

# **Fanellan Hub 400 kV Substation and Converter Station**

## **Environmental Impact Assessment Report**

### **Volume 4 | Technical Appendices**

#### **Appendix 8.3 – Landscape Character Effects**

**February 2025**



### APPENDIX 8.3: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

For the determination of Susceptibility and Value leading to overall Sensitivity, please see **Appendix 8.2: Landscape Character Sensitivity**.

For the determination of level of Significance please refer to **Table 8** Matrix for determining the significance of effects in **Appendix 8.1 Landscape and Visual Methodology**

**Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-1 Landscape Effects**

Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Sensitivity	Baseline description	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effect
NATURESCOT LCT 229 Enclosed Farmland	High	<p>The LCT consists of an area of sheltered north facing sloping farmed land located west of Inverness. Land-use is predominantly mixed-use agriculture separated by a high proportion of trees, woodlands, forestry and hedgerows. Landform and tree cover limits long distance views; signs of urbanisation are present with increase in new housing developments and the landscape is crossed by overhead lines.</p> <p>There are no landscape designations in the LCT. Designated heritage interest includes the private estate of Beaufort Castle Garden and Designed Landscape and scattered heritage assets, including a church and cemetery near Black Bridge. The Core Paths/ designated public path network is relatively sparse. A reasonable number of people pass through the LCT on the A833 and short sections of the A831/ A862 to access Black bridge cemetery, Kiltarlity and paths alongside the River Beauly.</p>	<p><u>Construction Phase</u></p> <p>Construction of the Proposed Development will be located on an elevated part of this LCT near Fanellan, south of Ruttle Wood and Torr Mor in the vicinity of an existing 400kv OHL. The landscape is principally characterised by sloping agricultural land with some urban influences. The proposals will introduce industrial features within an open elevated area of this LCT which is relatively exposed (in parts) to the south. Construction activity will be dominant within the localised highly sensitive landscape surrounding Fanellan. The scale of change is therefore assessed as <b>High</b>.</p> <p>The proposals occur across a small section of the LCT at Fanellan, but due to the exposed south facing slopes, the influence on the wider setting will be noticeable. The geographical extent of change is therefore assessed as <b>Medium</b>. The construction stage is considered to be short term, and the duration of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The overall magnitude of change is therefore assessed as <b>High</b>.</p>	<p><u>Construction Phase</u></p> <p><b>High</b></p>	<p><u>During Construction</u></p> <p><b>Major adverse (significant)</b> to a localised area of the LCT.</p>
			<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 1)</u></p> <p>Fanellan 400kV Substation and Converter station will be an uncharacteristic new feature in the landscape. The new structures will replace the rural agricultural landscape and existing OHL north of Fanellan Road. This change, together with the loss of established vegetation along Fanellan Road (removed during construction), and the creation of the new landscape forms, will result in a noticeable change to the immediate landscape. Whilst the sympathetic use of colour on the building facades of the Converter Station will help make parts of the built form appear more recessive in the landscape and more in character with the surrounding landscape colours, it will remain noticeable. Landscape mitigation planting will be immature and will not be sufficiently established to provide any integration of the Fanellan Hub into the wider landscape. The scale of change is therefore assessed as <b>Medium</b>.</p> <p>The proposals occur over a small section of the LCT north of Fanellan Road, beyond landscape forms and immature mitigation planting, which will limit the Proposed Developments impact on the wider setting. The geographical extent of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The operation stage is considered to be long term, and the duration of change is therefore assessed as <b>High</b>. The overall magnitude of change is therefore assessed as <b>Medium</b>.</p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 1)</u></p> <p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p><u>Year of Opening</u></p> <p><b>Moderate adverse (significant)</b> to a localised area of the LCT.</p>
			<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 15)</u></p> <p>Landscape mitigation planting will be sufficiently established to provide some screening to Fanellan 400kV Substation and Converter station . The landscape forms and established mitigation planting will increase the levels of the landscape integration and connected woodland belts. The substation infrastructure will also have dulled down over time. However, the LCT will remain slightly altered due to the introduction of large built elements that are locally uncharacteristic, albeit in a small proportion of the LCT. The scale of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low to medium</b>.</p> <p>The proposals occur in a relatively small area north of Fanellan Road, beyond vegetated landscape forms which will reduce the influence on the wider setting. The geographical extent of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The operation stage is considered to be long term and the duration of change is therefore assessed as <b>High</b>. The overall magnitude of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low to Medium</b>.</p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 15)</u></p> <p><b>Low to Medium</b></p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 15)</u></p> <p><b>Minor to moderate adverse (significant)</b> to a localised area of the LCT.</p>
NATURESCOT LCT 227 Farmed Strath - Inverness	High	<p>The LCT is characterised by narrow, farmed, open valley floors contrasted with the heavily wooded, steeper side slopes of the valley. The woodland contains a mixture of broadleaf woodlands and conifer forests. Settlement is largely limited to the open valley floor. A reasonable number</p>	<p><u>Construction Phase</u></p> <p>Construction of the Proposed Development will be located on a small elevated part of this LCT south of Ruttle Wood and the hill top of Torr Mor. The landscape within this character area is principally characterised by the river valley and mature woodlands and conifer forests. The proposals will remove some mature vegetation south of Torr Mor and will introduce industrial features within an open and relatively exposed localised area on the edge of this LCT. However, the construction activity will influence a minor aspect of this LCT only. The scale of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The proposals extend across a small section of the LCT beyond Ruttle Wood. The geographical extent of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The construction stage is considered to be short term and the duration of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The overall magnitude of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>.</p>	<p><u>Construction Phase</u></p> <p><b>Low</b></p>	<p><u>During Construction</u></p> <p><b>Moderate adverse (significant)</b> to a localised area of the LCT.</p>

Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Sensitivity	Baseline description	Description of Impact	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effect
		<p>of people pass through the LCT on the A831. Detracting features are present in the form of a power station and overhead lines (OHL). Where the OHL cross the valley and ascend to the skyline, they form prominent man-made features.</p> <p>There are no landscape designations in the LCT although Culloden Battlefield is located in Strathnairn (outside the study area). The River Beauly is popular for recreational pursuits, and is also dammed for hydro-electricity generation.</p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 1)</u></p> <p>Fanellan 400kV Substation and Converter station will be an uncharacteristic new feature in a small portion of the LCT. The new structures will replace the rural agricultural landscape south of Ruttie Wood within a very localised area of the LCT. Vegetation lost during construction is limited and would not be noticeable within the wider LCT. The scale of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The proposals occur a small section of the LCT south of Ruttie Wood and would have a limited impact on the wider setting of the LCT. The geographical extent of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The operation stage is considered to be long term and the duration of change is therefore assessed as <b>High</b>. The overall magnitude of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>.</p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 1)</u></p> <p><b>Low</b></p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 1)</u></p> <p><b>Minor adverse</b> (not significant) to a localised area of the LCT.</p>
			<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 15)</u></p> <p>There will be a slight alteration to the character of this LCT due to the barely perceptible structures comprising Fanellan 400kV Substation and Converter station. Landscape mitigation planting will be sufficiently established to help integrate the Proposed Development into the landscape. The scale of change is therefore assessed as <b>Negligible</b>. The proposals occur across a very small section of the LCT south of Ruttie Wood and would be barely perceptible within the wider setting of the LCT. The geographical extent of change is therefore assessed as <b>Low</b>. The operation stage is considered to be long term and the duration of change is therefore assessed as <b>High</b>. The overall magnitude of change is therefore assessed as <b>Negligible</b>.</p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 1)</u></p> <p><b>Negligible</b></p>	<p><u>Operational Phase (Year 1)</u></p> <p><b>Negligible</b> (not significant) to a localised area of the LCT.</p>