Landscape and Visual Assessment

For

3nr Proposed Wind Turbines at Herds Hill, Sanquhar, Scotland

Prepared for

Drumbuie Renewables

Prepared by

Galpin Landscape Architecture

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Galpin Landscape Architecture

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Proposal

1.1 The proposal is for three wind turbines each with a 3-bladed rotor design and with a height of 149m to blade tip and a hub height of 93m.

1.2 The proposal includes access tracks, underground cabling and temporary crane hard standings area with access to the site via an existing access track linking to the A76.

Landscape Character Assessment Summary

1.3 The proposed turbines would be at an appropriate scale and proportion to the landform and adjacent existing wind turbines.

1.4 The effect on the landscape character during construction activities would be short-term and magnitude of change on the landscape character would be Low.

1.5 The magnitude of change to the Landscape Character Type 19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale would be Low. The landscape character sensitivity is High-Medium, resulting in a Moderate - Slight/ Moderate degree of significance.

1.6 The proposed turbines are not within a landscape designation and the nearest would be 3.5km to the Thornhill Uplands Dumfries & Galloway Regional Scenic Area (RSA) with indirect effects due to the presence of existing wind turbines. The Southern Uplands Sensitive Landscape Area is 4.4km away, but likewise with indirect effects.

1.7 There would be a Low magnitude of change on a section of Sanquhar Conservation Area due to the limited intervisibility between designation and the proposed turbines.

1.8 There would be Low magnitude of change on a small number of Listed Buildings.

1.9 Overall, the effect of the proposed turbine on landscape character would be **Low**.

Visual Amenity Assessment Summary

1.10 The short-term temporary nature of the construction activities on the views of the visual receptors would ensure that the overall visual effects would be **Low**.

1.11 The visual assessment identified key viewpoints within the study area, in consultation with the LPA. The magnitudes of change range between **Medium** to **Low** and degrees of significance range between **Moderate / Substantial** to **Slight**.

1.12 Visual receptors who may see the proposed turbines include residents, recreational users and road users. There are wind turbines already existing or approved in all views in the vicinity of the proposed wind turbines.

1.13 There would be sequential views of the proposed wind turbines from the Southern Upland Way (SUW) and the A76. There would be varying views from the SUW, at the closet point, the magnitude of change would be medium. Road users on the A76 would have glimpses at various points of the proposed turbines, with a maximum magnitude of change of low.

1.14 The overall visual effects of the proposed wind turbines would be noticeable from some viewpoints, but mostly be seen as part of an existing scene of wind turbines.

Cumulative Assessment Summary

1.15 ***The cumulative effects on landscape character*** of the proposed turbines in combination with a number of nearby existing, approved and proposed wind turbines has been assessed. The Dumfries & Galloway Scoping Opinion report (DGCSC) (Ref: 23/0206/SCO) recommends the inclusion of the scoping schemes at Cloud Hill and Rowancraig in the Cumulative Assessment due to their proximity to the proposed development at Herds Hill.

1.16 Therefore, two scenarios of cumulative wind turbines were assessed, Scenario 1 assumed a baseline including all operational, approved (as yet unbuilt) and in-planning schemes and Scenario 2 included the scoping schemes as well as operational, approved and in-planning schemes within the study area.

1.17 For Scenario 1, the proposed turbines would be located at a similar elevation to Sandy Knowe and Sanquhar II tying into Sanquhar Wind Farm. Therefore, there would be a Low cumulative effect on LCT19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale.

1.18 For Scenario 2, the proposed Rowancraig turbines would be more dominant, and the proposed turbines would also be in association with Cloud Hill, resulting in a Low cumulative effect on LCT19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale.

1.19 For ***the cumulative visual amenity***, the key viewpoints were assessed in relation to other turbines in the area, with the magnitude of change being between **Low** to **Medium**. There would not be any significant cumulative visual effect on visual amenity.

2 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

2.1 This is a landscape and visual assessment commissioned by Community Windpower Limited on behalf of Drumbuie Renewables who are the Applicant, and prepared by Galpin Landscape Architecture to accompany the planning application for the proposed wind turbines at Herds Hill, Sanquhar.

The Proposal

2.2 From hereon within this report, the proposed three wind turbines will be referred to as 'the proposed turbines'.

2.3 The proposed turbines would have a height of 149m to blade tip and a hub height of 93m. The grid references for the turbines are:

- T1 – 273008, 608956;
- T2 – 273118, 608267;
- T3 – 272266, 608563.

2.4 The proposal includes access tracks including turning heads, underground cabling, a substation and control room, temporary construction and storage compound, a borrow pit and crane hard standing areas.

2.5 Access to the site is via an existing access track linking to the A76.

The Assessment

2.6 This report addresses issues relating to the anticipated potential effects upon the landscape character and visual amenity of the study area, likely to result from the proposed development.

2.7 This landscape and visual assessment was prepared after site visits in September 2023. This assessment describes and evaluates the change to the landscape and visual amenity and the extent to which these affect perception and views of the landscape.

2.8 Landscape character and visual assessment, although closely related to one another, have been considered separately for reasons of clarity and robustness.

Planning History

2.9 In the vicinity of the proposed site, there have been recent planning applications for wind farms which would have a direct relationship with the proposed turbines assessed in this landscape and visual assessment.

2.10 A request for scoping opinion was submitted from Drumbuie Renewables to Dumfries & Galloway Council (DGC) for the originally proposed three turbines of 180m height to blade tip. The Dumfries & Galloway Scoping Opinion Report (DGSOR) reference: 23/0206/SCO was provided by DGC, and this report follows closely those elements identified within the DGCSR.

2.11 The proposed height to blade tip of the turbines was subsequently reduced from an initial 180m to 149m to blade tip. This keeps the proposed turbines at a more appropriate scale as highlighted in the landscape character assessment and within the existing cumulative context. This was also highlighted in the DGCSR which considered the originally proposed 180m turbines.

2.12 For the cumulative assessment, research was carried out to check other wind farms in the vicinity, to determine if planning permissions had been approved or if proposals had been submitted.

The Study Area

2.13 The potential effects of likely landscape receptors and visual receptors were initially appraised within a study area of 10km radius. This study area focuses on the main issues of potential landscape and visual effects within a defined study area.

Landscape

2.14 A study area of 10km was used for the appraisal of the effects on landscape features and landscape character.

Visual

2.15 The visual assessment covered a radius of 10km from the development. The appraisal focussed on key viewpoints, illustrated with photomontages, although it also included assessment of notable views.

3 METHODOLOGY

Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology

3.1 This assessment has been prepared with reference to current recommended guidelines notably the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. The GLVIA relies on an appreciation of the existing landscape, a thorough understanding of the development proposals, evaluation of the magnitude of change predicted to result from the proposed development, the sensitivity of the existing landscape to change and the potential to mitigate effects.

3.2 Reference has also been made to the following guidelines:

- *Guidance note - Assessing the cumulative impact of onshore wind energy developments, SNH (March 2012)*
- *Cumulative Effect of Windfarms, SNH (April 2005)*
- *Visual Representation of Windfarms Good Practice Guidance, SNH (2007)*
- *Visual Representation of Development Proposals, The Landscape Institute, (2019)*
- *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance, SNH / The Countryside Agency (2002)*
- *Visual Assessment of Wind farms; Best Practice, prepared by University of Newcastle for SNH (2002)*
- *SNH guidance 'Visual Representation of Windfarms' version 2.2 (2017)*
- *SNH guidance - Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape V3 (2017)*
- *Dumfries and Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study (DGWLCS) (2020)*
- *Wind Energy Development: Development Management Considerations (2020)*
- *East Ayrshire Landscape Wind Capacity Study, East Ayrshire Council (2018)*
- *NatureScot Guidance - Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy developments (2021)*
- *NatureScot - Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland*
- *SNH National Landscape Character Assessment LCT 177– SOUTHERN UPLANDS*

– DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

- *Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas: Technical guidance (September 2020);*

3.3 The assessment has involved five key stages:

- *Defining the scope of the assessment, site reconnaissance and desktop background research;*
- *Establishment of the baseline conditions relating to landscape character, quality and value and sensitivity to change of the existing landscape;*
- *Evaluation of the potential effects anticipated to result from the introduction of the development into the baseline context;*
- *Assessment of the anticipated effects based on magnitude of change and sensitivity of the receptor; and*
- *Description of the anticipated effects and the degree of significance.*

Landscape Character Assessment Methodology

3.4 The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- *Consultation with the local planning authority;*
- *A review of the landscape character assessment within the 5km study area;*
- *A review of landscape designations from the Historic Environment Scotland (HES) database and local authority sources; and*
- *Identification of landscape character and its key landscape elements.*

3.5 A site appraisal of the landscape character and its key landscape elements was carried out. Site recording involved the completion of standardised recording forms and annotation of survey plans, supported by a photographic record of landscape character areas.

Effects Evaluation

3.6 The aim of the landscape character assessment is to identify, predict and evaluate potential key effects arising from the development. The assessment of predicted effects involves:

- *An appreciation of the nature, form and features of the development in*

the context of the baseline landscape character. Landscape character is a composite of physical, biological and cultural elements. Landform, hydrology, vegetation, land use pattern and associations combine to create a common 'sense of place' and identity which can be used to categorise the landscape into definable units (character areas). The level of detail and size of unit can be varied to reflect the scale of definition required. It can be applied at national, regional and local levels;

- *A review of the sensitivity to change of designated sites and landscape character in relation to changes proposed. This is assessed by a review of landscape value and scenic quality;*
- *An evaluation of the predicted magnitude of change experienced by designated sites and landscape character, assuming implementation of the development. This is in the form of quantification and description of the loss of, or indirect impact on, specific landscape components that make up the character of the various local landscape areas within the study area. Furthermore, it includes explanation of the predicted change in the composite quality of the various areas related to such loss and influence in combination with the compatibility of the proposed forms within or neighbouring the various areas; and*
- *Assessment of the degree of significance of the effects of the development on the designated site or landscape character under consideration by relating the magnitude of change to the sensitivity to change.*

Landscape Sensitivity to Change

3.7 Sensitivity to change in the context of the nature and form of the development and its effect on landscape character has been evaluated with reference to scenic quality and value, and has been rated as being high, medium or low. This three-point scale uses the following criteria:

- ***High**: a highly-valued landscape of high scenic quality susceptible to change arising from the development; and/or small scale, complex landforms and land cover characteristics with distinctive landscape features;*
- ***Medium**: a medium-valued landscape of medium scenic quality,*

reasonably tolerant of change arising from the development; and/or medium scale landforms and land cover in combination; occasional distinctive landscape features; and

- ***Low**: a low-valued landscape of low scenic quality, which is tolerant of change arising from the development; and/or large scale, simple landforms and land cover characteristics with no distinctive landscape features.*

Magnitude of Change

3.8 Magnitude of change has been assessed on a four point scale of high, medium, low or negligible. These criteria are described as follows:

- ***High**: very noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over an extensive area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a less extensive area;*
- ***Medium**: noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over less extensive area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a localised area;*
- ***Low**: perceptible indirect change in landscape characteristics over a localised area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a very localised area; and*
- ***Negligible**: virtually imperceptible or no indirect change in landscape characteristics over a very localised area, or virtually imperceptible, or no, direct change to landscape components/character.*

3.9 Wireline (or wireframe) diagrams and photomontages from viewpoint receptors have also been used as a tool to aid assessment.

3.10 The visibility of the development in the landscape would vary according to the weather conditions. The assessment has been carried out, as far as possible and as is best practice, by assuming the 'worst case' scenario, i.e. on a clear, bright day.

Degree of Significance Assessment

3.11 Using professional judgement and assisted by tools such as ZTVs, photomontages and wireline diagrams, the assessment of effects compares the magnitude of change experienced by a designated site or landscape character area to its

sensitivity to change of the type proposed. It also takes into account direct impacts upon existing landscape elements, features and key characteristics and assesses whether these would be lost or their relationships modified, in the context of their importance in determining the existing sensitivity of the character area in question.

3.12 Anticipated magnitude of change are reported in terms of a descriptive scale ranging from substantial – moderate – slight adverse through to negligible to an ascending scale of slight – moderate – substantial beneficial.

3.13 The criteria adopted for the assessment of landscape effects are as follows:

- ***Substantial adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: very noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;*
- ***Moderate adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;*
- ***Slight adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: perceptible deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;*
- ***Negligible degree of significance****: virtually imperceptible deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape.*

3.14 For the purposes of this assessment, degree of significance of moderate and above are considered to be significant.

3.15 See Table 1 – Landscape Character Degree of significance for a visual guide to understanding how the magnitude of change relates to the degree of significance over different sensitivities of landscape character.

3.16 The predicted effects have been considered in the light of primary mitigation measures associated with site planning, culminating in a statement of the predicted effects and their overall degree of significance to the landscape resource of the study area.

Visual Assessment Methodology

3.17 The assessment of visual impact has been based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Third Edition 2013. The guidelines suggest that visual effects are assessed from a clear understanding of the development proposed and any related landscape mitigation measures. It calls for an understanding of the visual form of the existing landscape, its quality and sensitivity to change taking into account the nature of the development.

3.18 The assessment has involved three key stages:

- *Determination of the main areas where effects would occur as a result of the location and orientation of the development, and establishment of the baseline conditions relating to the visual context of the study area and the location and sensitivity of potential visual receptors;*
- *Evaluation of the potential effects anticipated to result from the introduction of the development into the baseline context. The susceptibility of visual receptors to change in views and how they contribute to the sensitivity. Next the scale, extent and duration and how they contribute to the magnitude of effects are assessed; and*
- *Finally, the effects of the anticipated development are assessed by an evaluation of the magnitude of change on the sensitivity to change. The resulting judgments about sensitivity and magnitude inform the judgement of the overall degree of significance.*

Baseline Assessment

3.19 The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- *Consultation with the local planning authority, within the detailed study area regarding methodology, key views and viewpoint locations;*
- *Identification of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (visual envelope) for the proposed development;*
- *Identification and field assessment of potential receptors within the visual envelope; and*
- *Appreciation of the nature and importance of existing views experienced by the identified receptors.*

3.20 A site appraisal of potential impacts upon visual amenity was carried out. Site recording involved the completion of standardised recording forms and annotation of survey plans, supported by a photographic record of views from key receptor locations and using wireline projections.

Identification of Visual Receptors

3.21 For there to be a visual effect there is the need of a viewer (or visual receptor). Visual receptors include users of residential properties, recreational facilities and

other outdoor sites used by the public such as roads, railways and footpaths, which would be likely to experience a change in existing views as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed development.

3.22 Views from nearby key viewpoints are illustrated by photomontage, prepared using wireline diagrams and views from more distant viewpoints are illustrated by photographs; and views from those potential viewpoints with limited visibility of the proposed development are assessed but not illustrated with either wirelines or photomontages.

Appreciation of Existing Views

3.23 The visual assessment involved an initial desk-based review of OS mapping to establish the wider context, followed by site surveys to establish the form and nature of specific views and the role of the proposed development area in such views.

3.24 Site survey notes were recorded using a standardised spreadsheet that included receptor type and number, the nature of the existing view, the distance, angle and extent of the view of the proposed development, etc.

3.25 The evaluation involved the following tasks:

- *Analysis of the sensitivity of the viewpoint receptors to the anticipated change in their view; and*
- *Identification of the anticipated magnitude of change in existing views at these locations.*

Receptor Sensitivity

3.26 Visual receptors would have different sensitivities to the proposed development. The sensitivities of a receptor has been considered in relation to the susceptibility of the receptor, for example, the inhabitants of a residential dwelling are generally considered more sensitive to change than occupiers of a factory unit. The susceptibility of visual receptors to change in views and visual amenity depends on the activity or occupation of people. The people are the visual receptors who may be residents, recreational users, visitors and commuters. The judgement of susceptibility to change and value are assessed and how they contribute to the sensitivity of the visual receptor. The importance of the changed view to the receptor also contributes to an understanding of sensitivity to change. Therefore, orientation, nature of use, scenic quality and receptors' expectations of the changed

view in respect of existing context are all considered as a part of this evaluation. For example, a front-on changed view from the main habitable rooms of a dwelling would result in higher sensitivity to change than a side-on or rear changed view from the same receptor. The sensitivity of a receptor therefore depends upon the nature of the receptor and the importance to that receptor of the view being changed.

3.27 In this assessment, sensitivity is ranked on the following scale, which has been adapted from GLVIA methodology:

- ***High:*** *dwellings, footpaths, tracks and vantage points where the changes form part of an important/principal view such as a renowned local viewpoint;*
- ***Medium:*** *dwellings, footpaths, tracks and vantage points where the changes form part of a less important view, and roads where the changes form part of an important view; and*
- ***Low:*** *dwellings, footpaths, tracks and vantage points where the changes form part of an unimportant view, roads where the changes form a part of a less important view, and farm buildings (not used as dwellings) and industrial buildings where the changes form part of an important view.*

Magnitude of Change

3.28 The magnitude of change considers the extent of the proposed development visible, the extent of the existing view that would be occupied by the proposed development, the influence of the proposed development within the view and the viewing distance from the receptor to the proposed development. This has involved a combination of site, and desk-based analysis. On site, the elements of the proposed development potentially visible were recorded on the survey sheets. The analysis also involved the use of wireline projections and photomontages to assist the assessors with the evaluation.

3.29 In the assessment of visual effects, the magnitude of change is considered in terms of the type of change taking place in a view from a receptor and the degree of change which would take place in that view.

3.30 Magnitude of change is measured on the following scale, which has been adapted from GLVIA methodology:

- ***High:*** *where the proposed development would cause a very noticeable*

*change in the existing view**;***

- ***Medium:*** *where* the *proposed development would cause a noticeable change in the existing view;*
- ***Low:*** where *the proposed development would cause a perceptible change in the existing view; and*
- ***Negligible:*** *where the proposed development would cause a largely imperceptible change in the existing view.*

Assessment of Effects

3.31 The main criteria used to evaluate the visual impact are centred on the extent to which the proposed development would modify established views. The assessment of effects is based on consideration of both sensitivity to change and magnitude of change.

3.32 The determination of the effects is derived from the assessment of sensitivity to change and the magnitude of change combined with professional judgement.

3.33 The final assessment adopts the following categories to illustrate the level of visual effects:

- ***Substantial adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance:*** *very noticeable deterioration/ improvement in the existing view;*
- ***Moderate adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance:*** *noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing view;*
- ***Slight adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance:*** *perceptible deterioration/ improvement in the existing view; and*
- ***Negligible degree of significance:*** *largely imperceptible deterioration or improvement in the existing view.*

3.34 For the purposes of this assessment, degree of significance of moderate and above are considered to be significant and are applicable for landscape and visual assessments that require an EIA.

3.35 An assessment has been made of the visual effects upon receptors which would occur as a result of the proposed development at the viewpoint locations. However, the visual prominence of the development would vary according to weather conditions. The assessment has therefore been carried out in accordance with best practice, by assuming the "worst case" scenario; that is, on a clear, bright day in

winter. The assessment also takes into account changes in vehicle movement patterns and other proposal-related operations.

Visual Baseline Conditions

Viewpoints

3.36 The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- *Consultation with the local planning authority, regarding methodology, key views and viewpoint locations.*
- *Identification and field assessment of potential receptors within the visual envelope and an appraisal of their sensitivity.*
- *Appreciation of the nature and importance of existing views experienced by the identified receptors*.

3.37 The visual assessment involved an initial desk-based review of OS mapping to establish the wider context within which views initially appear to be set, followed by site surveys to establish the form and nature of specific views and the role of the proposed development area in such views. The site survey was informed by the computer generated ZTV mapping which indicates where the development may be visible from.

3.38 Table 4 shows the chosen viewpoints and reasons for inclusion in the assessment.

Methodology for Preparation of Photographs

3.39 The site survey includes a photographic record of the viewpoints. At each of the viewpoints the following details were recorded:

- *the grid reference (of the viewpoint)*
- *the angle of view (of the photo viewpoint)*
- *the ground height level or elevation*
- *the viewer height (measured to the lens of the camera)*
- *the date and time (of survey)*
- *the direction of view (to the development)*
- *the distance to the development (from the viewpoint)*
- *the grid reference of the development*
- *the height of the development*.

3.40 The photographs have been taken using a digital SLR camera with a full frame sensor using a 50mm fixed focal length lens and a 28mm fixed focal length lens.

Methodology for the Preparation of Wirelines

3.41 Wirelines (or wireframe drawings) are the visual representation of landform shown as contours laid over the bare ground. These are essential in order to prepare the photomontages.

3.42 The wirelines have been prepared using digital terrain software which produces a bare ground model as represented by the Digital Terrain Model (DTM). The DTM uses the Ordnance Survey's Terrain 50m DTM. While this is a reasonable representation of the landform, it is unable to represent very small topographic features precisely. The curvature of the earth and refraction through the atmosphere are taken into account but not the effects of screening due to woodland, buildings and other surface features.

3.43 The wirelines were checked against the photographs and site survey notes and directions of views. The wirelines are then lined up with the photographs at a suitable scale.

Methodology for Preparation of Photomontages

3.44 The photomontages are prepared by overlaying the wirelines as a transparency over the photographs to accurately position the development. This is achieved by lining up landform features in the photograph and the wirelines as well as inserting 'markers' in the DTM.

3.45 The visualisations of the wind turbines are presented in accordance with *SNH guidance 'Visual Representation of Windfarms' version 2.2 (2017)* and include the following sequence of visuals for each of the agreed viewpoints:

- *Viewpoint location plan for all viewpoints shown in context*
- *Individual thumbnail viewpoint location plan on each panorama and wireframe*
- *90degree panoramic baseline photo (stitched using cylindrical projection)*
- *90degree cumulative wireframe view (computer generated using cylindrical projection) presented below the baseline panorama for comparison and verification*
- *53.5degree cumulative wireframe view (computer generated with planar projection)*
- *53.5degree photomontage view; computer rendered using turbine 3D modelling and V-ray rendering software, overlaid onto a panorama stitched using planar projection and cropped to the correct field of view.*

3.46 All baseline panoramas, wireframes and photomontages are presented on A1 width sheets to pe printed at 840 x 297mm at the correct image sizes stated in the guidance as follows:

- *820mm x 130mm, for 90degree baseline panoramic photo & wireframe*
- *820mm x 260mm, for 53.5degree wireframe and photomontage.*

3.47 The details outlined in paragraph 3.39 are included as a spreadsheet and the images are annotated as appropriate.

Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology

3.48 Cumulative impacts are those which occur as a result of the construction of more than one wind farm or wind turbines in an area. The nature of these effects relates to the number of wind farms, scale, the landscape context and the inter-relationship between the visual envelopes of the developments. The assessment of cumulative impacts is an evaluation of the additional change and effect that the proposed development would have on a theoretical baseline position which assumes that all other existing, consented and application wind farms have been constructed.

Cumulative Visual Assessment

3.49 Cumulative effects may occur where a number of wind turbines increase the extent and prominence within a particular view. The likely significance of these effects relates to the number of wind turbines visible and their resultant scale, location and inter-relationship to each other within the view.

3.50 The methodology for the cumulative visual assessment follows the SNH guidance; Assessing the Cumulative impact of Onshore Wind Energy Wind Farms, from both static viewpoint receptors and routes. Combined views of wind turbines may be either simultaneous or successive. The assessment also considers the potential for sequential impacts experienced from route receptors where different wind turbines become visible whilst moving through the landscape. Sequential impacts may be occasional, frequent or constant.

3.51 The cumulative visual assessment includes:

- Identification and analysis of the baseline wind developments from each viewpoint/route;
- Evaluation of the potential magnitude of change to the baseline scenario resulting from the proposed turbines; and

- Assessment of the potential cumulative effects arising from the introduction of the proposed turbines.

The Cumulative Visual Baseline

3.52 The cumulative visual baseline analysis involves an appreciation of the existing view within the context of the baseline wind developments. Baseline information on existing and proposed wind farms within the study area has been collected. Identification of the baseline situation involves consideration of the scale, location and nature of the baseline wind farms within the view, the proportion of the view which is occupied by wind turbines and the potential importance to the viewer.

Cumulative Visual Magnitude of Change

3.53 Cumulative Magnitude of Change is the change of view with the introduction of the proposed turbines into the baseline wind development of the area. This includes the consideration of the potential nature, size, scale and location of the proposed change within the existing view and in relation to the existing wind turbines within the view.

3.54 The evaluation of the magnitude of change is based on the criteria outlined in the main visual assessment methodology.

3.55 Cumulative Magnitude of Change is measured on the following scale:

- ***High****: the addition of the proposed development to the baseline view would result in a very noticeable increase in Wind Turbines to the extent thereby they would become a dominating or obstructive feature within view.*
- ***Medium****: the addition of the proposed development would result in a noticeable increase in wind turbines to the extent whereby they would become prominent but would not dominate or obstruct the view.*
- ***Low****: the addition of the proposed development to the baseline view would result in a perceptible increase in wind turbines but would not increase the prominence of wind turbines as a feature in the view.*
- ***Negligible****: the addition of the proposed development in combination with other wind turbines would not result in any discernible increase in the appearance of wind turbines in the view.*

3.56 Cumulative Visual Effects defines whether the proposed development is significant or not significant from a cumulative perspective, and is the result of existing baseline wind turbines and the magnitude of change.

4 BASELINE

Landscape Character Baseline

Landscape Character of the Site

4.1 The proposed site is on the northeastern slopes of the large landform rising up to Black Hill and Bank Hill, west of Sanquhar and south of Kirkconnel.

4.2 This broader valley of the River Nith is echoed in the east by a range of hills forming an elevated landform.

4.3 This large landform is defined to the south by the Euchan Water and to the north by Kello Water. Glengap Burn between Bank Hill and Mid Hill form the western boundary of the landform and to the northeast, the elevation lowers gradually towards the River Nith.

4.4 The proposed site lies on the northern part of this larger landform, bounded to the north by Kello Water and is roughly bounded to the south by the access track running from Glengape past Drumbuie Moorhead and up to Black Hill. To the northeast, the land at Glengape forms the overall site boundary and March Burn is the rough boundary to the west.

4.5 The site is of a large scale, rising gently from the northeast up to the southwest (to the peak at Bank Hill), overlooking the wide, shallow valley of Upper Nithsdale.

4.6 A number of watercourses run across the site which consists of grazing grassland and moorland bog. There are pockets of commercial woodland which lie outwith the site boundary.

4.7 The access track leading up to Bank Hill is a noticeable, somewhat incongruous feature which runs across the site. This track continues on to the existing wind turbines further southwest from the site.

4.8 Access to the site is from the A76 and the C125n before linking west with the existing site entrance and access track.

4.9 The proposed site is in an elevated location and has an open nature.

4.10 There are existing vertical elements of wind turbines to the south and west of the proposed site. These turbines are detailed in the cumulative wind farm section.

Landscape Character Type

4.11 The landscape character types of the Dumfries and Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study (DGWLCS) were informed by the earlier Dumfries and Galloway Landscape Assessment (1998).

4.12 The proposed wind turbines lie within the Landscape Character Type (LCT) **19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale**.

4.13 The Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) National Landscape Character Assessment character areas share the same boundaries as the Dumfries and Galloway Landscape Assessments. The difference being the number given to the Landscape Type. LCT 177 - Southern Uplands – Dumfries & Galloway.

4.14 The Key Characteristics of this Landscape Character Type are (extracted from SNH NLCA):

- *Large, smooth dome/conical shaped hills, predominantly grass-covered.*
- *Open and exposed character except within incised valleys.*
- *Dramatically sculpted landforms and awe-inspiring scale.*
- *Distinctive dark brown/purple colour of heather on some of the higher areas.*
- *Pockets of woodland in incised valleys.*
- *Stone dykes occasionally define the lower limit.*
- *Legacy of lead and other mining activity, with extensive archaeological remains around the former mining village of Wanlockhead.*
- *Wind farms locally characteristic, away from the more dramatic, scenic and sculptural slopes and skylines.*

4.15 In relation to wind turbines:

- *Large-scale wind farms are locally characteristic of the open Southern Uplands - Dumfries and Galloway in upper Nithsdale and around Carsphairn and Langholm, away from the more dramatic, scenic and sculptural slopes and skylines. The defining strong areas of sculptural and dramatic landform, and landmark hills remain the dominant presence. Wind turbines are at times key defining characteristics of adjacent Landscape Character Types (such as Foothills with Forest – Dumfries & Galloway and Southern Uplands with Forest – Dumfries & Galloway) which can be felt strongly as nearby backdrops in the Southern Uplands – Dumfries and Galloway.*

4.16 The DGWLCS summary of Sensitivity, Key Cumulative Issues, Key Constraints, Opportunities and Guidance for Development are shown below.

4.17 **Summary of sensitivity**:

- These units of the Southern Uplands Type have a High sensitivity to Very Large turbines (150m+), a **High-medium** sensitivity to Large turbines (80-150m) and a High-medium sensitivity to the Medium typology (turbines 50-80m).

4.18 **Key cumulative issues** that may arise within the Southern Uplands - Nithsdale and NW Lowther (19) landscape character units are likely to include:

- *Overwhelming effects on views from the A76, settlement and footpaths in upper Nithsdale as a result of the combination of operational and consented large wind turbines sited within this landscape, the adjacent Ken unit of the Southern Uplands with Forest (19a) and the Upper Dales (9) - Upper Nithsdale landscape unit.*
- *A build-up of wind turbines extending along much of the skylines formed by the Southern Uplands either side of Upper Nithsdale, potentially creating an oppressive and cluttered effect.*
- *Further visibility of large turbines on containing skylines above the sensitive intimately scaled valleys of the Euchan and Scar Water – existing effects could be significantly exacerbated by the introduction of the Very Large typology (turbines >150m) either as new developments or repowering schemes.*

4.19 **Key constraints**:

- *More complex landform associated with the deeply incised valleys of the Kello and Euan Water and the more defined, rugged hills bordering the Upland Glens (10) of the Scar and Shinnel Water.*
- *The distinctive landmark hills of Blackcraig, Merkland, Cairn Kinney (within East Ayrshire) and Cairnkinna; the latter particularly important in providing a backdrop to Drumlanrig Castle and its designed landscape seen from the Thornhill area.*
- *The high visibility of these uplands from the north-western area of the Upper Dale (9) - Upper Nithsdale, where long hill slopes and generally fairly smooth skyline ridges provide a backdrop and focus on views from settlement and roads.*
- *Commercial forestry within adjacent upland areas in Dumfries and Galloway and neighbouring East Ayrshire and extensive operational and consented wind farm development in the Southern Uplands, which increases the value of the remaining less modified parts of these hills and their open character.*

- *The important contribution the dramatic sculptural open hills of the southern part of the Nithsdale unit make to wider scenic quality as recognised in the RSA designations that cover part of these uplands.*
- *Recreational use by walkers using tracks, minor roads and the SUW which increase visual sensitivity.*
- *Cumulative landscape and visual effects with the many operational, under-construction and consented wind farms located in this and adjoining landscapes.*

4.20 **Opportunities**:

- *The generally simple landform and gently undulating upland plateaux within the less visually prominent interior of the NW Lowthers unit.*
- *The sparsely populated nature of these uplands.*
- *An absence of landscape designations in the northern part of the Nithsdale unit and the NW Lowthers unit.*

4.21 **Guidance for development**:

- *There is no scope for the Very Large typology (turbines 150m+) to be accommodated in either of these landscape units due to the increased impact that could occur on more sensitive landscapes, such as the Upland Glens (10) of the Euchan and Scar Water and Shinnel valleys plus the Upper Dale (9) - Upper Nithsdale unit. The scope is also influenced by the significant cumulative effects that would be likely to occur with nearby operational, under construction and consented wind farms which largely comprise turbines of <130m high.*
- *There are very few, if any, opportunities for additional turbines within the Large typology (80-150m) to be accommodated in the Nithsdale unit given the extent of wind farm development already consented and the key landscape and visual constraints listed in 2.2.2 above in relation to effects on the sensitive Upland Glens (10) and on more pronounced rugged open hills in the southern part of this landscape unit. The Nithsdale unit of the Southern Uplands is concluded to be close to capacity for additional wind turbine development.*

Adjacent Landscape Character Types

4.22 The Dumfries and Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study (DGWLCS) shows the site resides adjacent to the following Landscape Character Types:

- LCT 9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale Area
- LCT 19 – Southern Uplands – NW Lowthers
- LCT 19a – Southern Uplands with Forest - Ken
- LCT 10 – Upland Glens – Scar

4.23 The Scoping Opinion highlighted the Lowthers Unit of Rugged Southern Uplands (LCT19) as a Landscape Character Type to be considered, *'Due to the proximity of the proposed wind turbines to the Upper Nithsdale (LCT 9) area, this landscape character type should be closely considered for potential indirect landscape impacts.'*

4.24 Part of the study area covers the eastern edge of the East Ayrshire Wind Capacity Study. The following list shows the related adjacent Landscape Character Types from this character study:

- LCT 10 – Upland River Valley
- LCT 18a – East Ayrshire Plateau Moorlands
- LCT 20a – East Ayrshire Southern Uplands

4.25 It is important to note that the landscape sensitivity to 'large' typology turbines reported within the DGWLCS and also in the East Ayrshire Landscape Wind Capacity Study is a judgement concerning how sensitive each character type is to wind energy development in that specific unit. This is not necessarily the same as being of a particular sensitivity to wind farm development in an adjacent or distant character unit which may result in indirect effects on landscape character. The sensitivity of the character unit to wind energy development in an adjoining or distant character unit is typically lower than reported here.

Landscape Designations

4.26 Table 2 provides summary details of landscape designations, however there are no landscape designations which cover the site of the proposed turbines.

4.27 The nearest **National Park** is Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park which is approximately 79km north of the site.

4.28 There are no **National Scenic Areas** in the study area. The nearest is Nith Estuary 44km southeast of the site.

4.29 There are no **Wild Land Areas** in the study area. The nearest is Merrick, 32.5km southwest.

4.30 The Thornhill Uplands Dumfries & Galloway **Regional Scenic Area** lies, at its nearest point, approximately 3.5km to the south and east of the proposed site. "*The*

designated area centres around the Middle and Upper Dale of the Nith from Mennock south to Auldgirth, and the series of glaciated Upland Glens of the Mennock, Dalveen, Scar, Shinnel, Dalwhat and Castlefairn which form its tributaries, carving their way southwards through the hills of the Southern Uplands."

4.31 In the neighbouring county of South and East Ayrshire is the Southern Uplands **Sensitive Landscape Area** which lies around 4.4km to the west of the site at its nearest point. This designation is recognised for its landscape quality.

4.32 The only **Conservation Area** in the study area is the Sanquhar Conservation Area which is 4.96km to the east of the proposed site.

4.33 There are no **World Heritage Sites** within the study area.

4.34 The nearest **Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)** is Kemp's Castle, 4.16km to the east of the site. Crichton Peel and Sanquhar Castle are 5.43km to the east, within Sanquhar town.

4.35 There are 16 **Listed Buildings** within the 5km study area, mostly in and around Kirkconnel and on the west side of Sanquhar. The nearest Listed Building to the proposed development is Kello Bridge (over Kello Water at Old Kelloside) which is approximately 1.97km north of the site. The Sanquhar Conservation Area is just over 5km from the proposed turbines and contains numerous other listed buildings.

4.36 There are no **Designed Parks and Gardens** within the 5km study area. The nearest designated garden is at Drumlanrig Castle which is approximately 12.5km to the southeast at its nearest point.

4.37 There are no **Country Parks** within the study area.

4.38 Other landscape designations in the 5km study area which are more related to biological or geological reasons include two **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** and one **Special Protection Areas (SPA)**. For the purposes of this landscape assessment, it is the landscape value and fabric of the landscape which is most important to understand and assess. Therefore, these designations are not directly pertinent to this landscape assessment.

4.39 There are various **Ancient Woodlands** around the study area. The adjacent woodlands to the proposed site are both of plantation origin and are Guttie Burn Plantation to the north and Glengape Belt to the east. The remaining areas of ancient woodland in the study area are mostly to the north and east on the slopes above the River Nith with a few smaller areas on the northern side of the valley.

Baseline Views

4.40 A series of fourteen representative viewpoints were identified within the study area. These visual receptors are to be found within 10km of the proposed wind turbines within the ZTV which is shown in Plan 8 Blade Tip ZTV (149m) and Plan 9 Hub Height ZTV (93m).

Visual Amenity Baseline Conditions

4.41 The area was examined on site from different viewpoints to establish the potential effects of the proposed turbine on visual amenity to different visual receptors (recreational users, residents, road users).

4.42 The following viewpoints have been chosen as key representative viewpoints in the close vicinity of the proposed turbines. See Plan 1 and Table 4 in the appendix.

VP1

4.43 Viewpoint 1 (See Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) – St. Connel's Church, Kirkconnel representative of recreational users.

VP2

4.44 Viewpoint 2 (See Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) – A76 northwest of Sanquhar; representative of road users.

VP3

4.45 Viewpoint 3 (See Figures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) – SUW east of Sanquhar; representative of recreational users.

VP4

4.46 Viewpoint 4 (See Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) – Sanquhar Castle; representative of recreational users.

VP5

4.47 Viewpoint 5 (See Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3) – Crawick Multiverse; representative of recreational users.

VP6

4.48 Viewpoint 6 (See Figures 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) – Mennock; representative of road users.

VP7

4.49 Viewpoint 7 (See Figures 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3) – A76 west of Kirkconnel; representative of road users.

VP8

4.50 Viewpoint 8 (See Figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3) – Corsencon Hill; representative of recreational users.

VP9

4.51 Viewpoint 9 (See figures 9.1 and 9.2) – Cattle grid east of Guffock Hill; representative of road users.

VP10

4.52 Viewpoint 10 (See Figures 10.1 and 10.2) – East Mount Lowther; representative of recreational users.

VP11

4.53 Viewpoint 11 (See Figures 11.1, 11.2 and 11.3) – Kelloholm, to the south of the village; representative of residents.

VP12

4.54 Viewpoint 12 (See Figures 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3) – St Connel's Chapel, near Kirkland; representative of recreational users.

VP13

4.55 Viewpoint 13 (See Figures 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3) – Southern Upland Way (SUW), Whing Head approach from Upper Nithsdale; representative of recreational users.

VP14

4.56 Viewpoint 14 (See Figures 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3) – Kemp's Castle; representative of recreational users.

Recreational Visual Receptors

4.57 Recreational users are people who use recreational routes, these may be in the form of core paths, cycle ways and open access land.

4.58 The **Southern Upland Way (SUW)** is a long-distance footpath and is one of 'Scotland's Great Trails'. It runs from Portpatrick on the south-west coast of Scotland to Cockburnspath on the eastern coast. At its nearest point, the SUW passes the proposed site 3.2km to the southeast.

4.59 There are a number of **Core Paths** within 5km of the proposed turbines, the nearest is the route from Kirkconnel to Mynwhirn Hill which is 1.8km to the northwest of the proposal at its nearest point.

4.60 The closest **National Cycle Network (NCN)** route, the NCN74, is over 10km to the northeast of the proposed development.

4.61 Visitors to the land art attraction at Crawick Multiverse (represented by VP5).

Residential Visual Receptors

4.62 The context of the visual amenity within the study area and within the ZTV includes the following villages; Kirkconnel, Kelloholm and Sanquhar.

4.63 There are several other hamlets, scattered dwellings and farmsteads within the study area.

Road User Visual Receptors

4.64 Dynamic views may be seen from the A76 which is the main route between Dumfries and Kilmarnock. The road passes to the northeast of the proposed site along the valley bottom through Sanquhar and Kirkconnel within the 10km study area.

4.65 The southern end of the B797 from Mennock to Wanlockhead is in the study area, but mostly out of the ZTV, except for the junction at Mennock (represented by VP6). The southern end of the B740 at Crawick is also in the study area and also within the ZTV, however much of the road further north is out of the ZTV. There are a many local roads in the study area.

Sequential Views

The Southern Upland Way (SUW)

4.66 Recreational users on the SUW would experience sequential views of the site and existing wind turbines. These views would occur from the northeast of Sanquhar,

with some lost visibility where there is intervening housing in Sanquhar, then east of Sanquhar, near Sanquhar Castle and south of Sanquhar. Across the moors to the west, the existing turbines are in sight from this route, although not close up or dominant. There is some visibility of the existing turbines until reaching the elevated location of Whing Head.

The A76

4.67 Road users may experience sequential views when travelling along the A76 in either an easterly or a westerly direction along the long and wide valley of the River Nith.

4.68 Road users on the A76 travelling in an easterly direction would have a view of the existing site and existing wind turbines in a south-easterly direction.

4.69 Road users on the A76 travelling in a north-westerly direction would have a view of the existing site and existing wind turbines in a westerly direction. There would be views in a westerly direction to the site and existing turbines from west of Mennock until east of Sanquhar then views are screened by built form, with occasional glimpses through buildings. There would be views west of Sanquhar until Kelloholm and then views are screened by buildings. West of Kelloholm / Kirkconnel, the direction of travel is in a westerly direction with no direct views to the site and existing wind turbines.

Cumulative Baseline

Other Wind Turbine Sites

4.70 The following table shows all other wind turbine developments within 10km of the proposed turbine up until the cut-off date of 11/09/2023.

4.71 See Plan 7 for cumulative wind farms located within the study area.

Wind Farm(s) Name	Number of Turbines	Blade Tip Height (m)
Operational		
Twentyshilling Hill	9	140
Whiteside Hill	10	121.5
Sanquhar	9	130
Hare Hill	20	63.5
Hare Hill Extension	35	91
Sandy Knowe	24	125
Sunnyside	2	62
Consented		
Sanquhar Six *	6	130
Lethans	22	176-220
Sanquhar II	44	149-200
Lorg **	9	130-150
Glenmucklock	8	150
In Planning		
Lethans Extension	10	251
Sandy Knowe Extension	6	149
Euchanhead	21	230
Lorg ***	15	176-200
Scoping		
Rowancraig	6	180
Cloud Hill	11	180

4.72 *The Sanquhar Six scheme was granted approval, although it has since been superseded with the approval of the Sanquhar II Wind Farm.

4.73 **Not assessed - This approved wind farm at Lorg covers the same site as the In Planning Lorg Wind Farm. The 'worst case' scenario is represented by the latter scheme which is assessed in this cumulative assessment.

4.74 ***This In Planning wind farm at Lorg is to be considered in the cumulative assessment as it represents the 'worst case' scenario.

5 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

Landscape Character Assessment

5.1 The following section provides an assessment on the effects that the proposed development would have on the landscape character areas and designated sites, within the 5km detailed study area (as summarised in Table 2 of the appendix). The assessment evaluates the likely effects during construction and in the longer term.

5.2 The judgement of the sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of change informs the assessment of the degree of significance.

The Effect on the Landscape During Construction

5.3 Construction activities which have the potential to affect the landscape character include:

- Preparation and completion of the individual access tracks and turbine foundations
- The erection of the wind turbines
- Presence of machinery and plant for construction
- Digging for underground cabling
- Construction of crane hard standings.

5.4 From the description of the construction activities as outlined above, any effects on the landscape character during the construction phase would be temporary for a short duration.

5.5 Therefore, the short-term and temporary nature of the construction activities on the landscape character would be **Low**.

The Effect on the Landscape Character of the Site

5.6 The proposed turbines would reside within the northeastern slopes of the large, simple landform rising up to Black Hill and Bank Hill and would be in scale and proportion with this large landform.

5.7 Due to the large scale of this landscape, there is capacity within the landscape fabric to accommodate these proposed turbines. The size and scale of the proposed turbines are proportionate to the large scale of the landform and would be compositionally balanced.

5.8 The effect of the proposed turbines on the immediate landscape character would be the addition of large vertical elements. These proposed turbines would relate to

other wind turbines in the immediate landscape. There would also be some association with other wind turbines across this particular landscape, although with some separation along ridges.

5.9 The proposed access track would change the landcover of the existing field in the localised area from grassland to grassland with access track. There is a main artery track further than the proposed site that is already established.

5.10 The magnitude of change to the immediate landscape character would be **high** as can be expected.

The Effect on the Landscape Character Type

5.11 The proposed development would introduce a further three wind turbines into the **Landscape Character Type 19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale.**

5.12 The proposed turbines are located just inside the most northern boundary of the character area, on the northeast facing slopes of the valley. The neighbouring Landscape Character Type 9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale Area shares a boundary with the northern boundary of the site.

5.13 Landscape Character Type 19 – Nithsdale contains a number of existing wind farms (within the study area): Sanquhar which is on the same landform as the proposed development but higher up the hill; Whiteside Hill which is to the southwest of the proposal and Twentyshilling Hill to the southeast. The adjacent Sanquhar II Wind Farm was recently granted approval and will form a large new wind energy element in the west of the character area with turbines up to 200m in height. Two of the turbines of the proposed Sanquhar II development will be located immediately west of the proposed development site, however these two turbines will be lower at 149m to blade tip.

5.14 The proposed turbines would reinforce the wind energy character of this part of the LCT with the existing wind farms of Sanquhar and Whiteside Hill. The proposed turbines would be located on the mid to lower slopes of the valley side, but at a similar elevation to other wind farms in the immediate valley surroundings.

5.15 With reference to the DGSOR requesting that the report must refer to the descriptions and criteria as set out in the *Dumfries and Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study (DGWLCS)*, the following examines and responds to each criterion in relation to the DGWFLCS with references shown in italics and requested items in bold:

5.16 **Sensitivity** – see section below for examination of sensitivity criterion.

5.17 **Cumulative Issues** – Key cumulative issues that may arise within the Southern Uplands – Nithsdale and NW Lowther (19) landscape character units are likely to include:

- *The effects on views from the A76, settlement and footpaths in upper Nithsdale as a result of the combination of operational and consented large wind turbines* – these have been assessed elsewhere in this report.
- *A build-up of wind turbines extending along much of the skylines formed by the Southern Uplands, potentially creating an oppressive and cluttered effect.* With the addition of these three proposed turbines adjacent to existing numbers of turbines, there would not be an oppressive and cluttered effect.

5.18 **Opportunities** – *nothing of relevance included.*

5.19 **Key Constraints**

- *The high visibility of these uplands from the north-western area of the Upper Dale (9) - Upper Nithsdale, where long hill slopes and generally fairly smooth skyline ridges provide a backdrop and focus on views from settlement and roads.* These areas of view have been examined in detail in the visual amenity section.
- *Commercial forestry within adjacent upland areas in Dumfries and Galloway and neighbouring East Ayrshire and extensive operational and consented wind farm development in the Southern Uplands, which increases the value of the remaining less modified parts of these hills and their open character.* The proposed turbines are outwith the existing plantations in this area and there would be no constraint.
- *Recreational use by walkers using tracks, minor roads and the SUW which increase visual sensitivity.* This has been examined in detail in the sequential views section of the visual amenity assessment.
- *Cumulative landscape and visual effects with the many operational, under-construction and consented wind farms located in this and adjoining landscapes.* This is examined in the Cumulative assessment section.

5.20 **Guidance for development**

- *There is no scope for the Very Large typology (turbines 150m+) to be accommodated in either of these landscape units due to the increased impact that could occur on more sensitive landscapes, such as the Upland Glens (10) of the Euchan and Scar Water and Shinnel valleys plus the Upper Dale (9) - Upper Nithsdale unit.* The DGWFLCS is outdated since the approval of the Sanquhar II scheme which includes turbines up to a height

of 200m and so is therefore contrary to the statement above. Therefore, the baseline conditions within this landscape character type have altered since the 2020 report.

5.21 The following elements refer to **the detailed guidance table across the landscape sensitivity criteria** for large turbines (80 – 150m):

5.22 **Scale and Openness**

- *Tall turbines could relate to this generally open and large-scale landscape without dominating the height of hills.* The scale of the proposed turbines would relate to the large scale of this landscape.
- *Sensitive rating: Medium*

5.23 **Landform**

- *This typology could relate to the broad ridges within the Nithsdale unit (19).* The size and scale of the proposed turbines would relate to this particular landform.
- *Sensitivity rating: Medium*

5.24 **Landcover and Landmark Features**

- *The simple land cover pattern would theoretically be less sensitive to wind farm development although the openness of these uplands contrasts with the densely forested Southern Uplands with Forest (19a) and turbines would compromise this quality.* The proposed site is open and would be less sensitive to wind turbines in this location being sited away from landmarks, such as nearby plantations.
- *Sensitivity rating: Medium*

5.25 **Settlement and Archaeology**

- *There may be some limited scope for this typology to be accommodated within the Nithsdale unit without conflicts of scale and impacts on the setting of settlements.* The nearest settlement is Kelloholm with a separation distance of 2km.
- *The setting of archaeological sites remains sensitive.* There is adequate separation distance between the nearest archaeological sites of Kemp's Castle (4.28km) and Sanquhar Castle (5.45km) and the proposed turbines.
- *Sensitivity rating: Medium*

5.26 **Landscape Context**

- *This typology could dominate adjacent small scale Upland Glens (10) and diminish the role of more distinctive landform and landmark hills in providing a rugged, open backdrop and contrast to these glens and other more*

patterned and settled landscapes including the SE section of the Nithsdale Upper Dales (9) and Foothills (18) and adversely affecting wider scenic composition. The proposed site is on a large section of landform and away from key valleys.

- *Operational and consented wind farms located in these uplands reduces scope for additional turbines to be accommodated without significantly increasing effects on more sensitive landscape character types.* There would be scope for the relatively small number of the three proposed turbines within this landscape context.
- *Sensitivity rating: High-medium*

5.27 **Perceptual Qualities**

- *Perceptual qualities would be likely to be less affected if development were concentrated within the more developed uplands.* The proposed site is adjacent to the more developed uplands, where turbines already exist.
- *Sensitivity rating: Medium*

5.28 **Views and Visibility**

- *The outer hills within this unit and the remaining undeveloped parts of the Nithsdale unit are more visible.* The key viewpoints identified examine in detail views from the east towards the Nithsdale unit.
- *Turbines of this size visible on sensitive skylines or seen at the head of narrow side glens would have a dominant effect on views.* These views are examined in the visual amenity assessment.
- *There would be likely to be close visibility of this typology from elevated hill tracks and the SUW.* Recreational Users on the SUW, particularly from Whing Head would be in relatively close proximity to the proposed turbines (3.28km). Further assessment has been undertaken in the visual amenity assessment – see viewpoint 13.
- *Sensitivity rating: High-medium*

5.29 **Landscape Values**

- *This typology would adversely affect the scenic value of these uplands and reduce their contrast with adjacent valleys and upland glens if sited so visible in close proximity from the RSA. Sensitivity is reduced in other parts of this landscape.* The landscape value would be slightly diminished, although the proposed turbines would be in the vicinity of exiting turbines.
- *Sensitivity rating: High-medium to Low*

5.30 The proposed turbines would contribute to existing characteristics of this landscape type already containing existing turbines. The key criterion have been adhered to and the proposed development would not be out of keeping with the guidelines. The magnitude of change to this landscape type would therefore be **Low**.

5.31 The sensitivities of this landscape type to accommodate the wind turbine is overall **High-Medium**.

5.32 This would result in a **Moderate - Slight/ Moderate** degree of significance on the Landscape Character Type 19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale Landscape Character Type as a result of the proposed turbine.

The Effect on Adjacent Landscape Character Types

5.33 Adjacent **Dumfries and Galloway Landscape Character Types**:

5.34 **LCT9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale** – This landscape character type is the nearest to the proposed turbines. The proximity of the proposed turbines to this LCT on the slopes of the valley increases the likelihood of effects. However, the proposed turbines would add further wind turbines into an adjacent landscape character type which contains a number of existing wind farms, reinforcing the wind energy character of the area. Sandy Knowe is a wind farm within LCT9 which is at a similar elevation on the valley side to the proposal.

5.35 **LCT 19 – Southern Uplands – NW Lowthers -** This LCT is on the opposite side of the valley to the proposed turbines. From here, there would be a slight increase in the number of turbines which would be perceived within the wider landscape.

5.36 **LCT 19 - Lowthers Unit of Rugged Southern Uplands -** This area is on the opposite side of the valley to the proposed turbines and is incorporated within the more rugged and mostly undeveloped character area of the Southern Uplands. Only views from the highest elevations and the most western parts of this area would be affected and from these areas only a minor increase in the number of turbines in the wider landscape would be perceived.

5.37 **LCT 19a – Southern Uplands with Forest – Ken -** Intervisibility between the proposed development and this LCT is sporadic due to the undulating landform. There are a number of existing wind farms in this character type and the addition of the proposed turbines in an adjacent area would not change the characteristics of this LCT.

5.38 **LCT 10 – Upland Glens – Scar -** The separation distance between this LCT and the proposed turbines and the limited intervisibility would mitigate any potential effects.

5.39 Adjacent **East Ayrshire Landscape Character Types**:

5.40 **LCT 10 – Upland River Valley -** There would be limited intervisibility between the proposal and this character type. The proposed turbines would be seen within the existing context of wind energy development including Sandy Knowe.

5.41 **LCT 18a – East Ayrshire Plateau Moorlands -** This LCT is on the opposite side of the valley to the proposed turbines. Lethans Hill and Corsencon Hill stand between the proposal and the LCT.

5.42 **LCT 20a – East Ayrshire Southern Uplands -** The separation distance and the limited intervisibility between the LCT and the proposed turbines would mitigate any effects which are limited due to the proposed turbines being visible in context with other turbines in that area of the landscape when viewed from this LCT.

The Effect on Landscape Designations

5.43 For a summary of the effects on landscape designations, see Table 2 in the Appendix.

5.44 The proposal is at a significant distance from and therefore has no effect on the following designations:

- **National Park**;
- **National Scenic Area**;
- **Wild Land Area**; and
- **World Heritage Site**;

5.45 The Thornhill Uplands Dumfries & Galloway **Regional Scenic Area (RSA)** lies, at its nearest point, approximately 3.5km to the south and east of the proposed site. There would be limited visibility of the proposed turbines from within this RSA which would be from some of the peaks of hills in the north-western portion of the area. Any effects on the designation would be indirect and due to the small number of proposed turbines and the existing cumulative baseline, there would be a barely perceptible increase in the number of turbines in the surrounding area. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the approved Sanquhar II scheme would lie in between the RSA and the proposed turbines and therefore any effects may be imperceptible.

5.46 In the neighbouring county of South and East Ayrshire is the Southern Uplands **Sensitive Landscape Area** which lies around 4.4km to the west of the site at its nearest point. The majority of this designation is outwith the ZTV, there would be views to the proposal from Corsencon Hill (see VP8) and also from the high ground between Hare Hill, with its large existing wind farm, and Blackcraig Hill. Due to the separation distance from the designation and the low number of turbines, the proposal would have a minor indirect effect on the designation.

5.47 The Sanquhar **Conservation Area** is the only one in the study area and is 4.96km to the east of the proposed site. The designation covers the central area of the village and therefore the built form of the southern part of Sanquhar would screen views to the proposed turbines from most of the Conservation Area. There may be some views to the proposal from the southwestern facing windows of buildings within the designation and some glimpsed views between buildings from the streets. Overall, due to the limited intervisibility between designation and the proposed turbines, there would be a low magnitude of change on the designation, resulting in a moderate degree of significance.

5.48 The reasons for the designation of the **Scheduled Ancient Monuments** (SAM) in the study area would not be affected by the proposed turbines, despite there being possible views of them. Therefore, the magnitude of change on the SAMs would be low.

5.49 The magnitude of change on the **Listed Buildings** would range from None to Low. Therefore, the effects on the Listed Buildings in the study area would not be significant.

5.50 The reason for the designation of the **Ancient Woodlands** in the study area would not be directly affected by the proposed development and so there would be no effect.

Landscape Character Assessment Summary

5.51 The proposed turbines would be at an appropriate scale and proportion to the landform and adjacent to existing wind turbines.

5.52 The effect on the landscape character during construction activities would be short-term and magnitude of change on the landscape character would be **Low**.

5.53 The magnitude of change to the Landscape Character Type 19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale would be **Low**. The landscape character sensitivity is **High-Medium**, resulting in a **Moderate - Slight/ Moderate** degree of significance.

5.54 The proposed turbines are not within a landscape designation and the nearest would be 3.5km to the Thornhill Uplands Dumfries & Galloway Regional Scenic Area with indirect effects due to the presence of existing wind turbines. The Southern Uplands Sensitive Landscape Area is 4.4km away, but likewise with indirect effects.

5.55 There would be a low magnitude of change on a section of Sanquhar Conservation Area due to the limited intervisibility between designation and the proposed turbines.

5.56 There would be Low magnitude of change on a small number of Listed Buildings.

5.57 Overall, the effect of the proposed turbine on landscape character would be **Low**.

Visual Amenity Assessment

5.58 This section addresses issues relating to potential degree of significance upon the visual amenity of the study area likely to result from the proposed turbines (as summarised in Table 4 of the appendix). It describes and evaluates the potential change in views of the existing landscape during construction and once in operation, and the extent to which these affect residents, visitors and users of the landscape.

Basis of Assessment

5.59 The key elements and characteristics of the proposed development which may give rise to visual effects are as follows:

- The wind turbines
- The access tracks
- Substation and control room
- Temporary presence of the Crane.

5.60 All disturbed areas would be restricted as far as practicable to the specified areas.

The Effect on the Visual Amenity during construction

5.61 Construction activities which have the potential to affect visual amenity receptors include:

- Erection of the wind turbines
- Preparation of access tracks and foundation for the wind turbines
- Presence of machinery and plant for construction
- Digging for underground cabling
- Construction of temporary Crane hard standings.

5.62 From the description of the construction activities as outlined above, any effects on the visual amenity receptors and their views during the construction phase would be for a temporary duration.

5.63 Therefore, the short-term temporary nature of the construction activities on the visual amenity receptors and their views would ensure that the overall visual effects would be **Low**.

Visual Appearance of the Proposal

5.64 The appearance of the proposed turbines would be 3-bladed rotors at a maximum tip height of 149m.

5.65 The proposed turbines were reduced in height from an original height to blade tip of 180m down to the proposed height of 149m. This reduces the turbines potential for impacting valley receptors and also keeps them below the threshold for visible aviation lighting at night.

5.66 The turbine design is 3-bladed, has a typical nacelle and hub and colour of neutral light grey.

5.67 There would be movement with a rotary action which would orientate in the direction of the wind accordingly.

5.68 The access tracks to the proposed turbines are from the existing access track to the operational Sanquhar Wind Farm.

5.69 For the temporary duration of the erection of the wind turbines, a crane would be seen on the site.

Assessment of Effects

5.70 As described in the baseline, 14 representative viewpoints were identified within the 10km overall study area.

5.71 The ZTV (Plan 8 Blade Tip ZTV (149m)) shows the area of 10km where the proposed development may be seen, however, this is a bare earth model and localised screening such as hedgerows, trees and intervening buildings are not taken into account.

5.72 The extent of the visibility of the proposed turbines shown in the ZTV, is centred mostly within the 10km and largely towards the northwest. There are large areas of coniferous woodland plantations to the south that further screen views.

5.73 Within the ZTV the following viewpoints have been chosen as key viewpoints representative of different visual receptors in the study area – residents, road users and recreational users. See also Table 4 in the appendix.

5.74 The following assessment of effects at each viewpoint assumes a baseline as per the baseline photograph, which is the current view on the date it was taken. The change in view has then been assessed assuming the addition of the proposed turbines only, i.e. not including those other wind farms which are approved but not yet built, in-planning or in scoping. See the cumulative visual amenity assessment for assessment including these other cumulative wind farms.

VP1

5.75 Viewpoint 1 (See Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) – St. Connel's Church, Kirkconnel representative of recreational users.

5.76 The **Existing View** – This viewpoint is located in the churchyard of St. Connel's Church in Kirkconnel. It is at the front of the church facing south and is representative of visitors to the church.

5.77 The view looks over the churchyard in the foreground to a group of trees on the far side of the A76 road, which can be made out in the right of the view. The River Nith runs past the view beyond the trees but cannot be seen in this view. In the distance, there are glimpsed views between gaps in the trees to the gently rising landform beyond. The Libry Moor plantation can be seen on the horizon in gaps between the trees on the right of the view.

5.78 A number of existing wind turbines of the operational Sanquhar Wind Farm can be seen above the plantation on the horizon. To the left of the view, the Twentyshilling Hill Wind Farm can just be made out in the distance between a gap in the trees.

5.79 This viewpoint is from a place of worship and is likely to be visited by recreational users, therefore visual receptor sensitivity is considered to be high.

5.80 The **Change in View** – It is theoretically possible that all three proposed turbines would be visible from this viewpoint. However, the screening provided by the trees in the midground means that only one of the turbines might be visible, while views to the other two would be filtered through the trees.

5.81 The proposed turbines would appear as an extension, down the hillside, of the existing turbines at Sanquhar Wind Farm although they would be slightly larger in scale than those. The western-most turbine would be the most visible, seen between the tall trees in the midground of the view although the plantation on Libry

Moor would appear in front of the proposed turbine, thus reducing its prominence in the view.

5.82 It should be noted that in the winter, when the leaves have fallen from the trees around the church, the two screened turbines may be slightly more visible, albeit still filtered through the tree branches.

5.83 The addition of the proposed turbines in the existing view would form a minor change from this viewpoint. Two of the three turbines would be largely screened from view, and the additional features of the turbines would appear in keeping with the existing turbines which are well spaced across the horizon.

5.84 The **Sensitivity of the Receptor** at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational users.

5.85 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low.**

5.86 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate**.

VP2

5.87 Viewpoint 2 (See Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) – A76 northwest of Sanquhar; representative of road users.

5.88 The **Existing View** – This view is located at the junction of a minor road with the A76 approximately halfway between Sanquhar and Kirkconnel and is just east of Tower Burn. It is representative of road users travelling along the A76.

5.89 The view looks southwest, over the busy A76 road which can be seen in the foreground. Beyond this is a pastoral landscape which is flat in the valley bottom and gently rises up beyond the belt of large trees which roughly mark the location of the River Nith. The Millstone Knowe plantation is seen to the left of the view with a more open, moorland landscape continuing to rise up beyond to the centre and right of the view. The proposed site is situated on this open moorland.

5.90 The existing turbines of the Sanquhar Wind Farm sit prominently on top of the horizon to the right of the view with views also possible to the Whiteside Hill Wind Farm which can be seen above the plantation in the centre of the view. Views to the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm are possible along this stretch of the A76 but are screened by vegetation from this particular location.

5.91 The view is not in the direction of travel along the A76 and would be seen more by those travelling west along this route.

5.92 This viewpoint is typical of dynamic receptors moving along the A76 and the sensitivity of visual receptors is considered to be low.

5.93 The **Change in View** – The three proposed turbines would sit on the open moorland in the background of the view. The nearest turbine would be approximately 3.6km from this viewpoint location.

5.94 The proposed turbines would be visible on the slopes of the moorland from the viewpoint. The two turbines on the right of the view are stacking (appear in front of one another) from this viewing angle. Whilst the turbines would appear slightly larger in size than the more distant turbines on the horizon (due to the relative distances from the viewer) the separation distance from the turbines reduces the prominence of them in the overall view.

5.95 The introduction of the proposed turbines would not notably change the character of the existing view due to the presence of existing turbines along the horizon. Furthermore, the presence of Sandy Knowe, which is not seen from this viewpoint, is also visible along this stretch of the A76, which further extends the existing context of turbines in the view. However, the taller size of the turbines, compared to the existing turbines and their closer proximity to the viewpoint location would mean that the proposal is a noticeable new feature in the view. The proposed turbines would be at lower elevations to the existing turbines, mitigating the effect, by ensuring the blade tips would appear at a similar height.

5.96 The fact that the view is not in the direction of travel reduces the impact upon visual receptors along the A76.

5.97 The **Sensitivity of the Receptor** at this viewpoint would be **Low** for road users.

5.98 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium**.

5.99 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Slight/ Moderate**.

VP3

5.100 Viewpoint 3 (See Figures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) – SUW east of Sanquhar; representative of recreational users.

5.101 **Existing View** – This viewpoint is taken from the route of the Southern Upland Way (SUW) to the east of Sanquhar along the section named 'Cow's Wynd'. The view was located at a paved area along the route which serves as a stopping point and offers panoramic views over the Upper Nithsdale valley. This view faces west and is representative of recreational receptors walking westwards along the SUW.

5.102 The view overlooks the village of Sanquhar which lies in the bottom of the wide, shallow valley of the River Nith. The line of the stone wall in the foreground demarks the route of the SUW here which leads down into the village. The lower valley sides

and the valley bottom are dominated by pastoral fields with occasional groups and linear areas of deciduous trees and woodland.

5.103 The uplands on the far side of the valley are mostly covered by unimproved moorland with large areas of coniferous plantations, some of which are rectilinear in appearance. Looking up the valley to the north (right of the view), the valley bends around and the villages of Kirkconnel and Kelloholm can be made out in the bottom of the valley. Corsencon Hill is a recognisable large landform on the northern side of the valley.

5.104 There are other existing wind turbines which are visible in the view. These include Sanquhar Wind Farm which is directly behind and above the proposed site, Whiteside Wind Farm to the south, Hare Hill and Hare Hill Extension which appear on the horizon to the north and also Sandy Knowe which is lower down the western slopes of the valley, near to the village of Kirkconnel. Twentyshilling Hill is another wind farm which is visible from this viewpoint and is to the south, although from this particular point on the SUW route, it is partially obscured by trees.

5.105 The sensitivity of recreational receptors using the SUW are considered to be high.

5.106 The **Change in View** – The proposed turbines would all be visible on the far side of the valley from this viewpoint. The nearest turbine would be approximately 5.8km from the viewpoint.

5.107 The proposed turbines would appear evenly spaced on the upper slopes of the valley and would appear as an extension to the operational Sanquhar Wind Farm on the top of Black Hill. The proposed turbines would appear at a comparable size and scale to those of Sanquhar Wind Farm.

5.108 Although the turbines would appear closer to the viewer than the existing turbines of the Sanquhar Wind Farm beyond them, they would still be seen in conjunction with the existing wind turbines in the view. The Sandy Knowe Wind Farm in the distance provides a context for turbines to appear on the slopes of the valley as well as on the ridgeline.

5.109 Therefore, the existing character of the view would not be changed but there would be a noticeable new addition of turbines on a different part of the valley slopes.

5.110 The **Sensitivity of the Receptors** at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational users.

5.111 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium**.

5.112 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate/Substantial**.

VP4

5.113 Viewpoint 4 (See Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) – Sanquhar Castle; representative of recreational users.

5.114 **Existing View** – This viewpoint is located in the western corner of the grounds of Sanquhar Castle. The view faces west and is representative of visitors to the castle and the recreational route of this section of the SUW.

5.115 The view is elevated on the raised ground of the castle and looks out over the flat, improved pasture fields along the bottom of the valley. The new houses on the right of the view are the southern area of the main built-up area of Sanquhar. Beyond the River Nith (unseen beyond the wall in the midground of the view), the pastoral landscape continues with more areas of trees than on the northern banks of the river. The landform rises up gently to the rounded peaks of Bank Hill and Mid Hill to the south and Hare Hill further northwest (centre of the view). Above the ridgeline of the house to the right, Corsencon Hill can be seen rising up in the distance.

5.116 The existing wind farms of Sanquhar, Whiteside Hill, Hare Hill and Sandy Knowe are all seen within the view and are all situated on the slopes and hills of the southern uplands on the southwest side of the wide, shallow valley of the River Nith.

5.117 This viewpoint is from a scheduled ancient monument and recreational visitors to this historical site would have a high sensitivity. Additionally, this viewpoint location is very close to the SUW.

5.118 The **Change in View** – All three of the proposed turbines would be visible from this viewpoint. The nearest turbine to the viewpoint is approximately 5.4km to the west.

5.119 The proposed turbines would be seen on the slopes of the valley side in a landscape which contains a number of existing wind farms. The turbines would appear closer to the viewer, and slightly larger than the existing turbines of the Sanquhar Wind Farm, which are the closest existing turbines in the view. The turbines would appear evenly spaced as they extend down the valley slopes.

5.120 Whilst the proposed turbines would be a noticeable new addition to the view, due to their position on the slopes of the valley and their larger apparent size, the turbines would be set within a part of the landscape which is already seen to contain a large number of existing wind farms. Therefore, the proposed turbines do not change the overall existing character of the view.

5.121 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational receptors.

5.122 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium**.

5.123 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate/Substantial**.

VP5

5.124 Viewpoint 5 (See Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3) – Crawick Multiverse; representative of recreational users.

5.125 **Existing View** – There would be views towards the proposed turbines from within the grounds of Crawick Multiverse, a large-scale land art installation designed by Charles Jencks on the site of a former open cast coal mine. There are elevated views from the various landforms within the park, namely, Belvedere, Andromeda, The Milky Way, the Multiverse and from other elevated sections of the site. The view is representative of recreational receptors visiting this attraction.

5.126 The views from these locations are wide, panoramic and far-reaching over the Upper Nithsdale valley. The large, geometric, manmade landforms of the Crawick Multiverse are seen in the foreground of the view. The village of Sanquhar lies in the bottom of the valley to the south (left of view) and Kirkconnel and Kelloholm lie to the west (right of view). Some large spoil heaps of the former coal mining industry can also be seen to the west.

5.127 Distant views to the far side of the valley and the open moorlands of the southern uplands include the proposed site and is host to a number of existing wind farm developments. These include Whiteside Hill, Sanquhar, Twentyshilling Hill to the south and the Hare Hill and Sandy Knowe wind farms to the west. The two smaller turbines of Sunnyside are to the northwest and relatively close to the viewpoint.

5.128 The **Change in View** – There would be clear views to the proposed turbines, the nearest of which would be approximately 5.4km from the viewpoint.

5.129 The proposed turbines would appear on the mid to lower slopes on the far side of the valley. They would seem to be an extension down the slope of the existing turbines at Sanquhar Wind Farm which is seen behind the existing turbines on the upper slopes. The size and scale of the turbines would be in keeping with the existing turbines in the view and the tips of the blades, although above the horizon, would not appear higher than those of the existing wind farms.

5.130 Whilst the proposed turbines would be a noticeable new addition to the view, particularly as they would be on the lower slopes of the valley side, they would not alter the character of the view which includes more turbines on the lower slopes of the valley with the existing turbines at Sandy Knowe to the right of the view. This would reduce the prominence of the proposed turbines. The proposed turbines

would be seen as an extension to the existing turbines which are of similar heights and therefore the change in the view would be minimal.

5.131 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational receptors.

5.132 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low**.

5.133 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate**.

VP6

5.134 Viewpoint 6 (See Figures 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) – Mennock; representative of road users.

5.135 **Existing View** – Located on the B797 at the railway bridge just south of Mennock, this viewpoint is representative of road users in and around Mennock. This location is at the start of the B797 which travels up to Wanlockhead from Mennock.

5.136 The view faces west and looks over the B797 in the foreground and to the improved pasture fields and coniferous plantations in the lower valley. There are some glimpses of the upland hills and also to existing turbines. The views are sporadically screened by roadside vegetation.

5.137 Views in the north and west direction along the stretch of the A76 road just north and south of Mennock are often screened by roadside trees, meaning that only glimpsed views towards the proposed site are possible. The viewpoint is therefore representative of the glimpsed views between trees to the existing turbines and the proposed site.

5.138 The existing turbines which can be seen in the centre of the view are those of the existing Sanquhar Wind Farm. The turbines of Whiteside Hill would also be partially visible from this road, although they are screened by vegetation in the photograph. Twentyshilling Hill Wind Farm is also visible from this viewpoint, but further to the south and west than is shown in the view.

5.139 As the viewpoint is representative of road users, the sensitivity of the receptor is judged to be low.

5.140 The **Change in View** – The proposed turbines are theoretically visible from this viewpoint but in reality, there is screening by roadside trees which mostly screens the turbines from view from this location.

5.141 The proposed turbines would largely be screened from view by the intervening vegetation and there may be some views of the blades of the turbines. This would change with the exact location of the viewer as there may be some views through

gaps in the trees. The turbines would be fairly evenly spread on the upper slopes of the valley, and would appear as an extension to the existing wind farm at Sanquhar.

5.142 Although from this particular location, the turbines are mostly screened from view, it may be possible to get glimpsed views through to the proposed turbines when travelling along the B797 and also along the local stretch of the A76. These views would be of short duration and not in the direction of travel. It should be also noted that in the winter months, without their leaves, the trees would provide less screening and there would therefore be filtered views through the tree branches to the proposed turbines.

5.143 Due to the nature of the sporadic screening by trees in this area, views of the proposed turbines from this viewpoint would be filtered and glimpsed views of short duration which does not change the nature of the view.

5.144 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **Low** for road users.

5.145 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low**.

5.146 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Slight**.

VP7

5.147 Viewpoint 7 (See Figures 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3) – A76 west of Kirkconnel; representative of road users.

5.148 **Existing View** – This viewpoint is located along the A76 to the west of Kirkconnel village and represents the views of road users travelling in an eastern direction.

5.149 It is typical of this stretch of the A76 that the landform gently rises to the south of the road. This encloses the view on this side somewhat with the eye drawn to the generally farther-reaching views available on to the north and east. Nevertheless, as the viewpoint demonstrates, there are some views south towards the proposed site, although these are generally partially screened by landform or vegetation. Here, there are views to the Libry Moor plantation. Occasional farm buildings and plantations along the southern side of the road in this area further screen views in the direction of the proposal.

5.150 The existing turbines nearest to the viewpoint are those at the eastern end of the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm. The upper portions of the turbines of Sanquhar Wind Farm are also visible above the horizon.

5.151 This viewpoint is typical of dynamic receptors moving along the A76 and the sensitivity of visual receptors is considered to be low.

5.152 The **Change in View** – Theoretically, the proposed turbines would be partially visible from this viewpoint, however, for two of the turbines only the blade tips would be visible, while the hub and blades of the other turbine would be visible. The nearest proposed turbine to the viewpoint would be approximately 3.9km to the southeast.

5.153 Although theoretically visible, two of the turbines would be screened from view by the Libry Moor plantation. This plantation would also partially screen views of the other turbine, meaning that the nacelle of the turbine would be visible on the tree line, with the blades visible as they rotate above them. The proposed turbines would be seen at a similar size to the existing turbines of the Sanquhar Wind Farm, which are also just visible above the plantation on the horizon.

5.154 The wind farm at Sandy Knowe is closer to this viewpoint and therefore would be the most prominent of the wind farm elements in the view. The proposed turbines would be largely imperceptible from this stretch of road with the screening provided by the landform and the Libry Moor plantation.

5.155 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **Low** for road users.

5.156 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low**.

5.157 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Slight**.

VP8

5.158 Viewpoint 8 (See Figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3) – Corsencon Hill; representative of recreational users.

5.159 **Existing View** – This is the view from the trig point on the summit of Corsencon Hill and representative of recreational receptors.

5.160 The view looks southeast over the wide Upper Nithsdale valley and is only a portion of a full 360degree panoramic view that can be viewed at this location. Looking down the line of the valley, the villages of Kirkconnel and Sanquhar are both visible in the flat valley bottom and sit within the typically pastoral landscape. The proposed site sits on the simple, gently sloping north-facing valley side, where the typical landcover is open moorland with large areas of coniferous plantations.

5.161 There are a number of existing wind farms in the view. The Hare Hill and Hare Hill Extension wind farms are visible to the south. Further east is the Sandy Knowe wind farm which is a dominant feature on the slopes of the valley just right of the centre of the view. Then the wind farms of Sanquhar and Whiteside Hill are visible on the horizon beyond the turbines of Sandy Knowe, and finally the Twentyshilling Hill

Wind Farm can be seen in the distance. The two smaller turbines at Sunnyside on the northern side of the valley are also visible from this viewpoint.

5.162 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users on Corsencon Hill. As the viewpoint is not on a core path or recognised route, it is considered that visual receptors have a medium sensitivity.

5.163 **The Change in View** – The proposed turbines would be visible in the view with the nearest of the proposed turbines approximately 7.9km from the viewpoint.

5.164 The turbines would appear on the slopes of the opposite side of the valley and would appear at a similar size and scale as the existing wind turbines of the Sandy Knowe and Sanquhar wind farms which are both visible in the view.

5.165 The proposed turbines would visually connect to the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm from this viewing angle even though they sit at a greater distance from the viewpoint. This separation distance from receptor to proposed turbines reduces the visual effects. Furthermore, the proposed turbines would appear in the same part of the landscape as the existing wind farms in this panoramic view.

5.166 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **Medium** for recreational users.

5.167 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low**.

5.168 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Slight/Moderate**.

VP9

5.169 Viewpoint 9 (See Figures 9.1 and 9.2) – Cattle grid east of Guffock Hill; representative of road users.

5.170 This viewpoint is represented solely as a wireline due to it being a significant distance from the proposed development. Given this, providing a photomontage would not assist the landscape architect in reviewing the scheme in terms of landscape.

5.171 **Existing View** – This viewpoint represents the views of road users on the local road between Crawick and Todholes Hill. The viewpoint is from the cattle grid just east of Guffock Hill, southeast of Todholes Hill.

5.172 This local road is quiet, with mostly only farm traffic and the occasional walker on the Muirkirk to Kirkconnel route. The views along the road vary, with some open panoramic views, and some more sheltered areas of the path where wider views are not possible. This view represents the stretch of road between Bail Hill and Todholes Hill (where the access track to the large mast breaks off from the road).

5.173 The view is a wide, panoramic view which looks south over the Upper Nithsdale valley and over to the proposed site on the far side of the valley. In the foreground of the view is semi-improved moorland on the northern side of the valley, in the valley bottom in the mid-ground is improved pasture with areas of woodland and plantations and on the far side of the valley, gently rising up, is the upland moorland landscape of the southern uplands, with large areas of geometrically shaped plantations. The village of Kelloholm is also visible in the bottom of the valley in the centre of the view.

5.174 Existing wind farms are a prominent feature in the view, with the wind farms of Sanquhar and Whiteside Hill in the centre of the view, Twentyshilling Hill off to the south and to the west (the right of the view) is Hare Hill, the Hare Hill Extension and also the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm which is sited on the lower slopes of the valley side.

5.175 **The Change in View** – The proposed turbines would be visible on the far side of the valley and the nearest turbine would be approximately 6km from the viewpoint.

5.176 The proposed turbines would appear on the mid to lower slopes of the northward facing side of the valley above the village of Kelloholm. The turbines are located lower down the same large-scale landform as the Sanquhar Wind Farm which are visible on the upper slopes beyond the proposed turbines. The tips of the proposed turbines would all sit on, or below the horizon line (and the tips of other existing turbines) from this viewpoint location.

5.177 The existing wind farm at Sandy Knowe is at a similar elevation on the lower slopes of the valley side further up the valley which provides a context for the proposed siting of the proposed development. Due to the large-scale nature of the receiving landscape, as well as the existing wind farms, the proposed turbines would appear at an appropriate size and scale. The addition of the proposed turbines on the slopes of the valley would add a new wind energy feature to the view.

5.178 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **Low** for road users.

5.179 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low**.

5.180 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Slight**.

VP10

5.181 Viewpoint 10 (See Figures 10.1 and 10.2) – East Mount Lowther; representative of recreational users.

5.182 This viewpoint is represented solely as a wireline due to it being a significant distance from the proposed development. Given this, providing a photomontage would not assist the landscape architect in reviewing the scheme in terms of landscape.

5.183 **Existing View** – The summit of East Mount Lowther is designated as a viewpoint on Ordnance Survey maps and offers 360degree panoramic views of the Lowther hills and beyond. Whilst close to the route of the SUW, it is roughly a 1.3km detour from the SUW to the Trig point and the viewpoint on East Mount Lowther. The viewpoint faces west and is representative of recreational receptors.

5.184 The view looks westward from the upland Lowthers from this high vantage point, over the foothills of the Lowthers to the wide, sweeping valley of the Upper Nithsdale and to the Southern Uplands on the far side of the valley, which contains existing wind farms. In the opposite direction to the view (facing east), the large white radar building, the access road leading up to it and the associated mast are all visible and which contribute to create a slightly industrial character to this part of the Lowthers.

5.185 Existing wind farms visible in the view (in a westerly direction) include Twentyshilling Hill which is the furthest south of those seen on the far side of the Upper Nithsdale Valley. Whiteside Hill and Sanquhar are seen relatively close together in the centre of the view, with Sandy Knowe on the lower slopes of the valley to the north and behind those is the Hare Hill and Hare Hill Extension wind farms. The two turbines of Sunnyside are also visible on the northern side of the valley.

5.186 **The Change in View** – All three of the proposed turbines would be visible in the view, albeit at a separation distance of approximately 14.8km to the nearest turbine.

5.187 The turbines would appear on the mid/lower slopes of the western side of the Upper Nithsdale Valley and would appear at a similar size and scale to the existing turbines at Sanquhar which would be behind them in this view. The proposed turbines would be in an area which already features wind farms, and from this view which gives a good over view of the valley, the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm can be seen to be at a similar elevation on the slopes and provides context for the proposed turbines.

5.188 The addition of the proposal into the view would not change the overall character of the view. The distance between the receptor and the proposed wind turbines, as well as the presence of a number of existing wind farms in a similar location reduce the potential visual impact of the proposal. As the change in the view would be

barely perceptible, it is subsequently judged that the magnitude of change from this viewpoint would be Negligible.

5.189 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational users.

5.190 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Negligible**.

5.191 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Slight**.

VP11

5.192 Viewpoint 11 (See Figures 11.1, 11.2 and 11.3) – Kelloholm, to the south of the village; representative of residents.

5.193 **Existing View** – This viewpoint is taken from the cemetery along the southern edge of Kelloholm village and close to a residential area. Although the view is from within the village, it does not directly represent the views from dwellings, as the cemetery sits on a small hillock which gives a better view southward towards the proposed site.

5.194 The view overlooks the rolling lowland pastures of the Upper Nithsdale valley and beyond looks up to the moorlands of the southern uplands and the proposed site. The undulating nature of the landform in the area around the viewpoint means that these more distant views to the uplands are limited to the high points of the undulations. On the horizon, and in the uplands landscape there are plantations.

5.195 The existing turbines of the Sanquhar and Whiteside Hill wind farms are prominent vertical features which are spread evenly along the horizon in the southern direction.

5.196 **The Change in View** – The proposed turbines would all be visible from this viewpoint with the nearest turbine at an approximate distance of 2.3km from the viewer.

5.197 The proposed turbines would appear on the moorland, upland landform which stretches out and down from the Sanquhar Wind Farm. The turbines would be closer to the viewpoint than the other turbines in the view but would appear in scale with the existing turbines and the large-scale receiving landscape.

5.198 The turbines would be a noticeable new feature in the view but would appear in a part of the landscape already containing wind farms.

5.199 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **Medium** for residential receptors.

5.200 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium**.

5.201 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate**.

VP12

5.202 Viewpoint 12 (See Figures 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3) – St Connel's Chapel, near Kirkland; representative of recreational users.

5.203 **Existing View** – This viewpoint is from the gate in the southwest corner of St Connel's Chapel facing south towards the proposed site. This view is representative of recreational visitors to St Connel's Chapel.

5.204 The viewpoint is on the gently rising north side of the Upper Nithsdale valley, on the southern facing slopes at the foot of the steeper, upland valley slopes which are just north of this viewpoint. The view is of the undulating, improved pasture fields and plantations on this side of the valley, with more distant views over to the far side of the valley, and the Southern Uplands. The undulating landform in the foreground prevents views into the valley bottom.

5.205 The existing wind farms visible in the view include the Sanquhar and Whiteside Hill wind farms in the centre of the view, along the horizon. Twentyshilling Hill Wind Farm is further south (left of the view) and more distant from the viewpoint. Sandy Knowe Wind Farm is the closest wind farm to the viewpoint and is on the right of the photograph, with the turbines on the mid to lower slopes of the far valley side. Just off the photograph to the right, the Hare Hill and Hare Hill Extension wind farms are visible along the ridgeline.

5.206 **The Change in View** – The closest of the proposed turbines would be approximately 6km south of this viewpoint. All three of the turbines would be visible.

5.207 The proposed turbines would be visible on the southern slopes of the Upper Nithsdale Valley, in the centre of the view. The proposed turbines would appear on the mid slopes of the valley when seen from this viewpoint and would be of a similar size and scale as the existing turbines which are on the same side of the valley. The tips of the blades and the hubs of the turbines would be seen above the horizon line, however, the tips of the turbines would appear no higher above the horizon than the existing turbines at Whiteside Hill and Sanquhar.

5.208 The addition of the proposed turbines would not change the overall character of the view, as the turbines would be seen in an area of landscape which already has existing turbines. As the proposed turbines would appear on the mid slopes of the valley, the viewer may perceive a slight increase in the number of wind turbines visible from this viewpoint and therefore there would be a low magnitude of change.

5.209 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational users.

5.210 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low**.

5.211 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate**.

VP13

5.212 Viewpoint 13 (See Figures 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3) – Southern Upland Way (SUW), Whing Head approach from Upper Nithsdale; representative of recreational users.

5.213 **Existing View** – The Southern Upland Way to the west of Sanquhar rises gently and steadily up to Whing Head, which offers good views over the Nithsdale Valley. This viewpoint was taken at the highest point along the SUW where good views over the valley are possible and is representative of recreational receptors walking along the Southern Upland way.

5.214 From this viewpoint, there are panoramic views over the Upper Nithsdale valley to the north and east, as well as views over the Southern Upland hills to the west. The view is dominated by the gently undulating moorland on the southern side of the valley which has occasional areas of plantations. At the bottom of the valley, it is possible to see the villages of Kelloholm and Kirkconnel and then the northern valley sides rising up to the Southern Uplands – North-West Lowthers.

5.215 When walking along this stretch of the SUW in a southwestern direction, up the hill, the viewer tends to be focussed on traversing the difficult, moorland terrain and wayfinding, and therefore views to the proposed site tend to be seen when stopping for a break along the route. Also, the views in the direction of travel are focussed on the Whiteside Hill turbines which appear straight ahead, at the top of the hill when travelling southwest. When walking northeast, down the hill, there are views over the Upper Nithsdale valley, and the proposed site may be more in view travelling this way along the SUW.

5.216 Existing turbines in the view include the Sanquhar Wind Farm on the upper slopes on the left edge of the photograph. Further left, off the edge of the photo, the Whiteside Hill Wind Farm is a key wind energy feature in the view when looking further west, into the Southern Upland hills. The Sandy Knowe Wind Farm moving down the mid to lower slopes of the southern valley side are visible. Further to the right of the photograph, to the north, on the far side of the valley, the two Sunnyside turbines can be seen from this viewpoint.

5.217 **The Change in View** – The proposed turbines would all be visible in the centre of the view, with the nearest turbine approximately 3.2km northwest of the viewpoint.

5.218 The turbines would appear within the moorland on the mid slopes of the same side of the valley as the viewpoint. The proposed turbines would appear evenly spread down the side of the slope and at a similar size to the existing turbines in the vicinity. Two of the turbines would have their blade tips above the distant horizon, with the lowest of the three turbines appearing entirely below the horizon.

5.219 The addition of the proposed turbines would be a noticeable addition to the view as they would appear to extend the horizontal field of view with wind turbines. Mitigating factors include the presence of the existing wind farms in the view, including the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm which is in a similar direction to the proposed turbines and the fact that the proposed turbines are of a similar size and scale to these existing turbines. From this viewing angle, the turbines appear as an extension to the existing wind farm character of this part of the landscape.

5.220 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational users.

5.221 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium**.

5.222 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate/ Substantial**.

VP14

5.223 Viewpoint 14 (See Figures 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3) – Kemp's Castle; representative of recreational users.

5.224 **Existing View** – This viewpoint is representative of recreational visitors to Kemp's Castle and is taken from the western edge of this Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).

5.225 The SAM at Kemp's Castle is an area of earthworks which are the only remains of the former fort. It is now part of an improved pasture field and is covered by numerous trees. The views from the designation towards the proposed site are limited due to the undulating landform and the trees, and the viewpoint represents the best view towards the site. While there are views to the uplands, they appear in the background of the view and are partially screened. The trees on the left of the view run alongside the Euchan Water stream.

5.226 The existing wind farms which are visible from this viewpoint are the Whiteside Hill Wind Farm (on the left of the view), the Sanquhar Wind Farm in the centre of the

view (mostly screened by vegetation) and the upper portions of part of the wind farms at Hare Hill and Sandy Knowe (centre-right of the view).

5.227 **The Change in View** – Although it is theoretically possible that there would be views to all three of the proposed turbines, two of the three proposed turbines would be screened from view by intervening trees, while the upper two-thirds of the other turbine would be visible. The nearest turbine is approximately 4.1km from the viewpoint.

5.228 The proposed turbines would appear as an extension along the horizon of wind turbines from the Sanquhar Wind Farm. The proposed turbines would be seen in glimpsed views and filtered behind the trees which are on the ridge in the centre of the view. One of the turbines would be more clearly visible on the right of the view, over the improved pasture field in the foreground.

5.229 In the winter months, when the leaves have fallen from the trees, there may be filtered views to the other two proposed turbines, but these would then be seen in context with the existing wind farm at Sanquhar.

5.230 The **Sensitivity** of the Receptors at this viewpoint would be **High** for recreational users.

5.231 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be **Low**.

5.232 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be **Moderate**.

Other Recreational Visual Receptors

5.233 The **Southern Upland Way (SUW)** is a long-distance footpath and is one of 'Scotland's Great Trails'. This is represented by Viewpoints 3 just east of Sanquhar and Viewpoint 13 from Whing Head. The SUW has been assessed separately in the Sequential Views section below.

5.234 The magnitude of change on the **Core Paths** within 5km of the proposed turbines would range from Medium to Negligible. For example, at the nearest route to the proposed turbines from Kirkconnel to Mynwhirn Hill to the northwest, the magnitude of change would be medium.

5.235 There would be no effect on the closest **National Cycle Network (NCN)** route, the NCN74, due to the large separation distance of over 20km to the proposed development.

5.236 Visitors to the land art attraction at Crawick Multiverse are represented by VP5 which shows the view from the highest point of the park and was chosen for its far-reaching panoramic views. The magnitude of change at VP5 was judged to be Low.

There would be views to the proposed turbines from other parts of the park which would be from lower elevations and with partial screening from landform and vegetation which would interrupt the panoramic views of the valley.

Other Residents Visual Receptors

5.237 Most of the views from residential properties within Sanquhar are screened by other built form. However, there may be some views from the southern facing windows of properties within the village, particularly those on the southern edge of the village as well as the houses along Blowearie Road just north of the railway line. Where there are clear views to the proposed turbines, there would be a medium magnitude of change in the views, resulting in a moderate degree of significance.

5.238 Although Kirkconnel and Kelloholm are largely within the ZTV, the screening effects of the built form in the village, trees and the landform which rises up in the direction of the proposed turbines means that there are very few clear views of the turbines. It may be possible to view the upper portions of the proposed turbines from some dwellings on the southern side of the villages, however, any visual effects on residential receptors would be limited.

5.239 An example is from south of Kelloholm at Viewpoint 11 which is taken from the cemetery at Kelloholm and although the turbines are in relatively close proximity to the viewpoint and there are clear views over the site from this viewpoint, it is situated on a hillock and is not necessarily representative of residential views in the vicinity.

5.240 There are a number of other hamlets, scattered dwellings and farmsteads within the study area. Depending on their direction of view and proximity to the proposed turbines, the visual effects on these visual receptors would vary. However, the key viewpoints cover the main likely views of the proposed turbines.

Other Road User Visual Receptors

5.241 Dynamic views may be seen from the A76 which is the main route between Dumfries and Kilmarnock. A sequential view assessment has been described in the section below.

5.242 The steep sided hills of the Lowthers either side of the road screen views from the majority of the B797 from Mennock to Wanlockhead. Only the very southern tip is within the ZTV and is represented by VP6 where the magnitude of change was judged to be Low.

5.243 The southern end of the B740 at Crawick is within the ZTV, however, the views towards the proposed site are very limited due to dense roadside trees, embankments and built form. There are some glimpsed views of the far side of the valley when travelling in a southwest direction. The majority of the road further north is outwith the ZTV.

5.244 There are a number of local roads in the study area, most of which are access roads for the scattered dwellings and farmsteads in the area. The local road between Sanquhar and Kelloholm is partially within the ZTV, however, the landform rises up to the southwest and so prevents long distance views in that direction towards the proposed turbines. There may be some glimpsed views of the turbines along this route, but not in the direction of travel. The small road leading up to Todholes Hill is represented by VP9. This is a narrow single-lane track and where there are views to the proposed site, they are not in the direction of travel.

Sequential Views

The Southern Upland Way (SUW)

5.245 Current views of the site and existing wind turbines for recreational users using the Southern Upland Way currently extend from the northeast of Sanquhar (see VP3), with some lost visibility where there is intervening housing in Sanquhar, then from near Sanquhar Castle (see VP4) and south of Sanquhar. Heading west over the moors, the existing turbines are in sight from this route, although not close up, not in the direction of travel or dominant. It should also be noted that the moorland terrain is difficult to navigate on this part of the SUW meaning that the receptor is concentrated primarily upon the ground immediately in front of them, and wider views are only gained when pausing. There are parts of the route where the proposed turbines are not visible due to an intervening plantation. There is some visibility of the site and existing turbines until just beyond the elevated location of Whing Head. Further west on the SUW, the route moves behind Cloud Hill and there would be no views.

5.246 The proposed wind turbines would sit alongside the existing wind turbines, without any additional views than those outlined as current views above.

5.247 The view from Whing Head would be the closest to the proposed turbines, the magnitude of change to views by receptors in this closest location would be **Medium**. There would be additional turbines further down the valley side and

adjacent to existing turbines of a similar size and scale at a similar distance to the receptor.

The A76

5.248 Road users on the A76 would be travelling in either an easterly or a westerly direction along the long and wide valley of the River Nith.

5.249 Road users on the A76 travelling in an easterly direction would have a view of the existing site and existing wind turbines in a south-easterly direction. There would be views towards the site and existing turbines from VP7 (west of Kirkconnel) for a short time, then going into Kirkconnel, views are mostly screened with occasional glimpses through buildings. From east of Kirkconnel the direction of travel is east, and the views would be south-westerly and therefore out of direct view.

5.250 Road users on the A76 travelling in a north-westerly direction would have a view of the existing site and existing wind turbines in a westerly direction. There would be views in a westerly direction to the site and existing turbines from west of Mennock (see VP6 – NB: Viewpoint taken from B797 but with similar views to A76) until east of Sanquhar then views are screened by built form, with occasional glimpses through buildings. There would be views west of Sanquhar (see VP2) until Kelloholm and then views are screened by buildings. West of Kelloholm / Kirkconnel, the direction of travel is in a westerly direction with no direct views to the site and existing wind turbines.

5.251 The views for road users on the A76 would be glimpses of a broad moorland valley edge with existing wind turbines. The proposed wind turbines would be located adjacent to existing wind turbines and there would be no additional views than those outlined as current views above.

5.252 The magnitude of change to views for road users would be Low. There would be additional turbines adjacent to existing turbines of a similar size and scale at a similar distance to the receptor.

Visual Amenity Assessment Summary

5.253 The proposed turbines would be 3-bladed rotors at 149m to tip height and would be seen alongside existing turbines.

5.254 The short-term temporary nature of the construction activities on the views of the visual receptors would ensure that the overall visual effects would be **Low**.

5.255 The visual assessment identified key viewpoints within the study area, in consultation with the LPA. The magnitudes of change range between **Medium** to **Low** and degrees of significance range between **Moderate / Substantial** to **Slight**.

5.256 Visual receptors who may see the proposed turbines include residents, recreational users and road users. Any view of the proposed turbines would include other wind turbines as well, therefore there are wind turbines already existing or approved in all views in the vicinity of the proposed turbines.

5.257 There would be sequential views of the proposed wind turbines from the Southern Upland Way (SUW) and the A76. There would be varying views from the SUW, at the closet point, the magnitude of change would be medium. Road users on the A76 would have glimpses at various points of the proposed turbines, with a maximum of low magnitude of change.

5.258 The overall visual effects of the proposed wind turbines would be noticeable from some viewpoints, but mostly be seen as part of an existing scene of wind turbines.

Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment

Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology

5.259 Cumulative impacts are those which occur as a result of the construction of more than one wind farm or wind turbines in an area. The nature of these effects relates to the number of wind farms, scale, the landscape context and the inter-relationship between the visual envelopes of the developments.

5.260 The assessment of cumulative impacts is an evaluation of the additional change and effect that the proposed development would have on a theoretical baseline position which assumes that all other existing, consented and application wind farms have been constructed.

5.261 The Dumfries & Galloway Scoping Opinion report (DGCSC) (Ref: 23/0206/SCO) recommends the inclusion of the scoping schemes at Cloud Hill and Rowancraig in the Cumulative Assessment due to their proximity to the proposed development at Herds Hill. Therefore, this cumulative assessment considers two scenarios to reflect the different stages of various cumulative schemes:

5.262 ***Scenario 1*** assumes a baseline including all operational, approved (as yet unbuilt) and in-planning schemes; and

5.263 ***Scenario 2*** also includes the scoping schemes as well as operational, approved and in-planning schemes within the study area.

Other Wind Turbines

5.264 The other wind turbines in the study area are listed in section 4 and can be found on Plans 6 and 7 which accompanies this report.

5.265 The Dumfries & Galloway Scoping Opinion report identifies the following nearby wind farms as those with the greatest potential for cumulative interactions:

- Sanquhar
- Whiteside Hill
- Sunnyside
- Sandy Knowe
- Euchanhead
- Sanquhar II
- Rowancraig
- Cloud Hill.

5.266 Further to these, it is also considered that the wind farm at Twentyshilling Hill should be closely considered in this cumulative assessment.

5.267 All wind farms which are considered in this cumulative assessment are listed in the table below:

Wind Farm(s) Name	**Number of Turbines**	**Blade Tip Height (m)**
Operational		
Twentyshilling Hill	9	140
Whiteside Hill	10	121.5
Sanquhar	9	130
Hare Hill	20	63.5
Hare Hill Extension	35	91
Sandy Knowe	24	125
Sunnyside	2	62
Consented		
Sanquhar Six *	6	130
Lethans	22	176-220
Sanquhar II	44	149-200
Lorg **	9	130-150
Glenmucklock	8	150
In Planning		
Lethans Extension	10	251
Sandy Knowe Extension	6	149
Euchanhead	21	230
Lorg ***	15	176-200
Scoping		
Rowancraig	6	180
Cloud Hill	11	180

5.268 *The Sanquhar Six scheme was granted approval, although it has since been superseded with the approval of the Sanquhar II Wind Farm.

5.269 **Not assessed - This approved wind farm at Lorg covers the same site as the In Planning Lorg Wind Farm. The 'worst case' scenario is represented by the latter scheme which is assessed in this cumulative assessment.

5.270 ***This In Planning wind farm at Lorg is to be considered in the cumulative assessment as it represents the 'worst case' scenario.

5.271 Within 1km of the proposed turbines are:

- Sanquhar II
- Rowancraig

5.272 Within 2km of the proposed turbines are:

- Sanquhar

5.273 Within 3km of the proposed turbines are:

- Sandy Knowe
- Whiteside Hill
- Cloud Hill

5.274 Within 4km of the proposed turbines are:

- Sandy Knowe Extension
- Sanquhar Six

5.275 Within 5km of the proposed turbines are:

- Hare Hill Extension

5.276 Beyond 5km, the distances from the proposed turbines are:

- Hare Hill
- Twentyshilling Hill
- Euchanhead
- Lorg
- Sunnyside
- Lethans
- Lethans Extension
- Glenmucklock

5.277 NOTE: The nearest cumulative turbines to the proposed development are two of the Sanquhar II turbines. These are separate to the main group of turbines in that scheme and their height to blade tip has been kept below 150m to reduce their potential for impacting valley receptors and also to keep them below the threshold for visible aviation lighting.

Cumulative Effects on Landscape Character

5.278 **Scenario 1:** In this scenario, it is assumed that in the cumulative baseline those wind farms which are consented but not yet built and those which are in-planning

are all constructed and are added to the existing baseline of operational wind farms in the study area.

5.279 The closest of these wind farms to the proposed site would be the two turbines of the consented Sanquhar II Wind Farm which would be adjacent to the proposed site to the west. The remaining turbines of the Sanquhar II Wind Farm would lie further to the south and west spread within the Southern Uplands. Lorg and Euchanhead would also be located to the southwest of the proposed turbines. The Sandy Knowe Extension would lie to the northwest and would form an extension to the operational turbines of the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm. To the north, on the far side of the valley, would be the Lethans, Lethans Extension and Glenmucklock wind farms.

5.280 The cumulative effect of the addition of the proposed turbines within the landscape character types throughout the study area would be the combined effects of the proposed turbines together with this assumed cumulative baseline.

5.281 The proposed turbines would be situated in the northern part of the character area LCT 19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale and would lie close to the boundary with LCT9. The turbines would be on the mid to lower slopes of the valley side which would change the characteristic placement of wind turbines on the upper slopes in the LCT19 character area. However, the proposed turbines would be at a similar elevation to those at Sandy Knowe which lie in the adjacent LCT9. Also, the two turbines of Sanquhar II which lie adjacent to the proposed site act to 'tie in' the proposed turbines with the existing wind energy development of Sanquhar at higher elevation. Therefore, due to these mitigating factors, there would be a Low cumulative effect on LCT19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale.

5.282 The cumulative effect on LCT9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale of the cumulative baseline would be the addition of wind farms on both sides of the western part of the valley with the Lethans, Lethans Extension and Glenmucklock schemes on the northern side of the valley and the Sandy Knowe, Sanquhar, Sanquhar II and Hare Hill wind farms all on the southern side of the valley. These schemes would combine to have the effect of surrounding the Upper Nithsdale character area, particularly in the western part of the area. The addition of the proposed turbines would further add to this baseline, and although they would reside in the neighbouring character area to the south, they would be close to the boundary. Despite this, the proposed turbines would have a Low cumulative effect on LCT9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale as the introduction of the turbines would have only a minor effect on the character of the area when considering the cumulative baseline in Scenario 1.

5.283 There would be a resulting Low cumulative effect on the landscape character with the addition of the proposed turbines and the wind farms which comprise the baseline for Scenario 1.

5.284 **Scenario 2:** In this scenario, the addition of those wind farms which are in scoping are also added as though operational to the cumulative baseline of Scenario 1.

5.285 This would mean that the wind farms at Rowancraig, on a site adjoining the proposed turbines to the south, and Cloud Hill, a little further south, would be added to the baseline. Both of these schemes would reside in the LCT19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale.

5.286 The addition of these proposed wind farms would further reinforce the wind energy component of the character of this part of the Southern Uplands landscape. This would reduce the potential for the proposed turbines to further change the character of the area, specifically with the addition of the Rowancraig scheme which would be in close proximity to the proposed site and would add existing context for wind energy development on the mid to lower slopes of the valley side within LCT19 – Southern Uplands - Nithsdale.

5.287 There would be a resulting Low cumulative effect on LCT19 – Southern Uplands - Nithsdale with the addition of the proposed turbines and the wind farms which comprise the baseline for Scenario 2.

5.288 The cumulative effect on LCT9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale would also be reduced as a result of the inclusion on the schemes at Rowancraig and Cloud Hill to the cumulative baseline. This would be due to the Rowancraig scheme in particular providing further existing landscape context for wind turbines on the mid to lower slopes of the valley side, and therefore the addition of the proposed turbines would not then change the character of LCT9 which would already be surrounded by wind turbines on both sides of the valley and with turbines on both the horizon and the lower slopes.

5.289 The following were 'Key cumulative issues' raised by the DGWLCS – *Note: since this document was prepared, there have been a number of wind farm schemes approved in the LCT19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale and other LCTs in the area which have changed the baseline conditions upon which the guidance was prepared*:

- *Overwhelming effects on views from the A76, settlement and footpaths in upper Nithsdale as a result of the combination of operational and consented large wind turbines sited within this landscape, the adjacent Ken unit of the Southern Uplands with Forest (19a) and the Upper Dales (9) - Upper Nithsdale landscape*

unit. It is acknowledged that there would be increased cumulative effects on the landscape character of LCT9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale due to the combination of those wind farms which are operational, consented, in planning and in scoping. The further addition of the proposed turbines would not further increase these effects.

- *A build-up of wind turbines extending along much of the skylines formed by the Southern Uplands either side of Upper Nithsdale, potentially creating an oppressive and cluttered effect.* The proposed turbines would be located on the mid to lower slopes of the valley, and although they would add to the existing baseline of turbines in the region, they would not alter the existing character and would add only slightly to the overall number of turbines visible above the horizon.
- *Further visibility of large turbines on containing skylines above the sensitive intimately scaled valleys of the Euchan and Scar Water – existing effects could be significantly exacerbated by the introduction of the Very Large typology (turbines >150m) either as new developments or repowering schemes.* The proposed turbines would be of Large typology (turbines 80-150m) and as such the valley of Euchan Water is largely outside of the ZTV. The Scar Water valley is further south and also out of the ZTV. Therefore, there would be no addition to the visibility of turbines on the skylines of these valleys.

Cumulative Visual Amenity Assessment

5.290 This section addresses issues relating to potential cumulative effect upon the visual amenity of the study area likely to result from the proposed turbines (as summarised in Table 4 of the appendix). It describes and evaluates the potential change in views of the existing landscape during construction and once in operation, and the extent to which these affect residents, visitors and users of the landscape.

5.291 See Plan 7 Cumulative Wind Farms and Table 4 in the appendix.

Assessment of Effects

5.292 Cumulative magnitude of change is the change that would occur as a result of the introduction of the proposed turbines into the baseline wind development of the area. This is identified based on the consideration of the potential nature, size, scale and location of the proposed change within the existing view and in relation to the existing wind farms / wind turbines within the view. The evaluation of the magnitude

of change is based on the criteria outlined in the cumulative visual assessment methodology (see section 3).

VP1

5.293 Viewpoint 1 (See Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) – St. Connel's Church, Kirkconnel representative of recreational users.

5.294 **Cumulative View - *Scenario 1:*** The two approved turbines of Sanquhar II which are close to the proposed turbines would act to bridge the gap between the proposal and the existing Sanquhar Wind Farm. The more distant wind farm of Twentyshilling Hill subtly creates a feeling of turbines along the ridgeline from this viewpoint. The proposed turbines would be in scale with the other turbines in the view and the screening provided by the trees from this viewpoint would reduce the visibility of the proposed turbines. The resulting magnitude of change would be Low.

5.295 **Cumulative View - *Scenario 2:*** The proposed Scoping wind farms at Rowancraig and Cloud Hill would increase the number of turbines in the view, and particularly the Rowancraig turbines would be a noticeable feature appearing above the line of midground trees. In this scenario, the addition of the proposed turbines would form a very minor change in the view. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.296 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP2

5.297 Viewpoint 2 (See Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) – A76 northwest of Sanquhar; representative of road users.

5.298 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The operational wind farms at Sanquhar and Whiteside Hill are visible at a distance on the horizon of the view. The addition of the approved Sanquhar II turbines and those in planning at Euchanhead would further extend this baseline of turbines along the horizon. It is the two Sanquhar II turbines which lie near to the proposed site which would have the most notable effect on the view due to their closer proximity to the viewer. These two turbines would help to visually connect the proposed turbines with the more distant turbines of Sanquhar on the horizon, albeit the proposed turbines would appear closer in the view. The resulting magnitude of change would be Medium.

5.299 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The addition of the proposed Scoping wind farms at Rowancraig and Cloud Hill would result in a cumulative baseline which contains more turbines close in the view. The proposed turbine on the left of the view would

visually connect to the scoping wind farm of Rowancraig with the other two turbines sitting relatively apart from the others and would be slightly more apparent in the view due to the landform. The magnitude of change would be Medium.

5.300 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP3

5.301 Viewpoint 3 (See Figures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) – SUW east of Sanquhar; representative of recreational users.

5.302 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: There would be an extensive coverage of turbines from a number of different wind farms across the horizon of the view, visible in combination with each other. The closest of these to the viewer and to the proposed site would be two turbines of the Sanquhar II which lie just southwest of the proposed site. The addition of the proposed turbines to this cumulative baseline would be in scale with these two turbines which would further help to integrate the proposed turbines into the view by visually connecting them to the other groups of turbines. The resulting magnitude of change would be Low.

5.303 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The proposed Scoping wind farms at Rowancraig and Cloud Hill would add noticeably to the baseline of Scenario 1 as these scoping schemes are located lower down the valley slopes and they are of a larger size (180m at the time of writing). The proposed turbines would be seen as an extension to the Rowancraig Wind Farm and would therefore form a minor change in the cumulative baseline. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.304 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP4

5.305 Viewpoint 4 (See Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) – Sanquhar Castle; representative of recreational users.

5.306 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The approved wind farm of Sanquhar II and the in-planning schemes at Euchanhead and Sandy Knowe extension would add to the number of wind farms visible on the southwestern side of the valley. The approved schemes of Lethans and Glenmucklock wind farms on the opposite side of the valley would add a further successional cumulative element to the view although from this viewpoint, these are partially screened from view by the housing close to this viewpoint location. The addition of the proposed turbines would be noticeable due

to their location on the mid to lower slopes of the valley, but the turbines appear in the same general part of the landscape as the existing wind farms, and so the resulting magnitude of change would be Low.

5.307 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The proposed Scoping wind farm at Rowancraig would be seen on the same landform as the proposed turbines and would also be larger and closer to the viewpoint. The proposed wind farm at Cloud Hill would also be visible in the view (further to the left) on the horizon and would extend the visible horizontal field of view of wind farms along the horizon. The increase in the number of turbines in the baseline view would reduce the visual impact of the addition of the proposed turbines. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.308 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP5

5.309 Viewpoint 5 (See Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3) – Crawick Multiverse; representative of recreational users.

5.310 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The approved schemes of Sanquhar II and the in-planning scheme at Euchanhead would significantly increase the coverage of wind turbines visible along the horizon of the view. Furthermore, the two turbines of the Sanquhar II Wind Farm which are close to the proposed site would visually connect the proposed turbines to the turbines on the upper slopes. The addition of the proposed turbines would not noticeably increase the presence of wind turbines in the view and so the magnitude of change would be Low.

5.311 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: Including the proposed Scoping wind farms at Rowancraig and Cloud Hill, there would be a further increase in the number of wind turbines in the view. The Rowancraig Wind Farm would appear close to the proposed turbines, on the same landform, and would be larger and more numerous, reducing the prominence of the proposed turbines. The magnitude of change with the addition of the proposed turbines would be Low.

5.312 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP6

5.313 Viewpoint 6 (See Figures 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) – Mennock; representative of road users.

5.314 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: A number of wind farms are theoretically visible in the view, and it is possible to get glimpsed views from the area around the viewpoint of Twentyshilling Hill, Whiteside Hill, Sanquhar and Sandy Knowe wind

farms. However, the screening elements of the vegetation along the roadsides and the screening effects of the landform from the valley bottom mean that there would not be a noticeable increase in the number of wind turbines in the view as a result of the addition of the proposed turbines. Therefore, the magnitude of change would be Low.

5.315 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The proposed Scoping wind farms at Rowancraig would be seen in a similar location to the proposed turbines, and would also be larger and closer to the viewpoint. The Cloud Hill Wind Farm would be partially visible above the horizon, although slightly further round than the proposed turbines. These scoping schemes would add to the existing baseline of wind farms in the view and therefore the proposed turbines would not add noticeably to the turbines in the view. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.316 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP7

5.317 Viewpoint 7 (See Figures 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3) – A76 west of Kirkconnel; representative of road users.

5.318 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The existing wind farms at Sandy Knowe and Sanquhar are visible from this viewpoint and the two Sanquhar II turbines close to the proposed site might also be visible above the plantation on the horizon. The relative prominence of the Sandy Knowe Wind Farm compared with the proposed turbines results in them being barely perceptible as an additional element in the view and therefore the magnitude of change would be Low.

5.319 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The proposed Scoping wind farm at Cloud Hill would not be visible from this viewpoint and only one of the Rowancraig turbines would be visible above the horizon. The addition of these schemes to the cumulative baseline condition does not affect the magnitude of change which would be Low.

5.320 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP8

5.321 Viewpoint 8 (See Figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3) – Corsencon Hill; representative of recreational users.

5.322 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The Sandy Knowe Extension, Sanquhar II and Euchanhead wind farms would be the most visible additions to the existing baseline of wind turbines in the view. The Lethans and Glenmucklock wind farms, which are

approved, but not yet built would also form a prominent new wind farm feature in the wider panoramic view (out of view to the left of the frame). The proposed turbines would add marginally to the number of turbines visible in the view and due to their distance from the receptor, they would not be a noticeable addition to the cumulative baseline. The resulting magnitude of change would be Low.

5.323 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The proposed Scoping wind farm at Rowancraig would appear very close to the proposed turbines and the addition of the proposed turbines would be a barely perceptible addition to that wind farm. The scoping scheme at Cloud Hill would be visible on the horizon and would further add to the number of turbines in the view. The magnitude of change would be Negligible.

5.324 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP9

5.325 Viewpoint 9 (See Figures 9.1 and 9.2) – Cattle grid east of Guffock Hill; representative of road users.

5.326 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The addition of the approved scheme at Sanquhar II the in-planning schemes at Lorg and Euchanhead would represent a large increase in the number of turbines visible within the view, particularly the proportion of the horizon. The two Sanquhar II turbines which would be adjacent to the proposed site would act to visually connect the proposed turbines with the Sanquhar turbines on the upper slopes of the hill. The addition of the proposed turbines would add incrementally to the cumulative baseline and the magnitude of change would be Low.

5.327 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The proposed scoping wind farm at Cloud Hill would be visible on the upper slopes to the south of the proposed wind turbines, and the Rowancraig Wind Farm, which is also in scoping, would appear close behind the proposed scheme. The proposed turbines at Rowancraig would be larger (180m to tip) than the proposed turbines assessed here and therefore due to the increased baseline of cumulative wind farms, the magnitude of change would be Low.

5.328 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP10

5.329 Viewpoint 10 (See Figures 10.1 and 10.2) – East Mount Lowther; representative of recreational users.

5.330 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The large Sanquhar II, Euchanhead and Lorg wind farms would form a backdrop of turbines on the horizon to the south of the proposed turbines which would strengthen the wind energy character of the landscape in this area. Further to this, the Lethans and Glenmucklock schemes on the northern valley side would add a separate wind energy feature into this view, albeit at a large distance from the viewpoint. The proposed turbines would not add to the cumulative effect of turbines in this view, which overlooks a large-scale landscape with many wind turbines. The magnitude of change would be Negligible.

5.331 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The addition of the Rowancraig and Cloud Hill wind farms (which are currently at scoping stage) to the cumulative baseline would increase the number of turbines in the view, and particularly the number of turbines on the mid to lower slopes of the valley side. There would be no additional cumulative effect due with the addition of the proposed turbines. The magnitude of change would be Negligible.

5.332 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP11

5.333 Viewpoint 11 (See Figures 11.1, 11.2 and 11.3) – Kelloholm, to the south of the village; representative of residents.

5.334 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: From this viewpoint, there would be some increase in the cumulative baseline as a result of the approved and in planning wind farms being constructed. The proposed turbines would appear lower down the slopes to these other turbines, although in the same general landscape area as viewed from this viewpoint. There would be a noticeable increase in turbines in the view due to the proposed turbines appearing closer to the viewpoint. The magnitude of change would be Medium.

5.335 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The proposed scoping wind farms of Rowancraig and Cloud Hill would reduce the cumulative impact of the proposed turbines by providing further existing turbines of a similar size and scale into the view. There would be a perceptible increase in the number of turbines in the view and therefore the magnitude of change would be Low.

5.336 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP12

5.337 Viewpoint 12 (See Figures 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3) – St Connel's Chapel, near Kirkland; representative of recreational users.

5.338 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The consented Sanquhar II Wind Farm would add to the number of turbines seen on the horizon beyond the proposed turbines and also across the horizon of a large part of the view. The two smaller wind turbines of the Sanquhar II scheme, which would be close to the proposed turbines, would visually bridge the gap between the proposed turbines and the Sanquhar Wind Farm. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.339 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The in-scoping schemes at Rowancraig and Cloud Hill would appear as a backdrop to the proposed turbines, and from this viewing angle, the proposed turbines would likely appear as an extension of the Rowancraig Wind Farm. Assuming the construction of these two scoping wind farms as part of the existing cumulative baseline, the proposed turbines would have a reduced cumulative effect on the view. The magnitude of change would be Negligible.

5.340 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP13

5.341 Viewpoint 13 (See Figures 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3) – Southern Upland Way (SUW), Whing Head approach from Upper Nithsdale; representative of recreational users.

5.342 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The two proposed turbines of the Sanquhar II scheme which are between the Sanquhar Wind Farm, and the proposal would reduce the visual gap between those two groups of turbines. The approved and in-planning schemes of Lethans and Glenmucklock on the far side of the valley become a large and separate (due to separation distance) cumulative feature, although they increase the overall feeling of this being a wider landscape with wind developments. The Sanquhar II Wind Farm would also be present in views further west along the ridgeline when travelling south-westwards along the SUW. From this particular point along the SUW, the magnitude of change would be Medium, however, this would be reduced along this stretch of the route as a whole due to the presence of the cumulative baseline.

5.343 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The scoping wind farm of Rowancraig would be a large new wind development in the view from here, and it would reduce the visibility of the proposed turbines as they would appear as part of one wind farm. The viewpoint would also contain the southern turbine of the Cloud Hill Wind Farm,

which would be a large new wind energy feature in the view along this stretch of the SUW. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.344 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

VP14

5.345 Viewpoint 12 (See Figures 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3) – Kemp's Castle; representative of recreational users.

5.346 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 1***: The proposed turbines would be seen alongside and in context with the Scenario 1 cumulative baseline, although views to the proposed turbines and the other existing turbines are all partially screened from this viewpoint. There would be a slight increase in the number of turbines visible from this viewpoint which would not affect the overall cumulative effect. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.347 **Cumulative View** - ***Scenario 2***: The Rowancraig Wind Farm which is in scoping would be visible in the centre of the view, and the Cloud Hill scheme would be visible on the crest of the hill to the left of the view. As the Rowancraig scheme would include a larger number of larger turbines, the addition of the proposed turbines would not add noticeably to the cumulative baseline. The magnitude of change would be Low.

5.348 The resulting **Cumulative Visual Effect** would not be significant.

Sequential Assessment SUW/A76

5.349 The cumulative impacts of wind development can extend over sequential views through the landscape as a visual receptor moves through the landscape.

5.350 It is therefore necessary to assess the sequential cumulative impact of the proposed development upon the cumulative baselines along the important routes through the study area, namely the A76 and the Southern Upland Way in this instance.

SUW

5.351 The route of the Southern Upland Way passing through the study area would already be affected by the presence of the number of wind farm schemes which are approved, in planning and in scoping, particularly to the south of the proposed turbines where the route would pass through schemes at Lorg, Euchanhead, Sanquhar II and then the scoping scheme at Cloud Hill. Due to the route passing

directly through these wind farms, the presence of the proposed turbines over 3km to the north would have a reduced effect on the route.

5.352 Similarly, when travelling south-westwards along the SUW from the east, as views across the Upper Nithsdale Valley were gained, there would be a heavy visible presence of wind turbines on the far (south-western) side of the valley. The addition of the proposed turbines would only slightly increase the number of turbines and the effect on the route. The resulting cumulative effect would therefore be Low.

A76

5.353 The proposed turbines would add to the existing cumulative baseline of turbines visible from the route of the A76 which passes through the Upper Nithsdale Valley along the route of the River Nith in the valley bottom. However, when travelling along this route in this area with the operational, approved, in planning and in scoping wind farm developments, there would already be a noticeable presence of wind energy development. The introduction of the proposed turbines within this baseline would only further reinforce the character of wind energy schemes on the sides of the valley above the road. The resulting cumulative effect would be Low.

Cumulative Assessment Summary

5.354 ***The cumulative effects on landscape character*** of the proposed turbines in combination with a number of nearby existing, approved and proposed wind turbines has been assessed.

5.355 Two scenarios of cumulative wind turbines were assessed, Scenario 1 assumed a baseline including all operational, approved (as yet unbuilt) and in-planning schemes and Scenario 2 included the scoping schemes as well as operational, approved and in-planning schemes within the study area.

5.356 For Scenario 1, the proposed turbines would be located at a similar elevation to Sandy Knowe and Sanquhar II tying into Sanquhar. Therefore, there would be a Low cumulative effect on LCT19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale.

5.357 For Scenario 2, the proposed Rowancraig turbines would be more dominant, and the proposed turbines would also be in association with Cloud Hill, resulting in a Low cumulative effect on LCT19 – Southern Uplands – Nithsdale.

5.358 For ***the cumulative visual amenity***, the key viewpoints were assessed in relation to other turbines in the area, with the magnitude of change being between **Low** to

Medium. There would not be any significant cumulative visual effect on visual amenity.

APPENDICES

Table 1 Landscape Character Degree of Significance

The following table is a visual guide to understanding how the magnitude of change relates to the degree of significance over different sensitivities of landscape character. As the assessment is based on subjective judgement and not formulaic calculations, this table is for guidance only.

Magnitude of Change	*Degree of Significance*		
High	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial	Substantial
Medium	Slight / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial
Low	Slight	Slight / Moderate	Moderate
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible / Slight	Slight
	Low	***Medium***	***High***
	Landscape Receptor Sensitivity		

Table 2 Landscape Receptors – Sensitivities, Magnitude of Change and Degree of Significance

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Dumfries and Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study - Landscape Character Types					
Sensitivity to Large turbines (80-150m) *see 'Dumfries & Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study'*					
			Sensitivity to Large turbines		
9 – Upper Dale – Upper Nithsdale Area	0.28km N	This is an adjacent landscape character type, the nearest to the proposed turbines. The proximity of the proposed turbines to this LCT on the slopes of the valley increases the likelihood of effects. However, the proposed turbines would add further wind turbines into an adjacent landscape character type which contains a number of existing	High	Low	Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		wind farms, reinforcing the wind energy character of the area. Sandy Knowe is a wind farm within LCT9 which is at a similar elevation on the valley side to the proposal.			
10 – Upland Glens - Scar	5.5km SE	This is an adjacent landscape character type. The separation distance between this LCT and the proposed turbines and the limited intervisibility would mitigate any potential effects.	High	Low	Moderate
19 Southern Uplands – Nithsdale	On site	The proposed wind turbines would reside in this landscape character type. The proposed turbines would reinforce the wind energy character of this part of the LCT with the existing wind farms of Sanquhar and Whiteside Hill. The proposed	High-Medium	Low	Moderate – Slight/ Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		turbines would be located on the mid to lower slopes of the valley side, but at a similar elevation to other wind farms in the immediate valley surroundings.			
19 – Southern Uplands – NW Lowthers	4.4km NE	This is an adjacent landscape character type. This LCT is on the opposite side of the valley to the proposed turbines. From here, there would be a slight increase in the number of turbines which would be perceived within the wider landscape.	High-Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate – Moderate
19 – Rugged Southern Uplands - Lowther	5.1km NE	This is an adjacent landscape character type. This area is on the opposite side of the valley to the proposed turbines and is incorporated within the more	High	Low	Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		rugged and mostly undeveloped character area of the Southern Uplands. Only views from the highest elevations and the most western parts of this area would be affected and from these areas only a minor increase in the number of turbines would be perceived.			
19a – Southern Uplands with Forest - Ken	1.8km W	This is an adjacent landscape character type. Intervisibility between the proposed development and this LCT is sporadic due to the undulating landform. There are a number of existing wind farms in this character type and the addition of the proposed turbines in an adjacent area would not change the characteristics of this LCT.	Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
East Ayrshire Wind Capacity Study - Landscape Character Types					
Sensitivity to Very Large typology (>130m) *see 'East Ayrshire Wind Capacity Study'*					
			** **Sensitivity to Very Large typology**		
10 – Upland River Valley	6.2km NW	This is an adjacent landscape character type. There would be limited intervisibility between the proposal and this character type. The proposed turbines would be seen within the existing context of wind energy development including Sandy Knowe.	High	Low	Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
18a – East Ayrshire Plateau Moorlands	7.4km NW	This is an adjacent landscape character type. This LCT is on the opposite side of the valley to the proposed turbines. Lethans Hill and Corsencon Hill stand between the proposal and the LCT.	High-Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate – Moderate
20a – East Ayrshire Southern Uplands	4.4km W	This is an adjacent landscape character type. The separation distance and the limited intervisibility between the LCT and the proposed turbines would mitigate any effects which are limited due to the proposed turbines being visible in context with other turbines in that area of the landscape when viewed from this LCT.	High	Low	Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
National Parks					
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park	79km N	Large separation distance. No effect.	-	-	-
National Scenic Areas					
Nith Estuary	44km SE	Large separation distance. No effect.	-	-	-
Wild Land Areas					
Merrick	32.5km SW	Large separation distance. No effect.	-	-	-
Regional Scenic Areas					
Thornhill Uplands	3.5km S & E	There is limited visibility of the proposed turbines from within this RSA - from some of the peaks of	High	Negligible	Slight

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		hills in the north-western portion of the area. Any effects on the designation would be indirect and due to the small number of proposed turbines and the existing cumulative baseline, there would be a barely perceptible increase in the number of turbines in the surrounding area.			
Sensitive Landscape Areas					
South and East Ayrshire – Southern Uplands	4.4km W	The majority of this designation is outwith the ZTV, there would be views to the proposal from Corsencon Hill (see VP8) and the high ground between Hare Hill, with its large existing wind farm, and Blackcraig Hill. The proposed	High	Negligible	Slight

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		turbines would lie at a distance from the SLA and would only have a minor indirect effect on the designation.			
Conservation Areas					
Sanquhar	4.96km E	There may be some views to the proposal from the southwestern facing windows of buildings within the designation and some glimpsed views between buildings from the streets.	High	Low	Moderate
World Heritage Sites					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Scheduled Ancient Monuments					

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Kemp's Castle	4.16km E	Represented by Viewpoint 14. Views very limited to proposed turbines and reasons for designation unaffected.	High	Negligible	Slight
Crichton Peel and Sanquhar Castle	5.43km E	Represented by Viewpoint 4. Open views are possible to the proposed turbines, however, the predominant reasons for the designation are unaltered.	High	Negligible	Slight
St Connel's Church and Graveyard	5.87km N	Represented by Viewpoint 12. Reasons for designation unaffected.	High	Negligible	Slight
Listed Buildings					
The Knowe Farmhouse and Steading	3.73km N	There may be some distant views to the proposed turbines, however, the setting of the building and reason for designation would not be affected.	High	Low	Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Guildhall Bridge	3.26km N	Views to the turbines would be screened by landform. No effect.	High	None	None
Old Church House (former Manse)	3.25km N	Views screened by trees surrounding property. No effect.	High	None	None
Kirkconnel Parish Church & Churchyard	3.12km N	Represented by Viewpoint 1. There would be partial views to the proposed turbines but the setting of the listed building would remain largely unchanged.	High	Low	Moderate
Kelloside	2.71km N	Possible partial views to the tips of the proposed turbines. The reasons for designation would be unaffected.	High	Negligible	Slight
Queensbury Hotel	3.04km N	Views to the proposed turbines would be possible from the rear windows of the listed building.	High	Low	Moderate
Kello Bridge	1.97km NE	Views of proposed turbines would be very limited.	High	Negligible	Slight

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Tower Farmhouse	3.81km NE	Although there would be views to the proposed turbines, the reasons for designation of the listed building would be largely unaffected.	High	Low	Moderate
Crawick Bridge	4.69km E	The reasons for designation would be unaffected despite possible views to the proposed turbines.	High	Negligible	Slight
Sanquhar House (Parish Manse) and Walled Garden	4.69km E	House surrounded by trees which would screen views.	High	Negligible	Slight
Blackaddie Bridge	4.53km E	Trees and landform would largely screen the proposed turbines.	High	Negligible	Slight
Euchan Bridge	4.61km E	Dense tree cover screens views.	High	None	None
Gardens & Designed Landscapes					
Drumlanrig Castle	12.5km SE	No intervisibility between the designation and the proposed turbines. No effect.	-	-	-

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Country Parks					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)					
Polhote and Polneul Burns	3.1km NW	The reason for the designation of this SSSI is not affected by the proposed development and so there would be no effect.	-	-	-
North Lowther Uplands	4.4km N	The reason for the designation of this SSSI is not affected by the proposed development and so there would be no effect.	-	-	-
Special Protection Areas (SPA)					
Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands	4.4km N	The reason for the designation of this SPA is not affected by the	-	-	-

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		proposed development and so there would be no effect.			
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)					
Upper Nithsdale Woods	5.9km NE	The reason for the designation of this SAC is not affected by the proposed development and so there would be no effect.	-	-	-
Ancient Woodlands					
No ID (Guttie Burn Plantation)	0.6km N	The reason for the designation of this Ancient Woodland would not be directly affected by the proposed development and so there would be no effect.	-	-	-
No ID (Glengape Belt)	1.05km E	The reason for the designation of this Ancient Woodland would not be directly affected by the proposed	-	-	-

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		development and so there would be no effect.			
National Nature Reserves (NNR)					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Core Paths					
Kirkconnel to Mynwhirn Hill	1.8km NW	Mostly within commercial plantations, but there may be some open views to the proposed turbines near to Kirkconnel and on the side of Mynwhirr Hill.	Medium	Medium	Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Kelloholm to Kirkconnel (via river)	2.00km N	Views would be mostly screened by trees and landform.	Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate
Euchan Falls	3.31km E	Riverside path with trees and within a gorge. No views.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible / Slight
Bank Hill to Graystone Hill	2.51km SW	Outside of the ZTV, therefore no effect.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible / Slight
Guildhall Bridge Kirkconnel	3.03km N	Views to proposed turbines very limited.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible / Slight
Kirkconnel to Black Law (via Fingland & Kirkland)	3.13km N	Represented by VP12. Views across to proposed turbines possible particularly walking in southern direction. Proposed turbines seen	Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		within a context of a number of existing wind farms.			
Sanquhar Castle Circular	4.98km E	Some open views towards the proposed development as represented by VP4.	Medium	Medium	Moderate
Sanquhar Town Walk	4.98km E	Views within the town are typically blocked by built form and trees, although there are some possible glimpsed views to the proposal.	Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate
Long Distance Footpaths					
South Uplands Way	3.2km SE (at its nearest point)	The effects on receptors travelling along this route would vary depending upon the direction of travel and the location and therefore visibility of the proposed turbines. The closest section of the route to the proposed site is at Whing Head (see VP13) where receptors would notice the greatest	High	Medium to Negligible	Moderate / Substantial to Negligible

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance and direction to proposed wind turbines (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
		change in the view. There would also be a noticeable change when walking in a westerly direction on the approach to Sanquhar village (see VP3).			
National Cycle Network (NCN)					
NCN 74	24km NE	No effect due to separation distance.	-	-	-

Table 3 Visual Amenity – Degree of Significance

The following table is a visual guide to understanding how the magnitude of change relates to the degree of significance for different sensitivities of visual receptors. As the assessment is based on subjective judgement and not formulaic calculations, this table is for guidance only.

Magnitude of Change	*Degree of Significance*		
High	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial	Substantial
Medium	Slight / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial
Low	Slight	Slight / Moderate	Moderate
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible / Slight	Slight
	Low	***Medium***	***High***
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity		

Table 4 Viewpoint Locations – Sensitivities, Magnitude of Change and Degree of Significance

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 1	St Connel's Church, Kirkconnel	3.343km S	272822 612294	Recreational Users	The proposed turbines would appear as an extension of existing turbines. Two of the three turbines would be largely screened from view.	High	Low	Moderate

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 2	A76, Northwest of Sanquhar	3.682km SW	275670611500	Road Users	The proposed turbines would not notably change the character of the existing view as there are existing turbines. The separation distance from the turbines reduces the prominence of them in the overall view and the proposed turbines would be at lower elevations to the existing turbines.	Low	Medium	Slight / Moderate

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 3	Southern Upland Way – east of Sanquhar	5.875km W	278737 610257	Recreational Users	The proposed turbines would all be visible and evenly spaced on the upper slopes and appear as an extension to the Sanquhar Wind Farm and of a similar scale. The existing character of the view would not be changed but the proposed turbines would be noticeable.	High	Medium	Moderate / Substantial

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 4	Sanquhar Castle	5.430km W	278460 609244	Recreational Users	All three of the proposed turbines would be visible on the slopes of the valley side adjacent to existing wind farms. A noticeable new addition to the view, although the turbines would be set within a part of the landscape which is already seen to contain a large number of existing wind farms, not changing the overall existing character of the view.	High	Medium	Moderate / Substantial

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 5	Crawick Multiverse	5.426km SW	277638 611785	Recreational Users	There would be clear views to the proposed turbines on the mid to lower slopes on the far side of the valley, seen as an extension to the existing turbines at Sanquhar Wind Farm at a similar scale and therefore the change in the view would be minimal.	High	Low	Moderate

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 6	Mennock	8.154km W	281254 607720	Road Users	The proposed turbines would largely be screened from view by the intervening vegetation and there may be some views of the blades of the turbines. Where seen, the proposed turbines would appear as an extension to existing turbines. In the winter months, there would be less screening.	Low	Low	Slight
VP 7	A76, West of Kirkconnel	3.914km SE	270724 612160	Road Users	The proposed turbines would be partially visible and there would be a 3.73km separation distance. The proposed turbines would be seen at a similar size to the existing turbines.	Low	Low	Slight

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 8	Corsencon Hill	7.987km SE	267156 614702	Recreational Users	The nearest proposed turbine would be 8km from the viewpoint which reduces the visual effects. The proposed turbines would appear at a similar size and scale as the existing wind turbines.	Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 9	Cattle Grid East of Guffock Hill	6.083km SW	275184 614637	Road Users	The proposed turbines would appear on the mid to lower slopes of the northward facing side of the valley above the village of Kelloholm. Due to the large-scale nature of the receiving landscape, as well as the existing wind farms, the proposed turbines would appear at an appropriate size and scale.	Low	Low	Slight

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 10	East Mount Lowther	14.838km W	287824 609993	Recreational Users	The separation distance and the presence of existing wind farms reduce the potential visual impact of the proposal and the change in the view would be barely perceptible.	High	Negligible	Slight
VP 11	Kelloholm, to the south of the village	2.364km SW	273681 611222	Residents	The turbines would be a noticeable new feature in the view but would appear in a part of the landscape already containing wind farms.	Medium	Medium	Moderate

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 12	St Connel's Chapel, near Kirkland	6.086km S	272327 615004	Recreational Users	The proposed turbines would not change the overall character of the view and would be seen within a landscape with an existing character of wind energy development.	High	Low	Moderate
VP 13	SUW, Whing Head approach from Upper Nithsdale	3.270km NW	275090 605659	Recreational Users	The proposed turbines would be seen as an extension of the existing character of wind development in the area. From this viewpoint, they would extend the horizontal field of view of turbines in the view.	High	Medium	Moderate/ Substantial

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to nearest turbine*	*Grid Reference*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement / Change in View*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 14	Kemps Castle	4.164km W	277238 608868	Recreational Users	Views to the proposed turbines are mostly screened by existing landform and vegetation. There may be glimpsed views to two of the turbines and clear views to the upper portions of one of the turbines. The character of the view would not be changed.	High	Low	Moderate