

## 4 Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment Technical Appendices

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#### *Category A: Locations representing close and medium-range views in the Sperrin Mountains and Foothills to north and west of the Proposed Development*

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- Figure 4.13 Viewpoint 4: Craig to north of site
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- Figure 4.21 Viewpoint 12: Robber's Table footpath to south west
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- Figure 4.25 Viewpoint 16: South-facing side of Eglish hill
- Figure 4.26 Viewpoint 17: Near Carrickatane

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## Abbreviations used in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- AONB Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- DCSDC Derry City and Strabane District Council
- EIA Environmental Impact Assessment
- ES Environmental Statement
- LCA Landscape Character Area
- LDP Local Development Plan
- LVIA Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- NIEA Northern Ireland Environment Agency
- NILCA Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment
- NIRLCA Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment
- PPS Planning Policy Statement; various PPSs published by the Department of the Environment are referred to in this Chapter
- PVP Provisional Viewpoint
- RES RES Limited; the Applicant
- RLCA Regional Landscape Character Area
- SPPS '*Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS): Planning for Sustainable Development*', Department of the Environment (September 2015)
- SPG '*Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes*', Northern Ireland Environment Agency (August 2010)
- VP Viewpoint; final viewpoint shortlisted as part of viewpoint selection process described in methodology
- ZTV Zone of Theoretical Visibility diagram

## Best Practice Guidance publications used in the formulation of the LVIA Methodology

### *The Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition'*

- 4.1 The aim of these guidelines (GLVIA) is to encourage high standards for the scope and content of landscape and visual impact assessments, based on the opinion and practice of members of the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.
- 4.2 The guidelines establish principles to assist in achieving consistency, credibility and effectiveness in LVIA, when carried out as part of an EIA. The following general principles of good practice are adhered to in the methodology for this LVIA:
- Clearly describe the methodology and the specific techniques that have been used;
  - Use clearly defined and agreed terminology;
  - Avoid generalisations about designated landscapes and their ability to accommodate change;
  - Be as impartial as possible;
  - Draw upon the advice and opinions of others and carry out consultations;
  - Organise and structure the assessment to focus upon the key issues of relevance to decision-making;
  - Openly acknowledge any deficiencies or limitations that may have constrained the assessment;
  - Consider the most significant effects in all instances.

### *Scottish Natural Heritage<sup>1</sup> (August 2017) 'Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape. Version 3a'*

- 4.3 This guidance provides principles for the design and location of wind farms with the aim of ensuring that wind farm developments appear appropriate within the landscape and reflects a development in the understanding of issues such as appropriate layouts for different locations, turbine size and design, wind farm extensions and cumulative development. The guidance acknowledges that understanding of these issues is constantly evolving and this guidance will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect this.

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Natural Heritage became Nature Scotland in August 2020

### *Nature Scotland (March 2021) 'Assessing the Cumulative Impact of Onshore Wind Energy Developments'*

- 4.4 This guidance, first published by Scottish Natural Heritage in 2021, has been re-published by the new Nature Scotland agency (see footnote) in a more accessible form online. It sets out recommended principles for the assessment of cumulative landscape and visual impacts arising from wind farms. As per the guidance above, it is acknowledged that understanding of cumulative issues is constantly evolving and this guidance would be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect this. The only content changes between the 2012 and 2021 versions are the removal of guidance relating to ornithology and to some outdated contextual information.

### *Scottish National Heritage (February 2017) 'Visual Representation of Wind Farms, Version 2.2'*

- 4.5 This guidance was originally published in 2006 to summarise and explain what was feasible, available and reasonable in terms of current good practice in the production of illustrations such as photomontages, wirelines and ZTV figures for use within an LVIA. It was revised in 2014 and 2017 to reflect developing experience and to ensure that visualisations are easier for the public and decision makers to use whilst also stressing that they are only a tool to aid decision making and must be considered alongside other information. SNH also recognise that different approaches may be appropriate for different types of developments, in different countries and for small scale projects. The prescriptive aspects of the guidance, and how they are interpreted in this LVIA, are included in Technical Appendix 4.2, paragraph 4.47.
- 4.6 Cognisance has been taken of the new guidance in this LVIA and its recommended methodology for taking photographs has been followed. However, the visualisations that accompany this LVIA are not printed at the large scale recommended by the guidance to allow for the practical and cost-effective distribution of public consultation material. SNH advises that printed visualisations should be produced at A1 size and viewed at a comfortable arm's length distance to facilitate easy comparison between viewpoints. In this LVIA the visualisations have been produced at A3 and, for clarity, the finished photomontages are presented on the same page as their corresponding wirelines for all shortlisted viewpoints.

### *Landscape Institute (September 2019) 'Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals'*

- 4.7 This guidance aims to help landscape professionals, planning officers and other stakeholders to select types of visualisations which are appropriate to the circumstances in which they will be used. It provides guidance as to appropriate techniques to capture site photography and produce appropriate visualisations for all types of development but recognises that, for some types of development,

including wind energy, that more specific guidance may also be appropriate. In particular, this Technical Guidance Note is broadly consistent with and supportive of Scottish Natural Heritage guidance referred to in the preceding paragraphs.

*Northern Ireland Environment Agency (August 2010) 'Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes: Supplementary Planning Guidance to Accompany Planning Policy Statement 18 Renewable Energy'*

- 4.8 The SPG provides broad strategic guidance on appropriate locations for wind energy development based on the definition of Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the NILCA. It is described in detail in Chapter 4, paragraph 4.67.

*The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2004) 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity'*

- 4.9 The topic paper provides an overview of current thinking about landscape sensitivity and landscape capacity in terms of the concept involved and the practical techniques that are being used. Its aim is to set out some of the key principles, clarifying some of the issues, helping with definitions of key terms and providing examples of the approaches that are currently being used.