VOLUME 2: CHAPTER 7 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

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7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

7.1 Executive Summary

Introduction

7.1.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed Spittal to Loch Buidhe to Beauly 400 kV Overhead Line (OHL) Connection (the Proposed Development) has been undertaken in order to identify the predicted landscape and visual effects that would be likely to result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development, as described in **Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development**. This includes identification of the potential effects upon views experienced by those living, working, and visiting in the area in addition to those on the wider landscape resource.

Approach and Method

7.1.2 The LVIA has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects, registered with the Landscape Institute. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance provided within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3). The visualisations supporting the LVIA have been prepared in formats agreed with both The Highland Council (THC) and NatureScot.

7.1.3 The LVIA has been conducted in consideration of the proposed design height of the towers/pylons and their placement, in addition to other elements such as access tracks and management felling of woodland which would be required to be implemented. The assessment has also considered the potential implications of the Limit of Deviation (LoD) associated with the Proposed Development (including a potential increase of up to 9 m in the design height of the towers which may be required at specific locations as the design is developed/construction undertaken).

7.1.4 In addition to assessment of effects resulting solely from the Proposed Development on the landscape, views and visual amenity the LVIA also gives consideration to the potential for cumulative effects between sections of the Proposed Development, along with other related developments (three substations at Banniskirk, Carnaig (Loch Buidhe) and Fanellan) which are the subject of separate planning applications. Further consideration of cumulative effects with other unrelated, proposed electrical infrastructure developments (including wind farm proposals and other proposed OHL and substation developments) falling within 10 km of the LVIA study area has also been undertaken where relevant.

Baseline Conditions

7.1.5 The Landscape and Visual baseline conditions were established through desktop review of published material, review of mapping and aerial imagery and field studies. The Proposed Development, crossing from Spittal to Beauly, would pass through a wide range of landscapes characterised by mountain glens, inland and coastal loch-shores, and moorland, interspersed with areas of forest and settled croftland and glens. A detailed description of the baseline landscape character for each Section of the Proposed Development is provided within Part 1.3 of the Section specific LVIAs (**Volume 5, Appendix 7.5 to 7.9**). The Proposed Development would traverse two Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), the Flow Country and Berriedale Braes SLA and the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA. Consideration of the route of the Proposed Development at the early stages of design has avoided passing through National Scenic Areas and other SLAs in Highland region.

Mitigation

7.1.6 The LVIA takes account of embedded mitigation measures developed when establishing the preferred route and alignment for the Proposed Development, and the selection of the proposed technology for different

sections of the route. The route selection process has drawn from consultation with NatureScot and other key consultees in order to minimise as far as practicable potential effects on landscape and visual receptors.

7.1.7 The LVIA also takes into account the likely benefits of general mitigation measures concerning the use of good practice construction and restoration techniques which would be applied during the construction and re-instatement phases of the Proposed Development. While the mitigation of impacts on landscape and visual receptors has been partially achieved through consideration of the routeing of the Proposed Development, significant adverse effects on landscape and visual receptors would be inevitable. In the absence of specific agreements with landowners no mitigation planting other than the re-instatement of ground cover has been proposed and the assessment has been undertaken on this basis, however it can be assumed that following completion of the construction phase re-stocking and replanting of areas of woodland would be likely to occur. This planting would be likely to reduce the visibility of the Proposed Development in some instances and over time reduce the residual effects on both landscape and visual receptors.

Assessment Findings

7.1.8 The Proposed Development would pass through a range of landscape character types and result in direct effects on these due to changes to ground cover and the installation of the towers. These effects would result largely from the addition of the proposed steel lattice towers, which would constitute new vertical features within the local landscape. The effects of greatest magnitude would largely remain focussed within distances of up to 700-900 m of the Proposed Development or less depending on localised screening. At greater distances across the LCTs, the influence of the Proposed Development would reduce, and the effects would reduce in significance across the wider landscape character types.

7.1.9 The Proposed Development would result in direct effects on the special qualities of the Flow Country and Berriedale Braes SLA and the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA. Effects on the Flow Country and Berriedale Braes SLA would be relatively localised and occur predominantly on the rolling hills between the peatlands and the coastal shelf. These effects would not compromise the integrity of the SLA. Effects on the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA would be more pronounced in upland areas and in the north of the SLA. Where viewed the Proposed Development would reduce the perceived wildness and tranquillity of the interior hills and Glen Loth however the Proposed Development would not compromise the integrity of the SLA. The Proposed Development would not directly affect any National Scenic Areas, and would not significantly affect any Wild Land Areas. Avoidance of significant effects was largely achieved by routeing at the design stage.

7.1.10 The Proposed Development would result in significant adverse effects on the views and visual amenity of residents living in close proximity to the route of the OHL in addition to the views and visual amenity of road users, railway users and users of core paths. Notable locations where adverse effects would occur include receptors in the vicinity of the Proposed Development in the northern length of the OHL (Section A: Spittal to Brora) and in the southern lengths of the route (Section D: Dounie to Near Strathpeffer and Section E: Near Strathpeffer to Beauly). The adverse effects on views and visual amenity in the north coincide with the open moorland landscapes where there are limited screening elements, and in the south, with the higher density of settlements and transport/recreational routes.

7.1.11 In combination with other developments associated with the Proposed Development and 'third party' developments (e.g. proposed wind farm developments) the Proposed Development would be likely to give rise to significant adverse effects on both landscape and visual receptors.

Conclusions

7.1.12 The LVIA concluded that temporary significant landscape and visual effects would occur during the construction of the Proposed Development. These effects would be localised in nature and primarily focused upon receptors in closest proximity to the Site. Localised significant landscape and visual effects would continue to occur in the longer term, particularly at close range, where due to the absence of screening the proposed steel lattice towers would form noticeable new elements within the landscape. There would be significant cumulative effects on landscape character types predominantly at the local level and on the SLAs, and views from a small number of transport routes and outdoor visitor locations.

7.2 Introduction

7.2.1 This chapter presents the findings of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed Spittal to Loch Buidhe to Beauly 400 kV OHL Connection (the Proposed Development). The primary aim of the LVIA has been to identify the predicted landscape and visual effects that would be likely to result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development, as described in **Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development**. This includes identification of the potential effects upon views experienced by those living, working, and visiting in the area, as well as those on the wider landscape resource.

7.2.2 This chapter provides a summary of the findings of the LVIAs which have been undertaken to the individual sections, Sections A to E. These sections extend as follows:

- Section A: Spittal to Brora;
- Section B: Brora to Loch Buidhe;
- Section C: Loch Buidhe to Dounie;
- Section D: Dounie to near Strathpeffer
- Section E: Near Strathpeffer to Beauly.

7.2.3 The LVIA has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects, registered with the Landscape Institute. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance provided within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) and the visualisations have been prepared in formats agreed with both THC and NatureScot.

7.2.4 This chapter is supported by the following documents:

- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.1: LVIA Scoping Appraisal;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.2: LVIA Methodology;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.3: Technical Methodologies for Visual Representation;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.4: Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.5: LVIA of Section A Spittal to Brora;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.6: LVIA of Section B Brora to Loch Buidhe;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.7: LVIA of Section C Loch Buidhe to Dounie;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.8: LVIA of Section D Dounie to near Strathpeffer;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.9: LVIA of Section E Near Strathpeffer to Beauly;**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.10: Landscape and Visual Reference List; and**
- **Volume 5, Appendix 7.11: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.**

7.2.5 The LVIA is supported by two sets of visualisations, which apply the principles set out within NatureScot 2017[1] guidelines and THC 2016[2] standards. These are included within **Volume 4a** and **Volume 4b,** respectively. Details on the preparation of visualisations can be found in **Volume 5**, **Appendix 7.3: Technical Methodologies for Visual Representation**.

7.2.6 In addition to the LVIA, a separate Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) has been prepared which describes the extent to which the predicted changes in views experienced by residents at the closest residential properties to the Proposed Development will affect the 'living conditions'. The RVAA is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 7.11: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment**.

7.3 Scope of Assessment and Methodology

Scope of Assessment

7.3.1 The scope of the LVIA has been determined through a combination of professional judgement, reference to the relevant guidance documents and consultation with stakeholders through a formal EIA scoping process and pre-application advice. The LVIA is also based on the formal Scoping Opinion issued by Scottish Ministers in February 2025. In summary, the LVIA considers the potential effects resulting from the temporary construction phase and the long-term/permanent effects resulting from the operational stage of the Proposed Development. The assessment has also included consideration of embedded mitigation measures. A detailed explanation of the process and rationale for scoping of the LVIA is contained within **Volume 5, Appendix 7.1: LVIA Scoping Appraisal**.

7.3.2 In summary, the scope of the LVIA is based upon the following considerations listed below, as agreed through the Scoping process and subsequent consultation with NatureScot and THC:

- Study Area extending to 10 km from the Proposed Development;
- Landscape character assessment, identifying potential effects on Landscape Character Types (LCTs); within the Study Area, with reference to the NatureScot National Landscape Character Assessment;
- Landscape assessment of potential effects on the Special Qualities of designated and/or protected landscapes, specifically the Flow Country and Berriedale Coast Special Landscape Area (SLA), but also the Causeymire – Knockin Flows Wild Land Area (WLA); Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest Wild Land Area (WLA), and Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth Special Landscape Area (SLA);
- Visual assessment giving consideration to views obtained by those living, working, and travelling and undertaking recreation within the Study Area. This includes views from settlement areas, views from promoted recreational routes or vantage points, and views from key transport routes; and
- Cumulative assessment giving consideration to the combined effects with all other proposed power-related infrastructure works within the Study Area (see **Chapter 5: EIA Process and Methodology, Tables 5.2** and **5.3** for cumulative developments assessed).

7.3.3 The LVIA is supported by 94 visualisations that illustrate the predicted appearance of the Proposed Development during operation once landscape reinstatement of disturbed areas has been assumed to be fully established. The locations of the visualisations have been established through consultation with THC and NatureScot in addition to suggestions made by members of the public through the consultation exercises undertaken by the Applicant.

[1] Scottish Natural Heritage. 2017. Visual Representation of Wind Farms. Version 2.2. Visual Representation of Wind Farms.
[2] The Highland Council. 2016. Visualisation Standards for Wind Energy Developments.

7.3.4 The locations of the visualisations are provided in **Table 7.1** and their location relative to the Proposed Development are illustrated on **Volume 3, Figures 7.4a to 7.4n.**

Table 7.1: Viewpoint Locations

Number	Location	Grid Reference		
Viewpoint 7-01	B874	ND	15181	60640
Viewpoint 7-02	Halkirk (B874)	ND	13691	59694
Viewpoint 7-03	A9 (north of Achalone Croft)	ND	15518	57568
Viewpoint 7-04	Calder Mains (B874)	ND	10066	59507
Viewpoint 7-05	A9 (Achalone)	ND	15734	56104
Viewpoint 7-06	B870 (west of Houstry of Dunn)	ND	19903	54616
Viewpoint 7-07	B870 (Newton)	ND	21628	54012
Viewpoint 7-08	Camster Road (south-east of Loch Watten)	ND	25035	53402
Viewpoint 7-09	B870 (Westerdale)	ND	12958	51732
Viewpoint 7-10	A9 (T) Lay-by (Bad a Cheo)	ND	17173	49945
Viewpoint 7-11	A9 (T) Air Crew Memorial	ND	17332	48551
Viewpoint 7-12	A9 (Loch Rangag)	ND	17994	42149
Viewpoint 7-13	A9 (north east of Guidebest)	ND	19064	36124
Viewpoint 7-14	Houstry	ND	15489	34719
Viewpoint 7-15	A9 (T) Laidhay Croft Museum	ND	17409	30602
Viewpoint 7-16	Achorn Road	ND	14542	30128
Viewpoint 7-17	East Scaraben	ND	8088	27282
Viewpoint 7-18	A9 (T) Berriedale Braes	ND	12046	22746
Viewpoint 7-19	A9 (T) south-west of Berriedale	ND	10695	21802
Viewpoint 7-20	Langwell	ND	9874	22280
Viewpoint 7-21	A9 (T) Badbea Historical Village	ND	8549	20388
Viewpoint 7-22	Badbea	ND	8001	20005
Viewpoint 7-23	Ousdale	ND	7148	20236
Viewpoint 7-24	Creag Thoraraidh	ND	3778	18923
Viewpoint 7-25	A897 (Caen)	ND	1913	17581
Viewpoint 7-26	Marrel	ND	1702	17311
Viewpoint 7-27	A897 (East of Kilphedir)	ND	210	18087
Viewpoint 7-28	Helmsdale	ND	2619	15199
Viewpoint 7-29	Glen Loth (north)	NC	93961	16475
Viewpoint 7-30	Glen Loth (south)	NC	93394	13764
Viewpoint 7-31	A9 (T) Greenhill	NC	91305	6395
Viewpoint 7-32	East Brora	NC	89819	4360

Number	Location	Grid Reference		
Viewpoint 7-33	A9 (T) Brora	ND	90109	3641
Viewpoint 7-34	A9 (T) Inverbrora	ND	89697	3203
Viewpoint 7-35	South of Killin	NC	85564	6786
Viewpoint 7-36	Loch Brora	ND	85620	7781
Viewpoint 7-37	Balnacoil	ND	82572	10781
Viewpoint 7-38	Dunrobin Castle	NC	85025	883
Viewpoint 7-39	Ben Bhraggie	NC	81076	1006
Viewpoint 7-40	A839 Rogart	NC	73472	1374
Viewpoint 7-41	An Droighneach	NC	72042	890
Viewpoint 7-42	Little Torboll	NH	75600	98485
Viewpoint 7-43	A9 (T) Loch Fleet	NH	77475	98163
Viewpoint 7-44	Loch Fleet	NH	78892	96852
Viewpoint 7-45	Skelbo Castle	NH	79278	95352
Viewpoint 7-46	Loch Laro	NH	60436	99676
Viewpoint 7-47	A837 (near Inveran)	NH	56765	97590
Viewpoint 7-48	A837 Invershin Cemetery	NH	57604	97153
Viewpoint 7-49	Inveroykel Culrain Road	NH	56793	96426
Viewpoint 7-50	A837 Invershin	NH	57751	96192
Viewpoint 7-51	Carbisdale Castle	NH	57409	95482
Viewpoint 7-52	A836 (west of Balblair)	NH	58237	94557
Viewpoint 7-53	Lower Hilton	NH	56906	93829
Viewpoint 7-54	Clashcoig (Lochbuidhe Road)	NH	64064	94325
Viewpoint 7-55	Airdens	NH	62333	93766
Viewpoint 7-56	Bonar Bridge	NH	60932	91541
Viewpoint 7-57	A949 (south of Swordale)	NH	61899	90222
Viewpoint 7-58	A949 Little Creich	NH	63549	89310
Viewpoint 7-59	A836 Kincardine	NH	60583	89387
Viewpoint 7-60	Gruinards (west of Dounie)	NH	55112	90711
Viewpoint 7-61	Strath Rusdale	NH	58903	75388
Viewpoint 7-62	Ardross (north)	NH	61948	74873
Viewpoint 7-63	Ardross Distillery	NH	60859	74557
Viewpoint 7-64	Ardross (east)	NH	62730	73926
Viewpoint 7-65	Boath	NH	57208	74148
Viewpoint 7-66	Loch Glass	NH	52402	70877
Viewpoint 7-67	Ben Wyvis	NH	49838	71132

Number	Location	Grid Reference		
Viewpoint 7-68	Redburn	NH	57034	67052
Viewpoint 7-69	Evanton (west)	NH	59031	66024
Viewpoint 7-70	Milton Lodge	NH	56080	65606
Viewpoint 7-71	A9 northbound at Duncanston	NH	59047	58042
Viewpoint 7-72	Heights of Brae	NH	52506	61303
Viewpoint 7-73	Neil Gunn Memorial	NH	51927	61022
Viewpoint 7-74	Heights of Inchvannie	NH	49882	60271
Viewpoint 7-75	Knockfarrel	NH	50535	58546
Viewpoint 7-76	Loch Kinellan	NH	47223	57657
Viewpoint 7-77	View Rock, Contin	NH	46153	57365
Viewpoint 7-78	Jamestown	NH	48408	56531
Viewpoint 7-79	A834 (southwest of Jamestown)	NH	46974	55856
Viewpoint 7-80	A834 (east of Contin)	NH	46513	55758
Viewpoint 7-81	A835 (south-east of Contin)	NH	46475	55329
Viewpoint 7-82	Moy Rock	NH	49896	54775
Viewpoint 7-83	Marybank Road	NH	48151	54314
Viewpoint 7-84	Achonochie Road (west of Marybank)	NH	47515	53801
Viewpoint 7-85	Fairburn Drive (west)	NH	46989	53071
Viewpoint 7-86	Fairburn Drive (east)	NH	47414	53043
Viewpoint 7-87	Aultgowrie	NH	47645	51560
Viewpoint 7-88	Muir of Ord	NH	51427	50680
Viewpoint 7-89	Cnoc Croit	NH	49182	49205
Viewpoint 7-90	A831	NH	46993	42807
Viewpoint 7-91	Kiltarlity	NH	50156	41427
Viewpoint 7-92	Femnock	NH	49871	40606
Viewpoint 7-93	Rhevackin	NH	52058	39671
Viewpoint 7-94	Teavarran	NH	52962	37904

7.3.5 The visualisations have been produced to support the LVIA work and are intended to show the appearance of the Proposed Development within the landscape setting and how it would be likely to appear in views experienced by people. The visual assessment has been undertaken as a receptor-based assessment (giving consideration to all potential visual receptors) rather than a 'single point', viewpoint-based assessment. In this regard, the visualisation locations do not comprise specific viewpoints for visual assessment and a viewpoint based assessment has not been undertaken.

7.3.6 Two sets of visualisations have been produced, which apply the principles set out within NatureScot's 2017[3] guidelines and The Highland Council (THC) 2016[4] standards. These are included within **Volume 4a** and **Volume 4b,** respectively. Further detail on the preparation of visualisations can be found in **Volume 5**, **Appendix 7.3: Technical Methodologies for Visual Representation**.

Methodology

7.3.7 The LVIA considers the two separate subjects of landscape and visual amenity as follows:

- The landscape assessment has considered the potential effects resulting from the Proposed Development on landscape character, designated and protected landscapes.
- The visual assessment has considered the potential effects resulting from the Proposed Development on the views and visual amenity of people present within the landscape, including established views from residential areas, transport routes and outdoor locations where appreciation of the view is considered a component of the experience/location.

7.3.8 The LVIA has been carried out on a section-by-section basis (Sections A to E provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 7.5 to Appendix 7.9**). However, the LVIA also gives consideration to the potential for cumulative effects between Sections of the Proposed Development, along with other related developments (including the proposed substations at Banniskirk, Carnaig and Fanellan) which are the subject of separate planning applications.

7.3.9 Further consideration of cumulative effects with other unrelated, proposed electrical infrastructure developments (including wind farm proposals and other proposed OHL and substation developments) has also been undertaken where relevant.

7.3.10 The detailed methodology to the LVIA is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 7.2: LVIA Methodology**. This methodology is based on current best practice provided within GLVIA3, which identifies five key stages:

- Understanding the Proposed Development;
- Establishment of the baseline;
- Identification of key landscape and visual receptors;
- Recognition of potential effects; and
- Assessment of the significance of effects.

7.3.11 In undertaking the LVIA, the assessment has also drawn from other published guidance and relevant baseline information listed below:

- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance[5];
- Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas - Technical Guidance[6];
- Technical Guidance Note 02/21 Assessing landscape Value Outside National Designations[7];
- Technical Guidance Note 6/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals[8];

[3] Scottish Natural Heritage. 2017. Visual Representation of Wind Farms. Version 2.2. Visual Representation of Wind Farms.
[4] The Highland Council. 2016. Visualisation Standards for Wind Energy Developments.
[5] NatureScot. 2022. Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance.
[6] NatureScot. 2020. Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas - Technical Guidance.
[7] Landscape Institute. 2021. Technical Guidance Note 02/21 Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations.
[8] Landscape Institute. Technical Guidance Note 6/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals.

- National Landscape Character Assessment (web-based interactive map)[9];
- The Special Qualities of the National Scenic Areas (Commissioned Report No.374)[10];
- Wild Land Areas Map and Descriptions[11];
- Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes[12];
- Wildness in Scotland's Countryside[13];
- Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas[14];
- Ordnance Survey Land ranger (1:50 000) and Explorer (1:25 000) maps;
- Aerial photography; and
- Site survey (to review landscape character, potential visibility and obtain viewpoint photography, undertaken throughout 2024).

7.3.12 Landscape and visual assessments are separate, though linked, procedures. In both cases the significance of effect is based upon the correlation between the impact magnitude (i.e. High, Medium, Low, or Negligible) and the sensitivity of the receptor (i.e. High, Medium, Low or Negligible), which are summarised below.

7.3.13 Where relevant, effects ratings are provided for two stages of the Proposed Development:

- During construction; and
- During operation (assumed to be approximately 10 years after completion when landscape / habitat reinstatement, restocking of felled forestry and any mitigation planting (if proposed) has begun to establish and provide screening/mitigation).

Landscape Sensitivity and Impact Magnitude

7.3.14 The sensitivity of the landscape to a particular development considers the susceptibility of the landscape and its value. This is assessed by taking into account the existing landscape characteristics, markers signifying value such as designations, and landscape capacity to accommodate change, which often vary depending on the type of development proposed and the particular site location. As such, sensitivity needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7.3.15 The impact magnitude arising from the Proposed Development at any location is based on the interpretation of a combination of quantifiable elements, as follows:

- the loss or alteration to key landscape features / elements or characteristics;
- distance from the Proposed Development;
- duration of effect;
- landscape context of the Proposed Development, including other nearby development or scale features.

Visual Sensitivity and Impact Magnitude

7.3.16 The sensitivity of visual receptors is based on a combination of how susceptible the viewer is to potential change as a result of the Proposed Development, and the value of the existing views. Residents are usually

[9] NatureScot. 2019. National Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland.
[10] NatureScot. 2010. The Special Qualities of the National Scenic Areas (Commissioned Report No.374).
[11] NatureScot. 2014. Wild Land Areas Map and Descriptions.
[12] Historic Environment Scotland. 2021. Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes.
[13] NatureScot. 2022. Wildness in Scotland's Countryside, SNH Policy Statement 02/03.
[14] The Highland Council. 2011. Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas.

regarded as the highest susceptibility group, as well as those engaged in outdoor pursuits for whom landscape experience is the primary objective. The susceptibility of potential visual receptors varies depending on the activity of the receptor. The value attributed to views varies depending on the nature, location and context of the view and the recognised importance of the view.

7.3.17 The impact magnitude arising from the Proposed Development at any particular viewpoint is based on the following elements:

- distance of view from the Proposed Development;
- duration of effect;
- extent of the Proposed Development in the view;
- angle of view in relation to main receptor activity;
- proportion of the view occupied by the Proposed Development;
- background to the Proposed Development; and
- extent of other built development visible, particularly vertical elements.

Significance of Effect

7.3.18 GLVIA3 places a strong emphasis on the importance of professional judgement in identifying and defining the significance of landscape and visual effects. Accordingly, professional judgement has been used in combination with the criteria outlined above to evaluate landscape and visual sensitivity, impact magnitude, and significance of effect. The assessment has been undertaken and verified by Chartered Landscape Architects to provide a robust and consistent approach.

7.3.19 For the purposes of this assessment, the significance of effect is based on a four-point scale (i.e. Major, Moderate, Minor, or Negligible). Details on the criteria for these ratings are provided in **Table 7.7** of **Volume 5, Appendix 7.2: LVIA Methodology**. These ratings represent points on a continuum and therefore, where relevant, interim ratings may be applied (i.e. Minor to Moderate). For the purposes of the EIA Regulations[15], in this assessment an effect rating of Moderate or greater is considered to be significant.

7.4 Assumptions and Limitations

7.4.1 Details of the Assumptions and Limitations applied to the LVIA are provided in **Section 1.16** of **Volume 5, Appendix 7.2: LVIA Methodology**. The assumptions and limitations applied in the LVIA of the Proposed Development include:

- the Proposed Development would be permanent;
- the construction stage would be temporary, approximately 48 months in duration; and
- the LVIA has assessed the design heights of the proposed towers and their location as per the tower schedule provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 3.1: Indicative Tower Schedule**. Variations in tower heights and deviations of the final alignment may occur at certain tower locations to account for undulations in the surrounding topography, and to align with best practices. Accordingly, the LVIA accounts for a vertical LoD of +/- 9 m with the proposed towers heights and locations detailed in **Volume 5, Appendix 3.1: Indicative Tower Schedule**.

- A horizontal LoD of up to 100 m in most cases, where necessary to avoid or minimise environmental impact while remaining consistent with wayleave boundaries. It is also recognised that the horizontal LoD would be less than 50 m along some sections of the Proposed Alignment.
- The LVIA is undertaken on the assumption that the Proposed Development would be experienced in clear visibility and the assessment is carried out on that basis. Where appropriate, comment is made in relation to lighting and weather conditions, including visibility in winter months during periods of seasonal leaf-fall.
- The LVIA draws on field observations from publicly accessible locations. Accordingly, the assessment of effects at individual residential properties has been undertaken from publicly accessible locations within closest proximity to the dwelling to ensure appropriate representation of potential views, unless stated otherwise where access was granted by the property owner.
- The assessment of operational effects assumes that areas disturbed but not required for the operation of the Proposed Development—such as temporary tracks, laydown and compound areas, and excavations for tower foundations—would be successfully reinstated to reflect, as closely as possible, similar vegetation types and appearance to those present prior to construction. It is important to note that these vegetation types may not necessarily comprise habitat types and values identical to those that were previously present.
- The data used in the completion of the LVIA has some inherent limitations regarding data tolerances and levels of accuracy; however, these limitations have been factored into the assessment.

7.4.2 No further limitations and assumptions specific to the Landscape and Visual Assessment have been identified or made.

7.5 Baseline Conditions: Landscape

General

7.5.1 The Proposed Development, crossing from Spittal to Beauly, would pass through a wide range of landscapes characterised by mountain glens, inland and coastal loch-shores, and moorland, interspersed with areas of forest and settled croftland and glens. A detailed description of the baseline landscape character for each Section of the Proposed Development is provided within Part 1.3 of the Section specific LVIAs (**Volume 5, Appendix 7.5 to 7.9**). An overview of the baseline landscape character of each Section is provided below:

Section A: Spittal to Brora

7.5.2 Between Spittal and Brora the Proposed Development would traverse a diverse range of landscapes in the north-east of Scotland. From the north to the south the Proposed Development runs from Spittal across broad peatland landscapes following the route of the existing 132 kV line towards Latheronwheel and then extends south-west across the rolling moorland hills above the coastal shelf between Dunbeath and Beinn Lunndaidh. The extent of views across the landscape reflects the change in landform, the openness of the landscape in the north affording expansive views across the Flow Country west of the A9(T) and the Proposed Development to the east, views becoming confined where the landscape exhibits a greater sense of enclosure and becomes more undulating in nature. Built form and settlement is largely limited to scattered individual properties close to road infrastructure in the north and to the coastal shelf and narrow glens in the south.

Section B: Brora to Loch Buidhe

7.5.3 Between Brora and Loch Buidhe the Proposed Development would extend from the hills north of Brora in the east to Loch Buidhe in the west. The Section traverses LCTs relating to strath and upland landscapes (**see Volume 3, Figure 7.3**), exhibiting a distinct contrast between the vast open moorlands and the incised valleys of the lochs and river catchments through which it passes. The moorlands are sparsely settled with limited

access and are often associated with sheep grazing, shooting estates and/or windfarm developments. This contrasts with the river valleys and coastal areas with which settlements (for example Brora) and transportation links (for example the A9(T)) are largely concentrated. To the east the coastal plain includes the river estuaries and large areas of managed farmland interspersed by larger coastal settlements.

Section C: Loch Buidhe to Dounie

7.5.4 Between Loch Buidhe and Dounie the Proposed Development would extend in an arc through the uplands to the west of the Dornoch Firth. The hill summits and plateaux are characterised by open swathes of moorland and large areas of forestry. Built form and settlement is limited to very localised areas, coinciding with the lower-lying straths that extend through the hills. Within these sheltered river valleys, the landscape exhibits a greater sense of enclosure. The water courses extending along the strath floor form a key focal point, typically abutted by areas of wetland and rough pasture, as well as parcels of woodland and localised tree cover.

Section D: Dounie to Near Strathpeffer

7.5.5 Between Dounie and Strathpeffer the Proposed Development would extend north-south across the rolling landform between Strathcarron in the north (where it adjoins Section C) and the hillside above the Peffery Burn in the south (where it adjoins Section E). The local landscape comprises a series of slopes and summits that are characterised by open swathes of moorland and large areas of forestry. In addition, the alignment extends across a number of enclosed river valleys and wider straths, including Glen Glass. Built form and settlement is limited, and predominantly focused across the lower-lying agricultural landscape to the east. In addition, there are localised elements of large-scale infrastructure, including Novar Wind Farm to the west of the Section D alignment, and Beinn Tharsuinn Wind Farm to the east, as well as existing OHLs.

Section E: Near Strathpeffer to Beauly

7.5.6 Between Strathpeffer and Beauly the Proposed Development would be located inland from the Beauly Firth, extending from the Peffery Burn in the north, to Fanellan in the south. The landscape is characterised by areas of farmland within the lower-lying strath at the northern end of the alignment, which transitions to areas of forestry on the adjoining slopes, and areas of open moorland across the more elevated plateau further south. At its southern end, the Section E alignment transitions back down towards lower-lying farmland, through areas of forestry and woodland. Built form comprises scattered dwellings and farmsteads within lower-lying areas, as well as localised infrastructure elements on the elevated hillsides and summits, including transmission masts and wind turbines. In addition, existing 132 kV OHLs extend through the local landscape at the southern end of Section E.

Landscape Designations and Protected Landscapes

7.5.7 Landscapes recognised for their natural beauty and scenic appeal may be designated at an international, national, or regional / local level, and are typically subject to protection by planning policy. Landscape designations are considered in the determination of the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors as they provide an indication of value ascribed to the landscape or visual resource.

7.5.8 Designated or protected landscapes which have been identified for inclusion within the assessment for the Proposed Development, as agreed with THC and NatureScot, are listed in Table 7.2and are illustrated on **Volume 3, Figure 7.2**. The rationale for those which have been identified for inclusion within the assessment and others which have been Scoped out is included in **Table 2** of **Volume 5, Appendix 7.1: LVIA Scoping Appraisal**.

Table 7.2: Designated and Protected Landscapes Identified for Inclusion in the LVIA

Section	Designated Landscapes through which the Proposed Development would Pass		Designated Landscapes within the Wider Study Area	
	National Context	Regional/Local Context	National Context	Regional/Local Context
A	Causeymire – Knockin Flows WLA.	The Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA	Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest WLA	None
B	None	Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA	Ben Kilbreck- Armine Forest WLA	None
C	None	None	Dornoch Firth NSA Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA	Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA
D	None	None	Dornoch Firth NSA Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA	Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA Ben Wyvis SLA
E	None	None	Glen Strathfarrar NSA Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA Central Highlands WLA	Ben Wyvis SLA Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA

7.5.9 A detailed description of the landscape designations included within the assessment can be found in **Volume 5**, **Appendix 7.4: Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes.**

National Scenic Areas

Dornoch Firth NSA

7.5.10 The Dornoch Firth NSA is located approximately 4.0 km to the east of the Proposed Development within Section D, and 4.5 km south-east of the Proposed Development within Section C. This encompasses the linear landscape along the Firth, which is enclosed by rounded hills with a ground cover consisting primarily of heather moor and scree. The lower slopes incorporate areas of woodland and plantation forestry, as well as areas of pasture and arable farmland. The coastal landscape is characterised by a series of bays, sandy beaches, flats, shallows and promontories.

Glen Strathfarrar NSA

7.5.11 The Glen Strathfarrar NSA is located approximately 7.9 km south-west of the Proposed Development within Section E. This encompasses a long, steep-sided glen, extending east-west and focused on Loch Beannacharan and the River Farrar. The strath drops eastwards, from high mountains to the west, towards the Culligran Falls and lower strath in the east. The glen sides incorporate extensive natural pine woodland.

Wild Land Areas

Causeymire – Knockin Flows WLA

7.5.12 The Causeymire – Knockfin Flows WLA covers an area of c. 514 km^2 of southern Caithness and the eastern fringes of Sutherland. The WLA extends across the peatlands between Forsinard in the north, Causeymire in

the east, the Strath of Kildonan in the west, and Braemore and the hills above Helmsdale in the south. A small portion of this WLA intersects with the Proposed Development in the rolling hills to the north of Helmsdale. The WLA is largely uninhabited except for a small number of isolated estate houses. The peatlands present challenging terrain however a number of tracks and paths provide access into the WLA and are popular with hillwalkers seeking to attain the summits of Maiden Pap, Morven and Scaraben. Settlement and roads surround the WLA on its west, south and eastern edges; however, views are only clearly experienced into the WLA from elevated sections of the A9(T) at Causeymire, the minor roads to Strathmore and Braemore, and the Far North railway line. This is because rising slopes tend to screen inward views from other locations.

Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest WLA

7.5.13 The Ben Klibreck- Armine Forest Wild Land Area covers an area of approximately 530 km^2 across central Sutherland between the settlements of Lairg, Altnaharra and Kinbrace. The Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest WLA extends into a small portion of the Study Area for Section A, covering the peak of Cnoc Meadhonach and Coir an Eoin. This WLA is defined by its vast, simple landform, dominated by extensive peatland and rolling hills that reinforce a strong sense of solitude and exposure. Dramatic, isolated mountains, including Ben Klibreck and the surrounding hills of Loch Choire, serve as striking focal points, contrasting sharply with the low-lying peatland and highlighting the landscape's remote and untamed nature. Access to the area is challenging, requiring navigation through rugged terrain with few established paths. Sparse human activity contributes to the landscape's strong sense of tranquillity, with only a few isolated buildings used for deer stalking and fishing.

Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA

7.5.14 The Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA extends between Ullapool in the north-west to the mountain of Ben Wyvis in the south-east, 450 m to the west of the Proposed Development within Section D, and 6.1 km north-west of the Proposed Development within Section E. It encompasses a complex composition of high and steep mountains within the central section, which transitions to cnocan and open peatland hills in the north, and rounded hills and plateaux in the south. The challenging terrain and quiet, uninhabited glens create a sense of isolation and wildness, albeit there are some isolated estate buildings and forestry activity on the outer edges. The area is primarily used for deer stalking, fishing and hydro-electric generation, as well as hill walking. It is also enjoyed in views from adjoining areas.

Central Highlands WLA

7.5.15 The Central Highlands WLA encompasses a very large area of mountains, peatlands and glens, 2.3 km to the west of the Proposed Development within Section E. The area is largely uninhabited and used mainly for deer stalking and fishing, although there are hydro-electric reservoirs and forest plantations around the margins. The area also attracts recreational visitors, with Kintail, Glen Affric and Glen Strathfarrar tending to attract the highest number. It is typically experienced in views from outside its edges, including along the A890, A887 and A87 main roads and the Dingwall to Kyle railway.

Special Landscape Areas

The Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA

7.5.16 The Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA extends to an area of 363 km^2. The majority of the Flow Country and Berriedale Coast falling within the Study Area to Section A lies in the southern portion of the Study Area, between Berriedale and Badbea. The SLA is defined by its vast peatlands and low horizons in the north. These crate a wild and remote atmosphere further reinforced by limited accessibility. Isolated mountains, marked by exposed rock formations and montane vegetation, offer dramatic views of both the Flow Country and the open sea. In the south, moorland foothills above the coastal shelf introduce diverse focal points,

including scattered lochs and meandering watercourses. Settlements are primarily located in sheltered glens and coastal regions, where the landscape transitions from open moorland to more enclosed and habitable areas and the coastal shelf.

Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA

7.5.17 The Loch Fleet, Loch Brora, and Glen Loth SLA covers an area of approximately 210 km² of rolling hills along the east coast of Sutherland, stretching from the southern slopes of Strath Ullie in the north to Loch Fleet in the south. Sections A and B of the Proposed Development traverse this SLA for a combined distance of c.30.4 km, crossing a landscape defined by rolling moorland hills, punctuated by a series of south-east orientated glens, straths and lochs, and edged by a narrow strip of farmed coastal.

7.5.18 The SLA encompasses a diverse range of landscapes, including straths and glens that provide natural corridors between the interior hills and the coastline. These areas are enriched with native woodlands and water bodies that reinforce their scenic and ecological value. To the east, the narrow coastal shelf accommodates roads, rail routes, small farms, and settlements. This area features a distinctive field pattern of pasture enclosed by trees and stone walls, forming a contrast with the open moorland beyond. The adjacent hill slopes define the coastal shelf, offering expansive views along the coastline and across the open sea.

7.5.19 While modern infrastructure, including wind turbines and electricity lines, subtly influences the landscape, these elements do not dominate its overall character. Historic built features, such as traditional farms and estate structures, remain prominent visual landmarks, reinforcing the heritage value of the SLA.

Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA

7.5.20 The Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA covers an extensive area of mountains and moorland between Loch Glascarnoch and the head of Loch Broom, 6.4 km to the west of the Proposed Development within Section D, and 8.1 km south-west of the Proposed Development within Section C. This encompasses a combination of rugged terrain, high summits enclosing sheltered glens with plantation and native woodland, as well as upland lochans. There is very limited habitation and access, which combine to create a sense of remoteness and solitude. The peaks and ridges in the northern and eastern parts of the SLA are characterised by more extensive areas of gentle slopes and high plateau summits.

Ben Wyvis SLA

7.5.21 This SLA covers the summit and foothills of Ben Wyvis, 2.6 km to the west of the Proposed Development within Section D, and 2.6 km to the north-west of the Proposed Development within Section E. The area comprises ridges and corries, often snow-capped. Its bulk and profile make it stand out as a distinct landmark that is separate to the main mountain areas located further north and west. As such, it contributes to, and forms a backdrop to, views along the Moray Firth. Outward views from the summit incorporate varied elements, including large areas of arable land, as well as the industrial port at Invergordon, and drilling rigs within the Cromarty Firth. The SLA excludes the lower slopes of Ben Wyvis, which are characterised by commercial plantation operations.

Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA

7.5.22 The Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA covers an extensive area of remote interior hills between Strathconon, Glen Strathfarrar and Glen Cannich. At its closest point, it is located 9.2 km south-west of the Proposed Development within Section E. The area includes large scale open mountain ridges and deep sinuous glens with smaller scale birch and pine woods, rivers and waterbodies, which results in strongly contrasting scenery. The limited extent of habitation and access means that the area is typically viewed by a small number of residents, estate workers and recreational visitors.

Landscape Character

7.5.23 'Landscape' as defined by the European Landscape Convention is an area, as perceived by people, whose visual features and character are the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. Landscape Character is created by the way the physical components of the landscape come together in such a way that an area can be defined as being "*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another*".

7.5.24 Although landscape character is also about experience and sense of place it is not about opinions or judgements on whether one landscape is considered better or worse than another. Landscape Character Assessment identifies, describes and maps variation in landscape character in a systematic way.

7.5.25 For the purposes of this assessment, Landscape Character units have been identified following review of NatureScot's Landscape Character Assessment prepared in 2019. This assessment identified Landscape Character Types (LCT's) across Scotland. A description and assessment of the Landscape character types identified to each section of the Proposed Development is provided in **Volume 5, Appendix 7.4: Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes**. The location and extent of Landscape Character Types within the Study Area to the Proposed Development is provided in **Volume 3**, **Figure 7.3: Landscape Character**.

7.5.26 A list of the LCT's which would be directly affected by the Proposed Development (shaded in dark blue) are listed in **Table 7.3** below.

Table 7.3: Landscape Character Types Transected by the Proposed Development

LCT	Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
134 – Sweeping Moorland and Flows					
135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland					
142 - Strath - Caithness & Sutherland					
143 – Farmed Lowland Plain					
144 – Coastal Crofts & Small Farms					
139 – Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness & Sutherland					
330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes - Ross & Cromarty					
341 – Forest Edge Farming					
335 – Wooded Glens and Rocky Moorland					
345 – Farmed and Forested Slopes - Ross & Cromarty					
346 – Open Farmed Slopes					
342 – Farmed River Plains					
331 – Rounded Rocky Hills – Ross & Cromarty					
220 – Rugged Massif – Inverness					
227 – Farmed Strath – Inverness					
229 – Enclosed Farmland					

7.5.27 In addition to the direct effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character, the Proposed Development would be likely to result in indirect effects on LCTs where visibility of the Proposed Development from the LCT would potentially result in a perceived change.

7.5.28 A list of the LCT's which would be indirectly affected by the Proposed Development, where there would potentially be views only of the Proposed Development from the LCT, are listed in **Table 7.4** below.

Table 7.4: Landscape Character Types indirectly affected by the Proposed Development

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
138 – Lone Mountains LCT;	134 – Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness & Sutherland LCT;	139 – Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness & Sutherland LCT;	335 – Wooded Glens and Rocky Moorland LCT;	329 – Rounded Mountain Massif LCT;
140 – Sandy Beaches and Dunes LCT;	145 – Farmed and Forested Slopes with Crofting LCT; and	145 – Farmed and Forested Slopes with Crofting LCT;	345 – Farmed and Forested Slopes - Ross & Cromarty LCT;	340 – Strath - Ross & Cromarty LCT;
141 – High Cliffs and Sheltered Bays LCT; and	146– Coastal Farmlands and Woodlands.	330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes - Ross & Cromarty LCT;	145 – Farmed and Forested Slopes with Crofting LCT;	347 – Open Steep Farmed Slopes LCT;
146 – Coastal Farmland and Woodlands LCT.		329 – Rounded Mountain Massif LCT; and	329 – Rounded Mountain Massif LCT;	339 – Inland Strath LCT;
		146 – Coastal Farmland & Woodlands LCT.	347 – Open Steep Farmed Slopes LCT;	328 – Rugged Mountain Massif - Ross & Cromarty LCT;
			346 – Open Farmed Slopes LCT;	226 – Wooded Glen – Inverness LCT;
			331 – Rounded Rocky Hills - Ross & Cromarty LCT;	228 – Rolling Farmland and Woodland LCT; and
			340 – Strath - Ross & Cromarty LCT;	222 – Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness LCT.
			339 – Inland Strath LCT; and	
			342 – Farmed River Plains LCT.	

7.5.29 Descriptions of these LCTs, including their key characteristics are included within **Volume 5, Appendices 7.5 – 7.9**

7.6 Baseline Conditions: Views and Visual Amenity

Interpretation of the ZTV

General

7.6.1 The ZTVs illustrating the predicted visibility of the Proposed Development are provided in **Volume 3, Figure 7.1(a)-(g)**: **Zone of Theoretical Visibility**. A description of the predicted visibility of the Proposed Development on a section-by-section basis is provided below. It should be noted that the ZTVs provide an indication of where the Proposed Development might be visible from but not necessarily where it will definitively be visible from due to limitations of the data used to prepare the visibility mapping.

Theoretical Visibility between Spittal and Brora (Section A)

7.6.2 Between Spittal and Brora ZTV coverage within a 5 km radius of the Proposed Development is predicted to be relatively extensive, However, it would become more fragmented in the southern part of the Section A alignment due to the transition from otherwise open moorland in the north to undulating terrain and the peaks and rolling hills in the south. Theoretical visibility of a high proportion of the proposed steel lattice towers is primarily concentrated within the open, flatter landscape between Loch of Toftingall and Rumster Forest. This area is largely defined by areas of expansive peatland to the west of the A9(T) and a mix of farmland, forestry, and moorland to the south. The openness of the peatlands conveys a strong sense of remoteness and wilderness, with an open, unobstructed skyline that increases visual exposure.

7.6.3 Beyond the remote, wilderness areas, destinations frequently visited by receptors would experience varying degrees of visibility of the proposed towers across the Study Area. Most of these locations are publicly accessible and situated close to the A9(T) or other key transport routes. Popular hillwalking destinations, such as Maiden Pap, Scaraben, and Morven, would be subject to relatively greater visibility due to their elevated positions, which increase exposure to views of the Proposed Development.

7.6.4 Lesser numbers of towers are predicted to be visible for receptors across the lower-lying coastal shelves, rolling hills, and straths. Additionally, there are large areas of ZTV coverage in close proximity to the towers that coincide with blankets of forestry plantations, which would lessen the overall availability of views. At distances beyond the 5 km Study Area, ZTV coverage becomes increasingly fragmented, particularly to the west and south-west, where the Proposed Development would be intermittently discernible or imperceptible across the broader landscape.

Theoretical Visibility between Brora and Loch Buidhe (Section B)

7.6.5 ZTV coverage is relatively widespread within 5 km of the Proposed Development between Brora and Loch Buidhe, albeit is more fragmented across northern and eastern areas. Theoretical visibility of greater numbers of steel lattice towers is typically focused across the more elevated slopes and summits, including Col-Bheinn, Ben Horn, Ben Lunndaidh and to the east of Loch Buidhe Lesser numbers of towers would typically be visible for receptors within lower-lying areas, including the River Brora and River Fleet valleys. Large areas of ZTV coverage in closest proximity to the towers coincide with blanket forestry that would influence the overall availability of views.

7.6.6 At distances beyond 5 km, ZTV coverage is predicted to become increasingly fragmented, particularly towards the north and north-west. Within these areas, potential views of the Proposed Development would be limited to localised summits and typically comprise a lesser number of towers.

Theoretical Visibility between Loch Buidhe and Dounie (Section C)

7.6.7 Between Loch Buidhe and ZTV coverage is predicted to be relatively widespread within 5 km of the Proposed Development, albeit it would be more fragmented across northern and eastern areas. Theoretical visibility of greater numbers of steel lattice towers is typically focused across the more elevated slopes and summits, including Meall Eachainn, Sron Ach a' Bhacaidh and Cnoc Breac in the north, Coire as Airde and Breac-Bheinn to the west, and Carn Salachaidh / Carn Bhrain to the south. Lesser numbers of towers would typically be visible for receptors within lower-lying areas, including the Dornoch Firth (in particular the southern side), and the adjoining straths at Kyle of Sutherland and Strathcarron. Large areas of ZTV coverage in closest proximity to the towers coincide with blanket forestry that would influence the overall availability of views.

7.6.8 At distances beyond 5 km, ZTV coverage of towers within Section C is predicted to become increasingly fragmented, particularly towards the north and south-west. Within these areas, potential views of the Proposed Development would be limited to localised summits, and typically comprise a lesser number of towers.

Theoretical Visibility between Dounie and Near Strathpeffer (Section D)

7.6.9 Between Dounie and Strathpeffer, ZTV coverage is relatively widespread within approximately 5 km of the Proposed Development. Theoretical visibility of greater numbers of steel lattice towers is focused on the raised ridge at Cnoc Ceislsin (which reaches 523 m AOD) and Cnoc an t-Sithean Mor (at 659 m AOD).

7.6.10 At distances beyond 5 km, ZTV coverage is typically more fragmented, particularly towards the west, which coincides with more mountainous landscape. Across these areas, views of the Section D alignment would be subject to screening by intervening ridges and summits. Theoretical visibility of greater numbers of steel lattice towers is typically focused across the more elevated slopes and at Glas Leathad Beag / Meall Nam Bradan Leathan, Ben Wyvis, and Little Wyvis. Conversely, the Proposed Development would be screened from the lower-lying valleys and glens.

7.6.11 Within the southern part of the Study Area, ZTV coverage remains relatively consistent at greater distance from the Proposed Development, reflecting potential long-distance views towards the Section D alignment from the Black Isle, across the open water of the Cromarty Firth.

Theoretical Visibility between Near Strathpeffer and Beauly (Section E)

7.6.12 Between Strathpeffer and Beauly, ZTV coverage is predicted to be relatively widespread within 5 km of the Proposed Development. However, potential views of the towers within the Section E alignment within this corridor would be restricted by areas of established woodland and forestry.

7.6.13 At distances beyond 5 km, there would continue to be views of the Proposed Development from areas of higher ground to the east. However, ZTV coverage is increasingly fragmented towards to the west, and is completely absent across areas of lower-lying ground. Accordingly, across more distant western parts of the Study Area between Strathpeffer and Beauly, potential views of the Proposed Development would be limited to localised summits and easterly-facing slopes, and typically comprise a lesser number of towers.

Visual Receptors

7.6.14 The visual baseline set out below draws from Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs, ZTV maps and field survey. The key visual receptors considered in this LVIA comprise:

- residents within settlements and isolated dwellings in closest proximity to the Proposed Development;
- road users / passengers on key transport routes, comprising A-roads, B-roads and rail lines;

- tourists visiting cultural heritage locations / outdoor locations where enjoyment of the view is one of the principal reasons for being at the location; and
- walkers / cyclists on promoted long-range recreational trails, Core Paths and national cycleways.

7.6.15 The following section identifies visual receptors within the Study Area that would experience potential views of the Proposed Development. Where distances to the Proposed Development are noted, these distances are measured from the visual receptor to the closest tower location. Although the OHLs would also be visible, the towers would constitute the largest and most visually prominent elements of the Proposed Development and would be visible from greater distances.

7.6.16 Visual receptors are described in greater detail within **Volume 5, Appendices 7.5 to 7.9**. Their locations are illustrated in **Volume 3, Figure 7.4: Visual Receptors**. A list of the settlements from which views of the Proposed Development would be experienced is provided in **Table 7.5.** A list of residential properties falling within 200 m of the Proposed Development from which views of the Proposed Development would be experienced is provided in **Table 7.6.** Transport routes and recreational routes (including core paths) are listed in **Table 7.7** and **Table 7.8,** and public outdoor locations from which views of the Proposed Development would be experienced are listed in **Table 7.9**.

Table 7.5: Settlements with views of the Proposed Development

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
Crofting township at Smerral (SA-06)	Gordonbush / Old Town (SB-1)	Culrain (SC-1)	Strathpeffer (SD-10)	Jamestown (SE-20)
Badbagie (SA-07)	Morvich (SB-5), 1 km to the west;	Lower Gledfield (SC-2)	Swordale (SD-11), 2.4 km to the east;	Contin (SE-21)
Borgue (SA-09)	East Kinnauld (SB-6)	Ardgay (SC-3)	Dingwall (SD-12)	Strathpeffer (SE-22)
Badrinsary (SA-10)	West Kinnauld (SB-7)	Kincardine (SC-4)	Ardgay (SD-13)	Kiltarlity (SE-23)
Marrel and scattered cottages along the A897 (SA-13)	Pittentrail & Rogart (SB-8/12/13 & 14)	Bonar Bridge (SC-5)	Evanton (SD-14)	Marybank (SE-24)
			Jamestown (SD-15)	Muir of Ord (SE-25)
			Contin (SD-16)	Beauly (SE-26)
				Dingwall (SE-27)

Table 7.6: Residential Receptors within 200 m of the Proposed Development

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
Lanergill Farm (SA-01)	Killin (SB-2)	Creide (SC-6)	Sonnycroft (SD-01)	Bridge Park Cottage (SE-01)
Lydias House, Toftingall Farm (SA-02)	Carroll Cottage (SB-3)	Oak Bank (SC-7)	West End (SD-02)	Mid Lodge (SE-02)

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
Farmstead at Halsary (SA-03)	Eiden group of residential properties and associated farm buildings (SB-11)	Invershin Farm (SC-8)	Cnoc Cluaran (SD03)	Heights of Kinnahaird (SE-03)
Farmsteads and cottages along the A9 (SA-04)	Dalnamain (SB-15)	The Bungalow, Invershin (SC-9)	Glaik Croft (SD04)	Bruaich Cottages (SE-04)
Single-story cottage (Braehungie) and a mobile home (Mountain View) west of the A9 (SA-05)	Brae Cottage (SB-16)		Fannyfield (SD-05)	Ben View (SE-05)
Achorn House (SA-08)			Tighnacraig (SD-06)	Grieve's Cottage (SE-06),
Landwell Gardens, Langwell Kennels, and Keepers House (SA-11)			Culeave Cottage (SD-07)	Broompark (SE-07)
The Bungalow, Ousdale, and Keepers Cottage (SA-12)			Cairn View (SD-08)	Wester Newton (SE-08)
			Leac Dubh Mor (SD-09)	Kinnahaird (SE-09)
				Auchnacoul (SE-10)
				Oakmor (SE-11)
				Jackson Cottage (SE-12)
				Orrin Cottage (SE-13)
				Sawmill Cottage (SE-14)
				Coul Garden Cottage (SE-15)
				Auchederson Farmhouse (SE-16)
				Gas Street Cottage(SE-17)
				Wester Kinellan (SE-18)
				Upper Weston Fanellan Croft (SE-19)

Table 7.7: Transport Routes

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
The A9(T) (RA-01)	The A9(T) (RB-1)	A836 (RC-1)	Dingwall to Kyle of Lochalsh Rail Link (RD-03)	A834 (RE-01)
The A882 (RA-02)	A839 (RB-2)	Far North Railway Line (RC-2)	A834 (RD-05)	Achonachie Road (RE-02)
The A897 (RA-03)	Far North Railway Line (RB-6)	A837 (RC-3)	A836 (RD-07)	A835 (RE-03)
The A99(T) (RA-04)	Gordonbush Road (RB-3)	B864 (RC-4)	A835 (RD-08)	A831 (RE-04)
The B870 (RA-05)	Dunrobin Glen Road (RB-4)	A949 (RC-5)	A9(T) (RD-09)	Dingwall to Kyle of Lochalsh Rail Link (RE-05)
The B874 (RA-06)	Lochbuie Road (RB-5)	Cadh an Tartair Road (RC-6)	B817 (RD-10)	A832 (RE-08)
The B876 (RA-07)		Culrain – Inveroykel Minor Road (RC-7)	A832 (RD-11)	A833 (RE-09)
Far North Railway Line from Inverness to Thurso via Helmsdale (RA-08)			Cadh an Tartair (RD-01)	A862 (RE-10)
Far North Railway Line between Scotscalder and Wick via Georgemas Junction (RA-09)			Minor road to the south of River Carron (RD-02)	Minor road between Marybank and Muir of Ord (RE-06)
			Smoogro Road (RD-04)	Minor road between Blackbridge and Struy (A831) (RE-07)
			Old Evanton Road (RD-06)	

Table 7.8: Recreational Routes

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
Core Path CA06.08: The Old Quarry (RA-10)	Core Path SU06.03 (RB-7) Drove Road,	Inverness to John O' Groats Cycle Trail (RC-8)	River Carron SU03.06 (RD-12)	Orrin Dam track RC30.01 (RE-11)
Core Path CA06.04: Causeymire Wind Farm (RA-11	Core Path SU06.14 (RB-8) Doll Bridge-Loch Brora	Core Path SU08.02: Carbisdale (RC-9)	Mains of Coul RC10.03, (RD-15)	Mains of Coul RC10.03 (RE-12)
Core Path CA10.11: Achavanich and Munsary (RA-12)	Core Path SU06.02 (RB-9) Loch Brora	Core Path SU03.01: Cornhill – Culrain (RC-10)	Kinellan link path RC10.07 (RD-16)	Kinellan link path RC10.07 (RE-13)
Core Paths CA10.03: Rumster Mast Loop, CA10.04:	Core Path SU12.13, SU12.14 (Golspie Tower – Ben	Core Path SU08.03: Lochcoire (RC-11)	Loch Kinellan circuit RC45.01 (RD-17)	Loch Kinellan circuit RC45.01 (RE-14)

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
Rumster, and CA10.07: Rumster to A99 (RA-13)	Bhraggie), and SU12.19 (RB-10)			
Core Paths CA04.01: Dunbeath Strath, CA04.02: Coopers Path, CA04.04: Achnaclyth Track by Toutnagoul, CA04.06: Footbridge Link, CA04.07: Post Office Path, CA04.08: Balcladich and the Sandy Pools, CA04.09: Back Path, CA04.10: Milton Track, CA04.11: A9 Roadside Link, CA04.12: Old Road Link, CA04.13: Old Road by the Driveway to Dunbeath Castle, CA04.16: Clashvalley Track, CA04.17: Portormin Beach, CA04.18: Camel Humps, and CA04.19 (RA-14)	Core Path SU12.24 (RB-11) Loch Lunndaidh path	Core Path SU08.01: Culrain to Invershin (RC-12)	View Rock RC10.01(RD-18)	Orrin circular - Fairburn RC30.02 (RE-15)
Core Paths CA04.15: Langwell Woodland and CA04.14: Berriedale Pier (RA-15)	Core Path SU 20.10 (RB-12) Torboll - Eiden	Core Path SU03.14: Cornhill Curling Pond (RC-13)	Swordale Hill RC10.01 (RD-19)	View Rock RC10.01 (RE-16)
Core Path CA04.03: Badbea (RA-16)	Core Path SU20.02 and SU20.01 (RB-13)	Core Path SU21.11: Shin Falls Forest Walk, and SU21.12: Shin Falls Circular (RC-14)	Strathpeffer - Jamestown (Blackmuir Woods) RC45.05 (RD-20)	Strathpeffer - Jamestown (Blackmuir Woods) RC45.05 (RE-17)
Core Paths SU13.01: Lobster Ponds – Navidale, SU13.02: St Johns Well, SU13.03: Helmsdale River Bank, SU13.04: Simpson Crescent, SU13.05: Old Helmsdale - Old Caithness Road, SU13.05: Navidale Cycle Path,	Core Path SU09.19 (RB-14)	Core SU03.06: River Carron footpath (RC-15)	Ord Wood west - Kinellan RC45.03 (RD-21)	Ord Wood west – Kinellan RC45.03 (RE-18)

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
SU13.06: Old Helmsdale - East Helmsdale, SU13.07: Playing Fields – West Helmsdale, and SU13.09: Navidale Farm Track/Seaweed Road (RA-17)				
Core Path SU13.08: Portgower Inn Road – Gartymore (RA-18)	NCN (RB-15)	Core Path SU03.11: River Carron (RC-16)	Cornhill Curling Pond Circuit SU03.14 (RD-22)	Contin Island RC10.05 (RE-19)
North Coast 500 (RA-19)	North Coast 500 (RB-16)	Core Path SU05.06: Balblair Wood (RC-17)	Contin to Strathgarve RC10.06 (RD-23)	Home Farm to Hughton by Lonbuie IN20.11 (RE-20)
		Core path SU05.04, Balblair Forest Walk (RC-18)	Torrachilty Woods RC10.04 (RD-24)	Contin to Strathgarve RC10.06 (RE-21)
		Core Path SU16.08: Braemore – Achany (RC-19)	Golf course - Ord Wood east RC45.07 (RD-25)	Ord Hill RC32.07 (RE-22)
		SU05.01: Loch Migdale (RC-20),	Blackmuir Woods - maze circular RC45.04 (RD-26)	Torrachilty woods RC10.04 (RE-23)
		Core Path SU21.02: Sika Trail Cycle Route (RC-21)	Rogie Falls RC10.02 (RD-27)	Golf course - Ord Wood east RC45.07 (RE-24)
			Eagle Stone Path RC45.10 (RD-28)	Blackmuir Woods - maze circular RC45.04 (RE-25)
			Badvoon Forest, Allt Eiteachan Path SU03.05 (RD-29)	Rogie Falls RC10.02 (RE-26)
			Badvoon Forest, Forest Road SU03.03 (RD-30)	Eagle Stone Path RC45.10 (RE-27)
			Ardival - Catsback - Loch Ussie RC45.09 (RD-31)	Ardival - Catsback - Loch Ussie RC45.09 (RE-28)
			Tollie to Lealty RC05.02 (RD-32)	Knockfarrel (maze to hill) RC45.02 (RE-29)
			Culrain, via Invercharron Hill / Carbisdale SU03.01 (RD-33)	Knockfarrel to Fodderty RC13.05 (RE-30)

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
			River Carron SU03.11 (RD-34)	Knockfarrel RC13.06 (RE-31)
			Carron Bridge SU03.09 (RD-35)	Paths within Torrachilty Forest (RE-32)
			Knockfarrel (maze to hill) RC45.02 (RD-36)	Paths located within forested areas to the north of Strathpeffer Golf Course, extending towards Peffrey Burn (RE-33)
			Dam Wood RC05.03 (RD-37)	North Coast 500 (RE-34)
			Ardgayhill SU03.10 (RD-38)	Inverness to John O' Groats National Cycle Trail (RE-35)
			Oldtown - Badvoon SU03.08 (RD-39)	
			Badvoon Forest, Link Path SU03.04 (RD-40)	
			Knockfarrel to Fodderty RC13.05 (RD-41)	
			Black Rock Gorge RC16.05 (RD-42)	
			Dublin to Ardross Mains RC05.04 (RD-43)	
			Evanton Woods RC16.06 (RD-44)	
			Tulloch Lane-Dingwall RC13.02 (RD-45)	
			Knockfarrel RC13.06 (RD-46)	
			Fyrish Path RC05.01 (RD-47)	
			Paths within Torrachilty Forest (RD-13)	
			Paths located within forested areas to the north of Strathpeffer Golf Course, extending towards	

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
			Peffrey Burn (RD-14)	
			Inverness to John O' Groats Cycle Trail (RC-49)	
			The North Coast 500 (RC-48)	

Table 7.9: Outdoor Locations

Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D	Section E
Dunbeath Castle (OA-01)	The Duke of Sutherland Monument (OB-01)	Carbisdale Castle (OC-01)	Strathpeffer Golf Course (OD-01)	Coul House Hotel (OE-01)
Scaraben (OA-02)		The Scap (Angling) (OC-02)	Loch Morrie (OD-02)	Falls of Orrin (OE-02)
Berriedale Braes Viewpoint (OA-03)		Dounie Estate (OC-03)	Dounie Estate (OD-03)	Fairburn Activity Centre (OE-03)
Badbea Historic Clearance Village (OA-04)		Loch Laro (OC-04)	Gledfield House and Estate (OD-04)	Fairburn Tower (OE-04)
Creag Thoraraidh (OA-05)		Loch an Lagain (OC-05)	Neil Gunn Memorial (OD-05)	Strathpeffer Golf Course (OE-05)
Emigrants Memorial (OA-06)		Balblair Forest (OC-06)	Loch Glass (OD-06)	Torrachilty Forest. – Car Park and Picnic Area (OE-06)
		Gledfield House and Estate (OC-07)	Ardross Castle (OD-07)	Riverside Chalets and Caravan Park (OE-07)
		Falls of Shin and Shin Forest (OC-08)	Pink House (Loch Glass) (OD-08)	Neil Gunn Memorial (OE-08)
			Cnoc Fyrish Monument (OD-09)	

7.7 Future Baseline

7.7.1 The baseline landscape and visual resource of the Study Area is predicted to undergo some continued minor development (new properties / housing extensions, or similar), in combination with ongoing changes to forestry/tree cover. However, these activities are not anticipated to result in notable change to the landscape characteristics of the Study Area or visual amenity and are therefore not considered further.

7.7.2 Conversely, transmission infrastructure and wind energy development within the Study Area have been identified with the potential to exert a more notable influence on the future landscape and baseline resource. Due to the scale of these developments (with reference to their spread and vertical height), these are anticipated to result in changes to local landscape character and visual amenity. The potential effects are considered further within the assessment of cumulative effects.

7.8 Mitigation

7.8.1 Principal mitigation measures throughout have been embedded in the design process and relate to the identification of a proposed alignment, to reduce as far as possible, landscape and visual effects. The requirement for, and location of, permanent access tracks has also been carefully reviewed with these being limited to the minimum required for longer term maintenance.

7.8.2 The following section summarises key mitigation elements during the construction and operational phase. A full list of all mitigation measures is provided in **Chapter 19: Schedule of Mitigation**.

Design Mitigation during Construction Phase

7.8.3 Construction of the Proposed Development would follow an agreed construction method statement that would include arrangements for implementation of various aspects of the works to mitigate local adverse impacts during construction (to be agreed with The Highland Council and other statutory agencies). Specific mitigation measures during construction will include:

- Minimising land clearance / vegetation removal as far as possible;
- Protection of existing features such as field boundaries;
- Maintaining the Proposed Development Site in a tidy and contained condition;
- Controlling construction lighting (construction works would be focused within daytime periods only);
- Use of existing tracks where possible;
- Utilise temporary access tracks where conditions allow; and
- Removal of the construction compound and all temporary construction materials would be undertaken after construction work is completed.

Design Mitigation During Operational Phase

7.8.4 Mitigation in relation to the operational phase primarily relates to the gradual re-establishment of any disturbed ground cover along the route of the Proposed Development. The reinstatement would focus on native moorland, reflecting the local ground conditions and landscape character, ensuring a natural context to the proposed built form, and also providing ecological habitat to the locality. Where required, reinstatement would involve replacement of topsoil, grading and installation of drainage as required. Graded areas would be allowed to vegetate naturally, although some seeding may be required to stabilise sites for example where peat has become exposed. For the purposes of this LVIA, it is assumed that the ground cover reinstatement would occur rapidly following cessation of construction activities.

7.8.5 Where tree felling to mitigate the risk of windblow (management felling) is deemed appropriate, these measures can only be undertaken with the agreement of the affected landowner and with felling permission granted by Scottish Forestry. This would require the landowner to fully address the replanting of such areas of felling outwith the operational corridor. It is the intention of the applicant to encourage the landowners to follow this good practice in terms of redesigning their current Long-Term Forest Plans which in turn would aim to follow UK Forestry Standard for the implementation of the works required. This management felling is therefore considered temporary.

7.9 Assessment of Effects: Landscape

General

7.9.1 This section assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on relevant LCTs, and designated and protected landscapes during the construction and operational phases. This follows the significance of effects

criteria outlined in the methodology (refer to **Volume 5**, **Appendix 7.2: LVIA Methodology**). The assessment begins with LCTs, which informs the subsequent evaluation of effects on designated and protected landscapes.

7.9.2 The detailed assessment of effects for each LCT is described **Volume 5, Appendices 7.5 – 7.9**. The detailed assessment of effects on designated and protected landscapes is provided in **Volume 5**, **Appendix 7.4: Assessment of Designated and Protected Landscapes**. In each case, the key significant effects are summarised below.

Assessment of Effects on Landscape Character

Section A

7.9.3 The detailed assessment of landscape character has considered nine separate LCTs within the Study Area to Section A. Significant effects were identified at five LCTs within 800 m of the Proposed Development during both construction and operational phases. These LCTs comprised:

- LCT 134 – Sweeping Moorland and Flows;
- LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland;
- LCT 142 – Strath – Caithness & Sutherland;
- LCT 143 – Farmed Lowland Plain; and
- LCT 144 – Coastal Crofts & Small Farms.

7.9.4 The nature of the significant effects to each LCT are summarised below:

LCT 134 – Sweeping Moorland and Flows

7.9.5 The Proposed Development would extend through the LCT from the open moorlands around Spittal to the coastal hills near Dunbeath for approximately 31.5 km. During construction **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects are expected along a linear corridor within 800 m from the Proposed Development. Beyond 800 m the works would become unobtrusive within the wider landscape. This would reduce the overall effect for the LCT to **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.6 During operation the most significant effects would occur within 800 m of the alignment, where impact magnitude would be High due to visual exposure and reduced remoteness. Across the wider LCT, resultant changes would diminish with distance, operation effects are assessed as **Moderate–Minor Adverse** (not significant) across the wider LCT, within 800 m the effects would be **Major–Moderate Adverse** (significant).

LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.7 The majority of the LCT to the east of Strath Ullie falls within the Causeymire -Knockfin Flows WLA and the Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA and is valued as a tourist destination. From Berriedale to Brora, the construction of steel lattice towers would be visually prominent particularly where towers cross the strath floor and upper hill slopes. However, the combined screening effects of undulating terrain, dense woodland, and commercial forestry plantations would largely contain the wider visibility, with only occasional glimpses of cranes or emerging towers. During construction forestry felling, necessary to facilitate crossing water bodies would contribute to localised landscape change within the defined linear corridor. **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects would be concentrated along the eastern edge of the LCT, primarily associated with the establishment of access tracks near Borgue and Berriedale, which would extend up to 1 km from the alignment to the A9. At greater distances, the influence of the construction activities would be reduced due to the screening influence of the intervening hills. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.8 Once operational the visual presence of the new infrastructure between Berriedale and Brora would be integrated with the existing 132 kV OHL, especially between Borgue and Badbea, where both routes closely align within a defined corridor. The alignment would intensify development within this localised zone, whilst avoiding extending infrastructure into more remote areas of the LCT. Forestry regeneration and ground cover reinstatement would soften the landscape change and reduce perceived fragmentation. The most pronounced effects would be concentrated within a linear corridor extending up to 1 km from the Section A alignment, where the magnitude of effect is assessed as **Major–Moderate Adverse** (significant). Across the wider LCT, effects are anticipated to reduce with distance and are assessed as **Moderate–Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 142 – Strath – Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.9 The construction works would extend directly across the LCT rather than following its length, introducing short sections of localised tree clearance and new access tracks that contrast with the natural and wild characteristics of the landscape. This would be most pronounced within the Strath of Kildonan near Marrel, where the works would occupy a linear area extending from the alignment approximately 400–500 m in the north-west and 600–700 m in the south-east. During construction the introduction of new infrastructure elements and increased human activity within a predominantly natural setting, would result in **Major-Moderate** Adverse (significant) effects. At greater distances, the construction activities would be screened by surrounding tree cover, and the Proposed Development would be less obtrusive. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate Adverse (**significant).

LCT 143 – Farmed Lowland Plain

7.9.10 During construction forestry felling to create a wayleave through a small section of the northernmost forestry plantation to establish temporary access tracks for tower construction would result in localised effects. This would resemble periodic forestry management within a confined area of the LCT. The resultant construction activities would present a concentrated and sustained level of activity, with localised changes evident at tower positions, access tracks, and compound areas. **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects would be largely confined to the localised areas of the LCT, with vehicular movement extending up to 750 m from the northern end of the alignment. At greater distances, the influence of the construction activities would be reduced due to the intervening screening. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.11 Once operational, the Proposed Development (Towers N1–N11) introduce prominent vertical elements into the rural landscape. Forestry felling would result in some fragmentation of the land cover, the overall effect would be localised by the presence of surrounding forestry plantations and mitigated by vegetation reinstatement. The immediate surroundings of the towers would experience a more noticeable change; while intervening tree cover and landforms would restrict visibility of the towers across more distant parts of the LCT. In summary, a **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within approximately 750 m of the alignment. At greater distances, the influence of the Proposed Development would be reduced due to the intervening screening. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 144 – Coastal Crofts & Small Farms

7.9.12 The LCT intersects with a substantial portion of the Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA, as well as the Loch Fleet, Brora & Glen Loth SLA. A short section of the Proposed Development traverses the outer edge of the Coastal Crofts & Small Farms LCT, at Badnagie, Borgue, and Ousdale, where the landscape is defined by a narrow coastal shelf bordered inland by steep hills. Construction activities would be geographically dispersed across Badnagie, Borgue, and Ousdale. Changes resulting from intensified human intervention

would be moderated to varying degrees by distance, topography, and tree cover. In more exposed areas, where construction works would involve ground clearance, vehicle movements, and the presence of infrastructure, the construction footprint would extend beyond individual tower locations and compound areas. Key effects would occur within a 2.2 km corridor north of Dunbeath. Accordingly, a **Major Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within the linear corridor of the alignment. Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant).

7.9.13 Once operational, the alignment extends across the LCT rather than following its length. Steel lattice towers at Badnagie (Towers N78–N83), Borgue (Towers N95–N99), and Ousdale (Towers N125–N128) introduce new infrastructure elements, partially aligned with the existing 132 kV OHL. **Major Adverse** (significant) effects would occur within a corridor extending 100–200 m to the north-west and 800–900 m to the south-east from the alignment. Across the wider LCT, the effects are assessed as **Moderate Adverse** (significant).

Section B

7.9.14 The detailed assessment of landscape character has considered five separate LCTs. Significant effects were identified in two LCTs within 1 km of the Proposed Development during construction and within 2 km during operational phase;

- LCT 135 Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland; and
- LCT 142 Strath - Caithness & Sutherland.

LCT 135 Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.15 During construction a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 1 km of the works. The construction effects would be largely consistent along Section B in accordance with the extent of enclosure by surrounding landform. Vehicular movement and works activities would be most visible across the open moorland, especially given Buidhe Road in the southern sections. The increased movement and presence of people would reduce the sense of remoteness. Further south, the Section B alignment would extend through areas of forestry, the construction phase activities (including felling and vehicular movement) would not appear out of place within this managed landscape. At greater distances, the construction activities would represent more discreet elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.16 Once operational, the steel lattice towers would represent a new linear element within the landscape however there would be a reduction in the level of human activity and vehicle movements. The increase in built form and accessibility would contrast with the more remote / uninhabited characteristics of the LCT and the sense of wildness that is most prevalent across its interior. Within 2 km of the alignment a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. Across the wider LCT, the effects would reduce to **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 142 Strath - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.17 The construction stage activities and vehicle movements would contrast with the agricultural land use within the strath landscapes. However, this would account for a localised area within the Golspie Burn valley given the commercial plantations. For the River Fleet and Loch Brora valleys, the wider valley floor and pastoral agriculture enables longer-range views towards the activities. A **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 1 km of the works. At greater distances, the construction activities would represent more discreet elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.18 During operation, the new towers and sections of permanent access track would form new components within the landscape. The towers would represent new elements in views channelled within the valleys that would contrast with the more rural / natural characteristics of the LCT. The alignment would take the shortest route across each valley, reducing its physical footprint upon the LCT. The influence of the Proposed Development would diminish across wider parts of the LCT at greater distance. Within 1 km of the alignment, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. At greater distances, the alignment would typically represent a more discreet element in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Section C

7.9.19 The detailed assessment of landscape character has considered seven separate LCTs. Significant effects have been identified across localised parts of the following:

- LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland; and
- LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland.

LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.20 The majority of Section C would be located within the 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland LCT, extending from the Substation at Meall Mor in the north, to Strathcarron in the south. During construction, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 600-700 m of the works. Within this linear corridor, the construction activity would result in noticeable changes to the existing landscape fabric and land use. Construction activities would contrast with the more natural characteristics of the local LCT, albeit would be contained by surrounding plantation forestry along southern sections of the route (equating to approximately 6.5 km of the total 11.0 km length of Section C within this LCT). As a result, the effects would be most noticeable within the moorland setting at the northern end of Section C. At greater distances, the construction activities would represent more discreet elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.21 During operation, the steel lattice towers would represent a new linear element within the landscape. Whilst the towers would represent new elements of infrastructure, the southern parts of the alignment (equating to approximately 6.5 km of Section C) would be located within the context of surrounding commercial plantation. The trees ensure that the effects would be focused within parts of the LCT where the more natural / wild characteristics of the LCT are less pronounced. Northerly sections of the alignment would extend through more open moorland (equating to approximately 4.5 km of Section C), where the towers would be broadly similar in terms of design, albeit with taller towers, than the existing 132 kV OHL that extends across this part of the LCT. Within 600-700 m of the alignment, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. At greater distances, the alignment would typically represent a more unobtrusive unobtrusive element in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.22 This LCT is focused upon the low-lying river valleys extending inland at the western end of the Dornoch Firth. Within the Study Area, this comprises two discrete landscape character areas at the Kyle of Sutherland, and Strathcarron. This coincides with very localised sections of the Section C alignment, where it extends directly across these straths. Construction works would include localised forestry felling on the upper slopes of the Kyle of Sutherland Area and Strathcarron Area, as well as the creation of new (permanent) tracks, and increased human activity / vehicular movement. This would contrast with the existing agricultural land use within the strath floor, although would be restricted by the low-lying nature of the landscape, and the screening

influence of intervening tree cover and the landform enclosing the valley sides. A **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 600-700 m of the works. At greater distances, the construction activities would represent more unobtrusive elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.23 During operation, the steel lattice towers would represent a new linear element within the LCT that would contrast with the more rural / natural characteristics of the LCT. However, the Section C alignment would extend directly across the Kyle of Sutherland and Strathcarron (rather than along the length of these straths), thereby limiting the number of towers required. Within 600-700 m of the alignment, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. At greater distances, the alignment would typically represent a more unobtrusive element in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Section D

7.9.24 The detailed assessment of landscape character has considered 15 separate LCTs. Significant effects have been identified across localised parts of the following LCTs:

- LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland;
- LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland;
- LCT 139 – Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness & Sutherland;
- LCT 330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes - Ross & Cromarty;
- LCT 341 – Forest Edge Farming; and
- LCT 329 – Rounded Mountain Massif.

LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.25 This LCT coincides with the northern-most part of Section D (between Strathcarron and Meall Bhenneit). This equates to approximately 8.1 km of the Section D alignment (Towers S40-S42 and S46 –S67). Construction works would involve very localised forestry felling at West Dounie to create a wayleave for the alignment, and the establishment of temporary access tracks. Construction activities would reduce the sense of remoteness; however, these would be partly screened by forestry at Blar Garvary from surrounding parts of the LCT. A **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted along a linear corridor within 700-800 m of the works, due to the open nature of the moorland landscape. At greater distances, the construction activities would represent more unobtrusive elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.26 During operation, the steel lattice towers would represent a new linear element within the landscape. The towers would predominantly extend across open moorland, albeit would be partly contained by the forestry at Blar Garvary to the east. Within the most open views from the 'scarcely settled' and 'largely uninhabited interior' of the LCT, the Proposed Development would represent a new element of human influence within the landscape. However, the rolling hill slopes would restrict views of the towers across more distant parts of the LCT. The main effects would be focused within a linear corridor along the alignment extending out to approximately 700-800 m from the towers where the effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). At greater distances, the alignment would typically represent a more unobtrusive element in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.27 This LCT is focused upon the low-lying river valley of Strathcarron at the northern-most end of Section D. This coincides with a very localised part of the Section D alignment, approximately 900 m in length, comprising two towers (Towers S38 and S39). The most open views of the works would be focused upon the more open strath floor, where the construction activities would contrast with the existing agricultural land use. A **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 600-700 m of the works, due to the open nature of the moorland landscape. At greater distances, the construction activities would be screened by surrounding tree cover and woodland and represent more unobtrusive elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.28 Once operational, within Section D, the Proposed Development would introduce two towers to the LCT and represent a new element within views along the valley. However, the Section D alignment would extend directly across the strath (rather than along it), thereby limiting the number of towers required. The strath landform would essentially screen parts of the Section D alignment south of Strathcarron. In summary, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 600-700 m of the alignment. At greater distances, the alignment would typically represent a more discreet element in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 139 – Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness & Sutherland

7.9.29 This LCT comprises high rugged mountains that rise up on the southern side of Strathcarron, at the northern end of Section D. This coincides with a very localised part of the Section D alignment, approximately 900 m in length, comprising three towers (Towers S43 – S45). Construction works would extend across open moorland on the eastern edge of the LCT. Contrasting with the more natural and wild characteristics of the LCT. However, they would be experienced within a large-scale landscape context. The influence of the construction activities would diminish across central and western parts of the LCT (west of Carn a' Chlaiginn). The key effects would be focused on the eastern edge of the LCT, accounting for a linear area within approximately 700-800 m of the works, where a **Major Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. At greater distances, the influence of the construction activities would be reduced. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.30 Once operational, the steel lattice towers would combine to form a new linear element within the landscape, along the eastern edge of the LCT. The towers would contrast with the more natural and wild characteristics of the LCT. However, the intervening slopes and summits would restrict views of the towers across more distant parts of the LCT further to the west. Potential visibility from the lower-lying slopes and glens would be extremely limited. In summary, a **Major Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 700-800 m of the alignment. At greater distances, west of Carn a' Chlaiginn, the alignment would be subject to screening based on the intervening slopes and summits. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes - Ross & Cromarty

7.9.31 This LCT encompasses extensive parts of Caithness and Sutherland and coincides with the majority of the Proposed Development within Section D. Construction works would involve localised forestry felling at intervals along Section D to create a wayleave for the alignment, and temporary and permanent access tracks to facilitate construction. The works would be screened along lengthy parts of Section D by retained forestry in the surrounding area, in combination with the characteristic 'rounded hills'. The key effects would be along a linear area within approximately 700 m of the works, where a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. At greater distances, the influence of the construction activities would be reduced due to the

intervening screening. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.32 Once operational, the steel lattice towers would represent a new linear element extending approximately 25.6 km north-south through the LCT. The towers would be spatially separate from the more remote interior parts of the LCT where 'wildness characteristics' are more prevalent. The surrounding forestry and rounded hills that characterise this LCT would restrict views of the towers across more distant parts of the LCT. In summary, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within approximately 700 m of the alignment. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 341 – Forest Edge Farming

7.9.33 This LCT encompasses spatially separate parts of the Section D Study Area. This includes the LCT area on the northern side of the Cromarty Firth that coincides with a 590 m section near Boath (including Towers S96 and S97), as well as 580 m section at Glen Glass (including Towers S112 and S113), and a 130 m section between Towers 122 and 123 at Fannyfield (the towers would be located outside the LCT). Construction works would include tree felling within areas of forestry and woodland, as well as temporary and permanent access tracks in localised areas south-west of Boath. The construction activities and vehicle movements would contrast with the traditional agricultural landuse within the LCT and the more natural characteristics of the local landscape. The influence of these activities on the wider LCT would be restricted by intervening tree cover and landform. The key effects would be focused across discrete areas of the LCT; those located within 700-800 m of the alignment on its north-eastern side near Boath, those within 400 – 700 m of the alignment north of Glen Glass, due to the screening effect of forestry and tree cover . The effects on these areas during construction would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.34 During operation, the Proposed Development would introduce two towers on the northern slopes at Glen Glass, as well as two towers and approximately 2.1 km of permanent access track south-west of Boath. Within these areas, there would also be views of adjoining towers, extending north / south along the wider Section D alignment (outside the LCT, but exerting indirect effects on local landscape character). The key effects would be focused across three discrete areas of the LCT, as described above, due to the screening effect of forestry and tree cover. The effects on these areas during construction would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). The influence of the Section D alignment upon other parts of the LCT would be reduced based on the increasing separation distance and intervening screening. Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 329 – Rounded Mountain Massif

7.9.35 Direct effects on this LCT occurs around Glen Glass and the surrounding mountains to the south, within 170m to the west of the alignment (Tower S103). Indirect effects on views are centred on Carn an Lochan / Carn Maire, 3.8 km to the west of Section D. There would be views towards the construction activities from the summit of Meall an Leathaid, including localised forestry felling and vehicle movements. There would also be views of construction activities from the summits of Cnoc Gille Mo Bhrianaig and Bendeallt, although these parts of the LCT are already influenced by the operational Novar Wind Farm, which would remain a prominent element within the locality. The influence of construction activities would diminish across wider parts of the LCT given the scale of the receiving landscape. The key effects would be focused on the eastern edge of the LCT, comprising localised areas within approximately 900 m of the works, where a **Major Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.36 Once operational, the key effects remain focused on the eastern edge of the LCT. The Proposed Development would introduce steel lattice towers to the nearby landscape, which would form new components within the local landscape. There would also be views of the wider Section D alignment extending north and south from elevated vantage points. The influence of the Proposed Development would diminish across more distant westerly parts of the LCT based on the increasing distance of view, the intervening landform, and the presence of Novar Wind Farm in front of the Section D alignment. In summary, from the summits and slopes east of Glen Glass, within approximately 900 m of the alignment (Towers S92 – S109), the effects during operation would be **Major Adverse** (significant). Across the wider LCT the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Section E

7.9.37 The detailed assessment of landscape character considered 18 separate LCTs. Significant effects have been identified across localised parts of the following:

- LCT 330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes - Ross & Cromarty LCT;
- LCT 335 – Wooded Glens and Rocky Moorland LCT;
- LCT 341 – Forest Edge Farming;
- LCT 345 – Farmed and Forested Slopes – Ross & Cromarty;
- LCT 346 – Open Farmed Slopes;
- LCT 342 – Farmed River Plains;
- LCT 331 – Rounded Rocky Hills – Ross & Cromarty;
- LCT 220 – Rugged Massif – Inverness;
- LCT 227 – Farmed Strath – Inverness; and
- LCT 229 – Enclosed Farmland.

LCT 330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes – Ross & Cromarty

7.9.38 This LCT encompasses extensive parts of Caithness and Sutherland, and coincides with the northern end of the Proposed Development within Section E (comprising a total length of approximately 600 m (including Towers S150 - S151). Construction works would involve localised forestry felling along Section E to create a wayleave for the alignment. Existing forestry tracks would be utilised where practicable to reduce the extent of new tracks required. The retained tree cover / forestry within the LCT would form a backdrop / screening element to the construction activities nearby. In addition, the characteristic 'rounded hills' would restrict views of the construction activities from wider surrounding areas. The key effects would be focused within a linear corridor along the works, approximately 600 m in length (north-south) and 100-200 m in width due to containment by surrounding forestry. Within this area a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. At greater distances, the influence of the construction activities would be reduced due to the intervening screening. Accordingly, across the wider LCT 330, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.39 Once operational, the steel lattice towers would represent a new linear element extending approximately 600 m north-south through this LCT. The towers would be spatially separate from the more remote interior parts of this LCT where 'wildness characteristics' are more prevalent. The surrounding forestry and rounded hills that characterise this LCT would restrict views of the towers across more distant areas. In summary, the key effects would be focused in a linear corridor, 600 m in length (north-south) and 100-200 m in width due to containment by surrounding forestry. Within this area a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. Across the wider LCT 330, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 335 – Wooded Glens and Rocky Moorland

7.9.40 This LCT coincides with a 1.7 km length of Section D, close to its northern end (including Towers S152 – S157). The LCT comprises large swathes of forestry and native woodland north of Strathconon. Construction works would include tree felling along the length of the alignment (approximately 1.7 km in length) to create a wayleave for the alignment, and additional felling to ensure a wind-firm edge to the retained forestry in the surrounding area. The construction works would also involve the creation of temporary access tracks. The activities would be focused on the eastern side of this LCT, where Section E would extend across forestry north of Creag Ulladail. The influence of the construction activities would be limited based on the use of existing forestry tracks to limit the extent of temporary tracks required, and visual containment by the retained forestry to either side of the alignment. The key effects would be focused along a linear area within 300-400 m of the works, where a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted. At greater distances, the influence of the construction activities would be substantially reduced due to the intervening vegetation. Accordingly, across the wider LCT 335, the effects would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.41 Once operational, Section E would introduce six towers to the eastern part of this LCT. There would be no permanent access track. The towers would be experienced in the context of surrounding forestry, which would screen the lower parts of the towers from view. Indirect effects based on potential views of wider parts of the Section E alignment (extending further north and south, outside the LCT 335) would also be restricted by tree cover and woodland. In summary, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 300-400 m of the alignment. The influence of the Proposed Development would diminish across central and western parts of this LCT, at greater distance from the Section E alignment. Accordingly, across the wider LCT 335 the effects would be **Moderate-Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 341 – Forest Edge Farming

7.9.42 This LCT occurs in three spatially separate parts of the Section E Study Area. This includes an area west of Strathpeffer, which coincides with a 3.0 km length of Section E, close to its northern end (including Towers S158 and S167), and a second LCT area between Fairburn and Beauly, which coincides with a 5.9 km length of Section E (including Towers S181 – S201). Construction works would include tree felling across the slopes on the southern side of Strathconon, and additional felling to ensure a wind-firm edge to the retained forestry in the surrounding area, as well as the creation of short sections of temporary and permanent access tracks, where existing tracks do not exist. The key effects would be focused within approximately 600-700 m of the works, albeit would be retained within 100-200m where the construction activities extend through denser areas of forestry. Within this localised part of the LCT the effects would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.43 During operation, the Section E alignment would introduce 31 towers to the LCT, as well as short sections of permanent access tracks (approximately 1.67 km in length). From surrounding areas, the towers would be experienced in the context of tree cover / forestry. Within the characteristic ‘far reaching views to the south’ the towers and tracks within the LCT area west of Strathpeffer would primarily be experienced as part of the inland landscape towards the west outside the southerly field of view. The towers and tracks within the LCT area between Fairburn and Beauly would typically be back-clothed by the rising landform along the upper sides of Strathconon, including Cul Mor, Cul Beag, and Cnoc Udais, The key effects would be focused within 600-700 m of the alignment, although this would be contained within 100-200 m where surrounding tree cover is more continuous / dense. The effects on these areas would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). The influence of the Section E alignment upon other parts of the LCT would be reduced based on the increasing separation distance and intervening screening. Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 345 – Farmed and Forested Slopes – Ross & Cromarty

7.9.44 This LCT occurs in three spatially separate parts of the Section E Study Area. This includes the LCT area at Knockfarrel, which coincides with a 550 m length of Section E (including Towers S168 and S169), and an area between Fairburn and Muir of Ord, which coincides with a 680 m length of Section E (including Towers S179 and S180) south of the River Conon.

7.9.45 Construction works would include localised tree felling within areas of farmland west of Jamestown and west of Muirton Mains, as well as the creation of short sections of temporary access tracks. The presence of construction activities and vehicle movements within the LCT and adjoining landscape would contrast with the existing agricultural land use within the LCT. However, the influence of these activities on the wider LCT would be restricted by intervening tree cover and landform. A **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 700-800 m of the works. The influence of the construction works would diminish across other parts of the LCT at greater distance, where the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.46 Once operational, the key effects would be focused on western edge of the LCT area at Knockfarrel and the western edge of the LCT area between Fairburn and Muir of Ord (where the effects would be direct), and parts of the LCT area at Knockfarrel (based on close proximity views). The Section E alignment would introduce a total of four towers to the LCT, as well as short sections of permanent access tracks (approximately 390 m in length). The towers would contrast with the more rural characteristics of the LCT, albeit in the context of a working agricultural landscape with existing infrastructure, including OHL. In summary, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 700-800 m of the alignment. At greater distances, the alignment would typically represent a more discreet element in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant). Effects on the distant LCT area on the Black Isle would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 346 – Open Farmed Slopes

7.9.47 This LCT occurs in five spatially separate parts of the Study Area adopted for Section E of the Proposed Development. This includes the LCT area south of Jamestown, which coincides with 830 m of the Section E alignment at its northern end (Towers S170 – S172). Construction works would include the creation of short sections of temporary access tracks. There would also be indirect effects on landscape character based on views of the construction activities, including views from the nearby westerly-facing slopes at Wester Moy. The influence on other LCT areas would be restricted based on the increased spatial separation and intervening screening. A **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within approximately 700-800 m of the works. At greater distances, the construction activities would represent more discreet elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.48 Once operational, the Section E alignment would introduce three towers to the LCT, south-west of Jamestown (Towers S170 – S172), which would form new components within the local landscape. From surrounding areas, the towers would be experienced on the skyline in the context of existing farmland, localised tree cover and forestry. All temporary tracks would be removed, and there would be no permanent access track. The main effects would be focused within a linear corridor within approximately 700-800 m of the alignment. The effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). The influence of the alignment would diminish across more distant parts of the LCT, where the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 342 – Farmed River Plains

7.9.49 This LCT extends inland from the Cromarty Firth, encircling Knockfarrel at its northern end, and extending southwards where it encompasses Beauly and the shores of the Beauly Firth. The LCT coincides with a 1.7

km length of the Section E alignment (including Towers S173 – S178) at the western end of the spur that lies to the south of Knockfarrel. Construction works includes localised tree felling within areas of farmland, as well as the creation of relatively short sections of temporary access tracks. The most open views of the works would be focused upon the more open areas of nearby farmland. A **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted within 600-700 m of the works where the construction stage activities and vehicle movements would contrast with the agricultural landuse within the strath floor. However, this would be focused within a very localised area within Strathconon. Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.50 Once operational, the key effects would be focused on western parts of the LCT west of Coille Uisge. The Section E alignment would introduce six towers to the LCT, west of Jamestown (Towers S173 – S178). From surrounding areas, the towers would form vertical elements within the flat strath floor. The key effects would be focused within a linear corridor within approximately 600-700 m of the alignment and would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). The influence of the Proposed Development would diminish across other parts of the LCT at greater distance, where the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 331 – Rounded Rocky Hills – Ross & Cromarty

7.9.51 This LCT encompasses three spatially distinct areas within the Section E Study Area. This includes the LCT area centred on the hills between Strathconon and Glen Orrin, which coincides with a 650 m length of Section E (including Towers S202 and S203). The other areas of the LCT are spatially separate from the Section E alignment. The construction works would be predominantly experienced in the context of tree cover and forestry on the lower lying slopes to the east (outside the LCT). The key effects would be focused along the eastern edge of LCT area between Strathconon and Glen Orrin. Given the open, elevated views from the hillsides along this edge of the LCT (including Craeg Mhor, Cul Mor, Cul Beag and Cnoc Beinn na Lice), the effects within approximately 800-900 m of the works would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). At greater distance from the Proposed Development, the effects of the construction activities would diminish steadily, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.52 Once operational, the Proposed Development would introduce two steel lattice towers on the edge of the LCT, located between existing masts at Cnoc Udais (to the east) and the Auchmore Wind Turbines at Cnoc Beinn na Lice (to the west). As such, the direct effects would be focused within an area already influenced by existing infrastructure. From the slopes and summits of Craeg Mhor, Cul Mor, Cul Beag and Cnoc Beinn na Lice (on the eastern edge of the LCT area between Strathconon and Glen Orrin), the towers would form a linear element in the lower-lying slopes to the east. Longer distance views would also be experienced from the higher peaks within the LCT area at Carn Loch an Tuirc, albeit the Proposed Development would represent a distant element in the background landscape. In summary, within 800-900 m the effects would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). Across other parts of the LCT the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 220 – Rugged Massif – Inverness

7.9.53 This LCT encompasses the large-scale mountain landscape west of Beauly. This coincides with a 7.4 km length of the Section E alignment (Towers S204 – S226), which extends through an area of rugged upland moorland, as well as localised areas of forestry further south. There would also be a Duck Under with Wood Poles, with live line Scaffold Provision in this area, where the Proposed Development crosses an existing 132 kV OHL near Ardochy.

7.9.54 The key effects would be focused on the eastern edge of the LCT where Section E would extend across moorland and forestry. Construction works would involve the establishment of permanent access tracks to

facilitate construction of the new towers and associated vehicular movements. The tracks would predominantly extend across open moorland, albeit further south (coinciding with Towers S222 – S226 of the alignment) the tracks would be enclosed by surrounding plantation forestry. As a result, the construction works would be most noticeable within the moorland setting further north. The main effects would be focused within 600-700 m of the works and would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). Across the wider LCT the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.55 Once operational, the Proposed Development would introduce 23 steel lattice towers to the LCT. Towers S204 – S221 would extend across open moorland. The surrounding hillsides would restrict views of the towers from other parts of the LCT, particularly across westerly areas beyond the summits of Beinn nam Fitheach, Mullach Binnean a' Chromhnaird and Beinn a' Chlaonaidh. Towers S222 – S226 would be located in the context of surrounding forestry, which would typically restrict views to the upper part of the towers. The towers and permanent access track would be located on the eastern edge of the LCT where the sense of wildness is less pronounced. The key effects would be focused within 600 700 m of the alignment, and would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). The influence of the Section E alignment upon other parts of the LCT would be reduced due to the intervening landform. Across the other parts of the LCT the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

LCT 227 – Farmed Strath – Inverness

7.9.56 This LCT encompasses the linear, strath landscape south-west of Beauly. This coincides with a 2.0 km length of the Section E alignment at its southern end (Towers S227 – S231), which extends directly across the strath at the northern end of the LCT. Construction works would include localised forestry felling on the slopes either side of the River Beauly, as well as the creation of new tracks (temporary and permanent). The construction activities would contrast with the existing agricultural landuse within the strath. However, the influence would be reduced by surrounding forestry, which would screen the tracks and associated vehicle movements. Similarly, the influence of these activities on more distant parts of the LCT to the south-west would be restricted by the intervening woodland along the strath floor, and the landform enclosing the valley sides. The main effects would be focused within approximately 400-500 m of the works and would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). Across the wider LCT, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.57 Once operational, the Section E alignment would introduce five towers to the LCT area in the Kyle of Sutherland (Towers S227 – S231), as well as short sections of permanent access track in the context of existing forestry on the eastern and western sides of the valley (approximately 860 m in total). The towers would represent new elements in views channelled along the northern end of the strath that would contrast with the more rural / natural characteristics of the LCT. However, the towers would be broadly similar in terms of design, albeit taller than the existing OHL, that extends along the strath further north. The alignment would take the shortest route across the strath, reducing its physical footprint upon the LCT, and would be subject to screening by woodland and the enclosing landform across the valley sides. The effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) within approximately 400-500 m of the alignment. The effects would diminish at greater distance due to intervening screening and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) across more distant parts of the LCT. Many areas located further to the south-west would be completely unaffected.

LCT 229 – Enclosed Farmland

7.9.58 This LCT encompasses areas of mixed farmland with extensive tree cover / woodland, as well as scattered settlements. The LCT is located at the southern end of the Section E alignment, comprising Tower S232 at its southern terminus. The construction works would not result in any notable tree felling, or other effects on the existing landscape fabric due to the limited footprint of the Proposed Development within the LCT. Indirect

effects, based on views of the activities and vehicle movements, would also be limited due to the extent of tree cover in the surrounding area. In summary, within approximately 600-700m of the works at the southern end of Section E the effects would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). Across all other parts of the LCT (comprising the vast majority of the LCT) the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

7.9.59 Operational effects would be focused on the western edge of the LCT, in the vicinity of Fanellan, where the Section E alignment would introduce one tower (Tower S232). There would be no permanent access track. From the surrounding locality, the tower would be experienced on the skyline, alongside other Section E towers extending to the north-west (outside the LCT). The influence of the towers would be reduced by the presence of the existing OHL within the landscape to the east of the towers. These views would be restricted across other parts of the LCT due to the extent of tree cover and woodland. Within approximately 600-700m of the alignment (specifically Tower S232, at the southern end of Section E) the effects would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). The influence of the Proposed Development would diminish across other parts of the LCT at greater distance, due to screening by intervening woodland, where effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Assessment of Effects on Designated and Protected Landscapes

7.9.60 The detailed assessment of effects arising from the Proposed Development on designated and protected landscapes, is included in **Volume 5, Appendix 7.4**. The assessment has considered the potential for effects on the Special Qualities of NSAs and SLAs, in addition to the Key Attributes and Qualities of WLAs.

7.9.61 Eleven designated or otherwise protected landscape areas were included in the assessment. The assessment concluded that effects to the following designated landscapes would be significant, during either construction and/or operation as discussed in **Volume 5, Appendix 7.4**:

- Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA;
- The Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA; and
- The Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA.

7.9.62 The key effects on the Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA would be limited to the outer-most 400-500 m of the WLA to the east of Cnoc a' Bhreac Leathaid, Carn a Chlaiginn and Carn an Laith-bhaid. This is based on indirect effects of the Proposed Development in Section D as it extends through the adjoining landscape to the east. The effects would diminish steadily across other parts of the WLA.

7.9.63 Both of the SLAs would be directly impacted by the Proposed Development in Sections A and B.

7.9.64 Overall effects on the following designated and/or protected landscapes were determined to be not significant at construction and operational phases:

- The Dornoch Firth NSA;
- The Glen Strathfarrar NSA;
- The Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie SLA;
- The Ben Wyvis SLA;
- The Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA;
- The Causeymire – Knockin Flows WLA;
- The Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest WLA; and
- The Central Highlands WLA.

7.9.65 The identified significant effects on the Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA; Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA; and the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA are described in detail in **Volume 5, Appendix 7.4** and the Section specific LVIAs for Section A (see **Volume 5, Appendix 7.5**), Section B (**see Volume 5, Appendix 7.6**), and Section D (see **Volume 5, Appendix 7.8**). A summary of the effects on the WLA and two SLAs is provided below.

Section A

The Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA

7.9.66 The Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA is largely defined by its vast peatlands and low horizons which create a wild and remote atmosphere further reinforced by limited accessibility. Isolated mountains, marked by exposed rock formations and montane vegetation, offer dramatic views of both the Flow Country and the open sea. Moorland foothills introduce diverse focal points, including scattered lochs and meandering watercourses. Settlements are primarily located in sheltered glens and coastal regions, where the landscape transitions from open moorland to more enclosed and habitable areas.

7.9.67 The special qualities of the SLA were identified as being:

- A striking combination of mountains rising abruptly from surrounding extensive areas of peatland that is vast in scale, with a long low horizon and broadly very simple in character, although containing numerous lochs, lochans and pools. The peatland areas are very difficult to access or cross due to the lack of tracks and roads and because of the drainage conditions. Consequently, these areas tend to possess a strong sense of wildness.
- The isolated mountains are typified by exposed rock, rocky outcrops and scree, and montane vegetation. They form distinctive and offer extensive views over the Flow Country and out to sea.
- The moorland foothills which flank the lone mountains typically comprise undulating and sloping broad convex hills, plateaux, rocky outcrops and crags, dense heather and grassland mosaics. The landform sweeps gently north from impressive elevations across vast open moorland to the flat peatland.
- The peatland expanse is incised in places by deeply carved, meandering wooded glens. Parallel tracks and footpaths, penetrate some interior parts of these glens, also occupied by isolated lodges and bothies utilising the shelter and protection offered by these glen slopes. These build structures empathise and contrast the vast scale of the surrounding peatlands.
- Settlement only occurs at the south-eastern part of this area, restricted to the sheltered glens and coastal areas. This leaves the area largely undeveloped and consequently possessing strong qualities of wildness.
- Experience of the open peatlands area is strongly affected by big skies with rapidly changing light and weather conditions. Views from local roads are particularly important along the higher sections of the A9 around Achavanich and Berriedale and from the road into Braemore. Views from the railway which skirts the area's north-western side, from the valley tracks, from the mountain peaks, or even from aircraft all give different perspectives.
- The inland waterways were a vital method of transport and communication in prehistory monuments are predominantly located along Langwell and Berriedale Waters and their tributaries. The remains represent the full range of major prehistoric features and include chambered cairns, roundhouses, brochs, souterrains, burnt mounds etc.

7.9.68 The SLA was judged to have a High sensitivity to change associated with the Proposed Development.

7.9.69 North of Dunbeath, Section A is located outside of the SLA, at its closest proximity the distance is 500 m, this rises to approximately 6 km, west of Dunbeath. Accordingly in this northern section there would be indirect

effects on the SLA resulting from the Proposed Development. Visibility towards the Proposed Development would occur primarily from upland elements of the SLA. South and west of Dunbeath, the southern portion of Section A is largely located within the SLA (extending through the SLA in the region of the Berriedale Coast for a distance of approximately 5.6 km) and therefore direct effects would occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

7.9.70 Potential views of the construction activities within the northern section, would be tempered by the distance of view in combination with the relatively low-level nature of construction works / vehicle movements. Within the valleys, tree cover, and topography would restrict longer-range views, but from closer range, often 1 km, as the Proposed Development crosses the valleys, the construction activities would be visible and prominent. In the southern portion of Section A, construction activities would be viewed at close distances both across the moorland and within the valleys including Strath Ullie.

7.9.71 Once operational, the towers would be visible from open moorland vantage points. Given the distance of view, they would represent relatively discreet additions to the background landscape enclosing the wider moorland and hills.

7.9.72 In summary, the impact magnitude upon the SLA would be locally (within 1 km) High-medium during construction and Medium during operation within the rolling hills adjoining the coastal fringe. This would diminish across more northern parts of the SLA, where views would be fully screened by intervening distances, woodland and topography, or where there is no direct impact to the landscape features which contribute to the Special Qualities of the SLA.

7.9.73 As described above, direct effects on The Flow Country and Berriedale Coast SLA would be focussed on its southern extents in the upland landscapes in the region west and northwest of Helmsdale to Dunbeath where direct effects would occur. The influence of Section A alignment on the SLA would diminish steadily at increased distance. The effect would be locally **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and locally **Moderate Adverse** (significant) during operation, with effects diminishing with greater distance across the SLA further north and no direct effects on the expansive peatlands of the Flow covered by the designation. The Proposed Development would have very limited effects on the coastal aspects of the SLA given distance and intervening vegetation and topography.

Section A

The Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA

7.9.74 The Loch Fleet, Loch Brora, and Glen Loth SLA is located in the northern extents of the study area to the Proposed Development in the vicinity of Brora. The SLA encompasses an area of rolling moorland hills, punctuated by a series of southeast orientated glens, straths and lochs, and edged to a narrow strip of farmed coastal shelf running along the shoreline. The character of this area is distinguished by its composition of contrasting landscape features – the contrasting landform, landcover and landscape pattern that empathise the distinction of each other.

7.9.75 Section A of the Proposed Development would extend across the SLA for a distance of approximately 15.6 km. Accordingly, there would be direct impacts on the SLA as a result of the Proposed Development during construction and operation within a relatively small area, however indirect effects as a result of visibility of the Proposed Development would occur across a wider area primarily from upland elements of the SLA. There would be very limited visibility or no visibility of the Proposed Development from coastal elements of the SLA. Potential views of the construction activities across the moorland plateau within the SLA would be tempered by the distance of view in combination with the relatively low-level nature of construction works / vehicle movements.

7.9.76 The special qualities of the SLA were identified as being:

- The combination and juxtaposition of the rolling moorland hills, linear glens, the coastal shelf and tidal basin creates a diverse yet connected landscape composition, which is experienced in sequence when travelling along the A9(T) and from the railway.
- The hill area contains straths and glens with differing local character derived from the varying combination of native woodland, forest plantation, moorland and water bodies. Providing sheltered access routes through the hills and physical and visual connections between the interior and the coastal shelf.
- Views are obtained from some areas of wind turbines and overhead electricity lines whose large scale and man-made character can seem to diminish the scale of the interior hills and their wildness qualities.
- A simple uniform, rolling plateau of interior broad, interwoven rounded hills, clothed by an open mosaic of heather and grass moorland. As this composition is simple and extends throughout the area.
- Skelbo Castle is a dominant feature on the south-side of Loch Fleet, sitting atop a hill commanding excellent views of the loch.
- The linear coastal shelf, is defined by the edge formed by the adjacent hill slopes, providing expansive views both along the coastal edge and outwards across the open sea. Interior views are limited by the convex nature of the hill slopes.
- To the east lies a narrow fertile coastal shelf contains the main road and rail routes in this area, and small farms and settlements. A distinctive field pattern of pasture runs parallel to the coast.
- The Mound is a prominent and man-made causeway over which the main A9 coastal road passes. Engineered by T Telford in 1814 –16.

7.9.77 The SLA was judged to have a High sensitivity to change associated with the Proposed Development.

7.9.78 Within the valleys, tree cover, and topography would restrict longer-range views, but from closer range, often 1 km, as the Proposed Development crosses the valleys, the construction activities would be visible and prominent. Once operational, the towers would be visible from open moorland vantage points. Given the distance of view, they would represent relatively discreet additions to the background landscape enclosing the wider moorland and hills, however on occasions the towers would be viewed in combination with existing OHLs and/or wind turbines in the wider landscape. Within the valleys the towers would be visible in closer proximity as they traverse the valley and would be prominent features within the view. Intervening vegetation would restrict longer-range views. In summary, the impact magnitude upon the SLA would be locally High during construction and High-medium during operation. This would diminish across more northern parts of the SLA, where ZTV coverage is more limited, and / or views would be fully screened by intervening woodland and topography.

7.9.79 The effects resulting from the Proposed Development on the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora, and Glen Loth SLA would occur predominantly on the upland landscapes of the SLA. The Proposed Development would have a direct effect on the landscapes which contribute to the Special Qualities of the SLA. The introduction of the alignment would reduce the perceived wildness and tranquillity of the interior hills and Glen Loth. The influence of Section A of the Proposed Development on the SLA would however diminish steadily at increased distance. The effect would be locally **Major Adverse** (significant) during construction and **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) during operation, with effects diminishing with greater distance across the SLA to the north-east. The Proposed Development would have very limited effects on the coastal aspects of the SLA and very limited effects on the perception of change within the SLA from the A9(T) and the Far North Railway line.

Section B

The Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA

7.9.80 Section B of the Proposed Development would extend across the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA for a distance of approximately14.8 km. Accordingly, there would be direct effects on the SLA as a result of the Proposed Development during construction and operation within a relatively small area, however indirect effects as a result of visibility of the Proposed Development would occur across a wider area primarily from upland elements of the SLA. There would be very limited visibility or no visibility of the Proposed Development from coastal elements of the SLA. Potential views of the construction activities across the moorland plateau within the SLA would be tempered by the distance of view in combination with the relatively low-level nature of construction works / vehicle movements.

7.9.81 During construction the erection of the towers would provide a noticeable change across the moorland, which is characterised by its wild character. The open character of the moorland would result in multiple towers being visible in any view across the SLA elevated sections. Within the valleys, the vegetation coverage along with topography would reduce long-range visibility across the alignment of the Proposed Development, however localised effects would be observed as the towers are constructed and from compound areas as well as localised tree felling for some locations. The effect would be locally **Major Adverse** (significant) during construction, with effects diminishing with greater distance across the SLA.

7.9.82 During operation the Proposed Development would remain a noticeable linear industrial element visible across the open and wild moorland. Remediation of the compound areas and access tracks will mitigate some of the effects, but overall the effect during operation would be **Major-Moderate Adverse**, with diminishing effects at greater distances across the SLA to the north-west. The Proposed Development would have very limited effects on the coastal aspects of the SLA and minimal impact on the perception of change within the SLA as seen from the A9(T) and the Far North Railway line.

Section D

Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA

7.9.83 The Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA is located 450 m west of the Proposed Development in Section D at the closest point (Tower N50). The WLA encompasses a complex composition of high and steep mountains within central parts, which transitions to cnocan and open peatland hills in the north. The challenging terrain and quiet, uninhabited glens are recognised for their sense of isolation and wildness. The landscape sensitivity of this WLA is considered to be High, with reference to the sensitivity analysis for the coinciding LCTs. This is reflective of the high susceptibility to change of the type proposed, particularly across more remote interior areas.

7.9.84 There would be no direct, physical change to the landscape within the WLA as a result of the Proposed Development. Potential views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would be focused on the eastern edge of the WLA, in particular the slopes and summits of Cnoc a' Bhreac Leathaid, Carn a Chlaiginn and Carn an Laith-bhaid. From these areas the construction works / vehicle movements and the introduction of the towers would contrast with the wild and remote qualities of the landscape. However, the Proposed Development would be experienced in the context of commercial forestry, within a receiving landscape of vast scale. The influence of the Proposed Development would diminish steadily across other parts of the WLA at increased distance.

7.9.85 During construction and operation, a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted for the outer-most 400-500 m of the WLA to the east of Cnoc a' Bhreac Leathaid, Carn a Chlaiginn and Carn an Laith-

bhaid. This would account for an area of approximately 250 ha, within a WLA that encompasses a total landmass of 90,466 ha (equating to less than 0.3%). The effects would diminish steadily across western parts of the WLA at increased distance from the Section D alignment. The overall effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation. The effects upon more remote interior parts of the WLA (comprising the majority of the WLA) would be extremely limited, and completely absent across lower lying slopes and glens, where there would be no views and no effect. Accordingly, it is assessed that the integrity of the WLA would not be compromised.

7.10 Assessment of Effects: Views and Visual Amenity

General

7.10.1 This section of the LVIA provides a summary of the potential significant effects resulting from the Proposed Development on visual receptors.

7.10.2 The detailed assessment of effects on the visual amenity of Building-based Receptors, Route-based Receptors and individuals at Outdoor Viewing Locations is presented in each of the Section specific appendices (refer to **Volume 5, Appendices 7.5 to 7.9**). Predicted significant effects are summarised below. The description of effects should be read in conjunction with the baseline descriptions for the relevant receptors, detailed in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 of the corresponding appendices.

7.10.3 The summary of effects is provided on a per section basis.

Settlements and Residential Receptors

Section A

7.10.4 The assessment of effects on the views and visual amenity of people in settlements and residential receptors identified that significant effects resulting from the Proposed Development would be likely to be arise at Lanergill Farm, Toftingall Farm, Halsary, farmsteads and cottages along the A9(T), (Braehungie and Mountain View), the crofting township at Smerral, scattered properties at Badnagie, Achorn House, Borgue, Badrinsary (Rose Cottage and an unnamed house), Langwell Gardens, Langwell Kennels, and Keepers House, The Bungalow, Ousdale, and Keepers Cottage, Marrel and scattered cottages along the A897.

Lanergill Farm (SA-01)

7.10.5 The principal views from Lanergill Farm are oriented to the north, north-west, and north-east, extending across open grazing fields partially curtailed by gently rising landforms and screened by existing outbuildings, collectively limiting more distant visibility into the broader landscape. Views are partially screened to the south and west by foreground tree cover, approximately 10 m away. Where this intervening vegetation is sparse, wind turbines on the moorland are visible, though plantation forestry at Moss of Toftingall (approximately 730 m away) obscures their lower sections. During both the construction and operational phases, views of the Proposed Development would be experienced at close proximity, occupying a significant portion of the north-west and south-west outlooks. In closest-range views, Tower N12, located approximately 230 m away, would be visible obliquely through gaps in the foreground curtilage trees. Tower N11, situated around 380 m away, would be seen to the west and north-west. Further south, beyond Moss of Toftingall, direct sightlines to the Proposed Development would extend up to 3 km, where the towers would appear against the sky, aligned with distant wind turbines. During winter, seasonal leaf loss would reduce natural screening, leaving the towers more exposed. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during both the construction and operational stages.

Lydias House, Toftingall Farm (SA-02)

7.10.6 The main views from the property and judged to be oriented to the south-west, south, and south-east, overlooking the Loch of Toftingall. These open views encompass expansive fields, rolling hills, and clusters of wind turbines on the horizon. However, wider visibility in these directions is partially reduced by plantation forestry (Moss of Toftingall), located approximately 760 m away. To the north and north-west, views are enclosed by landforms, elevated forestry, and scattered trees, while plantation forestry restricts eastern views in the immediate foreground. During both the construction and operational phases, close-range views of the Proposed Development would occur to the south and south-east. Tower N12, the nearest structure (approximately 330 m away), would be seen obliquely, prominently set against open fields and the background sky. Although forestry to the east provides substantial screening, the openness of the foreground fields leaves much of the view exposed. The coniferous tree cover offers consistent screening throughout the year, with minimal seasonal variation. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during both the construction and operational stages.

Farmstead at Halsary (SA-03)

7.10.7 Views from SA-03 are primarily oriented to the south-east across the Flow Country, with trees in the curtilage in the foreground providing partial filtering. The landscape features wind turbines, pylons, and power lines to the south-west, west, and north-west, contributing to a strong infrastructure presence both in the immediate foreground and extending into the distance. In contrast, views to the east, south-east, and south are more expansive, encompassing open peatland (approximately 380 m to the east and south-east at the closest point) and distant rolling hills (approximately 13 km to the south) with minimal visible infrastructure. During both the construction and operational phases, views of the Proposed Development would be experienced in close-range views to the north-east, east, and south-east, with partial filtering provided by foreground tree cover. Tower N29, the nearest structure, would be directly visible at approximately 256 m. In wider southern views, Towers N30 to N37 would be partially visible up to a distance of 3.3 km, appearing against the background sky. The broadleaved curtilage trees would slightly reduce their filtering effects during winter months, subtly increasing the visibility of infrastructure elements. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during both the construction and operational stages.

Farmsteads and cottages along the A9(T) (SA-04)

7.10.8 Farmsteads and cottages along the A9(T) primarily have westward views toward the Flows, characterised by expansive peatland framed by notable distant hills and peaks, including Morven, Scaraben, and Maiden Pap. Partially screened views of wind turbines are visible to the north-west from these properties, appearing on the horizon. Existing transmission infrastructure to the north-east, east, and south-east is intermittently visible at varying distances from the properties (approximately 90–250 m), positioned on the elevated moorland hill slopes and standing out notably against the sky. Curtilage trees variably filter oblique views toward the eastern hills, while most properties maintain open, uninterrupted views to the north-west, west, and south-west, offering expansive panoramic vistas of wilderness and vast skies that evoke a strong sense of remoteness. The Proposed Development (Towers N40–N46 and N56–N58) would be visible at close range to the north-east, east, and south-east from varying angles, closely aligned with the existing infrastructure. Achavanich Farm (approximately 198 m from Tower N46) and Corrie View (approximately 280 m from Tower N57) would experience the most direct views. Views toward designated and protected landscapes west of the A9(T) would remain largely unaffected, preserving the sense of remoteness and open sky. Due to the broadleaf nature of the curtilage trees, visibility of the Proposed Development would increase during the autumn and winter months as foliage diminishes. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during both the construction and operational stages.

Single-storey cottage (Braehungie) and mobile home (Mountain View) west of the A9(T) (SA-05)

7.10.9 Properties at this location experience expansive, panoramic westerly views across the Flow Country. In contrast, views to the south-east, east, and north-east are more enclosed by rising terrain, with existing transmission infrastructure occasionally visible against the skyline. During both the construction and operational phases, the construction and the introduction of steel lattice towers would be prominently visible in close proximity. At Braehungie, views of the Proposed Development to the north and east would be partially screened by intervening landforms and tree cover, while open views remain to the north-west, west, and south-west. Due to the presence of broadleaved vegetation, reduced filtering effects are anticipated during winter months, resulting in increased visibility. Elevated ground limits easterly views at Mountain View, but exposure to the south and south-west would increase the visibility of the Proposed Development. Towers N61 and N62, situated approximately 213 m from Braehungie and 178 m from Mountain View, respectively, would appear prominent in the foreground, contrasting against the surrounding landscape and sky. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during both the construction and operational stages.

Crofting township at Smerral (SA-06)

7.10.10 The township of Smerral is situated within the Houstry Valley, enclosed by elevated terrain to the east and west. Open views across rolling fields and distant hills are available from higher elevations, especially in the north-east, south-west, and south-east sides of the township. Infrastructure elements, including wind turbines, power lines, and agricultural outbuildings, are intermittently visible on the upper hill slopes when viewed toward the north-west, west, and south-west. Most properties experience minimal visual obstruction, although views from lower elevations are more enclosed by intervening landforms, limiting visibility to the broader landscape.

7.10.11 Construction activities and steel lattice towers associated with the Proposed Development would be prominently visible along ridgelines and elevated ground. Notably, the farmstead north of Boultach, approximately 334 m from Tower N69, would experience the closest-range views. Wider visibility of Towers N61 to N71 would be experienced from higher elevations across the township, including properties at Achnacloich, Boultach, Homeland, and Boultach Farm, ranging from 530 m to 2.3 km. In the south-eastern and south-western parts of the township, the Proposed Development would be perceptible from greater distances, appearing against the landscape and sky. These towers would become less prominent but remain distinguishable within the broader views. Visibility levels would remain consistent throughout the year due to limited tree cover and negligible seasonal filtering effects. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) to **Major Adverse** (significant) effects, depending on proximity and the proportion of the view occupied, during both the construction and operational stages, properties in the northern portion of the township being more likely to experience a greater level of effect.

Scattered properties at Badnagie (SA-07)

7.10.12 Isolated dwellings and farm structures in this area have generally open and expansive westerly and north-westerly views channelled along Dunbeath Strath, encompassing rolling hills, open moorland, and grassy fields. The east and north-east views are partially curtailed by elevated landforms, notably the Hill of Lychrobbie and Cnoc Breac. Intervening vegetation and rolling terrain offer varying degrees of filtering, with shrubs and occasional tree clusters providing localised screening. Construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers would create varying degrees of visual change. Towers N77–N84 would be visible along the strath at varying distances, partially screened by tree cover and/or landform. Visual contrast would be most noticeable against the sky from lower elevations within 1 km of the Proposed Development, especially in open areas with sparse vegetation. Ballentink, approximately 726 m from Tower N80, would experience the closest-

range visibility. Due to the nature of surrounding vegetation, visibility would remain consistent throughout the year, with minimal seasonal variation. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Moderate-Minor** Adverse (not significant) to **Major Adverse** (significant) effects, depending on proximity and the proportion of the view occupied, during both the construction and operational stages.

Achorn House (SA-08)

7.10.13 The main views from the property are oriented south-east toward Balnabruich, with plantation forestry approximately 250 m in the foreground. Elevated above Dunbeath Strath, the receptors at the property experiences broad panoramic views to the north-west, north, and north-east, encompassing a mix of low-lying riparian tree belts, moorland, and farmland. To the south-west, south, and south-east, views are more enclosed by moorland hills, while partially screened views of a distant wind farm to the north contrast with the surrounding wilderness. Construction activity and steel lattice towers would be visible at close range to the south-west, west, and north-west, with minimal filtering. The prominence of towers would be greatest where they cross the foreground landscape in north-western, western, and south-western views. Tower N87, the closest to the property, is located approximately 365 m to the north-west and would be visible at an oblique angle. In wider views extending up to 5.7 km north-west toward Braehungie, Towers N71–N86 would remain perceptible against the moorland backdrop and sky, albeit appearing more recessive due to distance. Views toward Towers N87–N94 from higher ground to the south, south-east, and south-west would be limited by landform to around 2.5 km. In the absence of intervening vegetation, visibility would remain consistent throughout the year. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects during both the construction and operational stages.

Borgue (SA-09)

7.10.14 Views from farmsteads and cottages along the A9 at Borgue are primarily oriented towards the north-east, east, and south-east, extending across the North Sea, framed by moorland hills rising to the west. Gently sloping crofting fields create a defined coastal foreground, limiting visibility inland to the west. Existing OHL crosses elevated ground west of the A9(T), and new steel lattice towers would appear as extensions of this infrastructure, particularly noticeable from north-west, west, and south-west-facing properties. Tower visibility would be intermittent, influenced by rolling terrain and curtilage trees, with the nearest tower (Tower N98) at approximately 431 m distance from Redlesburn House, visible at an oblique angle. Key seaward views would remain unaffected, but wider views to the south-west (up to 2.7 km) and west/north-west (up to 3 km) would partially include tower silhouettes against the sky. Vegetation would offer limited screening in spring and summer but reduced foliage in autumn and winter would increase visibility. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during both the construction and operational stages.

Badrinsary (Rose Cottage and an unnamed house) (SA-10)

7.10.15 At Badrinsary, south-west-facing views overlook Berriedale Strath, while views to the north-west, north, and north-east are generally screened by woodland and rolling terrain. In contrast, open sea views are obtained to the south-east and east, extending over farmland toward the coastal shelf. During both the construction and operational phases, steel lattice towers would be visible in close proximity within the north-west, north, and north-east-facing views. Some of these views would be partially filtered by intervening landforms and vegetation. Tower N106, the nearest visible structure (approximately 343 m away), would be intermittently seen through gaps in the trees. Despite the new infrastructure, key sea views to the south-east and east would remain unaffected. In wider views to the south-west, extending across Berriedale Strath (up to 4.6 km), partial glimpses of the tower tops would be visible, primarily set against the background landscape and the expansive sky. Seasonal vegetation would provide a degree of screening during spring and summer, while visibility would increase during autumn and winter due to foliage reduction. Overall, the Proposed

Development would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) during both the construction and operational stages.

Langwell Gardens, Langwell Kennels, and Keepers House (SA-11)

7.10.16 Langwell Gardens and nearby properties have enclosed and filtered views, particularly to the south-west, where rolling hills and dense woodland define the outlook over Berriedale Strath. Visibility of the broader landscape is generally limited by intervening landform and vegetation, with only occasional openings providing glimpses of the surroundings. Sea views to the east and north-east are heavily screened by terrain variation and curtilage vegetation, creating narrow, filtered sightlines towards distant slopes. Construction works and steel lattice towers (Towers N113–N114) would introduce visual changes in close proximity (approximately 386 to 520 m) to properties including Langwell Gardens, Langwell Kennels, and Keepers House. North- and north-west-facing views would experience intermittent visibility of tower tops through tree gaps, though heavily filtered by intervening landform and tree cover. In more distant views to the west and south-west, towers would appear partially against the background landscape and sky, with their lower sections often obscured by vegetation and rolling hills around Creagan Cosach and Cadha Fhionn. Infrastructure elements would become more recessive within the landscape with increased distance, while sea views and open skylines would remain unaffected. Seasonal vegetation would provide effective screening during spring and summer but reduced foliage in autumn and winter would increase visibility around these properties. Overall, the Proposed Development is anticipated to result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during both the construction and operational stages.

The Bungalow, Ousdale, and Keepers Cottage (SA-12)

7.10.17 Views from the cottages and farmhouses at this location extend across a rural landscape characterised by rolling hills, open fields, and scattered forestry plantations. Ousdale Farm and The Bungalow experience relatively open, panoramic views oriented north and south, overlooking gently sloping grazing fields. In contrast, Keepers Cottage, located at the base of Braigh na h-Eaglaise, is more enclosed by forested hills, with restricted views in all directions due to topography and vegetation. Existing OHL are present along the rural track connecting the properties and across the distant hills to the east. Construction works and the introduction of steel lattice towers (Towers N124–N129) would be intermittently visible to the north-west, west, and south-west from varying distances and angles, set against the forested moorland backdrop and background sky. A short section of the Proposed Development, particularly Towers N125–N127, would be experienced at close range from these properties, with the lower parts of the structure frequently filtered by forestry plantations. Keepers Cottage, located approximately 187 m from Tower N127, would experience the closest-range views of the Proposed Development, viewed at an extremely oblique angle toward the upper hill slopes. In wider views to the west and north-west across all properties, the infrastructure would remain partially visible against the sky, while dense woodland would effectively screen most views to the north-east. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in a **Moderate Adverse** (significant) impact during both the construction and operational stages.

Marrel and scattered cottages along the A897 (SA-13)

7.10.18 The properties at Marrel are situated within the valley, bordered by mature woodland and scattered trees on the surrounding hill slopes which extend north-west, north-east, and south-west from the A897. Primary views from these properties are generally oriented north-west and south-east along the Strath of Kildonan, with woodland and riparian forest forming the immediate foreground. Throughout the settlement, views are predominantly enclosed by the elevated terrain of Eldrable Hill and Caen Hill, which channel sightlines along the River Helmsdale, thereby limiting the visibility of the broader landscape.

7.10.19 Due to the varying topography and density of tree cover, different levels of visibility for the Proposed Development would be experienced from the properties. Generally, construction works and steel lattice towers would be largely screened within the strath by the surrounding woodland and landform, with some glimpses of the tower tops discernible against the sky. However, more open oblique views may occur from the properties at elevated slopes north of Creag Marail, especially where tree cover is sparse. Towers N147–N150 would be intermittently visible from these properties, with the most pronounced and direct views occurring at closer locations, particularly at Craig Brae. Craig Brae, located near the River Helmsdale to the south-east of the alignment, lies approximately 470 m away, where the visibility of the Proposed Development would be noticeable in closest-range views. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects, depending on proximity and the proportion of the view occupied, during both the construction and operational stages.

Section B

7.10.20 The assessment of effects on the views and visual amenity of people in settlements and residential receptors identified that significant effects resulting from the Proposed Development would be likely to be arise at Gordonbush, Killin, Caroll Cottage, Morvich, East Kinnauld, Eiden, Dalnamain and Brae Cottage.

Gordonbush / Old Town (SB-01)

7.10.21 During construction, the erection of the towers along with vehicle movements and compound areas would be viewed at distance across the Loch. Although clearer views will be experienced on the west side of the loch, woodland would obscure some activity on the eastern bank. The Proposed Development is predominantly visible against the background landscape. Overall, the visibility would be more apparent in winter months during leaf fall. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). During operation, the towers would remain a visible feature albeit at distance and set against the panoramic vista of the Loch and Valley, the woodland would continue to filter views to the Proposed Development on the eastern banks. The overall effect would be reduced to **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Killin (SB-02)

7.10.22 The construction works and new steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity. The Proposed Development would be visible at close range in views to the north. The views would be experienced against the combination of background sky, vegetation and landscape. The Proposed Development would be visible as it climbs up to the moorland north of the property. Overall, the visibility would be more apparent in winter months during leaf fall. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant). The proximity of the Proposed Development to the property would restrict mitigation measures during operation. This would result in **Moderate-Major Adverse** effects remaining (significant).

Carroll Cottage (SB-03)

7.10.23 Given the wide views north towards the Proposed Development the construction works and new steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity. The Proposed Development would be visible as it crosses the valley and climbs up to the moorland north of the property. Overall, the visibility would be more apparent in winter months during leaf fall. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant). The proximity of the Proposed Development to the property would restrict mitigation measures during operation. This would result in **Moderate-Major Adverse** effects remaining (significant).

Morvich (SB-05)

7.10.24 Construction activity would be visible in the middle ground of the view to the west of Morvich however intervening adjacent vegetation as well as along the river combines with the topography of the valley slopes

would to reduce the extent of visibility within the valley. Visibility would increase as the Proposed Development ascends the valley to the Moorland. Some localised tree felling would be necessary on the western slopes and would be a visible change. Construction traffic along the A839 along with temporary compound areas would be a noticeable change for the properties. Effects are reduced during the summer months given the extent of vegetation which would filter views. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during construction. The effects would diminish during operation to **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

East Kinnauld (SB-06)

7.10.25 The Proposed Development would replicate the alignment of the existing OHL to the east, construction work including site clearance tower erection and additional traffic would be visible from the small collection of properties, in the case of the property south of the railway the alignment is located in fields to the east. Temporary access tracks in the valley floor would also be visible but offset by intervening vegetation. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during construction. During operation the Proposed Development would be visible in conjunction with the existing OHL, the temporary tracks would have been removed and mitigation measures completed. The effects would diminish to **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Eiden (SB-11)

7.10.26 The Proposed Development would introduce a second OHL within the valley. Given the wide views, construction activities would be visible particularly in regards vegetation clearance and construction of the towers. During construction tower erection, localised tree clearance, temporary access points and construction traffic would all be noticeable changes in the wide view across the valley floor to the northeast of the properties. Construction activity would be visible as the Development rises the northern slopes. Topography and vegetation would restrict views of construction to the southeast. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) during construction. During operation the Proposed Development would be visible in conjunction with the existing OHL, the temporary tracks would have been removed and mitigation measures completed. The effects would diminish to **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Dalnamain (SB-15)

7.10.27 The Proposed Development would run parallel and to the east northeast of the existing transmission lines towards Eiden. It would be visible along the moorland before descending into the valley, where tree cover, and topography restricts visibility. As the alignment rises out of the valley northwest of Morvich some views of the towers would be possible but viewed from distance and in the context of the wider moorland landscape. During construction, activities would be evident south from Craeg a Bhlair including tower erection, temporary tracks, construction movement and compounds, as the Proposed Development heads southwest parallel to the existing OHL towards the property at distances up to 1 km this would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). During operation, the alignment would follow the route of the existing OHL and in the wide views of the moorland this would remain a perceptible change to the baseline view. At distances up to 1 km this would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Brae Cottage (SB-16)

7.10.28 Brae Cottage is orientated towards the south-east and will experience views towards the alignment of the Proposed Development as it runs parallel to the two existing OHLs approximately 500 m from the property. The Proposed Development will be positioned on elevated ground, south of the existing OHLs. Construction work will be visible both in proximity of the house and to the east and west up to distances of 2 km. The high ground of Creag Dail na Meine restricts longer views as the existing OHL and the Proposed Development head northeast towards Eiden. Construction activity including tree felling, tower erection, construction traffic,

compounds and crane work will result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). During operation the addition of a third OHL will increase the built elements within the near ground view and its location on higher ground adds layering to the built elements. The increase in extent of OHLs will be visible across the moorland plateau for 2km with some topographical mitigation. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Section C

7.10.29 The assessment of effects on the views and visual amenity of people in settlements and residential receptors identified that significant effects resulting from the Proposed Development would be likely to be arise at Culrain and at four residential properties comprising Creide, Oak Bank, Invershin Farm and The Bungalow (Invershin).

Culrain (SC-01)

7.10.30 From Culrain, the Proposed Development would be partially visible in views to the south-west at a distance of approximately 1.05 km, in the context of existing forestry and moorland. Views would consist of the upper parts of the transmission towers, visible against the background sky, with greater visibility of towers that coincide with areas of moorland. Views to more distant parts of the Proposed Development to the north-west are more contained by both landform and forest cover, and would consist of partially screened views of the upper parts of transmission towers. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Creide (SC-06)

7.10.31 The construction works and new steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity in views to the south, at a distance of approximately 205 m. The views would be experienced against the combination of background sky and landscape, and would be heavily filtered by intervening mature tree cover near the property. Views to more distant parts of the Proposed Development to the east would also be heavily filtered by mature tree cover, and predominantly visible against the background landscape. Overall, the visibility would be more apparent in winter months during leaf fall. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant).

Oak Bank (SC-07)

7.10.32 The construction works and new steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity, predominantly back-clothed by the background landscape at a distance of approximately 300 m to the south. These views would be heavily filtered by tree cover adjacent to the curtilage. Overall, the visibility would be more apparent in winter months during leaf fall. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Invershin Farm (SC-08)

7.10.33 The Proposed Development would be visible at close range from Invershin Farm, against the background landscape, a distance of approximately 200 m to the south. These views would be heavily filtered by mature tree cover, particularly during summer months. Views to more distant parts of the Proposed Development to the south-west and east would also be heavily filtered by adjacent tree cover. There would be heavily filtered views of the Special Arrangement (duck under with wood poles, with live line scaffold provision intersection) to the south-east, between Tower S22 and S23. The clearest views would be experienced during winter months due to leaf fall. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

The Bungalow, Invershin (SC-09)

7.10.34 Views of the Proposed Development to the south and south-west, at a distance of approximately 460 m, would be heavily filtered by mature vegetation around the property. Views to more distant parts of the Proposed

Development to the south-east would be partially screened by landform and filtered by curtilage vegetation. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Section D

7.10.35 The assessment of effects on the views and visual amenity of people in settlements and residential receptors identified that significant effects resulting from the Proposed Development would be likely to be experienced by residents at Sonnycroft, West End, Cnoc Cluaran, Glaik Croft, Fannyfield. Tighnacraig, Culeave Cottage, Cairn View, and Leac Dudh Mor.

Sonnycroft (SD-01)

7.10.36 View of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity to the west, filtered by intervening scrub vegetation. Tower S38 is the closest and would be viewed at an oblique angle at approx. 210 m distance. There would be views of Proposed Development at close range to the west, partially visible against the background landscape. In views to the south-west the Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against the background landscape, within Strathcarron. This would result in **Major-Adverse** effects (significant).

West End (SD-02)

7.10.37 Views of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity and at an oblique angle, in views to the west and south-west, Towers S112 and S133 are the closest, at approx. 270 m and 290 m distance respectively. Views of ground-based construction activity to the north-west would be filtered by intervening tree cover. There would be views of the Proposed Development at close range, predominantly against the background landscape, in views to the west and south-west. There would be filtered and partially screen views of the Proposed Development to the north and north-west, against the combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant).

Cnoc Cluaran (SD-03)

7.10.38 There would be oblique views of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers to the east. Tower S38 is the closest, at approx. 290 m. The Proposed Development would be visible at close range, predominantly against the background sky in views to the east, filtered by a curtilage vegetation. In wider views to the south-east, beyond Strathcarron (up to distances of 2.5 km), there would be Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against the background sky, filtered by intervening tree cover and would consist of the upper parts of the transmission towers, greater visibility within areas of moorland. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant).

Glaik Croft (SD-04)

7.10.39 The construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close range, on elevated ground to the south, south-east and south-west. (Tower S96 is the closest at 290 m.) The Proposed Development would be visible at close range predominantly against the background sky, due to the nature of the elevated landform to the south, south-east and south-west. Views to the south-west would partial screened by an adjacent shed building and curtilage vegetation. Views to the west and north-west would be partially screened by intervening landform, with the Proposed Development predominately visible against the background sky. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant).

Fannyfield (SD-05)

7.10.40 Views of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity, partially screened by forestry, to the west, south-west and north-west. (Tower S123 is the closest at approx. 315 m to the west). Views of ground-based construction work to the north-west would be limited due to screening effect of plantation forestry in the foreground. The Proposed Development would be visible to west and north-west, partially screened by adjacent shed building and forestry, against the background sky. To the south-west, the Proposed Development would be visible against a combination of background landscape and sky and to the north-west against the background sky, partial screened by planation forestry. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Tighnacriag (SD-06)

7.10.41 The construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity, in views to the east, north-east and south-east. (Tower S113 is the closest at 340 m and Tower S113 m at 370 m). Views of ground-based construction work to the north-east and south-east be more limited due to screening effect of intervening plantation forestry in the foreground. The Proposed Development would be visible to east and south, against both the background landscape and sky, partially screened by intervening forestry. In views to the north-west, the Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against the background sky and to the south-east against a combination of the background landscape and sky. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Culeave Cottage (SD-07)

7.10.42 There would be oblique views of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers in views to the east. Tower S38 is the closest, at approx. 375 m. The Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against the sky in views to the east, filtered by a curtilage vegetation and intervening tree cover in farmland. In views to the south-east, the Proposed Development would be visible against the combination of the background landscape and sky, filtered by intervening tree cover. The clearest views would be experienced during winter months due to leaf fall. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Cairn View (SD-08)

7.10.43 There would be oblique views of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers in views to the east. Tower S38 is the closest, at approx. 290 m. The Proposed Development would be visible at close range, predominantly against the background sky in views to the east, filtered by a curtilage vegetation. In wider views to the south-east, beyond Strathcarron (up to distances of 2.5 km), the Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against the background sky, filtered by intervening tree cover. The clearest views would be experienced during winter months due to leaf fall. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Leac Dubh Mor (SD-09)

7.10.44 There would be oblique views of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers in views to the east from Cnoc Climrian. Tower S38 would be the closest, at approx. 460 m. The Proposed Development would be visible at close range, predominantly against the background sky in views to the east, filtered by a curtilage vegetation. In wider views to the south-east, beyond Strathcarron (up to distances of 2.5 km), the Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against the background sky. The clearest views would be experienced during winter months due to leaf fall. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Section E

7.10.45 The assessment of effects on the views and visual amenity of people in settlements and residential receptors identified that significant effects resulting from the Proposed Development would be likely to be arise at Jamestown, Contin, Strathpeffer and Marybank in addition to Bridgepark Cottage, Mid Lodge, Heights of Kinnahaird, Bruaich Cottages, Ben View, Grieves Cottages, Broompark, Wester Newton, Kinnahaird, Achnacoul, Oakmor, Jacksons Cottage, Orrin Cottage, Sawmill Cottage, Coul Garden Cottage, Aucherderson Farmhouse, Gas Street Cottage, Wester Kinellan, and Upper Weston Fanellan Croft.

Jamestown (SE-20)

7.10.46 Views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would be extremely limited due to the concentration of intervening woodland to the west . This includes potential views of Tower S168, which would be located closest to the settlement at a distance of 540 m to the west. There would be clearer visibility of Tower 169 from the southern edge of the settlement. Within these localised views, this tower would be experienced at a distance of 615 m to the south-west. Views of wider parts of the Proposed Development would also be confined to properties on the southern edge of the settlement, and would be experienced against a combination of background sky and landscape. Within wider views to the south-west over the River Conon. the Proposed Development would be visible against the background landscape up to distances of 5 km. These views would be filtered by tree cover in and around the settlement and within intervening farmland. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), based on views from the southern settlement edge, diminishing across other of the parts settlement.

Contin (SE-21)

7.10.47 There would be views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers from south-eastern settlement edge, Tower S173 would be the closest at 580 m to the south-east, experienced against a combination of background sky and landscape and filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), based on views from the south-eastern settlement edge, diminishing across other of the parts settlement.

Strathpeffer (SE-22)

7.10.48 The construction works and steel lattice towers would be partially visible from localised residential areas on the outer edge of the settlement, and would represent distant elements in the background landscape towards the west. There would also be partial views of wider (more distant) parts of the Proposed Development in views to the south-west, up to distances of approximately 6 km. These views would also be restricted to localised, elevated areas on the edge of the settlement, and would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover. Views from other parts of the settlement would be subject to increased screening due to intervening buildings, tree cover and the underlying landform. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), based on the most open views from the edge of the settlement.

Marybank (SE-24)

7.10.49 Views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers would be visible to the north-west from the settlement edge subject to screening by tree cover. Views of Proposed Development to the west and north- west would be at distances up to approx. 3.2 km against the background landscape and filtered by intervening tree cove. Views to the south-west would be partially screened by landform and filtered by intervening woodland. The clearest views would be applicable to those properties located at the settlement edges and this would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).Potential views from all other parts of the settlement would be more limited.

Bridgepark Cottage (SE-01)

7.10.50 Views of construction works and the steel lattice towers would be heavily filtered in views to the south-west. Tower S193 would be the closest at approx. 200 m. To the south, Tower S194 would be visible at approx. 300 m, filtered by intervening tree cover. There would also be heavily filtered views of the Proposed Development to west, south-west and north-west, experienced against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant).

Mid Lodge (SE-02)

7.10.51 Views of construction works and the steel lattice towers would be heavily filtered in views towards the north / north-east. This includes potential views of Tower S167, which represents the closest tower to the property (225 m distance). Instead, Tower S168, which is located at slightly greater distance, 350 m to the south-east, would be more visible, albeit would also be filtered by mature woodland along the curtilage. As such, there would be oblique, filtered views of the Proposed Development to the south-east, experienced against a combination of background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), based on views in winter months.

Heights of Kinnahaird (SE-03)

7.10.52 View of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity to the south-east. Tower S171 is the closest and would be viewed at an oblique angle to the south-east at approx. 228 m distance. Tower S170 would also be viewed at an oblique angle at 390 m to the east and Tower S172 would also be visible in views to the south at approx. 340 m. There would be views of Proposed Development at close range to the east, partially screened by curtilage buildings and filtered by intervening tree cover, against a combination of the background sky and landscape. Views to the south-east would be at close range and predominantly against the background sky and views to the south would be predominantly against the background landscape. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant).

Bruaich Cottages (SE-04)

7.10.53 View of the construction works and the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity, Tower S173 would be the closest at 230 m to the west. In addition, Tower S172 would be approximately 250 m to the north-west and would be partially screened by road embankment landform. There would be oblique views of Proposed Development at close range to the west predominantly against the background sky, filtered by curtilage vegetation. Views to the north and north-east would be partially screened by road embankment landform. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) based on proximity and angle of view occupied.Ben View (SE-05)

7.10.54 View of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity to the south-east. Tower S173 would be the closest and would be viewed at an oblique angle to the south-east at approx. 240 m. Tower S174 would also be viewed at close proximity to the south at 390 m, and to the north-east Tower S172 would be visible at 425 m. There would be partially screened views (beyond adjacent shed buildings) of the Proposed Development at close range to the south and south-east, predominantly against the background landscape. There would also be views to the north-east against a combination of the background sky and landscape up to distances of approx. 1 km. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant). There would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density and type of vegetation.

Grieves Cottage (SE-06)

7.10.55 View of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity, Tower S172 would be the closest at 250 m to the north-west. Tower S171 would be approx. 330 m to the north and Tower S173 would be approx. 400 m to the south-west. There would be views of Proposed Development at close range to the north-west, predominately against the background sky. Views of Proposed Development to the north and north-east would be against a combination of background sky and landscape at distances of between 330 m and 670 m. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant) based on proximity and angle of view occupied.

Broompark (SE-07)

7.10.56 Views of construction works and the steel lattice towers would be extremely limited due to the concentration of the surrounding tree cover within the curtilage. This includes potential views of Tower S169, which would be the closest to the property at 260 m distance. As such, potential views of the Proposed Development, to the west, north-west and south-west would be heavily filtered, and experienced against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) based on proximity and angle of view in winter months.

Wester Newton (SE-08)

7.10.57 View of the construction works and steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity to the south-east, east and north-east, filtered by tree cover. Tower S179 would be the closest to the south-east at approx. 280 m to the south-east, and would be viewed at an oblique angle. Tower S178 would be viewed to the east at 340 m. There would be filtered views of the Special Arrangement (diamond duck under arrangement) to the south-east, between Tower S178 and S179. Views to the north-east would be heavily filtered by tree cover along the river corridor, against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), based on proximity and angle of view occupied in winter months.

Kinnahaird (SE-09)

7.10.58 View of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity, Tower S172 would be the closest at 300 m to the north-west. Tower S173 would be located approx.330 m to the west and would be filtered by curtilage vegetation. There would be oblique views of Proposed Development at close range to the west against a combination of background sky and landscape. Views to the north-west would be predominately against the background sky, filtered by curtilage tree cover. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects (significant), based on proximity and angle of view occupied in winter months.

Achnacoul (SE-10)

7.10.59 Views of construction works and the steel lattice towers would be extremely limited due to the concentration of the surrounding tree cover within the curtilage. In views to the north, north-east and east, the Proposed Development would be heavily filtered by adjacent woodland, and experienced against the background sky. This includes views of Tower S167, which would be located closest to the property at a distance of 340 m to the north-east. To the south-east, views would be partially screened by intervening landform and heavily filtered by tree cover, and experienced at a minimum distance of 790 m. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), based on views in winter months.

Oakmor (SE-11)

7.10.60 View of the construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity to the south-east. Tower S171 would be the closest and would be viewed at an oblique angle at approx. 370 m, filtered by intervening tree cover. Tower S172 would also be visible to the south-east at approx. 380 m. There would be views of Proposed Development at close range to the east and north-east against a combination of the background sky and landscape heavily filtered by intervening tree cover. Views to the south and south-east would be against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), based on proximity and angle of view occupied in winter months.

Jacksons Cottage (SE-12)

7.10.61 Views of construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be extremely limited, due to the concentration of the surrounding tree cover. Tower S186 would be the closest at 320 m to the south-west. There would be heavily filtered views of the Proposed Development to the south-west and south through gaps in intervening woodland, against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). There would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density of the vegetation.

Orrin Cottage (SE-13)

7.10.62 Views of construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be extremely limited, due to the concentration of the surrounding tree cover, Tower S186 would be the closest at 275 m to the south-west. There would heavily filtered views of the Proposed Development, to north-west, south-west and south against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). Due to the broadleaved nature of surrounding tree cover, there would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density and type of vegetation.

Sawmill Cottage (SE-14)

7.10.63 Views of construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers would be extremely limited, due to the concentration of the surrounding tree cover, Tower S187 would be the closest at 380 m to the south-west. There would heavily filtered views of the Proposed Development, to north-west, south-west and south against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). Due to the broadleaved nature of surrounding tree cover, there would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density and type of vegetation.

Coul Garden Cottage (SE-15)

7.10.64 Views of construction works and the steel lattice towers would be heavily filtered in views to the north and north-east. Whilst Tower S167 is the closest to the property, at a distance of 460 m, it would be predominantly screened from view. Instead, Tower S168 would be the most visible, at a distance of 540 m to the south-east, although it would also be filtered by mature woodland along the intervening curtilage. There would be oblique filtered views of the Proposed Development to the south-east, experienced against a combination of background sky and landscape. By contrast views to north, north-west, north-east would be very limited due to the concentration of tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). Due to the broadleaved nature of surrounding tree cover, there would a slight reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months.

Auchederson Farmhouse (SE-16)

7.10.65 There would be views of construction works and introduction of the steel lattice towers to the north-east Tower S195 would be the closest at approx. 470 m. Tower S194 would also be visible to the north-east at approx. 540 m. Towers S196 & S197 would be visible to the east at approx. 590 m. There would partially screened views of the Proposed Development to the north-east and east, against a combination of the background sky and landscape. Views to the south-east would against a combination of the background sky and landscape. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Gas Street Cottage (SE-17)

7.10.66 There would be oblique heavily filtered views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers to the west and north-west. Tower S178 would be the closet to the north-west at approx. 520 m. There would be oblique views of the Proposed Development to the west and north against the background landscape and filtered by intervening forestry at Ruttle Wood. Views to the north and north-east would be more open and the Proposed Development would be visible against the background. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). There would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density and type of vegetation.

Wester Kinellan (SE-18)

7.10.67 The construction works and steel lattice towers would be experienced in the landscape to the west and north-west, oblique to the primary direction of view from the property, and subject to screening by intervening tree cover. Tower S164 would be located in closest proximity at a distance of 520 m. The Proposed Development would be most visible in views to the west / north-west. Within these views the towers would be experienced predominantly above the horizon, against the sky. Potential views to the north would be screened by landform, and views to the north-east would be partially screened by intervening landform and filtered by intervening tree cover (located around the curtilage and within intervening farmland). Views to the south-west would also be predominantly screened by intervening landform. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). Due to the broadleaved nature of surrounding tree cover, there would a slight reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months.

Upper Weston Fanellan Croft (SE-19)

7.10.68 There would be oblique views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers. Tower S232 would be located closest to the property at 550 m to the north-west. This tower would be experienced against a combination of background sky and landscape, and filtered by intervening forestry at Ruttle Wood. Views of other parts of Section E to the north and north-west would be predominantly screened by combination of landform and forestry. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Route based Receptors

Section A

A Roads

7.10.69 During construction, close-range activities would be visible from the A897 but often filtered by vegetation. In operation, towers (Towers S148–S149) would be prominent at close distances, though beyond approximately 500 m, their visual impact would notably diminish due to landform and intervening vegetation, appearing as a recessive linear feature against the backdrop of distant hills. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would be limited to localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development, where road users would experience a **Major Adverse** (significant) effect during construction and operation based on proximity and proportion of the view occupied, and a **Minor Adverse** (not significant)

across the wider location. Views from other A class roads, including the A9(T), A99(T), and A882, would be more limited and intermittent due to a combination of distance, intervening landforms, and tree cover. As a result, the influence of construction activities and new steel lattice towers would be reduced, resulting in either no effects or between **Minor** and **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during both the construction and operational phases.

B Roads

7.10.70 Road users of the B870 would experience close views of the Proposed Development near the Moss of Toftingall, with Tower N12 (approximately 90 m away) notably visible. Construction activity and towers would be partially screened by forestry to the south (approximately 750 m away) and landform to the north. At greater distances, towers would appear recessive against the landscape backdrop. During operation, towers crossing the road would remain clearly visible, with distant views continuing to be partially screened by vegetation. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would be limited to localised sections within 750 m of the Proposed Development, where road users would experience a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect during construction and operation based on proximity and proportion of the view occupied, and a **Minor Adverse** (not significant) across the wider location.

7.10.71 No effects from other B Roads, including the B874 and B876, have been identified due to considerable spatial separation from the Proposed Development and the presence of intervening landforms limiting direct sightlines.

Railway Lines

7.10.72 The Far North Railway line via Helmsdale follows Strath Ullie from Helmsdale towards Marrel, where the Proposed Development (between Towers N148 and 149) would cross the line. Views from the passengers on this service are channelled north-west and south-east between heather-covered slopes, with landforms creating a layered and intimate visual experience.

7.10.73 The railway would pass directly beneath the alignment, offering brief, close-range views of the Proposed Development, similar to views along the A897 close to Marrel and the River Helmsdale. Construction works would be visible along a short stretch, though partially filtered by surrounding tree cover depending on viewing angle. At greater distances, the Proposed Development would appear as a recessive, linear element within broader vistas to the south-east and north-west, set against hills and mountains. During operation, the Proposed Development would be visible as it crosses the line within the strath and at greater distances as the alignment descends or climbs out of the strath. Overall, the views obtained along this section of the Far North Railway line would be limited to localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development at Marrel. Rail users would experience a **Major Adverse** (significant) effect of short duration during construction and operation based on proximity and proportion of the view occupied. **Minor Adverse** (not significant) effects are predicted across the wider route.

7.10.74 No effects from the Far North Railway line between Scotscalder and Wick via Georgemas Junction have been identified due to considerable spatial separation from the Proposed Development and the presence of intervening landforms limiting direct sightlines.

Recreational Routes

7.10.75 Of the ten individual or grouped recreational routes included in the visual assessment, significant effects have been identified at four (localised sections) during both construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Of these routes, one would be located directly under the alignment route, and three would be

located within 2 km of the closest tower. There would be localised significant effects during the construction phase only from one further route. The key effects are summarised below.

Core Path CA06.08 A gravel track stretching from the A9 near Spittal (RA-10)

7.10.76 The Proposed Development, situated east of the path and the A9(T), would be visible across the open landscape until it enters the Loch of Toftingall area and surrounding plantation woodland. During construction, limited screening elements in the open landscape would result in construction activities, including crane operations, tower erection, traffic, and material storage, visible from the track. Once operational, the towers would remain visible as the alignment continues south towards the Loch and woodland. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the footpath and would be experienced by route users for a short duration.

Core Path CA06.04 Wind farm access track, Causeymire Wind Farm (RA-11)

7.10.77 The Proposed Development, located east of the A9(T) and the footpath to the east of the windfarm, would run parallel and close to the road, with the closest distance to the footpath being approximately 2 km. Due to the open and undulating landscape, views towards the alignment would be possible to the south-east once it clears the plantation around the Loch. The construction activities would be visible from the footpath, appearing within the context of the wind farm and the expansive landscape. Once operational, the towers would remain prominent visual elements but would be seen alongside multiple turbines and existing OHLs. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation.

Core Path CA10.11 Track leading to Munsary via Loch Stemster (RA-12)

7.10.78 As the track heads north from the minor road, it runs parallel to the A9 and the Proposed Development, coming within approximately 346 m at its closest point. The existing OHL is visible from the track, and the Proposed Development would add to the built elements within the western view as it runs south parallel to the existing OHL. During construction, crane movements, tower erection, traffic, and material storage would be visible from the footpath. Once operational, the towers would remain prominent visual elements within the landscape, integrated within the context of existing turbines and OHLs. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major-Moderate** Adverse (significant) effects during construction and **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the footpath and would be experienced by route users for a short duration.

Core Paths CA04.01, CA04.02, CA04.04, CA04.06, CA04.07, CA04.08, CA04.09, CA04.10, CA04.11, CA04.12, CA04.13, CA04.16, CA04.17, CA04.18, and CA04.19. (RA-14)

7.10.79 The Proposed Development crosses the path west of Balcraggie Lodge, where scrub planting would allow views toward the west and the Proposed Development. During construction, at a distance of approximately 500 m, activities such as crane work, material storage, and construction traffic would be prominent within the view. The Proposed Development would be visible as it crosses the path and to the north with clear views toward Braehiller. As the alignment moves south-west, increased tree cover on the southern bank would limit visibility. During operation, the Proposed Development would remain a prominent feature within 500 m, but at greater distances, intervening vegetation would restrict visibility to the tops of the towers. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects within 500 m based on proximity and proportion of the view occupied during construction and operation. A **Minor Adverse** (not significant) effect would be experienced across the wider locations.

Core Path CA04.03. A gravel track off the A9(T) that leads to Badbea (RA-16)

7.10.80 The Proposed Development would be situated on elevated ground north of the roadside plantation woodland, aligned parallel to the existing OHL, and would be approximately 360 m north of the carpark at its closest point. During construction, views from the carpark would be limited by vegetation, with only taller activities such as crane works being visible. From the monument, construction activities would be seen above the tree line, in conjunction with the existing OHL. During operation, the Proposed Development would remain visible from the monument on elevated ground north of the A9(T), appearing alongside the existing OHL. Overall, the Proposed Development would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and **Minor Adverse** (not significant) effects during operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the footpath and would be experienced by route users for a short duration.

Other Recreational Routes

7.10.81 For all other paths, located at greater distance from the Proposed Development, potential views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be restricted by a combination of intervening landform, tree / forest cover and the increasing distance of the view. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce, and the Proposed Development would represent a discreet element within wider views. Accordingly, the visual effect experienced by recreational receptors using these paths would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) or less during construction and operation.

Section B

7.10.82 Six key transport routes have been included in the visual assessment this includes two A roads, three groups of B or unclassified roads within the two valley catchments and the Far North Railway. Five of the routes extend directly under the alignment route, and the other would be located within 4 km of the closest tower. Significant effects are identified for localised sections of five of these routes, during construction and during operation. The key effects are summarised below.

A Roads

7.10.83 Views from the A9(T) (RB-1) would be restricted due to vegetation and intervening topography as well as distance from the road to the Proposed Development. Some distant views of construction works may be possible as the road approaches and crosses Loch Fleet at the Mound but given intervening vegetation and the topography this would be fleeting. As the road heads north, the topography will restrict views of the construction works. Given the prominence of the road, construction traffic is likely to have a visual presence along with new access tracks, compounds. This would result in **Minor-Negligible Adverse** effects (not significant). During operation, views from the road towards the Proposed Development will be limited due to topography resulting in **Negligible Adverse** effects (not significant).

7.10.84 The A839 (RB-2) would be located directly under the Proposed Development. From localised sections of these routes, there would be clear, close-proximity views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). During operation, views from the road towards the Proposed Development will be **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

7.10.85 Across wider parts of these routes, potential views of the Proposed Development would be more restricted based on the presence of roadside vegetation / intervening tree cover and topography, in combination with the increasing distance of view. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce. Across the wider A839, the effect would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation.

B Roads and Minor Roads

7.10.86 Users of Gordonbush Road (RB-3) would experience views of the Proposed Development crossing the glen. During construction, the tower erection, crane work, construction traffic and compounds would all be visible within open views experienced within the valley. This would result in **Moderate-Major Adverse** effects (significant) within 3 km during construction. During operation the Proposed Development would represent a visual built element within a wide landscape with limited manmade features resulting in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) within 3 km.

7.10.87 Dunrobin Glen road (RB-4) long-distance views towards the construction work would be experienced from elevated sections of the road across the moorland from the east and west. Along the route, the woodland blocks are often offset from the road enabling long-distance views, although at times views are reduced due to the woodland blocks as well as topography. In sections of the alignment where the Proposed Development dissects the woodland, localised tree-felling would be a visible activity and this would be experienced alongside crane works, tower erection and storage compounds. Given the broad open and wide scale of the landscape the alignment will be viewed in a broad vista both north and south from the road. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) within 3 km during construction. During operation the Proposed Development would remain a visual built element within a wide landscape with limited built elements resulting in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) within 3 km.

7.10.88 From Lochbuie Road (RB-5) tower erection, access tracks, crane activity and compound storage will all be noticeable elements of construction within the wide vista of the open moorland. The alignment crosses the road to the west of Dalnamain, before proceeding, roughly parallel to the road west towards Loch Buidhe. Here, the existing two OHLs are a prominent linear feature, and the Proposed Development runs parallel to the existing OHLs, just skirting the north of the plantation forestry blocks. In the open expansive moorland this will be a significant duplication of the built elements. As a result, within 2 km of the Proposed Development the effect during construction is **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). Given the vegetation coverage further west and the alignment heading in a northeastern direction away from the route this would result in **Moderate-Minor Adverse** effects (not significant). During operation, the alignment west of Dalnamain will remain a prominent visual element as it traverses the moorland in parallel with the existing OHL, although this is tempered by its location on the edge of the plantation blocks. East of Dalnamain, the alignment runs parallel with the existing OHL and will be visible until it descends into the River Fleet valley. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) within 2 km during operation.

Railway Lines

7.10.89 The Proposed Development would extend directly across the Far North Rail Line (RB-6). The construction works and new steel lattice towers would be experienced at proximity from the section in closest proximity to the Proposed Development (between Pittentrail and Morvich) and in distances up to 2 km east. As the route traverses north alongside the A9 between the Mound and Golspie, views would be predominantly screened by intervening woodland. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) within 2 km of the Proposed Development. During operation, the Proposed Development will be viewed in conjunction and running parallel with the existing OHL The OHL will be a visible built element within the landscape, especially as the alignment ascends the valley slopes and given the open pastoral landscape within 2 km of the alignment. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Core Paths

7.10.90 Six core-path groups are identified within the Study Area (RB-7 to RB-12), of these three are considered to have direct effects. The key effects are summarised below.

Core Path Drove Road SU06-03 (RB-7)

7.10.91 The Drove Road is considered to have direct effects, as the Proposed Development traverses the route, west of Killin as it descends into the Loch Brora valley. The path has clear views towards the Proposed Development once it has climbed from West Clyne and follows a level plateau across the open moorland. Apart from the lower elevations between west and east Clyne the Proposed Development will form a distinctive element within the view and construction activity will be prominent across the elevated length of the path. Construction activity will be visible as the alignment heads east across An Dubh- Lochan. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) during construction. During operation, the alignment will remain a visible built element within a wide view that apart from forestry plantation has limited visible signs of human activity. The effects would therefore remain as **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).

Core Path Doll Bridge- Loch Brora SU06.14 (RB-8)

7.10.92 This path follows a predominantly vegetated route north of the river, with views restricted until the far northern sections. From 700 m distance the construction activities will be visible as the footpath clears the woodland and opens to expansive views northwards across the valley. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) during construction. During operation, the Proposed Development would remain a significant element within the view from the footpaths along the southern bank effects would remain **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Core Path Loch Brora West Track SU06.02 (RB-9)

7.10.93 This path on the southern bank affords clearer views towards Killin and the alignment of the Proposed Development as it descends and then crosses the valley. From 2 km distance the construction activities will be visible as the footpath clears the woodland and opens to expansive views northwards across the valley. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) during construction. During operation, the Proposed Development would remain a significant element within the view from the footpaths along the southern bank effects would remain **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Core Paths SU12.19, SU12.14 Golspie Tower- Ben Bhraggie, and SU12.13 (RB-10)

7.10.94 This group of paths traverse the vegetated southern slopes of the Golspie valley, each is considered to have indirect effects as the alignment of the Proposed Development is located north of the paths. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) during construction runs to the north. Except for SU12.14 the vegetated nature of the tracks reduces visibility towards the Proposed Development and therefore effects during construction and operation would be considered as **Minor Adverse** (not significant) SU12.14 is a 4 km track heading in a circular route towards Duke of Sutherland monument often within Ben Bhraggie Wood it does open out to open moorland. The Proposed Development at the closest point is c.3 km to the north. From the open moorland, views towards the construction work will be expansive between Aberscross Hill to the west and Loch nan Caorach in the east, the tower erection, construction movement, crane activity and compounds will all be key visible elements within the view, tempered by the distance and the expansive skyline view from the path. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) during construction. During operation the Proposed Development would remain a visible entity within the view, however its impact would diminish given the expansive nature of the view, this would result in **Moderate-Minor Adverse** effects (not-significant).

Core Paths SU12.24 Loch Lunndaidh (RB-11)

7.10.95 A short path which once clear of the Culmaily Plantation has views northwards towards the Proposed Development as it traverses across the moorland towards Loch Lunndaidh. At its closest point the path is 3

km south of the Proposed Development but the alignment on elevated ground of Benn Lunndaidh enhances its visibility.

7.10.96 During construction the activity will be visible from the length of the path as users look northwards. Despite the broad open character of the view this would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). During operation the Proposed Development would remain a visible entity within the view, however its impact would diminish given the expansive nature of the view, this would result in **Moderate-Minor Adverse** effects (not-significant).

Core Paths SU 20.10, (RB-12)

7.10.97 This track follows a vegetated route towards Eiden views across the valley towards the Proposed Development alignment will be intermittent, however during construction the taller activities such as tower erection could be visible within the valley and would be visible as the alignment traverses north up the slopes. This would result in **Major Adverse** effects within 500 m for both construction and operation and **Minor Adverse** effects (not significant) for both construction and operational phases across the wider path route.

Core Paths SU20.01 and SU20.02 (RB-13)

7.10.98 Core Paths SU20.01 and SU20.02 combine to form a longer track that traverses the southern slopes of the Fleet Valley from Eiden towards Inchcape. SU20.02 is a short section of path that climbs up towards the moorland at Eiden, the Proposed Development is located just to the east of the route and the existing OHL and would involve tree clearance. Clear views of the construction work would be experienced at close range as the alignment climbs south out of the valley. Distant views of the construction activities within the valley and on the northern slopes would be experienced as well as views from the top of the path across the moorland as the Proposed Development heads southwest towards Dalnamain.

7.10.99 During construction this would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) for distant views rising to **Major Adverse** effects (significant) within 500 m of the path. During operation the presence of a second OHL increases the built elements within the view and would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) for views within 500 m.

7.10.100 SU20.01 follows a route across the moorland on the southern edge of plantation woodland. As the path heads west, it rises towards An Droighneach and Meall Mor. Views north are restricted by the woodland and views south are partially contained by the moorland south of Meall Mor. Views towards the Proposed Development diminish as the track heads west and the Proposed Development heads southwest. Within 500 m clear views of construction work will be evident as the alignment progresses across the moorland. From the eastern 500 m of the path, views towards the Proposed Development up to 2 km, would be experienced, with Dalnamain visible to the south.

7.10.101 As a result, in a range up to 500 m the effects during construction would be **Major Adverse** effects (significant), during operation this would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). For western sections of the track the intervening topography results in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant) reducing to **Minor Adverse** (not significant) beyond 500 m and then **Negligible** as the track descends towards Bad an Fheidh.

SU09.19 Achvaich - Loch Buidhe (RB-14)

7.10.102 Views towards the Proposed Development would be experience at the northern end of the path as it clears the woodland south of Loch Buidhe. The alignment will result in tree clearance as the Proposed Development progresses west over Meall Mor and east towards Meall Chaorainn. Tree cover would reduce visibility of the Proposed Development as users traverse the path, but once the path approaches the cleared sections of the woodland, the construction work would be visible along the linear alignment of the Proposed Development. As

a result, within 500 m of the Proposed Development the effects during construction would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** effects (significant), During operation, the cleared section of woodland would enable long-range views of the Proposed Development alignment both east and west of the path, the effects would be **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Other Core Paths

7.10.103 For all other paths, located at greater distance from the Proposed Development, potential views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be restricted by intervening landform, tree / forest cover and the increasing distance of view. The influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce, and the Proposed Development would represent a discreet element within wider views. Accordingly, the visual effect experienced by recreational receptors using these paths would be **Negligible** (not significant) during construction and operation.

Other Recreational Routes

7.10.104 There would be no significant adverse effects on any other recreational routes as a result of Section B of the Proposed Development.

Section C

7.10.105 Seven key transport routes have been included in the visual assessment. Significant effects are identified for localised sections of four of these routes, during both construction and operation. Of these four routes, three extend directly under the alignment route, and the other would be located within 110 m of the closest tower. The key effects are summarised below.

A Roads

7.10.106 The A836 (RC-1) and A837 (RC-3) would be located directly under / within 110m of the Proposed Development respectively. From localised sections of these routes, there would be clear, close-proximity views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers. There would be heavily filtered views of the Special Arrangement (duck under with wood poles, from A836, with live line scaffold provision intersection) on section of road between Invershin and A837 junction (180 m at the closest point). There would also be views of the Special Arrangement from the A837, to the south and south-west (220 m at the closest point) between A836 and River Shin crossing. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 700 – 800 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of each route and would be experienced by respective road users for a short duration.

7.10.107 Across wider parts of these routes, potential views of the Proposed Development would be more restricted based on the presence of roadside vegetation / intervening tree cover, in combination with the increasing distance of view. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce. Across the wider A836, the effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation. Across the wider A837, the effect would be **Minor-Negligible Adverse** (not significant) during construction, and **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during operation.

B Roads and Minor Roads

7.10.108 No significant effects are identified for road users on the B864 (RC-4). This is due to the low-lying nature of the route and its containment by surrounding landform and woodland. Accordingly, potential views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would be extremely limited. The effect would be Negligible (not significant) during construction and operation.

7.10.109 Two minor roads have been included in the visual assessment on the basis that the Proposed Development would extend directly across them, or within close proximity. From the Culrain – Inveroykel Minor Road (RC-07) within the Kyle of Sutherland there would be clear, close-proximity views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers. These views would be limited to localised sections within 400 – 700 m of the Proposed Development, where road users would experience a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect during construction and operation.

7.10.110 Across wider parts of this minor road (accounting for the majority of the route), potential views of the Proposed Development would be restricted by roadside vegetation / intervening tree cover, in combination with the landform enclosing each strath, and the increasing distance of view. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce. Across the wider Culrain – Inveroykel Minor Road, the effect would be **Negligible** (not significant).

7.10.111 Views of Section C of the Proposed Development from the Cadh an Tartair (RC-06) within Strathcarron would be experienced at a distance of 720 m to the north at the closest point. Views would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover within the valley and Strathcarron Wood. The resultant effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) at most.

Railway Lines

7.10.112 The Proposed Development would extend directly across the Far North Rail Line (RC-2). There would be clear, close-proximity views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers from localised sections of the line within 300 – 400 m of the Proposed Development, where passengers would experience a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect during construction and operation. There would be heavily filtered views of the Special Arrangement (duck under with wood poles, with live line scaffold provision intersection) on shorth section near Invershin (270 m at the closest point).

7.10.113 The effects would reduce across wider sections of the line based on the screening influence of intervening woodland / trackside vegetation. From more open, distant sections of the route the construction activities and towers would form relatively discreet element within wider views along the hills around the Firth. Accordingly, the visual effect experienced by passengers would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation.

Recreational Routes

7.10.114 Fourteen recreational routes have been identified in the visual assessment (one promoted cycle route and thirteen Core Paths). Significant effects are identified for localised sections of seven of these routes, during both construction and operation. Of these seven routes, four would be located directly under the alignment route, and the other three would be located within 1 km of the closest tower. The key effects are summarised below.

Inverness to John O' Groats National Cycle Trail (RC-08)

7.10.115 The Proposed Development would extend across this cycle trail near Invershin and the A836, resulting in close range views from a localised section. The construction works and new steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity from the 700 m section south of the route, near Invershin. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 700 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of each route, and would be experienced by respective route users for a short duration.

Core Path SU08.02 – Carbisdale (RC-09)

7.10.116 The Proposed Development would extend across this path at two locations, near the lochan at Culrain Burn, which would result in close range views, subject to screening. Views toward the Proposed Development, would be concentrated on sections of path at higher elevation, up to distances of 500 m, subject to intervening screening. During construction, tree felling would also be evident and from sections of the path at close range. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections of the path within 500 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the overall footpath, and would be experienced by route users for a short duration.

Core Path SU03.01: Cornhill – Culrain (RC-10)

7.10.117 The Proposed Development would extend across this path at Hilton Wood, where there are large areas of clear fell forestry. The construction works and new steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity from localised parts of the path within approximately 800 m of the Proposed Development (within clear fell and forest management areas). This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 800 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the footpath, and would be experienced by route users for a short duration.

Core Path SU08.03: Lochcoire (RC-11)

7.10.118 The Proposed Development would extend directly across this path. As a result, there would be clear views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers from parts of the path within 500 m of the Proposed Development. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the footpath, and would be experienced by route users for a short duration.

Other Recreational Routes

7.10.119 Views from other footpaths within approximately 1 km, in particular RC-12 (Core Path SU08.01: Culrain to Invershin) RC13 (Core Path SU03.14: Cornhill Curling Pond), and RC-15: Core Path SU03.06: River Carron would result in significant effects. With regard to route RC-12, the elevated nature of the path, which coincides with a raised viaduct would allow views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers to the north-west. There would also be filtered views of the Special Arrangement (duck under with wood poles, with live line scaffold provision intersection). The effects would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and operation. In terms of route RC13 (SU03.14), there would be views of the Proposed Development to the west, subject to intervening forest screening. The clearest views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be experienced from the western-most 250m long part of the path, where the effects would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and operation. The effects across the path as a whole would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant). Views from route RC-15: Core Path SU03.06: River Carron would be experienced at a distance of 780 m to the north, and would be subject to partial screening by tree cover within the valley and the intervening Strathcarron Wood. The effects would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and operation.

7.10.120 For all other paths, located at greater distance from the Proposed Development, potential views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be restricted by intervening landform, tree / forest cover and the increasing distance of view. This includes potential views from routes RC-14, RC-16, RC-17, RC-18, RC-19, RC-20 and RC21. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce, and the Proposed Development would represent a discreet element within wider views. Accordingly, the visual effect experienced by recreational receptors using these paths would be Negligible (not significant) during construction and operation.

Section D

7.10.121 Eleven key transport routes have been included in the visual assessment. Significant effects are identified for localised sections of two of these routes, during both construction and operation. Of these two routes, both are minor roads and would be located directly under the alignment (located within 100 – 270 m of the closest tower). The key effects are summarised below.

Minor Roads

7.10.122 The Proposed Development would extend directly across two minor roads, specifically Cadh' an Tartair Road (RD-01) and the minor road to the south of the River Carron (RD-02), both located within Strathcarron. The key views from these roads would be limited to localised sections within 700 m of the Proposed Development, where road users would experience a **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect during construction and operation.

7.10.123 Across wider parts of these minor roads (accounting for the majority of these routes) the potential views of the Proposed Development would be restricted by roadside vegetation / intervening tree cover, in combination with the landform enclosing each strath, and the increasing distance of view. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce. Across the wider sections of the roads, the effects would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation.

Recreational Routes

7.10.124 Of the thirty-eight recreational routes identified in the visual assessment, significant effects have been identified at three (localised sections), during both construction and operation. Of these paths, one would be located directly under the alignment. The key effects are summarised below.

Core Path River Carron SU03.06 (RD-12)

7.10.125 The Proposed Development would extend across this path and the construction works and steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity from sections of the route within 700 m, filtered by intervening tree cover. The Proposed Development would be visible in views to the west and east against the background landscape, heavily filtered by tree cover within Strathcarron valley. From wider sections of the route, views would be intermittent and subject to screening within river corridor and intervening farmland. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the footpath and would be experienced by route users for a short duration.

Swordale Hill RC16.01 (RD-19)

7.10.126 Where there are breaks in the forestry there would be views construction works and new steel lattice towers from western sections of the path (Tower S121 would be the closest at 670 m). The Proposed Development would be visible from closest section of path (western path sections) in views to west, south-west and north-west, predominantly against the background landscape. Views from other sections of path in the south and north would be limited by intervening forestry. Views from eastern path sections would be limited due to intervening landform (Swordale Hill). The clearest views would be experienced from western path sections where there are breaks in the forestry and result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant). The effects would reduce along other sections of the path.

Cornhill Curling Pond Circuit SU03.14 (RD-22)

7.10.127 Views of Construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers to the south-west would be perceptible, subject to intervening tree cover (Tower S38 is the closest to the footpath at 980 m). There would be views of

the Proposed Development to the west and south-west, against a combination of background sky and landscape (within Strathcarron), subject to tree cover within the forest and intervening farmland. In wider views to the south-west beyond Strathcarron up to distances of 2.5 km, the Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against the background sky within areas of moorland. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the footpath and would be experienced by route users for a short duration. Due to the broadleaved nature of surrounding tree cover, there would a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months Overall, the visibility would be more apparent in winter months during leaf fall.

Other Recreational Routes

7.10.128 For all other paths, located at greater distance from the Proposed Development, potential views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be restricted by a combination of intervening landform, tree / forest cover and the increasing distance of the view. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce and the Proposed Development would represent a discreet element within wider views. Accordingly, the visual effect experienced by recreational receptors using these paths would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) at most during construction and operation.

Section E

A Roads

A834 (RE-01)

7.10.129 The A834 extends directly under the alignment between properties at Heights of Kinnahaird and Broompark, where road users travelling east and west would experience close-proximity views of the construction works and steel lattice towers. Tower S170 would be the closest to the south at approx. 155 m, and Tower S169 would be located to the north at approx. 125 m. The Proposed Development would be visible at close range for a short section of the road up to distances of 400 m in views north, appearing against a combination of the background sky and landscape. Close range views to south-east, south and south-west would be against a combination of the background sky and landscape. Views to the east and south-east when travelling from Contin would be against the background landscape and sky. Views to the south and south-west would be against the background landscape only. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 400 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the transport route and would be experienced by respective road users for a short duration.

A835 (RE-03)

7.10.130 The A835 extends directly under the alignment between Ben View and Brauch Cottage. There would be views at close-proximity of the construction works and steel lattice towers, Tower S173 would be closest at approx. 55 m to the south-west. Tower S172 would be 190 m to the north-east. The Proposed Development would be visible at close range for a short section of the route up to distances of 500 m, in views to north, south, south-west and north-east against a combination of the background sky and landscape. From wider sections of the route to the north-west, near Contin, views would be partially screened by intervening landform and buildings, hence potential views would drop-off abruptly. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of each route and would be experienced by respective road users for a short duration.

A831 (RE-04)

7.10.131 The A831 extends directly under the alignment between Aigas Dam Power Station and Crask of Aigas. Tower 228 would be closest to the north at 270 m, partially screened by landform. Tower S229 would be approx. 300 m to the south-east. There would be views of the Proposed Development at close range up to distances of approx. 300 m within the river valley, experienced against a combination of background sky and landscape, and filtered by intervening tree cover at Ruttle Wood. Views at greater distance from sections of the road to the south and south-west would be partially screened by steep landform along the road corridor and filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 300 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of each route and would be experienced by respective road users for a short duration.

Rail Links

7.10.132 The Dingwall to Kyle of Lochalsh Rail Link (RE-05) extends along the valley of the River Peffrey, where it would pass under the Section E alignment (between Towers S152 and S153). From the section of the route between Achterneed and Raven Rock, there would be views of the construction works and steel lattice towers at close range. Tower S152 would be located in closest proximity to the route, at approximately 100 m to the north. The Proposed Development would be experienced in views to north and south, in the context of surrounding tree cover and forestry. This accounts for a short section of the overall rail corridor. From wider sections of the route to the west, views of the Proposed Development would be predominantly screened by intervening landform and forestry. Potential views would drop-off abruptly on this basis. Similarly, potential views from wider sections of the route to the east would be restricted by the intervening landform. The effects experienced from localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the route and would be experienced for a short duration.

Minor Roads

Achonachie Road (RE-02)

7.10.133 Achonachie Road passes directly under the alignment between the access to Muirton Mains and Loch Achonachie. There would be views at close-proximity of the construction works and steel lattice towers, Tower S178 would be closest at approx. 55 m to the south-west. Tower S177 would be 190 m to the north-east. There would be views of the Proposed Development at close range between access to Muirton Mains and Loch Achonachie up to distances of 400m in views to the north, north-west, south and south-east. Views would be predominantly experienced against the background landscape, and heavily filtered by tree cover. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 400 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of each route and would be experienced by respective road users for a short duration. Due to the broadleaved nature of tree cover, adjacent to the road there would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due to the density of the vegetation

Minor road between Marybank and Muir of Ord (RE-06)

7.10.134 Views of the construction works and new steel lattice towers from closest road sections would be filtered by intervening woodland, Tower S196 would be the closest at approx. 330 m to the south-west. There would be views at close range to the west and south-west of the Proposed Development near Auchnagowrie Bridge, filtered by intervening woodland and against a combination of the background landscape and sky. Views of the Proposed Development to the west, between Auchnagowrie Bridge and Muir of Ord would be a combination of open and partially screened by landform and forestry (Auchmore Wood) against a combination

of the sky and background landscape. Views to the north-west are partially screened by landform and filtered by tree cover. Views of the Proposed Development to the south-west, west and north between Auchnagowrie Bridge and Muir of Fairburn would be heavily filtered by coniferous woodland within Fairburn estate. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects. There would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density and type of vegetation.

Minor road between Blackbridge and Struy (RE-07)

7.10.135 There would be views of construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers to the west, north-west and south-west from section of the road at Fanellan. Tower S232 would be the closest at 630 m. There would be views of the Proposed Development at close range to west, north-west and south-west from section of the road at Fanellan against the background sky and landscape. Views of the Proposed Development to the west and south-west from section of the road between Blackbridge and Fanellan Croft would be partiality screened by landform and heavily filtered by tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects from closest sections of the transport route.

Recreational Routes

7.10.136 Of the 25 recreational routes identified in the visual assessment, significant effects have been identified at 14 (localised sections), during both construction and operation. Of these paths, five would be located directly under the alignment route and six others would be located within 1 km of the closest tower. The key effects are summarised below.

Orrin Dam track (RC30.01) (RE-01)

7.10.137 The path intersects the Proposed Development between Towers S187 and S188. Theconstruction works and introduction of new steel lattice towers would be experienced at close proximity from sections of the path within approximately 700 m (within forest management areas). Upgraded tracks for construction would be visible at close range. Tower S187 would be the closest to the path, at approximately 20 m. Within close proximity views the Proposed Development would be visible predominantly against background sky, albeit filtered by intervening forest cover. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 700 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of each footpath and would be experienced by respective path users for a short duration.

Mains of Coul (RC10.03) (RE-12)

7.10.138 This path intersects the Proposed Development between Towers S168 and S169). There would be close range views of construction works and the steel towers in the landscape to the north and south (Tower S168 would be the closest at 100 m to the north). Views of ground-based construction activities and the towers at close range to the north would be heavily filtered by intervening mature tree cover along the path corridor. More open views of the Proposed Development would be experienced towards the south. These views would be limited to sections of the path between the Broompark and Coul House Hotel. From this section the Proposed Development would be experienced in the context of farmland and tree cover within Strath Conon, against a combination of background sky and landscape. The clearest views would extend out to approximately 700 m from the alignment and would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across this localised section construction and operation. Effects would reduce along wider sections of the route.

Kinellan link path (RC10.07) (RE-13)

7.10.139 The eastern end of this footpath intersects the Proposed Development between Towers S163 and S164 (Tower S163 would be the closest at approximately 50 m to the north). There would be close range views of

the construction works and steel towers from the eastern end of the path, particularly within distances of up to 500 m from the alignment. From this section of the path, the Proposed Development would be experienced in the landscape to the north and south, subject to screening by intervening forestry. Views of the Proposed Development from the more distant north-western sections of the path would be extremely limited due to intervening forestry. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. Effects would reduce on wider sections of the route.

Kinellan link path (RC10.07) (RE-14)

7.10.140 The construction works and steel lattice towers would be experienced at close range from the western sections of path (Tower S163 would be located 120 m to the west). From this section of the path, the Proposed Development would be visible to the north-west, west and south-west, subject to intervening woodland screening. There would also be partial views of the Proposed Development from the more distant sections of path around the loch, including parts of the alignment to the west and south-west (at distances of up to 1 km). The Proposed Development would gradually become more screened from northern and southern sections. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. Effects would reduce along wider sections of the route.

Orrin circular - Fairburn (RC30.02) (RE-15)

7.10.141 There would be filtered views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers at close range from a localised section of the path near Bridgepark Cottage. Tower S192 would be the closest at 200 m to the west. The clearest views would be experienced within distances of up to 500 m from the alignment. In addition, there would be close range views from western path sections to the south, south-west and north-west, where Tower S187 would be the closest at 250 m. Again, the clearest views would be experienced from sections of the path within 500 m of the Proposed Development, near the Orrin Dam track, filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This accounts for a limited extent of the path route and would be experienced by respective path users for a short duration.

View Rock (RC10.01) (RE-16)

7.10.142 The Proposed Development would be visible from localised sections of the path in closest proximity to the Section E alignment. This includes the View Rock Viewpoint. The construction works and steel lattice towers would be experienced in views to the east, north-east and south east, subject screening by intervening to woodland. Tower S164 would be the closest at 260 m to the east. Potential views from more distant sections of the path, including the southern section that connects with to the car park near Black Water (located at the edge of the forest) would be limited due to a combination of intervening landform and tree cover. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects based on the clearest views.

Strathpeffer - Jamestown (Blackmuir Woods) (RC45.05) (RE-17)

7.10.143 This path is located 790 m to the east of Section E at the closest point (Tower S168). Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would be limited due to the concentration of intervening tree cover. Views from the closest sections (on the northern edge of Jamestown) would be extremely limited due to a combination of intervening buildings and woodland cover (to the west of the settlement). Potential views of the Proposed Development from other sections of the path (on the edge of Strathpeffer) would be experienced out to distances of approximately 1.2 km to the west, against a combination of background sky and landscape,

albeit heavily filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation based on the clearest views

Ord Wood west – Kinellan (RC45.03) (RE-18)

7.10.144 This path is located 940 m to the east of Section E at the closest point (Tower S159). Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers in the landscape to the west / north-west would be partially screened by intervening landform, appearing against the background sky. Within the most open views, the Proposed Development would be partially visible to the south-west, at distances of between 1 km and 1. 6 km, appearing predominantly against the background landscape, filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation based on the clearest views.

Contin Island (RC10.05) (RE-19)

7.10.145 There would be views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers to the south-east, filtered by intervening tree cover. Tower S173 would be the closest at 950 m to the south-east. Views of the Proposed Development to the south-east would be filtered by intervening tree cover (at Black Water) against a combination of background sky and landscape. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections of the path during construction and operation. There would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density and type of vegetation.

Ord Hill (RC32.07) (RE-22)

7.10.146 There would be views of construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers from the summit in views to the west, south-west and north-west. Views of the Proposed Development from the hill summit would be experienced against a combination of the background sky and landscape. Views of the Proposed Development to the south-west and west from path sections at lower elevation would be partially screened by landform and subject to forest screening levels. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections of the path route during construction and operation.

Golf course - Ord Wood east (RC45.07) (RE-24)

7.10.147 This path is located 1.3 km to the south-east of Section E at the closest point (Tower S157). Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would be restricted by the intervening landform and tree cover. The most open views of the Proposed Development would be experienced from the western and north-western sections of the path. From these sections, the Proposed Development would be partially visible in the distance to the north, experienced against the combination of background sky and landscape, beyond intervening tree cover. Potential views of the Proposed Development to the west / south-west would be filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation based on the clearest views.

Blackmuir Woods - maze circular RC45.04 (RE-25)

7.10.148 This path is located 1.3 km to the east of Section E at the closest point (Tower S165). Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover, including woodland at Blackmuir Wood. Where there are localised gaps in tree cover, the Proposed Development would be visible against a combination of the background landscape and sky in views towards the west. From western and north-western sections of the path there would also be longer distance views, encompassing parts of the Proposed Development towards the north-west and south-west, at distances of approximately 2.5 – 3.0 km. Within these views the Proposed Development would represent a distant element in the background

landscape, beyond intervening tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation based on the clearest views.

Ardival - Catsback - Loch Ussie (RC45.09) (RE-28)

7.10.149 This path is located 2.2 km to the south-east of Section E at the closest point (Tower S156). Within the most open views the construction works and steel lattice towers would represent distant elements in the background landscape, in views to the north, north west, west and south-west. In views to the north and north-west, the Proposed Development would be experienced in the context of wider, panoramic views of rugged hills, and would be viewed against a combination of background landscape and sky. Views to the west / south-west would be experienced at distances of approx. 2.3 km to 2.6 km, partially screened by landform and filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation based on the clearest views.

Strathpeffer Walking and Cycling Routes (Torrachilty Forest) (RE-32)

7.10.150 This series of paths intersects the Proposed Development at four locations (near Towers S159, S160, S161 and 163). There would be close range views of construction works and the steel lattice towers from these sections of the path, with the clearest views experienced within 500 m of the alignment, subject to intervening forest screening. Potential views from wider sections of the paths would be concentrated on localised sections at higher elevation, subject to intervening screening, where the Proposed Development would be experienced against a combination of the background landscape and sky and heavily filtered by tree cover. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. Effects on wider sections of the route would be reduced.

Strathpeffer Walking and Cycling Routes (North of Strathpeffer Golf Course) (RE-33)

7.10.151 This series of paths intersects the Proposed Development at two locations (near Towers S152 and S157). There would be close range views of the construction works and the steel lattice towers from these sections of the path. The clearest views would be experienced within distances of 500 m of the alignment, subject to intervening forest screening. This includes a localised section extending through the valley of the River Peffery, where the Proposed Development would be experienced at close range, against a combination of the background landscape and sky, in the context of surrounding tree cover. Potential views from other sections of the paths would be concentrated on localised sections at higher elevation. This would result in **Major Adverse** (significant) effects across localised sections within 500 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. Effects on wider sections of the route would be reduced.

Other Recreational Routes

7.10.152 For all other paths, located at greater distance from the Proposed Development, potential views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be restricted by a combination of intervening landform, tree / forest cover and the increasing distance of the view. Accordingly, the influence of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would reduce and the Proposed Development would represent a discreet element within wider views. Accordingly, the visual effect experienced by recreational receptors using these paths would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation.

Outdoor Locations

Section A

7.10.153 Six outdoor locations have been identified in the visual assessment. Among these, two locations are identified as potentially experiencing significant adverse effects during both construction and operation. The key effects are summarised below.

Berriedale Braes Viewpoint (OA-03)

7.10.154 The Berriedale Braes Viewpoint offers an elevated, unobstructed vantage point with open views across the hills on the coastal fringe, Berriedale Water and Scaraben to the north-west, and expansive views across the North Sea to the east. Construction works and steel lattice towers (Towers N106–N110) would be intermittently visible to the north-west to the fore of Scaraben. Filtered views of the towers would be possible in views to the south-west, albeit occupying a minor portion of the view. Dense woodland and landform would provide substantial screening, naturally channelling sightlines along the strath. The towers would appear in mid-range views (approximately 1.4 km from Tower N109 at the closest point). Seasonal variation would affect visibility, with reduced screening in autumn and winter due to leaf loss, slightly increasing the visibility of towers. Accordingly, the Proposed Development would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation.

Creag Thoraraidh (OA-05)

7.10.155 Views from the summit of Creag Thoraraidh would include intermittent visibility of construction works and steel lattice towers (Towers N94–N171) oriented towards the interior from the south-west to north-east. Positioned at distances ranging from 517 m to 12.9 km, these towers would appear on the lower hillsides to the fore of views towards the interior landscapes. Views to the east across the North Sea and to the south would be unaffected. In close-range views, some towers would be partially obscured by landforms at their lower sections. The nearest tower (Tower N139), at approximately 517 m from the peak of Creag Thoraraidh. With minimal intervening vegetation, a high number of towers would remain visible throughout the year, as seasonal variation would not affect filtering effects. Accordingly, the Proposed Development would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation.

Section B

7.10.156 One outdoor location was identified in the visual assessment as potentially experiencing significant adverse effects during both construction and operation. The key effects are summarised below.

Duke of Sutherland Monument (OB-01)

7.10.157 The Proposed Development is located approximately 3 km to the north of this location at the closest point. From the open moorland, views towards the construction work would be visible between Aberscross Hill to the west and Loch nan Caorach in the east. Visitors to the monument would perceive the construction work tempered by the distance and the expansive skyline view from the monument. This would result in a **Major-Moderate Adverse** effect (significant) during construction. During operation the Proposed Development would remain a visible entity within the view, however its impact would diminish given the expansive nature of the view, this would result in a **Moderate Adverse** effect (significant).

Section C

7.10.158 Eight outdoor locations have been identified in the visual assessment. Significant effects are identified for three locations, during both construction and operation. The key effects are summarised below.

Carbisdale Castle (OC-01)

7.10.159 Carbisdale Castle is located on an area of high ground, approximately 695 m to the east / south-east of the Proposed Development, adjacent to the Kyle of Sutherland. The elevated location affords open and panorama views to north and north-west along the Kyle of Sutherland and Achany Glen. Views to the east and south include extensive areas of woodland and plantation forestry at Invershin and Balblair. To the north-east the Proposed Development would be partially visible against a combination of background sky and landscape, in

the context of existing plantation forestry. This would result in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects. Views to the west and north west would be fully screened by mature woodland. It should be noted that views are contained by woodland at the approach road and a large proportion of the associated footpaths adjacent to the castle, are located within mature woodland.

The Scap (Angling) (OC-02)

7.10.160 This promoted angling location is located on the Kyle of Sutherland, approximately 600 m to the north-west of the Proposed Development near Oak Bank (north-west of Carbisdale) views of the Proposed Development to the south-east, predominantly visible against the background landscape. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** effects (significant).

Dounie Estate (OC-03)

7.10.161 This estate is located 900 m to the south-east of the Proposed Development in Section C, towards the eastern end of Strathcarron. There would be partial views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers to the north-west, beyond intervening tree cover, including Strathcarron Wood. The clearest views would be experienced in winter months, resulting in a **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect.

Section D

7.10.162 Nine outdoor locations were identified in the visual assessment. Significant effects were identified for one location, during both construction and operation. The key effects are summarised below.

Dounie Estate (OD-03)

7.10.163 The construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers would be visible at distances of between 900 m and 1.5 km. The Proposed Development would be partially visible in views to the west against the background landscape, heavily filtered by tree cover within Strathcarron valley. From wider sections of the route, the Proposed Development would be experienced at greater distance. Views would be intermittent and subject to screening within river corridor and intervening farmland. As a result, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would exert limited influence on existing views. Based on the clearest views during winter months, visitors would experience **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects during construction and operation.

Section E

7.10.164 Eight outdoor locations have been identified in the visual assessment. Significant effects on views and visual amenity were identified for five locations, during both construction and operation. The key effects are summarised below.

Coul House Hotel (OE-01)

7.10.165 Views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers would be viewed to the south-east from the edge of the hotel grounds, Tower N170 would be the closest at 480 m to the south-east. The Proposed Development would be viewed to the south-west, south and south-east predominantly experienced against the background landscape and heavily filtered by intervening tree cover. In contrast, potential views from central and northern parts of the hotel grounds would be contained by surrounding tree cover and intervening built form. As such, potential views of the alignment to north / north-east would be limited. Based on views from the southern edge of the hotel grounds, the effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant). Due to the broadleaved nature of surrounding tree cover, there would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density of the vegetation.

Falls of Orrin (OE-02)

7.10.166 Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers to the south-west would be subject to screening by intervening woodland. Tower N192 would be located in closest proximity, at a distance of 420 m to the south-west. Within localised gaps in tree cover, the Proposed Development would be viewed to the south-west, against the background landscape heavily filtered by tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects. Due to the broadleaved nature of surrounding tree cover, there would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density of the vegetation.

Fairburn Activity Centre (OE-03)

7.10.167 Views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers would be heavily filtered by intervening tree cover. Tower N186 would be the closest at 560 m to the south-west. Within localised gaps in tree cover the Proposed Development would be viewed to the west and south-west at close range, heavily filtered by tree cover and experienced against the background landscape. Where there are gaps in the woodland there would be longer distance views of the Proposed Development to the north, north-east, and south-east, filtered by tree cover and experienced against the background landscape. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects applicable to views where there are gaps in the woodland with most open outlook. There would be a reduction in the filtering effects of tree cover in winter months, however, this is not expected to change the levels of effect due the density of the vegetation.

Fairburn Tower (OE-04)

7.10.168 Views of the construction works and introduction of steel lattice towers would be partly screened to the south-west. Tower N192 would be located in closest proximity at a distance of 740 m. The Proposed Development would be viewed to the south and south-west, experienced against the background landscape, partly screened by intervening forest cover. Views to the west would be partially screened by intervening landform and forest cover, and experienced against the background landscape. Views to the south-east would be experienced against the combination of the background sky and landscape. Views to the north-west would be partially screened by farm buildings and experienced against the background landscape. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects based on the clearest views.

Strathpeffer Golf Course (OE-05)

7.10.169 Views of the construction works and steel lattice towers to the north-west from the closest parts of the golf course would be limited due to the intervening landform. Tower N159 would be located in closest proximity at a distance of 800 m. The Proposed Development would partially visible in longer distance views to the west and south-west (at distances of between 1 km and 1. 6 km). Within the most open views the Proposed Development would be experienced predominantly against the background landscape, and filtered by intervening tree cover. This would result in **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects based on the clearest views.

7.11 Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects

General

7.11.1 An assessment of the potential cumulative landscape and visual effects resulting from the Proposed Development in combination with related projects including the Fanellan, Carnaig and the Banniskirk 400kV Substations and in addition to 'third party' energy generation/transmission projects (e.g. proposed wind farms and grid connections) identified within the Study Area to each Section of the Proposed Development.

7.11.2 The cumulative assessment has been set out considering two different scenarios as follows:

- **Scenario 1**: Including other parts of the Proposed Development and other related development. This includes neighbouring Sections of the Proposed Development, and the Fanellan, Banniskirk and Carnaig Substations. The cumulative assessment considers the effects of these developments during both construction and operation as it is possible that they would be constructed concurrently;
- **Scenario 2**: Including other unrelated development. This would include all other identified cumulative baseline sites which are not related to the Proposed Development. The cumulative assessment considers the effects of these developments during operation only, as it is difficult to predict how these developments would relate to the Proposed Development during the construction phase.

7.11.3 The detailed cumulative landscape and visual assessments on a per Section basis are provided in the individual LVIAs to Sections A to E (**Volume 5, Appendices 7.5** to **7.9**). The cumulative assessment has given consideration to all Landscape Character Types, designated or protected landscapes and visual receptors falling within the combined study areas for respective Sections, and elsewhere, where estimated theoretical visibility of unrelated developments would occur. The visual effects of relevant Sections have been used to inform potential cumulative effects. Elsewhere assumptions have been made regarding the likely visual effects of other developments.

7.11.4 A summary of significant cumulative effects is outlined in **Table 7.10** and **Table 7.11** during construction and operation. The description of effects should be read in conjunction with the baseline descriptions for these receptors in **Volume 5, Appendices 7.4 and 7.5** in addition to the LVIAs to Sections A to E provided in **Appendices 7.5** to **7.9**.

Table 7.10: Assessment of Cumulative Effects on Landscape Receptors

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
Section A: Spittal to Brora		
LCT 134 – Sweeping Moorland and Flows	Scenario 1: • Proposed Banniskirk 400 kV Substation and HVDC Converter Station	Potential cumulative effects on the LCT relating to Scenario 1 would be largely indirect. The influence of Section A in combination with Banniskirk Substation would be limited due to the intervening landform and presence of forestry / woodland, in combination with the distance of view, which would reduce the visibility and indirect influence attributable to the substation. The construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent background elements within wider vistas across the LCT. There would be no notable increase in relation to the effects described within the main assessment. The cumulative effect would be **Minor Adverse (not significant)** during construction and operation.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Spittal to Peterhead HVDC Link at early development stage (N/A); • Proposed Watten Wind Farm • Proposed Loch Toftingall BESS • Proposed Spittal BESS • Proposed Ayre Wind Farm Grid Connection; • Proposed Camster II Wind Farm • Proposed Golticlay Wind Farm Redesign • Propose Swarclett Wind Farm • Proposed Baledigle Wind Farm (Scoping • Proposed Hill of Lynchrobbie Wind Farm (Scoping • Proposed Tormsdale Wind Farm	In combination with the proposed Watten, Tormsdale and Hill of Lynchrobbie Wind Farms the Proposed Development would increase the extent of energy generation/transmission infrastructure within the LCT, and result in direct effects on the features and elements that define the LCT. The wind turbines would exhibit greater visual prominence and be likely to result in a greater level of influence on the LCT where viewed in combination with existing wind farms in the vicinity of Spittal and Rangag, wind turbines constituting an increasingly prominent feature in the landscape, while the two proposed turbines at Hill of Lynchrobbie increase the occurrence of energy infrastructure close to the coastal fringe near Latheronwheel. The proposed Ouglassy Wind Farm north-east of Spittal would increase indirect effects on the LCT in addition to Camster II, Golticlay, Swarclett and Watten Wind Farms. It is assumed that the proposed grid connection projects (Spittal to Peterhead HVDC Link, West of Orkney and Ayre Wind Farm grid connections) would be undergrounded and have limited impacts on the LCT following reinstatement of ground cover. On balance the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse (significant)** across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse (not significant**).

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Proposed Ouglassy Wind Farm	
LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section B of the Proposed Development	Sections A and B of the Proposed Development both extend through upland parts of the LCT. Similar to Section B, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence in each case would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Hill of Lynchrobbie Wind Farm	There would be no direct effects on the LCT as a result of the Proposed Development and/or other development proposals. The proposed turbines at Hill of Lynchrobbie Wind Farm would be sited to the south-west of Latheron Wheel and result in indirect effects on the Rounded Hills LCT. The proposed wind farm would increase the perceived increase of energy infrastructure within and close to the LCT, the wind turbines as a function of their height and the movement of the rotors. Effects relate primarily to those resulting from the Proposed Development. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m of the Section A alignment). The cumulative effects relating to the alignment would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section B of the Proposed Development	Sections A and B of the Proposed Development both extend through very localised parts of the LCT, where the alignment crosses the individual narrow strath landscapes. Similarly to Section B, the Proposed Development would extend directly across each strath, rather than along it, thereby limiting the footprint of the associated construction works, as well as the number of new steel lattice towers. Given the enclosed nature of the straths, these elements would represent notable elements from parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of construction activities and the new alignment would reduce at greater distance within the strath due to the screening influence of intervening tree cover and the landform enclosing the valley. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • None	There are no other energy-related proposals within the LCT. Potential indirect effects based on views of proposed wind farms within the surrounding uplands (outside the LCT) would be largely restricted by intervening landform.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
Loch Fleet, Loch Brora, and Glen Loth SLA	Scenario 1: • Section B of the Proposed Development.	Sections A and B of the Proposed Development both extend through the SLA for a total distance of c.30.4 km. In combination with Section B, the Proposed Development would introduce a large scale transmission line into the SLA and impact the special qualities relating to wildness/remoteness and accessibility. The towers would represent notable elements from parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of construction activities and the new alignment would reduce at greater distance within the SLA due to the screening influence of intervening tree cover and the landform enclosing lower lying areas. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider SLA, and would be **Major-Moderate** (significant).
	Scenario 2:	No predicted cumulative effect.
Section B: Brora to Loch Buidhe		
LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section A and C of the Proposed Development; • Proposed Carnaig 400 kV Substation.	The Carnaig 400 kV substation would result in notable, albeit very localised effects on landscape character due to its limited footprint and height. Section A of the Proposed Development extends through upland parts of the LCT. Similar to Section C, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence in each case would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works, and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 2 km). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) or less.
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign; • Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Proposed Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III);	The consented and proposed wind farm developments would merge to form a single, combined array of wind turbines on the hills to the north of the Proposed Development. The wind farms would individually and collectively exert significant effects on local landscape character in their own right due to the vertical scale of the turbines (currently proposed at up to 230 m to tip) and the movement of the rotors. However, these effects would diminish at greater distance and accordingly would account for a relatively focused geographic area within an expansive LCT. Should all of the proposals go ahead, the cumulative effect across the LCT as a whole is predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** (significant). This is based primarily on the combined presence of large-scale wind turbines across the LCT. As noted above for

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	Scenario 1, the effects of the Proposed Development would be more localised, and accordingly its contribution to cumulative effects across the LCT would be relatively limited.
LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section A and C of the Proposed Development • Proposed Carnaig 400 kV Substation.	Section C of the Proposed Development extends through very localised parts of the LCT, where the alignment extends across intervening straths. Similarly to Section B, the Proposed Development extends directly across each strath, rather than along it, thereby limiting the footprint of the associated construction works, as well as the number of new steel lattice towers. Given the enclosed nature of the straths, these elements would represent notable elements from parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of construction activities and the new alignment would reduce at greater distance within the strath due to the screening influence of intervening tree cover and the landform enclosing the valley. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 1 km). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) or less.
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign • Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III) • Garvary Wind Farm	There are no other energy-related proposals within the LCT. Potential indirect effects based on views of proposed wind farms within the surrounding uplands (outside the LCT) would be restricted by the landform along the strath sides. Accordingly, the cumulative effect is not predicted to vary from that described in relation to Scenario 1.
Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA	Scenario 1: • Sections A and C of the Proposed Development • Proposed Carnaig 400 kV Substation	Visibility towards the proposed Carnaig substation and section C of the Proposed development would be restricted to the higher slopes on the western edge of the SLA and viewed over distance with intervening topography and vegetation diminishing visibility. On balance, the cumulative effect across parts of the WLA within the Study Area would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant). Section A of the Proposed Development would be visible across the eastern sections of the SLA and would be a prominent feature across the elevated moorland. The cumulative effect across parts of the WLA within the Study Area would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign • Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III)	From the more elevated slopes and summits on the western edge of the SLA there would be views of these proposed wind farms. These would be located in the distance across the River Fleet valley, this would limit the influence on the existing landscape character. Consequently, it is predicted that the cumulative effects would align to those for Scenario 1.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Garvary Wind Farm	
Section C: Loch Buidhe to Dounie		
LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section B and D of the Proposed Development; • Proposed Carnaig 400 kV Substation.	The Carnaig 400 kV substation would result in notable, albeit localised effects on landscape character around the main platform. Sections B and D of the Proposed Development both extend through upland parts of the LCT. Similar to Section C, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence in each case would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign; • Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Proposed Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III); • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm.	The consented and proposed wind farm developments would be located within LCT 135 and merge to form a single, combined array of wind turbines on the hills to the north, and distant west, of the Proposed Development. These would be augmented by the scoping-stage Wind Farms, which would extend across additional geographic areas of the LCT to the north and west of the Proposed Development (extending in closer proximity to the Section C alignment). The exception to this would be the scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm, which would be located to the distant south (outside the LCT), resulting in indirect effects on landscape character. The wind farms would individually and collectively exert significant effects on local landscape character in their own right due to the vertical scale of the turbines (currently proposed at up to 230 m to tip) and the movement of the rotors. However, these effects would diminish at greater distance, and accordingly would account for a relatively focused geographic area within an expansive LCT. Should all of the proposals go ahead, the cumulative effect across the LCT as a whole is predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** (significant). This is based primarily on the combined presence of large-scale wind turbines across the LCT. As noted above for Scenario 1, the effects of the Proposed Development would be more localised, and accordingly its contribution to cumulative effects across the LCT would be relatively limited.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section B and D of the Proposed Development.	Sections B and D of the Proposed Development both extend through very localised parts of the LCT, where the alignment extends across intervening straths. Similarly to Section C, the Proposed Development extends directly across each strath, rather than along it, thereby limiting the footprint of the associated construction works, as well as the number of new steel lattice towers. Given the enclosed nature of the straths, these elements would represent notable elements from parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of construction activities and the new alignment would reduce at greater distance within the strath due to the screening influence of intervening tree cover and the landform enclosing the valley. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	There are no other energy-related proposals within the LCT. Potential indirect effects based on views of proposed wind farms within the surrounding uplands (outside the LCT) would be restricted by the landform along the strath sides. Within the most open views, the wind turbines would represent elements in a geographically separate landscape context, outside the strath. Accordingly, the cumulative effect is not predicted to vary from that described in relation to Scenario 1.
LCT 139 – Rugged Mountain Massif - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section D of the Proposed Development would extend across the landscape within the eastern-most edge of the LCT. The construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of these elements would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (within approximately 700 m). This is based primarily on close proximity views of Section D during construction and operation. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2:	There are no energy-related proposals within the LCT. However, from the more elevated slopes and summits on the northern edge of the LCT there would be views of these wind farms. In particular, the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm, scoping-stage Braelangwell

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign; • Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Proposed Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III); • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm.	Wind Farm, and scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm would be located in the landscape to the north (on the opposite side of Strathcarron), and the scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm would be located in the hills to the south. Due to the vertical scale of the turbines, these developments would exert notable effects in their own right across localised parts of the LCT. The other wind farms would be located at greater distance, on the opposite side of the Dornoch Firth / Kyle of Sutherland, beyond Braelangwell Wind Farm and behind the Section C alignment. As such, their influence on existing landscape character would be limited. In summary, the cumulative effects on the LCT would be slightly increased from those described above in relation to Scenario 1, due to the addition of proposed wind farms to the view (in combination with partial views of the Proposed Development). Accordingly, across the LCT within the Study Area, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** (significant).
Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section D of the Proposed Development would extend across the landscape to the east of the WLA. From the easterly-facing slopes and summits on the eastern edge of the WLA the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would be visible at relatively close proximity (< 1 km). As described in the main assessment, views of Section C would be predominantly limited to the northern edge of the WLA. As such, cumulative visibility of Sections C and D would be limited to localised areas, in the vicinity of Creag na Ceapaich, Carn a' Chlaiginn and Carn an Liath-bhaid (on the north-eastern edge of the WLA). The effects attributed to Sections C and D would be limited to localised geographic parts of the WLA, and would not notably detract from the more remote interior areas. The cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the outer north-eastern edge of the WLA. This is based primarily on close proximity views of Section D during construction and operation, as well as partial views of Section C. However, the effects would reduce across the wider WLA, in particular the more remote interior. On balance, the cumulative effect across parts of the WLA within the Study Area would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign;	The scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm would be located on the north-eastern edge of the WLA and result in significant effects on the local landscape in its own right due to the vertical scale of the turbines (currently proposed at up to 220 m to tip) and the movement of

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Proposed Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III); • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm.	the rotors. However, these effects would diminish at greater distance, and accordingly would account for a relatively focused geographic area on the northern edge of the WLA. There are no other energy-related proposals within the WLA. From the more elevated slopes and summits on the northern edge of the WLA there would be potential views of the other consented and proposed wind farms, in particular the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm, which would be located in the landscape to the north (on the opposite side of Strathcarron). The other wind farms would be located at greater distance, behind these wind farms and the Section C alignment, reducing their influence on existing landscape character. In summary, the cumulative effects on the LCT would be slightly increased from those described above in relation to Scenario 1, due to the addition of proposed wind farms. In particular, the scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm, which would exert direct effects on the landscape within the WLA. Accordingly, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Major Adverse** (significant) across the north-eastern edge of the WLA based primarily on Creachan Wind Farm. The cumulative effect would diminish across other parts of the WLA located further to the west (including its remote interior). Across wider parts of the WLA the cumulative effect would be consistent with that described in relation to Scenario 1, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
Section D: Dounie to Near Strathpeffer		
LCT 135 – Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section C of the Proposed Development.	Section C of the Proposed Development would extend through upland parts of the LCT. Similar to Section D, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm;	The consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm will be located within LCT 135 and exert significant effects on local landscape character in its own right due to the vertical scale of the turbines (at 144.5 m to 149.9 m to tip) and the movement of the rotors. However, these effects would be focused across the western edge of the Study Area and will diminish at greater distance. These effects would be augmented by the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm, Braelangwell Wind Farm, and Balblair Wind Farm, which would extend across additional geographic areas of LCT 135 (east of Meall Buidhe) and also result in significant direct effects in their own right. The other Scenario 2 developments would result in indirect effects. The scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm would be located in the landscape to the south of the LCT (outside the LCT). Due to the vertical scale of the turbines, this would exert a notable effect in its own

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm.	right across localised parts of the LCT. There would also be views of the consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign to the south-east, as well as long distance views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm and scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm in the distant landscape to the south. Due to the spatial separation from the LCT, these schemes would exert limited influence on landscape character. Should all of the proposals go ahead, the cumulative effect across the LCT as a whole is predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** (significant). This is based primarily on the combined presence of large-scale wind turbines across the LCT. As noted above for Scenario 1, the effects of the Proposed Development would be more localised, and accordingly its contribution to cumulative effects across the LCT would be relatively limited.
LCT 142 – Strath - Caithness & Sutherland	Scenario 1: • Section C of the Proposed Development.	Section C of the Proposed Development would extend through a very localised parts of the LCT, where the alignment extends across intervening straths. Similarly to Section D, the Proposed Development extends directly across each strath, rather than along it, thereby limiting the footprint of the associated construction works, as well as the number of new steel lattice towers. Given the enclosed nature of the straths, these elements would represent notable elements from parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of construction activities and the new alignment would reduce at greater distance within the strath due to the screening influence of intervening tree cover and the landform enclosing the valley. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within approximately 700 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	There are no other energy-related proposals within the LCT. Potential indirect effects based on views of cumulative developments within the surrounding uplands would be restricted by the landform along the strath sides. Within the most open views, the wind turbines would represent elements in a geographically separate landscape context, outside the strath. Accordingly, there would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
LCT 139 – Rugged Mountain Massif -	Scenario 1:	Section C of the Proposed Development would extend across the landscape to the north of the LCT, on the spatially separate northern side of the intervening valley at Strathcarron. The construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent recognisable new

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
Caithness & Sutherland	• Section C of the Proposed Development.	features in the wider landscape, albeit within a broad scale landscape context, and accordingly would exert limited influence on existing landscape characteristics. Section D would exert greater influence, particularly where it extends within the LCT. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT within approximately 700-800 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This is based primarily on direct effects and close proximity views of Section D during construction and operation. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign; • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm.	There are no energy-related proposals within the LCT. However, from the more elevated slopes and summits on the northern edge of the LCT there would be views of these wind farms. In particular, the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm, scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm, and scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm would be located in the landscape to the north (on the opposite side of Strathcarron). The scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm would be located in the landscape to the south. Due to the vertical scale of the turbines, these developments would exert notable effects in their own right across localised parts of the LCT. The other wind farms would be located at greater distance. From open, elevated vantage points there would also be views of the consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign to the south-east, as well as long distance views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm and scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm in the distant landscape to the south. In each case, these schemes would exert limited influence on landscape character due to the spatial separation from the LCT. In summary, the cumulative effects on the LCT would be slightly increased from those described above in relation to Scenario 1, due to the addition of proposed wind farms to the view (in combination with partial views of the Proposed Development). Accordingly, across the LCT within the Study Area, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** (significant).
LCT 330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes - Ross & Cromarty	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section D would extend broadly north-south through a lengthy section of this LCT, through areas of upland moorland and foresty. Conversely, Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through very localised parts of the LCT on its southern edge (north of the River Peffery). In both cases, the construction activities and steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence would diminish at increased distance, and would be restricted by surrounding forestry in some areas. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a large scale landscape context.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (within approximately 700 m). The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign; • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL; • Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	The consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign, proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm, and scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm and Ceislein Wind Farm would be located (partly) within LCT 330 and exert significant effects on local landscape character in their own right due to the vertical scale of the turbines. In addition, the screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL and Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would extend through a spatially separate part of the LCT on the western edge of the Study Area (north of Loch Luichart). There would also be views of the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm in the landscape to the south (outside this LCT area) from more open, elevated vantage points there. In each case, these developments would be spatially separate from the Proposed Development, and exert their primary influence across a geographically different part of the LCT. In summary, the Scenario 2 developments would contribute towards cumulative effects on parts the LCT, which would be significant in their own right. However, these would diminish at greater distance across this expansive LCT. The overall cumulative level of effect would remain **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
LCT 341 – Forest Edge Farming	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through parts of the LCT (within the LCT area south of Strathconon). Similar to Section D, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within 700-800 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign;	From more open, elevated vantage points within the LCT there would be views of views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm within the context of forestry, beyond the Section D alignment. This would contribute towards cumulative effects in the vicinity of Fannyfield, albeit would exert diminishing influence at greater distance. There would also be views of the consented Strathrory Wind

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering • Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm.	Farm Redesign and scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm from northern parts of the LCT. These views would be restricted by the intervening landform at greater distances. The proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be experienced in a different sector of view (to the south / east of the LCT). This would exert limited cumulative influence based on the narrow angle of view and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT, comprising areas at Fannyfield (based on the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind) and within 700-800 m of the Section D and E alignments. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
LCT 335 – Wooded Glens and Rocky Moorland	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend across the landscape to the south-east of the LCT, where it extends across Strathconon. There would be no direct effects, albeit the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent recognisable new features in views from more open vantage points. However, these elements would be subject to screening by woodland within the LCT, and accordingly would exert limited influence on existing landscape characteristics. Section D would exert greater influence, particularly where it extends within the LCT. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts of the LCT within approximately 100-200 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This is based primarily on direct effects and close proximity views of Section D during construction and operation. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Negligible** (not significant) during construction, and **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during operation.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	The scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm would be located partly within the western edge of the LCT, and would result in significant effects in its own right. In addition, the Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would extend through a localised part of the LCT (on its south-western edge). Residual effects based on localised clearance of trees to accomodate the underground cable would be spatially separate from the Proposed Development, and accordingly would exert limited cumulative influence. The proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be located on higher ground at Knockfarrel, to the east of the LCT. Potential views would be very limited due to the extent of woodland within the LCT. Similarly, the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm would be located in the hills to the north of the LCT. Potential indirect effects based on views would be also restricted by extensive tree cover wthin the LCT. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based primarily on the scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm. The Proposed Development would also contribute to localised effects as described above.
LCT 345 – Farmed and Forested Slopes - Ross & Cromarty	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through parts of the LCT (within the LCT area south of Strathconon). Similar to Section D, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		closest proximity. However, the influence would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within 700-800 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign; • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm.	From more open, elevated vantage points within the LCT west of Evanton (on the northern edge of the Cromarty Firth), there would be views of views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm in the context of forestry, beyond the Section D alignment. There would also be potential views of the consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign and scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm, subject to screening by the intervening landform. In each case, the cumulative influence of the wind turbines would diminish at greater distance. The proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be experienced in a different sector of view and exert limited cumulative influence based on the narrow angle of view and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. The influence of the Proposed Development from parts of the LCT on the northern edge of the Cromarty Firth would be limited. Instead, the effects would be focused on a geographically separate LCT areas to the south (on the northern and southern side of Strath Conon as described above). In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT, comprising areas in the vicinity of Evanton (based on the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind) and within 700-800 m of the Section D and E alignments. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
LCT 346 – Open Farmed Slopes	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through localised parts of the LCT, west of Jamestown (on the northern side of Strathconon). Similar to Section D, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. The Section E alignment would also exert notable indirect effects on a separate LCT area on the southern side of Strathconon, based on close proximity views of the Proposed Development within the valley floor. However, the influence of Section E would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (within approximately 900 m). The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm;	The proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be located within the LCT and exert direct effects on local landscape character. However, these effects would be focused on the north-eastern side of Knockfarrel, spatially separate from the Proposed Development. The influence would be limited due to the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	From the more open vantage points, there would also be views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm, on the forested hills above the Cromarty Firth. The clearest views would be experienced from the Black Isle, which represents the LCT area furthest from the Section D and E alignments. The proposed wind turbines would be experienced in the distance, beyond Section D. The scoping-stage wind farms would also be visible from more open elevated vantage points, albeit would represent distant elements in the background landscape to the west and exert very limited cumulative influence. In summary, the proposed wind turbines would contribute towards localised effects on the LCT. However, the overall cumulative level of effect would remain consistent with that described in relation to Scenario 1.
LCT 331 – Rounded Rocky Hills - Ross & Cromarty	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through a very localised part of the LCT at Cnoc Beinn na Lice. It would also extend through adjoining forestry to the east (just outside the LCT) where it would exert an indirect influence on landscape character. Due to their proximity, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers associated with Section E would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. The influence of these elements would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. Section D would exert lesser influence, based on its increased spatial separation from the LCT. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to Section E. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL; • Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	The scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm, scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm, screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL, and Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would all be located partly within this LCT, resulting in direct effects on the existing landscape fabric. The effects of the wind farms and the 132kV OHL would be significant in their own right within the surrounding locality, with the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm exerting the greater influence based on their vertical scale. These developments would primarily exert their influence across the LCT areas on the northern and southern sides of Loch Garve (on the western edge of the Study Area), which are spatially separate from the Proposed Development. Potential views of the Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would be restricted by its spatial separation from the LCT, in combination with the screening influence of the intervening landform and tree cover. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised parts of the LCT, primarily based upon the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and Tarvie Wind Farm. The Proposed Development would also contribute towards cumulative effects, albeit in a more limited and localised manner. The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider parts of the LCT, in particular the LCT area south of Strathconon, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
LCT 339 – Inland Strath	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development	Section E of the Proposed Development would be located to the east of the LCT, where it extends across Strathconon. There would be no direct effects, albeit the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent recognisable new features in views from more open vantage points. These elements would be subject to screening by woodland within the LCT, and accordingly would exert limited influence on existing landscape characteristics. Section D would also avoid direct impacts on this LCT. Indirect effects based on views would be restricted by the intervening landform and tree cover / forestry. As such, this would also exert limited influence on existing landscape character within the LCT. Section D would also exert indirect effects on geographically separate LCT areas located further north (outside the Section E Study Area, at the north-western end of Strathrusdale). On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) across localised parts of the LCT within closest proximity to the Proposed Development. For Section D, this primarily coincides with the north-western end of Strathrusdale. For Section E, this coincides with the spatially separate LCT area, at the south-eastern end of Strathconon, Accordingly, there would be no coalescence of these effects. Across the wider LCT, the cumulative effect would be **Negligible** (not significant) during construction and operation.
	Scenario 2: • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	The Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would extend through a localised part of the LCT on the southern side of Strathconon. Residual effects based on localised clearance of trees to accommodate the underground cable would exert limited cumulative influence. The scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm would be located in the nearby landscape (outside the LCT) to the north of Strathconon, occupying an area of higher ground. Potential indirect effects based on views would be partly contained by the intervening landform that encloses the strath. However, within more open views, the turbines would form recognisable elements on the skyline, resulting in significant effects in their own right across localised parts of the LCT. From the geographically separate LCT area further north, at Strathrusdale, potential views of the scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm would be subject to screening by the intervening landform. Accordingly, it would exert limited cumulative influence. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts of the LCT, primarily based on views of the scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm north of Strathconon. The Proposed Development would exert lesser influence on views to the east of Strathconon (within a different field of view).
LCT 342 – Farmed River Plains	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through localised parts of the LCT, across Strathconon. The construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of Section E would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. Section D would contribute towards cumulative effects, in particular at Coille Uisge, which coincides with a separate area of the LCT. Section D would exert lesser cumulative influence based on its increased spatial separation from the LCT.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development. These effects would be primarily associated with Section E, where it extends through Strathconon. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from localised parts of the LCT on the north-eastern side of Knockfarrel. This would exert an indirect effect upon local landscape character, albeit the influence would be limited due to the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. The effects would be focused within a part of the LCT that is spatially separate from the Proposed Development, and there would be no coalescence of effect. The proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would be located at greater distance and exert limited influence on the LCT due to the screening influence of the existing landform. Potential views of the consented Strathrory Wind Farm Redesign and scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm (further to the north), and the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and Tarvie Wind Farm (further to the west) would be subject to screening by the intervening landform. In summary, the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would contribute towards localised effects on the LCT. However, the overall cumulative level of effect would remain consistent with that described in relation to Scenario 1.
Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA	Scenario 1: • Section C and E of the Proposed Development.	Potential cumulative effects on the WLA would be indirect. The influence of Section C and Section E would be limited due to their spatial separation from the WLA, on the opposite sides of Strathcarron to the north, and Strathconon to the south respectively. Section D would exert greater influence, particularly where it extends in close proximity (< 1 km) to the eastern edge of the WLA. As described in the main assessment, the key influence would be focused on the outer-most 400-500 m of the WLA to the east of Cnoc a' Bhreac Leathaid, Carn a Chlaiginn and Carn an Laith-bhaid. The cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across this very localised area on the outer eastern edge of the WLA during construction and operation. This is based primarily on close proximity views of Section D. The effects would reduce across the wider WLA, in particular the more remote interior. On balance, the cumulative effect across parts of the WLA within the Study Area would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm;	The scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm would be located on the north-eastern edge of the WLA and result in significant effects on the local landscape in its own right due to the vertical scale of the turbines (currently proposed at up to 220 m to tip) and the movement of the rotors. However, these effects would diminish at greater distance, and accordingly would account for a relatively focused geographic area on the northern edge of the WLA.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL.	In addition, the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and associated screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL would be located in the landscape at the southern edge of the WLA. Due to their proximity and scale, they would also exert significant effects in their own right upon localised parts of the WLA (focused on the summits along the southern edge). From the most open vantage points, there would also be views of the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm, which would be located in the landscape to the north (on the opposite side of Strathcarron). The scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm at greater distance to the south. Potential views of Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering to the east would be very limited due to its spatial separation, and presence of intervening forestry. Accordingly, this would exert very limited influence on the WLA. From the more elevated slopes and summits on the eastern edge of the WLA there would be views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm within the forested hills to the east, in front of the Section D alignment. Based on the vertical scale of the turbines, this would exert a notable indirect effect on parts of the WLA in closest proximity to it. The scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm would also be located in the landscape to the east, beyond Section D of the Proposed Development. The proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering (in the landscape to the south-east) would exert very limited influence due to its distance from the WLA. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised north-eastern and southern parts of the WLA, primarily based on views of the scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm and Carn Fearna Wind Farm respectively due to their proximity and vertical scale. In addition, the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would contribute towards localised **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects in combination with the Section D alignment across the eastern edge of the WLA. The effects would steadily diminish further north across more remote, central parts of the WLA. Across wider parts of the WLA the cumulative effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
Ben Wyvis SLA	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Potential cumulative effects on the SLA would be indirect. The influence of Section E would be limited due to its spatial separation from the SLA, on the opposite side of Strathconon, and intervening forestry. Similarly, Section D would exert limited influence due to its spatial separation from the SLA, in combination with intervening forestry, as well as the intervening Novar Wind Farm further north (outside the Section E Study Area). In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation. The cumulative effects would reduce across the more remote interior of the SLA.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering;	The scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and associated screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL would be located in the landscape at the southern edge of the SLA. Due to their proximity and scale, they would exert significant effects in their own right upon localised parts of the SLA (focused on the summits along the southern edge). From the most open vantage points, there would also be views of the scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm at greater distance to the south. From the more elevated slopes and summits on the eastern edge of the WLA there would be views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm within the forested hills to the east, in front of the Section D alignment. Based on the vertical scale of the turbines, this would exert

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL.	a notable indirect effect on parts of the WLA in closest proximity to it. The scoping-stage Ceislein Wind Farm would also be located in the landscape to the east, beyond Section D of the Proposed Development. Potential views of Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering to the south-east would be very limited due to its spatial separation, and presence of intervening forestry. Accordingly, this would exert very limited influence on the SLA. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised southern parts of the SLA, primarily based on views of the Scoping Stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm due to its proximity and vertical scale. In addition, the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would contribute towards localised **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects upon the eastern edge of the SLA. The effects would steadily diminish further north across more remote, central parts of the SLA. Across wider parts of the SLA the cumulative effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant). The Proposed Development would exert limited cumulative influence due to its spatial separation from the SLA and intervening forestry.
Section E: Near Strathpeffer to Beauly		
LCT 330 – Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes - Ross & Cromarty	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section D would extend broadly north-south through a lengthy section of this LCT, through areas of upland moorland and foresty. Conversely, Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through very localised parts of the LCT on its southern edge (north of the River Peffery). In both cases, the construction activities and steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence would diminish at increased distance, and would be restricted by surrounding forestry in some areas. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a large scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (within approximately 700 m). The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor** Adverse (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL;	The proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would be located (partly) within LCT 330 and exert significant effects on local landscape character in its own right due to the vertical scale of the turbines. In addition, the screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL and Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would extend through a spatially separate part of the LCT on the western edge of the Study Area (north of Loch Luichart). There would also be views of the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm in the nearby landscape (outside this LCT area) from more open, elevated vantage points there. In each case, these developments would be spatially separate from the Proposed Development, and exert their primary influence across a geographically different part of the LCT. In summary, the Scenario 2 developments would contribute towards cumulative effects on parts the LCT, which would be significant in their own right. However, these would diminish at greater distance across this expansive LCT. The overall cumulative level of effect would remain **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	
LCT 335 – Wooded Glens and Rocky Moorland	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section D would be located in the landscape to the north of the LCT. There would be no direct effects, albeit the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent recognisable new features in views from more open vantage points. However, these elements would be subject to screening by woodland within the LCT, and accordingly would exert limited influence on existing landscape characteristics. Section E would extend through a localised part of the LCT on its eastern edge. Again, the effects of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be restricted by surrounding areas of tree cover within the LCT. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts of the LCT within approximately 300-400 m of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. This is based primarily on direct effects and close proximity views of Section E during construction and operation. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction, and **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during operation.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	The Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm would be located partly within the western edge of the LCT, and would result in significant effects in its own right. In addition, the Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would extend through a localised part of the LCT (on its south-western edge). Residual effects based on localised clearance of trees to accomodate the underground cable would be spatially separate from the Proposed Development, and accordingly would exert limited cumulative influence. The Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be located on higher ground at Knockfarrel, to the east of the LCT. Potential views would be very limited due to the extent of woodland within the LCT. Similarly, the Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm would be located in the hills to the north of the LCT. Potential indirect effects based on views would be also restricted by extensive tree cover wthin the LCT. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based primarily on the Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm. The Proposed Development would also contribute to localised effects as described above.
LCT 341 – Forest Edge Farming	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through two separate parts of the LCT (within the LCT areas on the north and south sides of Strathconon). Section D would extend through a spatially separate part of the LCT further north, extending broadly parallel to the Cromarty Firth. In both cases, the construction activities and steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within 700-800 m). This includes separate parts of

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		the LCT on the northern and southern sides of Strathconon, and further north. The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	From more open, elevated vantage points within the LCT there would be views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm within the context of forestry, beyond the Proposed Development (Section D alignment). This would contribute towards cumulative effects in the vicinity of Fannyfield, albeit would exert diminishing influence at greater distance. The proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be located in the landscape to the south. This would typically be experienced in a different sector of view to the Proposed Development (to the south / east of the LCT). This would exert limited cumulative influence based on the narrow angle of view and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT, comprising areas at Fannyfield (based on the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind) and within 700-800 m of the Section D and E alignments. The effects would reduce across the wider LCT and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
LCT 345 – Farmed and Forested Slopes - Ross & Cromarty	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through two separate parts of the LCT (within the LCT areas on the north and south sides of Strathconon). The construction activities and steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence would diminish at increased distance. Section D would extend through the adjoining landscape (outside the LCT), limiting its influence to indirect effects based on potential views, which would be subject to screening by landform and tree cover. Accordingly, across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (typically within 700-800 m). The cumulative effects would be primarily due to Section E (with Section D exerting lesser influence). The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	From more open, elevated vantage points there would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering. This would be experienced in a different sector of view to the Proposed Development, and exert limited cumulative influence based on the narrow angle of view and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. The Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would extend through a localised part of the LCT on the southern side of Strath Conon. Residual effects based on localised clearance of trees to accomodate the underground cable would exert limited cumulative influence. Potential views of other Scenario 2 developments would be limited across parts of the LCT 345 within the Study Area due to the intervening landform and spatial separation.

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		In summary, the proposed Scenario 2 developments would contribute towards localised effects on the LCT. However, the overall cumulative level of effect would remain consistent with that described in relation to Scenario 1.
LCT 346 – Open Farmed Slopes	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through localised parts of the LCT, west of Jamestown (on the northern side of Strathconon). Section D would extend through the adjoining landscape in close proximity to the same part of the LCT. This would result in indirect effects, based on potential views. In both cases, the construction activities and steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. The Section E alignment would also exert notable indirect effects on a separate LCT area on the southern side of Strathconon, based on close proximity views of the Proposed Development from the valley floor. However, the influence of Section D and Section E would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation (within approximately 900 m). The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	The proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be located within the LCT and exert direct effects on local landscape character. However, these effects would be focused on the north-eastern side of Knockfarrel, spatially separate from the Proposed Development. The influence would be limited due to the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. From the more open vantage points, there would also be views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm, on the forested hills above the Cromarty Firth. The proposed wind turbines would be experienced in the distance, beyond Section D. The scoping-stage wind farms would also be visible from more open elevated vantage points, albeit would represent distant elements in the background landscape to the west and exert very limited cumulative influence. In summary, the proposed Scenario 2 developments would contribute towards localised effects on the LCT. However, the overall cumulative level of effect would remain consistent with that described in relation to Scenario 1.
LCT 342 – Farmed River Plains	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through localised parts of the LCT, across Strathconon. The construction activities and steel lattice towers would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. However, the influence of Section E would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and towers would represent relatively discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. Section D would extend through the adjoining landscape north of Strathconon, in relatively close proximity to the LCT, resulting in potential indirect effects. Section D would contribute towards cumulative effects, in particular at Coille Uisge, which coincides with a

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		separate area of the LCT. However, the effects would be limited in other areas due to the spatial separation of Section D from the LCT (Section D would exert lesser cumulative influence than Section E on this LCT on this basis). In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts on the LCT in closest proximity to the Proposed Development. These effects would be primarily associated with Section E, where it extends through Strathconon. The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from localised parts of the LCT on the north-eastern side of Knockfarrel. This would exert an indirect effect upon local landscape character, albeit the influence would be limited due to the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. The effects would be focused within a part of the LCT that is spatially separate from the Proposed Development, and there would be no coalescence of effect. The proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would be located at greater distance and exert limited influence on the LCT due to the screening influence of the existing landform. There would also be potential views of the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and Tarvie Wind Farm to the west, albeit visibility would be subject to screening by the intervening landform.In summary, the proposed Scenario 2 developments would contribute towards localised effects on the LCT. However, the overall cumulative level of effect would remain consistent with that described in relation to Scenario 1.
LCT 331 – Rounded Rocky Hills - Ross & Cromarty	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would extend through a very localised part of the LCT at Cnoc Beinn na Lice. It would also extend through adjoining forestry to the east (just outside the LCT) where it would exert an indirect influence on landscape character. Due to their proximity, the construction activities and new steel lattice towers associated with Section E would represent notable linear features within parts of the LCT in closest proximity. The influence of these elements would diminish at increased distance. Across wider parts of the LCT, the construction works and new towers would represent discreet elements within a broad scale landscape context. Section D would exert lesser influence, based on its increased spatial separation from the LCT. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts of the LCT, primarily focused upon areas in closest proximity to Section E (Section D would exert lesser influence). The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm;	The scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm, scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm, scoping-stage Fairburn Extension, screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL, and Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would all be located partly within this LCT, resulting in direct effects on the existing landscape fabric. The effects of the wind farms and the 132kV OHL would be significant in their own right within the surrounding locality, with the scoping-stage wind farms exerting the greater influence based on their vertical scale. These developments would

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Fairburn Extension; • Scoping-stage Ballach Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL; • Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	primarily exert their influence across the LCT areas on the northern and southern sides of Loch Garve, and on the southern side of the Orrin Reservoir (on the western edge of the Study Area), which are spatially separate from the Proposed Development. The turbines of the scoping-stage Ballach Wind Farm would be located just outside LCT 331 (to the south) and would exert indirect effects on local landscape character, which would also be notable due to the height of the turbines. Potential views of the Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would be restricted by its spatial separation from the LCT, in combination with the screening influence of the intervening landform and tree cover. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised parts of the LCT, primarily based upon the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm, scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm, and scoping-stage Fairburn Extension. The Proposed Development would also contribute towards cumulative effects, albeit in a more limited and localised manner. The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider parts of the LCT, and would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
LCT 339 – Inland Strath	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E of the Proposed Development would be located to the south-east of the LCT, where it extends across Strathconon. There would be no direct effects, albeit the construction activities and new steel lattice towers would represent recognisable new features in views from more open vantage points. These elements would be subject to screening by woodland within the LCT, and accordingly would exert limited influence on existing landscape characteristics. Section D would be located to the north-east of the LCT in this area. Indirect effects based on views would be restricted by the intervenign landform and tree cover at Torrachilty Wood. As such, this would also exert limited influence on existing landscape characterer within the LCT. Section D would also exert indirect effects on geographically separate LCT areas located further north (outside the Section E Study Area, at the north-western end of Strathrusdale). On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant) across localised parts of the LCT within closest proximity to the Proposed Development. For Section D, this primarily coincides with the north-western end of Strathrusdale. For Section E, this coincides with the spatially separate LCT area, at the south-eastern end of Strathconon, Accordingly, there would be no coalescence of these effects. Across the wider LCT, the cumulative effect would be **Minor** (not significant) during construction and operation.
	Scenario 2: • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm;	The Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link would extend through a localised part of the LCT on the southern side of Strathconon. Residual effects based on localised clearance of trees to accomodate the underground cable would exert limited cumulative influence. The scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm would be located in the nearby landscape (outside the LCT) to the north of Strathconon, occupying an area of higher ground. Potential indirect effects based on views would be partly contained by the intervening landform athat encloses

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	Pre-app Western Isles HVDC Link.	the strath. However, within more open views, the turbines would form recogisable elements on the skyline, resulting in significant effects in their own right across localised parts of the LCT. On balance, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) across localised parts of the LCT, primarily based on views of the scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm north of Strathconon. The Proposed Development would exert lesser influence on views to the east of Strathconon (within a different field of view).
Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Potential cumulative effects on the WLA would be indirect. The influence of Section E would be limited due to its spatial separation from the WLA, on the opposite side of Strathconon,and intervening forestry. Section D would exert greater influence, particularly where it extends in closest proximity to the eastern edge of the WLA. This would occur outside the Section E Study Area, to the east of Cnoc a' Bhreac Leathaid, Carn a Chlaiginn and Carn an Laith-bhaid. Based primarily on views of Section D, the cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) across this very localised area on the outer, eastern edge of the WLA during construction and operation (outside the Section E Study Area). The cumulative effects would reduce across the wider WLA, in particular the more remote interior. On balance, the cumulative effect across parts of the WLA within the Study Area would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	The scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and associated screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL would be located in the landscape at the southern edge of the WLA. Due to their proximity and scale, they would exert significant effects in their own right upon localised parts of the WLA (focused on the summits along the southern edge). From the most open vantage points, there would also be views of the scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm at greater distance to the south. From the more elevated slopes and summits on the eastern edge of the WLA there would be views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm within the forested hills to the east, in front of the Section D alignment. Based on the vertical scale of the turbines, this would exert a notable indirect effect on parts of the WLA in closest proximity to it. Potential views of Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering to the east (beyond the Section E alignment) would be very limited due to its spatial separation, and presence of intervening foresty. Accordingly, this would exert very limited influence on the WLA. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised southern parts of the WLA, primarily based on views of the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm due to its proximity and vertical scale. In addition, the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would contribute towards localised **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects in combination with the Section D alignment across the eastern edge of the WLA. The effects would steadily diminish further north across more remote, central parts of the WLA. Across wider parts of the WLA the cumulative effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Landscape Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
Ben Wyvis SLA	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Potential cumulative effects on the SLA would be indirect. The influence of Section E would be limited due to its spatial separation from the SLA, on the opposite side of Strathconon, and intervening forestry. Similarly, Section D would exert limited influence due to its spatial separation from the SLA, in combination with intervening forestry, as well as the intervening Novar Wind Farm further north (outside the Section E Study Area). In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation. The cumulative effects would reduce across the more remote interior of the SLA.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm; • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm; • Screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL.	The scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and associated screening-stage Carn Fearna 132 kV OHL would be located in the landscape at the southern edge of the SLA. Due to their proximity and scale, they would exert significant effects in their own right upon localised parts of the SLA (focused on the summits along the southern edge). From the most open vantage points, there would also be views of the Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm at greater distance to the south. From the more elevated slopes and summits on the eastern edge of the WLA there would be views of the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm within the forested hills to the east, in front of the Section D alignment. Based on the vertical scale of the turbines, this would exert a notable indirect effect on parts of the WLA in closest proximity to it. Potential views of Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering to the south-east would be very limited due to its spatial separation, and presence of intervening foresty. Accordingly, this would exert very limited influence on the SLA. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised southern parts of the SLA, primarily based on views of the scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm due to its proximity and vertical scale. In addition, the proposed Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm would contribute towards localised **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) effects upon the eastern edge of the SLA. The effects would steadily diminish further north across more remote, central parts of the SLA. Across wider parts of the SLA the cumulative effect would be **Moderate-Minor** Adverse (not significant). The Proposed Development would exert limited cumulative influence due to its spatial separation from the SLA and intervening forestry.

Table 7.11: Assessment of Cumulative Effects on Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
Section A: Spittal to Brora		
Lanergill Farm (SA-1)	Scenario 1: • Proposed Banniskirk Substation	Potential views of the proposed Banniskirk Substation would be restricted by intervening landform and vegetation, in combination with the distance of view. As a result, there would be no notable change to the level of effect reported within the main assessment. The cumulative effect would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Ouglassy Wind Farm	Section A would potentially be viewed in combination with the proposed Ouglassy Wind Farm immediately to the north-west of the receptor location. The proposed turbines would be very prominent elements within the view, viewed over a short distance simultaneously with the Proposed Development. In combination the Proposed Development and the proposed wind farm would result in a **Major adverse** (significant) cumulative effect.
Lydias House, Toftingall Farm (SA-2)	Scenario 1: • None	Potential views of Scenario 1 cumulative developments would be restricted by the intervening landform. No predicted cumulative effect.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Ouglassy Wind Farm	Section A would potentially be viewed in combination with the proposed Ouglassy Wind Farm immediately to the north-west of the receptor location. The proposed turbines would be very prominent elements within the view, viewed over a short distance simultaneously with the Proposed Development. In combination the Proposed Development and the proposed wind farm would result in a **Major adverse** (significant) cumulative effect.
Farmsteads and cottages along the A9(T) (SA-04)	Scenario 1: • None	Potential views of Scenario 1 cumulative developments would be restricted by the intervening landform. No predicted cumulative effect.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Tormsdale Wind Farm • Proposed Hill of Lynchrobbie Wind Farm	Visual receptors at SA-04 would experience very short distance views to the Proposed Development to the east in combination with longer distance views to the north-west towards the proposed Tormsdale and potentially the two proposed turbines at Hill of Lynchrobbie Wind farm to the south over a long distance. Owing to intervening vegetation and landform views of the Hill of Lynchrobbie wind farm are likely to be restricted to the upper components of the wind turbines only. The cumulative effect of the Proposed Development in combination with the proposed Tormsdale wind farm would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and operation. In combination with the proposed Hill of Lynchrobbie Wind Farm the cumulative effects would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
Section B: Brora to Loch Buidhe		
No significant cumulative visual effect were identified.		
Section C: Loch Buidhe to Dounie		
Far North Rail Line (RC-2)	Scenario 1: Section B of the Proposed Development.	There would be sequential views of Sections B and C from spatially separate sections of this long-distance rail route. In each case the effects across localised sections in closest proximity to the Section B and C alignments (within 2 km and 400 m respectively) would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) at most. However, from all other sections of the route potential views would be screened by a combination of landform and vegetation, and tempered by increasing distance. Views would be fully screened along more enclosed sections. Across the route as a whole the cumulative effect would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) during construction and operation.
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign; • Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Proposed Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III); • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	Views of these wind farms along the route would be restricted by intervening tree cover and landform. As such, views would be predominantly limited to the scoping-stage wind farms, which would typically be part-screened, and experienced in a sequential manner along different sections of the route. Within more open views the wind turbines would form new elements on the skyline around the Dornoch Firth / Kyle of Sutherland. Potential views of the other (consented and proposed) wind farms would be extremely limited, and as such they would exert very limited cumulative influence on views from the road. In summary, based on partial views of the Proposed Development and the scoping-stage wind farms, the cumulative effect across parts of the route within the Study Area is predicted to be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (significant). However, there would be no effect across wider sections of this long-distance route.
Cadh' an Tain Road (RC-6),	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	There would be close proximity views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers associated with the northern end of Section D (where it adjoins Section C). These elements would be experienced within the strath, and the slopes that enclose its southern side. Views would gradually diminish at greater distance from Section D due to the screening influence of intervening tree cover and landform.

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		The cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) on views from localised parts on the road in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation. As per the main assessment, these effects would reduce in views from more distant sections of the route. Across the wider route, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm.	Views of the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm would be focused across western parts of the route between Amatnatua and Culeave (west of the Proposed Development). The wind turbines would be subject to partial screening by the rising landform along the northern side of the strath in combination with intervening forestry. However, in more open views the turbines would form recognisable elements on the skyline to the north / north-west. Potential views of all other Scenario 2 cumulative developments would be restricted by the intervening landform. Based on partial views of the Proposed Development in combination with the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect on views from this route is predicted to be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).
Core Path SU03.01: Cornhill – Culrain (RC 10)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	There would be close proximity views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers associated with Section C, where it would extend across this path. However, views would be limited to localised sections of the path in close proximity, due to the screening influence of surrounding forestry. Section D would be located in the landscape to the south, and would also be filtered by intervening tree cover, restricting views to more open sections of the path. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised sections of the path within closest proximity to Section C. The overall cumulative effect across wider parts of the path network would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant). Section D would exert limited influence.
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign; • Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Proposed Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III); • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm;	There would be potential views of the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm in the landscape to the west. These views would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover / woodland, particularly across eastern sections of the route. The consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm would be located within the same field of view, albeit at greater distance, and exerting more limited influence on the experience of walkers. Potential views of the other wind farms would be experienced at greater distance to the north-east, on the opposite side of the Kyle of Sutherland. Accordingly, they would exert limited influence on the view. Based on partial views of the Proposed Development and the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on the most open views. The cumulative effects would be reduced along other parts of the route due to increased levels of intervening screening.

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	
Core Path SU03.14: Cornhill Curling Pond (RC-13)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Views of Section C would be restricted by surrounding forestry / tree cover along the path. This would limit visibility and temper cumulative simultaneous visibility with Section D. The clearest views would be experienced from the western-most part of the path (250 m in length) where forestry felling (to create the wayleave for the alignment and a wind-firm edge to the retained forestry) would open up views towards the Proposed Development. From this localised part of the path, there would be partial views of Section C and Section D in the landscape to the west, resulting in **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) cumulative effects during construction and operation. The cumulative influence would be reduced along other parts of the route due to increased levels of intervening screening.
	Scenario 2: • Consented Lairg II Wind Farm Redesign; • Consented Garvary Wind Farm; • Proposed Acheilidh Wind Farm (Lairg III); • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	Potential views of the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm in the landscape to the west would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover / woodland. The clearest views would be experienced from the western-most part of the path (250 m in length) where there would be a more open outlook beyond areas of forestry felling. The wind turbines would be visible in the landscape beyond the Proposed Development, albeit exerting a notable influence on views in their own right due to their vertical scale. Potential views of the other wind farms would be experienced at greater distance to the north-east, on the opposite side of the Kyle of Sutherland. Accordingly, they would exert limited influence on the view. Based on partial views of the Proposed Development and the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Major Adverse** (significant). These cumulative views would be limited to very localised western parts of the path. The cumulative influence would be reduced along other parts of the route due to increased levels of intervening screening.
Core SU03.06: River Carron footpath (RC-15)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	From the western end of the path there would be close proximity views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers associated with the northern end of Section D (where it adjoins Section C). These elements would be experienced within the strath, and the slopes that enclose its southern side. Across eastern parts of the path, views would be restricted by intervening woodland and riparian tree cover. The cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) on views from localised parts on the path in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation. As per the main assessment, these effects would reduce in views from more distant easterly sections of the route. Across the wider route, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm.	Views of the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm would be restricted by the landform on the northern side of Strathcarron in combination with woodland and riparian tree cover along the path. Within more open views, experienced from localised areas at the western end of the path, Braelangwell Wind Farm would be experienced on the opposite (northern) side of Strathcarron. The wind turbines would form recognisable elements on the skyline to the north. Meall Buidhe Wind Farm would be located at greater distance in the hills to the north-west and exert lesser influence on the view. Potential views of all other Scenario 2 cumulative developments would be restricted by the intervening landform. Based on partial views of the Proposed Development in combination with Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect on views from this route is predicted to be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant). However, there would be no effect across more enclosed parts of the path, where the route extends though more dense woodland.
Location OC-3 Dounie Estate	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section D of the Proposed Development would be experienced in the landscape to the west, subject to partial screening by intervening tree cover. As a result, views of the Section D construction activities would be limited. Once operational, there would be views of the upper parts of the steel lattice towers. The cumulative effects during construction would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant). The cumulative effects during operation would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	The scoping stage Braelangwell Wind Farm would be experienced on the opposite (northern) side of Strathcarron. The wind turbines would form recognisable elements on the skyline to the north, behind the Proposed Development. The consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm would be located at greater distance in the hills to the north / north-west and exert lesser influence on the view. The scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm would be located to the north-east and exert very limited cumulative influence due to the distance of view and intervening tree cover. Potential views of all other Scenario 2 cumulative developments would be restricted by the intervening landform and spatial separation. Based on views of the Proposed Development and the scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm, consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).
Section D: Dounie to Near Strathpeffer		
Strathpeffer (SD-10)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west of the Strathpeffer. Views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by intervening landform and tree cover, and accordingly would be limited to the outer edges of the settlement. Section D would be located at greater distance in the landscape to the north, in the background beyond intervening woodland. Accordingly,

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		it would exert limited cumulative influence on views from the settlement. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and operation, based primarily on views of Section E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	Potential views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be restricted by the intervening landform and tree cover. Potential views of other wind farms would be restricted by the intervening landform and separation distance.. In summary, there would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Cadh an Tartair (RD-01)	Scenario 1: • Section C of the Proposed Development.	There would be close proximity views of the construction activities and new steel lattice towers associated with the southern end of Section C (where it adjoins Section D). These elements would be experienced within the strath, and the slopes that enclose its northern side. Views would gradually diminish at greater distance from Section C due to the screening influence of intervening tree cover and landform. The cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) on views from localised parts on the road in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation. As per the main assessment, these effects would reduce in views from more distant sections of the route. Across the wider route, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm.	Views of the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm would be focused across western parts of the route between Amatnatua and Culeave (west of the Proposed Development). The wind turbines would be subject to partial screening by the rising landform along the northern side of the strath in combination with intervening forestry. However, in more open views the turbines would form recognisable elements on the skyline to the north / north-west. Potential views of all other Scenario 2 cumulative developments would be restricted by the intervening landform. Based on partial views of the Proposed Development in combination with the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect on views from this route is predicted to be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).
Core Path SU03.06: River Carron (RD-12)	Scenario 1: • Section C of the Proposed Development.	From the western end of the path there would be close proximity views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers associated with the southern end of Section C (where it adjoins Section D). These elements would be experienced within the strath, and the slopes that enclose its southern side. Across eastern parts of the path, views would be restricted by intervening woodland and riparian tree cover. The cumulative effect would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) on views from localised parts on the path in closest proximity to the Proposed Development during construction and operation. As per the main assessment, these effects would reduce in views from more distant easterly sections of the route. Across the wider route, the effects would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm;	Views of the consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm would be restricted by the landform on the northern side of Strathcarron in combination with woodland and riparian tree cover along the path. Within more open views, experienced from localised areas at the western end of the path, Braelangwell Wind Farm would be experienced on the opposite (northern) side of

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm.	Strathcarron. The wind turbines would form recognisable elements on the skyline to the north. Meall Buidhe Wind Farm would be located at greater distance in the hills to the north-west and exert lesser influence on the view. Potential views of all other Scenario 2 cumulative developments would be restricted by the intervening landform. Based on partial views of the Proposed Development in combination with Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect on views from this route is predicted to be Major-Moderate Adverse (significant). However, there would be no effect across more enclosed parts of the path, where the route extends though more dense woodland.
Strathpeffer Walking Route: North of Strathpeffer (RD-14)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	There would be close proximity views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers associated with the northern end of Section E, where it would extend across this series of paths. However, views would be limited to localised sections of the path in close proximity, due to the screening influence of surrounding forestry. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, and would also be filtered by intervening tree cover, restricting views to more open sections of the path. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised sections of the path within closest proximity to Section E. The overall cumulative effect across wider parts of the path network would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant). Section D would exert limited influence.
	Scenario 2: • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	The scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm would be located in the hills to the west / south-west of the path network. However, potential views of these schemes would be restricted by surrounding tree cover. Based on glimpsed views through localised gaps in tree cover, the cumulative level of effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
Core Path SU03.14: Cornhill Curling Pond (RD-22)	Scenario 1: • Section C of the Proposed Development.	Views of Section C would be restricted by surrounding forestry / tree cover along the path. This would limit visibility and temper cumulative simultaneous visibility with Section D. As such, the cumulative effects during construction and operation would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant).
	Scenario 2 • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm;	Potential views of the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm in the landscape to the west would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover / woodland. The clearest views would be experienced from the western-most part of the path (250 m in length) where there would be a more open outlook beyond areas of forestry felling. The wind turbines would be visible in the landscape beyond the Proposed Development, albeit exerting a notable influence on views in their own right due to their vertical scale. Potential views of the scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm would be experienced at greater distance to the north-east, on the opposite side of the Kyle of Sutherland. Accordingly, they would exert limited influence on the view.

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm.	Based on partial views of the Proposed Development and the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Major Adverse** (significant). These cumulative views would be limited to very localised western parts of the path. The cumulative effects would be reduced along other parts of the route due to increased levels of intervening screening.
Core Path RC45.07: Golf course - Ord Wood east (RD-25)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-westof the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform and tree cover. Section D would be located to the north. The associated construction works and steel lattice towers would represent distant elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, it would exert extremely limited cumulative influence. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based primarily of views of Section E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be partial views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering in the landscape to the east (within a different sector of view to Sections D and E). Views would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, and accordingly it would exert very limited influence on existing views. In summary, there would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Core Path RC45.04: Blackmuir Woods - maze circular (RD-26)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover. Where there are gaps in the surrounding tree cover, Section E would be visible on the hillsides to the west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. Views to the south-west would be screened by the intervening landform. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, at greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based primarily of views of Section E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be partial views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering in the landscape to the east (within a different sector of view to Sections D and E). Views would be subject to screening by the intervening landform at Knockfarrel, and accordingly it would exert very limited influence on existing views. Potential views of other wind farms would be restricted by the intervening landform and separation distance. In summary, there would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Core Path RC45.09: Ardival - Catsback - Loch Ussie (RD-31)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, which would restrict views to the south-west. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, at slightly greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Proposed Abhain Dubh Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from more elevated (southern) sections of the path. The influence of the turbine would be relatively limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other wind farms would be restricted by the intervening landform and separation distance. The cumulative effect would remain **Moderate Adverse** (not significant).
Core Path SU03.01: Cornhill - Culrain (RD 33)	Scenario 1: • Section C of the Proposed Development.	There would be close proximity views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers associated with Section C, where it would extend across this path. However, views would be limited to localised sections of the path in close proximity, due to the screening influence of surrounding forestry. Section D would be located in the landscape to the south, and would also be filtered by intervening tree cover, restricting views to more open sections of the path. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised sections of the path within closest proximity to Section C. The overall cumulative effect across wider parts of the path network would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant). Section D would exert limited influence.
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm.	There would be potential views of the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm in the landscape to the west. These views would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover / woodland, particularly across eastern sections of the route. The consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm would be located within the same field of view, albeit at greater distance, and exerting more limited influence on the experience of walkers. Potential views of the other wind farms would be experienced at greater distance, subject to screening by landform and tree cover. Accordingly, they would exert limited influence on the view. Based on partial views of the Proposed Development and the scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm and Braelangwell Wind Farm, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on the most open views. The cumulative effects would be reduced along other parts of the route due to increased levels of intervening screening.
	Scenario 1:	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, which would fully screen views of the south-west. Section D would

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
Core Path RC45.02: Knockfarrel (maze to hill) (RD-36)	• Section E of the Proposed Development.	be located in the landscape to the north, at greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	Potential views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from more elevated sections of the path would be limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other Scenario 2 developments would be limited by landform and separation distance. There would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Core Path RC13.05: Knockfarrel to Fodderty (RD-41)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, which would fully screen views of the south-west. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, at greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from more elevated (southern) sections of the path. The influence of the turbine would be relatively limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other Scenario 2 developments would be limited by landform and separation distance. The cumulative effect would remain **Moderate Adverse** (not significant).
Core Path RC13.06: Knockfarrel (RD-46)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform and tree cover. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west / north, against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering to the south of the path (in the opposite field of view to the Proposed Development). The influence of the turbine would be relatively limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other Scenario 2 developments would be limited by landform and separation distance. The cumulative effect would remain **Moderate Adverse** (not significant).
Strathpeffer Golf Course (OD-01)	Scenario 1: • Section E of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west / north-west of the golf course. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would be limited by the intervening landform and tree cover. Section D would be located at greater distance in the landscape to the north. Potential views of Section D would be limited by the landform at Creag Ulladail, and limited to localised parts of the course where the construction works and towers would represent distant elements in the background landscape. In summary, the cumulative effect would be Moderate Adverse (significant) based primarily on Section E.
	Scenario 2: • None.	The Scenario 2 cumulative developments would be screened by the intervening landform. There would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Dounie Estate (OD-03)	Scenario 1: • Section C of the Proposed Development.	Section D would be located in the landscape to the west of the Estate. Section C of the Proposed Development would be experienced in the landscape to the north-west. In both cases the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to partial screening by intervening tree cover. As a result, views of the Section C and D construction activities would be relatively limited. Once operational, the Section C towers would extend northwards from those in Section D, extending the influence of the alignment across a wider angle of view. The cumulative effects during construction would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant). The cumulative effects during operation would be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).
	Scenario 2: • Consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm;	The scoping stage Braelangwell Wind Farm would be experienced on the opposite (northern) side of Strathcarron. The wind turbines would form recognisable elements on the skyline to the north, behind the Proposed Development. The consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm would be located at greater distance in the hills to the north / north-west and exert lesser influence on the view. The scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm would be located to the north-east and exert very limited cumulative influence due to the distance of view and intervening tree cover. The scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm would be located in the hills to the south of the Estate. However, potential views of these turbines would be restricted by the intervening landform. Based on views of the Proposed Development and the scoping-stage Braelangwell Wind Farm, consented Meall Buidhe Wind Farm and scoping-stage Inveroykel Wind Farm, the cumulative effect is predicted to be **Major-Moderate Adverse** (significant).

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
	• Scoping-stage Balblair Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Creachan Wind Farm.	
Section E: Near Strathpeffer to Beauly		
Strathpeffer (SE-22)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west of the Strathpeffer. Views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by intervening landform and tree cover, and accordingly would be limited to the outer edges of the settlement. Section D would be located at greater distance in the landscape to the north, in the background beyond intervening woodland. Accordingly, it would exert limited cumulative influence on views from the settlement. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) during construction and operation, based primarily on views of Section E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	Potential views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering would be restricted by the intervening landform and tree cover. Potential views of other wind farms would be restricted by the intervening landform and separation distance. In summary, there would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Golf course - Ord Wood east RC45.07 (RE-24)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-westof the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform and tree cover. Section D would be located to the north. The associated construction works and steel lattice towers would represent distant elements in the background landscape. Accordingly, it would exert extremely limited cumulative influence. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based primarily of views of Section E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be partial views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering in the landscape to the east (within a different sector of view to Sections D and E). Views would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, and accordingly it would exert very limited influence on existing views. Potential views of other wind farms would be restricted by the intervening landform and separation distance. In summary, there would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Blackmuir Woods - maze circular RC45.04 (RE-25)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by intervening tree cover. Where there are gaps in the surrounding tree cover, Section E would be visible on the hillsides to the west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. Views to the south-west would be screened by the intervening landform. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, at greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry.

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based primarily of views of Section D.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Farm Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be partial views of the proposed Knockbain Farm Wind Turbine Repowering in the landscape to the east (within a different sector of view to Sections D and E). Views would be subject to screening by the intervening landform at Knockfarrel, and accordingly it would exert very limited influence on existing views. In summary, there would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Ardival - Catsback - Loch Ussie RC45.09 (RD-28)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, which would restrict views to the south-west. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, at slightly greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering; • Proposed Abhain Dubh Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from more elevated (southern) sections of the path. The influence of the turbine would be relatively limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other wind farms would be restricted by the intervening landform and separation distance. The cumulative effect would remain **Moderate Adverse** (not significant).
Knockfarrel (maze to hill) RC45.02 (RE-29)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, which would fully screen views to the south-west. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, at greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	Potential views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from more elevated sections of the path would be limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other Scenario 2 developments

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		would be limited by landform and separation distance. There would be no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.
Knockfarrel to Fodderty RC13.05 (RE-30)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform, which would fully screen views of the south-west. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, at greater distance. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering from more elevated (southern) sections of the path. The influence of the turbine would be relatively limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other Scenario 2 developments would be limited by landform and separation distance. The cumulative effect would remain **Moderate Adverse** (not significant).
Knockfarrel RC13.06 (RE-31)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section E would be located in the landscape to the west / south-west of the path. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform and tree cover. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north. Potential views of the construction works and steel lattice towers would also be limited due to the combination of intervening landform and forestry. Within the clearest views the Proposed development would be visible on the hillsides to the west / north-west / north, against a combination of the background landscape and sky. In summary, the overall cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based on combined views of Sections D and E.
	Scenario 2: • Proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering.	There would be views of the proposed Knockbain Wind Turbine Repowering to the south of the path (in the opposite field of view to the Proposed Development). The influence of the turbine would be relatively limited due to the narrow angle of view, and the presence of an existing turbine (albeit smaller) at the site. Potential views of other Scenario 2 developments would be limited by landform and separation distance. The cumulative effect would remain **Moderate Adverse** (not significant).
Strathpeffer Walking and Cycling Routes – north of Strathpeffer Golf Course (RE-33)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	There would be close proximity views of the construction activities and steel lattice towers associated with the northern end of Section E, where it would extend across this series of paths. However, views would be limited to localised sections of the path in close proximity, due to the screening influence of surrounding forestry. Section D would be located in the landscape to the north, and would also be filtered by intervening tree cover, restricting views to more open sections of the path.

Visual Receptor	Cumulative Developments	Predicted Significant Cumulative Effects
		In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Major Adverse** (significant) across localised sections of the path within closest proximity to Section E. The overall cumulative effect across wider parts of the path network would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant). Section D would exert limited influence.
	Scenario 2: • Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm; • Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm.	The Scoping-stage Carn Fearna Wind Farm and Scoping-stage Tarvie Wind Farm would be located in the hills to the west / south-west of the path network. However, potential views of these schemes would be restricted by surrounding tree cover. Based on glimpsed views through localised gaps in tree cover, the cumulative level of effect would be **Moderate-Minor Adverse** (not significant).
Strathpeffer Golf Course (OE-07)	Scenario 1: • Section D of the Proposed Development.	Section D would be located in the landscape to the west of the golf course. Views of the associated construction activities and steel lattice towers would be subject to screening by the intervening landform and tree cover. Section E would be located to the south. The associated construction works and steel lattice towers would represent distant elements in the background landscape, beyond Section D. Accordingly, it would exert extremely limited cumulative influence. In summary, the cumulative effect would be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) based primarily of views of Section D.
	Scenario 2: • None.	There would be no views of Scenario 2 developments, and no change to the cumulative effect described in relation to Scenario 1.

7.12 Residual Effects

7.12.1 The assessment of operational effects takes into account the likely benefits of the embedded and implementation stage mitigation measures which are proposed and therefore the operational effects identified should be considered representative of residual effects.

7.12.2 Specific mitigation recommendations as outlined in **Section 7.9** above, may lead to further small reductions in landscape and visual effects if applied, but have not been taken into account within the assessment as the implementation of these measures would be dependent upon other external factors including landowner agreements.

7.13 Summary and Conclusions

Summary

7.13.1 In summary, the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to the Proposed Development has been undertaken in accordance with the guidance provided in GLVIA3, and following consultation on the scope of the assessment with The Highland Council and with NatureScot. The assessment has identified the baseline landscape and visual context to the Proposed Development and assessed the effects resulting from the Proposed Development during the construction phases in addition to the operational phase. The assessment has been undertaken on a receptor-based approach supported by visibility mapping and representative viewpoints which have been prepared in accordance with both NatureScot and The Highland Council visualisation guidance/standards.

7.13.2 The proposed 400 kV OHL would be approximately 173 km in length and would extend from Spittal (Banniskirk Substation) in Caithness to Beauly (Fanellan Substation) in Inverness-shire (from north to south). The assessment has considered the impacts on the landscape as a resource and on the views and visual amenity of people on the basis of the details provided in **Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development**. This includes consideration of the proposed design height of the towers/pylons and their placement, in addition to other elements such as access tracks and management felling of woodland which would be required to be implemented. The assessment has also considered the potential implications of the LoDs associated with the Proposed Development (including a potential increase of up to 9 m in the design height of the towers which may be required at specific locations as the design is developed/construction undertaken).

7.13.3 While the mitigation of impacts on landscape and visual receptors has been partially achieved through consideration of the routeing of the Proposed Development, significant adverse effects on landscape and visual receptors would be inevitable. In the absence of specific agreements with landowners no mitigation planting other than the re-instatement of ground cover has been proposed and the assessment has been undertaken on this basis, however there is a reasonable prospect that following completion of the construction phase re-stocking and replanting of areas of woodland would occur. This planting would be likely to reduce the visibility of the Proposed Development in some instances and over time reduce the residual effects on both landscape and visual receptors.

7.13.4 The Proposed Development would pass through a range of landscape character types and result in direct effects on these due to changes to ground cover and the installation of the towers. These effects would result largely from the addition of the proposed steel lattice towers, which would constitute new vertical features within the local landscape. The effects of greatest magnitude would largely remain focussed within distances within 700-900 m of the Proposed Development depending on localised screening and be localised in nature.

At greater distances across the LCTs, the influence of the Proposed Development would reduce, and the effects would reduce in significance across the wider landscape character types.

7.13.5 The Proposed Development would also result in direct effects on the special qualities of the Flow Country and Berriedale Braes SLA and the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA. Effects on the Flow Country and Berriedale Braes SLA would be relatively localised and occur predominantly on the rolling hills between the peatlands and the coastal shelf. Effects on the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth SLA would be more pronounced in upland areas and in the north of the SLA. Where viewed the Proposed Development would be reduce the perceived wildness and tranquillity of the interior hills and Glen Loth. While significant effects on both SLAs would arise as a result of the Proposed Development, the overall integrity of the designations would not be compromised. The Proposed Development would not directly affect any National Scenic Areas. With the exception of very localised areas on the outer edge of the Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis WLA, the Proposed Development would not significantly affect any Wild Land Areas. Avoidance of significant effects was largely achieved by routing at the design stage.

7.13.6 The Proposed Development would result in significant adverse effects on the views and visual amenity of residents living in close proximity to the route of the OHL in addition to the views and visual amenity of road users, railway users and users of core paths. Notable locations where adverse effects would occur include receptors in the vicinity of the Proposed Development in the northern length of the OHL (Section A: Spittal to Brora) and in the southern lengths of the route (Sections D: Dounie to Near Strathpeffer and Section E: Near Strathpeffer to Beauly). The adverse effects on views and visual amenity in the north coincide with the open moorland landscapes where there are limited screening elements, and in the south, with the higher density of settlements and transport/recreational routes.

7.13.7 In combination with other developments associated with the Proposed Development and 'third party' developments (e.g. proposed wind farm developments) the Proposed Development would be likely to give rise to significant adverse effects on both landscape and visual receptors.

Conclusions

7.13.8 The LVIA concludes that temporary significant landscape and visual effects would occur during the construction of the Proposed Development. These effects would be localised in nature and primarily focused upon receptors in closest proximity to the Site. Localised significant landscape and visual effects would continue to occur in the longer term, particularly at close range, where due to the absence of screening the proposed steel lattice towers would form noticeable new elements within the landscape. There would be significant cumulative effects on landscape character types predominantly at the local level and on the SLAs, and views from a small number of transport routes and outdoor visitor locations.