



Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign

Technical Appendix 6.5: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment

Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd

Prepared by: Stephenson Halliday

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Appendix 6.5 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment

A.1 Introduction

This Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) has been prepared by Abseline in accordance with Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/19: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (15 March 2019). The Technical Guidance Note (TGN) identifies that:

"The purpose of carrying out a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) is to form a judgement, to assist decision makers, on whether a proposed development is likely to change the visual amenity of a residential property to such an extent that it becomes a matter of 'Residential Amenity'."

It further notes that:

"Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' ...

It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."

This assessment considers only what the resident may see from a property. Views or 'visual amenity' are just one component of residential amenity and the two should not be confused. The latter is a planning matter and may also include aspects such as noise, air quality, traffic, etc., in addition to residential visual amenity. This RVAA considers the visual amenity aspects of residential amenity. Where necessary, other aspects are considered in the relevant chapters of this EIA Report and it is for decision makers to weigh all these aspects, and documents/assessments relating to them, in determining the acceptability of a proposal.

Overall residential amenity is discussed within the planning statement accompanying the application for the proposed development.

This assessment, and the process of RVAA, seeks to identify where effects on residential visual amenity are of such a nature or magnitude that they may need to be considered in the overall balance of 'Residential Amenity' or 'Living Conditions'. The point at which this happens is referred to as the Residential Visual Amenity (RVA) Threshold.

A.2 Approach

Overview

TGN 2/19 advocates a four-step process to RVAA with the first three falling broadly within the scope of LVIA where the magnitude and significance of visual effects is assessed. The fourth step involves a further assessment of the change to visual amenity of individual properties identified as "having the greatest magnitude of change" (i.e. Substantial effects within this assessment) and identifying whether the RVA threshold is reached. Where effects of less than Substantial magnitude are identified, this final step is not required as the effects would not reach the RVA threshold.

Study Area and Initial Assessment

There are no standard criteria for defining the RVAA study area and this is determined on a case by case basis. The guidance note identifies that for large structures, such as wind turbines, a preliminary study area of 1.5-2km radius may be appropriate to begin identifying properties for inclusion within RVAA, but for other developments the study area would be much reduced in proportion to their size. In this case, a study area of 2km has been agreed with consultees.

Within the RVAA study area all residential properties are identified. An initial appraisal is undertaken to identify those properties likely to experience the greatest effects, therefore requiring further detailed assessment, and those where effects would be less and unlikely to approach the RVA threshold. This process may draw on the

findings of the LVIA as a starting point and is supplemented by other tools including ZTV maps, wireframes and field work.

Further Detailed Assessment

For those properties that have been identified at the initial stage as requiring further detailed assessment the process follows the following key stages:

- · Evaluation of baseline visual amenity;
- · Assessment of likely change to the visual amenity of properties; and
- Forming the RVAA judgement (if required as set out at above).

Properties are usually assessed individually but may be considered in groups where the outlook or views are essentially the same; for example a row of houses that all share an open outlook towards the Site. Where properties are grouped for assessment this will be clearly identified and reasons for grouping described.

Baseline Visual Amenity

The existing baseline visual amenity is described for each property and is informed by desk study and field work. In line with guidance, site visits are only undertaken where effects cannot be adequately assessed from nearby public locations and there is potential for the RVAA threshold to be exceeded. Visual amenity is described 'in the round' and considers both views from the dwelling itself, the domestic curtilage and views experienced when arriving or leaving the property. It has been noted where the owners of a dwelling have a financial involvement in the project.

Likely Change to Visual Amenity

The change to baseline views and visual amenity as a result of the proposed development is described for each property and a judgement on the magnitude of effects likely to be experienced is provided. This may involve consideration of the following factors:

- Distance between the property and proposed development and their relative locations (e.g. up/down hill);
- Nature of available views (e.g. panoramic, enclosed) and the effect of daily or seasonal variations;
- Direction of view or aspect of property affected;
- Extent to which the proposed development may be visible from various parts of the property (e.g. dwelling, rooms, access, garden);
- Scale of change to views, including the proportion of view occupied by the proposed development;
- Compositional changes (e.g. loss/addition of landscape features such as woodland);
- Contrast or integration of new features with the existing views;
- Duration and nature of changes (e.g. temporary/permanent, intermittent/continuous); and
- Visualisation and understanding localised mitigating factors.

This stage may be supported by a range of visual aids as required including maps, ZTV studies, photography and visualisations. The choice of visual aids is determined on a case by case basis and may be informed by consultation. In line with best practice guidance the type of visualisation should be proportionate to the nature of the proposed development and assessment stage.

RVAA Judgement

This final stage is concerned with identifying "whether the predicted effects on visual amenity and views at the property are such that it has reached the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold, therefore potentially becoming a matter of Residential Amenity". This is the key concern of RVAA and judgements on the RVA threshold are set out clearly and unambiguously.



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Cumulative

RVAA is undertaken against the baseline, as described in the accompanying LVIA. As stated in the TGN, future cumulative visual effects are not assessed within the RVAA, as the focus of the RVAA is on the existing visual amenity and, in this case, no developments are located sufficiently close that cumulative effects on residential amenity would be likely to arise.

Distances/Directions

Where distances and directions are given within the detailed assessment, these are distances between the nearest part of the property (including the domestic curtilage) and the nearest turbine, unless explicitly stated otherwise. Distances given are rounded to the nearest 10m to account for the level of accuracy available in techniques used to measure (usually based on aerial photography within a GIS). In the Initial assessment, distances are approximate and to the nearest 100m. Proposed turbine micro-siting allowances are taken account of within this assessment.

A.3 Assessment

Introduction

RVAA Figure 1 below illustrates properties within the 2km RVAA study area. In total, over 60 potentially residential properties have been identified within the RVAA study area based on OS AddressBase data, review of planning consents and site surveys. As indicated by Figure 1, a number of properties are derelict or otherwise do not provide for residential use and are not considered further for the following reasons:

- Inkerman (P7), Marchbank (P12), Croft of Fernking (P32), Rowanbank (P35) and Blinkbonny (P52) are either derelict or do not appear to be in residential use. It is noted that Inkerman (P7) was the subject of a 2003 planning consent (02/02335/FUL) to renovate and extend although it remains a ruin and there does not appear to have been any attempt to implement this.
- Beechtree Farm caravan (P47) is the subject of a temporary consent (21/01935/APP) allowing its siting
 for a period of no more than 3 years or no more than 3 months following first occupation of the newly
 built dwellinghouse at Beechtree Farm (P46). In either scenario, consent for the caravan will expire prior
 to commencement of the proposed development.
- The caravan at Rowanbrae (P45) appears to no longer be present.
- Ryeriggs Plot 3 (P55) is the subject of an unimplemented planning consent (08/02760/FUL) for a single detached dwelling. Although a Notification of Initiation of Development was submitted to Moray Council in 2013 and offsite highways works (condition 9) appear to have been undertaken, no works on the site itself appear to have been initiated and it remains in agricultural use. It is owned by an involved landowner.
- Williamstown (P59) is not identified as being residential within OS AddressBase data and it is unclear if it
 is currently habitable or in residential use. An unimplemented planning consent (08/01951/FUL) for a
 new residential property on the plot identifies the property as "old farmhouse now derelict, subject of
 future application to renovate & extend" although no such application has been submitted.

Initial Assessment

An initial assessment has been undertaken in order to identify those properties with the highest magnitude of change where there is potential for the RVA threshold to be reached. The assessment is informed by the ZTV in Figure 1; wireline visualisations and inset plans located within this document, and site visits undertaken to assess views from individual properties. Where it is identified that effects at properties have the potential to reach the RVA threshold this is identified and further detailed assessment is provided on individual property assessment sheets in the following section. The initial assessment is provided below.

Table 1 Initial Assessment

Ref	Property	Comments	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
P1 P2 P3 P4 P5 P6	Hillfolds Stoneybank Redburn Farm Quarryhill Cottage Greenwells Croft Hillhead of Letterfourie	This group of homes are all located between 1.2-2km north-west of the eastern group of turbines and more than 3km from the western group. As illustrated by Figure 1 below, visibility of the proposed development from this area is partly restricted by terrain and forestry. Based on the ZTV study Redburn Farm and Hillhead of Letterfourrie will have the most visibility. Visibility from Quarryhill Cottage and Greenwells Croft will be very limited due to screening by forestry and/or garden vegetation. Visibility from Stoneybank towards the closer eastern group of turbines will be restricted by woodland and the western group will be more than 2km from this home. Hillfolds will be screened by nearer higher ground and will have visibility of the blade tips of one turbine as illustrated by the wireline included in Annex A. There is a consent for a new dwelling (09/02250/APP) to the north-east of the existing house although it is relatively old and unclear if it remains extant. If it were to be built rising ground and adjacent woodland are likely to entirely screen the proposed development. Views from Redburn Farm are mostly enclosed by conifers around the garden boundary although there may be visibility from parts of the garden through a gap in the trees. Given the angle of this gap compared to the gable end of the property it is considered that views from any windows in the gable end will be aligned on the gap between the two groups of turbines. Changes to views will be Large scale for a Limited extent of the property. Hillhead of Letterfourie has open views towards the Site and will be most affected within this group and is considered further in the detailed	Moderate (Redburn Farm) or lower except for Hillhead of Letterfourie Potentially Substantial at Hillhead of	Major/ moderate (Redburn Farm) or lower except for Hillhead of Letterfourie Potentially Major at Hillhead of Letterfourie.
P8	Muirton	This property is located approximately 1.6km to the north of the eastern group of turbines and more than 5km from the western group. As indicated by the wireline in Annex A, and Figure 1, the blades of up to 8 turbines in the nearer eastern group will be visible with the remainder screened by forestry. The main facades of this house face south-west and north-east and views of the turbines will primarily arise from the gable end, gardens and access track, giving rise to a medium magnitude of change for an Intermediate extent of the property.	Letterfourie Moderate	Major/ moderate



Ref	Property	Comments	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
P9 P10 P11	Aultmore Lodge Langlandburn Clochmacreich	This group of properties are located between 1.5 and 1.8km to the east of the eastern group of turbines and will only have visibility of this group as illustrated by Figure 1 and the wireline from Aultmore Lodge provided in Annex A.	Substantial/ moderate at Aultmore Lodge and Clochmachreich	Major/ moderate at Aultmore Lodge and Clochmachreich
		Aultmore Lodge has outbuildings between the 1.5 storey house and the Site which will screen views from ground floor west facing windows and from areas of the garden to the rear of the house and north of the outbuildings. Some other areas within the curtilage and any south-facing windows will have visibility of the turbines seen above the hedge and/or filtered through trees around the garden boundary.		
		Clochmacreich is the most distant of this group and has a group of small outbuildings and agricultural sheds to the south and mature deciduous trees around the garden to the west that screen views in the direction of the Site. There will potentially be views of the turbines through trees in winter from west-facing windows and the garden, and the turbines will also be seen on leaving the property via the access track.		
		Both Aultmore Lodge and Clochmacriech will experience Large scale changes to views for a Localised extent of each property.		
		Langlandburn has large barns to the west and a tree-belt to the southwest which will mostly or entirely screen views of the proposed development.		
P13 P14 P15 P16	Myreside Wester Windyhills Bossy Hillocks Netherton of Windyhills	This group of properties is located between 0.9 and 2km to the southeast of the eastern group of turbines and will only have visibility of this group apart from P16 where distant blade tips of the western group may also be visible as indicated by Figure 1. Myreside is a former steading most of which is used for outbuildings with the dwelling situated in the south-west and accessed on the east side of the building. There are open views all around with the main outlook to the east. There are two small windows on the west side of the dwelling which look out onto rising ground and beyond to the immediate horizon of forestry, where the eastern group of turbines will be seen above the trees. Wester Windyhills has outbuildings to the north and west of the house and a substantial hedge to the south. Visibility of the turbines is unlikely from windows but the turbines will be visible looking over the hedge from parts of the garden which lies to the south of the house and hedge. Effects will be Large/medium scale for a Localised extent of the property.	Potentially Substantial at Myreside	Potentially Major at Myreside
		Bossy Hillocks has no windows facing towards the Site, but there will be views of the turbines from the front yard parking area and through trees and shrubs from the garden to the south of the house.		

Ref	Property	Comments	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
		Netherton of Windyhills is situated in an elevated location on the valley side immediately to the south of a large barn which truncates views to the north. The main outlook is to the south and there are no west-facing windows. The proposed development will be visible from the open garden. Wester Windyhills, Bossy Hillocks and Netherton of Windyhills will experience Large scale changes to views (as illustrated by the wireline from Bossy Hillocks in Annex A) for a Localised extent of each property.	Substantial/ moderate except at Myreside	Major/ moderate except at Myreside
P17 P18 P19 P20 P21 P22	Balnamoon Hill Cottage Goukstone Croft Balnamoon Hill Redroofs Croft West Balnamoon East Balnamoon	This group of properties is located 1.1-1.9km from the eastern group of turbines and more than 5km from the western group. The wireline from Redroofs Croft in Annex A illustrates typical views of the eastern group of turbines from this group. Goukstone Croft is an L-shaped house surrounded by a line of trees such that its main outlook from windows is to the south away from the Site. Young forestry surrounding the house is likely to screen views of the proposed development as it grows, but until the forestry is sufficiently mature there is likely to be visibility of the turbines through the trees from the garden (and any northwest facing windows), giving rise to Large scale changes to views for an Intermediate extent of the property over a Medium-term duration. There is a consent for a new dwelling (08/00741/FUL) adjacent to the existing house although it is relatively old and unclear if it remains extant. If it were to be built effects would be very similar as for Goukstone Croft. Balnamoon Hill Cottage is a small single storey building. It is identified as a residential property in OS AddressBase data but it is unclear if it is in residential use or just used for agricultural storage. Mature trees along the northern edge of the property will provide some screening of views towards the turbines from the house, garden and access track and young forestry immediately north-west is likely to entirely screen views in the direction of the Site as it matures. Effects would be Large to Large/medium scale over an Intermediate extent of the property for a Medium-term duration. Balnamoon Hill has mature trees to the northeast and outbuildings to the west which limit the outlook towards the Site and young forestry nearby is likely to screen views from the driveway once it begins to mature. Over a Medium-term duration, turbines may be visible from the driveway and parking area giving rise to a Large scale change to views over a very Limited extent of the property. Redroofs Croft, East Balnamoon and West Balnamoon are lik	Substantial/ moderate at Goukstone Croft, Balnamoon Hill Cottage and Balnamoon Hill	Major/ moderate at Goukstone Croft, Balnamoon Hill Cottage and Balnamoon Hill



Ref	Property	Comments	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
		potential for large scale changes to views from windows and parts of their gardens and are considered in the detailed assessment.	Potentially substantial at Redroofs Croft, East and West Balnamoon	Potentially Major at Redroofs Croft, East and West Balnamoon
P23 P24 P25 P26 P27 P28	2 Burn of Aultmore Croft 3 Burn of Aultmore Croft Deerhill Croft Deerhill Farm Near Hame Hillhead of Starhill	Deerhill Croft is situated amongst woodland with no view in the direction of the Site due to screening by vegetation. The remaining properties in this group are 1.9-2km to the south of the eastern group of turbines and more than 3km from the western group. As illustrated by the wireline from 3 Burn of Aultmore Croft in Annex A the turbines will be partly screened by terrain and will be further partly screened by forestry. Only T16 will be within 2km of these properties, with the remaining turbines at distances of 2.3km or more. Changes to views will be Large/medium scale where the turbines are visible.	Substantial/ moderate or lower	Major/ moderate or lower
P29 P30	Drodland Hayfield	These houses are located 1.2 and 1.5km from the eastern group of turbines and approximately 3km from the western group. Both will have close views of the turbines from parts of the properties and are considered in the detailed assessment provided below.	Potentially Substantial	Potentially Major
P31	Fernking Croft	This home is located within 1.9km of the western group of turbines and 2.1km from the eastern group. The main facades of the house face east and west and the main outlook is to the west given nearby forestry which wraps around other sides of the property. The eastern group is not likely to be visible due to the nearby forestry. The smaller western group will be seen, partly screened by forestry to the northwest, in the main outlook from the house and garden. The scale of change will be Large/medium for a Wide extent of the property.	Substantial/ moderate	Major/ moderate
P33 P34 P36 P37 P38	Newtonbrae Sunnybrae Croft Glen of Newmill Coralside Croft Woodside Cottage	This group of properties are located 1-2km to the south-east of the western group of turbines and approximately 3.5km from the eastern group. Newtonbrae is closely surrounded by barns and outbuildings to the north and the main outlooks to the south and west are from the house and garden are partly screened by garden trees and shrubs. The turbines would be visible from the access track and there may be views of T5 from parts of the garden, but otherwise the turbines would mostly be screened by vegetation. Large scale effects would arise for a Limited extent of this property. Sunnybrae Croft will have close views of the western group of turbines and is considered within the detailed assessment.	Potentially Substantial at Sunnybrae Croft	Potentially Major at Sunnybrae Croft

Ref	Property	Comments	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
		Glen of Newmill is a caravan sited within woodland and will have no visibility of the proposed development. Coralside Croft has a line of trees along the garden boundary and views of the turbines from the north facing windows will be oblique and relatively distant. The turbines will be visible from parts of the garden at distances of 1.9km – through gaps in the trees year round and through branches in winter. Large/medium scale changes to view will arise for an Intermediate extent of the property. Woodside Cottage is sited among open fields with outbuildings and trees in the garden screening views to the north and west from the house and most of the garden, although the turbines will be visible as illustrated by the wireline in Annex A from the access track and part of the garden between the outbuildings. Changes to views will be Large scale from a Limited extent of the property.	Substantial/ moderate at Newtonbrae, Coralside Croft and Woodside Cottage	Substantial/ moderate at Newtonbrae, Coralside Croft and Woodside Cottage
P39 P40 P41 P42	Auchinderran Cottage Nether Auchinderran Heads of Auchinderran Heads of Auchinderran Cottage	This group of properties are located 1.5 and 1.9km to the south-west of the western group of turbines and approximately 3.5km from the eastern group. All of the properties in this group have trees and/or outbuildings screening views towards the Site from the houses and gardens. There will be views of the western group of turbines from the access track to all of these homes, giving rise to Large/medium scale changes to views for a very Limited extent of these properties.	Slight	Moderate
P43	Rhunoch	Rhunoch is set within a garden with trees around the boundary and along the access track except for a more open garden boundary to the east. There may be oblique views of the western group of turbines from windows on the east façade and views from parts of the garden to the east of the house and parts of the driveway. The turbines would be around 1.9km distant and changes to views will be Large/medium scale for an Intermediate extent of the property as illustrated by the wireline in Annex A.	Substantial/ moderate	Major/ moderate
P44	Rowanbrae Farm	This T-shaped property has open views to the west, east and south, with views to the northwest and north screened by outbuildings and woodland. Turbine 5 is likely to be visible from east facing windows, with the other turbines likely to be screened by the woodland. The western group of turbines are also likely to be partially visible through and over nearby vegetation from the driveway entrance and above and/or around the house and woodland from parts of the garden. The scale of change to views will be Large/medium or Medium scale from an Intermediate extent of the property.	Moderate	Major/ moderate



Ref	Property	Comments	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
P46	Beechtree Farm	This newly built property has open views to the south and east with views to the north and west screened by woodland. The house is oriented with main views out of windows to the south-east and not in the direction of the Site. There are three small windows on the north-east gable end of the property facing the Site where the nearby group of five turbines will be visible over barns and outbuildings east of the house. Similar views will occur from driveway and garden areas to the south and east of the house while views from the garden area southwest and west of the house will be more restricted. There will be Large scale changes to views from an Intermediate extent of the property.	Substantial/ moderate	Major/ moderate
P48	Ryeriggs Croft	This property is located 1.2km to the west of the western group of turbines and will have open views from parts of the garden and the east façade. It is considered in the detailed assessment below.	Potentially Substantial	Potentially Major
P49	The Bungalow	The dwelling is set back from the B9016 on slightly elevated ground behind a narrow belt of evergreen and deciduous trees and a wooden plank fence. There is a single small window on the east elevation with restricted views in the direction of the Site. There is a large area of garden to the east and NE of the dwelling. The western group of turbines will be visible on leaving the property but will be mostly or partly screened by trees from the house and garden. Effects will be at most Medium scale for an Intermediate extent of the property.	Moderate	Major/ moderate
P50	Raefin	Raefin is surrounded by woodland and large barns that limit outward views. The turbines are unlikely to be visible from the dwelling or most of the access track.	Negligible	Minor
P51 P53	Tarrymount Blackhills	These two properties are location 1.4-1.9km to the northwest of the western group of turbines and may potentially have some visibility of blade tips as illustrated by the wirelines in Annex A. Any changes to views would be at most small scale.	Slight or lower	Moderate or lower
P54	Upper Allaloth	This newly built property has large picture windows taking up the north facing gable end where the main living areas are located. There are further windows along the east and west facades to the northern half of the building while the southern half of the building comprises a large garage with no windows.	Moderate/ slight	Moderate

Ref	Property	Comments	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
		There will be no views of the proposed development from within the house, the only potential views will be from the driveway and garden areas although the turbines will be largely screened by rising landform (including embankments), as illustrated by the wireline in Annex A, woodland and forestry to the south and east of the house and by the house itself. The scale of change would be Medium at most from a Limited extent of the property.		
P56 P57	Sites 1 and 2 adjacent to Redroofs Croft	Site 1 (23/00337/AMC & 19/01183/PPP) and Site 2 (23/00338/AMC & 19/00802/PPP) are located immediately south of Redroofs Croft (P20) and comprise consents for two detached, 1.5 storey houses oriented with the main façades facing north-east and south-west, not looking in the direction of the proposed turbines to the north-west. There is unlikely to be any notable visibility from within these consented houses while views from the surrounding gardens will be constrained by the woodland belt to the south of Redroofs Croft and, as it matures, young forestry to the northern side of the road passing the properties. The scale of change is unlikely to be greater than Large/medium over a Limited extent of the properties.	Moderate	Major/ moderate
P58	Site south of Deerhill Croft	This consented but as yet unbuilt house is located 1.4km south of the eastern group of turbines and will have open views of turbines from the rear of the house and some garden areas. It is considered in the detailed assessment below.	Potentially Substantial	Potentially Major

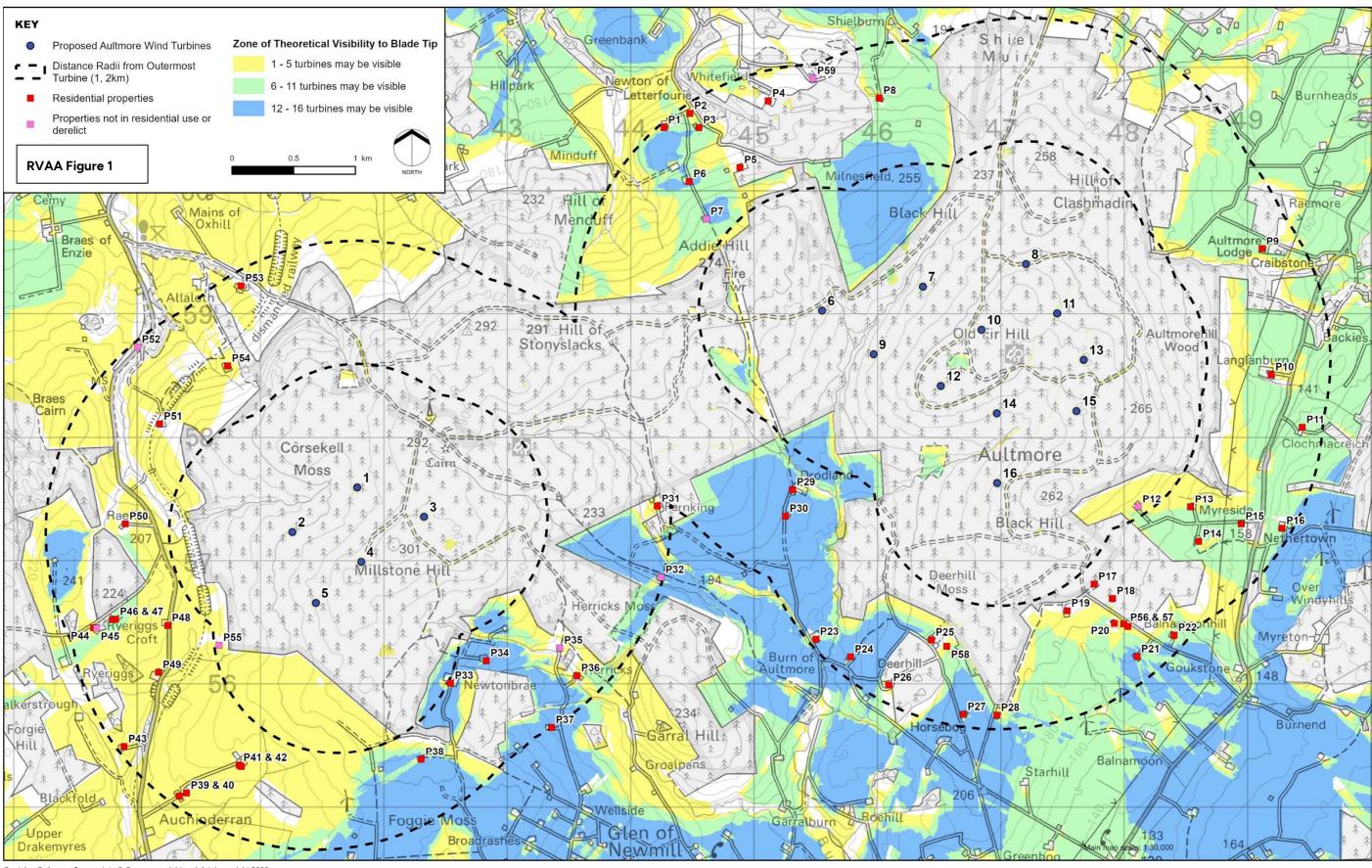
Summary

In summary, based on the approach outlined in Paragraph 7 of this Appendix, further detailed assessment is provided below for the following properties:

- Hillhead of Letterfourie (P6)
- Myreside (P13)
- Redroofs Croft (P20)
- West Balnamoon (P21)
- East Balnamoon (P22)
- Drodland (P29)
- Hayfield (P30)
- Sunnybrae Croft (P34)
- Ryeriggs Croft (P48)
- Site south of Deerhill Croft (P58)



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Property Name	Hillhead of Letterfourie
Property Reference:	P6
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.5km (T6)
Orientation Of Frontage	North-west
Direction To Turbines:	South-east and south-west
Resident Details:	Not financially involved
Survey Details:	Surveyed from nearby publicly accessible locations

The main outlook from this 1.5 storey house is to the north, taking advantage of open and elevated views towards the coast and across the Moray Firth. There are a number of outbuildings immediately to the northwest and west of the main house that interrupt views in these directions from the ground floor and external areas of the property. To the rear (south/southeast) of the house, views looking towards the Site are open across a low walled garden and yard area with open farmland seen rising up towards forestry topping nearby hills.

Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As illustrated by the wireline in Annex A, the rising landform south of the property will largely screen the closest turbines while the nearby forestry will further add to this. The upper parts of the blades on turbines 6 and 7 will be seen turning above the forestry in slightly oblique views from rear windows and the main garden area, introducing a new and slightly incongruous feature on the nearby skyline. Other turbines in the closer eastern group would be almost entirely screened from view by the intervening landform and vegetation although one or two further blade tips may be visible just above the treetops.

The western group of turbines will be visible from the rear garden/yard area, slightly more visible above the intervening forestry with one or two turbine hubs seen just above the trees, albeit at a distance of 3.5km or more. This group of turbines will be less notable from within the house given the very oblique angle of view from rear windows, with direct views out of the rear windows focussed more on the gap between the two turbine groups.

The proposed development will give rise to a Large/medium scale change to views from an intermediate extent of this property and the primary outlook to the north will not be affected.

The magnitude of change will be Substantial/moderate.

RVAA Judgement:



View of southern façade from Fishwives Trail



Property Name	Myreside
Property Reference:	P13
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.2km (T15)
Orientation Of Frontage	East
Direction To Turbines:	West to northwest
Resident Details:	Not financially involved
Survey Details:	External parts of dwelling and curtilage visited in agreement with resident in November 2022

The main outlook from the dwelling is to the east. The elevated position of the dwelling gives views of wind turbines south of Lurg Hill and longer distance views to the southeast partly interrupted by vegetation in the property garden. Views to the north-east from the dwelling are truncated by steading buildings that form a courtyard overlooked by east facing windows of the dwelling. Views west and northwest from the dwelling are restricted by the size of windows and by slightly rising ground immediately to the west of the dwelling that coincides with a narrow strip of garden. Views west and northwest towards the Site comprise of open, rising ground with landcover of rough pasture and forestry plantation on the horizon.

There are views all around from the dwelling curtilage with a mixture of open views and views truncated by buildings from the courtyard and east side of the steading buildings. The elevated position of the property allows longer distance views and varied, open views outwith the area enclosed by steading buildings.

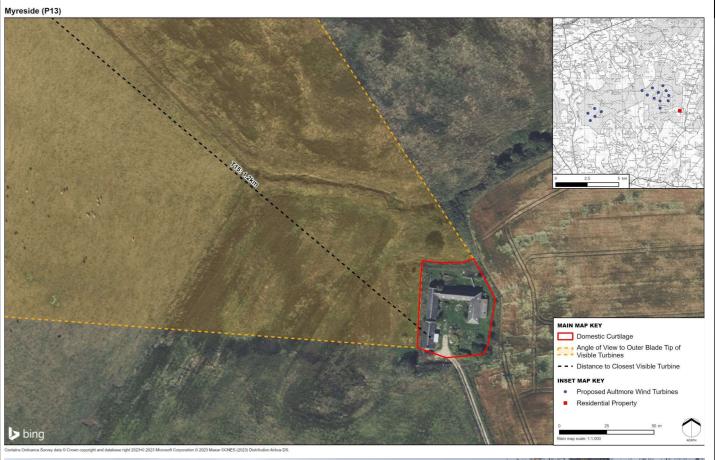
Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As illustrated by the photowire in Annex C, the main outlook east from the dwelling will not be affected by the proposed development. Eight turbines in the eastern cluster would potentially be visible from the west façade of the property although the turbine towers and most of the hubs would be screened by intervening landform, as illustrated by the wireline in Annex A, and forestry. The hub of turbine 15 would potentially be visible in angled views above intervening forestry. Views from inside the dwelling would be restricted due to the small size of windows and the reduced field of view that would be obtained from the interior living spaces.

There would be views of turbines from the garden on the east and north side of the dwelling. There would be no views of the proposed development from the enclosed courtyard area and from garden on the east side of the steading buildings. There would be views of turbines from the access track to the property. The scale of change would be Large across a Localised part of the property.

The magnitude of change will be Substantial/moderate.

RVAA Judgement:

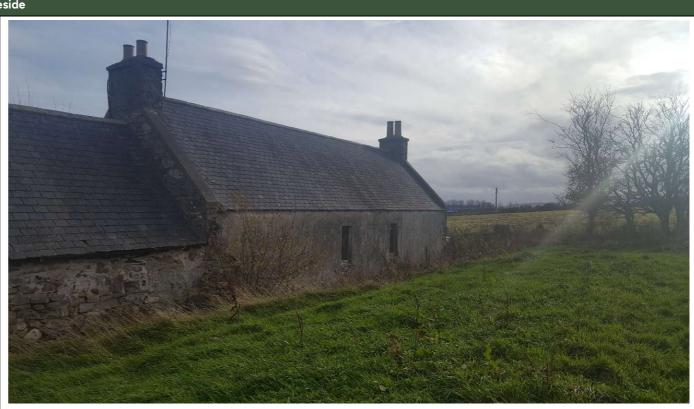




View of eastern façade







View of enclosed courtyard/garden

View of western façade

Property Name	Redroofs Croft
Property Reference:	P20
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.5km (T16)
Orientation Of Frontage	North-east
Direction To Turbines:	North to west
Resident Details:	Not financially involved
Survey Details:	Surveyed from nearby publicly accessible locations
Deceline Viewel Amerity	

This H-shaped house is set within a large wraparound garden, bordered to the south-eastern side by a dense tree belt and tall hedgerows that obscure views to the south and east. Boundary vegetation along the south-western side of the property is more intermittent and the primary views out from the property look out across a large patio and the main garden area, through the intermittent boundary vegetation and along the valley from a slightly elevated position where the Balnamoon farm wind turbine can be seen around 900m away from the house.

To the north of the house the ground slopes upwards and a series of hedgerows, outbuildings and equestrian facilities that abut the northern part of the garden constrain low level northward views with forestry extending across higher ground in the direction of the Site forming the skyline beyond.

Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As illustrated by the wireline in Annex A, in views from windows on the north-west facing façade, northern and western parts of the garden and possibly part of the parking area in front of the property, the eastern group of turbines will be visible over and between the outbuildings and equestrian facilities to the north of the property. These will be seen across the forested skyline above the buildings with most of the turbine towers screened by intervening landform (see wireline in Annex A) and buildings and forestry further screening some of the turbine hubs. Hubs of the nearer turbines (15, 16 and possibly 10 and 12-14) are likely to be visible over outbuildings and intervening trees although as young forestry immediately north of the road passing the property and around Goukstone Croft (P18) matures this will provide further screening such that only blade tips of some of the turbines are likely to be visible – it is unlikely this forestry will entirely screen the proposed development from the property.

There is unlikely to be any notable visibility from windows on other façades, the large patio area or garden immediately south of the house and the more open views along the valley to the south-west will be unaffected. The proposed development will give rise to Large scale changes to views from a Localised extent of the property, although this will reduce as nearby forestry to the north matures.

The magnitude of change will be Substantial/moderate.

RVAA Judgement:





West Balnamoon	
P21	
1.8km (T16)	
South-east	
North to west	
Not financially involved	
Surveyed from nearby publicly accessible locations	
	P21 1.8km (T16) South-east North to west Not financially involved

This 1.5 storey house is set within open fields with a large garden area to the south-east, also wrapping around to the north-east and south-west of the house. There is a single large tree to the south of the garden but otherwise boundaries are open and afford open views across the surrounding farmland. Outbuildings to the west and north-west of the house interrupt views in these directions from ground floor windows on the north-west façade, western part of the garden and yards and parking areas. The primary outlook from the house is to the south-east, looking across the valley, with few small windows on other elevations offering views in other directions.

The two, single turbines at Balnamoon can be seen to the south-west at distances of around 350m and 750m while the cluster of turbines to the south of Lurg Hill are visible around 1.6km to the north-east. Views of these existing turbines are largely confined to the garden and access track with only very oblique views possible from most windows.

To the north and north-west, rising ground, forestry and vegetation around nearby properties constrain views with the skyline formed by relatively nearby vegetation.

Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As illustrated by the wireline for nearby Redroofs Croft in Annex A, the eastern group of turbines will be visible on the skyline to the north and north-west, seen above forestry and the tree belt around Redroofs Croft (P20). Lower parts of the turbine towers will be screened by intervening landform and intervening vegetation would provide some further screening, up to hub height on some of the more distant turbines. The hubs of the closest turbines, turbine 16 (1.8km) and turbine 15 (2km), are likely to remain visible above the intervening vegetation and the rotors would be seen turning, along with the blades on some other turbines, above the treeline as a large and slightly incongruous new feature.

These views will largely be confined to the access track, parking areas, north-eastern strip of garden and the single, small upstairs dormer window on the north-west side of the house. Outbuildings will interrupt the views form the downstairs windows on the north-west façade and adjacent courtyard area while the main house and outbuildings will screen views from the main garden areas. The main outlook from windows on the south-east elevation would be unaffected by the proposed development which will give rise to Large scales changes to views from a Localised part of the property.

The magnitude of change will be Substantial/moderate.

RVAA Judgement:





Property Name	East Balnamoon	
Property Reference:	P22	
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.9km (T16)	
Orientation Of Frontage	South	
Direction To Turbines:	North to west	
Resident Details:	Not financially involved	
Survey Details:	Surveyed from nearby publicly accessible locations	

This single storey, L-shaped property is located on the eastern side of a yard defined by the house and a number of outbuildings to the north-west and south-west and a seating area with summer house to the west. Garden areas extend to the south and east of the house with a conservatory on the eastern side of the house facing onto the garden which is bounded by a mature hedgerow, constraining views in this direction. There are a number of mature trees amongst outbuildings to the southern side of the yard, adjacent to the access track and to the north and north-west of the house there is a small area of relatively young but dense woodland arrayed around a large pond forming part of the wider land ownership. Views to the south, from the house and garden area, are channelled along the access track by hedgerows. Views from west facing windows and the yard area are contained by the outbuildings although forestry on rising ground to the west and north-west can be seen above the buildings.

Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As illustrated by the wireline for nearby Redroofs Croft in Annex A, some of the eastern group of turbines will be visible to the north-west, obliquely from windows on the western side of the house and from the central yard area. They will be seen above the outbuildings and beyond the more distant forestry with hubs of the nearest turbines (16, 15, 13) potentially visible with only blades of more distant turbines seen. The turbines will be a prominent, but relative background feature given the visual containment by the outbuildings and the young woodland to the northwest may provide some additional screening as it further matures. Views from south and east facing windows and the conservatory will be unaffected by the proposed development and visibility of the turbines will be very limited from the garden areas on these sides of the house. The proposed development will give rise to Large scales changes to views from a Localised part of the property.

The magnitude of change will be Substantial/moderate.

RVAA Judgement:





Property Name	Drodland
Property Reference:	P29
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.3km (T9)
Orientation Of Frontage	South
Direction To Turbines:	North-east and west
Resident Details:	Not financially involved
Survey Details:	External parts of dwelling and curtilage visited in agreement with resident in November 2022

The dwelling is located to the south and west of a number of large farm buildings. Views to the north are restricted by farm buildings and there is a single small window on the flat roof extension to the east elevation. There are no windows on the west elevation. The main outlook is to the south.

The large farm buildings to the north and north-east of the dwelling occupy a large proportion of views and there is a gap between them through which forestry plantation is visible. The majority the horizon to the north and northeast is obstructed by buildings. The main outlook to the south is of slightly rising ground that truncates views of the lower lying middle ground with views of distant hills on the horizon. Views in the immediate locality are characterised by farm buildings, machinery and ancillary infrastructure associated with the working farm.

Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

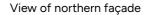
As illustrated by the wireline in Annex A, turbine 9 is the closest turbine at a distance of 1.3km with turbine 6 a similar distance at 1.5km to the north. These turbines will be the more noticeable and will be seen above intervening buildings and agricultural equipment. They will be noticeable when using the rear entrance to the dwelling and the flat roof extension. Other turbines in the eastern cluster will only be glimpsed when using the rear entrance to the dwelling or when using the access track approaching from the south. Similarly, the western group of turbines will be visible from these areas but at a notably increased distance beyond 3km. The scale of effect will be Large across a Localised part of the property.

The magnitude of change will be Substantial/moderate.

RVAA Judgement:









Drodland Typical view looking north-east from rear of house

Small window on eastern façade of extension









Property Name	Hayfield
Property Reference:	P30
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.5km (T9)
Orientation Of Frontage	South
Direction To Turbines:	North-east and west
Resident Details:	Not financially involved
Survey Details:	External parts of dwelling and curtilage visited in agreement with resident in November 2022

The dwelling is situated immediately to the south of large agricultural sheds that truncate views to the north. The main outlook from the property is to the south. There is a single small frosted window on the east elevation and a single window on the west elevation.

Views east from the curtilage are relatively open and comprise of views of forestry plantation that extends across the horizon and into the middle distance. The main outlook to the south from this elevated location provides views down a valley to lower lying farmland and valleys with distant hills forming the horizon. Views to the west are of slightly rising ground which truncates views with forestry plantation visible on the horizon. Large agricultural sheds restrict views to the north.

The area around the dwelling and the curtilage is used as storage for disused vehicles and quad bikes awaiting repair and maintenance.

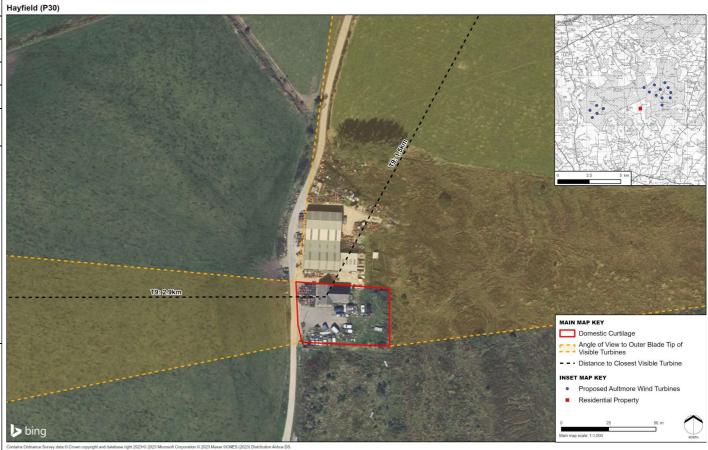
Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As illustrated by the photowire in Annex C, there will be views of the eastern array from the access and yard to the south of the dwelling. Turbines in the southern part of the array (13-16) will be the more noticeable with turbines 8, 10, 11 and 12 visible only from the eastern part of the garden. Turbines 6, 7 and 9 will be screened by sheds immediately to the north side of the dwelling. There may also be views of blade tips of turbines in the western cluster but at a distance of 2.9km or greater.

While eight turbines in the array will be visible from the yard and garden, it is unlikely that turbines will be visible from the dwelling given that views are restricted to the north with no views from the frosted window on the east facing façade. Views from the garden and yard are relatively expansive in scale and the turbines will be seen in the context of forestry plantation that extends across a large proportion of the view. The scale of effect will be Large across a Limited extent of the property.

The magnitude of change would be Substantial/moderate.

RVAA Judgement:





View of south facing façade and main outlook from the dwelling



Hayfield



View of the west facing façade showing a single window



View from the north facing façade and side entrance to the dwelling showing large sheds that interrupt views



View of the east facing façade showing a single small frosted window



Property Name	Sunnybrae Croft	
Property Reference:	P34	
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.3km (T4)	
Orientation Of Frontage	South	
Direction To Turbines:	North-west and north-east	
Resident Details:	Not financially involved	
Survey Details:	Surveyed from nearby publicly accessible locations	

This small, single storey property is set amongst open fields surrounded by forestry at varying distances to the north, west and east; there is also recently planted forestry at closer proximity (c. 100m) to the south which will screen views in this direction as it matures. There is a small garden to the southern side of the house bounded by small trees. To the north of the house, and wrapping around to the east and western sides, there is a large yard area bounded by outbuildings to the northeast and west of the house, a small tree and further low level vegetation. Rising farmland to the north, west and east contains views in these directions with forestry beyond forming the nearby skylines.

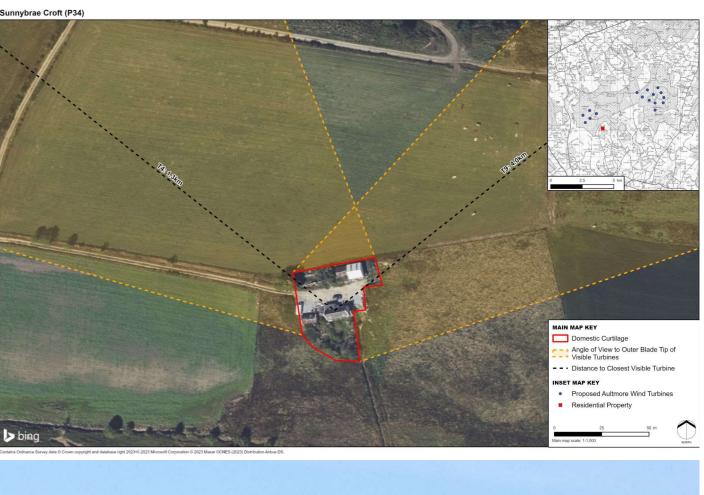
Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As illustrated by the wireline in Annex A, the western group of turbines will be quite openly visible from the access track, yard area and windows on the northern elevation of the house. Turbine bases would be screened by surrounding forestry but upper towers and the rotors of the three closest turbines (3, 4, 5) would stand clear above the trees with the more distant turbines 1 and 2 potentially having their hubs screened by trees. The turbines will also be visible from the small garden to the south although there will be some screening of views by the house and garden vegetation. The turbines will be a prominent new feature on higher ground to the north-west and west giving rise to Large scale changes to views over an Intermediate extent of the property.

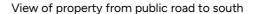
The magnitude of change will be Substantial.

RVAA Judgement:

The western group of turbines would be openly visible from the yard area with more restricted views from the garden south of the house. Although turbines would be visible from windows on the rear elevation, only turbine 3 would be particularly noticeable with the others at such an oblique angle that they are unlikely to be visible when back in the room away from the window. The southern outlook from the property would be unaffected by the proposed development and there would be substantive internal areas with no views of turbines and effects would not be sufficient to reach the RVA threshold.









Property Name	Ryeriggs Croft	
Property Reference:	P48	
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.2km	7
Orientation Of Frontage	South	7
Direction To Turbines:	East	
Resident Details:	Not financially involved	
Survey Details:	Surveyed from the public road	٦

This small 1.5 storey property is oriented with the main views out along the road and the valley, seen from the main south facing windows, and across the valley to low forestry topped hills to the east, seen primarily from the two garden areas. There is one small window on the eastern gable end of the house and a further east facing window on a small extension to the rear of the property.

The two garden areas are located to the south of the house and across the driveway to the north-east. The southern garden is bounded by a low hedgerow and picket fence with some large shrubs and small trees on the southern boundary, affording relatively open views beyond the garden from south facing windows, and there is a greenhouse immediately west of the house. The northern garden area has a greater sense of enclosure and is bounded by a line of small trees on the northern property boundary and a wooden fence and some large shrubs alongside the road to the east. To the west of this there are a series of outbuildings that sit to the north-west of the house.

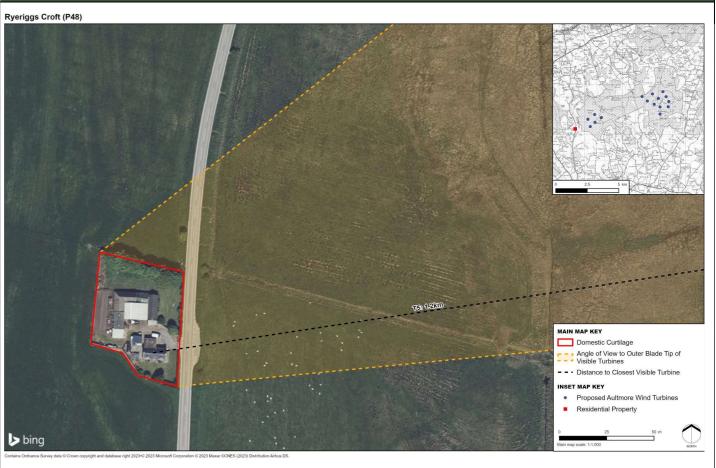
Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

As shown by the wireline in Annex A, the western group of turbines will stand in relatively open view, across the valley to the east and will be visible from the driveway, the two garden areas and the two eastern facing windows. Turbine bases will be screened by forestry but upper parts of towers and the turbine rotors will stand clearly above. Garden vegetation will filter views from the northern garden area and driveway, and the house will obscure the more northerly turbines from the western part of the garden to the south of the house. The turbines will be a large and prominent new feature in views to the east, giving rise to Large scale effects from an Intermediate extent of the property.

The magnitude of change would be Substantial.

RVAA Judgement:

The western group of turbines will be a prominent new feature in views from the property, widely visible from garden areas but visibility from within the house would be limited to two small windows which face directly onto a main road. The main outlook from windows facing south would be unimpacted by the proposed development and effects would not be sufficient to reach the RVA threshold.





Property Name	Site south of Deerhill Croft
Property Reference:	P59
Distance To Nearest Turbine:	1.4km (T16)
Orientation Of Frontage	South
Direction To Turbines:	North and west
Resident Details:	Not financially involved
Survey Details:	Surveyed from nearby publicly accessible locations

This property has not yet been built but is the subject of a recent planning consent (20/00913/APP) with a Notification of Initiation of Development submitted to Moray Council in August 2023 – approved plans for the dwelling are included within Annex B.

This will be a relatively large five bedroom, two storey, L-shaped house set within the south-eastern part of a relatively large plot surrounded by existing forestry with a new tree belt proposed to be planted wrapping around the plot to the north and east, enclosing the house and garden in these directions. The planning drawings state that the house will be "oriented to face in Southerly direction providing view down valley". The floorplans indicate that the north-eastern corner of the house will be occupied by an attached garage and carport accessed from a drive/parking area to the north of the house. A kitchen and dining area will face onto this and a snug forms the only other northerly facing window on the ground floor. Upstairs, northerly facing windows are limited to an en-suite bathroom and the smallest single bedroom.

Likely Change to Visual Amenity:

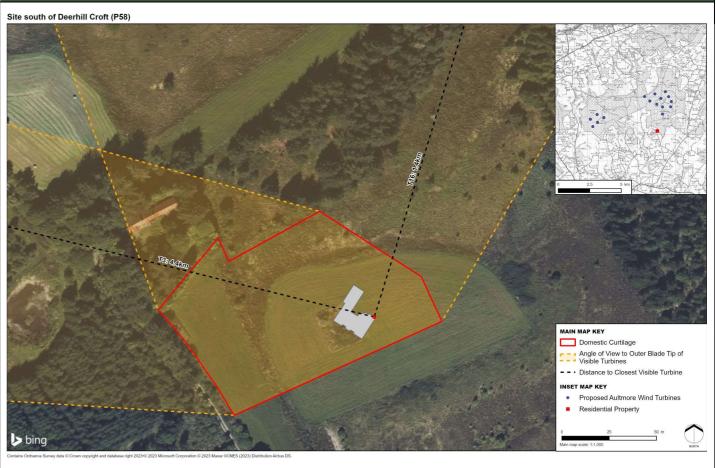
As shown by the wireline in Annex A, the eastern group of turbines will be seen above rising ground and forestry to the north of the house with the closer turbines in relatively open view above intervening forestry. Views will be possible from the driveway, parking area, garden, kitchen/dining and snug at ground level with views upstairs restricted to one single bedroom and an en-suite bathroom. Existing woodland adjacent to the plot may screen or filter views of some of the more westerly turbines in this group from the some parts of the garden and the garage/carport would also screen views of some of these from the kitchen and dining areas. Given the scale and proximity to the house of the proposed tree belt within the consented plans it is likely that this would provide additional screening and/or filtering of views in the medium to long-term as it matures.

The proposed development will give rise to Large scale changes to views from an Intermediate extent of the property although these may reduce as the tree belt matures.

The magnitude of change will be Substantial.

RVAA Judgement:

The eastern group of turbines will be a very prominent new feature in views to the north of the property although, as stated by the planning drawings, the main outlook is designed to be to the south. Although there will be visibility of some of the turbines from the garden, some of the downstairs living space and one bedroom, most of the bedrooms and internal living space would be unaffected by the proposed development. The degree of visibility and magnitude of effects is also likely to reduce in time as the tree belt forming part of the consented proposals matures. Effects at this property would not be sufficient to meet the RVA threshold.





A.4 Summary and Conclusions

The aim of the RVAA seeks to identify where effects on residential visual amenity are of such a nature or magnitude that "the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."

There are 60 residential properties and a number of planning consents for residential properties within the 2km RVAA study area that have been considered within this assessment. For the majority of these properties, the initial assessment identified that effects will be less than Substantial magnitude and detailed consideration has not been required.

Properties at Hillhead of Letterfourrie, Myreside, Redroofs Croft, West Balnamoon, East Balnamoon, Drodland, Hayfield, Sunnybrae Croft, Ryeriggs Croft and a consented but unbuilt property on a site south of Deerhill Croft (P6, P13, P20, P21, P22, P29, P30, P34, P48 and P59 on Figure 1) were included within the detailed assessment in order to identify if the potential impact would be of such magnitude that it may trigger the Residential Visual Amenity threshold. From the properties investigated in more detail, all except three were determined to experience effects less than Substantial magnitude and therefore would not have the potential to reach the RVA threshold.

Sunnybrae Croft (P34), Ryeriggs Croft (P48) and the site south of Deerhill Croft (P59) were all identified to experience Substantial magnitude effects as a result of open, relatively close proximity views of a number of the proposed turbines. Although the proposed turbines will introduce large scale, very prominent new features in views, in no case would the scale of the turbines appear overbearing. In each case there would also be a degree of screening in some views from the properties and ample parts of the properties, including primary outlooks, would be unaffected by the proposed development such that in no case would the proposed turbines become ubiquitous or unavoidable and it is not considered that any of the impacts would be sufficient to trigger the RVA threshold.

This assessment concludes that in no case would effects be of such nature and / or magnitude that it potentially affects living conditions at any property to the point it becomes an unattractive place to live, when judged objectively in the public interest.



Annex A – Wirelines

Wirelines (A3)

P1 Hillfolds

P6 Hillhead of Letterfourie

P8 Muirton

P9 Aultmore Lodge

P15 Bossy Hillocks

P20 Redroofs Croft

P24 3 Burn of Aultmore Croft

P29 Drodland

P34 Sunnybrae Croft

P38 Woodside Cottage

P43 Rhunoch

P48 Ryeriggs Croft

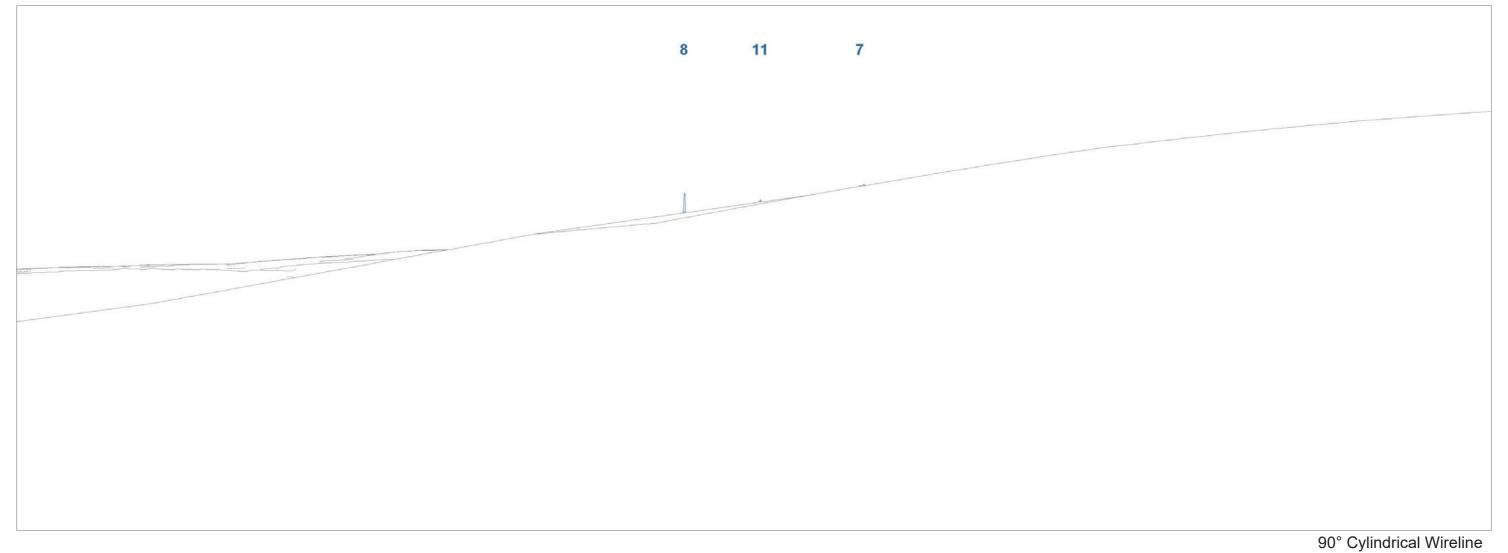
P51 Tarrymount

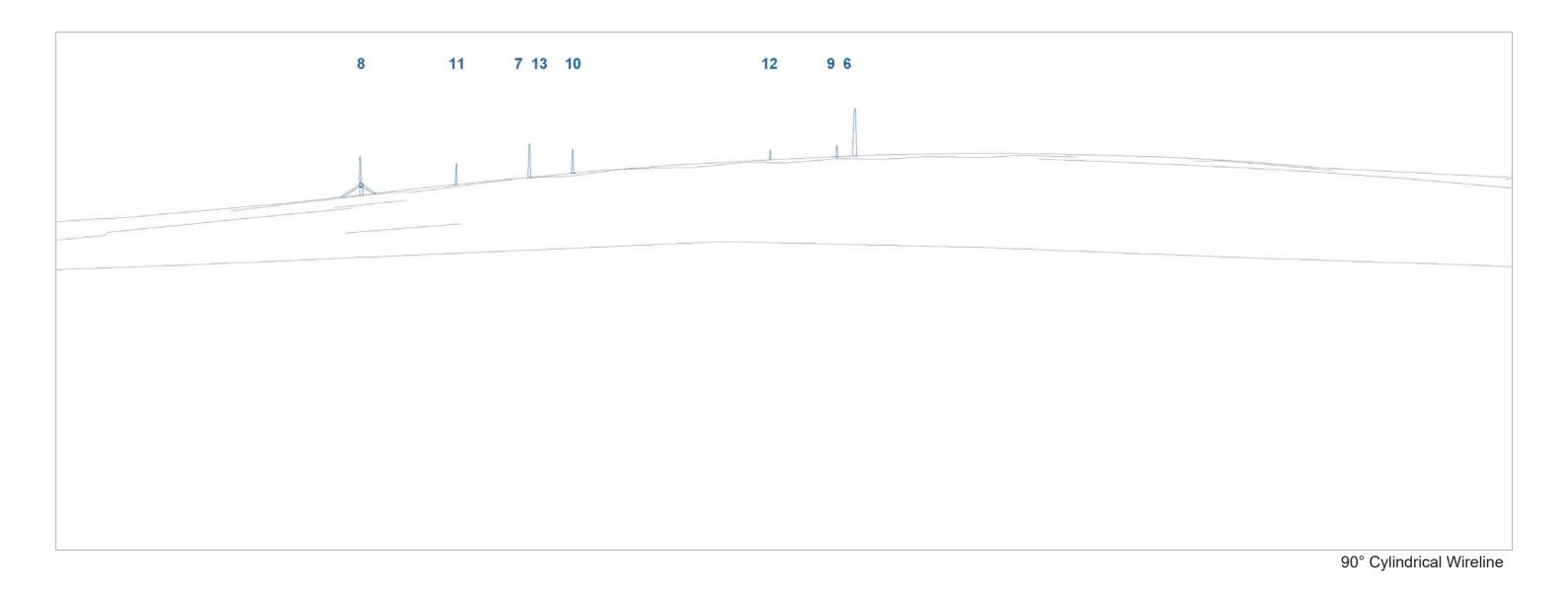
P53 Blackhills

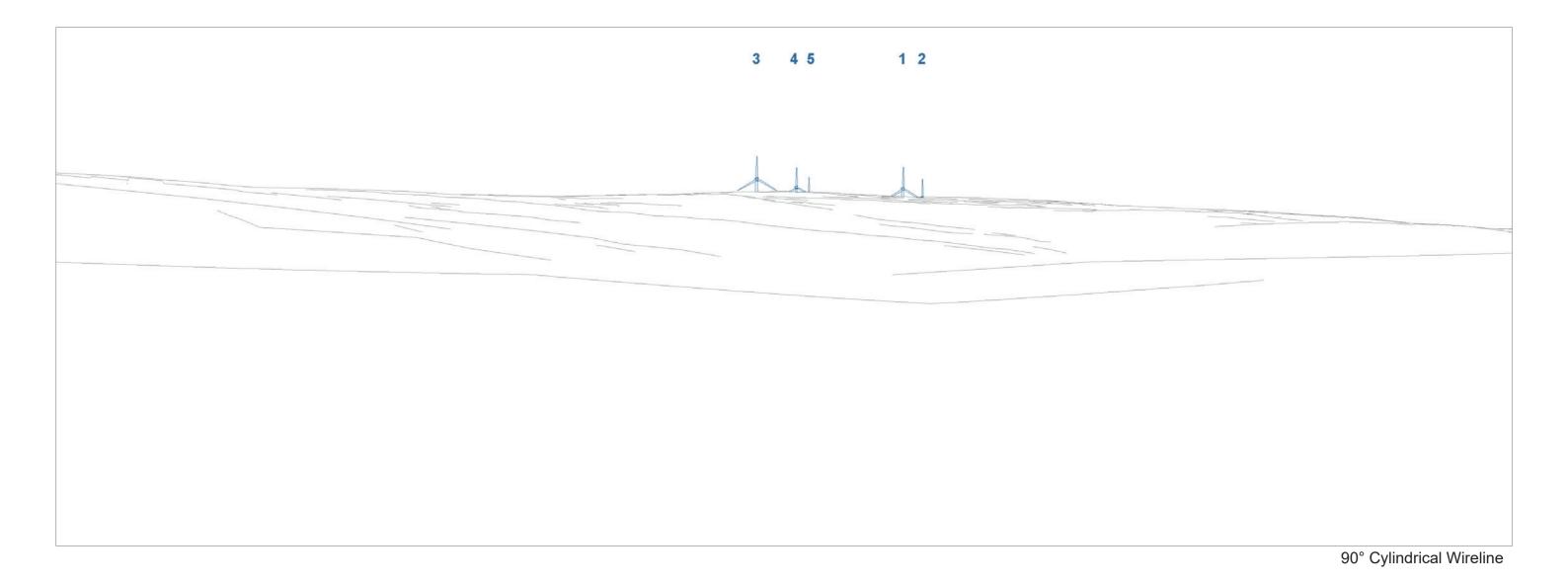
P54 Upper Allaloth

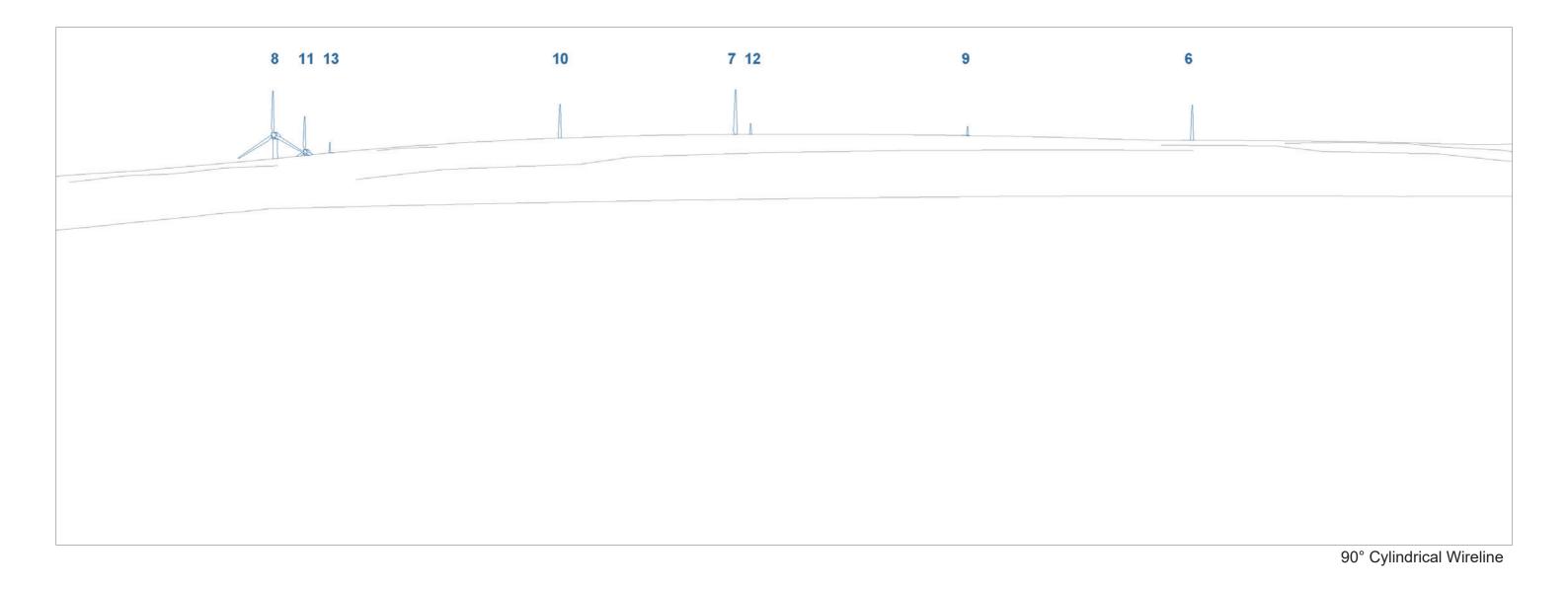
P58 Site south of Deerhill

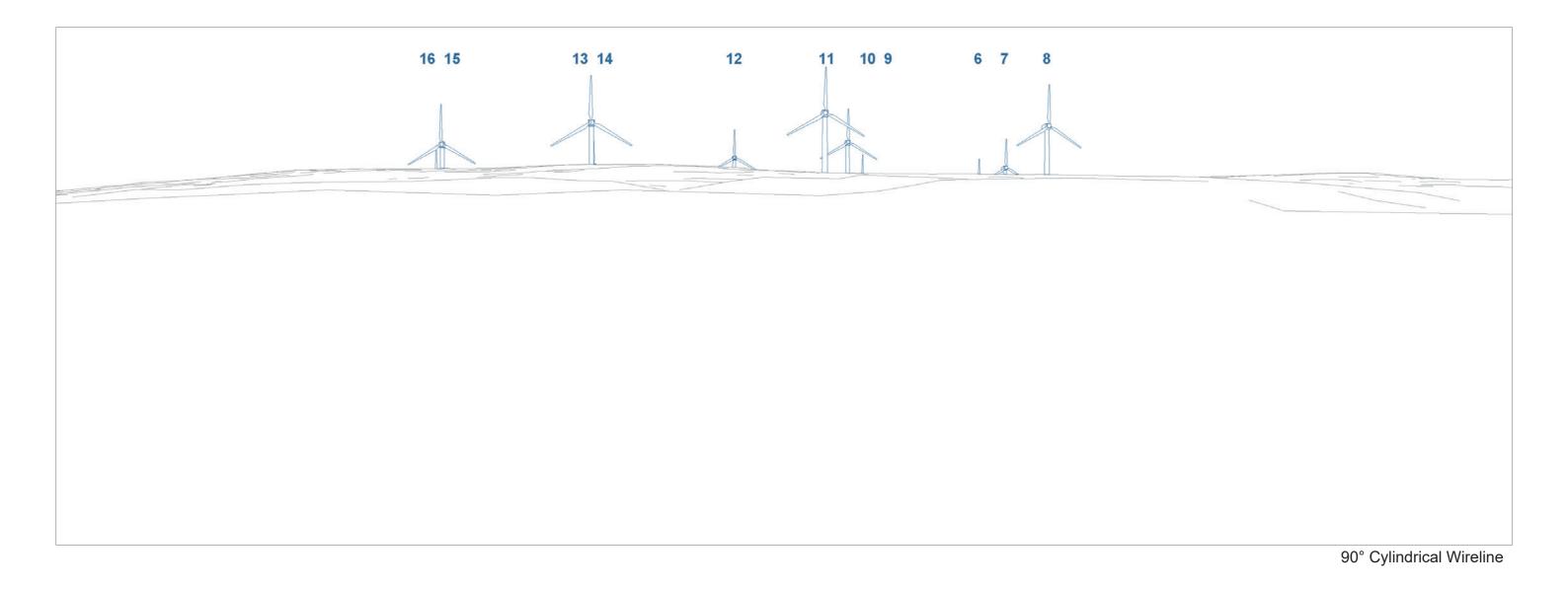


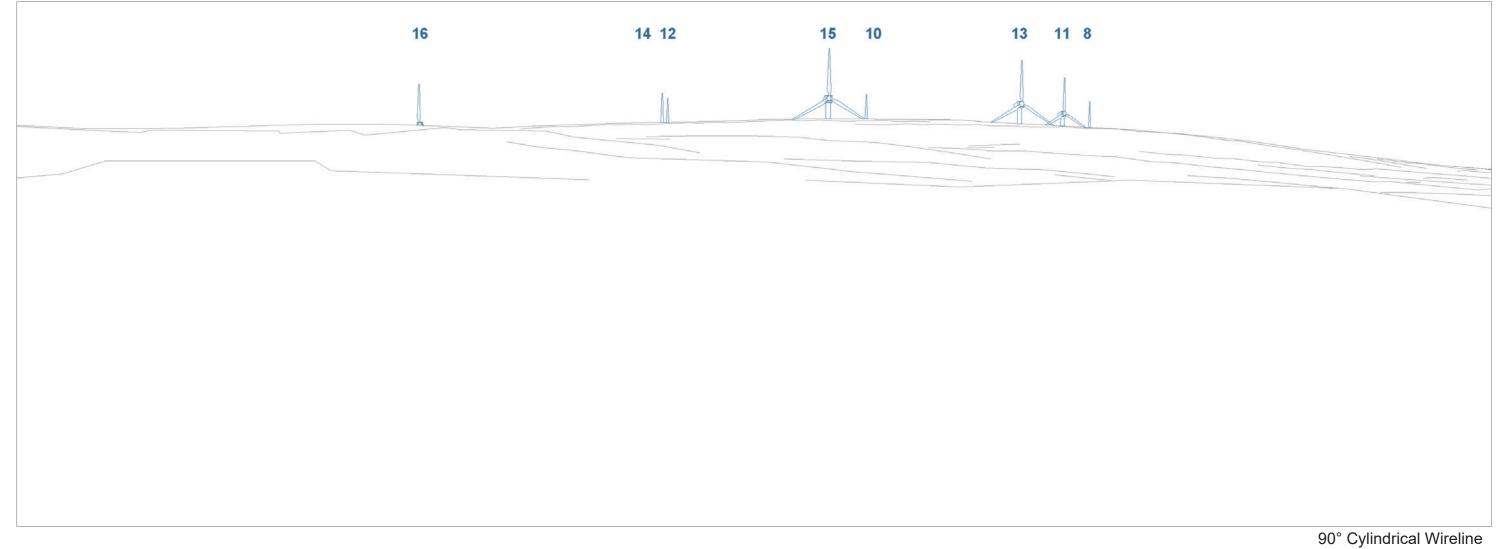


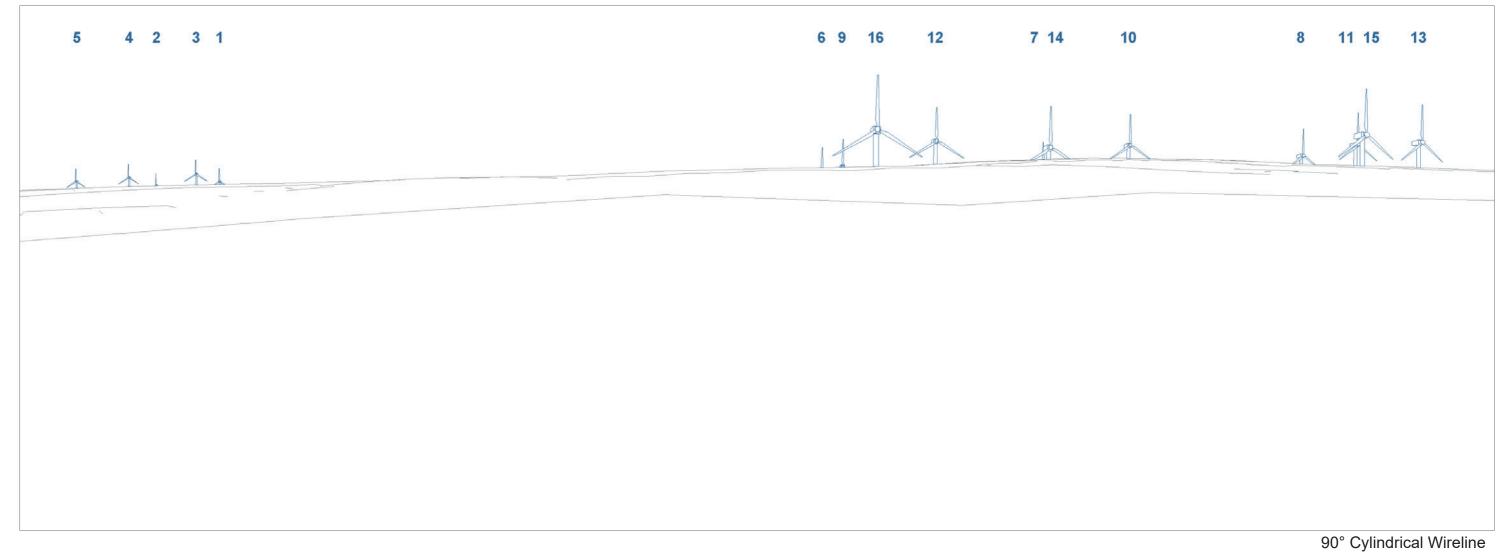


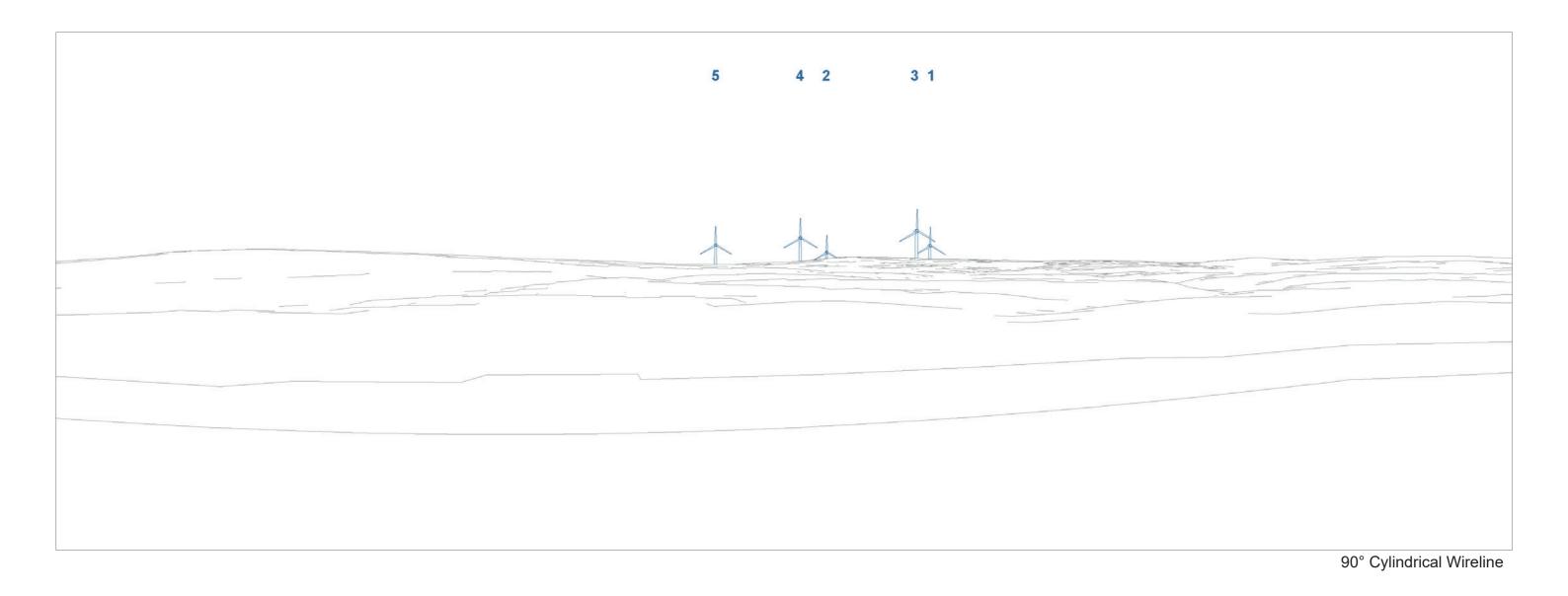


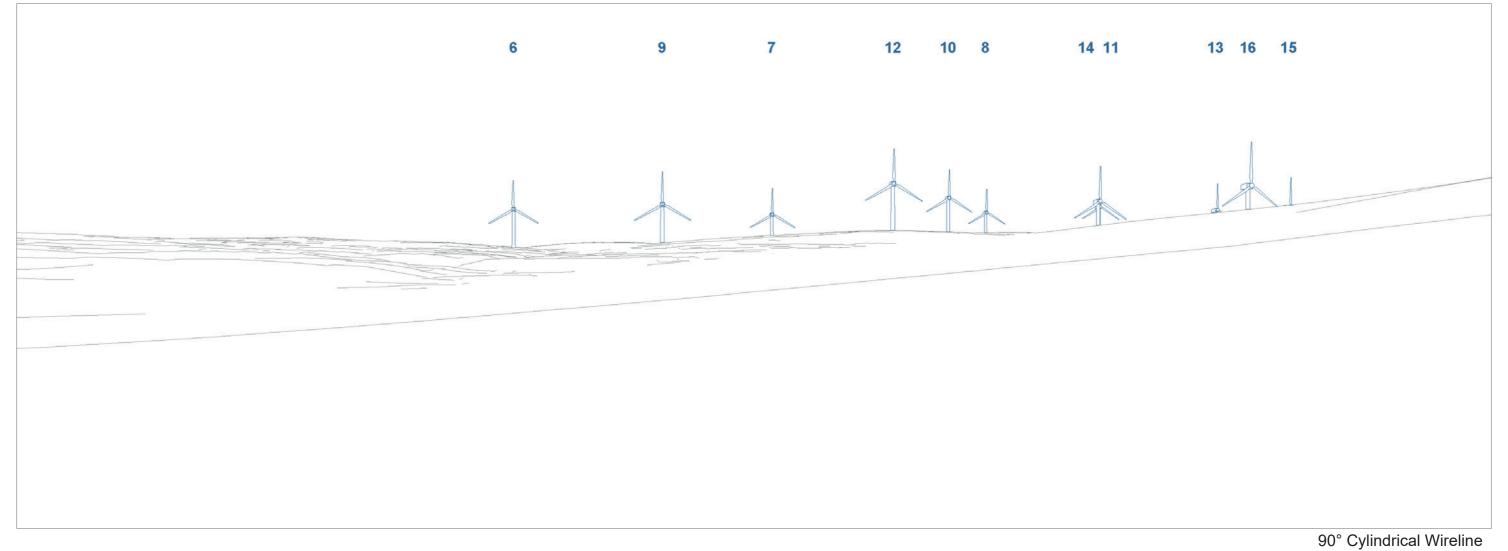


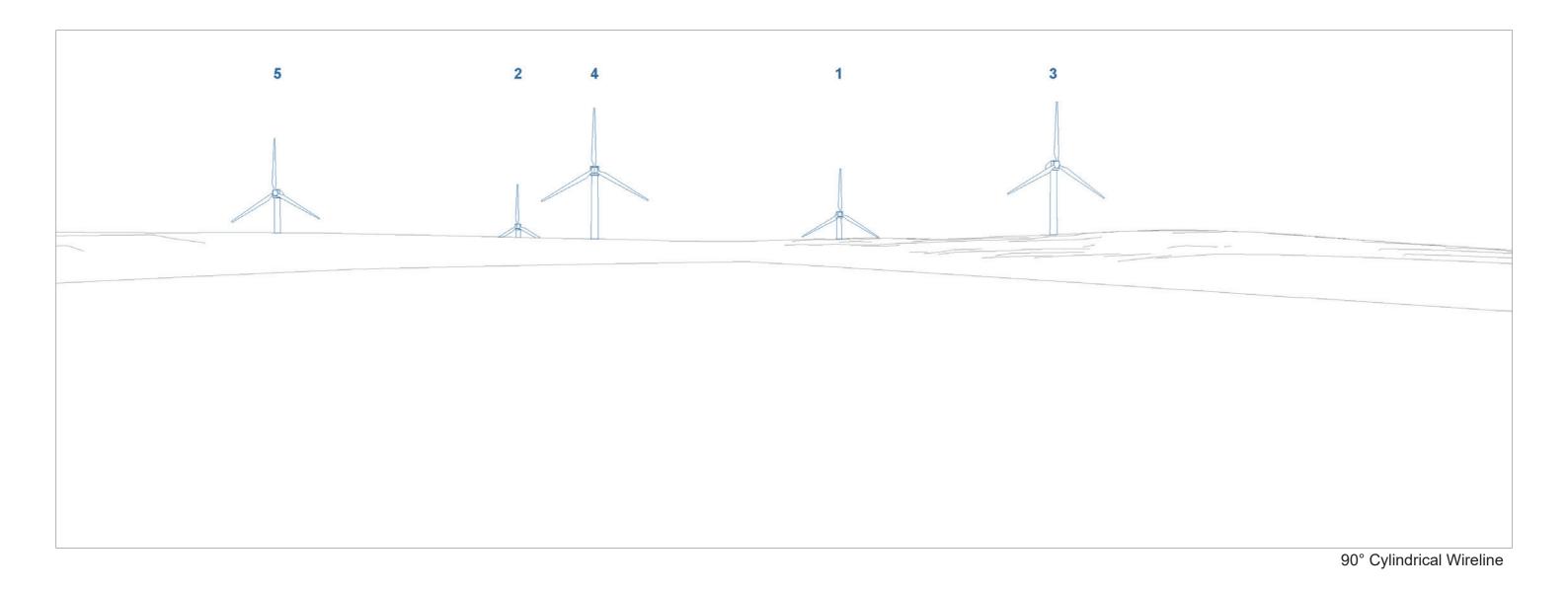


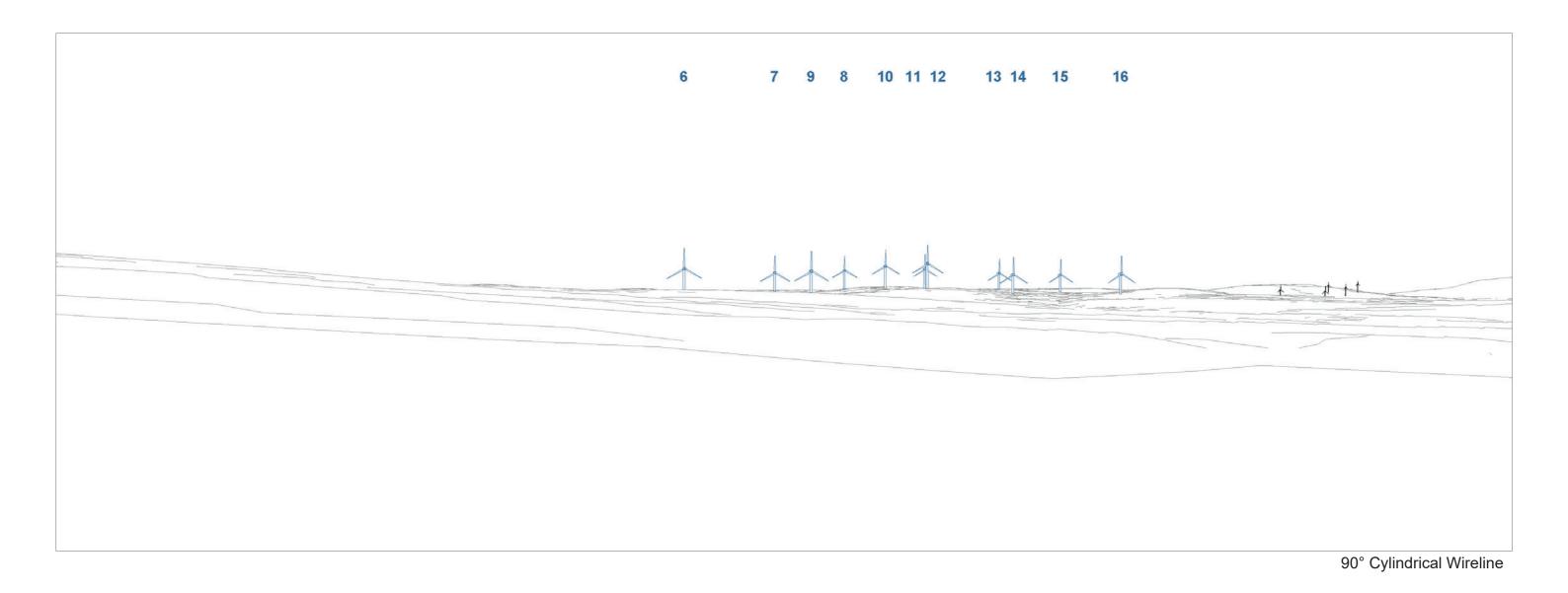


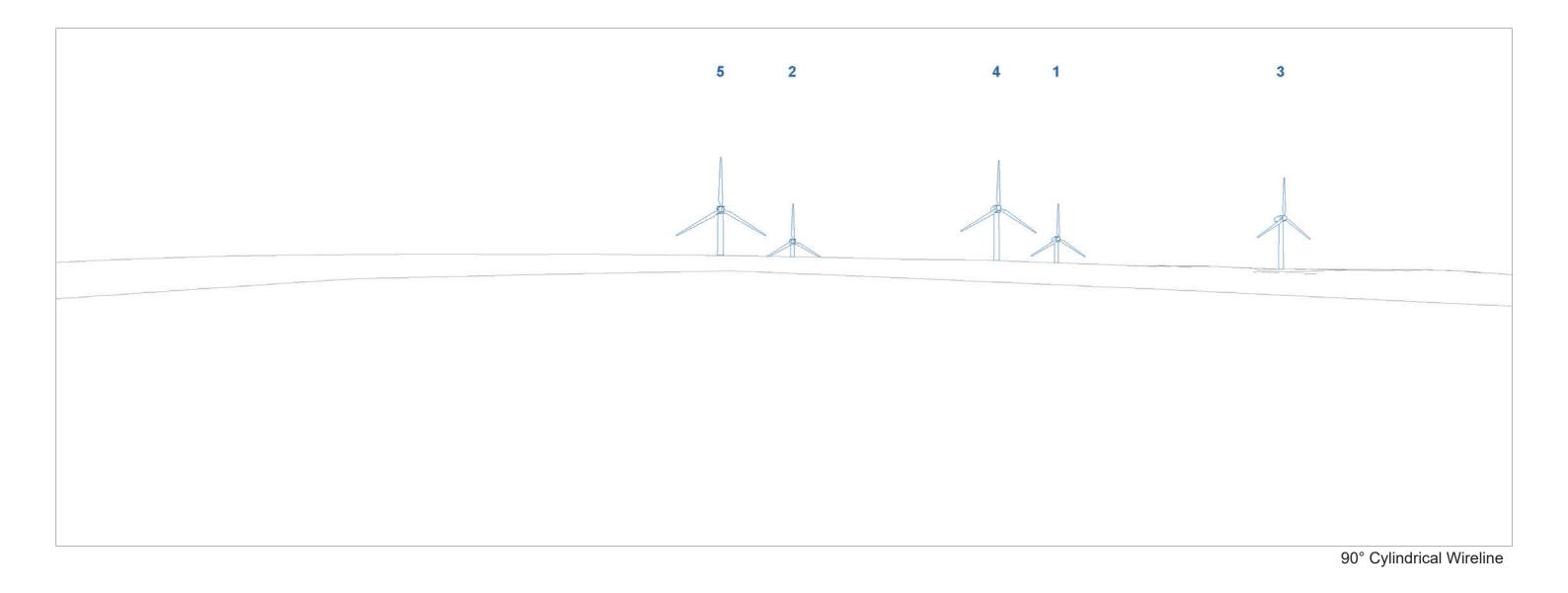


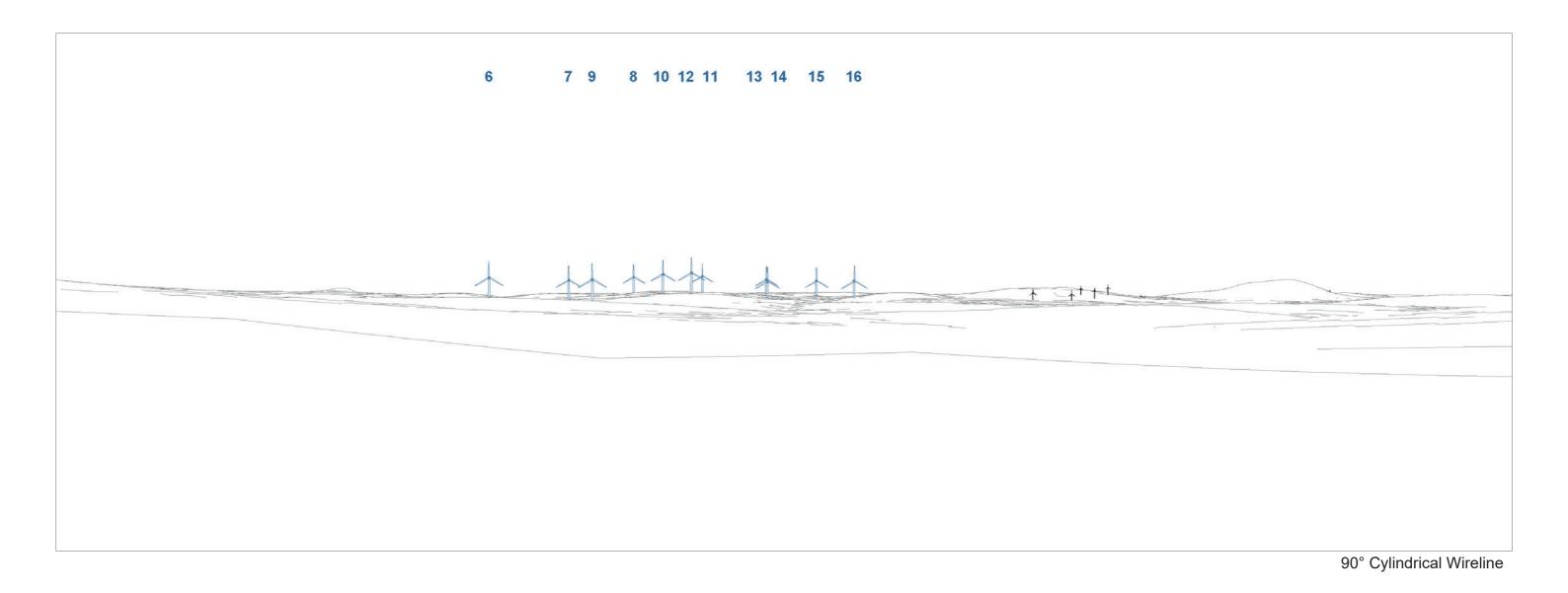


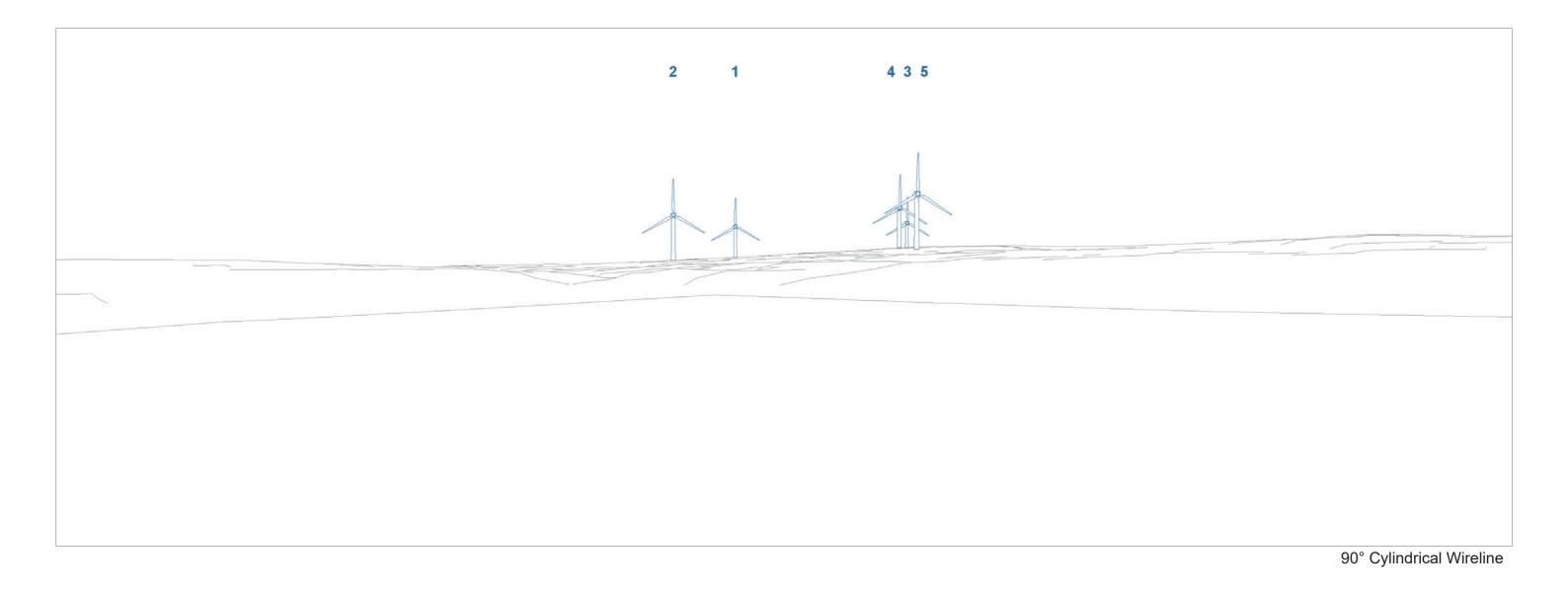


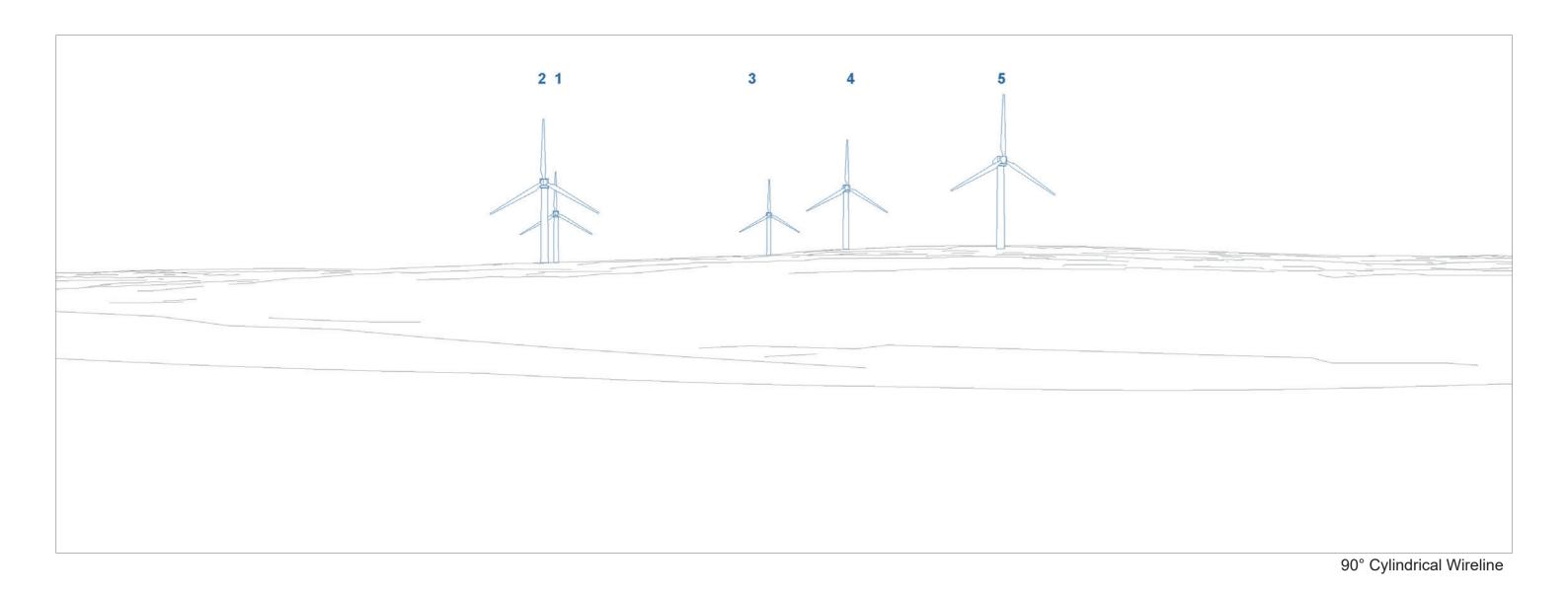


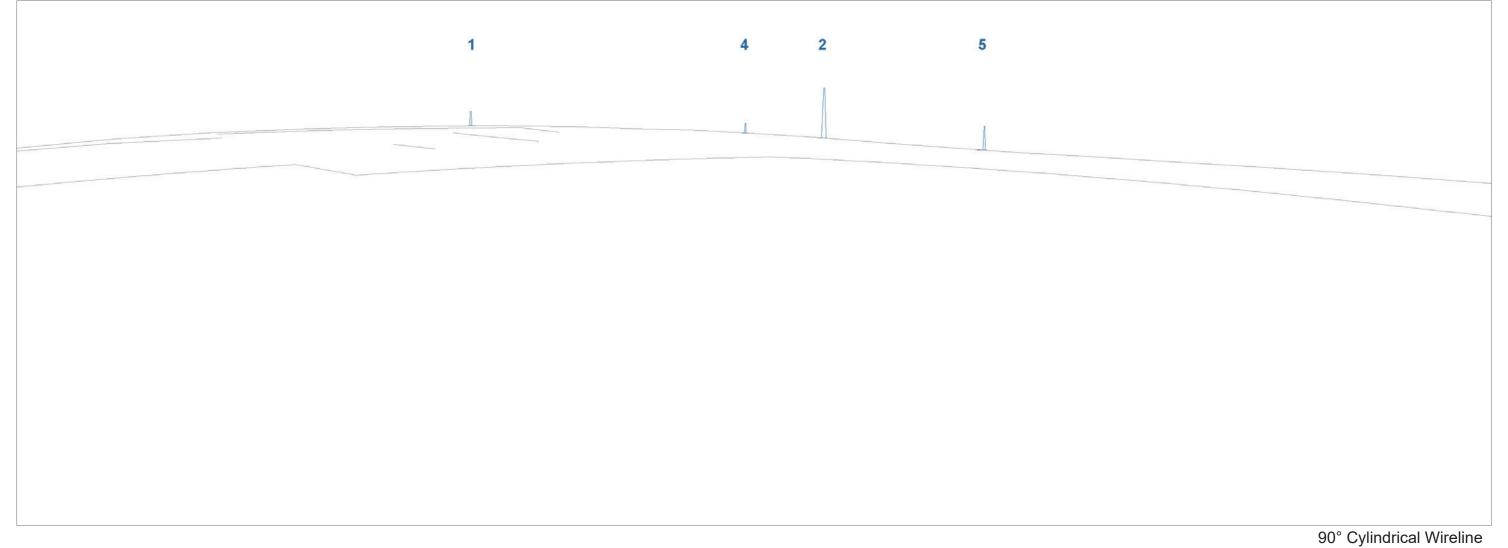


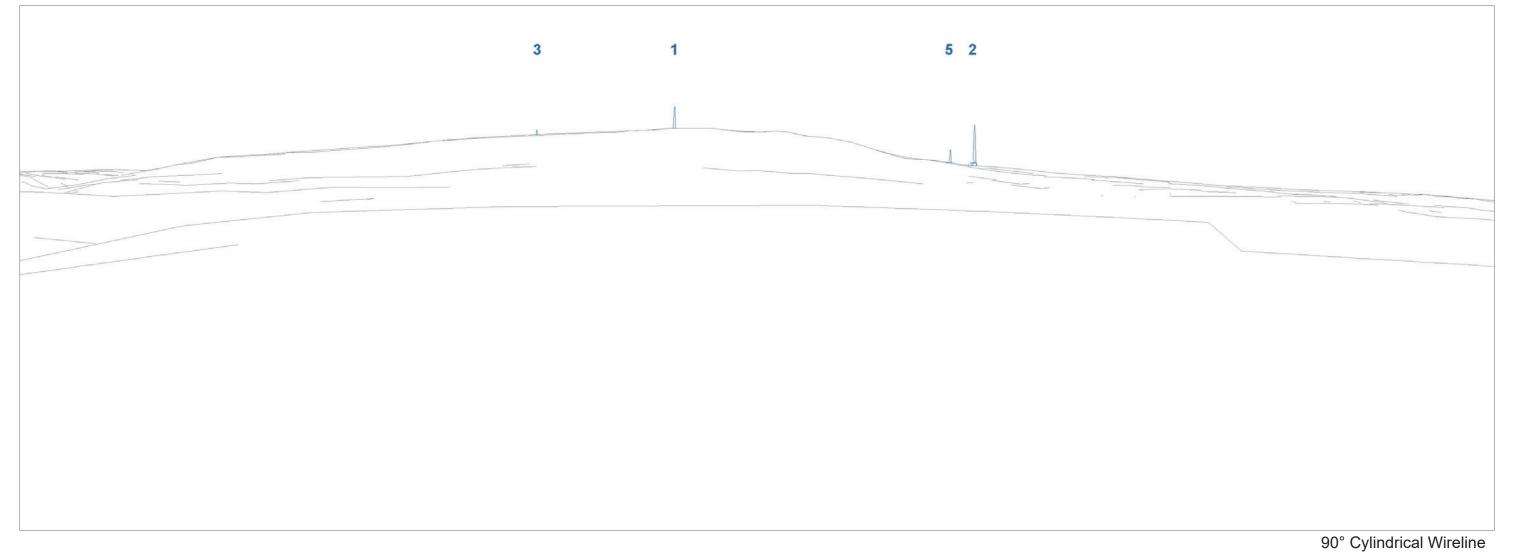


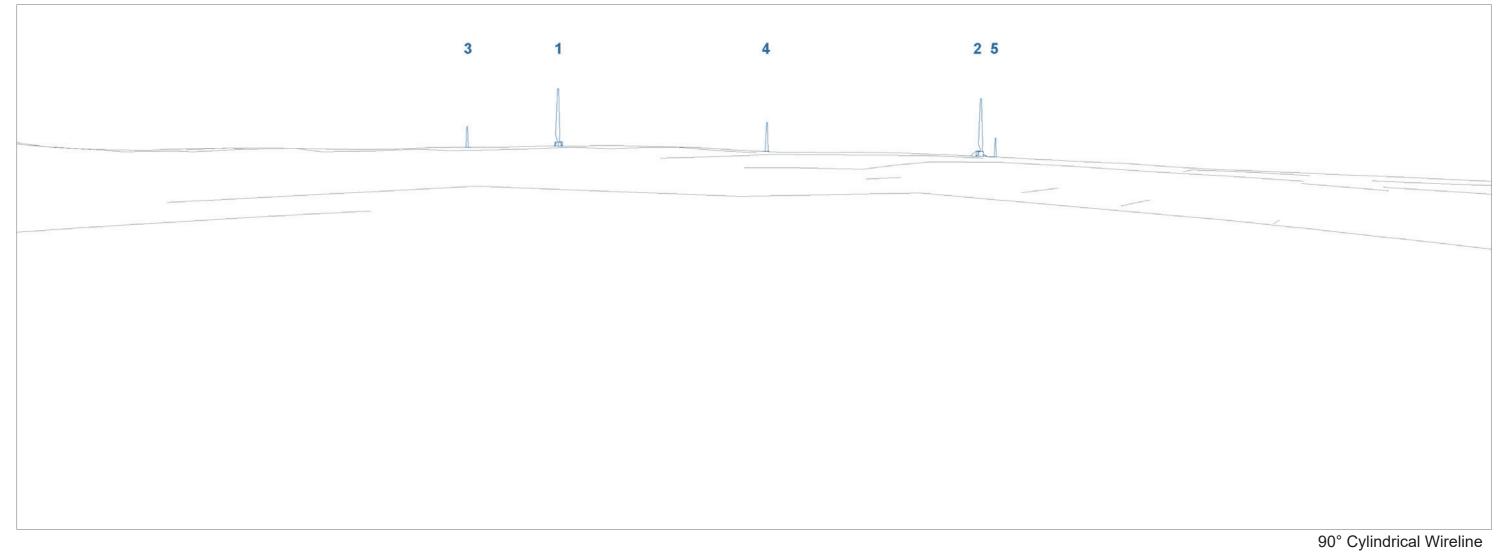


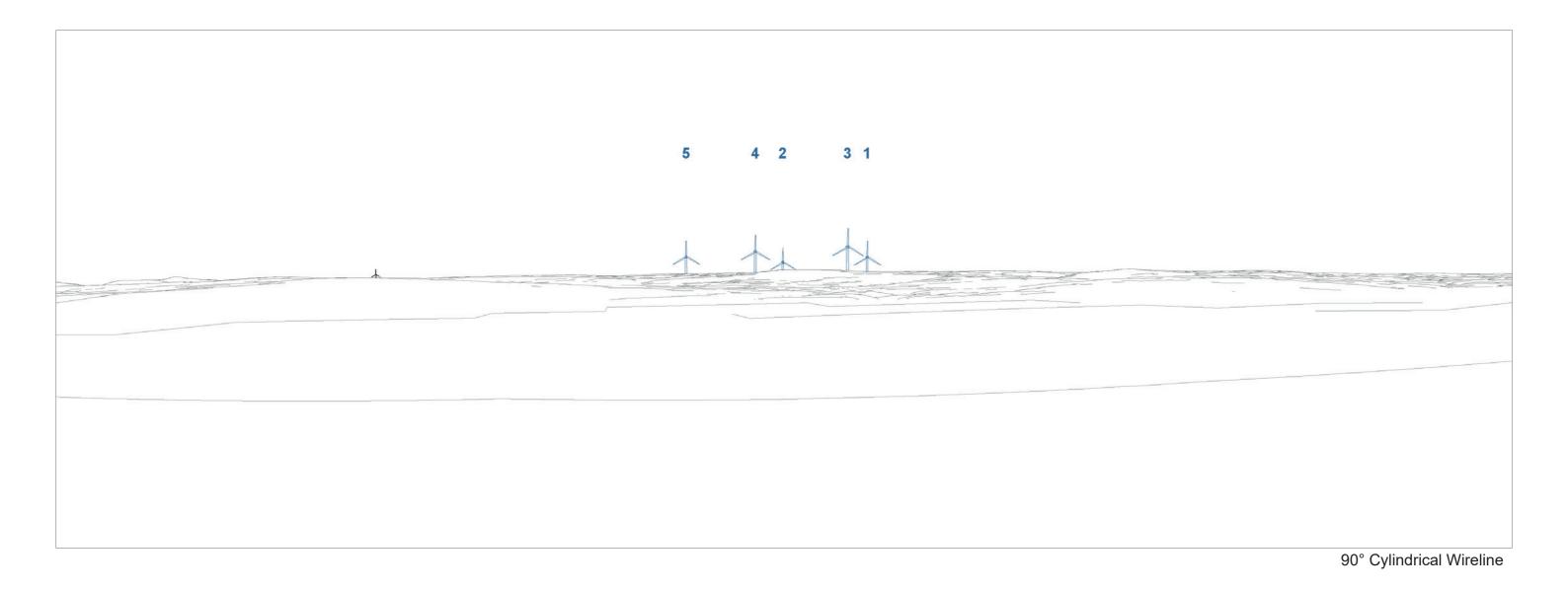


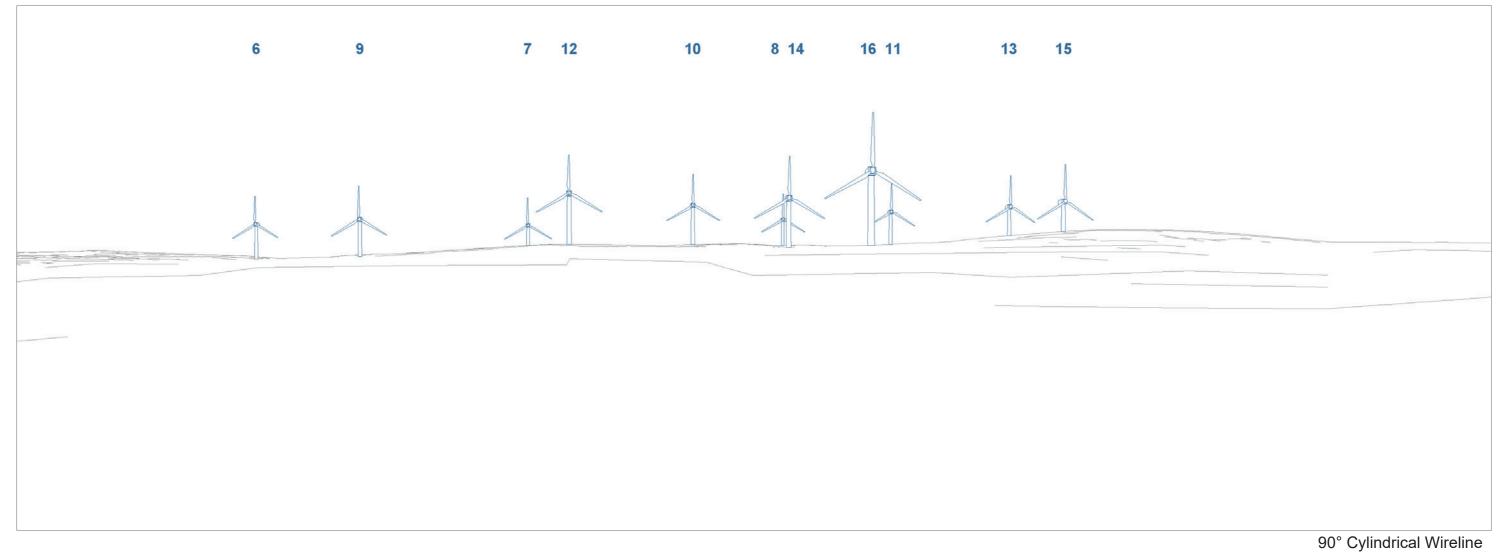






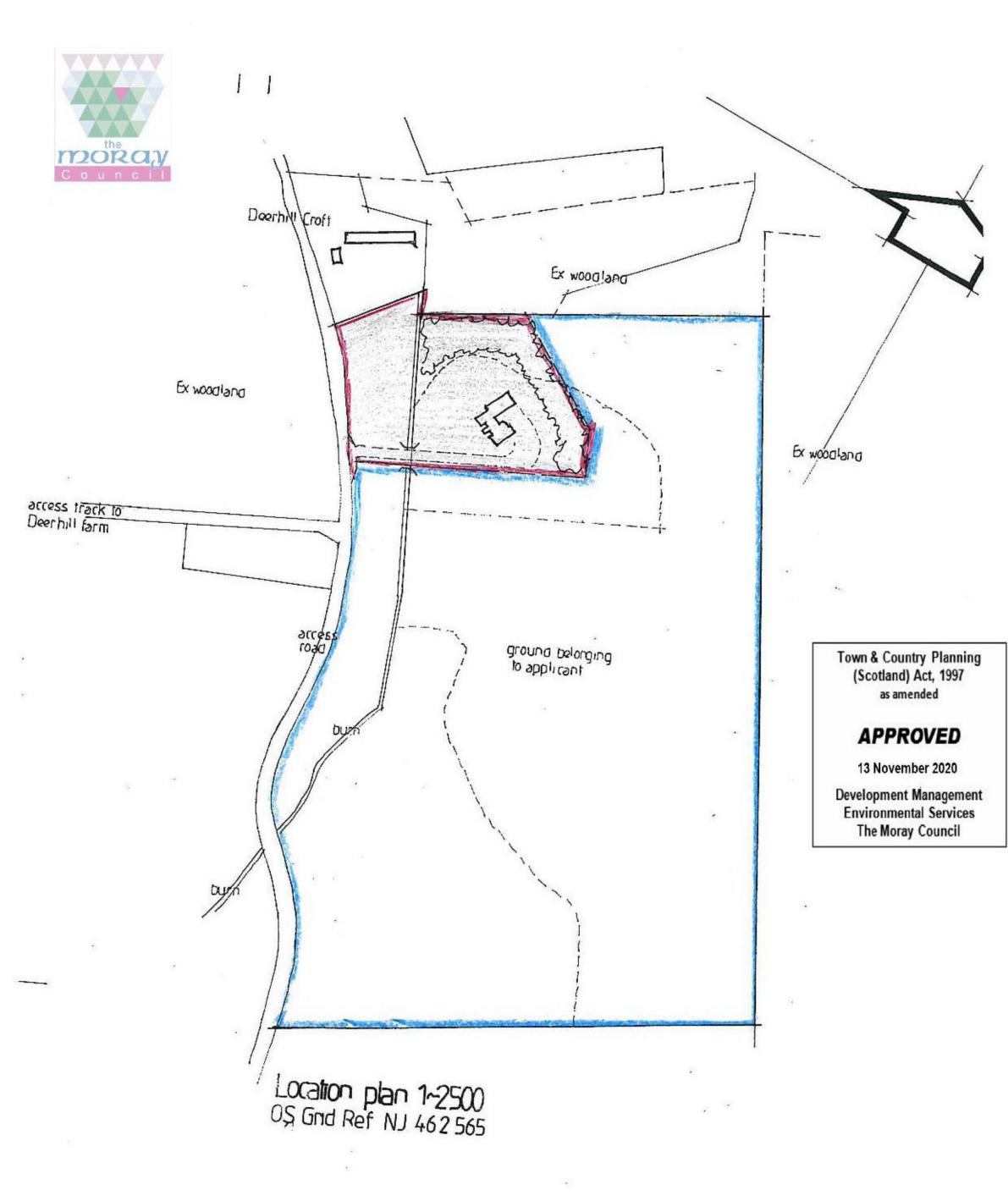




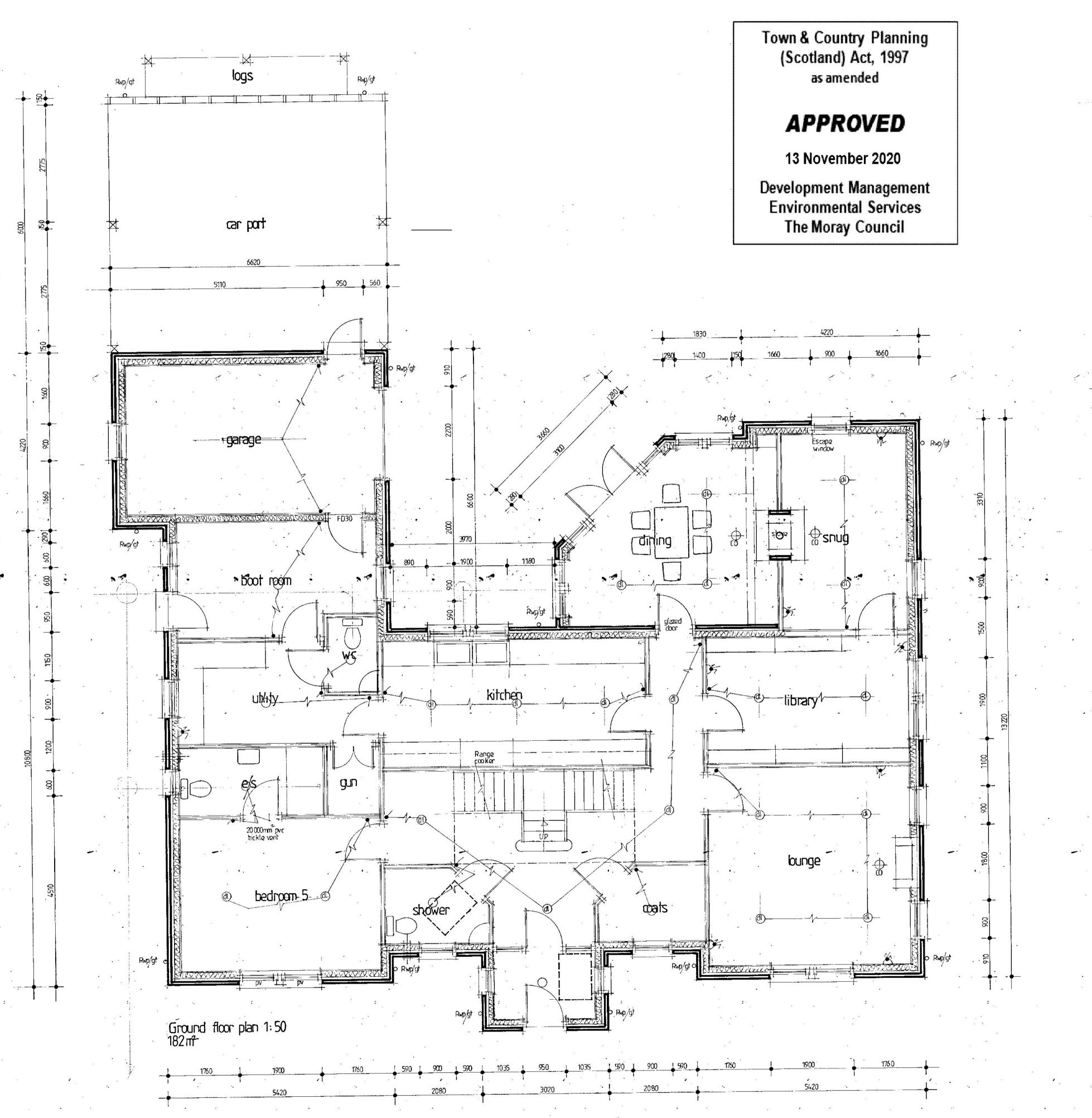


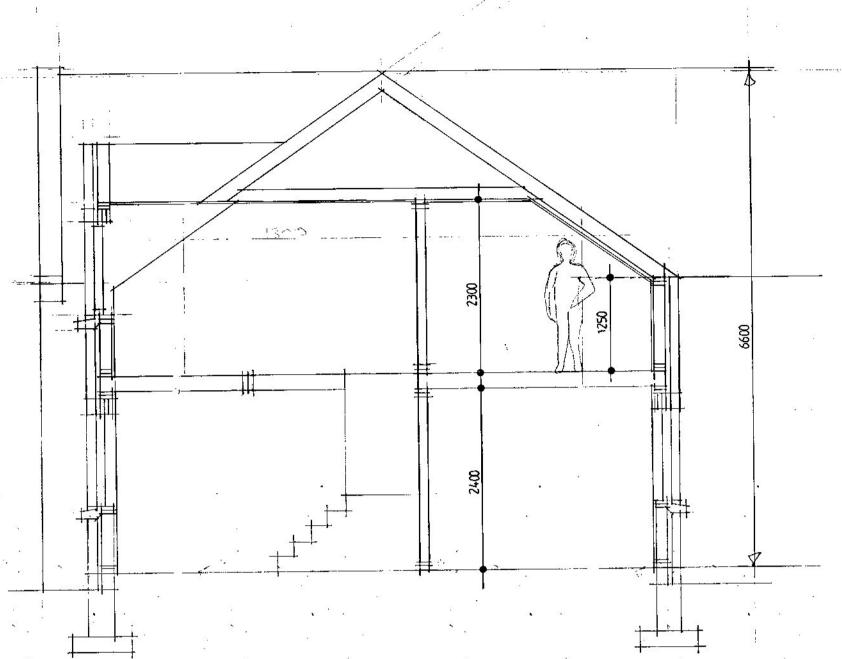
Annex B – Approved Plans, site south of Deerhill (20/00913/APP)



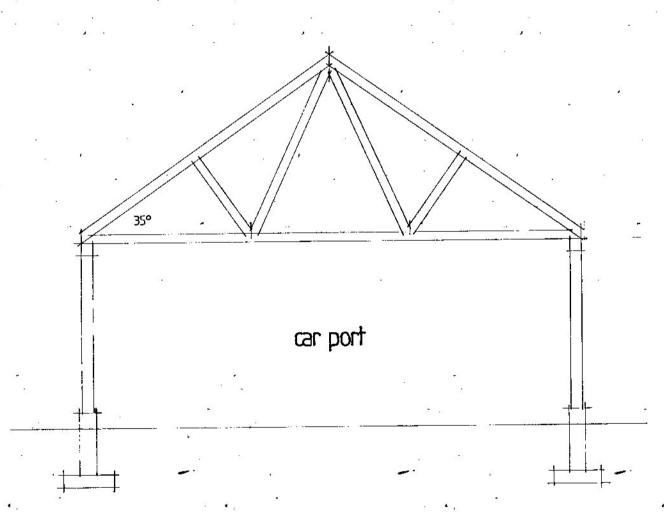








Cross section



Cross section

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Mr. & Mr.s. J. Irving-Morse	SCALE 150	DRAWN BY	Mar 2018
PROJECT Proposed dwelling house Deerhill, Newmill, Keith	and garage at		17-40 Dwg 1~4



ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CONSULTANTS

TELEPHONE No. 01343 842635

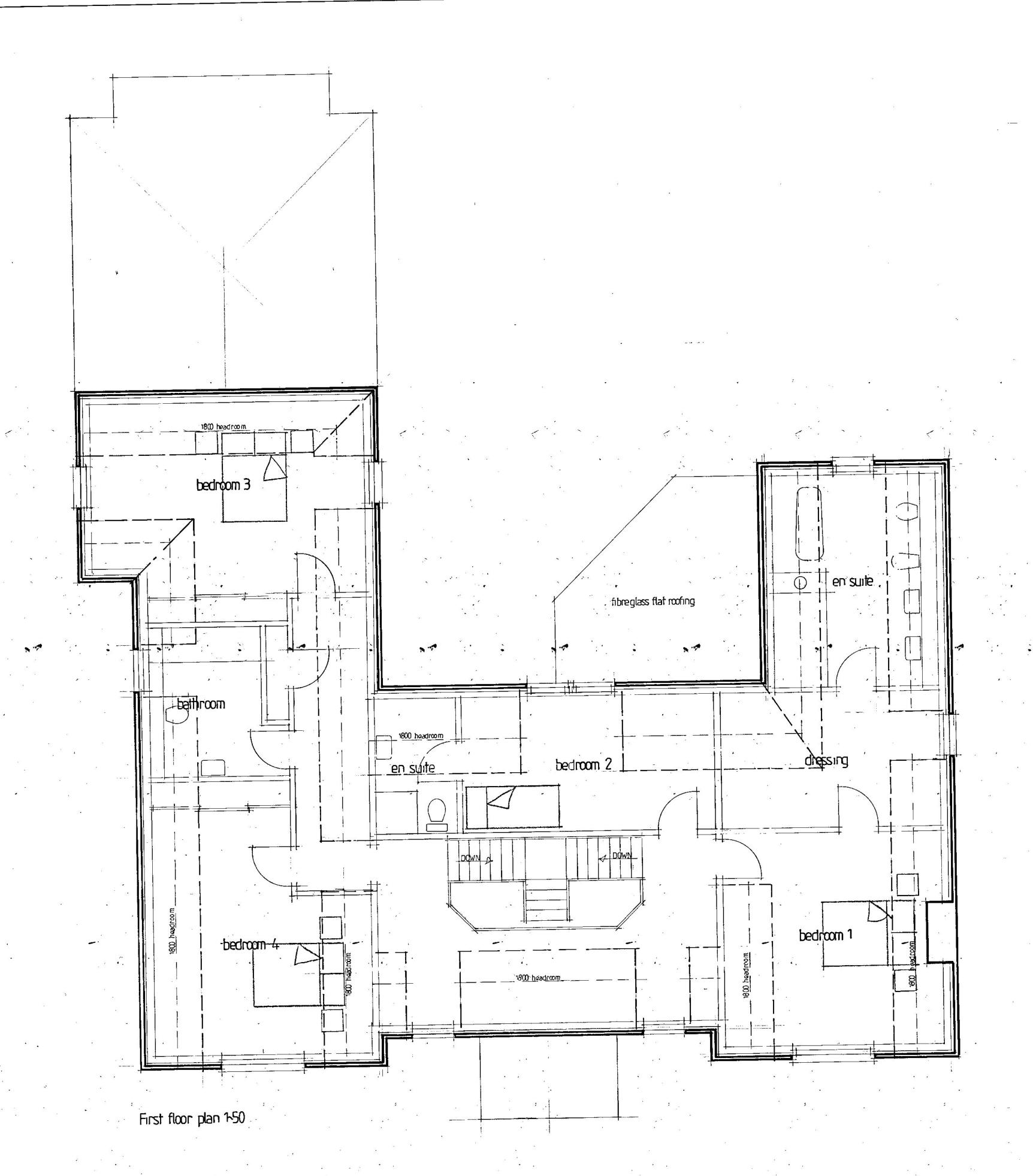
MOBILE No. 07766 315501

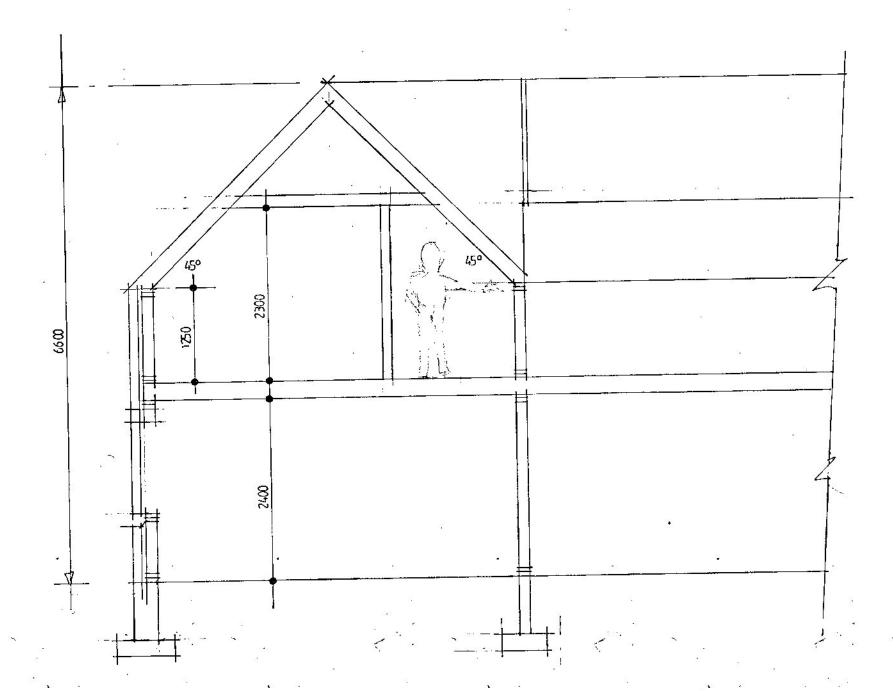
EMAIL: ctkplans@aol.com

WEB: www.plans-plus.co.uk

PARTNERS: COLIN & CATRIONA KEIR

MAIN STREET OFFICES: URQUHART, BY ELGIN, IV30 8LG





Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act, 1997 as amended

APPROVED

13 November 2020

Development Management Environmental Services The Moray Council

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Iå	MEE, GOILLES .		
Mr & Mrs J Irvnq-Morse	SCALE 150	DRAWN BY	May 2020
PROJECT Proposed dwelling house Deerhill, Newmill, Keith	17~40 Dwg 2~4		



ARCHITECTURAL **DESIGN CONSULTANTS**

TELEPHONE No. 01343 842635
MOBILE No. 07766 315501
EMAIL: ctkplans@aol.com
WEB: www.plans-plus.co.uk
PARTNERS: COLIN & CATRIONA KEIR

01343 842635 07766 315501

MAIN STREET OFFICES: URQUHART, BY ELGIN, IV30 8LG

Annex C - Photowires (842x297mm)

P13 Myreside

P30 Hayfields





Date September 2023 Image Size 820 x 260mm Paper Size 840 x 297mm



Grid Reference: Ground Height: Direction of Centre of View: ³ Horizontal Field of View: Vertical Field of View:

Principal Distance:

345251E 857346N 199.4m AOD 030.00° 53.5° 18.2° 812.5mm

Layout:
Hub Height:
Height to Blade Tip:
Nearest Visible Turbine:
Number of Sets of Tips Visible: 2 Number of Hubs Visible: 2

Aultmore



Residential Viewpoint 2a: Drodland South View from Yard PHOTOWIRELINE VISUALISATION R2a (a)



Image Size 820 x 260mm Paper Size 840 x 297mm



Grid Reference:
Ground Height:
Direction of Centre of View: 3 Horizontal Field of View: Vertical Field of View: Principal Distance:

345251E 857346N 199.4m AOD 083.50° 53.5° 18.2° 812.5mm

Layout:
Hub Height:
Height to Blade Tip:
Nearest Visible Turbine:
Number of Sets of Tips Visible: 2 Number of Hubs Visible: 2



Residential Viewpoint 2a: Drodland South View from Yard PHOTOWIRELINE VISUALISATION R2a (b)







Grid Reference:
Ground Height:
Direction of Centre of View: 3 Horizontal Field of View: Vertical Field of View: Principal Distance:

345251E 857346N 199.4m AOD 264.80° 53.5° 18.2° 812.5mm Layout:
Hub Height:
Height to Blade Tip:
Nearest Visible Turbine:
Number of Sets of Tips Visible: ²
Number of Hubs Visible: ²

Aultmore 200m T9 @ 1507m



Residential Viewpoint 2a: Drodland South View from Yard PHOTOWIRELINE VISUALISATION 2a (c)



Image Size 820 x 260mm Paper Size 840 x 297mm



348530E 857418N 192.7m AOD 301.50° 53.5° 18.2° 812.5mm

Layout:
Hub Height:
Height to Blade Tip:
Nearest Visible Turbine:
Number of Sets of Tips Visible: ²
Number of Hubs Visible: ²



Residential Viewpoint 3a: Myreside Low PHOTOWIRELINE VISUALISATION R3a