulting in no breach of the RVAT. The conclusion also takes into account a restriction on the HLOD which would limit movement of the Alignment to 25 m. From Jericho, the closest towers would be seen to the rear of the properties and would be partially screened by intervening vegetation. Primary views would remain largely unchanged with towers only visible at greater distances and in peripheral views. As such there would be no breach of the RVAT at this property group.

Section B

9.9.5 The Proposed Development would be visible from 14 residential properties/ property groups within the RVAA study area (225 m from suspension towers and 270 m from angle towers) in Section B. Ten of these 14 properties/ property groups would experience a **High** magnitude of change as a result of the Proposed Development; however, the Proposed Development would not be so overbearing or dominant in views as to breach the RVAT at any of these properties. Factors that contribute to these findings include visibility of towers in oblique or peripheral views rather than direct views from the primary elevation of properties, such as at Cairnwell, as well as filtering offered by intervening vegetation, for example at Woodhead of Ballinshoe, the Cairn, the Farmhouse at Baldoukie, Foreside of Cairn, and Craigeassie Farm. Partial screening of the Alignment offered by vegetation/ woodland or adjacent non-residential buildings is also a contributing factor that reduces the dominance of the Alignment and therefore no breach of the RVAT, for example at Haughs of Ballinshoe Farm and Barnsdale where adjacent farm buildings would provide partial screening. At Wolflaw, views from the primary elevation would not be altered, resulting in the Proposed Development not being so overbearing as to breach the RVAT. Where intervening roads or farm tracks create a sense of separation between a property and the Proposed Development, this has also been considered to reduce the dominance of the Proposed Development, for example at the group of properties at Balmadity Farm House. The conclusions of the RVAAs of Woodhead of Ballinshoe, Wolflaw, the Cairn, Cairnwell, the Farmhouse at Baldoukie, Knowe Cottage, Balmadity Farm House,

[31] The Landscape Institute, February 2019. Technical Guidance Note 2/19: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA).

Dunswood, and Lochty Houses takes into account HLOD restrictions that would limit movement of the Alignment to these properties.

Section C

9.9.6 The Proposed Development would be visible from 15 residential properties/ property groups within the RVAA study area (225 m from suspension towers and 270 m from angle towers) in Section C. Nine of these 15 properties/ property groups would experience a **High** magnitude of change as a result of the Proposed Development; however the Proposed Development would not be so overbearing or dominant in views as to breach the RVAT at any of these properties. Factors that contribute to these findings include visibility of towers in oblique or peripheral views rather than direct views from the primary elevation of properties, for example at Gungeon Cottage and Mains of Drumhendry Cottage, as well as views partially screened by nearby buildings and/or garden or surrounding vegetation, woodland, forestry, for example at Westerly, Northgate, and Mill of Cruik. Where intervening roads, farm tracks, or neighbouring curtilages create a sense of separation between a property and the Proposed Development, this has also been considered to reduce the dominance of the Proposed Development, for example at Mill of Balrownie and 4 Westside Cottages. The conclusions of the RVAAs of Gungeon Cottage, Nether Belliehill, Westerly, Northgate, Gawloch Farm, the Bungalow at Primrosehill, Cowieshillfarm House, and Haughhead Cottages take into account the HLOD restrictions would limit or prevent movement of the Alignment closer to these properties.

Section D

9.9.7 The Proposed Development would be visible from ten residential properties/ property groups within the RVAA study area (225 m from suspension towers and 270 m from angle towers) in Section D. Eight of these ten properties/ property groups would experience a **High** magnitude of change as a result of the Proposed Development; however, the Proposed Development would not be so overbearing or dominant in views as to breach the RVAT at any of these properties. Factors that contribute to these findings include visibility of towers in oblique or peripheral views rather than direct views from the primary elevation of properties, for example at Brownmuir House, Annamuick Cottages, Nether Quithel Cottage, Inches Cottage, and Jacksbank Cottages, as well as views partially screened by garden or surrounding vegetation and woodland, for example at Redhall House. Where intervening roads or farm tracks create a sense of separation between a property and the Proposed Development, this has also been considered to reduce the dominance of the Proposed Development, for example at The Neuk. The conclusions of the RVAAs of Brownmuir House, Nether Quithel Cottage, and Annamuick Cottages take into account HLOD restrictions that limit or prevent movement of the Alignment towards these properties.

Section E

9.9.8 The Alignment would be visible from five residential properties/ property groups within the RVAA study area (225 m from suspension towers and 270 m from angle towers) in Section E. Three of these five properties/ property groups would experience a **High** magnitude of change as a result of the Proposed Development; however, the Proposed Development would not be so overbearing or dominant in views as to breach the RVAT at these properties. At the property of Mill of Megie, located within Fetteresso Forest, this conclusion has been made based on the presence of rising landform around the property which partially contains views in the direction of the Proposed Development (northwest and west) as well as the position of proposed towers in oblique views rather than in direct views from the primary elevation of the property. The conclusion of the RVAA of Mill of Mergie takes into account a HLOD restriction that limits easterly movement of the Alignment towards the property to 10 m. From Wester Durris, there would be no breach of the RVAT due to the screening afforded by a mature hedgerow around the boundary of the property in views from the primary elevation. The sense of separation afforded by the intervening minor road would prevent a RVAT breach at Woodside and a HLOD restriction would limit westerly movement of the Alignment towards the property. HLOD restrictions at the following properties have been taken into consideration within their RVAA conclusions: Mill of Mergie, Milton, Wester Durris, and Woodside.

Section F

9.9.9 The Alignment would be visible from nineteen residential properties/ property groups within the RVAA study area (225 m from suspension towers and 270 m from angle towers) in Section F. Sixteen of these 18 properties/ property groups would experience a **High** magnitude of change as a result of the Proposed Development; however, the Proposed Development would not be so overbearing or dominant in views as to breach the RVAT at any of these properties. Factors that contribute to these findings include visibility of towers in oblique or peripheral views rather than direct views from the primary elevation of properties, for example at the group at Broomfield Steading and Little Finnercy Cottage, as well as views partially screened by

garden or surrounding vegetation and woodland, for example at Hill of Park. From some properties, the Proposed Development would be visible in direct views from primary elevations however would be afforded some partial filtering from garden vegetation, for example at South Monecht Farm and the group at Monecht Cottages. Where intervening roads or farm tracks create a sense of separation between a property and the Proposed Development, this has also been considered to reduce the dominance of the Proposed Development, for example at the group at Old Wester Echt Cottage and Lodge. At Southside Cottage Leylodge, the closest tower of the Proposed Development would be seen beyond the existing intervening Kintore - Tealing 275 kV tower that is visible to the southwest and would be seen a more distant and smaller feature in relation to the existing tower. This, in combination with partial screening from intervening woodland, results in no breach of the RVAT at this property. For properties where the HLOD has been restricted, this has been considered within their associated RVAAs. These properties are: New West Lodge, Lochwood Cottage, Broomfield, Little Finnercy, Monecht Cottages, South Monecht Cottage, South Monecht Farm, New Wester Echt Farm, Old Wester Echt, Old Wester Echt Lodge and Cottage, Upper Corskie, Southside Cottage Leylodge, and the properties in the Cul-de-sac group near Leylodge.

9.10 Additional Mitigation

9.10.1 Further measures over and above any embedded and applied mitigation within the Operational Corridor (LV5) are set out at a high level within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**. Such additional measures seek to further restore and enhance landscape features within the Operational Corridor that would be altered by the construction and operational requirements of the Proposed Development. Landscaping beyond reinstatement of existing ground conditions is subject to landowners' agreement.

Table 9.5: Additional Mitigation

Mitigation Measure	Project Stage/Timing	Responsibility
• **LV5:** Prior to felling, design proposals will be developed for specific areas, that apply the principles in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide** in more detail. Proposals could include softening of wayleaves through commercial forestry and deciduous and broadleaved woodland, and around the edges of woodland to create a more naturalistic looking, irregular and graded profile, through the planting of native shrubs species, wildflower and grass mixes. Landscaping beyond reinstatement of existing ground conditions is subject to landowners' agreement.	Construction phase before any felling takes place. Advanced planting is encouraged along the route prior to the construction of the overhead line.	Principal Contractors

Residual Operational Effects

9.10.2 The application of additional mitigation measure set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** and **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide** would assist in integrating the Proposed Development into the surrounding landscape and would help the landscape accommodate the Proposed Development better. However, these additional mitigation measures are not considered to reduce the level of significance of landscape and visual effects identified within this LVIA. As such, the residual effects as a result of the Proposed Development would remain the same as identified in the assessments set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**.

9.11 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects - Decommissioning

9.11.1 The Proposed Development would not have a fixed operational life. As set out in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**, the effects associated with the construction phase can be considered to be representative of worst-case decommissioning effects, and therefore no separate assessment on decommissioning has been undertaken as part of this LVIA.

9.12 Assessment of Likely Cumulative Effects

9.12.1 The below summarises the likely Significant cumulative effects which have been identified during both the construction and operational phases, based on the project description as outlined in **Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description**. Unless otherwise stated, potential effects identified are considered to be adverse. The full assessment of likely cumulative effects on landscape and visual receptors during construction and operation is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and**

Visual Assessment. Detailed information about the methodology used to carry out the cumulative assessment is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.5: LVIA and Visualisations Methodology**.

9.12.2 The projects considered within the cumulative assessment (as listed in **Table 9.4.1: Intra and Inter Developments considered in the cumulative LVIA** of **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment**) are concentrated in particular geographic locations, rather than being distributed along the route of the Proposed Development (further information is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 9.4: Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment**). Cumulative landscape and visual effects are assessed for Sections A-F of the Proposed Development, as illustrated in **Volume 3, Figure 1.1: Overview of the Proposed Development**. Sections D and E are assessed together given the concentration of Intra (Associated SSEN Transmission Developments) and Inter Developments (Other SSEN Transmission Developments and Third Party Developments) around the Section boundary at Hurlie.

Summary of Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects in Section A

Cumulative effects on landscape character – Intra Developments

9.12.3 The overlap of the construction phases would require concurrent activities at the Emmock substation site, and along the proposed OHL. The scale of construction activities would affect the key characteristics of LCTs 382 and 387, including their rural character and open views, in the area between Tealing Substation and the lower slopes of Craigowl Hill. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during construction, in a localised area between Tealing Substation and the lower slopes of Craigowl Hill. Beyond this area, construction of Emmock substation would cease to have an influence, and cumulative effects would reduce to **Not Significant**. Due to distance, there would be very limited change to the special qualities of the Sidlaw LLA, and cumulative effects on the LLA would therefore be **Negligible** (**Not Significant**).

9.12.4 During operation, the vertical prominence of the Proposed Development and the spatial scale of Emmock substation would combine to affect the key characteristics of LCT 387, in particular its rural character. Due to the bunds which would contain the Emmock substation during operation, effects would be limited to the area around and immediately north of the proposed substation, where the two projects meet. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) at operation, in a localised area around and immediately north of the proposed Emmock substation. Beyond this area, the influence of Emmock substation would reduce, and cumulative effects would reduce to **Not Significant**. Due to distance, there would be very limited change to the key characteristics of LCT 382 or the special qualities of the Sidlaw LLA, and cumulative effects on these receptors would therefore be **Negligible** (**Not Significant**).

Cumulative effects on visual amenity – Intra Developments

9.12.5 The overlapping construction activities would result in changes to views from nearby receptors within VRA A6. Construction work of both projects would be visible to people in this area, affecting combined and sequential views from residential receptors and road users. Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during construction, for nearby receptors within the localised area of VRA A6. More distant receptors would experience more limited change, and effects would be **Not Significant**.

9.12.6 During operation, the Proposed Development would comprise prominent vertical structures, while the Emmock substation would be relatively contained behind earth bunds. Due to the projects being adjacent, nearby receptors in VRAs A3 and A6 would experience combined and successive views. Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during operation over the localised area of VRA A6. For receptors within VRA A3, the Proposed Development is slightly more distant and Emmock substation more screened by bunding. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during operation over the localised area of VRA A3. More distant receptors would experience more limited change, and effects would be **Not Significant**.

Cumulative effects on landscape character – Intra and Inter Developments

9.12.7 It is expected that Fithie Energy Park (proposed) would be constructed after construction of the Proposed Development is complete, and therefore no cumulative effects would occur. Construction of the other Intra and Inter Developments may overlap with construction of the Proposed Development. This would lead to a large area of active construction works, between Myreton BESS in the south, and the Proposed Development in the north. There would be a cumulative effect on landscape character within the area between Tealing Substation and the lower slopes of Craigowl Hill, affecting key characteristics of LCTs 382 and 387. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during construction across a localised area between Tealing Substation and the lower slopes of Craigowl Hill. Beyond this area, the influence of construction would reduce, and effects on landscape character would reduce to **Not Significant**.

9.12.8 During operation, the presence of all the Intra and Inter Developments alongside the Proposed Development would lead to a concentration of infrastructure to the northwest of Tealing Substation. This would add to the existing infrastructure at Tealing and Seagreen Substations, and change the current rural landscape to one characterised by OHLs and electrical compounds. There would be effects on the key characteristics of LCTs 382 and 387, particularly their rural character and openness. The cumulative effect would occur across the area between Tealing Substation and the lower slopes of Craigowl Hill. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during operation, across a localised area between Tealing Substation and the lower slopes of Craigowl Hill. Beyond this area, the influence of the Intra and Inter Developments would reduce, and cumulative effects would reduce to **Not Significant**. Due to distance, there would be very limited change to the special qualities of the Sidlaw LLA, and cumulative effects on these receptors would therefore be **Negligible** (**Not Significant**).

9.12.9 Further north are two projects that would interact with the Proposed Development, but not with each other or with other Intra and Inter Developments. The proposed Ark Hill Wind Farm Extension is not predicted to have significant cumulative effects in combination with the Proposed Development. The cumulative influence on LCT 382 would be small and limited to a small area around Craigowl. Cumulative effects would be **Not Significant.** The Cossans Solar Farm and BESS would have localised cumulative effects in combination with the Proposed Development, which would pass over the solar farm. The cumulative effects would be **Moderate** and **Significant** within a small area around Cossans Solar Farm and BESS.

9.12.10 The contribution (in-addition cumulative effect) of the Proposed Development to these cumulative effects is considered to be **Significant**, as the Proposed Development would be larger and more extensive than most of the Intra and Inter Developments, and would have greater landscape effects.

Cumulative effects on visual amenity – Intra and Inter Developments

9.12.11 It is expected that Fithie Energy Park (proposed) would be constructed after construction of the Proposed Development is complete, and therefore no cumulative visual effects would occur with this development. The overlapping construction activities of Emmock substation, the Emmock and Tealing OHL Tie-ins and Tie-backs, OHL upgrades, and the potential construction of the Balnuith and Myreton BESS developments alongside the Proposed Development, would result in changes to views from nearby receptors between Myreton and Craigowl Hill. Construction activity (including works to dismantle sections of existing OHL) would be visible in combined and successive views from receptors within VRAs A2, A3, A6 and A9. Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) for people within the localised areas of VRAs A2, A3, A6 and A9 during the construction period. Effects may reduce depending on the length of construction phases on different projects, but this assessment considers the worst case scenario of all Intra and Inter Developments being constructed simultaneously. Effects on receptors within other VRAs would be **Not Significant** due to greater distance leading to lower magnitude of change in views.

9.12.12 During operation, the Intra and Inter Developments around Emmock substation would result in a cluster of infrastructure being visible in the area northwest of the existing Tealing Substation. This would include the existing Tealing Substation as well as the new Emmock substation, the Emmock and Tealing OHL Tie-ins and Tie-backs, and BESS installations, as well as the Proposed Development. These views would be experienced by receptors within VRAs A2, A3, A6, A7, A8 and A9. Multiple infrastructure projects would be visible to people in these areas, affecting combined and sequential views. For receptors within VRAs A3 and A6, close views of the Proposed Development, Emmock substation and the Emmock and Tealing Tie-ins and Tie-backs would result in a **Major** (**Significant**) cumulative effect across these localised areas. Receptors in VRAs A2, A7 and A9 would experience views of the Proposed Development alongside some of the Inter Developments, but some would be at further distance. The cumulative effect would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) across these localised areas. Views from higher ground in the Sidlaw Hills, experienced by recreational users in VRA A8, would take in all the Intra and Inter Developments around Emmock, as well as sequential views of Ark Hill Wind Farm Extension to the north. Cumulative effects will be **Moderate** (**Significant**) within the localised area of VRA A8. Cumulative effects of the Proposed Development in combination with the Cossans Solar Farm and BESS would be experienced separately to the other Intra Developments, as it is at the north end of Section A. Receptors close to the solar farm would experience views of the Proposed Development passing over the solar panels. The cumulative effects will be **Moderate** (**Significant**) in a very localised area around the Cossans Solar Farm.

9.12.13 The contribution (in-addition cumulative effect) of the Proposed Development to these cumulative effects is considered to be **Significant**, as the Proposed Development would be larger and more extensive than most of the Intra and Inter Developments, and would have greater visual effects.

Summary of Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects in Section B

9.12.14 There are no Intra Developments or Inter Developments that would interact with Section B of the Proposed Development, and therefore no cumulative effects would arise.

Summary of Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects in Section C

9.12.15 There are no Intra Developments or Inter Developments that would interact with Section C of the Proposed Development, and therefore no cumulative effects would arise.

Summary of Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects in Section D and E

Cumulative effects on landscape character – Intra Developments

9.12.16 The overlap of the construction phases will require concurrent activities at the proposed Hurlie substation site, and along the proposed OHL. The scale of construction activities will affect the key characteristics of LCTs 24 and 29, including the patchwork of arable and pastoral fields in LCT 24 south of Fetteresso Forest and the distinctive upland plateau to the north in LCT 29 which forms part of the Highland Boundary Fault. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during construction, within a localised area in Fetteresso Forest and in a localised area to the south between Hurlie substation and Carmont Hill, and north around Slug Road. Beyond these areas, construction of Hurlie substation would have limited influence, and cumulative effects would reduce to **Not Significant**.

9.12.17 During operation, the vertical prominence of the Proposed Development and the spatial scale of Hurlie substation would combine to affect the key characteristics of LCT 24, including views across the Howe of the Mearns, and LCT 29, in particular the role the upland plateau plays in forming a distinctive backdrop to the surrounding lowland areas. Due to the extent of commercial forestry surrounding Hurlie substation which would partially screen the substation, cumulative effects would be limited to the area immediately south of Fetteresso Forest where visibility of Hurlie substation would greatest, although still reduced by commercial forestry. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) at operation, in the localised area around and immediately south of the proposed Hurlie substation. Beyond this area, the influence of Hurlie substation would reduce, and cumulative effects would reduce to **Not Significant**.

Cumulative effects on visual amenity – Intra Developments

9.12.18 The overlapping construction activities will result in changes to views from nearby receptors within VRAs D23, D26 and E2. Construction work of both projects would be visible to people in this area, affecting combined and sequential views from residential receptors, recreational receptors and road users. Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during construction, for nearby receptors within the localised areas of VRAs D23, D26 and E2. More distant receptors would experience more limited change, and effects would be **Not Significant**.

9.12.19 During operation, the Proposed Development will comprise prominent vertical structures, while the Hurlie substation will be relatively contained behind intervening commercial forestry in Fetteresso Forest. Due to the projects being adjacent, nearby receptors in VRAs D23 and E2 would experience combined and successive views. Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during operation in the localised area of E2. For receptors within VRA D23, the Proposed Development and Hurlie substation are slightly more distant and Hurlie substation more screened by intervening landform and forestry, resulting in a **Moderate** (**Significant**) cumulative effect during operation in the localised area of VRA D23. More distant receptors would experience more limited change, and effects would be **Not Significant**.

Cumulative effects on landscape character – Intra and Inter Developments

9.12.20 It is expected that the construction of the Fetteresso 132 kV Substation extension, Glendye Wind Farm Grid Connection and Network Rail Drumlithie would overlap with construction of the Proposed Development. It is unknown when the construction of the other inter developments would take place. Should construction of all inter developments, with exception of the Laurencekirk Residential Development, overlap with construction of the Proposed Development, there would be a large area of active construction works across LCT 24 and 29, between the Carron Water to the south, across Fetteresso Forest itself, and to Durris Forest in the north. There would be both physical and perceptual cumulative effect on landscape character within these areas. The Laurencekirk Residential Development would be located in LCT 22 and would result in some physical and perceptual cumulative effects if construction overlapped with that of the Proposed Development. Given the distance of approximately 2 km between the residential development and the Proposed Development, the interaction between construction activity

would be limited. For LCT 24 and 29, cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during construction, in a localised area between the Carron Water to the south, across Fetteresso Forest, and to Durris Forest in the north. Beyond this area and in LCT 22, the influence of construction would reduce, and effects on landscape character would reduce to **Not Significant**.

9.12.21 During operation, the presence of all the Intra and Inter Developments alongside the Proposed Development, with exception of the Laurencekirk Residential Development, would lead to a concentration of infrastructure immediately south of Fetteresso Forest and within the forest itself. This would add to the existing infrastructure at Fetteresso Substation and the two existing OHLs that pass over Fetteresso Forest, intensifying the influence of energy infrastructure on LCT 24 and 29. This increased influence would affect key characteristics of LCT 24 and 29, including the patchwork of arable and pastoral fields in LCT 24, and the distinctive upland plateau in LCT 29 which forms part of the Highland Boundary Fault. The cumulative effect would occur across the area between the Carron Water to the south, across Fetteresso Forest itself, and to Durris Forest in the north. The Laurencekirk Residential Development in LCT 22 would be perceived as an extension to the existing settlement of Laurencekirk which already influences LCT 22. For LCT 24 and 29, cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during operation, in a localised area between the Carron Water to the south, across Fetteresso Forest, and to Durris Forest in the north. Beyond this area and in LCT 22, the influence of the Intra and Inter Developments would reduce, and cumulative effects would reduce to **Not Significant**.

9.12.22 The contribution (in-addition cumulative effect) of the Proposed Development to these cumulative effects is considered to be **Significant**, as the Proposed Development would be larger and more extensive than most of the Intra and Inter Developments, and would have greater landscape effects.

Cumulative effects on visual amenity – Intra and Inter Developments

9.12.23 It is expected that the construction of the Fetteresso 132 kV Substation extension, Glendye Wind Farm Grid Connection, Network Rail Drumlithie would overlap with construction of the Proposed Development. It is unknown when the construction of the other inter developments would take place. Should construction of all inter developments overlap with construction of the Proposed Development, there would be changes to views from nearby visual receptors in a localised area between the Carron Water to the south, across Fetteresso Forest itself, and to Durris Forest in the north, as well as further south around Laurencekirk. Construction activity would be visible in combined views from receptors across localised areas within VRAs D1, D3, D22, D23, D24, D25, D26, E1, E2, E3, E5 and E6. For receptors around Laurencekirk in C31 and D1, the cumulative visual interaction between the two sets of construction works would be limited due to the intervening distance between them (approximately 2 km). Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during construction for the closest receptors across localised areas within VRAs D22, D23, D24, D25, D26, E1, E2, E3, E5 and E6. Effects may reduce depending on the length of construction phases on different projects, but the assessment considers the worst case scenario of all Intra and Inter Developments being constructed simultaneously. Effects on receptors within other VRAs near Fetteresso Forest and in D1 and D3 near Laurencekirk would be **Not Significant**.

9.12.24 During operation, the inter developments together would introduce a range of different energy related infrastructure into views, including prominent vertical structures and electrical compounds. Due to the proximity and location of the projects together within or south of Fetteresso Forest there would be changes to views from nearby visual receptors between the Carron Water to the south, across Fetteresso Forest itself, and to Durris Forest in the north. The intra and inter developments alongside the Proposed Development would be visible in combined views from receptors across localised areas within VRAs D22, D23, D24, D25, D26, E1, E2, E3, E5 and E6. For receptors around Laurencekirk in C31 and D1, the cumulative visual interaction between the Laurencekirk Residential Development and the Proposed Development in VRAs C31 and D1 would be limited given the differing nature of the developments, and that the residential development would be perceived as an extension to the existing settlement of Laurencekirk. Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during operation for the closest receptors across localised areas within VRAs D22, D23, D24, D25, D26, E1, E2, E3, E5 and E6. Effects may reduce for receptors in more distant parts of these VRAs, where intervening features such as landform or woodland and forestry are likely to filter views of some of the inter developments. Effects on receptors within other VRAs near Fetteresso Forest and in D1 and D3 near Laurencekirk would be **Not Significant**.

9.12.25 The contribution (in-addition cumulative effect) of the Proposed Development to these cumulative effects is considered to be **Significant**, as the Proposed Development would be larger and more extensive than most of the Intra and Inter Developments, and would have greater visual effects.

Summary of Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects in Section F

Cumulative effects on landscape character – Inter Developments

9.12.26 It is unknown when the construction of the Inter Developments would take place, and if there would be any overlap with the construction of the Proposed Development. Should construction of all Inter Developments overlap with construction of the Proposed Development, there would be a large area of active construction works across LCT 26 (Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire (Echt and Kintore units)). This would result in both physical and perceptual cumulative effects on landscape character. The scale of construction activities would affect key characteristics of LCT 26, including its mixed farmland and strong woodland structure. This would be experienced in the area around Leylodge, Letter and Womblehill near Kintore, and largely associated with the concentration of Inter Developments near Kintore. Construction of Hill of Fare Wind Farm in the neighbouring LCT 28 (Outlying Hills & Ridges) would have an influence on the landscape character of LCT 26 as it would interrupt views of the outlying hills which form a focus of views from LCT 26. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during construction, in a localised area around Leylodge, Letter and Womblehill. **Moderate** (**Significant**) effects would also be experienced in a localised area around Meikle Tap and Echt where the influence of construction of both the Proposed Development and Hill of Fare Wind Farm would be experienced. Beyond these areas, the influence of construction would reduce, and effects on landscape character would reduce to **Not Significant**.

9.12.27 During operation, the presence of the Inter Developments alongside the Proposed Development would lead to a concentration of infrastructure around Kintore Substation. The presence of these developments would intensify the influence of electrical and energy infrastructure near Kintore, which would affect the key characteristics of LCT 26, including the rolling landform of gentle hills, strong woodland structure and mixed farmland. The cumulative effects would be limited to the area between Leylodge, Letter and Womblehill. The presence of Hill of Fare Wind Farm in LCT 28 would have an influence on the landscape character of LCT 26 as it would interrupt views of the outlying hills which form a focus of views from LCT 26, and may diminish the scale of the landform by introducing vertical structures across the top of Hill of Fare. Both Hill of Fare Wind Farm and the Proposed Development would be experienced across large areas of LCT 26 between Crathes and Dunecht. Cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) at operation, in a localised area around Kintore Substation (between Leylodge, Letter and Womblehill) associated with the cluster of Inter Developments near Kintore, and more widely between Dunecht and Crathes due to the influence of both the Proposed Development and the large scale Hill of Fare Wind Farm. Beyond this area, the influence of the Inter Developments would reduce, and cumulative effects would reduce to **Not Significant**.

9.12.28 The contribution (in-addition cumulative effect) of the Proposed Development to these cumulative effects is considered to be **Significant**, as the Proposed Development would be larger and more extensive than most of the Inter Developments, and would have greater landscape effects.

Cumulative effects on visual amenity – Inter Developments

9.12.29 It is unknown when the construction of the Inter Developments would take place, and if there would be any overlap with the construction of the Proposed Development. Should construction of all Inter Developments overlap with construction of the Proposed Development, there would be changes to views for nearby visual receptors between Leylodge, Womblehill and Letter due to a concentration of Inter Developments near Kintore Substation. There may also be changes to views for visual receptors near Meikle Tap due to the construction of Hill of Fare Wind Farm alongside the Proposed Development. Construction activity would be visible in combined, successive and/or sequential views from some receptors across localised areas within VRAs F29, F30, F31, F32 and F33, and from F16 with relation to Hill of Fare Wind Farm. Cumulative effects would be **Major** (**Significant**) during construction for receptors across localised areas within VRAs F16, F30, F32 and F33. For receptors in VRAs F29 and F31 cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during construction. Effects may reduce for receptors in more distant parts of these VRAs, where intervening features such as landform or woodland and forestry is likely to filter views of some of the inter developments. Effects on receptors within other VRAs would be **Not Significant** due to greater distance leading to lower magnitude of change in views.

9.12.30 During operation, the Inter Developments alongside the Proposed Development would introduce a range of different electrical and energy related infrastructure into views, including prominent vertical structures and electrical compounds. Due to the proximity and location of the Inter Developments and the Proposed Development near Kintore Substation, nearby receptors across localised areas within VRAs F29, F30, F31, F32 and F33 would experience combined, successive and sequential views from residential receptors and road users. Cumulative effects on views from VRAs F30, F32 and F33 would be **Major**

(**Significant**) during operation across these localised areas. For receptors in VRAs F29 and F31 cumulative effects would be **Moderate** (**Significant**) during operation. Given the scale of Hill of Fare Wind Farm (16 turbines at 180-200m tip height) situated in an elevated position, there would be widespread visibility from across the lower lying Aberdeenshire countryside. Much of the area between Crathes and Dunecht would experience views of both Hill of Fare Wind Farm and the Proposed Development during operation. The cumulative effect on views from some receptors across localised areas within VRAs F10, F11, F17, F21 and F23 would be **Major** (**Significant**) during operation. These cumulative effects would be experienced in mainly successive and sequential views, although combined views may be experienced from east of the Proposed Development. Effects may reduce for receptors in more distant parts of these VRAs, where intervening features such as landform or woodland and forestry is likely to filter views of some of the inter developments. Effects on receptors within other VRAs would be **Not Significant** due to greater distance leading to lower magnitude of change in views.

9.12.31 The contribution (in-addition cumulative effect) of the Proposed Development to these cumulative effects is considered to be **Significant**, as the Proposed Development would be larger and more extensive than most of the Inter Developments, and would have greater visual effects.

9.13 Summary of Significant Effects

9.13.1 **Table 9.4: Summary of Significant Effects** below summarises the predicted residual effects of the Proposed Development on landscape and visual amenity prior to and following the application of additional mitigation.

9.13.2 There is no proposed additional mitigation during construction, above and beyond the embedded and applied mitigation measures set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring**. As such, the residual effects as a result of construction would remain the same as identified in the assessments set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment** and **Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment**.

9.13.3 Additional mitigation measures during the operational phase are set out in **Section 9.5: Mitigation and Monitoring** and **Volume 5, Appendix 9.6: Outline Landscape Mitigation Design Guide**. These measures are not considered to reduce the level of significance of landscape and visual effects identified within this LVIA. As such, the residual effects as a result of the Proposed Development would remain the same as identified in the assessments set out within **Volume 5, Appendix 9.1: Landscape Assessment and Appendix 9.2: Visual Assessment.**

Table 9.4: Summary of Significant Effects

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
Landscape Character Types						
LCT 387: Dipslope Farmland (Tealing Unit)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)
LCT 382: Lowland Hills Ranges	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)
LCT 386: Low Moorland Hills	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands - Tayside (Forfar Unit)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
LCT 384: Broad Valley Lowlands – Tayside (Brechin Unit)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
LCT 379: Foothills - Tayside	Not significant	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands - Aberdeenshire	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
LCT 24: Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills – Aberdeenshire	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)
LCT 29: Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)
LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
LCT 26: Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire Echt Unit	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
LCT 26: Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire Kintore Unit	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate **(Significant)**	Moderate **(Significant)**
Landscape Designations						
River South Esk LLA	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
Dee Valley SLA	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
Visual Receptor Areas						
VRA A1: Downfield	Not significant	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A2: Templeton, Gallowhill, Myreton of Claverhouse, and Inveraldie	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)
VRA A3: Balnuith	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA A4: Tealing and Kirkton of Tealing	Not significant	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A6: Balkemback	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA A7: Balluderon and Balkello	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Moderate (**Significant**)
VRA A8: Ark Hill, Balkello, Craigowl and Gallow Hills	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)
VRA A9: Prieston and Coldstream	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA A10: Lumley Den to Happas	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A12: Upper Hayston Farm to Nether Hayston	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A13: Meikle Kilmundie to Arniefoul Mill	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A17: Plans of Thornton	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A18: Douglastown and Kirkton	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A19: Ingliston and Mains of Brigton	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A20: Haughs of Cossans	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA A21: Glamis, Leys of Cossans, and Kinalty Haughs	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B1: Westmuir, Drumshade, and Logie	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B2: Ballindarg	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B3: Upper Drumgley to Loch of Forfar	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B6: Padanaram	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B7: Baggerton, Bogside, and Lunanhead	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B8: Mosside of Ballinshoe to Over Bow	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA B9: Redford to Woodside	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B11: Drumclune, Garlowbank, Forest Muir, and Bog	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B12: Blairyfeddon to Craigeassie	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B13: North Quilkoe to Battledykes	Minor (Not Significant)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B15: Murthill to Tobees	Moderate (**Significant**)	Minor (Not Significant)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Minor (Not Significant)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B16: Cairnhill	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B17: Derachie, Downiepark, and Shielhill	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B18: Meikle Coull to Knowehead	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B19: Tannadice	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B20: Tannadice to Hill of Finavon	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B22: Noranbank to Careston	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B23: Hilton of Fern and Roughmount Wood	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B24: Wellford to Boggie Wood	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B25: South Noranside	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA B26: Auchnacree, Glenogil, Ogil, and Fern	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B28: Balmadity to Blackhall	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA B29: Montboy to Mill of Cruick	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C2: Belliehill to Balrownie	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C3: Maisondieu, Barewell, and Kintrockat	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C5: Little Brechin	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C7: Grosefield to Stracathro	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C8: Brathinch and Bankhead Wood	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C9: Inchbare	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C10: Lummington	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C11: Chapelton & Reidhall	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C15: Westside to Inveriscandye	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C16: Capo Plantation	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C18: Luthermuir	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA C19: Mains of Drumhendry	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C20: Edzell Airfield	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C22: Black Burn and Craigmoston Burn	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C25: Mains of Thornton	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C26: North of Lady Jane's Plantation	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA C27: Inchgray Farm to Auchcairnie Croft	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D4: Westerton / Waulkmill	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D5: Cammackmuir Plantation / Gallows Knap	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D6: West Cairnbeg / Scotch-haugh Burn	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D7: Woods of Redhall / Nursery Burn	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D8: Redhall / Pittengardner	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D11: Herscha Hill / Stoneyfield Belt	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D14: Mains of Dellavaird	Moderate (**Significant**)	Minor (Not significant)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Minor (Not significant)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D15: North Blairs to Burnhead of Monboddo	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA D16: Auchtochter	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D17: Glenbervie	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D20: Inches	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D21: Jacksbank	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA D22: Newmill to Tannachie	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA D23: Carmont Hill	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA D24: Quithel	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA D25: Elfhill	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA D26: The Wyndings	Moderate (**Significant**)	Minor (not significant)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Minor (not significant)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA E1: Fetteresso Forest	Minor (Not Significant)	Minor (Not Significant)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Minor (Not Significant)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA E2: Hill of Swanley, Cheyne, and Fetteresso	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA E3: Cowie Water and Black Burn	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA E4: Rickarton and Slug Road	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA E5: Strathgyle Wood, Hill of Auquhollie, and Nerther Auquhollie	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA E6: Cairn-mon-earn, Durris Forest	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA E7: Tilquhillie, Blairydrine, and Crossroads	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA E8: Balladrum Wood	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA E9: Funach Wood	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA E10: Calladrum Wood	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA E13: Kirkton of Durris	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA E15: A93 / West Park	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA E16: Park House / A93	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F1: Upper Park/ Beechgrove Cottages	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F3: Loch of Park & Collonach Plantation	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F4: West of Drumoak	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F9: Quartains	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F10: Hirn, Glashmore, and Rashenlochy	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Major (**Significant**)
VRA F11: Schoolhill	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Major (**Significant**)

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA F12: North Eddieston, Little Eddieston, Meikle Eddieston, Upper Anguston, Easter Anguston	Minor (Not Significant)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F14: Hill of Braigie, Braigiewell, East Finnercy, Northton, and Templefold	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F15: Landerberry, Milton of Finnercy, and Tillyshogle	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F16: Meikle Tap and Wester Tillyshogle	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant
VRA F17: South Kirkton, Mill of Echt, and Tillioch	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Major (**Significant**)
VRA F18: Knockquharn, Easter Echt, Milton of Garlogie, and Lochead	Minor (Not Significant)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F19: Easter Culfosie, North Monecht, and Meanecht	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F20: North Mains, Myriewell, Kirk Cottages and South Monecht	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F21: Echt	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Major (**Significant**)
VRA F23: Barmekin Hill, Barmekin Wood and surroundings	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Major (**Significant**)
VRA F25: Dunecht Village and surroundings	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant
VRA F29: Lauchintilly and Glack	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)

Predicted Effects	Significance (Construction)	Significance (Operation)	Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Significance of Residual Effects Following Additional Mitigation (Operation)	Cumulative Effects (Construction)	Cumulative Effects (Operation)
VRA F30: Backhill of Glack to Leylodge	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA F31: Westhill	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)
VRA F32: Womblehill, Burnside, Upper Terryvale, and Glasgoforest	Moderate (**Significant**)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA F33: Leylodge and surroundings	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)	Major (**Significant**)
VRA F35: Cottown	Minor (Not Significant)	Moderate (**Significant**)	Softening of forestry and woodland edges, including wayleaves	Moderate (**Significant**)	Not significant	Not significant