

CLASHINDARROCH II WIND FARM

LVIA Viewpoint Assessment
Prepared for: Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd

Technical Appendix 7.2

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CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.0	VIEWPOINT 1: MINOR ROAD NEAR TILLATHROWIE	6
3.0	VIEWPOINT 2: MINOR ROAD NEAR BACKSIDE	10
4.0	VIEWPOINT 3: HAUGH OF GLASS.....	10
5.0	VIEWPOINT 4: TAP O' NOTH.....	11
6.0	VIEWPOINT 5: THE BUCK.....	14
7.0	VIEWPOINT 6: CLASHMACH HILL	17
8.0	VIEWPOINT 7: A920 BETWEEN HUNTLY AND DUFFTOWN.....	1
9.0	VIEWPOINT 8: MINOR ROAD NEAR CORSE, SOUTH EAST OF A97	4
10.0	VIEWPOINT 9: MINOR ROAD OFF B9117 NEAR MILLTOWN OF ROTHIE MAY.....	7
11.0	VIEWPOINT 10: A96 BETWEEN HUNTLY AND KEITH	11
12.0	VIEWPOINT 11: BATTLE HILL, HUNTLY	14
13.0	VIEWPOINT 12: CORREEN HILL, OLD MILITARY ROAD	18
14.0	VIEWPOINT 13: BEN RINNES.....	22
15.0	VIEWPOINT 14: KNOCK HILL	25
16.0	VIEWPOINT 15: BEN AIGAN	28
17.0	VIEWPOINT 16: A96 LEYS OF DUMMUIE	31
18.0	VIEWPOINT 17: OXEN CRAIG	34
19.0	VIEWPOINT 18: BURNSIDE, NORTH OF NEWMILL	37
20.0	VIEWPOINT 19: LADDER HILLS, LITTLE GEAL CHARN.....	40
21.0	VIEWPOINT 20: MEIKLE BALLOCH.....	43
22.0	SUMMARY TABLES	46
23.0	REFERENCES.....	52

1.0 Introduction

1. This Technical Appendix sets out the findings of the detailed viewpoint assessment, carried out as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed Clashindarroch II Wind Farm. The findings of the Viewpoint Assessment are used to inform the overall assessment of effects of the proposed development on landscape character and visual amenity reported in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report).
2. The 20 viewpoints were agreed with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) and Aberdeenshire Council (AC) and are shown on Figures 7.5a and 7.5b, Volume 3 of this EIA Report.
3. The viewpoints were selected to cover points of specific importance including: recognised viewpoints, landscape designations (for example Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)), settlements, and important recreational routes (for example the Ladder Hills), to inform the likely extent of significant landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development. A variety of landscape character types and locations at different directions, distances and elevations from the Site have been represented in the selected viewpoints.
4. For some receptors such as the main roads within the Study Area (Viewpoints 7, 10 and 16), the illustrated view does not always illustrate a representative view for receptors on these routes which would be more limited than presented for these specific viewpoints. This is due to the limited theoretical visibility of the proposed development as well as further restrictions on actual visibility due to roadside vegetation, fences and buildings for example.
5. Viewpoints 2 and 3 are included as representative of views from the Deveron Valley within 5km to the west of the Site as the scoping layout showed visibility in this valley. However, the final proposed development would not be visible from these viewpoints or the surrounding area. Given the proximity to the Site and the sensitivity of the area (parts lie within the Moray Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and the Deveron Valley SLA), the viewpoints have been retained within the assessment to demonstrate the lack of visibility.
6. An assessment of the potential effects on both landscape character and visual amenity arising from the proposed development at each of the agreed viewpoints has been carried out in line with Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 2013, Third Edition (GLVIA 3; Ref. 7.2.1). The existing and predicted views from each of these viewpoints have been described and analysed in order to identify the magnitude of change and the residual effects of the proposed development on landscape character and visual amenity.
7. An assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposed development on landscape character and visual amenity has been made for the viewpoints which have, or would have, visibility of the wind farms included in the cumulative assessment (Table 7.2-1). The viewpoint assessment firstly identifies the cumulative magnitude of change with the addition of the proposed development to operational and/or consented wind farms (baseline cumulative scenario). It then, where relevant, identifies the cumulative magnitude of change from the proposed development with these operational and/or consented wind farms and the sites that are currently under consideration for planning permission. There are no scoping stage wind farms included in the assessment. See below for further details.
8. The 20 viewpoints are illustrated by Figures 7.22-7.41 presented in Volume 3B of the EIA Report.

9. For each viewpoint, a viewpoint location plan is provided. This illustrates the viewpoint and surrounding area at a scale 1:25,000. The plan identifies the extent of the view arcs illustrated on the photographic panorama, cumulative wireline and, if relevant, the photomontage. Within the legend of the location plan, the viewpoint information and location description are given.
10. The initial viewpoint photography was taken in 2017. This was updated by a further round of day time photography carried out in 2018 because Dorenell Wind Farm was being constructed and was not shown in the initial photography. Consequently, in the photography of the existing views Dorenell is shown under construction, (notably apparent in Viewpoint 19), whereas it is now fully operational. Additionally, in a few instances, wind turbines have been constructed and are now operational that are not shown in the baseline viewpoint photography: for example, the Balliesward Farm turbine shown on the wireline of Viewpoint 6.
11. Following the location plan, 90° photo-panoramas and wirelines have been provided, the number of which relates to the available cumulative view. For all viewpoints, cumulative wirelines are presented with the Clashindarroch II Wind Farm turbines shown in blue; existing and consented turbines shown in green and proposed turbines in red.
12. For a selection of viewpoints (1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 19 and 20), a photomontage of the predicted view towards the Site is presented below a photograph of the existing view of the Site from the viewpoint. The majority of these viewpoints lie within 15km of the Site, as beyond this distance there are inherent technical limitations of depicting turbines in photomontages of the landscape.
13. The photomontages for viewpoints 1, 4, 5 and 12 illustrate the proposed forest felling shown in the Wind Farm Felling Plan (see Technical Appendix 3.2 Figure 3.2.6) as well as the proposed infrastructure predicted to be visible. Infrastructure has been incorporated where appropriate, with the key relevant viewpoints being 1 and 4. At other viewpoints a combination of separation distance, woodland and/or elevation of the viewpoint would greatly restrict or prevent visibility of all element other than the proposed wind turbines.
14. At viewpoint 1 the key proposed elements that are likely to be seen are borrow pits, as the access tracks on the closest hillsides already exist (and would be reused) and other elements would be screened by woodland. Three potential borrow pit locations have been identified on the upper south east facing slopes of Craigend Hill. As these comprise search areas for borrow pits they have not been included in detail in the photomontage. However, it is acknowledged that they would be seen from this viewpoint and therefore their location and approximate extent is identified.
15. At viewpoint 4 the proximity and relative elevation of the viewpoint means elements of infrastructure would be visible. This infrastructure includes the track, anemometer mast, and hard standings where visible. The track and hard standings are illustrated to show the surface of these features for which a colour and texture similar to existing estate tracks in the area has been used. The currently proposed extent of cut and fill associated with constructing the tracks has also been taken into account and is shown as intended to be restored. It should be noted that the modelling of infrastructure within the photomontages is illustrative only and whilst produced to show the proposed layout, it cannot accurately depict at this scale the full extent of cut and fill earthworks that may be required once necessary onsite ground investigation works have been carried out.
16. Night time lighting would be required for the proposed development as described in Chapters 3 and 7 of the EIA Report; four viewpoint locations were agreed with Aberdeenshire Council to illustrate night time effects. Baseline night time photography was taken and photomontages prepared showing aviation lighting for viewpoints 1, 9, 11 and 12. These show lighting that is consistent with the

requirements of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Policy Statement (01 June 2017); Lighting of Onshore Wind Turbine Generators in the United Kingdom with a Maximum Blade Tip Height at or in Excess of 150m Above Ground Level (Ref. 7.2.2). Accordingly, the illustrations have been prepared to include both 2000 candela and 200 candela lights on the nacelle of each turbine, together with 35 candela lights at a mid-point of each tower.

17. The LVIA Technical Appendix 7.1 - Visualisation Methodology explains the processes followed to produce the viewpoint illustrations.
18. The locations of all wind farms within approximately 40km of the proposed development are shown on Figure 7.7a. This identifies all wind farms (operational, under construction, application, and at appeal within 40km of the proposed development). The status of the wind farms is taken to be current as of September 2019.
19. The cumulative context in the 40km radius study area agreed for the Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) is very complex with over 100 sites. These include numerous small, single turbines in Aberdeenshire as well as very large wind farms in the uplands of Moray. Single turbines have been considered in the study area where they are over 50m in blade tip height.
20. An initial comparison review of the ZTVs of wind farm developments within the study area against the proposed development's ZTV was undertaken to consider whether significant cumulative effects would be likely to occur. A judgement was then made on the wind farm sites to be included in the assessment. This considered the relative size and distance of each of the wind farms in relation to the proposed development; the extent of any simultaneous visibility; as well as the potential for sequential cumulative effects on the key transport routes in the study area. Table 7.2-1 and Figure 7.7b identify the wind farms which have been included in the detailed cumulative assessment. This totals 31 operational sites, 4 consented and 4 proposed wind energy developments. The Hill of Glaschyle Wind Farm is included in the assessment as although it lies just beyond the 40km study area, it is in close proximity to the Berry Burn and Pauls Hill Wind Farms and has potential to be seen as grouped with them.

Table 7.2-1
Wind Farm Developments Considered in the CLVIA

Status	Wind farm	No of Turbines	Height of Turbines to Blade Tip (m)	Direction from Clashindarroch II Wind Farm	Distance from Clashindarroch II Wind Farm (km)
Operational	Bailiesward Farm	1	79.6	NNE	4.9
	Balnamoon Crossroads	1	69	N	22.5
	Berry Burn	29	99.5	W	34.3
	Cairnborrow	5	100	N	8.9
	Cairnmore	3	81	SE	9.6
	Clashindarroch	18	110	SSW	0.5
	Cowhill	1	79.6	ENE	29.9
	Crannabog Farm	1	79	ENE	28.2
	Dorenell	59	126	WSW	9.3
	Dummuie	7	78	ENE	11.7
	Edintore	6	124	NNW	13.1
	Followsters	1	77	NNW	21.7
	Garehill Newmill	1	74	N	22.4
	Glens of Foudland	20	78	ENE	15.9
	Greenmyres	1	84	ENE	12.4
	Hill of Glaschyle	12	99.5	W	41.7
	Hill of Tillymorgan	3	100	ENE	20.2
	Hill of Towie 1	21	100	NW	14.5
	Kellas	4	110	WNW	31.3
	Kildrummy	9	93	S	10.9
	Mains of Balquhain	1	80	E	29.7
	Mains of Meadaple	1	79	ENE	28.2
	Meikle Folla	1	79	ENE	28.1
	Midtown of Glass	1	79	NNW	9.3
	Myreton Crossroads	3	79	N	24.1
	Newton of Edingight Grange	1	77	N	24.8
	Pauls Hill	28	100	W	31.2
	Roths	22	100	WNW	29.5
	Roths Extension	18	110-125	WNW	29.8
	Upper Wheedlemont Farm	2	81	SE	7.0
Westerton of Folla	1	79	ENE	26.4	
Consented	Aultmore	13	110	N	25.1
	Hill of Burns	1	79.6	ENE	29.7
	Hill of Towie II	16	125	NW	13.9
	Meikle Hill	6	126.5	WNW	32.3
App	Clash Gour	48	130-180	WNW	32.9
	Meikleton of Ardonald	1	135	N	9.8
	Pauls Hill II	7	149.9	WNW	30.6
	Roths III	29	149.9-225	WNW	25.3

App = Application

21. In the viewpoint assessment text, effort has been made to focus on the key cumulative interactions between the proposed development and the most relevant of the existing, consented and proposed wind farms rather than to describe all the wind farms which are predicted to be visible from any given viewpoint. All of the wind farms included in the cumulative assessment which are predicted to be visible from any given viewpoint are shown in the wirelines, which also reference the distance from the viewpoint. The assessment text and tables presented for each viewpoint identify those sites where important cumulative interactions are considered to occur. As single turbines of less than 50m to blade tip height have not been included in the assessment, there are some viewpoint locations from where these single turbines may be seen in the photography of the existing view, but are not taken account of in the assessment. This is because it is judged that Clashindarroch II Wind Farm in conjunction with such small sized, individual turbines, would not result in significant cumulative effects.
22. Summary tables of the viewpoint assessment for both landscape and visual receptors at each viewpoint are provided at the end of this Technical Appendix.

2.0 VIEWPOINT 1: MINOR ROAD NEAR TILLATHROWIE

FIGURES 7.22 -7.22f

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 348025, 835192

2.1 Location

23. This viewpoint is located 3.7km north east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 267m AOD on the layby on the south side of the minor road, just beyond the western boundary of The School House property. It is representative of views that would be obtained by local residents and road users in the Tillathrowie area. It is also representative of views from the Northern Rolling Lowlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) within the Agricultural Heartlands Landscape Character Type (LCT).

2.2 Existing View

24. The viewpoint is at a local high point on the road which allows over 180 degree views across the Tillathrowie valley and surrounding hillsides from the south clockwise through to north. A field boundary which consists of gorse and a belt of newly planted trees lies to the south of the road and limits views towards the east. To the north, mature trees at The School House limit views to the east and also north east. The foreground landscape and parts of the lower hillsides in the distance are a mix of medium sized pasture and arable fields delineated by post and wire fencing with intermittent gorse. Commercial forestry cover much of the hillsides around the main farmhouse at Whitestones in the north of the view (to the right of the photograph presented in Figure 7.22a) with areas of recently clear felled forestry visible. Following the road to the west, commercial forestry is prevalent across the Hill of Drumfergus and Craighend Hill which form the backdrop to the view. Wooden telegraph poles and overhead lines also follow the road and cross the fields north of the road. The property at Drumfergus can be seen at the foot of the hillside to the south west, and the farms and houses at Tillathrowie are just visible to the west. Overall it is a view of a medium scale, relatively simple, rolling landscape.
25. In addition to the daytime view this viewpoint has been selected to consider potential effects associated with aviation lighting on the wind turbines. The night time view is described in Section 2.9 below.

2.3 Existing Cumulative View

26. The wireline in Figure 7.22a illustrates that the blade tips of 11 turbines of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm are theoretically visible from this viewpoint. As shown by the photo-panorama in Figure 7.22a, the current foreground forestry screens this view. Future felling of the forestry could potentially reveal the blade tips.

2.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA

27. The relative simplicity and general medium to large scale of the landscape components within the view (forestry and open fields across rolling hillsides) provides a landscape that is considered to have a Medium susceptibility to wind farm development.

28. There are no landscape designations at this location. This is a farming landscape of medium landscape condition, interspersed with commercial forestry with no distinctive scenic qualities or rarity, which is considered to have a Medium value.
29. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Local Residents

30. The susceptibility of the local residents is considered to be High, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual.
31. The value attached to the view for residents is considered to be High as views obtained by residents from their homes are considered to be highly valued.
32. Residents are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Road Users

33. The susceptibility of road users is considered to be Medium and the value medium, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
34. Road users along this local road are therefore considered to have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

2.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

35. The predicted cumulative view with the baseline Clashindarroch Wind Farm is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.22a and 7.22b and the photomontage in Figure 7.22c. The wireline shows that the upper columns, hubs and blades of eleven, hubs and blades of two and one blade of the proposed turbines would be visible directly ahead of the view, slightly framed by the adjacent rolling hillsides. The Clashindarroch Wind Farm blade tips would lie behind and between proposed turbine numbers 13 and 12, and 11 and 3. The photomontage illustrates that the forest felling which will be carried out to accommodate the proposed development, as shown on the Wind Farm Felling Plan (Figure 3.2.6). The retained forestry would screen some of the hubs and more distant blades, but the hubs and blades of the closer turbines would still be visible.

2.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

36. The proposed development would be a fundamental change to the view due to its close proximity and also that there are no other turbines currently visible from this viewpoint. There is a degree of separation provided by the intervening rolling hills and forestry, but as the proposed development is less than 4km from the viewpoint, the movement and scale of the turbines would be very apparent. The view to the existing borrow pit, which formed part of the original Clashindarroch Wind Farm development has been opened up by recent woodland felling, with it comprising a relatively discrete element towards the top of Craigend Hill. The proposed borrow pits would be visible from this viewpoint, positioned to the west, north and south of the existing borrow pit. The detail of the borrow pits is not fully defined, but the search areas have been identified. The approximate location and extent of these search areas are shown in Figure 7.22a. The new borrow pits are likely to be seen from this location, but they are expected to comprise limited elements in the overall view, especially once construction activities are complete. There is also potential for replacement woodland planting to screen both the existing and proposed borrow pits. The magnitude of change from the introduction of

the Clashindarroch II Wind Farm to the landscape is considered to be **Substantial**, with this judgement mainly relating to the wind turbines rather than the potential borrow pits.

2.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

37. The landscape receptor of the Northern Rolling Hills LCA is considered to be of Medium sensitivity to wind farms, which combined with a **Substantial** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** effect on the landscape character within the view.

Visual Amenity

38. A **Substantial** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major** and **Significant** effect on the visual amenity of local residents who have a high sensitivity to wind farm development. For road users, who have a medium sensitivity to wind farm development, the resulting effect would be **Major-Moderate** and **Significant**.

2.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

39. There are no proposed wind farms visible from this viewpoint.

2.9 Baseline night time view

40. As noted above the viewpoint is positioned on the minor road at Tillathrowie and is representative of the view seen by local residents and road users. The sensitivity of the visual receptors is the same as that assessed for daytime views.
41. The baseline photography presented in Figure 7.22d demonstrates the night time context at this location. There are very few baseline sources of artificial light, limited to occasional lights within residential properties. Whilst these are not apparent in the photography, they were visible in the field. However, overall this represents a dark location at night. It is a west facing viewpoint, meaning the setting sun creates contrast on the horizon and a glow can be maintained into the evening depending on the time of year and weather conditions.

2.10 Predicted Night Time View

42. The wireline included in Figure 7.22d demonstrates that the upper towers, hubs and blades of 11 turbines are theoretically visible above the horizon, with the hubs and blades of a further two turbines potentially seen. The daytime photomontage in Figure 7.22c provides interpretation of how the woodland taking account of the Wind Farm Felling Plan would screen parts of the turbines. Accordingly, visibility is predicted of 10 hubs (nacelles), where the aviation lights would be positioned. The night time photomontages in Figure 7.22e and 7.22f show this lighting at an intensity of 2000 candela and 200 candela respectively (in accordance with the relevant guidance). In addition, 32 candela lights are required at the mid-point on the towers. However, due to a combination of the intervening landform and woodland, this lower lighting is only predicted to be visible on one turbine, towards the left hand side of the array. The prevailing south westerly wind would mean the turbine blades would frequently face away from this viewpoint, with the lights seen on the near side of the blades.

2.11 Predicted Night Time Magnitude of Change

43. The closest turbine would be located approximately 3.7km from this viewpoint, therefore the lights are predicted to be clearly discernible. They would contrast with the dark baseline context and the change would be prominent. Therefore, the magnitude of change associated with the aviation lights at this viewpoint is predicted to be **Substantial**.

2.12 Predicted Night Time Effects

Landscape Character

44. The landscape receptor of the Northern Rolling Hills LCA is considered to be of Medium sensitivity to wind farms, which combined with a **Substantial** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed lights would result in a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** effect on the landscape character within the view.

Visual Amenity

45. A **Substantial** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed lights would result in a **Major** and **Significant** effect on the visual amenity of local residents who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development. For road users, who have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development, the resulting effect would be **Major-Moderate** and **Significant**.

3.0 VIEWPOINT 2: MINOR ROAD NEAR BACKSIDE

FIGURES 7.23 -7.23a

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 341163, 836133

46. This viewpoint is located 3.9km north west of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 292m AOD on the layby near the property of Backside, approximately halfway along the minor road between the A941 in the south and A920 in the north. It is representative of views that would be obtained by local residents in this part of the Deveron Valley. It is also representative of views from the Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA within the Straths and Valleys LCT. The viewpoint is within the Deveron Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA).
47. The wireline in Figure 7.23a illustrates that there would be no visibility of the proposed development from this viewpoint. The viewpoint was retained to illustrate the lack of visibility in close proximity from the Deveron Valley and is representative of the majority of this area (see Figure 7.6 Blade Tip ZTV).

4.0 VIEWPOINT 3: HAUGH OF GLASS

FIGURES 7.24 -7.24a

Representative viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 342444, 839632

48. This viewpoint is located 6.2km north north west of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 210m AOD on the layby on the minor road north of the crossroads at Haugh of Glass, opposite the entrance to the Glass School. It is representative of views that would be obtained by local residents in the Haugh of Glass area. It is also representative of views from the Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA within the Straths and Valleys LCT. The viewpoint is located within the Deveron Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA).
49. The wireline in Figure 7.24a illustrates that there would be the tip of one proposed turbine blade theoretically visible. However, the wireline shows that extent to which this would extend above the horizon would be very limited and in reality with land cover taking into account, as illustrated by the photo-panorama, there is unlikely to be visibility of the proposed development from this viewpoint. The viewpoint was retained to illustrate the lack of visibility in close proximity from the Deveron Valley and is representative of the majority of this area.

5.0 VIEWPOINT 4: TAP O' NOTH

FIGURES 7.25 -7.25f

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 348404, 829328

5.1 Location

50. This viewpoint is located 4.8km south east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 563m AOD on the summit of Tap O' Noth, north of the trig point. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers visiting the summit. It is also representative of views from the Grampian Outliers LCA within the Moorland Plateau LCT.

5.2 Existing View

51. The summit of Tap O' Noth has remains of an ancient hill fort which encloses a large area, but panoramic views of the surrounding landscape are available at the edges. This viewpoint is located on the northern end of the fort where the focus of the panoramic views is primarily to the western side. The immediate landscape below the promontory to the west and north consists of a patchwork of commercial forestry across undulating hills and includes the Clashindarroch Wind Farm. To the south the immediate landscape is largely arable and pasture with shelterbelts. Cairnmore and Wheedlemont turbines are visible within this section of view. In the middle distance in this direction, the Lumsden valley area is visible between the distinct moorland covered Correen Hills to the south east and the Cabrach (including the summit of The Buck) to the south west. Kildrummy Wind Farm is seen above the skyline behind the Cabrach area and in front of the distant Cairngorms. Beyond the forestry at Clashindarroch, the higher uplands within Moray are visible forming the skyline including the prominent Ben Rinnes. To the north, the landscape descends towards the coast and a mostly agricultural and settled landscape, although the outcrops of Knock Hill and Meikle Balloch are notable features. Within the agricultural lands, wind farms and turbines are a consistent feature.

5.3 Existing Cumulative View

52. The panoramic views available from Tap O' Noth include the presence of numerous wind turbines in all directions. The wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.25a-d illustrate that to the west, Clashindarroch Wind Farm and Dorenell Wind Farm are within 10km extending across a large proportion of the view in this direction. Theoretically, and depending on weather conditions, Berry Burn, Rothes, Rothes Extension, Meikle Hill, and Kellas Wind Farms are visible on the distant horizon (>35km) behind Clashindarroch and Dorenell. To the north west, Hill of Towie I and II lie approximately 20km from the viewpoint and can be seen mostly above the skyline, with Midtown of Glass slightly further north. Edintore Wind Farm is at a similar distance towards the north. Also to the north, Cairnborrow Wind Farm is the closest of several wind farms, seen below the horizon, approximately 13km from the viewpoint. The consented Aultmore Wind Farm can be seen above the skyline in the distance to the right of Cairnborrow in the view. Towards the north east and east, the wind farms at Dummuie and Glens of Foudland are the most visible turbines across the landscape in this direction, although there are several individual turbines visible too. Towards the south, the closest turbines to the viewpoint at Cairnmore and Upper Wheedlemont can be seen backclothed by the undulating landscape. Kildrummy Wind Farm is also visible on the open moorland, approximately 10km to the south south west.

5.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Grampian Outliers LCA

53. Due to the individual distinctiveness of Tap O' Noth and its position amongst a lower and less notable part of the Grampian Outliers LCA, extensive panoramic views across a variety of landscapes including many existing wind farms are a key characteristic. Taking this into account it is considered as having a Medium susceptibility to wind farm development.
54. Tap O' Noth does not lie within a landscape designation and the landscape within the views immediately surrounding it is largely commercial forestry with limited scenic quality although there is more interest in the distant backdrops of the CNP to the south west. It is considered that the value of the landscape in the views from Tap O' Noth is overall Medium.
55. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

56. The susceptibility of the visual receptors is considered to be High for walkers, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
57. The value attached to the view for walkers is considered to be High as the summit is a popular walking destination for both natural and historical reasons.
58. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

5.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

59. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.25a-e and photomontage in 7.25f and is summarised identifying key wind farms with which Clashindarroch II may result in significant cumulative effects in Table 7.2-2.

Table 7.2-2
VP4 Key Existing Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	4.8	NW
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	29.1	NNW
	Cairnborrow	12.8	NNW
	Cairnmore	5	SSE
	Clashindarroch	5.5	W
	Dorenell	14.5	WSW
	Dummuie	10	NE
	Edintore	18.1	NNW
	Glens of Foudland	14	NE
	Hill of Tillymorgan	17.2	ENE
	Hill of Towie I	20.2	NW
	Hill of Towie II	19.8	NW
	Kildrummy	10.2	SSW
	Upper Wheedlemont Farm	3.7	S

60. As shown by the wireline (Figure 7.25e) and photomontage (Figure 7.25f) all 14 turbines of the proposed development would be seen from the viewpoint at a lower elevation, 11 of which would have blades or blade tips above the horizon. They would appear as three groups of turbines extending across the rolling landscape from the adjacent Clashindarroch Wind Farm. The turbines of the proposed development would be closer to the viewpoint and appear larger than the more distant Clashindarroch turbines. Dorenell Wind Farm extends from behind Clashindarroch on the hillsides to the west.

5.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

61. Cumulatively with the Clashindarroch and Dorenell Wind Farms, the proposed development would increase the horizontal extent of turbines across the western view and within close proximity to the viewpoint so that they would become a defining feature of the view in this direction. The magnitude of cumulative change is therefore considered to be **Substantial**.

5.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

62. As the landscape receptor of the Grampian Outliers LCA has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Substantial** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

63. A **Substantial** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major** and **Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

5.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farms

64. Proposed wind farms seen from this viewpoint are either relatively distant (Rothes II, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour) or limited in scale (Meikleton of Ardonald). This context is illustrated by the wirelines in Figure 7.25a and 7.25b. Rothes II, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour would form parts of two groups of wind farms located over 30km from this viewpoint, with these developments located behind the proposed development or the existing Clashindarroch Wind Farm. Meikleton of Ardonald would be located at 14km, adjacent to Cairnborrow Wind Farm, lying to the north of the viewpoint (to the right of the proposed development). The relative positions and prominence of these proposed wind farms means the primary focus, and cumulative effects would be associated with the larger and closer existing developments, i.e. Clashindarroch and Dorenell. On this basis, in addition to the baseline and proposed wind farms, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Substantial** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 5.7 above.

6.0 VIEWPOINT 5: THE BUCK

FIGURE 7.26 -7.26f

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 341219, 823399

6.1 Location

65. This viewpoint is located 8.7km south of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 721m AOD on the summit of The Buck. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers visiting the summit. The western side of The Buck lies within Moray and the eastern side lies within Aberdeenshire and as such it is representative of views from the Grampian Outliers LCA within the Moorland Plateau LCT and also the Open Uplands LCA within the Uplands LCT (Moray).

6.2 Existing View

66. The summit of The Buck allows panoramic views to the uplands in the west and south which rise to the Cairngorms. Ben Rinnes is prominent on the skyline to the north west. To the north and east the undulating landforms and promontories of the Grampian Outliers LCAs are clear amongst the lower valleys and farmland. In the immediate foreground to the north, the heather moorland extends towards large tracts of commercial forestry where the existing Clashindarroch Wind Farm is located. These areas are interspersed with deforested areas and muirburn. Directly to the south east, the undulating moorland, which contains Kildrummy Wind Farm, limits open views towards the River Don valley.

6.3 Existing Cumulative View

67. The panoramic views available from The Buck include the presence of numerous wind turbines in all directions as illustrated by Figures 7.26a-d. In close proximity, within approximately 2.5km, the Kildrummy Wind Farm lies to the south although is partially obscured by the foreground landform and sits below the horizon line. To the north west Dorenell Wind Farm is approximately 10km from the viewpoint and would be a notable feature across the hills in this direction, lying in front of Ben Rinnes. Towards the north, the Hill of Towie I (operational) and Hill of Towie II (consented) Wind Farms would be seen together above the skyline over 20km from the viewpoint. Clashindarroch Wind Farm is directly north and within 10km from the viewpoint, forming a notable feature below the horizon line. Beyond Clashindarroch, Edintore, Aultmore and Cairnborrow as well as numerous single turbines are potentially visible on and below the skyline. To the north east, Dummuie and Glens of Foudland Wind Farms and many single turbines are discernible at approximately 20km distant. Cairnmore and Upper Wheedlemont Farm Wind Farms are located at approximately 9km and 6km to the east, with both seen below the horizon.

6.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Grampian Outliers LCA/Open Uplands LCA

68. The Buck is part of the upland moorland area of Cabrach, within the Grampian Outliers LCA and Open Uplands LCA. From the summit there are long distance views across a variety of landscapes including many existing wind farms. The proposed development would not lie on or directly beside The Buck, but

would lie within a portion of the view which has a simple landform, characterised by forestry and muirburn and existing wind farms, less distinctive from other parts of the view. Taking this into account it is considered as having a Medium susceptibility to wind farm development.

69. The Buck does not lie within any landscape designation. It is considered that the value of the landscape at and around The Buck is Medium due to its varied nature and scenic qualities, noting that the portion of the view within which the proposed development would lie could be considered less scenic than other parts of the view due to the forestry and muirburn.
70. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

71. The susceptibility of the visual receptors is considered to be High for walkers, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
72. The value attached to the view for walkers is considered to be High as the summit is a popular walking destination for both natural and historical reasons.
73. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

6.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

74. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.26a-e and photomontage in 7.26f and is summarised in Table 7.2-3.

Table 7.2-3
VP5 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	8.7	N
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	35.4	N
	Cairnborrow	19.3	N
	Cairnmore	9.2	ENE
	Clashindarroch	6.1	N
	Dorenell	9.7	WNW
	Edintore	23.1	N
	Glens of Foudland	23.2	NE
	Hill of Tillymorgan	26.1	NE
	Hill of Towie I	23	NNW
	Hill of Towie II	21.7	NNW
	Kildrummy	2.5	SSE
	Upper Wheedlemont Farm	6.4	ENE

75. The wireline (Figures 7.26e) illustrates that all 14 turbines of the proposed development would be visible from this viewpoint. Turbines 3, 8, 12, and 13 would lie behind and in-between the Clashindarroch Wind Farm turbines, appearing as larger turbines although further away from the viewpoint. The proposed development would increase the horizontal extent by approximately half of

the Clashindarroch Wind Farm. Almost all the proposed turbines would be below the skyline, the exception being a single blade tip.

6.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

76. As illustrated by the wireline in Figure 7.26e and photomontage in Figure 7.26f, the proposed development would appear as an extension to the Clashindarroch Wind Farm, with larger turbines, and increasing the horizontal extent by approximately half of the existing wind farm. It would appear partly below the distant consented Aultmore Wind Farm and also below the Cairnborrow Wind Farm. The proposed development would add to the cluster of wind farms (Clashindarroch, Edintore, Aultmore and Cairnborrow) within this portion of the view, although would not bring turbines closer to the viewpoint. Dorenell Wind Farm lies to the north west at a similar distance to Clashindarroch Wind Farm from this viewpoint but within a separate part of the view. The Dorenell Wind Farm would be approximately one and half times horizontal extent of the proposed development with Clashindarroch Wind Farm as seen from this viewpoint. Kildrummy Wind Farm is the closest existing development to this viewpoint, located at a distance of approximately 2.5km, with all the turbines positioned at lower elevation and below the horizon and some largely screened by an intervening ridge. The relatively limited extent that the proposed development would add to Clashindarroch Wind Farm would comprise a localised change and it is considered that it would not combine with Dorenell Wind Farm or Kildrummy Wind Farm to materially increase the cumulative effects. Therefore, whilst the proposed development would be noticeable change, it would not fundamentally change the overall view. The magnitude of cumulative change is therefore considered to be **Moderate**.

6.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

77. As the landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Moderate** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in **Moderate** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

78. A **Moderate** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

6.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farms

79. Proposed wind farms seen from this viewpoint are relatively distant (Rothes II, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour) as illustrated by the wireline in Figure 7.25d (Rothes II, Pauls Hill and Clash Gour). Rothes II, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour would form parts of two groups of wind farms located over 30km from this viewpoint, with these developments located to the right of Dorenell Wind Farm, to the north west of the viewpoint. The relative positions and distance of these proposed developments means the primary focus, and cumulative effects would be associated with the larger and closer existing developments i.e. Clashindarroch, Dorenell and Kildrummy. On this basis, in addition to the baseline and proposed wind farms, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Moderate** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 6.7 above.

7.0 VIEWPOINT 6: CLASHMACH HILL

FIGURE 7.27 -7.27f

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 349773, 838507

7.1 Location

80. This viewpoint is located 7.2km north east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 375m AOD on the summit of Clashmach Hill. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers visiting the summit. It is also representative of views from the Grampian Outliers LCA within the Moorland Plateau LCT.

7.2 Existing View

81. Clashmach Hill has an elongated summit which allows panoramic views across the Grampian Outliers LCA to the south and south west, with the higher upland landscape visible beyond. The foreground hills do however give some enclosure to the view in this direction. To the north and east, moorland landscape gives way to the more open, settled and farmed landscape. The immediate landscape in the view consists of farmed moorland, shelterbelts and commercial forestry. Tap O' Noth and The Buck are distinctive landforms within the undulating landscape to the south with commercial forestry a key characteristic across the surroundings.

7.3 Existing Cumulative View

82. The panoramic views available from Clashmach Hill include the presence of numerous wind turbines in all directions as illustrated by Figures 7.27a-d. The closest turbine is the single turbine at Bailiesward Farm positioned on the lower slopes of Clashmach Hill to the south west of the viewpoint. Clashindarroch Wind Farm also lies to the south west and is seen with turbines above and below the skyline at approximately 10km from the viewpoint. Dorenell Wind Farm lies approximately 18km further to the west. Kildrummy Wind Farm is seen above the horizon to the south, east of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm at a distance of approximately 19km. Cairnborrow Wind Farm lies within 5km to the north west and sits in front of Edintore Wind Farm which is seen above the skyline a further 5km away in this direction. Hill of Towie I and II Wind Farms are over 14km further north west. Rothes and Rothes Extension Wind Farms are just discernible on the skyline, approximately 30km in the distance to the left of Hill of Towie II in the view. The consented Aultmore Wind Farm would be visible on the distant skyline approximately 20km to the north of the viewpoint. To the east, the Glens of Foudland and Dummuie Wind Farm along with several single turbines are visible. It is also noted (included in the baseline photography in Figure 7.27b) that there are several small turbines in the foreground of the view on the lower slopes east and north of the Cairnborrow Wind Farm.

7.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Grampian Outliers LCA

83. Clashmach Hill is at the northern edge of the Grampian Outliers LCA and is influenced by its proximity to a more varied landscape including the settlement of Huntly and the agricultural landscape surrounding it to the north and east, and the commercial forestry to the south and south west. Wind

farms are also existing characteristics of the panoramic views. Taking into account the proposed development would not lie on or directly beside Clashmach Hill, the landscape is considered as having a Medium susceptibility to wind farm development.

84. Clashmach Hill does not lie within any landscape designation. It is a popular walking destination in the local area but has less distinctive landform or heritage connections than elsewhere within the LCA. It is therefore considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.
85. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

86. The susceptibility of the visual receptors is considered to be High for walkers, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
87. The value attached to the view for walkers is considered to be High as Clashmach Hill is a popular walking destination in the local area.
88. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

7.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

89. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.27a-e and photomontage in 7.27f and is summarised identifying the key cumulative wind farms in Table 7.2-4.

Table 7.2-4
VP6 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	7.2	SW
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	20.1	NNW
	Bailiesward Farm	2.8	WSW
	Cairnborrow	4.8	NW
	Clashindarroch	9.8	SSW
	Dorenell	17.9	SW
	Dummuie	7.1	E
	Edintore	10.6	NW
	Glens of Foudland	10.7	E
	Hill of Tillymorgan	15.6	E
	Hill of Towie I	14.5	WNW
	Hill of Towie II	15.2	WNW
	Kildrummy	19.0	SSW
	Proposed	Meikleton of Ardonald	6.2

90. The wireline (Figure 7.27e) illustrates that the hubs and blades of all 14 turbines are visible. The towers of the turbines are partly obscured by the intervening landform. The proposed development appears in seven overlapping and fairly evenly spaced pairs of turbines. The proposed turbines lie in front of Clashindarroch Wind Farm except for turbines 1 and 8 which lie just to the right of the existing wind farm.

7.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

91. The proposed development would lie mostly in front of the existing Clashindarroch Wind Farm but would bring the presence of turbines closer to the viewpoint in this direction, as illustrated by the photomontage in Figure 7.27f. It would increase the density of turbines, resulting in a greater number of overlapping turbines and blades, but within a relatively narrow extent of view already characterised by wind turbines. The rolling landform between the viewpoint and the proposed development would also provide a degree of separation. The proposed development would be seen in the same portion of view as the consented Dorenell Wind Farm which would appear as an array of turbines to the south west, approximately 18km from the viewpoint. Although the proposed development would result in a limited increase in the horizontal extent of turbines within the view, the increased density of turbines in combination with Clashindarroch and Dorenell Wind Farms would increase the perception of turbines as a key feature of the view to the south west of this summit. In a wider context, consecutive views from this viewpoint, notably to the north west and east include several wind farms with Hill of Towie I and II at just over 14.5km, Cairnbarrow at approximately 5km, and Edintore at approximately 10m, and more distantly at 20km, Aultmore being apparent on the skyline to the north east. To the south east, Glens of Foudland is at just under 11km and Dummuie is approximately 7km from the viewpoint. Considered in the context of this overall pattern the proposed development would not introduce a new or defining component in the landscape, but would be adding the number of turbines. Therefore, the proposed development would represent a prominent, but localised change within the overall view and context of existing wind farms, and the cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be **Moderate**.

7.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

92. As the Grampian Outliers LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Moderate** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

93. A **Moderate** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

7.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farms

94. Rothes II, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour wind farms would be located over 28km to the west/north west of this viewpoint. The combination of this separation distance and intervening landform would restrict their visibility and prominence. They would also form part of the existing pattern of wind farm development in this direction, albeit at greater distance than many of the operational wind farms. The proposed single turbine at Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 6km and therefore much closer to Clashmach Hill. This would be seen in combination with Cairnbarrow (approximately 5km) and Edintore (10.6km) wind farms. The relative positions and prominence of these proposed developments means the primary focus, and cumulative effects would be associated with the larger and closer existing developments including Clashindarroch and Dorenell, together with other wind farms to the north, north west and east. Therefore, in addition to the baseline and proposed wind farms, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed

wind farms is considered to remain **Moderate** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 7.7 above.

8.0 VIEWPOINT 7: A920 BETWEEN HUNTLY AND DUFFTOWN

FIGURE 7.28 -7.28b

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 340667, 840372

8.1 Location

95. This viewpoint is located 7.6km north north west of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 314m AOD on the A920, approximately halfway between Huntly and Dufftown. It is representative of views that would be obtained by road users within the small extent of theoretical visibility illustrated along the A920. It is also representative of views from the Dough of Cairnborrow LCA within the Farmed Moorland Edge LCT.

8.2 Existing View

96. The view along the A920 in this particular area is open to the south but limited to the north by the slopes of the Hill of Talnamounth, and a small local quarry enclosed by gorse and scrub. The view to the south looks directly across to the rolling clear felled and muirburned moorland hills of Tips of Coarsemaul and Tom Mor. Beyond lies the high ridgeline that flanks the eastern side of the Deveron Valley. The distinctive shape of The Buck is visible in the distance. Towards the east, along the Deveron Valley, there is a smaller scale patchwork of pasture, moorland, woodland and forestry.

8.3 Existing Cumulative View

97. The wirelines and photo-panoramas (Figures 7.28a-b) illustrate that three turbines and three blade tips of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm are visible above the skyline to the south. Dorenell Wind Farm is seen clustered above the skyline at the end of the valley landforms to the south south west. The blade tips of Dummuie Wind Farm and Greenmyres turbine are visible to the east, between flanking hillsides in the view.

8.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Dough of Cairnborrow LCA

98. This viewpoint lies within the southern edge of the Dough of Cairnborrow LCA in close proximity to a small area of Grampian Outlier LCA, the Moray Open Uplands LCA, and also the Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA. As a result it is quite a transitional landscape although the rolling moorland and forestry appears as the dominant characteristic. Wind farms are discernible but not prominent features in the wider landscape viewed from this area. It is considered that the susceptibility of this landscape to wind farm development is Medium.

99. The area does not lie within any landscape designation. It is a transitional area with a slightly incoherent landscape pattern and as such it is considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.

100. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Road Users

101. The susceptibility of the visual receptors is considered to be Medium and the value Medium, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
102. Road users along the A920 are therefore considered to have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

8.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

103. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.28a-b and is summarised in Table 7.2-4.

Table 7.2-5
VP7 Key Existing Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	7.6	SSE
Operational /Consented	Clashindarroch	8.9	SSE
	Dorenell	14.6	SSW
	Dummuie	16.1	ESE

104. The wirelines (Figures 7.28a-b) illustrate that the blades or blade tips of six turbines of the proposed development would be visible above the ridgeline. The photo-panorama shows that the current forestry may obscure some of the blades, but it is predicted that the movement of the blades, particularly those of the centre two turbines in the wireline would be notable.

8.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

105. The proposed development would be largely obscured by the ridgeline above the Deveron Valley. Blade movement would be noticeable above the forestry. The larger turbines of the proposed development would appear closer to the viewpoint and separated from the Clashindarroch Wind Farm which has more fully visible turbines to the south. Dorenell Wind Farm is positioned within a separate portion of the view to the proposed development. The Dorenell turbines comprise more noticeable features in comparison to the proposed development as they are fully visible above the skyline in a more dense arrangement across a narrow horizontal extent of the view. It is also noted that the view towards the proposed development is at right angles to the direction of travel along the road which would reduce the prominence of the proposed development. It is considered that the proposed development would be a limited addition to the view so that the original baseline conditions would be fundamentally the same, and therefore the cumulative magnitude of change is **Slight**.

8.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

106. As the Dough of Cairnborrow LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

107. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of road users who have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

8.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

108. There are no proposed wind farms visible from this viewpoint.

9.0 VIEWPOINT 8: MINOR ROAD NEAR CORSE, SOUTH EAST OF A97

FIGURE 7.29 -7.29e

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 360078, 841281

9.1 Location

109. This viewpoint is located 17.2km north east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 183m AOD on a minor road north of Corse, and just south of Comisty. It is representative of views that would be obtained by local residents. It is also representative of views from the Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA within the Agricultural Heartlands LCT.

9.2 Existing View

110. The view along this minor road is across a relatively uniform agricultural landscape of gently rolling, medium to large scale fields with post and wire fencing, and mature broadleaf tree boundaries. Farmsteads are scattered amongst the fields. The higher moorland plateau landscape lies as a backdrop to the south and west.

9.3 Existing Cumulative View

111. There are several wind farms across the view from this area as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.29a-c. The Glens of Foudland Wind Farm is the closest at approximately 4.5km to the south of the viewpoint. Dummuie Wind Farm lies to the south south west at approximately 6km. To the south west, approximately 20km away, Clashindarroch Wind Farm is visible above the skyline. Dorenell Wind Farm lies adjacent to Clashindarroch in the view but a further 8km distant and would only just be discernible. Cairnborrow, Hill of Towie I and II Wind Farms are seen to the west at distances of between approximately 14km and 24km.

9.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA

112. This viewpoint lies within a landscape typical of the Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA, which includes wind turbines as a characteristic. Taking this into account it is considered that the susceptibility of this landscape to wind farm development is Medium.

113. The area does not lie within any landscape designation. It is an intact and uniform, working agricultural landscape and it is therefore considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.

114. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Local Residents

115. The susceptibility of the visual receptors is considered to be High for residents, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.

116. The value attached to the view for residents is considered to be High as views from residential properties are considered to be highly valued.
117. Residents are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

9.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

118. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.29a-d and photomontage in 7.29e and is summarised in Table 7.2-6.

Table 7.2-6
VP8 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	17.2	SW
Operational /Consented	Cairnborrow	13.6	W
	Clashindarroch	19.7	SW
	Dorenell	28.4	SW
	Dummuie	6.3	SSW
	Edintore	18.1	W
	Glens of Foudland	4.5	SSE
	Greenmyres	6.6	SSW
	Hill of Towie I	22.7	W
	Hill of Towie II	24.1	W
	Proposed	Meikleton of Ardonald	14.6

119. The wireline (Figures 7.29d) illustrates that all 14 turbines of the proposed development would be visible. The proposed development appears as an array of relatively even spaced turbines with occasional clustering resulting in overlapping blades. The left half of the proposed development lies in front of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm and the right half lies in front of the more distant and barely visible Dorenell Wind Farm.

9.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

120. The proposed development would lie at over 17km from the viewpoint within a portion of the view already characterised by wind turbines from Clashindarroch Wind Farm, as illustrated by the wireline and photomontage in Figure 7.29d and Figure 7.29e respectively. It would lie closer to the viewpoint than the Clashindarroch Wind Farm with larger turbines and overlap in front of approximately a third of its horizontal extent, appearing as an extension. The proposed development would lie separate from the closer Dummuie Wind Farm which lies to the south, and also the Cairnborrow, Hill of Towie I and II turbines to the west. Glens of Foundland is prominent with many of its turbines above the skyline at 4.5km to the south east. Taking this into account and the distance from the viewpoint, the proposed development would be a minor addition to the proportion of the view affected by wind farms. As such, it is considered the magnitude of cumulative change would be **Slight**.

9.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

121. As the North Rolling Lowlands LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

122. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of residents who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

9.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

123. The closest proposed development visible from this location would be the single turbine at Meikleton of Ardonaldat approximately 14.5km to the west. It would be seen adjacent to and in the context of Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Therefore this would be a very small change, and it is considered the cumulative magnitude of change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms would remain **Slight** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 9.7 above.

10.0 VIEWPOINT 9: MINOR ROAD OFF B9117 NEAR MILLTOWN OF ROTHIE MAY

FIGURE 7.30 -7.30f

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 355835, 849580

10.1 Location

124. This viewpoint is located 19.7km north east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 140m AOD on a minor road off the B9117, south of the property at South Retanach. It is representative of views that would be obtained by local residents. It is also representative of views from the Upland Farmland LCA within the Uplands LCT.

10.2 Existing View

125. The view along this minor road extends the south, west and north. The foreground view is across pasture with post and wire fencing and with remnant hedgerows. There are also small stands of native woodland and shelterbelts dispersed across the farmland which curtail distant views to the west except for Ben Rinnes which appears above the trees. Knock Hill is a prominent feature of the view towards the north. To the south and south west, beyond the foreground farmland, the higher upland landscape is seen in the skyline where the largely forested Meikle Balloch and The Bin are notable features.

10.3 Existing Cumulative View

126. There are several wind farms in the distance from this viewpoint as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.30a-b. Clashindarroch, Dorenell and Cairnborrow are seen to the south west. Cairnborrow Wind Farm is the closest at approximately 12km. It is noted that there are also two small turbines visible on the hillside to the east of Cairnborrow. Clashindarroch Wind Farm lies at approximately 20km and Dorenell Wind Farm 29km from the viewpoint. To the north west, the blade tips of Aultmore and Netherton of Windyhills are visible in the wireline, together with the turbines of Myreton Crossroads, near to Knock Hill.

10.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Upland Farmland LCA

127. This viewpoint lies within a landscape fairly typical of the Upland Farmland LCA, as a large scale gently undulating landscape with simple vegetation pattern including forestry. However, the landscape around the viewpoint to the south also has a considerable coverage of broadleaf trees particularly along roads and fields boundaries which reduces the scale and provides some enclosure to this part of the view. Taking this into account it is considered that the susceptibility of this landscape to wind farm development is Medium.

128. The area does not lie within any landscape designation. There are notable landforms viewed from within the landscape but overall it is a working agricultural landscape and as such it is considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.

129. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Local Residents

130. The susceptibility of the visual receptors is considered to be High for residents, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.

131. The value attached to the view for residents is considered to be High as views from residential properties are considered to be highly valued.

132. Residents are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

10.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

133. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.30a-b and is summarised in Table 7.2-7.

Table 7.2-7
VP9 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	19.7	SW
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	12.3	NW
	Cairnborrow	11.6	SW
	Clashindarroch	22.2	SSW
	Dorenell	29	SW
	Myreton Crossroads	9.2	NW
Proposed	Meikleton of Ardonald	12.1	SW

134. The wirelines (Figures 7.30a-b) illustrates that 12 hubs and blades and two blades of the proposed development would theoretically be visible above the skyline from this viewpoint. The proposed turbines would be seen within the same horizontal extent as the Clashindarroch Wind Farm but would lie in front and appear larger in the view.

10.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

135. The proposed development would be visible at approximately 20km within a narrow horizontal extent of the view which is already characterised by the turbines of Clashindarroch Wind Farm. The proposed development would lie in front of Clashindarroch Wind Farm and would appear larger and taller than the existing turbines, increasing the density of turbines in a narrow portion of the available view. However, the intervening distance would limit the relative prominence of this change. The large number of turbines at Dorenell Wind Farm are seen to the south west merging into the closer Cairnborrow Wind Farm, but separated from the proposed development and Clashindarroch by the rounded summits in the middle ground, including The Bin. The proposed development would represent a minor addition to the proportion of the view affected by turbines, in terms of number of turbines and proximity, with no increase in horizontal extent, and the original baseline conditions would remain fundamentally the same. It is therefore considered that the magnitude of change would be **Slight**.

10.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

136. As the Upland Farmland LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

137. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of residents who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

10.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

138. The only proposed development visible from this location would be the Meikleton of Ardonald single turbine. It would be located adjacent to, and would be seen in the context of, Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Therefore, this would be a very small change and the cumulative magnitude of change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms would remain **Slight** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 10.7 above.

10.9 Baseline night time view

139. As noted above the viewpoint is positioned on a minor road off the B9117, south of the property at South Retanach and is representative of the view seen by local residents. The sensitivity of the visual receptors is the same as that assessed for daytime views.
140. The baseline photography presented in Figure 7.30c demonstrates the night time context at this location. There are very few sources of artificial light in the direction of the proposed development, limited to occasional lights within residential properties and occasional vehicles using the local road network to the west. In addition, further to the north (to the right of the photograph) occasional street lights and also aviation lights on wind turbines at Myreton Crossroads are apparent. Overall this represents a dark location at night. It is a west facing viewpoint, meaning the setting sun creates contrast on the horizon and a glow can be maintained into the evening depending on the time of year and weather conditions.

10.10 Predicted Night Time View

141. The wireline included in Figure 7.30c shows that the hubs and blades of 12 turbines are theoretically visible above the horizon, with the hubs and blades of a further two turbines potentially seen. However, further interpretation predicts that 10 hubs (and therefore lights) would be seen from this location, with intervening landform restricting the visibility of the other four turbines. The night time photomontages in Figure 7.30e and 7.30f show this lighting at an intensity of 2000 candela and 200 candela respectively (in accordance with the relevant guidance). In addition, 32 candela lights are required at the mid-point on the towers. However, due to the intervening landform and woodland these lower lights are not predicted to be visible from this location. The prevailing south westerly wind would mean the turbine blades would frequently face away from this viewpoint, with the lights seen on the near side of the blades.

10.11 Predicted Night Time Magnitude of Change

142. The closest turbine would be located approximately 19.7km from this viewpoint. While the lights would be noticeable and contrast with the baseline context, the intervening distance means they are not predicted to form prominent or defining elements of the view. Therefore, the magnitude of change associated with the aviation lights at this viewpoint is predicted to be **Moderate**.

10.12 Predicted Night Time Effects

Landscape Character

143. As the Upland Farmland LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Moderate** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed lights would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the landscape character within the view.

Visual Amenity

144. A **Moderate** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed lights would result in a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** effect on the visual amenity of residents who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

11.0 VIEWPOINT 10: A96 BETWEEN HUNTLY AND KEITH

FIGURE 7.31 -7.31c

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 344656, 846146

11.1 Location

145. This viewpoint is located 12.5km north of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 229m AOD on the A96, east of the junction with the B9115 and the access road to Whitehillock Farm. It is representative of views that would be obtained by road users within the small extents of theoretical visibility illustrated along the A96. It is also representative of views from the Upland Farmland LCA within the Uplands LCT.

11.2 Existing View

146. This view along this main road is open to the south east clockwise through to the north west. The foreground consists of large fields used for pasture and grass crops delineated with post and wire fencing and evergreen shelterbelts. Larger stands of commercial forestry can be seen in the middle distance to the south. High voltage pylons and overhead lines lie across the road and continue across the fields to the south east. Smaller wooden telegraph poles and overhead lines run along the field boundaries to the south. The tops of the northern hills within Clashindarroch Forest can be seen in the horizon to the south.

11.3 Existing Cumulative View

147. There are several wind farms in close proximity to the viewpoint as illustrated in the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.31a-c. Edintore lies within 2km of this location to the west and is partially screened by foreground trees and shelterbelts, as are the Hill of Towie I and II Wind Farms which lie approximately 10km to the west. To the south, approximately 4km from the viewpoint, Cairnborrow Wind Farm is visible above the skyline. To the south east, the turbines at Dummuie, Greenmyres, Glens of Foudland and Hill of Tillymorgan are apparent but more distant at over 15km.

11.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Upland Farmland LCA

148. This viewpoint lies within a landscape fairly typical of the Upland Farmland LCA, as a medium-large scale gently undulating landscape. Forestry and pockets of mixed woodland and shelterbelts provide scale indicators within the open pasture and arable fields. In this particular part of the landscape the main road, pylon lines and telegraph poles are prominent features as well as existing wind turbines. Taking this into account it is considered that the susceptibility of this landscape to wind farm development is Medium.

149. The area does not lie within any landscape designation. There are notable landforms viewed from within the landscape but overall the landscape is a working farmland and transport/infrastructure corridor and it is therefore considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.

150. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Road Users

151. The susceptibility of the visual receptors of road users is considered to be Medium and the value Medium, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
152. Road users along the A96 are therefore considered to have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

11.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

153. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.31a-c and is summarised in Table 7.2-8.

Table 7.2-8
VP10 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	12.5	S
Operational /Consented	Cairnborrow	3.8	SE
	Dummuie	15.2	ESE
	Edintore	2.3	W
	Glens of Foudland	18.2	ESE
	Hill of Tillymorgan	23.4	ESE
	Hill of Towie I	8.6	W
	Hill of Towie II	9.6	WSW
Proposed	Meikleton of Ardonald	3.2	SE

154. The wirelines (Figures 7.31a-c) illustrates that only one blade and five blade tips of the proposed development would be potentially visible from this viewpoint.

11.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

155. The majority of the proposed development would be screened by the intervening hills from this viewpoint. The movement of the visible blade and blade tip would be potentially discernible. As the proposed development would be at right angles to the direction of travel on the road and there are much closer, more prominent turbines within the view, the proposed development would not be a focus. It is considered that it would be a very minor addition to the view and the baseline conditions would remain fundamentally unaltered. As such, the magnitude of cumulative change is considered to be **Negligible**.

11.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

156. As the Upland Farmland LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Negligible** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed

development would result in a **Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

157. A **Negligible** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Minor** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of road users who have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

11.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

158. The only proposed development visible from this location would be the single turbine at Meikleton of Ardonald which would be located adjacent to, and seen in the context of, Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Therefore, it would be a very small change and the cumulative magnitude of change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms would remain **Negligible** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 11.7 above.

12.0 VIEWPOINT 11: BATTLE HILL, HUNTLY

FIGURE 7.32 -7.32f

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 353839, 839482

12.1 Location

159. This viewpoint is located 11.0km north east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 143m AOD at the south western edge of Battle Hill. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers and/or visitors to the hill, and potentially residents on the eastern edge of Huntly. It is also representative of views from the Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA within the Straths and Valleys LCT.

12.2 Existing View

160. The view to the south west from Battle Hill is framed by mature beech trees. The foreground grass field descends towards the A96, and A97 (Aberdeen road) which are lined by mature trees. Houses at the edge of Huntly are visible to the north west. Beyond the tree lined A96, Clashmach Hill and the forested Ba'Hill frame the view further with the rolling hills of Clashindarroch Forest on the distant skyline.

12.3 Existing Cumulative View

161. As illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panorama in Figures 7.32a the eastern most turbines of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm are visible above the skyline, beyond the eastern slopes of Clashmach Hill. The photo-panorama shows a small single turbine is also visible on the northern slopes of Clashmach Hill, to the west of the view above Huntly.

12.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Deveron and Bogies Straths LCA

162. Battle Hill lies at the edge of the Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA and is close to the Northern Rolling Lowlands. It is typically an enclosed landscape due to the coverage of broadleaf trees, although the view assessed here demonstrates an exception to this. Taking into account the proposed development would not be located on Battle Hill and its enclosed nature, it is considered that the susceptibility of Battle Hill to wind farm development is low. Aerial photography indicates that the woodland on Battle Hill has recently been felled. However, it is likely that this would be re-planted and the sense of enclosure would be reinstated.

163. Battle Hill does not lie within any landscape designation but has significance as an important historic site and stands apart from the surrounding forested hills. It is also popular walking destination in the local area. It is therefore considered that the value of the landscape is High.

164. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers/Visitors

165. The susceptibility is considered to be High for walkers, visitors and residents as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
166. The value attached to the view for walkers and visitors is considered to be High as Battle Hill is a popular destination for both natural and historical reasons. The value attached to the view for residents is considered to be High as views from residents properties are considered to be highly valued.
167. Walkers, visitors and residents are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

12.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

168. The predicted cumulative view with baseline wind farms is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.32a-b and photomontage in 7.32c and is summarised in Table 7.2-9.

Table 7.2-9
VP11 Key Existing Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	11.0	SW
Operational	Clashindarroch	13.5	SW

169. The wirelines illustrate that the hubs and blades of three turbines (T5, T14 and T10), the blades of one turbine (T2) and the blade tips of two turbines (T4 and T11) would be visible from this viewpoint. They would be seen to the left of the lower slopes of Clashmach Hill, with larger turbines seen in front of the turbines of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm.

12.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

170. The majority of the proposed development would be screened from view by Clashmach Hill as illustrated by the wirelines and the photomontage in Figure 7.32c. Where the hubs and blades are seen they would be notably larger than the adjacent Clashindarroch Wind Farm turbines, but not particularly higher in the view which helps to reduce the contrast. The blade movement of the visible turbines would be discernible. As a minor addition within a distant part of the view already containing wind turbines, it is considered that the magnitude of cumulative change from the proposed development would be **Slight**.

12.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

171. As the Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

172. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers/visitors and residents all of whom have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

12.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

173. There are no proposed wind farms visible from this viewpoint.

12.9 Baseline night time view

174. As noted above the viewpoint is positioned on the south western edge of Battle Hill. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers and/or visitors to the hill. It is unlikely that many people will visit the location at night for recreation, although walkers may be in the area at dawn or dusk. However more notably, in the context of night time views, a comparable view potentially would be seen by residents on the eastern edge of Huntly. The sensitivity of the residents is the same as that assessed for daytime views.
175. The baseline photography presented in Figure 7.30c demonstrates the night time context at this location. There are several baseline sources of artificial light in the direction of the proposed development, predominately associated with the settlement pattern within Huntly. Street lighting along the A97 (Aberdeen Road) is present to the left side of the photography, whilst similar light sources within Huntly are visible towards the right. In the wider landscape there are also lights associated with dispersed properties and farms, notably those seen on the south east slopes of Clashmach Hill. Whilst parts of the view seen from this location are dark, these contrast with the multiple sources of artificial light. It is a generally west facing viewpoint, meaning the setting sun creates contrast on the horizon and a glow can be maintained into the evening depending on the time of year and weather conditions.

12.10 Predicted Night Time View

176. The wireline included in Figure 7.32d demonstrates that hubs and blades of three turbines are theoretically visible above the lower slopes of Clashmach Hill, with the hubs and blades or blade tips of a further three turbines potentially seen. The night time photomontages in Figure 7.32e and 7.32f show this lighting at an intensity of 2000 candela and 200 candela respectively (in accordance with the relevant guidance). In addition, 32 candela lights are required at the mid-point on the towers. However, due to the intervening landform and woodland these lower lights are not predicted to be visible from this location. The prevailing south westerly wind would mean the turbine blades would frequently face away from this viewpoint, with the lights seen on the near side of the blades.

12.11 Predicted Night Time Magnitude of Change

177. The closest turbine would be located approximately 11km from this viewpoint. While the lights would be visible, the prevalence of existing nearby light sources that form part of the baseline would restrict their prominence considerably. Therefore, the magnitude of change associated with the aviation lights at this location is predicted to be **Negligible**.

12.12 Predicted Night Time Effects

Landscape Character

178. As the Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Negligible** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed lights would result in a **Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

179. A **Negligible** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of residents who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

13.0 VIEWPOINT 12: CORREEN HILL, OLD MILITARY ROAD

FIGURE 7.33 -7.33g

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 354685, 823345

13.1 Location

181. This viewpoint is located 13.5km south east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 381m AOD at the Ordnance Survey viewpoint at a layby on the Old Military Road (also known as Suie Road) on the northern edge of the Correen Hills. It is representative of views that would be obtained by road users and visitors to the viewpoint. It is also representative of views from the Grampian Outliers LCA within the Moorland Plateau LCT.

13.2 Existing View

182. The view from this specific viewpoint offers a framed view across the forested hillsides of the Correen Hills and agricultural lands of the Inch Basin LCA towards the distinctive Tap O' Noth and Hill O' Noth. The higher area of Gartly Moor is also visible to the north and Ben Rinnes is discernible on the distant horizon to the north west.

13.3 Existing Cumulative View

183. As illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.33a-b the Clashindarroch Wind Farm is visible above the skyline within the centre of the view to the left of Tap O' Noth, approximately 13km from the viewpoint. Dorenell Wind Farm lies approximately 22km to the west of the viewpoint, partially hidden by the foreground Correen Hills. There is a gap between the Clashindarroch and Dorenell Wind Farms which is punctuated by Ben Rinnes on the distant skyline. Cairnmore Wind Farm which is within 4km to the west of the viewpoint is mostly obscured by the foreground hills. Also in this direction, the two turbines at Upper Wheedlemont Farm are seen at distance of approximately 8km below the skyline and the consented Dorenell Wind Farm. To the north, the consented Aultmore Wind Farm would be potentially visible on the skyline, approximately 36km from the viewpoint. To the north east and east there are potentially several wind farms visible and single turbines within 10-15km from the viewpoint with only the Hill of Tillymorgan Wind Farm particularly noticeable at approximately 15km.

13.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Grampian Outliers LCA

184. The viewpoint is located at the edge of the Grampian Outliers LCA where views across the surrounding landscape are available. The views therefore contain a variety of features including wind farms and the susceptibility to wind farm development is considered Medium.
185. The Correen Hills form part of the Grampian Outliers LCA and lie just outside the Bennachie Aberdeenshire SLA. These hills are less distinctive in elevation and appearance than the adjacent Bennachie area. It is therefore considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.
186. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Road Users/Visitors

187. As this is a specific OS viewpoint, the susceptibility and value are considered to be High for visitors as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7. For road users, the susceptibility and value are considered to be Medium.
188. Visitors are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity and road users a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

13.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

189. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.33a-c and photomontage in 7.33d and is summarised in Table 7.2-10.

Table 7.2-10
VP12 Key Existing Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	13.5	NW
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	35.9	NNW
	Cairnmore	4.4	W
	Clashindarroch	13.6	WNW
	Dorenell	21.9	W
	Hill of Tillymorgan	15	NNE
	Upper Wheedlemont Farm	7.7	W

190. The wireline (Figure 7.33c) illustrates that nine of the proposed turbines would be visible almost in full and the blade tips of two turbines (T4 and T7) would just be visible to the left of the lower slopes of Tap O' Noth. The other two turbines would be screened by Tap O' Noth. The visible proposed turbines would lie with their towers and hubs mostly below the skyline with only the blades above, at a similar height to the adjacent turbines of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm. A key difference between appearance of the existing and proposed wind farms is the existing turbines are almost entirely seen above the horizon, whilst the majority of the proposed turbines are positioned below the horizon.

13.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

191. The proposed development in addition to the Clashindarroch and Dorenell Wind Farms (and to a lesser extent Upper Wheedlemont Wind Farm) would fill most of the contained view between the edge of the Correen Hills and Tap O' Noth, as illustrated by Figures 7.33c and d. The proposed turbines would appear in close proximity to Tap O' Noth, and with the hubs and towers seen largely below the skyline there would be limited conflict with the perceived height of Tap O' Noth. The proposed development, Clashindarroch Wind Farm and Dorenell Wind Farm would be perceived as separate developments due to slight gaps between them and a noticeable difference in turbine height at the various distances from the viewpoint. However, it is noted that the top of the blade tips of all three wind farms would lie at a similar height relative to the skyline due to their varying site levels. The proposed development would be the closest of these wind farms to the viewpoint and would considerably increase the proportion of the view affected by wind farms, specifically within the framed view towards Tap O' Noth. As such the magnitude of cumulative change resulting from the proposed development is considered to be **Substantial**.

13.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

192. As the Grampian Outliers LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Substantial** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

193. A **Substantial** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Major** and **Significant** effect on the visual amenity of visitors to the viewpoint who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development, and a **Major-Moderate** and **Significant** effect on road users who have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

13.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

194. There are no proposed wind farms visible from this viewpoint.

13.9 Baseline Night Time View

195. As noted above the viewpoint is positioned at the Ordnance Survey viewpoint at a layby on the Old Military Road (also known as Suie Road) on the northern edge of the Correen Hills. Night time views mainly would be obtained by road users as few people would visit this location to appreciate the view from the OS marked viewpoint. The sensitivity of road users is the same as that assessed for daytime views.
196. The baseline photography presented in Figure 7.33e demonstrates the night time context at this location. There are a small number of isolated sources of artificial light in the direction of the proposed development, predominately associated with the local settlement pattern within the agricultural lands of the Inch Basin, to the north of this location. Whilst these light sources are relatively subtle in the photograph these are more apparent in the field. The most obvious lights are those associated with settlements, including Clatt and Kennethmont. Lights at dispersed properties are also seen, as are the headlights of vehicles using the local road network. The two wind turbines at Upper Wheedlemont Farm have aviation lights on the nacelles and these are located to the west of the viewpoint. The visibility of these turbines is limited at this specific viewpoint, but they are seen at locations further north along the road. Additional notable light sources that were present during the fieldwork comprised tractors and combine harvesters working in the fields. It is acknowledged this unlikely to be a frequent occurrence and is particularly associated with the time of year the fieldwork and photography was undertaken.
197. It is a generally west facing viewpoint, meaning the setting sun creates contrast on the horizon and a glow can be maintained into the evening depending on the time of year and weather conditions.

13.10 Predicted Night Time View

198. The wireline included in Figure 7.32d demonstrates that nine of the proposed turbines would be visible almost in full, along with the blade tips of two turbines. This means that the lights on the nacelles and towers of nine turbines are predicted to be visible from this location. The night time photomontages in Figure 7.33f and 7.33g show this lighting at an intensity of 2000 candela and 200 candela respectively

(in accordance with the relevant guidance). In addition, there 32 candela lights positioned at the mid-point on the towers. The prevailing south westerly wind would mean the turbine blades would frequently face perpendicular to this viewpoint, with the lights visible to the right of the blades.

13.11 Predicted Night Time Magnitude of Change

199. The closest turbine is positioned approximately 13.5km from this viewpoint. While the lights would be visible the existing light sources that form part of the baseline context would limit the associated change. The lights would not introduce new elements into the view and their prominence would also be reduced in part by the intervening distance. However, it is also noted that it is a broadly dark agricultural landscape that is present throughout the view. Therefore the magnitude of change associated with the aviation lights at this location is predicted to be **Moderate**.

13.12 Predicted Night Time Effects

Landscape Character

200. As the Grampian Outliers LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Moderate** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed lighting would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the landscape character within the view.

Visual Amenity

201. A **Moderate** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed lights would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on road users who have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

14.0 VIEWPOINT 13: BEN RINNES

FIGURE 7.34 -7.34f

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 325514, 835449

14.1 Location

202. This viewpoint is located 17.8km west of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 840m AOD at the summit of Ben Rinnas. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers. It is also representative of views from the summits within North Eastern Hills LCA within the Uplands and Glens LCT, although they would not be as high as this distinctive outlier. It is also representative of views from within the Moray AGLV.

14.2 Existing View

203. There are 360 degree panoramic views available from the summit of Ben Rinnas. To the north east, the foreground moorland hilltops of Meikle Conval and Little Conval and more distant Ben Aigan are notable features and the settlement at Dufftown is just visible between the Convals. A patchwork of farmland and forestry lies in the valleys. To the east, the rolling moorland and forestry uplands continue into the distance where the prominent form of Tap O' Noth and Hill O' Noth are visible. The uplands are higher and larger scale towards the south and west within the Cairngorm National Park.

14.3 Existing Cumulative View

204. There are numerous wind farms visible within the 360 degree available view, as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.34a-d. The consented Dorenell Wind Farm would be the closest at approximately 8km from the viewpoint and would occupy the largest horizontal extent of the view. Clashindarroch Wind Farm is seen approximately 16km to the east, below the skyline. Also towards the east, the turbines and wind farms around Dummuie and Glens of Foudland are visible within a narrow horizontal extent. To the north east, Cairnborrow Wind Farm is approximately 20km from the viewpoint and seen with the backdrop of Meikle Balloch. Towards the north, Edintore, Hill of Towie I and II are located beyond approximately 12km from the viewpoint, with the more distant Aultmore Wind Farm potentially visible on the skyline beyond. Closer to the north west, the large wind farms of Rothes and Rothes Extension, Meikle Hill and Kellas at distances of over 15km, and further to the west Paul's Hill, Berry Burn and Hill of Glaschyle can be seen across the uplands at distances over approximately 14km.

14.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: The North Eastern Hills LCA

205. The viewpoint is a prominent hill within this part of the North Eastern Hills, which is a large scale, expansive landscape. Views to the Cairngorms Massif (to the south west of the viewpoint) are highlighted in the character assessment (SNH, 1996 Ref. 7.2.3) as a special feature of the area, as well as remoteness, and the views of extensive horizons. The proposed development would not lie within views to the Cairngorms but would be in a portion of the view which is characterised by a simplicity and openness with a simple vegetation cover of moor or coniferous forestry and a slightly more

complex skyline created by the outcrops of the Grampian Outliers. There are also a large number of wind farms at various distances from the viewpoint within this portion of the view. Taking these factors into account the susceptibility to wind farm development is considered Medium.

206. Ben Rinnes lies within the Moray AGLV, which covers the landscape between the viewpoint and the south western edge of the Site. It is considered that the value of the landscape is High-Medium.
207. Taking into account the susceptibility and value discussed above, the overall sensitivity to wind farm development of the landscape within the view is considered to be High-Medium.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

208. The susceptibility is considered to be High and the value High for walkers as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
209. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

14.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

210. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.34a-e and photomontage in 7.34f and is summarised in Table 7.2-11.

Table 7.2-11
VP13 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	17.8	E
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	31.1	NNE
	Berry Burn	17.2	WNW
	Cairnborrow	21.6	ENE
	Clashindarroch	16.4	E
	Dorenell	7.7	SE
	Dummuie	30.7	ENE
	Edintore	19.9	NE
	Glens of Foudland	34.8	ENE
	Hill of Glaschyle	24.8	WNW
	Hill of Tillymorgan	39.4	E
	Hill of Towie I	14.1	NNE
	Hill of Towie II	12.7	NE
	Hunthill	11.3	N
	Kellas	17.8	NW
	Kildrummy	21.7	SE
	Meikle Hill	17.6	NW
	Pauls Hill	13.9	W
	Roths	15.7	NW
	Roths Extension	15.4	NW
	Proposed	Clash Gour	16.1
Meikleton of Ardonald		21.5	NE
Pauls Hill II		13.2	NW
Roths III		11.6	NNW

211. The wirelines (Figures 7.34a and 7.34e) illustrates that the hubs and blades of 11 of the proposed turbines and the blades of four of the proposed turbines would be potentially visible from this viewpoint. The majority of the turbines would be below the skyline with one blade tip just breaking the distant skyline. The proposed development consists of mainly single turbines with some overlapping blades, particularly T1, T11 and T14, with a similar horizontal extent to the adjacent Clashindarroch Wind Farm. The proposed turbines would be larger but more distant than the Clashindarroch Wind Farm turbines.

14.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

212. The proposed development would be located to the north of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm from this viewpoint, increasing the extent of turbines within this section of view towards the more distant turbines at Dummuie, Glens of Foudland and Hill of Tillymorgan. Clashindarroch Wind Farm is clearly separated from Dorenell which is the closest wind farm to the viewpoint. The proposed development's turbine towers would be largely obscured by the intervening landform with the visible blades and hubs below the skyline, as illustrated by the photomontage in Figure 7.34f. Thus it would be clearly discernible but not prominent, and would appear as an extension to Clashindarroch Wind Farm. It is considered that the baseline conditions would remain fundamentally the same and therefore the magnitude of cumulative change from the proposed development would be **Slight**.

14.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

213. As the North Eastern Hills LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a High-Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** to **Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

214. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

14.8 Predicted cumulative view with baseline and proposed wind farm

215. Rothes III, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour wind farms would be located to the north west of this viewpoint, with the closest of these proposed turbines at a distance of approximately 14km. Together, these would comprise two large groups of wind turbines, positioned in a different direction to Clashindarroch II, which would provide distinct separation. The proposed Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 21km, seen in combination with Cairnborrow Wind Farm and given this proposed development comprises a single turbine it would be a relatively limited change in to the cumulative context. The relative positions and distances to these proposed developments means the primary cumulative effects relevant to Clashindarroch II would be associated with the larger and closer existing developments including Clashindarroch and Dorenell. Therefore, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Slight** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 14.7 above.

15.0 VIEWPOINT 14: KNOCK HILL

FIGURE 7.35 -7.35d

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 353708, 855151

15.1 Location

216. This viewpoint is located 23.6km north north east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 428m AOD at the summit of Knock Hill. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers. It is also representative of views from the summits within the Upland Farmland LCA within the Uplands LCT, although they would not be as high as this distinctive outlier.

15.2 Existing View

217. There are 360 degree panoramic views available from the rocky moorland summit of Knock Hill. To the north west, north and north east the coastline and North Sea are visible beyond the patchwork of farmland and forestry. To the south west, the distinctive landform of Ben Rinnes is visible. The Cairngorms provide a backdrop behind Ben Rinnes to the south. The Buck and Tap O' Noth can be distinguished in front of the higher uplands also to the south. Bennachie is visible to the south east and contrasts with the lower agricultural landscape. The position of Knock Hill close to the coast allows a clear view of the change in landform from the coastal lowlands to the uplands of the Cairngorms inland.

15.3 Existing Cumulative View

218. There are numerous wind farms visible within the 360 degree views available at the summit of this viewpoint as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.35a-d. Within close proximity there are many single turbines and small wind farms in all directions. The consented Aultmore Wind Farm would be the closest larger wind farm to the viewpoint, at approximately 7km to the west. In this direction, beyond 35km from the viewpoint, there is potential to see the wind farms on the Moray Uplands including Rothes and Rothes Extension as well as Pauls Hill. Towards the south west, beyond approximately 17km from the viewpoint, the Hill of Towie I and II and Edintore Wind Farms are visible surrounding Ben Aigan. Dorenell Wind Farm lies further towards the south, at over 31km from the viewpoint. To the south, the Cairnborrow Wind Farm, Clashindarroch Wind Farm and Kildrummy Wind Farm lie approximately 14km, 26km and 36km respectively from the viewpoint, within the same portion of the view but do not overlap. To the south east, Dummie and Glens of Foudland along with the numerous single turbines in that area would be visible at over 19km from the viewpoint.

15.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Upland Farmland LCA

219. The viewpoint is a prominent hill within the northern part of the Upland Farmland LCA. Views from it are expansive and include a variety of landscape types from coastal plains to the Cairngorms Mountains. The proposed development would lie within a portion of the view which is characterised by existing wind farms. The susceptibility to wind farm development is therefore considered Medium overall due the diversity and presence of existing wind farms.

220. Knock Hill and its immediate surroundings are not within any landscape designation. Whilst Knock Hill is distinctive and has heritage value, the wind farm would not be located upon it. Taking this into account, it is considered the value of the landscape is Medium.
221. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

222. The susceptibility is considered to be High and the value High for walkers as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
223. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

15.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

224. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.35a-d and is summarised in Table 7.2-12.

Table 7.2-12
VP14 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	23.6	SSW
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	7.0	WNW
	Berry Burn	45.0	WSW
	Cairnborrow	14.44	SSW
	Clashindarroch	25.9	SSW
	Dorenell	31.2	SSW
	Dummuie	19.1	SSE
	Edintore	13.7	SW
	Glens of Foudland	19.5	SSE
	Hill of Glaschyle	50.1	WSW
	Hill of Tillymorgan	23.6	SE
	Hill of Towie I	17.6	SW
	Hill of Towie II	19.9	SW
	Kellas	35.7	WSW
	Kildrummy	36.0	S
	Meikle Hill	38.4	WSW
	Myreton Crossroads	3.9	WNW
	Pauls Hill	43.2	WSW
	Roths	35.2	WSW
	Roths Extension	35.8	WSW
Proposed	Clash Gour	41.8	WSW
	Meikleton of Ardonald	14.5	SSW
	Pauls Hill II	42.0	WSW
	Roths III	32.3	WSW

225. The wireline (Figure 7.35a) show that all 14 proposed turbines would be potentially visible although to varying extents. There would be seven turbines with only the upper towers, hubs and blades visible. A

further four turbines would have just hubs and blades visible, and the blades of the remaining three turbines would be visible. The western extent of the proposed development would lie in front of the turbines of the Clashindarroch Wind farm, with seven of the proposed turbines extending to the left of this in the view, with the turbines slightly closer and appearing larger than the operational Clashindarroch turbines.

15.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

226. The proposed development would lie partly in front of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm and would have more turbines fully visible than the existing wind farm with which it would appear as an extension. The larger turbines and slightly closer location of the proposed development compared to the Clashindarroch Wind Farm would mean that it would be more discernible but would represent a minor addition to the overall baseline view. The considerable separation from other consented or operational large wind farms within the view reduces the potential for other combined cumulative effects. Taking into consideration the above, and the distance of over 23km to the proposed development, the magnitude of cumulative change is considered to be **Slight**.

15.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

227. As the Upland Farmland LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

228. A Slight magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a high sensitivity to wind farm development.

15.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

229. Rothes III, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour wind farms would be located to the west south west of this viewpoint, with the closest of these proposed turbines are located at a distance of over 32km. Together these would comprise two large groups of wind turbines. They would be positioned in a different direction to Clashindarroch II, which would provide distinct separation. The proposed single turbine at Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 14km, and seen in combination with Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Therefore, it would comprise a limited change to the cumulative context. The relative positions and distance of these proposed developments means the primary cumulative effects relevant to Clashindarroch II would be associated with the existing larger wind farm developments that are closer to the Site, including Clashindarroch and Dorenell. Therefore, in addition to the baseline and proposed wind farms, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Slight** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 15.7 above.

16.0 VIEWPOINT 15: BEN AIGAN

FIGURE 7.36 -7.36d

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 330994, 848191

16.1 Location

230. This viewpoint is located 19.6km north west of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 470m AOD at the summit of Ben Aigan. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers. It is also representative of views from the summits within the Uplands Farmland LCA within the Uplands LCT, although they would not be as high as this distinctive outlier. It is also representative of views from within the Moray AGLV which covers the western half of the mountain.

16.2 Existing View

231. There are 360 degree panoramic views available from the moorland summit of Ben Aigan. To the north, the Spey Bay is visible across the coastal farmland. To the north east, the view is across farmland and forestry and includes the isolated Knock Hill. To the east and south east, the Hill of Towie Wind Farm is a prominent feature in close proximity across the hilltops in the middle ground, with the rolling upland hills beyond. Glen Rinnes with the settlement at Dufftown is visible to the south beyond the summit. Ben Rinnes and its surrounding hills lie to the south south west with the Cairngorms providing a backdrop in this direction.

16.3 Existing Cumulative View

232. There are numerous wind farms visible within the 360 degree views available from this summit as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.36a-d. The closest and most prominent are the Hill of Towie I and II turbines which lie approximately 4km to the east south east of the viewpoint. Edintore and Cairnborrow Wind Farms lie behind Hill of Towie I Wind Farm, and there is potential to see the Dummuie and Glens of Foudland Wind Farms in this direction too, beyond approximately 25km from the viewpoint. Clashindarroch Wind Farm is seen above the skyline to the south east, approximately 20km from the viewpoint. Towards the south, Kildrummy Wind Farm is largely hidden by The Buck, at approximately 29km from the viewpoint. To the south, approximately 15km from the viewpoint, Dorenell Wind Farm is visible across the uplands and above the skyline. To the west north west, Pauls Hill, Berry Burn, Hunthill, Hill of Glaschyle, Rothes, Rothes Extension, Meikle Hill and Kellas Wind Farms are between 7 and 27km from the viewpoint and form a continuous extent of turbines. To the north east, the consented Aultmore Wind Farm would lie approximately 19km from the viewpoint and visible along the skyline along with the several single turbines and small wind farms in this area.

16.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Upland Farmland LCA

233. The viewpoint is a prominent hill within this part of the Upland Farmland LCA providing expansive views that include many existing wind farms. As the wind farm would not be located on the hill, and taking

into account the large scale landscape within the views which has an overall simplicity and openness, the susceptibility of the landscape to wind farm development is considered Medium.

234. Ben Aigan lies partly within the Moray AGLV landscape designation but the portion of the view in which the proposed development would lie is largely outside of the AGLV and is less remote and more settled than the landscape within the views across the AGLV to the south west. It is considered that overall the value of the landscape is Medium.
235. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

236. The susceptibility is considered to be High and the value High for walkers as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
237. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

16.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

238. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.36a-d and is summarised in Table 7.2-13.

Table 7.2-13
VP15 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	19.6	SE
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	18.6	NE
	Berry Burn	21.2	WSW
	Cairnborrow	16.1	ESE
	Clashindarroch	20	SE
	Dorenell	16.2	SSE
	Dummuie	27.9	ESE
	Edintore	11	E
	Glens of Foudland	31.4	E
	Hill of Glaschyle	26.9	W
	Hill of Tillymorgan	36.6	E
	Hill of Towie I	4.3	E
	Hill of Towie II	4.4	ESE
	Kellas	13.4	W
	Kildrummy	29.3	SSE
	Meikle Hill	15.5	W
	Myreton Crossroads	20.9	NE
	Pauls Hill	19.4	WSW
	Roths	12.2	W
Roths Extension	12.7	W	
Proposed	Clash Gour	18.1	WSW
	Meikleton of Ardonald	15.5	ESE
	Pauls Hill II	18.2	WSW
	Roths III	8.6	W

239. The wireline (Figure 7.36a) shows that the blades and hubs of two turbines, together with the blades of eight and the blade tips of three proposed turbines would be visible above the skyline. They would lie between the Hill of Towie II Wind Farm and the Clashindarroch Wind Farm, albeit the Hill of Towie Wind Farm is much closer to the viewpoint.
240. The wireline location at viewpoint 15 differs slightly from the location of the baseline photograph. The wireline has been positioned at the trig point at the summit of the hill in order to show full context of the viewpoint in relation to operational/consented and proposed cumulative wind farms.

16.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

241. The proposed development would be largely obscured by the ridgeline directly to the west of the Site so that two hubs, and the blades and blade tips of the remaining 12 turbines would be visible as illustrated by the wireline in Figure 7.36a. The top of the blades would appear a similar height to the turbines of the adjacent Clashindarroch Wind Farm which are more fully visible. The proposed development would fill a gap between the Hill of Towie II Wind Farm and Clashindarroch Wind Farm but at almost 20km from the viewpoint and given the limited extent of turbines that would be seen, the prominence of the proposed development would be limited, particularly in contrast to the much closer Hill of Towie II turbines. As such, it is considered that the proposed development would be a minor addition to the baseline view and the magnitude of change would be **Slight**.

16.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

242. As the Upland Farmland LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

243. A Slight magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a high sensitivity to wind farm development.

16.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farms

244. Rothes III, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour wind farms would be located to the west or west south west of this viewpoint, with the closest of these being Rothes III at over 8km. The photography of the existing view is taken slightly to the south west of the trigonometry point on the summit and the foreground of the summit obscures views to the north west. However, the wind farms that would be clearly visible in this direction from the summit are shown on the wireline on Figure 7.36c. Together these developments would effectively comprise one combined large group of wind turbines, with Rothes III prominent in the nearby view. They would be in a different direction to Clashindarroch II, which would provide distinct separation. The proposed Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 15km, seen in combination with Cairnborrow Wind Farm behind Hill of Towie I Wind Farm, and therefore result in limited change to the cumulative context. The relative positions and distance of these proposed developments means the primary cumulative effects relevant to Clashindarroch II would be associated with the larger, existing developments closer to the Site including Clashindarroch and Dorenell. Therefore, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed

development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Slight** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 16.7 above.

17.0 VIEWPOINT 16: A96 Leys of Dummuie

FIGURE 7.37 -7.37d

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 355731, 837816

17.1 Location

245. This viewpoint is located 11.8km east north east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 175m AOD on the A96, approximately 3km south of Huntly near a junction with roads to Gartly in the south and Drumblade in the north. It is representative of views that would be obtained by road users on one of the limited sections of the A96 which is shown by the ZTVs to have potential visibility of the proposed development. It is also representative of views from the Northern Rolling Lowland LCA within the Agricultural Heartlands LCT.

17.2 Existing View

246. The view from this part of the A96 is relatively open. Pasture and arable fields lie either side of the road with post and wire fencing and interspersed with occasional trees and shelterbelt planting. Telegraph poles and overhead lines cross the road and run along field boundaries. To the north west in the direction of the road towards Huntly, the top of Clashmach Hill and also The Bin are visible beyond the foreground fields. To the west, south west and south, the rise of the foreground land as well as tree cover prevents any distant views. To the north, the view is across gently rolling farmland with areas of forestry, with Boghead Hill, Hill of Greenfold and Hill of Mungo notable undulations.

17.3 Existing Cumulative View

247. Dummuie Wind Farm is the closest wind farm to the viewpoint but it is largely or completely obscured by the foreground landform and vegetation, as illustrated in the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.37a-d. Glens of Foudland Wind Farm is more apparent on the skyline towards the south east, but again the baseline photography demonstrates that foreground vegetation would restrict visibility from this exact location. To the north, the consented Aultmore Wind Farm would be potentially visible on the distant skyline, approximately 22km from the viewpoint. To the north west, a few turbines of the Edintore, Cairnborrow, and Hill of Towie I Wind Farms are just visible beyond the foreground rising land.

17.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA

248. This viewpoint lies within a landscape fairly typical of the Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA, with its simple rolling landform, large fields with woodlands and shelterbelts and wind turbines. The A96 is a key feature of this part of the LCA. With the generally large scale landscape and simple view but also taking into account the scale indicators such as the shelterbelts and woodland, it is considered that the susceptibility of this landscape to wind farm development is Medium.

249. The area does not lie within any landscape designation. The landscape within the view is a working farmland and transport corridor and it is therefore considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.
250. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Road Users

251. The susceptibility of the visual receptors of road users is considered to be Medium and the value Medium, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
252. Road users along the A96 are therefore considered to have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

17.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

253. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.37a-d and is summarised in Table 7.2-14.

Table 7.2-14
VP16 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	11.8	WSW
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	22.3	NW
	Cairnborrow	10.1	WNW
	Dummuie	1.6	SSE
	Edintore	15.60	WNW
	Glens of Foudland	4.7	E
Proposed	Meikleton of Ardonald	11.4	WNW

254. The wireline (Figure 7.37a) shows that blade tip of one proposed turbine would be visible above the skyline beyond the foreground landform. The limited visibility has been carefully checked and it is apparent that the proximity and low elevation of the ridge to the west of the A96 provides relatively marginal screening of the proposed turbines. The wireline presented in Figures 7.37a-d reflect an observer height of 1.5m above ground level. However, limited adjustments to the observer height above the terrain data alters the number and proportion of the turbines predicted to be visible. This could slightly alter the predicted magnitude of change and effect. As the receptor at this location comprises road users travelling along the A96, considered to have medium sensitivity, the transient and oblique nature of the view means the level effect is unlikely to become significant.

17.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

255. The blade tip would be seen at right angles to the direction of travel on the road. At almost 12km from the proposed development, the blade movement would be discernible but the distraction of other elements within the view, including other closer and more visible wind farms within the direction of travel, would limit the extent to which it would add a noticeable element in the view. It is considered that the proposed development would be a minor addition that would be barely distinguishable from the existing baseline situation. As such, the magnitude of change is considered **Negligible**.

17.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

256. As the Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Negligible** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

257. A **Negligible** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Minor** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of road users who have a Medium sensitivity to wind farm development.

17.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

258. The proposed Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 11km, seen in combination with Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Accordingly, due to the barely discernible change to the cumulative context, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Negligible**. Therefore, the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 17.7 above.

18.0 VIEWPOINT 17: OXEN CRAIG

FIGURE 7.38 -7.38b

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 366285, 822595

18.1 Location

259. This viewpoint is located 23.8km east south east of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 522m AOD at the summit of Oxen Craig within the Bennachie range. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers. It is also representative of views from the Bennachie unit of the Grampian Outliers LCA within the Moorland Plateaux LCT, and the Bennachie SLA.

18.2 Existing View

260. There are 360 degree views available from Oxen Craig although the more expansive views are towards the north west and south west. The adjacent summit of Mither Tap interrupts distant views to the east and the extensive upland moorland extending from Oxen Craig to the west breaks up the view in this direction. To the north west, Tap O' Noth and Hill O' Noth are discernible in the skyline across the agricultural lowlands, with Ben Rinnes distinguishable beyond. To the south west, the upland moorland with forestry continues across a series of rolling hills towards the Cairngorms massif beyond. To the north east and south east the patchwork of lowland farmland is visible to the east coast.

18.3 Existing Cumulative View

261. There are numerous wind farms visible within the expansive views available from this viewpoint as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.38a-d. It is noted that many are not included on the wirelines as they lie outside the cumulative study area, but the photo-panorama illustrates the number of single and small wind farms to the north and north east. The Hill of Tillymorgan turbines are notable against the hillside to the north at just under 12km, and the Glens of Foudland Wind Farm is seen below the horizon in front of the landform of Knock Hill in the distance. Hill of Towie I and II, Cairnborrow and Edintore Wind Farms lie to the north west, over approximately 27km from the viewpoint. To the west north west Clashindarroch Wind Farm is seen in front of the distant Ben Rinnes, slightly overlapping with Dorenell Wind Farm which covers a notable horizontal extent to the west, approximately 33km from the viewpoint.

18.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Grampian Outliers LCA

262. The viewpoint is located within the eastern extent of the Grampian Outliers LCA where views across the surrounding landscape are available. The views therefore contain a variety of features including wind farms. As the proposed development would not lie on Bennachie, and taking into account the general large scale landscape and openness of the views which include wind farms, the susceptibility to wind farm development is considered Medium.

263. Oxen Craig lies within the Bennachie SLA and the views of the surrounding foreground are within the SLA but the more distant views towards the portion of the view where the proposed development

would lie are outside the SLA but include a scenic quality relating to the distinctive outliers within the lower lying farmland. The value of the landscape is considered to be High-Medium.

264. The landscape receptor is considered as having an overall High-Medium sensitivity to wind farm development on the basis of the varied landscape with diverse elements and smaller scale field pattern and woodlands which combine with a distinct skyline in the direction of the proposed development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

265. The susceptibility is considered to be High and the value High for walkers as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
266. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

18.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

267. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.38a-d and is summarised in Table 7.2-15.

Table 7.2-15
VP17 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	23.8	WNW
Operational /Consented	Cairnborrow	27.7	NW
	Cairnmore	16.0	W
	Clashindarroch	24.5	W
	Dorenell	33.3	W
	Dummuie	16.2	NW
	Edintore	33.5	NW
	Glens of Foudland	13.8	NNW
	Hill of Tillymorgan	11.7	NNW
	Hill of Towie I	37.3	WNW
	Hill of Towie II	37.6	WNW
	Kildrummy	23.8	WSW
Proposed	Upper Wheedlemont Farm	19.2	W
	Meikleton of Ardonald	29.1	NW

268. The wireline (Figure 7.38a) illustrates that the hubs and blades of eight proposed turbines, the blades of five, and the blade tips of one of the proposed turbines would be visible behind the long back of the Hill O' Noth, partly above the skyline. The position of the viewpoint relative to the layout means the turbines would appear clustered in four groups, particularly T1, T6 and T9 on the right hand side and slightly separated from the main array.

18.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

269. The proposed development would continue the presence of turbines across the view to the north east from the Clashindarroch Wind Farm and Dorenell Wind Farm and reduce the gap between the extent of Hill of Towie I and II turbines towards the north west. The proposed development would lie behind the Hill O' Noth with blade tips at a similar height to the summit of Tap O' Noth which lies to the south (to the left of the turbines in the view). The Clashindarroch Wind Farm also has turbines either side of

Tap O' Noth but they sit slightly lower than the summit. The position of the proposed development could be perceived to compete with the scale and prominence of Tap O' Noth and Hill O' Noth but there is a degree of separation due to the perspective of the view, so that the proposed turbines appear behind rather than on these hills.

270. Although the proposed development would extend the presence of wind turbines it would be within a portion of the view already characterised by wind farms and would consist of a small extent of the overall 360 degree views. Taking this into account, and also that the proposed development is over 24km from the viewpoint, it is considered that it would be a minor addition to the baseline view and as such the magnitude of cumulative change would be **Slight**.

18.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

271. As the Grampian Outliers LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a High-Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate to Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

272. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

18.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

273. The only proposed wind farm development potentially visible from this location is the Meikleton of Ardonald turbine, noting that visibility of Rothes III is limited to blade tips at approximately 50km. The Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 29km and appear in combination with Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Accordingly, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Slight**. Therefore, the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 18.7 above.

19.0 VIEWPOINT 18: BURNSIDE, NORTH OF NEWMILL

FIGURE 7.39 -7.39b

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 343140, 853284

19.1 Location

274. This viewpoint is located 19.7km north of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 209m AOD on a track which extends from Newmill's Hill Street north towards the high point at Burnside. It is representative of views that would be obtained by local residents. It is also representative of views from the Uplands Farmland LCA within the Uplands LCT.

19.2 Existing View

275. The viewpoint lies on the south side of a local area of high ground which overlooks Newmill and Keith. The foreground surroundings are farmland with post and wire fencing and intermittent gorse. The settlement pattern near the viewpoint lies largely within the Strath Isla valley and the land gently rises around it preventing long distance views, although Knock Hill can be seen to the north east and Ben Rinnes to the south. Forestry and wind turbines are a feature on the skyline.

19.3 Existing Cumulative View

276. There are numerous wind farms visible that can be seen to the south and south west of this viewpoint as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 3.39a-b. Edintore Wind Farm is the closest wind farm and most visible on the skyline approximately 6km to the south. Hill of Towie I and II Wind Farms can be seen at between approximately 8 and 10km to the south south west, lying in front of Ben Rinnes. Between Hill of Towie I and Edintore, Dorenell Wind Farm is seen in the distance above the skyline within a narrow horizontal extent, over 20km from the viewpoint. The blade tips of Clashindarroch Wind Farm are barely noticeable to the left of the Edintore turbines, at distance of over 21km from the viewpoint. Cairnborrow Wind Farm is seen to the south south east, approximately 11km from the viewpoint. To the west, the Rothes, Rothes Extension, Kellas, and Meikle Hill Wind Farms would be seen on the distant horizon, over 20km from the viewpoint. There are also several single turbines in close proximity to the viewpoint, such as Followsters.

19.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Upland Farmland LCA

277. The viewpoint lies in an area fairly typical of the Upland Farmland LCA although is perhaps a more enclosed view than from some other parts due to the Strath Isla Valley. It still features a generally large scale landscape with simple components including wind farms. The susceptibility to wind farm development is therefore considered Medium.

278. The area does not lie within any landscape designation and is considered a working farming landscape. As such it is considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.

279. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Local Residents

280. The susceptibility of the visual receptors is considered to be High for residents, as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
281. The value attached to the view for residents is considered to be High as views from residential properties are considered to be highly valued.
282. Residents are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

19.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

283. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.39a-b and is summarised in Table 7.2-16.

Table 7.2-16
VP18 Key Existing Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	19.7	S
Operational /Consented	Cairnborrow	11.1	SSE
	Clashindarroch	21.6	S
	Dorenell	23.7	SSW
	Edintore	6.3	S
	Followsters	2.2	NW
	Hill of Towie I	8	SW
	Hill of Towie II	10.3	SSW
	Kellas	25.1	WSW
	Meikle Hill	27.7	WSW
	Roths	24.5	WSW
	Roths Extension	25.1	WSW
Proposed	Clash Gour	31	WSW
	Meikleton of Ardonald	10.5	SSE
	Roths III	21.6	WSW

284. The wireline (Figure 7.39a) illustrates that five blade tips and six blades of the proposed turbines would be visible above the skyline from this viewpoint. One of the blades would overlap with two blades that form part of Clashindarroch Wind Farm.

19.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

285. The proposed development would be largely obscured by the intervening landform. The photo-panorama illustrates that the forestry on the hillsides near Edintore Wind Farm would further obscure some of the blades seen in the wireline. At almost 20km from the viewpoint, it is considered that the proposed turbines would be a minor addition to the view and the magnitude of change would be **Negligible**.

19.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

286. As the Upland Farmland LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Negligible** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

287. A **Negligible** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of residents who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

19.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

288. Rothes III and Clash Gour wind farms would be located to the west south west of this viewpoint, with the closest of these proposed turbines at Rothes III located at a distance of over 21km. Together, these would effectively comprise one combined group of wind turbines with the smaller and slightly more distant turbines at Rothes, Rothes Extension, Meikle Hill and Kellas wind farms. They would be positioned in a different direction to Clashindarroch II, which would provide distinct separation. The proposed single turbine at Meikleton of Ardonald would be located at approximately 10km, seen in combination with Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Given the limited predicted visibility of the proposed development, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Negligible** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 19.7 above.

20.0 VIEWPOINT 19: LADDER HILLS, LITTLE GEAL CHARN

FIGURE 7.40 -7.40c

Representative Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 329854, 819696

20.1 Location

289. This viewpoint is located 18.1km south west of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 742m AOD at the summit of Little Geal Charn in the Ladder Hills. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers. It is also representative of views from the summits within North Eastern Hills LCA within the Uplands and Glens LCT. It also lies within the Cairngorms National Park.

20.2 Existing View

290. The view from the open moorland summit of Little Geal Charn is expansive and consists of series of rolling upland hills and mountains. To the south clockwise to the north west, the landscape becomes higher towards the Cairngorms Massif and generally is a consistent view of moorland covered rounded summits. The views towards the east and north east have more variety and the promontories of The Buck and Tap O' Noth can be made out in the skyline.

20.3 Existing Cumulative View

291. Views of wind farms from this viewpoint are contained to the north, clockwise to the east, as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.40a-c. Dorenell Wind Farm is the closest large wind farm to the viewpoint at approximately 6km and is seen across the upland landscape to the north. The consented Aultmore Wind Farm and several other wind farms and single turbines would be seen beyond Dorenell, over 25km from the viewpoint. Clashindarroch Wind Farm is seen approximately 15km to the north east of the viewpoint with some blade tips above the horizon. Towards the east, there is potential to see the distant Dummuie and Glens of Foudland Wind Farms and the other single turbines in their vicinity. Kildrummy Wind Farm lies directly to the east, approximately 12km from the viewpoint and is visible against a backdrop of the uplands beyond.

20.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: The North Eastern Hills LCA

292. The viewpoint is on part of the Ladder Hills at the north eastern edge of the CNP. Views to the Cairngorms Massif are highlighted in the character assessment (SNH, 1996; Ref 7.2.2) as a special feature of the area as well as remoteness, and the views of extensive horizons. However, wind farms are also part of the views outwith the CNP. As the proposed development would not lie within the CNP, and taking into account the expansive, open landscape in which the proposed development would lie within, the susceptibility to wind farm development is considered Medium.

293. The Ladder Hills lie within the CNP and it is therefore considered that the value of the landscape is High.

294. The landscape receptor is considered as having an overall High sensitivity to wind farm development, considering the national designation value and acknowledging the context of high scenic value and distinctive skylines.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

295. The susceptibility is considered to be High and the value High for walkers as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.
296. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

20.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

297. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.40a-b and photomontage in 7.40c and is summarised in Table 7.2-17.

Table 7.2-17
VP19 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	18.1	NE
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	42.2	NNE
	Cairnborrow	27.7	NNE
	Clashindarroch	15.4	NE
	Dorenell	6.2	N
	Dummuie	30.8	NE
	Edintore	29.5	NNE
	Glens of Foudland	34.9	NE
	Hill of Tillymorgan	38	NW
	Hill of Towie I	26.5	N
	Hill of Towie II	25	N
	Kildrummy	11.7	ENE
Proposed	Meikleton of Ardonald	928.2	N

298. The wireline (Figure 7.40b) illustrates that the upper towers, hubs and blades of all 14 turbines of the proposed development would be visible. They would lie behind the Clashindarroch Wind Farm and with taller turbines than the closer existing Clashindarroch Wind Farm, also with some blade tips above the skyline. Together the whole group of turbines would occupy a narrow portion of the available view.

20.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

299. As the proposed development would lie mostly behind Clashindarroch Wind Farm, it would increase the density of turbines within a narrow horizontal extent already characterised by wind turbines within the expansive views available from this viewpoint, as illustrated by the wirelines and photomontage. It would lie separately from other wind farms within the view, and would be recessive in comparison to the closer Dorenell Wind Farm which occupies a considerable horizontal extent to the north of the viewpoint. The proposed development would represent a minor change to the proportion of view affected by wind farms and the original baseline would remain fundamentally the same. As such, the magnitude of cumulative change is considered to be **Slight**.

20.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

300. As the North Eastern Hills LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a High sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

301. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

20.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farm

302. The only proposed wind farm development potentially visible from this location is the Meikleton of Ardonald turbine, noting that visibility of Rothes III is limited to blade tips at approximately 50km. The Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 28km, seen in combination with Cairnborrow Wind Farm. Given the imperceptible change to the cumulative baseline, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Slight**. Therefore, the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 20.7 above.

21.0 VIEWPOINT 20: MEIKLE BALLOCH

FIGURE 7.41 -7.41d

Specific Viewpoint

Grid Coordinates: 347159, 849554

21.1 Location

303. This viewpoint is located 16.2km north of the nearest turbine of the proposed development at an elevation of 365m AOD at the summit of Meikle Balloch. It is representative of views that would be obtained by walkers. It is also representative of views from the summits within the Uplands Farmland LCA within the Uplands LCT.

21.2 Existing View

304. There are 360 degree panoramic views available from the moorland summit of Meikle Hill. To the north west, north and north east, the view encompasses a patchwork of farmland and forestry up to the coastline. To the north east Knock Hill is in close proximity rising from the surrounding farmland. To the south, the Grampian Outliers, including Tap O' Noth and The Buck, are notable amongst the valley and lowland farmland and forestry. Ben Rinnes lies in the skyline to the south west with wind turbines in front and around it to the east.

21.3 Existing Cumulative View

305. There are views of wind farms in all directions from this viewpoint as illustrated by the wirelines and photo-panoramas in Figures 7.41a-d. Edintore Wind Farm is the closest, at approximately 5km to the south west from the viewpoint. Hill of Towie I and II Wind Farms continue the presence of turbines in this section of the view into the distance where Berry Burn, Rothes, Rothes Extension, Kellas and Meikle Hill are potentially visible over 25km from the viewpoint. To the south west, Dorenell Wind Farm is visible across the uplands, approximately 23km from the viewpoint. At approximately 18km, further towards the south, the blades and hubs of some of the turbines of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm are visible above the skyline. Cairnborrow Wind Farm is approximately 7km from the viewpoint and lies directly south, visible below the skyline. To the south east of the viewpoint, beyond 15km, the numerous wind farms around Dummuie and Glens of Foudland are visible. To the north at approximately 9km, the consented Aultmore Wind Farm would be seen above the skyline, and the single turbines and small wind farms in this area can also be seen.

21.4 Sensitivity

Landscape Receptor: Upland Farmland LCA

306. The viewpoint is a relatively prominent hill within the northern part of the Upland Farmland LCA. Views from it are expansive and include many existing wind farms. As the wind farm would not be located on the hill, the susceptibility to wind farm development is considered Medium.

307. Meikle Balloch does not lie within any landscape designation and is largely characterised by the commercial forestry that lies upon and around it. It is considered that the value of the landscape is Medium.

308. Therefore, the landscape receptor is considered as having a Medium overall sensitivity to wind farm development.

Visual Receptors: Walkers

309. The susceptibility is considered to be High and the value High for walkers as set out in the methodology section of Chapter 7.

310. Walkers are therefore considered to have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

21.5 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline Wind Farms

311. The predicted cumulative view is illustrated in the wirelines in Figures 7.41a-d and is summarised in Table 7.2-18. The photography of the existing view from this location was not updated to include Dorenell, largely due to the intervening distance. However, as noted below, and shown on the wireline on Figure 7.41a, Dorenell is clearly visible from this viewpoint.

Table 7.2-18
VP20 Key Existing and Proposed Wind Energy Developments Visible

Status	Wind Farm	Distance from VP (km)	Direction from VP
Application Site	Clashindarroch II	16.2	S
Operational /Consented	Aultmore	8.8	NNW
	Berry Burn	3937.4	WSW
	Cairnborrow	76.9	S
	Clashindarroch	18.4	S
	Dorenell	22.7	SSW
	Dummuie	16.1	SE
	Edintore	5.1	SW
	Glens of Foudland	18.3	ESE
	Hill of Tillymorgan	23.3	ESE
	Hill of Towie I	9.4	WSW
	Hill of Towie II	11.5	WSW
	Kellas	29.1	W
	Kildrummy	28.9	S
	Meikle Hill	31.5	W
	Myreton Crossroads	7.8	N
	Pauls Hill	35.3	WSW
	Roths	28.2	W
	Roths Extension	28.8	W
	Proposed	Clash Gour	34.3
Meikleton of Ardonald		6.7	S
Pauls Hill II		34.1	WSW
Roths III		24.9	W

312. The wireline (Figure 7.41a) illustrates that upper towers hubs and blades of two turbines, together with one hub and blades, five blades and six blade tips of the proposed development would be visible above the skyline behind the ridgeline that lies to the west of the Site. The southern turbines would lie to the left of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm, and the northern turbine blades would overlap with the blade tips of Kildrummy Wind Farm, which are barely discernible. The western turbines of the closer Cairnborrow Wind Farm would lie in front of the northern most proposed turbines.

21.6 Cumulative Magnitude of Change with Baseline Wind Farms

313. The proposed development would be largely obscured by the intervening landform as illustrated by Figure 7.41a. Although the proposed development lies adjacent to the Clashindarroch Wind Farm, it would be more visible with taller turbines seen above the skyline and could be perceived to fill the gap between the Clashindarroch and Cairnborrow developments. However, this would be within a relatively narrow extent of the wider views available. The proposed development would be within a separate portion of the view from Dorenell Wind Farm which is further from the viewpoint but much more visible across the uplands to the south west, as shown on the wireline on Figure 7.41a. It is considered that the proposed development would be a minor addition to the proportion of the view affected by wind farm development and the baseline conditions would remain fundamentally the same. As such, the magnitude of change is considered to be **Slight**.

21.7 Cumulative Effects with Baseline Wind Farms

Landscape Character

314. As the Upland Farmland LCA landscape receptor at this viewpoint has a Medium sensitivity to wind farms, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change, the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate-Minor** and **Not Significant** cumulative effect on landscape character when considered in relation to the baseline wind farms.

Visual Amenity

315. A **Slight** magnitude of change from the introduction of the proposed development would result in a **Moderate** and **Not Significant** effect on the visual amenity of walkers who have a High sensitivity to wind farm development.

21.8 Predicted Cumulative View with Baseline and Proposed Wind Farms

316. Rothes III, Pauls Hill II and Clash Gour wind farms would be located to the west south west of this viewpoint, the closest of these proposed turbines are located at a distance of over 24km. Together, these would effectively comprise one combined group of wind turbines with the slightly more distant and smaller Rothes, Rothes Extension, Meikle Hill and Kellas wind farms. They would be positioned in a different direction to Clashindarroch II, which would provide distinct separation. The proposed Meikleton of Ardonald turbine would be located at approximately 7km clearly apparent from this viewpoint as an individual turbine. Given the distance to the proposed wind farms to the west south west together with the relatively limited predicted visibility of the proposed development, the magnitude of cumulative change of the proposed development with baseline and proposed wind farms is considered to remain **Slight** and the cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be assessed as in section 21.7 above.

22.0 Summary Tables

317. Table 7.2-19 provides a summary of the viewpoint assessment on visual receptors. Significant effects are highlighted in bold text. Where there would be no application stage developments visible, the effect has been noted as not applicable: 'n/a'.

Table 7.2-19
Summary of Viewpoint Assessment on Visual Receptors

	Viewpoint	Visual Receptor	Distance to nearest Clash II turbine	Direction from nearest turbine	Elevation (m AOD)	Receptor Sensitivity	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/Consented + Clash II	Effect on Visual Receptor	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/Consented/ Prop + Clash II	Effect on Visual Receptor
1	Minor Road near Tillathrowie	Residents Road Users	3.7km	NE	267m	High Medium	Substantial	Major Major-Moderate	n/a	n/a
1	Minor Road near Tillathrowie (Night)	Residents Road Users	3.7km	NE	267m	High Medium	Substantial (night time magnitude of change)	Major Major-Moderate	n/a	n/a
2	Minor road near Backside	Residents	3.9km	NW	292m	High	No visibility	No effect	n/a	n/a
3	Haugh of Glass	Residents	6.2km	NNW	210m	High	No visibility	No effect	n/a	n/a
4	Tap O' Noth	Walkers	4.8km	SE	563m	High	Substantial	Major	Substantial	Major
5	The Buck	Walkers	8.7km	S	721m	High	Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Major-Moderate
6	Clashmach Hill	Walkers	7.2km	NE	375m	High	Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Major
7	A920 between Huntly and Dufftown	Road Users	7.6km	NNW	314m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	n/a	n/a

	Viewpoint	Visual Receptor	Distance to nearest Clash II turbine	Direction from nearest turbine	Elevation (m AOD)	Receptor Sensitivity	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/Consented +Clash II	Effect on Visual Receptor	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/Consented/Prop + Clash II	Effect on Visual Receptor
8	Minor Road, near Corse, south east of A97	Residents	17.2km	NE	183m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate
9	Minor Road off B9117 near Milltown of Rothiemay	Residents	19.7km	NE	140m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate
9	Minor Road off B9117 near Milltown of Rothiemay (Night)	Residents	19.7km	NE	140m	High	Moderate (night time magnitude of change)	Major-Moderate	n/a	n/a
10	A96 between Huntly and Keith	Road Users	12.5km	N	229m	Medium	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Minor
11	Battle Hill, Huntly	Walkers/ Visitors/ Residents	11.0km	NE	143m	High	Slight	Moderate	n/a	n/a
11	Battle Hill, Huntly (Night)	Residents	11.0km	NE	143m	High	Negligible (night time magnitude of change)	Moderate-Minor	n/a	n/a
12	Correen Hills, Old Military Road	Visitors Road Users	13.5km	SE	381m	High Medium	Substantial	Major Major-Moderate	n/a	n/a
12	Correen Hills, Old Military Road (Night)	Road Users	13.5km	SE	381m	Medium	Moderate (night time magnitude of change)	Moderate	n/a	n/a
13	Ben Rinnes	Walkers	17.8km	W	840m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate

	Viewpoint	Visual Receptor	Distance to nearest Clash II turbine	Direction from nearest turbine	Elevation (m AOD)	Receptor Sensitivity	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/Consented +Clash II	Effect on Visual Receptor	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/Consented/Prop + Clash II	Effect on Visual Receptor
14	Knock Hill	Walkers	23.6km	NNE	428m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate
15	Ben Aigan	Walkers	19.6km	NW	470m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate
16	A96, Leys of Dummuies	Road Users	11.8km	ENE	175m	Medium	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Minor
17	Oxen Craig	Walkers	23.8km	ESE	522m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate
18	Burnside, north of Newmill	Residents	19.7km	N	209m	High	Negligible	Moderate-Minor	Negligible	Moderate-Minor
19	Ladder Hills, Little Geal Charn	Walkers	18.1km	SW	742m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate
20	Meikle Balloch	Walkers	16.2km	N	365m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate

318. Table 7.2-20 provides a summary of the viewpoint assessment on landscape receptors. Significant effects are highlighted in bold text. Where there would be no application stage developments visible, the effect has been noted as not applicable: 'n/a'.

Table 7.2-20
Summary of Viewpoint Assessment on Landscape Receptors

	Viewpoint	Landscape Receptor	Distance to nearest Clash II turbine	Direction from nearest turbine	Elevation (m AOD)	Receptor Sensitivity	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/ Consented + Clash II	Effect on Landscape Receptor	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/ Consented/ Prop + Clash II	Effect on Landscape Receptor
1	Minor Road near Tillathrowie	Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA	3.7km	NE	267m	Medium	Substantial	Major-Moderate	n/a	n/a
1	Minor Road near Tillathrowie (Night)	Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA	3.7km	NE	267m	Medium (night time magnitude of change)	Substantial	Major-Moderate	n/a	n/a
2	Minor road near Backside	Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA/Deveron Valley SLA	3.9km	NW	292m	n/a	No visibility	No effect	n/a	n/a
3	Haugh of Glass	Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA/Deveron Valley SLA	6.2km	NNW	210m	n/a	No visibility	No effect	n/a	n/a
4	Tap O' Noth	Grampian Outliers LCA	4.8km	SE	563m	Medium	Substantial	Major-Moderate	Substantial	Major-Moderate
5	The Buck	Grampian Outliers LCA/ Open Uplands LCA / Moray AGLV	8.7km	S	721m	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

	Viewpoint	Landscape Receptor	Distance to nearest Clash II turbine	Direction from nearest turbine	Elevation (m AOD)	Receptor Sensitivity	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/ Consented + Clash II	Effect on Landscape Receptor	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/ Consented/ Prop + Clash II	Effect on Landscape Receptor
6	Clashmach Hill	Grampian Outliers LCA	7.2km	NE	375m	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
7	A920 between Huntly and Dufftown	Dough of Cairnborrow LCA	7.6km	NNW	314m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	n/a	n/a
8	Minor Road, near Corse, south east of A97	Northern Rolling Lowlands LCA	17.2km	NE	183m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	Slight	Moderate-Minor
9	Minor Road off B9117 near Milltown of Rothiemay	Upland Farmland LCA	19.7km	NE	140m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	Slight	Moderate-Minor
9	Minor Road off B9117 near Milltown of Rothiemay (Night)	Upland Farmland LCA	19.7km	NE	140m	Medium (night time magnitude of change)	Moderate	Moderate	n/a	n/a
10	A96 between Huntly and Keith	Upland Farmland LCA	12.5km	N	229m	Medium	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Minor
11	Battle Hill, Huntly	Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA	11.0km	NE	143m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	n/a	n/a
11	Battle Hill, Huntly (Night)	Deveron and Bogie Straths LCA	11.0km	NE	143m	Medium	Negligible	Minor	n/a	n/a
12	Correen Hills, Old Military Road	Grampian Outliers LCA	13.5km	SE	381m	Medium	Substantial	Major-Moderate	n/a	n/a

	Viewpoint	Landscape Receptor	Distance to nearest Clash II turbine	Direction from nearest turbine	Elevation (m AOD)	Receptor Sensitivity	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/ Consented + Clash II	Effect on Landscape Receptor	Cumulative magnitude of change: Op/ Consented/ Prop + Clash II	Effect on Landscape Receptor
12	Correen Hills, Old Military Road (Night)	Grampian Outliers LCA	13.5km	SE	381m	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	n/a	n/a
13	Ben Rinnes	North Eastern Hills LCA / Moray AGLV	17.8km	W	840m	High-Medium	Slight	Moderate to Minor	Slight	Moderate to Minor
14	Knock Hill	Upland Farmland LCA	23.6km	NNE	428m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	Slight	Moderate-Minor
15	Ben Aigan	Upland Farmland LCA / Moray AGLV	19.6km	NW	470m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	Slight	Moderate-Minor
16	A96, Leys of Dummuies	Northern Rolling Lowland LCA	11.8km	ENE	175m	Medium	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Minor
17	Oxen Craig	Grampian Outliers LCA / Bennachie SLA	23.8km	ESE	522m	High-Medium	Slight	Moderate to Minor	Slight	Moderate to Minor
18	Burnside, north of Newmill	Upland Farmland LCA	19.7km	N	209m	Medium	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Minor
19	Ladder Hills, Little Geal Charn	North Eastern Hills LCA/ CNP	18.1km	SW	742m	High	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Moderate
20	Meikle Balloch	Upland Farmland LCA	16.2km	N	365m	Medium	Slight	Moderate-Minor	Slight	Moderate-Minor

23.0 References

- Ref. 7.2.1: Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (December 2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA 3).
- Ref. 7.2.2: Civil Aviation Authority (01 June 2017) Policy Statement; Lighting of Onshore Wind Turbine Generators in the United Kingdom with a Maximum Blade Tip Height at or in Excess of 150m Above Ground Level.
- Ref. 7.2.3: Scottish Natural Heritage/Turnbull Jeffery Partnership (1996). No.75 Cairngorms Landscape Character Assessment.

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