Agenda Item	**7.2**
Report No	**PLS/65/26**

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee

Date: 02 December 2026

Report Title: 25/04604/FUL: E Power Limited

Land 2km NE of The Lodge, Buntait, Glenurquhart, Drumnadrochit

Report By: Area Planning Manager – South

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period 35 years, comprising up to 6 turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9 meters, battery energy storage system (BESS), and ancillary infrastructure

Ward: 12 – Aird and Loch Ness

Development category: Major Development

Reason referred to Committee: Major Development

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal does not accord with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is unacceptable in terms of applicable material considerations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **REFUSE** the application as set out in section 11 of the report.

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Planning permission is sought for the construction and operation of Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm including a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure. The indicative maximum rated output of the wind farm is 28.8 megawatts (MW) whilst the indicative storage capacity of the BESS is 15 MW.

1.2 The proposed development comprises:

- 6 turbines up to 149.9m blade tip height;
- BESS measuring 75m x 50m;
- 4.38km of new access tracks;
- 3.26km of existing access track upgrades;
- Turbine foundations and crane hardstandings;
- Underground cabling;
- Substation compound measuring 100m x 75m;
- A permanent met mast;
- 2 temporary construction compounds;
- 2 borrow pits; and
- 2 major watercourse crossings.

1.3 The application is supported by an indicative turbine specification (Nordex N133) which, in terms of noise and landscape and visual assessments, represents a worst-case scenario. The finalised turbine specification is capable of being secured by way of planning condition prior to commencement of development.

1.4 Planning permission is sought for an operational life span of 35 years with the Proposed Development subsequently being decommissioned and the area restored following prevailing good practice guidelines.

1.5 The application does not seek planning permission for the proposed wind farm's grid connection; however, indicative details have been provided within a Grid Appraisal (September 2026). This assumes a 13.9km 33kV underground cable between the wind farm and Fasnakyle substation.

1.6 The applicant has carried out two rounds of Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) with the first events taking place on the 10 and 24 March 2025 in Inverness and the second round of events taking place in Inverness and Cannich on 24 June 2025. The application is supported by a PAC Report which provides further detail on the consultation undertaken and the applicant's response to consultation comments received.

1.7 The applicant utilised the Council's Pre-application Advice Service for Major Developments in January 2025 (24/02469/PREMAJ). Advice was sought on a scheme for 9 turbines of unspecified maximum blade tip height. The response advised that, whilst recognising the significant policy support afforded to renewable energy developments, there were major concerns regarding landscape and visual impacts, particularly on the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, significant effects on the setting of Corrimony Chambered Cairn, potential impacts on peatland,

biodiversity and protected species, and constraints relating to transport access. As a result, the response advised that the proposal was highly unlikely to be supported.

1.8 The application site was the location of the previously proposed Cnoc an Eas Wind Farm (15/02758/FUL) which comprised the erection of 13 turbines up to 136.5m to blade tip. Planning permission was refused by the Highland Council on the grounds of unacceptable visual impact, including cumulative visual impact from Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, adverse landscape impacts on the special qualities of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig Special Landscape Area, and effects to the setting of the Corrimony Chambered Cairn scheduled monument. This decision was subsequently upheld at appeal by the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (PPA-270-2155). It should be noted that the policy context related to renewable energy developments has changed since the determination of Cnoc an Eas Wind Farm, most notably through the adoption of NPF4 which broadly adds support to the principle of renewable energy developments. Nevertheless, the planning history of the application site remains a relevant material consideration.

1.9 The application is supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) which comprises the following technical chapters: Design Evolution and Alternatives; Landscape and Visual; Cultural Heritage; Ecology; Ornithology; Hydrology, Geology, Hydrogeology and Peat; Transport and Access; Noise; Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation; Climate and Carbon Balance; and Other Considerations. In addition to the EIAR and PAC Report, the application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement and Socio-Economics Statement and Outline Recreational Management Plan.

1.10 No variations have been made to the application since it was made, however, the applicant has submitted Additional Information in the form of a Grid Appraisal, dated 8 September 2026. This provides an assessment of the potential for significant effects to arise from the proposed development's grid connection in isolation, and in combination with the proposed development. The grid connection does not form part of the current application for planning permission. The applicant also provided further clarification comprising a response to an objection from Historic Environment Scotland dated 22 June 2026.

Extent of the EIA Project

1.11 The proposed development comprises a wind farm and BESS. It is recognised that, for the benefits of the proposed development to be achieved, a connection to the National Grid is required. Consequently, the extent of the project in EIA terms requires to be considered.

1.12 The Wingfield Criteria refers to a set of four criteria used to determine whether separate development proposals should be treated as a single EIA project in R. (Wingfield) v Canterbury City Council and HNC Developments LLP [2019] EWHC 1975 (Admin). These are:

- Common ownership: where two sites are owned or promoted by the same person, that could indicate that they constitute a single project;
- Simultaneous determinations: where two applications are considered and determined by the same committee on the same day and subject to reports

which cross refer to one another, that could indicate that they constitute a single project;

- Functional interdependence: where one part of a development cannot function without another, that could indicate that they constitute a single project; and
- Stand-alone projects: where a development is justified on its own merits and is pursued independently of another development, that could indicate that it constitutes a single individual project that is not an integral part of a more substantial scheme.

1.13 The grid connection would be built and operated by either the transmission or distribution electricity network operators, depending on the voltage of the connection. The grid connection and the proposed wind farm would therefore not be under common ownership. The proposed wind farm is being considered currently whilst the Council is not aware of any application being made to either the Council or the Energy Consents Unit for a grid connection. There is therefore no simultaneous determination. The proposed wind farm cannot operate without a grid connection whilst the grid connection also cannot operate without the wind farm. There is clear functional interdependence between the two developments. Similarly, neither the wind farm nor the grid connection would be justified on their own merits, given that the energy benefits of the wind farm scheme could not be delivered in the absence of a grid connection. Neither element would be pursued independently of the other development.

1.14 Whilst there are Wingfield criteria weighing both for and against the proposed wind farm and grid connection being a single EIA project, functional interdependence should be given greater weight. The wind farm cannot export electricity and therefore cannot operate for its intended purpose without a grid connection, while the grid connection is provided solely to serve the wind farm. The energy benefits of the proposed development cannot be realised in the absence of a grid connection. This indicates that the two elements may properly be regarded as components of a single project for EIA purposes.

1.15 The grid connection is considered further in section 7 of this report.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site extends to approximately 609 hectares (Ha) and occupies land within Glen Urquhart, between Drumnadrochit 7.7km to the east and Cannich 5.5km to the west. Access is taken from the A831 to the south. The site occupies the slopes and summit area of Cnoc Farasd, with land rising from 133m Above Ordinance Datum (AOD) at its southern extent to 416m AOD towards the northern boundary.

2.2 Land cover within the site is dominated by commercial non-native conifer plantation woodland. This is interspersed with areas of wet heath, blanket bog, acid grassland, neutral grassland and dry heath. A relatively small area of native Scots pine woodland is present in the western part of the site, alongside areas of naturally colonising mixed scrub.

2.3 The site is drained by a number of watercourses. The River Enrick runs eastwards along the southern boundary, while the Allt na Dalach Moire flows south through the eastern part of the site before joining the River Enrick upstream of Loch Meiklie.

2.4 The site is accessed via an existing track network and contains a number of routes used recreationally by the public, including for walking and horse riding. The Affric Kintail Way passes through the western part of the site, providing a long-distance recreational route linking the Loch Ness area with Kintail. No designated core paths or cycle routes pass through the site.

2.5 There are no residential properties within the site, however, there are low-density settlements along the A831 to the south, including Balnain and Buntait.

Ecological and Ornithological Designations

2.6 The application site does not form part of any designated natural heritage site. The scope of the EIAR covers the following designations in the wider area:

Designated Site	**Designated Features**	**Distance from Site Boundary**
Glen Affric to Strathconon Special Protection Area (SPA)	Golden eagle, breeding	4.0km W
North Inverness Lochs SPA	Salvonian grebe, breeding	5.0km E and SE
Dubh Lochs Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Slavonian grebe	5.0km S
Strathglass Complex Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Apline and subalpine heaths; blanket bog; bog woodland; plants in crevices on base-rich rocks; Caledonian forest; dry heaths; tall herb communities; otter (lutra lutra); wet heathland with cross-leaved heath (Erica tretralix); clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels; montane acid grasslands; plants in crevices on acid rocks; acidic scree; mountain willow (Salix spp.) scrub.	5.5km NW
Glen Strathfarrar SSSI	Woodlands: native pinewood; non-vascular plants: lichen assemblage; vascular plants: vascular plant assemblage; invertebrates:	5.5km NW

	dragonfly assemblage; breeding bird assemblage	
Balnagrantach SSSI	Vascular plants: club sedge (carex buxbaumii); Slavonian grebe.	6.3km E
Glen Affric National Nature Reserve (NNR)	Caledonian forest.	7.9km W
Glen Affric SSSI	Woodlands: native pinewood; non-vascular plants: lichen assemblage; invertebrates: dragonfly assemblage.	8.5km SW
Urquhart Bay Wood SAC	Alder (Alnus glutinosa) woodland on floodplains	8.7km SE
Urquhart Bay Wood SSSI	Woodland: wet woodland.	8.7km E
Loch Knockie and Nearby Lochs SPA	Slavonian grebe, breeding	16.7km S
Knockie Lochs SSSI	Slavonian grebe	16.7km S
Loch Ruthven SPA	Slavonian grebe, breeding	17.6km E
Loch Ruthven SSSI	Slavonian grebe; breeding bird assemblage	17.6km E
Loch Ashie SPA	Slavonian grebe, breeding	19.3km E
Loch Ashie SSSI	Slavonian grebe	19.3km E

Landscape Designations and Landscape Character

2.7 The application site does not form part of any landscape designation. The following landscape designations are within 25km of the site, with all designations beyond this distance being scoped out of assessment:

- Glen Strathfarrar National Scenic Area (NSA), 6.8km NW;
- Glen Affric NSA, 14.3km SW;
- Kintail NSA, 17km W;
- Loch Ness and Duntelchaig Special Landscape Area (SLA), 8.9km SE; and
- Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA, 10.6km NW.

2.8 The application site does not form part of any Wild Land Area (WLA), with the closest being the Central Highlands WLA, 6.3km W.

2.9 The application site is located on the northern side of Glen Urquhart in a transitional area between Landscape Character Type (LCT) 222 Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness in the north and LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness in the south. The wider area contains LCT 227 Farmed Strath – Inverness along Strathglass, with LCT 220 – Rugged Massif – Inverness occupying the higher ground above it, particularly to the north. To the east, Loch Ness falls within LCT 225 – Broad Steep-Sided Glen.

Cultural Heritage

2.10 There are no designated cultural heritage assets within the application site. The EIAR however identifies 22 non-designated heritage assets within the site. These primarily comprise post-medieval agricultural settlements and field management systems.

2.11 Within 1km of the application site, there is one scheduled monument, the Corrimony Chambered Cairn 3.6km SW, one listed building, the Category B listed Glenurquhart, Shewglie (LB15015), a large 18th century house, and 79 non-designated heritage assets, including 16 clearance cairns and cairnfields.

2.12 Within 5km, there is one further scheduled monument, Achratagan, hut circle and cairnfield (SM11456), one Category A listed building, Glenurquhart, Corrimony Grange Barn (LB14997), seven Category B listed buildings, and two Category C listed buildings. There are also 12 scheduled monuments and the Category A listed Fasnakyle Power Station (LB7118) within 10km of the site.

Cumulative Developments

2.13 Appendix 2 of this report provides details of operational, consented and under construction, and in planning wind farm projects within the 25km landscape and visual impact assessment study. The cut-off date for the applicant's LVIA was three months prior to submission in August 2025; the status of several schemes in the cumulative study has therefore moved on and have been updated in this appendix.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1	10.12.2024	24/04447/SCOP: Erection and operation of a wind farm comprising of up to 9 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 220m, battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure.	EIA Scoping Response Issued
3.2	09.07.2025	25/01772/PAN: Proposed Wind farm for 6 turbines, up to 149.9m tip, total generating capacity 28.8MW, plus ancillary infrastructure including battery storage of up to 15MW. Total capacity 43.8MW.	PAN Reported to Committee
3.3	09.05.2016	15/02758/FUL: Cnoc an Eas Wind Farm: Erection of 13 wind turbines of up to 136.5m (to blade tip) height and maximum installed generating capacity of 44.2 MW.	Refused and Appeal Dismissed

3.4	15.12.2014	14/04295/SCOP: Erection of up to 17 turbines, turbine foundations including associated transformer plinths and enclosures, an electrical substation, access point, underground cables, site access tracks, borrow pits, steel tower anemometer mast and temporary site construction compound.	EIA Scoping Response Issued
3.5	09.05.2016	14/04293/PAN: Erection of up to 17 turbines, turbine foundations including associated transformer plinths and enclosures, electrical substation, access point, underground power cables, site access tracks, borrow pits, steel tower anemometer mast and temporary site construction compound.	PAN Reported to Committee

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: EIA Development and Unknown Neighbour

Date Advertised:

- Inverness Courier: 19.12.2025 and 25.09.2026
- Edinburgh Gazette: 19.12.2025 and 25.09.2026

Representation deadline: EIAR - 18.01.2026 and EIAR AI - 25.10.2026

4.2 Timeous representations: 508 Objections

0 Supportive or General / Neutral Comments

4.3 Officers have reviewed the objections received and Microsoft Copilot has been used to assist Officers with the production of the following summary of the material considerations raised by objectors:

- Landscape and visual effects, including impacts on landscape character and scenic quality;
- Impacts on Special Landscape Areas and views from key recreational viewpoints;
- Effects on the setting of the Corrimony Chambered Cairn and other cultural heritage/archaeological assets;
- Loss and disturbance of peatland, carbon-rich soils and associated carbon storage functions;
- Effects on hydrology, watercourses, groundwater, flood risk and Private Water Supplies;
- Impacts on habitats, biodiversity and ecological networks;
- Effects on protected species, including birds, bats and other protected mammals;
- Loss of forestry, native woodland and areas identified as ancient woodland;
- Construction traffic impacts, including road safety, HGV movements and abnormal loads;

- Impacts on residential amenity from noise, dust, vibration, traffic and visual effects;
- Effects on public access, outdoor recreation, core paths, the Great Glen Way, Affric Kintail Way and outdoor amenity;
- Impacts on tourism and recreation associated with landscape change;
- Construction-related environmental effects and adequacy of mitigation measures;
- Safety concerns associated with the proposed BESS (where they are related to planning matters such as siting and layout);
- Cumulative effects with existing, consented and proposed energy developments;
- Compliance with NPF4, the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and EIA Regulations;
- Adequacy of environmental information and concerns regarding deferred mitigation/assessment; and
- Relevance of the previous refusal of the Cnoc an Eas Wind Farm and consistency in decision-making.

4.4 Non-material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- General opposition to wind farms or renewable energy development;
- Community benefit payments or lack thereof;
- Allegations of government corruption;
- Objections based on personal dislike of turbines or industrial development in principle;
- Moral or political objections to the proposal; and
- Claims regarding profits or commercial motives of the developer.

4.5 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet https://www.highland.gov.uk/planning/view-comment-planning-applications.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **Glen Urquhart Community Council (host) objects** on the grounds of significant adverse effects on the setting of Corrimony Chambered Cairn, together with landscape, visual and cumulative impacts affecting Loch Ness, Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and Glen Urquhart. Objection is also raised in relation to impacts on recreation and tourism, particularly the Affric Kintail Way, the loss of ancient woodland, insufficient information regarding biodiversity enhancement, peat, soils and water environment impacts, and the view that the proposal does not accord with planning policy when assessed overall.

5.2 **Strathglass Community Council objects** on the grounds that the development would conflict with NPF4 and would lead to unacceptable effects on landscape and visual amenity; cultural heritage assets; peat, hydrology and the water environment; ecology and protected species; traffic, transport and public safety; public access and recreation; and cumulative impacts. It also suggests that deferring plans such as a Construction Environmental Management Plan, Peat Management Plan and a Drainage Strategy to conditions is inconsistent with the EIA Regulations. Attention is

also drawn to the refusal of, and subsequent dismissal of the appeal for, Cnoc an Eas Wind Farm at the same site in June 2017.

5.3 **Other Community Councils**

- Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council did not respond to the consultation;
- Kilmorack Community Council did not respond to the consultation;
- Kiltarlity Community Council did not respond to the consultation.

5.4 **Access Officer** does not object and welcomes the acknowledgement of broader public access rights and the Affric Kintail Way within the application. Whilst some additional detail is needed, these could be secured by planning condition.

5.5 **Contaminated Land Officer** does not object and has confirmed that they have no further comment.

5.6 **Ecology Team** does not object, subject to conditions securing ecological mitigation, monitoring and habitat management. They are satisfied that, with the proposed mitigation, significant effects on protected species, bats, freshwater ecology and ornithological interests can be avoided. However, it advises that the proposal does not currently comply with NPF4 Policy 3 in relation to biodiversity enhancement, as additional peatland restoration is required to compensate for indirect peatland impacts. Conditions are recommended, including the appointment of an Environmental Clerk of Works, approval of a Habitat Management Plan, Construction Environmental Management Plan, Bird Protection Plan, species protection measures and ongoing monitoring.

5.7 **Environmental Health** does not object, subject to conditions imposing a noise limit and relating to construction noise, blasting, private water supplies and noise emissions from the substation and BESS.

5.8 **Flood Risk Management Team** does not object. There is a risk of flooding at the site access however works to the access will not result in loss of floodplain capacity and mitigation measures will be put in place to ensure safety. The surface water drainage arrangements are acceptable.

5.9 **Forestry Team objects** on the basis that it has not been demonstrated that the mitigation hierarchy has been applied in relation to the proposed loss of ancient woodland associated with the southern compound. The wider loss of forestry could be addressed by way of a compensatory planting condition.

5.10 **Historic Environment Team (Archaeology)** objects due to a significant adverse effect on the setting of the Corrimony Chambered Cairn scheduled monument. There is potential for unrecorded undesignated archaeological assets to exist above and below ground, however, impacts could be mitigated by way of a written scheme of investigation.

5.11 **Historic Environment Team (Conservation) objects** as the Cultural Heritage Assessment applies an inconsistent and insufficiently robust methodology when assessing effects on designated heritage assets. In particular, the assessment is considered to place excessive reliance on visibility, ridgelines, vegetation screening

and the retention of functional relationships, rather than fully considering the wider landscape context, setting, and cultural significance of listed buildings in accordance with Historic Environment Scotland guidance and NPF4 Policy 7. The officer considers that potential effects on a number of listed buildings, including Corrimony Grange Barn (LB14997), Mill of Tore and Mill Cottage (LB15014), Shewglie (LB15015), Old Corrimony (LB15000) and Corrimony Burial Ground (LB14998), have been underestimated, and notes that no dedicated visual assessment was provided for Lochletter Farm Garden Pavilion (LB49692). The applicant has not adequately demonstrated that adverse effects on the setting and significance of designated heritage assets have been properly identified, assessed, avoided or minimised.

5.12 **Landscape Officer objects** owing to significant adverse landscape and visual effects, including cumulative effects. The proposal would introduce turbines into an area currently undeveloped and free from wind farm development, while further reinforcing the perception of wind farm encirclement around Loch Ness. The turbines would be prominent in views from several sensitive receptors within Glen Urquhart, including visitors to Corrimony Chambered Cairn, recreational users of the Affric Kintail Way, a number of residential properties, and a short section of the A831. Receptors around Loch Ness would also experience prominent views of the turbines including those at the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, along a short section of the A82, and those travelling along the eastern shores of the loch including the B852 and those on the waters of Loch Ness on the approach to and from Urquhart Castle located within the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, with the overall visual effects of the proposal extending over an unusually wide geographical area. The proposal would also have significant adverse effects on the Dramatic Great Glen Special Quality of the SLA. Consequently, the residual landscape and visual effects are considered unacceptable and contrary to policy.

5.13 **Transport Planning Team** raises no objection. A large increase in HGV traffic on the A833 and A831 is identified however it is recognised that this is due to the existing low numbers of HGV movements on the roads. Effects on the urban environment within Inverness or Drumnadrochit has not been assessed; additional mitigation should be identified in the CTMP. Potential difficulties with the AIL route are identified, including the route near Insch's Roundabout, the B9005 and the A8082 which has several roundabouts along its length. A trial run is recommended. Cumulative traffic impacts arising from the wind farms identified in the EIAR can be addressed by way of Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMP) on the proposed development and the other consented wind farms likely to generate traffic on the same road network. As well as a CTMP, conditions requiring an Abnormal Load Plan and details of the A831 access are recommended.

5.14 **Civil Aviation Authority** did not respond to the consultation request.

5.15 **Highlands and Islands Airports Limited** raised no objection and noted that, based on the current turbine locations and heights, the proposed development would not infringe the safeguarding criteria and operation of Inverness Airport.

5.16 **Historic Environment Scotland objects** owing to the proposal having a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the setting of "Corrimony, chambered cairn 600m ESE of" scheduled monument, contrary to NPF4 Policy 7(h). All six turbines would be prominent in key views to and from the cairn, eroding its rural setting and

adversely affecting how the monument is understood, experienced and appreciated. It concludes that the impacts cannot be satisfactorily mitigated and maintains its long-standing objection to wind farm development in this location.

5.17 **Ministry of Defence** raises no objection, subject to conditions requiring aviation safety lighting, including MOD-accredited infra-red lighting, and the provision of information necessary for aviation charting and safeguarding. The site lies within Low Flying Area 14 where turbines have the potential to present a physical obstruction to low-flying aircraft and advises that any future amendments to the proposal should be subject to further consultation.

5.18 **National Air Traffic Services** raises no objection.

5.19 **NatureScot** do not object. The proposed development will have a significant effect on the Urquhart Bay Wood SAC, however, raises no objection subject to a condition requiring a Firewater Management Plan which details how firewater will be dealt with and disposed of to avoid contamination of watercourses. Subject to this, the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC. This condition will also address concerns in relation to the associated Urquhart Bay Wood SSSI. No likely significant effect is anticipated on the Glen Affric to Strathconon SPA. Proposed post-construction monitoring of effects on bats is welcomed, however, habitat management to avoid collision risk may be required depending on the results of monitoring. The outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan is broadly accepted with minor comments and made. No landscape and visual concerns of national significance have been identified.

5.20 **Transport Scotland** do not object, subject to a condition requiring a CTMP that uses updated road traffic collision data for the A82(T). There is uncertainty over who would be responsible to assess and mitigate cumulative transport effects from different wind farm developers, and a more detailed mechanism may be required for monitoring and reporting traffic levels within the CTMP. Detailed comments on the AIL route are included with a detailed review of various elements of the AIL plan and a trial run required by condition.

5.21 **Scottish Environment Protection Agency** do not object, subject to conditions requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan, watercourse crossings to be oversized bottomless culverts sized for 1 in 200 year event plus climate change, and a finalised Peat Management Plan.

5.22 **Scottish Forestry** do not object, however, any woodland removal must accord with the Scottish Government's policy on woodland removal and NPF4 Policy 6. It highlights the strong presumption against woodland loss, particularly native woodland, and advises that details of all felling, restocking and compensatory planting proposals should be provided and secured in compliance with the UK Forestry Standard.

5.23 **Scottish Water** raises no objection but notes that the proposed activity falls within a drinking water catchment where a Scottish Water abstraction is located. Scottish Water abstractions are designated as Drinking Water Protected Areas (DWPA). It is essential that water quality and quantity in the area is protected. Scottish Water consider the proposed development to be a low-risk activity to water quality given its

location within the catchment however care should be taken during construction, and mitigation measures must be in place to protect adjacent water courses from run off or other potential contaminants such as hydrocarbons.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

6.1 Appendix 3 of this report provides details of the documents which comprise the adopted Development Plan, including details of pertinent planning policies as well as adopted supplementary guidance, and other material policy considerations which are relevant to the assessment of the application.

7. PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

Planning Considerations

7.2 The key considerations in this case are:

a) Development Plan / Other Government Policy
b) Energy and Economic Impacts
c) Siting, Layout and Design
d) Landscape and Visual Impacts
e) Construction Impacts
f) Natural Heritage (including ornithology)
g) Built and Cultural Heritage
h) Roads, Transport and Access
i) Water, Flood Risk, Drainage and Peat
j) Noise and Shadow Flicker
k) Other Material Considerations

Development Plan / Other Government Policy

7.3 Appendix 4 of this report provides an assessment of compliance with the Development Plan and other material policy considerations. In this case, the Development Plan comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the adopted Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP), the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (IMFLDP2) and all statutorily adopted supplementary guidance, including the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG).

7.4 The principle of onshore wind development is established in national policy. NPF4 identifies Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure as a National Development, being of national importance to the delivery of Scotland's Spatial Strategy. This supports the continued contribution of the Highland area towards the transition to net zero. At the same time, NPF4 seeks to safeguard environmental assets and promote investment in both natural and engineered climate change solutions. As such, the assessment of renewable energy

proposals requires a balanced consideration of the benefits of renewable energy generation against any adverse environmental effects.

7.5 This is reflected within other material policy considerations, with Government policy giving significant weight to the importance of achieving net zero through the deployment of onshore wind at pace. Government legislation and policy maintain the commitment to attaining net zero by 2045, with the Onshore Wind Policy Statement requirement for 20GW of onshore wind to be deployed by 2030, and the Climate Change Committee Report to UK Parliament (July 2024) explaining that onshore wind installations will need to double by 2030. The UK Government Clean Power Action Plan has also recently set a more ambitious target of 27-29 GW of onshore wind by 2030. The ability to meet these targets should therefore be given substantial weight when undertaking the planning balance exercise for renewable energy proposals.

7.6 At the local level, the HwLDP supports renewable energy developments where they are appropriately located, sited and designed and would not give rise to significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively. The Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance provides a framework for assessing proposals against ten landscape and visual criteria to assist the application of policy and the overall planning balance. An assessment of the proposal against these criteria is provided in Appendix 7 of this report.

Energy and Economic Impacts

7.7 The Council continues to support the Scottish Government's renewable energy ambitions. The Highland area currently hosts approximately 30% of Scotland's installed onshore wind generating capacity, and there remains a significant pipeline of onshore wind farm proposals pending consideration.

7.8 Notwithstanding any impacts on landscape character, visual amenity and heritage interests, the principle of development is supported by Scottish Government policy and guidance supporting the transition to renewable energy. The development would contribute towards renewable energy and climate objectives through the provision of 28.8MW of onshore wind generating capacity, and 15MW of battery energy storage capacity.

7.9 Wind turbines provide an important mechanism for the reduction of carbon dioxide (CO2), and other greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into the atmosphere by reducing the consumption of fossil fuel generated mains electricity. However, during their manufacture, construction and decommissioning, wind farms can result in the emissions of GHGs, particularly where natural carbon stores, such as forestry or peat, are present and potentially impacted by the development, often termed "carbon balance". The applicant's assessment of the carbon balance predicts total emissions of 59,950 tonnes CO2 equivalent from the construction and operation of the wind farm. An annual saving of 25,316 tonnes CO2 equivalent is predicted, based on a grid mix of electricity generation, resulting in a payback period of 2.3 years. The assessment includes a worst-case scenario prediction which results in a payback period of 6.2 years. The CO2 and GHG emissions savings represent a significant benefit of the proposed scheme.

7.10 Chapter 12 of the EIAR includes an assessment of socio-economic effects. This estimates up to 37 construction jobs and £3.0 million Gross Value Added (GVA) within Highland during the construction period, and up to 6 jobs and £0.4 million GVA per annum throughout the operational phase. Again, this is positive but is not deemed significant in EIA terms.

7.11 **Construction Impacts**

7.12 Construction impacts would primarily arise from noise and dust associated with construction traffic and construction activities. Volume 3 of the EIAR contains a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) which, subject to a controlling condition, would ensure that construction traffic is appropriately mitigated. A Community Liaison Group would also be required to be established to ensure that community councils and other stakeholders are kept informed and have the ability to provide feedback on any construction traffic issues that arise.

7.13 In addition, the applicant proposes that a finalised Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) be put in place during the construction phase. This would have the aim of mitigating impacts on the environment from construction issues such as noise, dust and pollution.

7.14 There are sufficient separation distances between borrow pits and sensitive receptors to ensure that blasting is not a significant issue, subject to appropriate mitigation being secured by way of a CEMP condition.

7.15 Construction impacts are capable of being controlled and mitigated to an acceptable level by way of planning conditions.

Siting, Layout and Design

7.16 Chapter 4, Volume 1 of the EIAR describes the site and the proposed development's evolution through four design iterations. Starting with 22 turbines at 220m to blade tip at Feasibility stage, through to 9 turbines at 220m at Scoping Stage, revised to the First Public Exhibition Layout to 7 turbines at 220m, and finally the EIAR Design Freeze layout for 6 turbines at 149.9m to blade tip as per the proposed layout.

7.17 The reasons for the site's selection are reported in Chapter 4, Volume 1 of the EIAR Section 4.3) which states that the location of the site was selected because it met the following criteria:

- "There is good wind speed and resource;
- The Proposed Development location is in proximity to existing operational wind farms and is in an area where wind turbines are already operating at a reasonable distance from the Site;
- Has the capacity to maintain suitable distance from the nearest residential properties and settlements;
- The Site benefits from a good existing road network that has been previously used for the transportation of wind turbine components;
- The Site does not feature any national environmental designations; and

- The Site sits predominantly in Group 3, in The Highland Council Supplementary Planning Guidance, Areas with Potential for Wind Farm development."

7.18 It is not agreed that the proposed development is located in proximity to operational wind farms. Rather, it introduces wind farm development in a new area currently unoccupied by wind farm development which is evident in the applicant's Figure 5-12: Cumulative Baseline of the EIAR. The nearest operational wind farm, Corrimony is located nearly 10km southwest of the proposed development which is part of an existing cluster of wind farm development. The siting of the proposed development would contribute to a perception of some receptors becoming increasingly surrounded by wind energy development. Further detail is provided later in this report.

7.19 The planning history of wind farms in the area has been a consideration and in particular, the refused Cnoc an Eas Wind Farm for 13 turbines at 136.5m to blade tip (THC ref. 15/02758/FUL). That application site overlaps the current application site. Unacceptable landscape and visual effects were one of the key reasons for its refusal, including significant adverse effects including cumulative effects on one of the special qualities of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, detracting from the views from Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, and significant adverse effects on the visual impacts from important viewpoints in the wider area, notably Corrimony chambered cairn, the Affric-Kintail Way, and from either side of Loch Ness (and on the loch). Significant cumulative visual effects with other operational and consented wind farms when viewed from hilltops on the west of Loch Ness were also cited as part of the reasons for refusal.

7.20 The applicant states that the design of the proposed development has followed a constraints-led approach in order that mitigation on environmental effects is embedded within the design, with key areas of survey and assessment including landscape designations, landscape character and visual amenity, potential cumulative effects with other relevant wind farm developments within 25 km of the proposed development, archaeology and cultural heritage assets, ground conditions, topography and presence of peat, proximity to noise sensitive receptors, presence of watercourses, private water supplies and sensitive surface water features, presence of Core Paths, public roads, overhead lines, fixed telecommunications links, presence of sensitive ornithology receptors, presence of ecological receptors and aviation and utilities constraints.

7.21 The proposed development has undergone several iterations with each layout involving a review from key landscape and visual receptors, and other technical disciplines. consideration of setting impacts on cultural heritage assets, impacts to peat depth and ornithological consideration. Turbine tip heights explored during the design process ranged from 220m to 149.9m. The applicant also consulted with THC at pre-application stage (24/02469/PREMAJ) which noted the Council's landscape and visual concerns in relation to views from the A82, Loch Ness (and its eastern shores), the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA. It was also noted that the proposed development has the potential to introduce visibility of wind energy development into areas where visibility of wind energy development is not currently present or is very limited.

7.22 In relation to landscape and visual matters, the LVIA in Chapter 5 and the Design Evolution and Alternatives in Chapter 4, Volume 1 of the EIAR including the Design and Access Statement do not define any specific design objectives or principles for the proposed development. However, for each layout iteration, landscape and visual considerations were noted as follows:

- Scoping Layout - Initial review of potential landscape and visual impacts and terrain constraints;
- First Public Exhibition Layout - Minimising visibility from sensitive landscapes (National Scenic Areas (NSAs), Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), Glen Urquhart/Strathglass, and Buntait); and
- Final EIAR Layout - Reduction in number of turbines from 7 to 6 which provides benefit from a heritage and landscape point of view as it reduces the extent of the proposed development, and the reduction in height removed the requirement for aviation lighting, which is beneficial in terms of potential landscape and visual impacts.

7.23 Other technical considerations were also taken into account, such as cultural heritage and the design around the Corrimony Chambered Cairn. The applicant notes that movement eastwards of turbines and reduction in tip heights reduced visibility from the Cairn, and this move and reduction in height moved the turbines out of the line of sight of the Cairn and helped to decrease the prominence.

7.24 Key considerations in coming to a judgement on the proposed development are also derived from The Loch Ness Landscape Sensitivity study contained within the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG). The site is located just on the edge of the area covered by the study and is therefore relevant in relation to its siting and design. This study identifies that any remaining capacity for larger scale development should be focused on existing clusters that are generally found in Rolling Uplands, Rugged Massif and Rocky Moorland Landscape Character Types. However, the development should be well designed, and the turbines should:

- “Be set back from key routes (e.g. The Great Glen Way, the A82 and the A887 around Dundreggan);
- Preserve mitigation established by current schemes;
- Maintain the landscape setting of each existing scheme;
- Respect spacing and scale of existing development pattern; and
- Minimise visual confusion from higher ground to the west and north and with Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and avoid a perception of the peak being encircled by development.”

7.25 **Loch Ness and its Surrounds**: An established pattern of wind farm development in the Loch Ness area has been to ensure that schemes are set back and appropriately contained in views from Loch Ness and routes along the Great Glen. In considering wind energy developments on both sides of Loch Ness, Officers have consistently sought to avoid or minimise visibility from the water and along the surrounding loch

level routes and approaches. This has largely been achieved through the refusal of poorly sited wind farm proposals, and by securing appropriate mitigation by design, including turbine deletions and careful consideration of turbine scale. Currently visibility from operational schemes (Bhlaraidh) is restricted to a few blade tips. The consented Chrathaich Wind Farm is also expected to largely restrict visibility to a limited number of additional blade tips, consistent with the established pattern of operational and consented development. In contrast, the proposed development is more visually conspicuous and prominent, with hubs, blades and some upper towers being visible in a different part of the skyline, as seen in VP7: East Loch Ness, and also in the wireline in Caption TA 5-3-2: View from the centre of Loch Ness of Technical Appendix 5-3, Volume 3 of the EIAR. The turbines would form a new and prominent focus in views across Loch Ness and Urquhart Bay, introducing wind energy development into a part of the landscape where no operational or consented turbines are currently visible. In doing so, the proposed development has the potential to undermine the design mitigation secured for other wind farm schemes and erode the established pattern of development being set back from Loch Ness and carefully contained in views from the loch and routes along the Great Glen.

7.26 The proposed development would be a conspicuous man-made feature in promoted views across (VP7: East Loch Ness) and from the waters of Loch Ness. Loch Ness is a world-renowned tourist destination, and the proposed development would be visible from a well-used section of the loch frequented daily by visitors travelling to and from Urquhart Castle. The turbines would also detract from the Castle's prominence when seen from the B852 and its promoted laybys as seen in VP7: East Loch Ness. It would also be visible from a section of the A82 along the Great Glen for road users including tourists and walkers / cyclists as the route descends into Drumnadrochit as seen in VP6: A82 near Strone.

7.27 **Summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh**: Meall Fuar-mhonaidh is a prominent landmark hill and important vantage point from which to appreciate the considerable scale and alignment of the Great Glen Fault. As illustrated in VP12, the summit currently affords largely unspoiled views to the north, where existing wind farm development is generally limited by distance and has little influence on the overall character of the outlook. The proposed development, located approximately 10 km away, would introduce turbines into a further part of this predominantly undeveloped view, extending the influence of wind energy development across the northern skyline. The introduction of turbines into this outlook would increase the perception that the summit would become increasingly encircled by wind farm development, affecting the experience of the summit as a landmark feature within the wider landscape. The proposed development would also conflict with the preferred design outcomes set out in the Council's OWESG, particularly in relation to respecting the existing and established pattern of wind farm development and avoiding the perception of encirclement around prominent summits. The proposed development would therefore erode the existing visual qualities of this important landmark within the regional SLA which is noted further below.

7.28 **Glen Urquhart**: Glen Urquhart is largely free of visibility of operational wind farms, as also illustrated in the applicant's cumulative ZTV (Figure 5-13-1 of the EIAR) with the exception at its western end where any views of operational wind farms are very limited to blade tips. Whilst the wooded character of the glen screens the proposed

development from sections of the A831, some residential properties and settlements such as Drumnadrochit and Cannich on either end of the glen, where visible, it would have a significant visual adverse effect from important, sensitive locations such as the Corrimony Chambered Cairn (VP2), long sections of the Affric Kintail Way[1] (mainly in Section 1 and a small stretch in Section 2), small settlements like Shenval (VP3), and a small section of the A831. This would be the only wind farm visible from parts of this sensitive glen which forms a key approach to Loch Ness from Strathglass / Glen Affric. The composition is poor from some of these locations with turbine overlap and outliers as seen in both VPs 2 (Corrimony Chambered Cairn) and 3 (Shenval) with the southern turbines appearing overly prominent and disrupting the wooded skyline of the glen. The positioning of the turbines within / adjacent to forestry / woodland make the trees act as a scale indictor accentuating turbine size as again evident in VPs 2 and 3. The design of the proposed development when viewed from the glen conflicts with the NatureScot Siting and Design of Wind Farms in the Landscape, Version 3a.

7.29 **Cumulative Effects and Pattern of Wind Farm Development**: In addition to the design of the proposed development on its own, it is equally important that siting, layout, and design principles consider the cumulative effects arising from a proposal's relationships with other wind energy developments in its wider context given the ever-increasing presence of turbines in the landscape. Individual wind farm design should therefore take into account the baseline and potential future baseline conditions of wind energy in its wider context. While consideration of how the siting, layout, and design of developments relate to each other and the cohesiveness of their relationship to their surroundings from fixed viewpoints important, it is also important to assess how wind farms relate to each other in terms of their frequency when moving through the landscape.

7.30 As such, factors such as the degree to which nearby developments follow similar 'development patterns' in terms of siting, layout, and design can determine the degree to which schemes sit harmoniously or discordantly together in the landscape. Therefore, similarities and differences between receiving landscapes and LCTs; the degree to which the size and scale differences between the schemes and individual components, especially turbine proportions such as relative tip and hub heights, rotor diameters, and direction of rotor spin, are experienced by receptors and what effects these have on receptors such as the enjoyment of the view qualities, amongst others, are key in the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

7.31 Such consideration includes understanding the visual separation between schemes, which is important in order to allow receptors to experience and appreciate the character of the landscape and any special natural, architectural, cultural, and historic features in between. Care and attention are therefore required regarding design, siting and location to avoid detrimental impacts. Indeed, NatureScot's Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape Guidance Versions 3a (2017) notes that it can be particularly challenging to accommodate multiple wind farms in an area and so advances wind farm design objectives of limiting visual confusion and reinforcing the appropriateness of each development for its location.

[1] The applicant has incorrectly assessed and labelled Section 1 of the Affric Kintail Way between Drumnadrochit and Cannich where the section of overlap with the A831 was re-routed in 2022. This is noted further in the Officers Appraisal further in the Visual Effects section.

7.32 The proposed development would introduce turbines in a manner contrary to the established pattern of operational and consented wind farm development. The pattern of wind farm development in this area has been largely concentrated to the southeast, east, south and southwest of Loch Ness. Nevertheless, where visible in combination with other cumulative wind farms, particularly the Bhlaraidh group, the proposed development would have a significant cumulative visual effect when viewed from hilltops on the west side of Loch Ness, from where it would contribute to the impression that they are becoming surrounded by wind turbines. The design of the proposed development would therefore fail to meet the criteria set out in the OWESG in relation to the patten of wind farm development.

7.33 Not only is consideration of how the siting, design of multiple developments related to each other, and the cohesiveness of their relationship to their surroundings from fixed viewpoints important, but also how wind farms relate to each other in terms of their frequency when moving through the landscape. Such consideration includes understanding the visual separation between schemes, which is important in order to allow receptors to experience and appreciate the character of the landscape and any special natural, architectural, cultural, and historic features in between. Care and attention are therefore required regarding design, siting and location to avoid detrimental sequential effects on important routes in the wider area. In relation to this, there would be Significant adverse sequential cumulative effects for receptors travelling in and along the eastern shores of Loch Ness with the proposed development and in particular, the in-planning Loch Liath Wind Farm, affecting up to 4-5km of the area between Urquhart Bay and eastern shores of Loch Ness, as also indicated in the cumulative ZTV (Figure 5-14-2 of the EIAR). Loch Liath Wind Farm was subject to Public Local Inquiry, and is currently pending decision by Scottish Ministers, with the Council, in line with Officers recommendation, having raised objection to that scheme.

7.34 The implications of the proposed development on the perceptual experience of the landscape and the visual experience of the receptor are considered in the respective Landscape Impact and Visual Impact sections below. As with all wind farm development, there remains potential for significant residual landscape and visual effects that require further consideration even though mitigation is, or should be, embedded into the design. Any assessment must pay particular attention to the specific hosting and neighbouring LCTs of the receiving landscape along with the landscape composition they engender, as well as any landscape designations in the wider area, susceptible receptors, as well as public views and the amenity of residents, recreational, and road user receptors. The assessment that follows generally sets out that due to the siting, scale and location of the proposed development, the proposal has resulted in a scheme that appears overly prominent in highly sensitive views, and notably contrasts with the established pattern of wind farm development, resulting in significantly detrimental effects on landscape character and the sense of place it imbues, a special quality of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, and on views as experienced by local residents, users of the local roads network, and recreational users. The design of the proposed development does not follow all the principles sets out in the NatureScot Guidance ‘Siting and Designing Wind farms in the Landscape’ Version 3a (2017) and also does not meet

several of the Council's OWESG (2016) Criterion, the latter which is set out in Appendix 6 of this Report.

Ancillary Infrastructure

7.35 In terms of design of the infrastructure on the site including the BESS, substation, access tracks, borrow pits and temporary compounds, these appear to have been located to reduce landscape, visual, and other environmental effects, particularly from low-lying receptors. However, some sections of access track would be visible from more elevated receptors. Forestry felling and restructuring in Kilmartin and Enrick Forests, as noted in the Long-Term Forest Plan, would also be visible from some receptors. The permanent met mast is likely to be more noticeable from closer range receptors.

7.36 Proposals for BESS facilities included with wind farm developments are usually subject to conditions imposed to secure details of their finalised siting, layout, access (for maintenance and emergency service vehicles). The design of all external components including compound and structure finishes, and grid connection are all matters to be subject to conditions, as well as, details of the fire risk management system including fire suppression, water supply, drainage including containment and segregation of expended fire suppression agent and / or water from the water environment, as well as the establishment of a Fire Risk Management Plan, inclusive of an Emergency Response Plan.

7.37 The final design of ancillary components requires to be conditioned as details of final design are not all shown within the EIAR. The applicant is aware of the Council's requirement for associated buildings to be designed in a manner appropriate to the wind farm's Highland context. The applicant has not yet committed to house transformers within the turbines themselves or externally. Housing them internally is the Council's preferred option in order to reduce the visual clutter of additional infrastructure and could be secured by condition.

7.38 As noted in Chapter 3 Volume 1 of the EIAR, the applicant has proposed a 100m micrositing allowance to allow the proposed development to respond to and mitigate against unforeseen environmental constraints during construction works. The need for this is however contested and should not exceed 50m as the changes to the positioning of turbines of greater than 50m would result in a significantly changed proposal than that which has been assessed through the LVIA.

Landscape Effects

7.39 There are several aspects to consider in determining whether the proposed development represents an acceptable degree of effect on landscape character, including:

- effects on the Landscape Character Type (LCT) as a whole, as well as the specific unit of the LCT (referred to as the Landscape Character Area (LCA)), and on neighbouring LCTs;
- effects on the local landscape composition closer to the proposed development; and,
- direct and indirect effects on landscape designations.

Landscape Character Effects

7.40 Landscape character is the distinctive and identifiable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape and the way that this pattern is perceived. Effects on landscape character can occur both on the site, where the pattern of elements that characterise the landscape would be directly altered by the addition of the proposed development, and outwith the site in the wider study area, where visibility of the proposed development may alter the way in which this pattern of elements is perceived.

7.41 The proposed development's specific effects on landscape character will result from the introduction of six large man-made rotating features into the landscape. The extent to which the turbines and, to a lesser degree, the associated tracks and other infrastructure change the existing colour and texture of the host Rocky Moorland Plateau and Wooden Glen LCTs and its interaction with the colour and texture of the wider landscapes that the development is experienced within. The proposed development's lower lying infrastructure components will have greater influence where they are more visible, which varies due to the topography and forestry.

7.42 In general terms, wind farm developments are experienced as locally dominant features within their host landscapes while the perception of their size and scale will generally decrease relative to the host landscape as one moves away from the turbines and crosses different landscape features against which the turbines are experienced as ever diminishing objects.

7.43 The proposed development would straddle across two LCTs – LCT 222 Rocky Moorland Plateau and LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness forming a transitional landscape. Both LCTs, along with other surrounding LCTs are considered in the applicant's assessment, including:

- LCT 220 Rugged Massif – Inverness;
- LCT 225 Broad Steep-Sided Glen; and
- LCT 227 Farmed Strath – Inverness.

7.44 The remaining LCTs within the study area not included in the assessment have been scoped out due to relative visibility, distance, and other mitigating factors such as existing development including wind farms meaning the proposed development would have limited to no effect on these landscape resources.

7.45 The applicant's assessment concludes Significant landscape effects for the two host LCTs resulting in direct physical effects, and from visibility to the north and south of Glen Urquhart and the glen itself. The applicant notes that this would cover a small geographical area with LCT 222 Rocky Moorland Plateau - Inverness which is judged to receive Significant (Major) effects on character to the north of Glen Urquhart, extending 1.6km to the north, 6.5km to the east, and 3.1km to the west. To the south of Glen Urquhart, the character of the LCT would be affected from 3.5 to 5.9km to the southwest, thereafter, reducing with distance to not significant levels. LCT 226 Wooden Glen – Inverness which covers Glen Urquhart is also judged to receive Significant (Major) effects on character up to 3.5km from the site, thereafter, reducing to not significant levels on account of screening by woodland within the glen.

Therefore, effects on character as a result of the proposed development would extend up to 6.5km both within the wider landscape and within the two LCTs. The applicant also assesses Significant cumulative effects as a result of the addition of the proposed development to both the consented and in-planning scenarios on LCT 222 Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness, for parts of the LCT immediately to the north and south of Glen Urquhart.

7.46 The proposed development is also located within the area covered by the OWESG Loch Ness study, with the turbine envelope falling within the Landscape Character Area (LCA) LN9: Eskadale Muir through Meall na h-Eilrig (hill above Drumnadrochit), to the north, Rocky Moorland Plateau. This document identifies LCA LN9 as having a high sensitivity to large-scale windfarms due to settlement, road access and higher sensitivity of neighbouring types and there is no scope for medium to large scale wind farms. The proposed development would significantly affect this LCA broadly similar to the geographical extent for LCT 222 Rocky Moorland Plateau – Inverness.

7.47 The applicant's identified Significant effects on both LCTs are not disputed, however, the geographical extent of Significant adverse landscape effects on LCT 226 Wooded Glen – Inverness are understated. These effects would extend out to approximately 5km rather than 3.5km assessed by the applicant. Whilst it is agreed there would be Significant adverse effects on the two host LCTs, Officers recommended objection to the application is not on these specific grounds, rather, due to the proposed development's resultant effects on the special qualities of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA as described below.

Designated Landscape – Special Landscape Areas

7.48 The proposed development is not located within an SLA. The applicant has assessed the proposed developments likely effects on the Special Qualities of two regionally designated Special Landscape Areas (SLAs); Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, and Strathconan, Monar and Mullardoch SLA. This assessment focusses only on the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA by virtue of the SLA having Special Qualities that are most likely to be significantly impacted by the proposed development. Officers are content that the effects of the Special Qualities of the Strathconan, Monar and Mullardoch SLA would not be significant, however, there would be Significant visual effects from some hill tops and mountains within the SLA, such as VP16: Sgurr na Ruaidhe and VP14: Beinn a'Bhathaich on the edge of the SLA.

Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA

7.49 The Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA is situated some 8.9km southeast of the nearest proposed turbine. The SLA encompasses the section of the Great Glen surrounding Loch Ness, including the defining hillslopes along its western and eastern shores, the prominent landmark hill of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh to the west, and the elevated interior moorland and agricultural plateau to the east, which incorporates Lochs Ashie, Duntelchaig and Ruthven. The area is characterised by its constantly changing landscape compositions, dominated by the extensive linear form of Loch Ness and its dramatic glacial trench. The loch is framed by steep, imposing and often wooded slopes, which rise towards undulating moorland ridges. To the east, this

contrasts with a more remote and elevated interior plateau, characterised by upland lochs, scattered woodland and distinctive rocky knolls.

7.50 There are three special qualities identified for this SLA; the dramatic Great Glen; the contrasting intimate plateau; and the historic landscape. The applicant's assessment concludes that the proposed development would not result in Significant effects on the characteristics and qualities underpinning the SLA's designation, although it acknowledges the potential for some localised indirect effects on the upper parts of the designation. However, this conclusion is disputed. Officers consider that the proposed development would give rise to Significant adverse effects on the Special Qualities of the SLA, particularly its defining characteristic of the Dramatic Great Glen.

7.51 Three viewpoints are located within the SLA, VP6: A82 near Strone, VP7: East Loch Ness and VP12: Meall Fuar-mhonaidh. The applicant assesses the effects at VP7 and VP12 as Significant, whereas VP6 is assessed as Not Significant. However, the applicant's findings are contested, given that all three viewpoints would experience Significant effects, as set out in Appendix 5 of this report.

7.52 The applicant identifies relatively limited areas of theoretical visibility within the SLA, extending across Urquhart Bay, Loch Ness and the eastern side of the loch, with visibility extending inland to elevated locations including Beinn a Bhathaich (456m AOD), Stac na Cathaig (446m AOD), Carn an Fhreacadain (382m AOD) and Creag Bhuidhe (375m AOD), at distances of up to approximately 23.9km. To the southeast, theoretical visibility is largely confined to the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh (699m AOD), approximately 9.8km from the proposed development. Whilst it is acknowledged that the extent of theoretical visibility across the SLA would be limited, the areas from which the proposed development would be visible include highly sensitive and important receptors that embody and contribute to its designated Special Qualities. These include Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, the shores and waters of Loch Ness, and key locations along the loch, particularly its terminal focus at Urquhart Bay and some key sections of the B852 and A82 transport corridors. The visibility of the proposed development from these locations would result in Significant adverse effects, notwithstanding the geographically limited extent of visibility.

7.53 The SLA is particularly sensitive to the introduction of additional large-scale features on the side slopes or ridgelines of the Great Glen. Both sides of Loch Ness are sensitive to new built development that could intrude upon views along and across the loch. Furthermore, the cumulative effect of multiple developments, particularly where these introduce a series of linear or discrete features, has the potential to detract from the sequential experience of the landscape when travelling along the loch. In recognition of these sensitivities, the Council has sought to establish and maintain a pattern of wind farm development that is appropriately set back from Loch Ness and well contained within the wider landscape. This approach has been achieved through the refusal of poorly sited wind farm proposals and the securing of appropriate design-led mitigation, including turbine removals and careful consideration of turbine scale. Consequently, the pattern of operational and consented wind farm development has largely limited additional visibility from Loch Ness to occasional blade tips. The proposed development, by contrast, would introduce turbines of a scale and prominence that depart from this established pattern of development. This would undermine the approach taken to protect the landscape

setting of Loch Ness and result in Significant adverse effects, as illustrated by VP7 (East Loch Ness) and VP6 (A82 near Strone).

7.54 The Special Qualities of the SLA include The Dramatic Great Glen of which the following elements would be affected by the proposed development:

"Urquhart castle is a prominent focus along the loch, occupying a magnificent situation on an irregular headland of rock jutting out into the loch…"

7.55 The introduction of the proposed turbines on the skyline (overlapping with the Corbett of Sgorr na Diollaid in the distance), beyond Urquhart Bay and the wooded hills of Beinn a' Ghairchin (349m AOD) and Sgorr Gaoithe (266m AOD) and in close proximity to Urquhart Castle, would detract from the prominence and visual setting of the castle. This would be particularly evident from locations along the B852 (VP7: East Loch Ness) and from Loch Ness itself, where views are experienced by the many recreational vessels that travel along the loch and often slow down to appreciate the views and scenery in this area. The proposed development would also create a competing visual focus, drawing the eye towards Glen Urquhart and away from the expansive views along and across Loch Ness. Rather than allowing the loch and its surrounding landforms to remain the principal focus, the turbines would introduce a prominent skyline feature as a terminal focus that would alter the established visual composition. Furthermore, the proposed development would give rise to Significant adverse sequential cumulative effects for receptors travelling along and experiencing Loch Ness in the context and setting of Urquhart Castle. These effects would arise from the proposed development in combination with other schemes, particularly the in-planning Loch Liath Wind Farm, with the potential to affect a stretch of approximately 4–5km between Urquhart Bay and the eastern shores of Loch Ness. This extent is illustrated in the cumulative ZTV (Figure 5-14-2 of the EIAR).

7.56 The proposed development is also considered to affect the following element associated with the Special Qualities of the Dramatic Great Glen:

"Meall Fuar-mhonaidh is a good vantage point from which to appreciate the massive scale and alignment of the Great Glen Fault within a backcloth of the Monadliath massif to the south and the Balmacann and Affric mountains interior to the northwest, both areas which possess wildness qualities."

7.57 Meall Fuar-mhonaidh is also identified as a 'Key Location' within the Council's OSWEG. As outlined above, the Council has consistently sought to minimise the effects of wind farm development on this prominent landmark hill. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed development would not significantly affect views towards Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, it would give rise to Significant adverse effects on views from the summit (VP12), detracting from its relationship with the surrounding landscape as described within the relevant Special Quality. As illustrated by VP12, the summit currently affords extensive and largely unspoilt views to the north, where operational wind energy developments are generally distant and have limited influence on the overall character of the outlook. The proposed development, located approximately 10km away, would introduce turbines into a further section of this predominantly undeveloped panorama, extending the presence and influence of wind energy development along the northern skyline. Officers consider that the introduction of turbines into this outlook would reinforce the perception of wind energy

development increasingly encircling the summit. Furthermore, the consenting of the proposed Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro Scheme (25/01599/S36), the upper components of which would be prominently visible from the summit and occupy part of the same field of view as the proposed development, would contribute to a greater sense of encirclement by other energy infrastructure, thereby exacerbating the significant cumulative effects.

7.58 The proposed development would also be contrary to the preferred design outcomes set out in the criteria table within the Council's OWESG. In particular, Criterion 1 seeks to avoid wind energy development becoming visually prominent in the majority of views from settlements and identified Key Locations. Meall Fuar-mhonaidh is recognised by the Council as a Key Location, reflecting its status as a prominent and well-visited landmark hill, as well as its contribution to the Special Qualities of the SLA. Officers therefore consider that the visual effects of the proposed development from this location would conflict with the Council's established design objectives for onshore wind energy development.

7.59 The proposed development would also fail to satisfy the thresholds set out under Criterion 3, as it would disrupt the visual relationship between the landmark hill of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and its wider landscape setting. Furthermore, the proposed development would depart from the established pattern of wind farm development within the area, thereby conflicting with the objectives of Criterion 6.

7.60 Overall, Officers consider that the proposed development would give rise to Significant adverse effects on the Dramatic Great Glen Special Quality of the SLA. In particular, it would adversely affect views northwards from the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, contributing to a perception of the landmark hill becoming increasingly encircled by large-scale energy development and intensifying cumulative effects with other schemes. The proposed development would also adversely affect views across Urquhart Bay, particularly when experienced from the waters and eastern shores of Loch Ness, where it would be seen in the context of Urquhart Castle. Officers consider that the turbines would introduce a competing visual feature on the skyline, detracting from the prominence of the Castle and its relationship with the surrounding landscape.

Visual Effects

7.61 The assessment of visual effects is included in Technical Appendix 5-3, Volume 3 of the EIAR and covers a range of receptors including settlements, transport routes, recreational routes, visitor attractions and hilltops. As noted in Appendix 4 of this report, the applicant's visual assessment has been undertaken as a receptor-based assessment (giving consideration to all potential visual receptors) rather than a 'single point', viewpoint-based assessment. In this regard, the visualisation locations do not comprise specific viewpoints for visual assessment, and a viewpoint-based assessment has not been undertaken. This is unusual for a wind farm proposal, and Officers have therefore attempted to extrapolate what would be the applicant's assessment at viewpoints from their visual assessment in Technical Appendix 5-3, Volume 3 in Appendix 5 of this report which includes a viewpoint assessment from each of the 17 viewpoints.

7.62 There are differences between the applicant's assessment and the appraisal undertaken by Council's officers, which is to be expected when such assessments are dependent on the application of professional judgement. Differences for the specific viewpoints are set out in Appendix 5 of this report and in the main text below.

7.63 The applicant assesses significant visual effects up to approximately 16 km distance from the proposed development which includes seven out of 17 viewpoints namely:

- VP2: Corrimony Chambered Cairn (Major adverse);
- VP3: Shenval (Major adverse);
- VP7: East Loch Ness (Moderate);
- VP10: Carn na Leitire (Moderate);
- VP12: Meall Fuar-mhonaidh (Moderate);
- VP13: Beinn a' Bhathaich (Moderate); and
- VP16: Sgurr na Ruaidhe (Moderate).

7.64 This geographical extent of significant effects up to 16km is unusually large for only a six-turbine wind farm of less than 150m to blade tip. Critically, in appraising the applicant's LVIA, Significant effects (Moderate adverse) have been identified at one additional receptor, VP6: A82 near Strone, which would occur for road users, nearby residents, and visitors / walkers / cyclists located approximately 10.3km southeast of the proposed development.

7.65 In addition, it is found that the applicant has under-assessed the magnitude of change at VP12: Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, which would result in a higher level of effect (Moderate to Major) at this location, however, it is agreed that the effect at this viewpoint would be Significant. It is also found that the applicant has over-assessed the effect at VP11: Great Glen Way, near Ladycairn, albeit that it is agreed that the effect at this viewpoint would not be significant.

7.66 In addition to the effects of the proposal as an in solus development, which includes operational wind farms as part of the baseline, the applicant's LVIA has considered the cumulative effects that may arise when the proposed development is added to two different scenarios of consented and application-stage wind farms.

7.67 The applicant's cumulative assessment concludes that all Significant effects that relate to relationship between the proposed development and the Bhlaraidh group have been identified through the LVIA (i.e. they would occur in the solus assessment which includes operational wind farms), and no new Significant cumulative (additional) effects are identified with the increase of wind energy development in the surrounding area. This includes consideration of the in-planning scheme at Ballach. The cumulative assessment also finds that the proposed development would not create Significant combined cumulative effects in the consented or in-planning scenarios. This conclusion is disputed.

7.68 The Officer appraisal in Appendix 5 of this report concludes that Significant cumulative effects would arise from:

- VP2: Corrimony Chambered Cairn;
- VP3: Shenval
- VP10: Carn na Leitire;

- VP12: Meall Fuar-mhonaidh;
- VP13: Beinn a'Bhathaich; and
- VP16: Sgurr na Ruaidhe.

From the hilltops including VPs 10, 12, 13 and 16, the addition of the proposed development will result in significant cumulative effects particularly with the operational Bhlaraidh and Corrimony, consented Bhalraidh Extension and Chrathaich, and in-planning Loch Liath and Ballach wind farms (Scenarios 1 and 2). There would also be Significant combined cumulative effects from several of these hilltops under both scenarios. From VP2 and VP3, it would be the proposed development that would contribute to Significant cumulative effects compared to the in-planning Lynemore wind farm (Scenario 2) which has theoretical visibility as indicated in the wirelines would have very limited effects at this viewpoint due to distance and intervening vegetation. The proposed development would be introduced in a new area currently unoccupied by wind farm development, however, where visible in combination with other cumulative wind farms, the proposed development would have a Significant cumulative visual effect when viewed particularly from hilltops on the west side of Loch Ness, from where it would contribute to the impression that they are becoming surrounded by wind turbines.

7.69 In general terms, the Significant visual effects are a result of the proposed development introducing, or increasing the prominence of, large scale turbines of contrasting scale (including with operational wind farms), colour, texture, movement and character to its receiving transitional and scenic landscape. The proposed development would extend the visibility of the turbines beyond that already experienced as a result of operational wind farms around Loch Ness.

7.70 Significant adverse visual effects as a result of the proposed development would occur on views from scattered groups of properties in Glen Urquhart at Shenval, Balnalick, Bearnock, Shewglie and Buntait, sections of the A82 near Strone and A831 through Glen Urquhart (assessed by Officers), B852 / General Wades Military Road for road users including tourists, Affric Kintail Way, Corrimony to Tomich Scottish Hill Track, Core Path 201, recreational users including tourists from either side of Loch Ness including the waters, several hill tops to the north, northwest, northeast, west and southeast (including hill summits above Loch Ness), and visitors to the Corrimony Chambered Cairn.

7.71 Due to the larger geographical extent of significant visual effects including cumulative effects extending up to 16km, affecting a wide range and numbers of visual receptors for a six-turbine wind farm of less than 150m to blade tip, Officers do not consider that they can sensibly be considered localised. Nor do officers consider that the proposed development's significant effects have been appropriately mitigated given the siting and location of the proposed development.

Residential Receptors

7.72 In terms of settlements, the applicant's assessment in Chapter 5 of the EIAR has concluded Minor to Negligible and not significant effects on residents at Achimony, Cannich and Drumnadrochit due to the very limited visibility from these settlements. These findings are agreed.

7.73 EIAR, Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5-6 has assessed the proposed development's likely effect on the Residential Visual Amenity of 21 properties within a study area of 2.5 km. All 21 properties are located within Glen Urquhart. The nearest property, Corish, is located approximately 1.1 km to the south of the nearest proposed turbine.

7.74 The assessment indicates that of the 21 properties, residents at six properties: Upperton of Buntait, Buntait, Shenval, Shewglie, Bearnock and Balnalick would experience a High magnitude of change resulting in a Major adverse and Significant visual effect. It goes on to conclude that none of the properties included in the RVAA would breach the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold. These findings are agreed.

Recreational Receptors

7.75 The applicant has assessed Significant adverse visual effects on sections of the following recreational receptors:

- Affric – Kintail Way (Major adverse) for approximately 750m when passing to the south of the site - this route also overlaps with Core Paths 200 / 202 where the effect is also Major adverse;
- Corrimony (Glen Urquhart) to Tomich (Strathglass) Scottish Hill Track 264 (Moderate adverse) for approximately 3.2km when passing south of the site – this route also overlaps with Core Paths 199 / 209 where the effect is also Moderate adverse;
- Core Path 201 Forestry Commission Car Park to Shenval (upper) (Major adverse) – fire breaks in trees;
- Loch Ness (Moderate) - up to 2.4km when passing through Urquhart Bay looking towards Glen Urquhart; and
- Several hilltops to the north, northeast, west and southeast (Moderate adverse).

7.76 The applicants above judgements on Significant effects are broadly agreed, however the following matters are raised:

- **Affric Kintail Way / Core Paths 200 / 202 / 265** – The applicant has incorrectly assessed and labelled Section 1 of the Affric Kintail Way between Drumnadrochit and Cannich. According to Figure 5-11 of the EIAR, Section 1 appears to follow the A831 from west of Shenval (after Core Path 202) to Drumnadrochit. This is incorrect. This section of the route was rerouted in 2022[2]. Leaving Shenval north along the minor road, the route crosses the A831 into the bell-mouth opposite where the route is signposted onto a new section of path heading uphill right into the site of the proposed development. The route follows stretches of forestry track before picking up a new section heading downhill towards the A831. The route follows the A831 for 200 yards

[2] https://www.affrickintailway.com/affric-kintail-way-stage-1.html

before crossing the road onto another new section heading uphill and entering forestry for approximately 2 km before descending into Cannich.

- For Section 1 of this route - The applicant assesses Significant adverse effects for 750 m of the route to the south of the site. This reported length is disputed. As noted above, as the applicant has incorrectly assessed the route between Shenval and Cannich, Officers consider that there would be additional Significant adverse effects (varying between Major and Moderate adverse) as the route crosses the minor road near Bearnock and meanders through the site of the proposed development where the turbines would be visible at close range above forestry and until the route descends towards the A831 extending around 3 – 3.5km. Significant adverse effects would continue for another 1.5km after it crosses the A831 and heads uphill through Dark Deer Croft and before it enters forestry. Significant adverse effects would therefore affect approximately 5.75km of Section 1 of the Affric Kintail Way. There would also be Significant adverse effects (varying from Moderate to Major with distance) through gaps in forestry travelling west from once the route climbs steeply onto a more level track at around 7km distance until reaching Shenval. Further, parts of this forestry is also subject to felling which would open out views across Glen Urquhart and towards the turbines resulting in Significant effects.

- For Section 2 of this route - from Cannich to Affric Road end, there would be Significant adverse effects (Moderate) as the route climbs steeply past Cannich off Mullardoch road from a short stretch (around 200 – 300m) at a viewpoint bench and Clan Chisholm stone and slightly beyond where there would be open views through gaps in trees (more open in the winter) at a distance of around 8-9km.

- In summary, the extent of Significant adverse visual effects along the Affric Kintail Way is far greater (up to around 6km) than the applicant's assessment of 750m thereby also affecting the recreational amenity for users along these sections of the route. These findings and the extent of identified Significant effects does not account for any further forestry felling. There is also likely to be Significant adverse sequential cumulative effects along this route with the addition of the proposed development and the consented Bingally substation and proposed Fasnakyle to Bingally 132kV connection.

- **Loch Ness** – Whilst the extent of Significant adverse effects for recreational users including tourists on the loch is broadly agreed, the proposed turbines would introduce a new feature and focal point as a terminal focus where the eye is drawn up towards Glen Urquhart despite the available views up and down the loch. The proposed turbines on the skyline close to Urquhart Castle would also detract from the Castle's prominence where boats with tourists /

visitors generally slow down to appreciate the views in this area. There would also be Significant adverse sequential cumulative effects for receptors on Loch Ness with the proposed development and in particular, the in-planning Loch Liath Wind Farm, affecting up to 4-5km of the area between Urquhart Bay and eastern shores of Loch Ness, as also indicated in the cumulative ZTV (Figure 5-14-2 of the EIAR).

- **Hilltops** - From several surrounding hilltops as also illustrated in VPs 10: Carn na Leitire, 12: Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, 13: Beinn a' Bhathaich and 16: Sgurr na Ruaidhe, the addition of the proposed development will result in significant cumulative effects particularly with the operational Bhlaraidh and Corrimony, consented Bhalraidh Extension and Chrathaich, and in-planning Loch Liath and Ballach wind farms (Scenarios 1 and 2). There would also be significant combined cumulative effects from several of these hilltops under both scenarios. As noted previously, Officers consider that the proposed development would be introduced in a new area currently unoccupied by wind farm development, however, where visible in combination with other cumulative wind farms, the proposed development would have a significant cumulative visual effect when viewed particularly from hilltops on the west side of Loch Ness, from where it would contribute to the impression that they are becoming surrounded by wind turbines.

7.77 In relation to other recreational routes, it is agreed that the effects for people on the Great Glen Way would not be significant.

Transport Receptors

7.78 The applicant has identified Significant adverse visual effects would occur for users of one road – B852 / General Wades Military Road for up to 2.4km directly across Urquhart Bay looking towards Glen Urquhart (Moderate adverse). Whilst the level of effect and significance is agreed, the same matters described in relation to the effect on Loch Ness noted above, also apply to receptors along this route where the proposed development would be visible. In addition, it is found that there would be additional short sections of the A82 and A831 where unreported Significant adverse effects would be experienced:

- **A82** – As set out in Appendix 5 of this report, in relation to VP6 (A82 near Strome), the section of the A82 as one travels along the bend from Urquhart Castle towards Drumnadrochit, this represents the first open view of Glen Urquhart across the woodland at the confluence of the Endrick and Coiltie rivers, and over Drumnadrochit. The enclosing wooded hills frame the view and draw the eye towards Glen Urquhart, in the direction of the proposed development where the turbines would be visible in the direction of travel. The enclosing landforms to the north and south funnel the view along Glen Urquhart, with the proposed turbines occupying a terminal position within the view. Their prominence would draw the eye towards the end of the glen, in comparison with other features in the landscape. The proposed development would therefore foreshorten the view at a key point along the route, where one

enters a more settled part of the glen. The turbines would introduce a prominent terminal feature, reducing the appreciation of the way in which the wooded glen winds towards Glen Urquhart. The duration of the view would be approximately 30 seconds for road users and a few minutes for walkers and cyclists along the track adjacent to the road. The magnitude of change along this section of the route would be Medium-Low, which when combined with the High sensitivity, results in a Moderate and Significant adverse effect.

- **A831** – There would be Significant adverse effects (Moderate) from a short section of this route between the junction of the minor road to Corrimony Chambered Cairn where there is also a bus shelter up to around 200-250m west where there has been forestry recently felled resulting in more open views towards the turbines which would be partially visible on the skyline.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Summary

7.79 It is clear from the assessment of the proposed development's design and siting, its effects on landscape character, designated landscapes and its visual effects, that this proposal will result in Significant Landscape and Visual effects, including cumulative effects. Whist some Significant landscape and visual effect can be expected for any wind farm, the proposed development would represent a notable departure from the existing pattern of development within the wider landscape, being located in an area currently free of any wind farm development. Where visible in combination with other cumulative wind farms, the proposed development would also have a significant cumulative visual effect when viewed particularly from hilltops on the west side of Loch Ness, from where it would contribute to the impression that they are becoming surrounded by wind turbines.

7.80 Whilst the wooded character of Glen Urquhart screens the proposed development from sections of the A831, some residential properties and settlements such as Drumnadrochit and Cannich on either end of the glen, where visible, the turbines would be stark new highly prominent features in the landscape and have a significant visual adverse effect from important, sensitive locations such as the Corrimony Chambered Cairn (VP2), long sections of the Affric Kintail Way (mainly in Section 1 and a short stretch in Section 2), small settlements like Shenval (VP3), and a short section of the A831. This would be the only wind farm visible from parts of this sensitive glen which forms a key approach to Loch Ness from Strathglass / Glen Affric. The geographical extent of Significant effects up to 16km is unusually large for a six-turbine wind farm, particularly given the proposed sub 150m proposed blade tip height, which remains modest compared to many other wind farm developments in planning elsewhere in Highland at present, with this being an indicator that the proposed application site is subject to several environmental constraints, and evidently landscape and visual.

7.81 There are Significant adverse effects on the Dramatic Great Glen Special Quality of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA. In particular, the development would adversely affect views northwards from the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh, contributing to a perception of the landmark hill becoming increasingly encircled by wind energy development, and intensify cumulative effects arising from other schemes. The development adversely affects views across Urquhart Bay, particularly when experienced from the waters and eastern shores of Loch Ness, where it would be

seen in the context of Urquhart Castle. Officers consider that the turbines would introduce a competing visual feature on the skyline, detracting from the prominence of the Castle and its relationship with the surrounding landscape; with Loch Ness and its surrounding scenery being a world-renowned attraction.

7.82 The range and extent of the significant adverse landscape and visual effects associated with the proposed development cannot reasonably be considered as localised. The policy implications of this judgement is provided in the Conclusion Section of the report, with the unacceptable residual landscape and visual effects forming the recommended Reasons 1 and 2 for refusal.

Natural Heritage (including ornithology)

Designated Sites

7.83 The application site is not within any site designated for nature conservation. Designated sites within 20km of the site are listed at Section 2 of this Report.

7.84 Table 7-10 of the EIAR reviews the identified ecological designated sites and explains whether each has been taken forward for further assessment. The following sites were not taken forward for assessment on the basis of separation distances and that they are not designated for fish/aquatic macro-invertebrate migratory species and are not hydrologically connected with the application site:

- Urquhart Bay Wood SAC;
- Glen Strathfarrar SSSI;
- Balnagrantach SSSI;
- Glen Affric SSSI;
- Urquhart Bay Wood SSSI; and
- Glen Affric NNR.

7.85 Contrary to the applicant's finding of no connectivity between Urquhart Bay Wood SAC and SSSI, NatureScot note that the BESS is proposed approximately 260m upslope from the closest watercourse (the Allt na Dalach Mòire) which connects to the River Enrick and subsequently to the SAC (and SSSI). Given the potential for excessive nutrient loading and chemical contamination to degrade habitat within the SAC and SSSI, these features are assessed further.

7.86 In addition, given the known home range of otters and the proximity of the Strathglass Complex SAC to the application site, the otter qualifying interest of the SAC is also assessed further.

7.87 Moreover, paragraph 8.10.1 of the EIAR considers ornithological designated sites and identifies the potential for likely significant effects to the golden eagle qualifying interest of the Glen Affric to Strathconon SPA, with effects on the associated SSSI also requiring appropriate assessment.

7.88 In the event that the Council are minded to grant planning permission, appropriate assessments will be required as well as planning conditions. To help inform this process, Officers findings for all of the potentially Significantly affected designations are as follows.

- **Urquhart Bay Wood SAC** is designated for its Alder woodland on floodplains habitat. Pollution from run-off of contaminated water from firefighting could enter the SAC via watercourses on and adjacent to the proposed development site. Consequently, there would be a likely significant effect on the Urquhart Bay Wood SAC. Subject to the proposed BESS being subject to conditions requiring adherence to best practice guidance, particularly with regard to ensuring that the drainage system is capable of collecting and holding contaminated water run-off, the proposed development would not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

- **Urquhart Bay Wood SSSI** is designated for its wet woodland habitat. As with the predicted effect on the SAC, the requirement for a Firewater Management Plan to ensure retention of any contaminated water within the site will ensure no adverse effect to the SSSI.

7.89 **Glen Affric to Strathconon SPA** is designated for its breeding golden eagle interest. Whilst golden eagles are recognised as having complicated territory boundaries, it is unlikely that SPA birds will be foraging on the wind farm site due to the distance from the SPA territory centres and the presence of a pair of territorial birds in the wider area. The proposed development will not have a likely significant effect on the qualifying interest of the SPA either directly or indirectly. An appropriate assessment is therefore not required. Paragraph 8.10.1 of the EIAR concludes that there would also be no significant effect on the associated SSSI designation underpinning the SPA which is not disputed.

Protected Species

7.90 The application is supported by the results of a protected species desk-based study and survey. Protected species surveys recorded evidence of otter and pine marten activity, with otter spraints and a potential otter couch identified along site watercourses, and numerous pine marten scats found throughout the plantation and clearfell areas. No evidence of wildcat, water vole or red squirrel was recorded, while only a single badger footprint was found and no setts were identified. Overall, bats, otter and pine marten are the principal protected species interests associated with the site.

7.91 Wildcat and water vole were not taken forward for further assessment on the basis of there being no evidence of the species recorded at the site. Suitable habitat for reptiles and amphibians at the site was recorded however the lack of any survey records suggest limited use of the site by the species. Bats, otter, pine marten, red squirrel, badger and fish were all taken forward for further assessment.

7.92 Embedded mitigation measures are specified at section 7.7.1 of the EIAR. These include design measures such as maintaining buffers to watercourses and woodland, measures covering the construction and operational phases. Construction measures include the establishment of Bat Exclusion Zones (BEZ), comprising the removal of woodland around turbines, pre-construction surveys focussing on otter, pine marten, red squirrel and badger, a 15mph site speed limit, appropriate timing of work, the implementation of a Fish Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, and a “stop work” procedure in the event that a protected species is identified on site. Construction phase measures include controls over the movement of vehicles on-site, including a

restriction on movements during the hours of darkness, the maintenance of the BEZ and the implementation of best practice measures relating to the use of artificial lighting.

7.93 The bat assemblage stands to be impacted by habitat loss and disturbance associated with artificial lighting required for construction. The majority of the lost woodland, plantation and scrubland habitat is of low habitat suitability for bats however good quality riparian habitat and the network of established forestry rides and extraction routes will also be lost resulting in loss of foraging habitat, long term roosting opportunities and loss of commuting habitat to the wider landscape. Whilst the identified mitigation measures are welcomed, the resulting effect on the bat assemblage from construction would be Significant adverse due to the loss of foraging and commuting habitat. At the operational stage, the main risk to the bat assemblage is from collision mortality, barotrauma and other injuries associated with bats flying in proximity to operational turbines. This effect on foraging and commuting bats is assessed as being Significant adverse**.**

7.94 The EIAR assesses the effect on common and soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared and Myotis sp. separately. Construction effects on both groups of bats are assessed as being similar to that of the overall bat assemblage, with habitat loss and disturbance associated with artificial lighting resulting in a Significant adverse effect. Common and soprano pipistrelle are considered to be at high-risk from operational wind turbines which would be a Significant adverse effect. Brown long-eared Myotis. are considered to be at low risk from wind farm developments due to their habitat preferences and overall behaviour. The operational risk to these species is assessed as being not Significant.

7.95 There is potential for construction activities to cause disturbance to foraging otters, particularly where those works take place near watercourses. Effects could also arise from pollution events affecting water quality and the loss of otter habitat. Whilst mitigation measures, including ECoW supervision would be of benefit, the resulting adverse effect would nevertheless be Significant. At the operational phase, risk to otter derives from vehicle movements which, subject to speed limits and a restriction of vehicles to site tracks, would result in effects that are not Significant.

7.96 Pre-construction surveys and ECoW supervision will minimise direct impacts upon pine marten, including the destruction of dens or resting places, however these effects and habitat loss associated with the construction phase will result in a Significant adverse effect. At the operational phase, the identified controls on vehicle movements within the site will ensure effects on pine marten are not Significant.

7.97 No red squirrels were recorded on site during the protected species survey and only a single badger footprint was identified. Pre-construction surveys and ECoW supervision will ensure construction phase effects on both species are not Significant. Similarly, the identified restrictions on vehicle usage at the site will ensure operational phase effects are also not Significant for both species.

7.98 European eel, Atlantic salmon and brown/sea trout are present within the catchment with suitable habitat existing on-site. Construction phase effects on fish are nevertheless assessed as being not Significant due to the implementation of mitigation measures including a Fish Mitigation and Monitoring Plan and pollution

prevention measures. Similar measures relating to work carried out in the vicinity of watercourses at the operational phase will also ensure that such works are not Significant.

7.99 In the absence of additional mitigation, the proposed development is predicted to result in Significant adverse effects to the bat assemblage and to the common and soprano pipistrelle species at construction and operation stages. Brown long-eared Myotis are predicted to receive a Significant adverse effect at the construction phase but not during operation. Similarly, otter and pine marten are predicted to receive a Significant adverse effect during construction but not during operation. The proposal includes the creation and enhancement of broadleaved woodland which will be of benefit to bat species. This woodland creation, in addition to the removal of non-native trees along watercourses and heathland enhancement, will be of benefit to otter and pine marten. Operational measures, including post-construction monitoring, bat-friendly lighting and feathering of turbine blades are also proposed to mitigate effects on common and soprano pipistrelle. Furthermore, based on post-construction monitoring, adaptive curtailment will also be implemented whereby wind turbine operation is restricted during conditions where bats are at particularly high risk from turbine collision. The EIAR also notes that the habitat enhancement measures will be of benefit to fish and aquatic fauna. The identified mitigation and enhancement measures are sufficient to result in no residual Significant effect to all protected species.

Habitats and Biodiversity Enhancement

7.100 The site extends to approximately 609 hectares. A UKHab survey was carried out across the site and an additional 250m buffer in May, June and September 2024, with National Vegetation Classification (NVC) surveys undertaken during June and September. The site is predominantly occupied by commercial forestry plantation, interspersed with forestry rides and areas of wet and dry heath, blanket bog, grassland and watercourses. Smaller areas of other woodland types, including Ancient Woodland, as well as scrub and bracken, are also present. The proposed development would result in the direct loss of approximately 49.33 hectares of habitat, broadly reflecting the habitat composition of the wider site. This includes the loss of 3.77 hectares of irreplaceable coniferous and mixed woodland and 0.46 hectares of peatland habitat.

7.101 A Peatland Condition Assessment was carried out 23-27 September 2024, followed by peat depth surveys in November 2024 and March and May 2025. Peat deposits were absent from large areas of the site, but small pockets of deeper peat (>2 m) occurred in depressions and flatter areas, particularly to the north of the site. Much of the peat has been heavily disturbed and affected by commercial forestry, existing tracks and associated drainage, but 20.8ha was identified as priority peatland habitat and bog pools were found throughout the wetter areas. Development design has evolved to avoid locating infrastructure on deep peat as much as possible, with an estimated volume of 106,537 m3 to be excavated.

7.102 The applicant's use of the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric is welcomed. A total of 49.33ha of habitat is to be directly impacted by the proposed development, and 198.21ha are to be managed and enhanced for biodiversity (including peatland). Compensation and enhancement focus on replacement of 27ha of coniferous plantation with native

riparian woodland through natural regeneration, and 48.6ha of other native woodland enhancement, including Plantations on Ancient Woodlands Site (PAWS) Ancient Woodland, with some spot planting to increase species diversity.

7.103 In addition, upland heathland will be created within the Bat Exclusion Zones surrounding key holed turbines, with a further 107.8ha of enhancement of existing heathland habitat. Small stands of dense Bracken are recommended to be controlled to provide a more open habitat. Deer management, marking of deer fences, Invasive Non-Native Species removal and provision of various bat and bird boxes provide further enhancement of the site. The inclusion of a monitoring regime to last for the lifetime of the proposed development is also welcomed. This includes monitoring of restored habitats, key breeding bird species and nest box use, turbine carcass searches and grazing pressure.

7.104 The proposed development demonstrates that over 10% biodiversity enhancement is achieved for non-peatland habitat which is considered to be acceptable.

7.105 In terms of peatland habitats, the proposed development would result in the direct loss of 0.5ha. The applicant would be expected to deliver 5ha of peatland restoration as compensation and then a further 2.08ha as enhancement. The applicant has identified an area of 7.08ha to undergo forest to bog restoration which would be satisfactory. The application does not give consideration to indirect impacts on peatland, however, based on NatureScot guidance, this should be calculated as a 30m buffer around the areas of direct impact. As such, the proposed development does not demonstrate acceptable biodiversity enhancement in relation to peatland habitats. The additional peatland restoration required to achieve significant biodiversity enhancement does not form part of the proposed development and it has not been shown that this can be accommodated on-site or where it may be accommodated off-site. Consequently, it is not considered appropriate to resolve this matter by way of planning condition. Whilst the application does not comply with policy in this regard, the scale of shortfall is relatively minor, reflecting the limited extent of blanket bog around site infrastructure, and so is taken into consideration in the planning balance but does not form an additional reason for refusal.

Forestry, Woodland and Trees

7.106 Chapter 14.5 of the EIAR considers the potential effects of the proposed development on forestry. The application site comprises 473.75ha of woodland, consisting predominantly of productive conifer plantation together with smaller areas of broadleaf woodland, including areas identified within the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) and Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). The proposed development would require the removal of 49.46ha of woodland to facilitate the turbine infrastructure, access tracks and associated construction areas. Of this, 39.29ha comprises stocked woodland requiring permanent removal, including approximately 32.92ha of productive conifer woodland and 6.37ha of broadleaf woodland.

7.107 The Council's Forestry Team objects to the application, principally due to concerns regarding impacts on ancient woodland and PAWS areas associated with the proposed southern construction compound. The consultation response notes that whilst the loss of productive conifer plantation can generally be accommodated within

the framework of Scottish Government woodland removal policy, there is a strong presumption against the removal of ancient woodland and PAWS habitat under NPF4 Policy 6 and the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy.

7.108 The principal forestry concern relates to approximately 2.75ha of regenerating broadleaf woodland associated with PAWS areas within Enrick Forest, including around 0.65ha affected by the proposed southern construction compound. The Forestry Team advises that, whilst the applicant has sought to minimise impacts and proposes reinstatement and replanting following construction, further justification is required to demonstrate that all reasonable opportunities to avoid or minimise impacts on the PAWS area have been exhausted, including consideration of alternative compound locations and further refinement of track alignments. As submitted, the loss of woodland associated with the southern compound is not accepted. The loss of PAWS areas is a Significant effect in EIA terms and, as compliance with the mitigation hierarchy has not been demonstrated, this has not been appropriately mitigated.

7.109 The wider loss of commercial forestry is considered capable of being addressed through a compensatory planting condition. The applicant proposes compensatory planting at a ratio of 2:1 for broadleaf woodland losses, equating to 12.73ha of broadleaf woodland and open ground creation to compensate for the 6.37ha of broadleaf woodland affected. Overall, the development would result in the removal of 39.29ha of stocked woodland and proposes approximately 45.66ha of compensatory planting and associated habitat creation. However, no detailed compensatory planting proposals have been submitted as part of the application. The principle of compensatory planting is acceptable however detailed woodland management, restocking and compensatory planting proposals, together with establishment, maintenance and monitoring measures, would require to be secured by condition.

7.110 It is recommended that the loss of PAWS associated with the southern compound forms a reason for refusal due to the lack of appropriate mitigation.

Built and Cultural Heritage

7.111 There are no designated cultural heritage assets within the application site. There are 22 non-designated heritage assets within the site however these primarily comprise post-medieval agricultural settlements and field management systems, as well as pre-historic hut circles and clearance cairns. In addition, there is potential for unknown archaeological assets to exist within the site, particularly for prehistoric and post-medieval remains. There is potential for these assets to receive direct impacts from the proposed development. Embedded and additional mitigation measures have been specified, including the avoidance of heritage assets through the design evolution and an archaeological watching brief for more sensitive works. An appropriate level of archaeological supervision could also be secured by planning condition. Direct effects on cultural heritage assets could be appropriately mitigated and would result in a not Significant effect.

Scheduled Monuments

7.112 The EIAR identifies 15 Scheduled Monuments within the study area. Of these, 9 are assessed as having either a negligible or no effect, due to there being no or limited visibility and consideration of the sensitivity of the scheduled monuments to change. These assets are appropriately scoped out of further assessment and are detailed in Technical Appendix 6-1: Setting Assessment. Consequently, 6 Scheduled Monuments are taken forward for detailed assessment within EIAR Chapter 6. These are:

- Corrimony chambered cairn (SM90081);
- Comar wood, dun (SM13578);
- Urquhart Castle (SM90309);
- Garbeg Cottage, burial mounds (SM4635);
- Craig Mony, fort (SM5808); and
- Achratagan, hut circle and cairnfield (SM11456).

7.113 The EIAR assesses no significant effect to all Scheduled Monuments with the exception of Corrimony Chambered Cairn (SM90081) for which a Moderate Significant operational effect is predicted. The assessment of potential effects on all Scheduled Monuments other than Corrimony Chambered Cairn is accepted.

7.114 Corrimony Chambered Cairn (SM90081) is of national importance. Dating to approximately 2000 BC, it is a well-preserved example of a Clava-type chambered cairn, comprising a passage grave surrounded by a ring of standing stones. The monument is of particular significance because it demonstrates the sophisticated design, planning and construction techniques of later Neolithic and Early Bronze Age communities, with much of the original passage roof surviving. Its high degree of preservation provides valuable evidence of prehistoric burial practices, ceremonial activity and settlement patterns within the wider landscape, contributing to an understanding of Scotland's prehistoric cultural heritage. The cairn's significance derives from its archaeological, historical and cultural value as a rare and substantially intact prehistoric monument of national importance.

7.115 Corrimony Chambered Cairn's Statement of Significance notes that the relationship between the monument's orientation, its wider landscape setting and potential astronomical associations is not yet fully understood but highlights significant potential for further research. Nevertheless, the cairn's siting and orientation are clearly deliberate and form an important part of its significance. Located on low-lying ground at the head of Glen Urquhart and enclosed by rising land on all sides, the monument features a southwest-facing entrance passage, suggesting a southwest to northeast alignment that may have been intended to reference astronomical events. Comparable alignments relating to midwinter sunsets, lunar standstills and other celestial phenomena have been identified at Clava Cairns and are considered likely to have influenced the design of this monument. These alignments, together with views to and from the cairn, are likely to have been important to its design, construction and use, and continue to contribute to the cultural and spiritual significance that many visitors attribute to the site today.

7.116 The cairn sits within a wider prehistoric landscape including the rising ground around Buntait where extensive evidence of prehistoric settlement can be found, including

hut-circles, field systems, cup-marked stones and a barrow. In addition, there is a natural mound 100m to the northeast of the cairn which has been demonstrated through excavation to be a site of ritual activity, likely associated with the use of the cairn. Corrimony Cairn should therefore be seen as a component of a wider prehistoric landscape with these connections particularly reinforcing the significance of its relationship to areas to its northeast.

7.117 The floor of Glen Urquhart and the surrounding hillsides, including the slopes around Buntait, are rural in character and make an important contribution to the setting of Corrimony Chambered Cairn. The hillside to the northeast of the monument is largely free from modern development, with Buntait farmhouse and its associated agricultural buildings forming the principal-built features. Aside from commercial forestry, the only substantial modern infrastructure visible to the north is the Beauly-Denny overhead line, which is sufficiently offset from the principal views along and across the chamber towards the northeast.

7.118 It is also important to note that the view to the northeast from the cairn forms an important part of the experience of visiting the cairn. Access to the site is across a small bridge from the south which brings visitors to the southwest of the cairn, meaning that the first views from within the site are to the northeast.

7.119 The applicant's assessment broadly aligns with the understanding that the significance of Corrimony Chambered Cairn is closely linked to its position within Glen Urquhart, its rural surroundings and the alignment of its entrance passage. However, greater emphasis is placed on views towards the southwest and the potential relationship with the midwinter sunset, with less consideration given to reciprocal views to the northeast along the passage. The applicant considers that the proposed turbines would be located beyond the ridgeline defining the Glen, creating a clear separation from the cairn's immediate landscape context, and notes that intervening vegetation would help soften their visual presence. This is not accepted for reasons set out below. Overall, the applicant concludes that, while the development would introduce modern infrastructure into views to the northeast, it would not materially affect the ability to understand or appreciate the monument's setting. The EIAR assesses the effect as Significant but finds that there would be no significant adverse impact upon the integrity of the asset’s setting. This finding is not accepted.

7.120 EIAR Figure 6-9-3 provides a cultural heritage photomontage from Corrimony Chambered Cairn. It demonstrates that the blades, hubs and at least part of the towers of five turbines would be visible from the monument. Whilst the blades of the sixth turbine are obscured by trees from the viewpoint location, they are likely to be visible from elsewhere within the cairn’s fenced area.

7.121 The submitted photomontage indicates that the proposed turbines would be a prominent feature on the skyline behind Corrimony Chambered Cairn in views from the area immediately in front of the entrance passage. Although the visualisation shows the turbines slightly offset from the central axis of the cairn and passage, they would appear directly behind the monument from a range of viewpoints around the cairn and when approaching the entrance to the chamber.

7.122 The turbines would be highly visible in key views of and from the monument and would materially affect how its setting is experienced and understood. This is particularly relevant in views from the area immediately in front of the entrance passage, which is considered likely to have formed an important part of the monument's original ceremonial use and remains central to the way visitors experience the site today.

7.123 While the turbine bases would be located beyond the ridgeline that defines the glen, the turbine structures would remain prominent on the skyline and would draw attention away from the cairn, its entrance passage and the sense of enclosure provided by the surrounding landform. Their presence would introduce a substantial modern element into views that are currently characterised by a predominantly rural and agricultural landscape, altering the character of the monument's setting and introducing large-scale development into an upland area that presently appears largely undeveloped.

7.124 Limited weight is attached to the screening effect of the shelterbelt located behind the cairn, as its extent and effectiveness are unlikely to be maintained throughout the operational life of the development. The woodland is identified for felling within the relevant land management plan, with harvesting anticipated around 2030. As a result, the visual influence of the turbines may increase over time, and the shelterbelt is not considered to provide a reliable long-term mitigation measure.

7.125 As a Scheduled Monument, the EIAR's methodology identifies Corrimony Chambered Cairn as a heritage asset of High importance. The EIAR identifies the cairn's sensitivity as High, reflecting that its setting makes a major contribution to understanding, appreciation and experience of it and that its setting contributes substantially to its cultural significance. The EIAR assesses the magnitude of change as Medium, describing it as affecting peripheral views in a way that does not reduce the significance of the asset that is derived from its intrinsic and associative characteristics. The EIAR goes on to find a Moderate adverse effect which is Significant.

7.126 The High importance and sensitivity of Corriemoillie Chambered Cairn is agreed however the magnitude of change is considered to be underassessed. The proposed development will intrude on key views between the scheduled monument and the wider historic landscape that it forms part of. The height and elevated location of the turbines means they would become a highly prominent feature within those views, and their overtly modern appearance would be at odds with the largely undeveloped backdrop that the hills of the application site provide to the monument. This would be a major alteration of the asset's baseline setting that would result in substantial loss of cultural significance. As such, the magnitude of change is considered to be High and the resulting effect would be Major adverse and Significant.

7.127 In addition to an assessment of significance, it is necessary to consider whether the proposed development would have a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the scheduled monument. The proposed development, for the reasons previously set out, would erode the way in which the monument is understood, experienced and appreciated. It is considered, in agreement with HES, that the proposed development

would result in a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the scheduled monument. It is recommended that this forms a reason for refusal.

Listed Buildings

7.128 The Cultural Heritage Chapter identifies all Category A listed buildings within 10km and all Category B and C listed buildings within 5km. Listed buildings that have no intervisibility with the proposed development, or where they have no visibility with the turbines from key locations, were scoped out of further assessment on the basis that there would be no impact. Technical Appendix 6 – 1: Setting Assessment assesses the remaining 12 listed buildings and concludes that, in all cases, the effect would be either Negligible or Minor with no potential for a Significant effect. The justification in each case largely draws on the specific setting of each listed building and, in the applicant's view, the limited, if any, contribution that the application site makes to their setting. The focus on immediate functional relationships results in limited consideration being given to the contribution that wider landscape context makes to the significance of the listed buildings.

7.129 The Council's Conservation Officer objects to the application on several grounds, including that effects on listed buildings have been underassessed. In particular, the Conservation Officer considers that the wider landscape context of various listed buildings has not been given sufficient consideration in their setting assessment. This concern is raised in relation to the following listed buildings:

- Category A listed "Glenurquhart, Corrimony Grange Barn" (LB14997);
- Category B listed "Glenurquhart, Corrimony Bridge Over River Enrick" (LB14999);
- Category B listed "Glenurquhart, Old Corrimony" (LB15000);
- Category C listed "Glenurquhart, Corrimony Burial Ground" (LB14998);
- Category B listed "Glenurquhart, Mill of Tore and Mill Cottage" (LB15014);
- Category B listed "Glenurquhart, Shewglie" (LB15015); and
- Category B listed "Lochletter Farm, Garden Pavilion (LB49692)".

7.130 Glenurquhart, Corrimony Grange Barn (LB14997) is a late 17th-early 18th century cruck barn which is described within its Statement of Special Interest as an "unusual survival of finest cruck building in Scotland". As a barn, its relationship with the surrounding agricultural and rural landscape helps illustrate its origins as part of an historic farming landscape. Its wider landscape setting is therefore relevant to its significance and should have been given greater consideration in the assessment of its setting. Nevertheless, the listed building sits within a cluster of modern agricultural buildings as part of a working farm. This restricts visibility to and from the proposed development and has introduced large modern structures within its immediate context. Whilst the wider rural and undeveloped character of Glenurquhart contributes to the setting of the listed building, the surrounding agricultural land within the floor of Glenurquhart is considered to be the most important aspect of its setting, as this is likely to be where the agricultural activity associated with the barn took place. The proposed development would not directly impact this immediate setting. As per the Conservation Officer's consultation response, it is agreed that the effect on the listed building is likely to have been underassessed by the applicant, however, the resulting effect is not likely to be significant for the reasons identified.

7.131 Lochletter Farm, Garden Pavilion (LB49692) lacks known documentation but, according to its listing description, was built as a garden pavilion in conjunction with Lochletter House which dated from 1761. The site was clearly chosen for enjoyment of views over Loch Meiklie, and the mountains, and as being inter-visible with Lochletter. Its statement of special interest notes that it is a rare example of a significant building type. The proposed development would be sited within the upland areas beyond Loch Meiklie. A wireline from the Garden Pavilion has not been provided however the ZTV indicates visibility from 5-6 turbines and a lack of intervening landform suggests that the proposed development would be highly visible from the listed building. The EIAR's Setting Assessment suggests that the proposed development will introduce an element of height in views to the northwest but that they will appear beyond attractive views of Loch Meiklie and the River Enrick and in views already altered by modern additions including the A831 and commercial forestry. This is not accepted. The proposed development would be significantly more prominent than the A831 and commercial forestry due to the height and elevated siting of the proposed turbines, as well as their overtly modern appearance. The hills to the north are referenced in the statement of significance as contributing towards the siting of the listed building and would be seen in the same attractive views across Loch Meiklie. The proposed development would become a highly prominent, if not dominant, feature within the key view across Loch Meiklie.

7.132 Category B listed buildings such as this are assigned Medium importance within the EIAR methodology. Given the importance of views across Loch Meiklie to the siting of the listed building, its sensitivity would be classed as High. Significant harm to the identified key view from the listed building is likely to fall within Medium magnitude however the absence of wirelines makes assessment challenging and this magnitude of change is not therefore definitive. The resulting effect is likely to be Moderate and Significant but, nevertheless, there is clear potential for the proposed development to cause a Significant effect to the setting of the listed building. Consequently, a detailed assessment of the effect of the proposed development on Lochletter Farm, Garden Pavilion, supported by wirelines, should have been included within the EIAR. It is recommended that this forms a reason for refusal.

Other Listings

7.133 It is acknowledged that the wider landscape context makes a more limited contribution to the setting of Corrimony Bridge over the River Enrick (LB14999), Old Corrimony (LB15000), Corrimony Burial Ground (LB14998), Mill of Tore and Mill Cottage (LB15014), and Shewglie (LB15015) than is the case for the aforementioned heritage assets. The list descriptions and statements of significance for these listed buildings do not identify wider landscape relationships or key views as significant components of their heritage value, although it is recognised that the significance of listed buildings can extend beyond such descriptions. It is also recognised that the surrounding landscape can contribute to setting through its aesthetic qualities and by reinforcing the historic character and authenticity of a largely undeveloped environment. However, while the proposed development may result in some change to the setting of these listed buildings, contrary to the Council's Conservation Officers opinion, it is found that adverse effects on these assets are unlikely to be significant. This reflects the limited contribution that the application site makes to the setting, appreciation and significance of each asset, and is reflective of the intervisibility of

the proposed visibility from these assets as well as views towards both the asset and the proposed wind farm.

Cumulative Impacts - Cultural Heritage

7.134 In terms of scheduled monuments, the EIAR assesses Minor adverse cumulative effects to Comar Wood dun, Garbeg cottage burial grounds, and Achratagan hut circle and cairnfield, with cumulative effects arising from the proposed Loch Liath Wind Farm in planning, and the consented Bhlairaidh Extension and Chrathaich wind farms. These findings are not disputed. No cumulative effects arising from these surrounding wind farms are anticipated for Corrimony Chambered Cairn which is also agreed.

7.135 For the listed buildings identified as having potential to receive significant effects, these are all located within Glen Urquhart where there are no other existing wind farm developments. The cluster of listed buildings at Corrimony are 6km to the northeast of Corrimony Wind Farm, a five-turbine development of 100m blade tip turbines. The ZTV submitted with that application suggests limited, if any, visibility from the listed buildings at Corrimony. There are no other concerns in relation to the effect of cumulative development on listed buildings.

Roads, Transport and Access

7.136 An assessment of the likely significant effects arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development is presented in Chapter 10 of the EIAR.

7.137 Access to the site would be taken from an improved existing junction onto the A831. Construction traffic is expected to access the site from the A82(T) road (north and south of Drumnadrochit) and then west along the A831 to the site junction. A small number of staff trips or deliveries may also route to the site via the A833 from the north. The study area for the assessment of transport and access covers:

- The A82(T) between Inverness and Spean Bridge;
- The A833 between the A862 and the A831; and
- The A831 between the A82(T) and the site access.

7.138 The EIAR assesses the roads within the study area against the “Rule 1” and “Rule 2” criteria set out in the relevant IEMA Guidelines. This identifies where roads are required to be taken forward for further assessment.

7.139 The EIAR estimates a total of 6,675 two-way HGV trips (i.e. 13,350 inbound and outbound trips) associated with the construction phase of development across its 15-month construction period. In addition, 60 two-way daily private car/LGV trips to the site are also estimated. Months 5 and 6 of the construction timeline involve the largest number of HGV movements, at 862 two-way trips per month. This equates to approximately 39 two-way trips per day (i.e. 78 individual movements). Months 5 and 6 are therefore taken as the worst-case scenario and are used to assess the impact of the proposed development on the transport network.

7.140 Construction traffic impacts for each road within the study area are presented in Table 10-10 of the EIAR. The table identifies the key considerations for each route

and assesses whether there is potential for significant effects to arise, having regard to the criteria set out in the IEMA guidance. This determines whether the roads are taken forward for further assessment. The main findings are summarised below:

	A82(T) north	A82(T) south	A833	A831
Percentage increase in total traffic	3.0%	2.8%	1.4%	26.5%
Percentage increase in HGVs	7.1%	9.3%	4.2%	91.1%
Potential significant effect?	No	No	No	Yes

7.141 The EIAR assesses the A831 against the criteria set out in the relevant IEMA guidelines which can be summarised as follows:

- Severance of communities: Sensitivity to severance considered to be medium, reflecting pedestrian crossing infrastructure within Drumnadrcohit. The magnitude of change in HGV levels is Major. The effect is assessed as Major/Moderate and Significant;
- Road vehicle driver and passenger delay: Medium sensitivity reflecting that all construction traffic will use this road, but baseline traffic levels are low. Magnitude of change in HGV levels is Major. The resulting effect is Major/Moderate and Significant.
- Non-motorised user delay and amenity: Low sensitivity reflecting the existence of alternative pedestrian and cyclist provision (specifically the Affric-Kintail Way). The magnitude of change is Major resulting in a Moderate and Significant effect.
- Fear and intimidation on and by road users: Sensitivity assessed as Medium based on average traffic flows and vehicle speeds. The magnitude of change is classed as Negligible resulting in a Negligible and Not Significant effect.
- Road user and pedestrian safety: The sensitivity of receptors to accidents is always classified as High. The magnitude of change is assessed as Negligible based on a calculation of the likelihood of accidents associated with the additional traffic. The resulting effect is Moderate/Minor and Not Significant.
- Hazardous and large loads: There are no hazardous loads associated with the proposed development. The proposed development is predicted to result in four abnormal loads per week over months 10 to 13. This effect is assessed as Negligible and Not Significant.

7.142 The EIAR assesses the potential for cumulative effects to arise from the proposed development and other developments in its vicinity which are either in the planning system or have consent but have not yet been constructed. The other developments considered are:

- Bhlaraidh Wind Farm Extension;
- Corriegarth II Wind Farm;
- Tomchrasky Wind Farm;
- Crathaich Wind Farm;
- Loch Liath Wind Farm; and
- Fairburn Wind Farm Extension.

7.143 Additional mitigation would be delivered through the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to address the significant effects identified on the A831 in relation to severance, driver and passenger delay, and non-motorised user delay. The CTMP would include measures to reduce both the number and impact of construction vehicle movements, including agreed haul routes, contractor inductions, site logistics planning, temporary traffic signage, management of construction staff travel, restrictions on delivery times, potential temporary speed limits, prevention of HGV lay-bys on local roads, and wheel-washing facilities to keep roads clean. The CTMP would also provide a dedicated site liaison role and ongoing traffic management arrangements, ensuring that construction traffic avoids peak traffic periods and school start and finish times, thereby minimising impacts on local residents and road users. Subject to the implementation of this additional mitigation, the residual effects deriving from the transport effects of the proposed development in isolation, i.e. not taking into account cumulative effects, are expected to be Not Significant.

7.144 Transport Scotland raise no objection to the application but request that, should consent be granted, the CTMP condition should include updated road traffic collision data for the A82(T) from Transport Scotland. Accident data analysis should also be reviewed and updated in the CTMP. Concerns are also raised about managing cumulative traffic impacts from different wind farms with a more detailed mechanism to be included in any CTMP. Detailed comments are also provided on AIL movements to the site. The matters raised by Transport Scotland could appropriately be addressed by way of planning condition should consent be granted.

7.145 Similarly, the Highland Council's Transport Planning Team raises no objection to the application subject to a CTMP condition covering construction traffic coordination with other wind farm developments, an Abnormal load Plan and details of the upgraded access onto the A831.

7.146 The cumulative transport assessment does not include transport impacts associated with the Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro (PSH) Scheme, to which the Highland Council raised no objection at the meeting of the South Planning Applications Committee on the 7 October 2026 (25/01599/S36). Construction traffic would approach the site from the A831 from a main site access at Balnain, with no construction traffic using the A831 to the west of Balnain. The Traffic Assessment predicts peak construction traffic figures of 178 HGV movements and 34 other vehicle movements per day based on two-way movements. The scheme has an 8-year construction period. Construction traffic routes between Glen Earrach PSH and the proposed development would therefore overlap along the A831 east of Balnain and the A82. The 8-year construction period also makes it likely that construction periods would overlap. Consequently, the omission of Glen Earrach PSH from the cumulative assessment represents a major gap and creates clear potential for significant effects on roads, transport and access which has not been adequately assessed or mitigated within the EIAR.

7.147 Construction traffic associated with the consented Bingally Substation (25/00592/FUL) would also make use of the A831 and A82 roads, with its site access being to the north of Cannich. Its peak construction traffic forecast is 226 daily HGV movements and 378 car/LGV movements, although car/LGV movements would not

be restricted to the A82/A831 route to the site. This consented development has also not been included in the cumulative assessment.

7.148 The cumulative traffic assessment, which concludes that significant cumulative traffic effects are unlikely to arise, is contested due to the omission of the Glen Earrach PSH scheme and the Bingally Substation scheme. There exists clear potential for additional unassessed significant effects to be caused given the substantial combined traffic increases that would occur between the proposed development and these schemes. These effects have not been assessed and therefore have not been adequately mitigated in the EIAR. In the event consent for this proposal would be forthcoming, this would need to be subject to an updated Transport Assessment to inform the CTMP, and potential further road network upgrades and mitigation measures. It is recommended that the inadequate Transport Assessment forms a reason for refusal of the application.

Water, Flood Risk, Drainage and Peat

7.149 Chapter 9 of the EIAR sets out the applicant's assessment of hydrology, geology, hydrogeology and peat. The site is primarily drained by way of several watercourses to either Allt Drimneach or Allt na Dalach Moire which then drain to the River Enrick. SEPA's future flood risk mapping shows a high fluvial flood risk at the proposed site entrance. The site predominantly has Class 0 (mineral soils) and Class 5 peatland with sampling revealing that the majority of the site has peat depths below 0.5m. The applicant has investigated potentially groundwater dependent habitats within the site and identified three which are partially Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). Eight Private Water Supplies (PWS) have been identified within 2km of the site. The key issues are the potential for construction related pollution events of watercourses, high fluvial flood risk at the site entrance, effects on peat, effects on Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE) and effects on PWS.

7.150 The EIAR chapter specifies embedded mitigation which is primarily to be implemented through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Embedded mitigation includes mitigation by design, implementation of standard good practice, and topic specific measures, including water quality monitoring, the employment of a Hydrological Clerk of Works (HCoW) or EnvCoW to oversee construction works within PWS catchments and appropriate measures covering the management of peat.

7.151 Technical Appendix 9-5: Flood Risk Assessment screens flood risk from all sources other than fluvial as being low or no risk, thus requiring no further assessment. Fluvial flooding is identified as being a high risk due to an area of high risk identified at the site access on SEPA's Fluvial Flood Map. In terms of flood risk at the site entrance, the access is existing although will require upgrading. The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) confirms that any upgrade works will not result in the loss of floodplain capacity meaning no increase in flood risk to others. The FRA finds that, in the event of a 1 in 200 year + 40% climate change flood event, flood depths of up to 1.0m are likely across the site access adjacent to the A831. The FRA notes that alternative access and egress is possible via the public road at Buntait (U1636) however, which would provide staff and emergency services an access into the site that is not at risk of

flooding. The Council's Flood Risk Management Team (FRMT) raises no objection to the application on flood risk grounds.

7.152 In terms of site drainage, the surface water drainage arrangements specified in the Drainage Impact Assessment are to the satisfaction of the FRMT. Concerns around the drainage of potentially contaminated firewater are capable of being addressed by way of planning condition, which would be required in any case to address NatureScot concerns.

7.153 PWS within 2km of the site boundary have been identified and assessed within Technical Appendix 9-4: Private Water Supply Assessment. The assessment, based on desk-based and site surveys, identified eight PWS sources with five of these subsequently assessed as being at no risk. There is a risk that felling activities could result in an impact to the remaining three PWS sources, which are Bearnock Burn (Stalker's Cottage), Cnoc na Raineach, and Dalich Moire. Mitigation measures are proposed including the employment of a Hydrological or Environmental Clerk of Works to oversee works within PWS catchments and restrictions on the storage and refuelling of plant, machinery and vehicles within the relevant watercourses and a suitable buffer. PWS monitoring would take place during construction works with a contingency supply arrangements ready for implementation in the event that PWS are affected by works. Subject to the identified mitigation being secured by planning condition, the proposed development would not be expected to have a significant effect on any PWS.

7.154 Subject to the implementation of the identified mitigation, residual effects on all hydrological, geological, hydrogeological and peat receptors during construction, operation and decommissioning phases are considered to be Not Significant. The identified mitigation could be secured by way of planning condition and so no further reason for refusal relating to water, flood risk, drainage or peat is recommended.

Noise and Shadow Flicker

7.155 The applicant has submitted an operational noise assessment which demonstrates that predicted wind turbine noise levels will not exceed 36dB at any receptor. The assessment includes the results of a baseline survey. Environmental Health raises some queries about background noise levels however, on the whole, raises no objection subject to a condition limiting operational noise emissions at the site at 35dB LA90 up to wind speeds of 5m/s and 37dB LA90 for wind speeds of 6m/s and above. The Noise Assessment and subsequent Environmental Health consultation response both pre-date the publication of the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise (ARWTN), instead applying the older ETSU-R-97 standard. It is considered unlikely that significant effects arising from operational noise will occur however the appropriate level of restriction on noise emissions from the site may change. Additional comments from Environmental Health have been sought and would inform any prescribed noise limits to be conditioned should consent be forthcoming.

7.156 The proposal also includes a BESS and substation which would be over 1km from the nearest receptor. The assessment states that at this stage there is insufficient information available regarding the plant to be installed and suggests that the requirement for a separate noise assessment is required by planning condition.

Given the separation distances involved, this approach is acceptable and would not be expected to result in a significant effect.

7.157 The EIAR includes an assessment of shadow flicker at Chapter 14. The Chapter is based on shadow flicker monitoring which uses a study area based on 10x the rotor diameter. Whilst this approach is acceptable elsewhere in the country, the northern latitude of the Highland region means that this distance is insufficient and a distance of 11x the rotor diameter should be used. Consequently, the EIAR's finding of no Significant effect arising from shadow flicker is not accepted. With reference to EIA Figure 14-1 Shadow Flicker Modelling Results, it is clear that the addition of 10% to the assessment buffer would bring a number of residential receptors into the buffer and it cannot be assumed that they would not suffer a Significant effect. It is therefore recommended that this forms an additional reason for the refusal of the application.

Other Material Considerations

Grid Connection

7.158 The applicant has submitted an appraisal of the grid connection in an Additional Information Report (the AIR). The AIR aims to provide an assessment of likely significant environmental effects deriving from the grid connection, both in isolation, combined with the proposed development, and cumulatively with the proposed development.

7.159 The AIR assumes that the grid connection will take the form of 13.9km of 33kV underground cable to connect the wind farm to Fasnakyle substation. It recognises that the grid connection will be managed and owned by the licenced electricity network operator. As such, the AIR is based on the applicant's own assumptions on the likely form of the grid connection. The AIR recognises that the electricity network operator would not be bound by the contents of the appraisal when developing any grid connection. As such, the appraisal does not represent a worst-case scenario which could satisfy a "Rochdale Envelope" approach. An overhead line connection, for example, is likely to result in greater landscape and visual effects.

7.160 The AIR assesses the grid connection (in isolation, in combination with the wind farm and cumulatively with the wind farm) in terms of likely significant environmental effects on landscape and visual; ecology and ornithology; forestry; geology, hydrology and hydrogeology; transport and access; cultural heritage; and noise. The AIR concludes that construction effects would be localised, temporary and reversible, with no likely significant effects identified in relation to landscape and visual amenity, ecology, forestry, hydrology, cultural heritage, transport or noise. The report further finds that no statutory environmental designations would be directly affected and that no significant cumulative or in-combination effects would arise with the proposed wind farm.

7.161 It is recognised that, in R (Finch) v Surrey County Council and others [2024] UKSC 20, the Supreme Court stated that "conjecture and speculation have no place in the EIA process." Given that the AIR has been prepared by the wind farm developer rather than the prospective grid connection developer, there remains uncertainty as to whether the assessed grid connection would ultimately be delivered in the form described, or indeed to the existing substation identified, rather than the nearby

consented Bingally Substation which has been designed to accommodate such additional connections. It is recognised that the AIR was submitted in response to Officer concerns and represented a constructive attempt to address issues arising from the Raeshaw judgment. Nevertheless, in the absence of a mechanism, other than planning conditions, to secure the connection as assessed, the AIR may not provide a basis on which the Planning Authority can reach a reasoned conclusion regarding the likely significant environmental effects of the project.

7.162 It is also recognised that the electricity network operator has not designed the grid connection at this stage and so the point of connection, the selection of an overground or underground connection, and the transmission corridor, have not been identified. A detailed assessment is therefore not possible and a "Rochdale Envelope" approach would be so broad as to be of limited value and disproportionate in the circumstances of the connection being 33kV, and if above ground likely to supported by wooden H poles. Consequently, the likely significant effects of the grid connection are not fully identifiable at the time of this application's determination, without further input and design by the network operator SSEN. Were the application to be approved, this matter could potentially be covered by way of a multi-stage condition to cover the grid connection that ensures that work does not commence on the wind farm until the likely effects of the entire project, comprising the wind farm and its grid connection, have been fully assessed and mitigated as appropriate. Alternatively, should permission be refused and subsequently appealed, the Scottish Ministers as decision maker may require further environmental information ahead of determination. Given the recommendation, and overriding concern with other environmental effects of the development proposal, it is not on this occasion deemed pertinent to the decision on this application and it is therefore recommended that the lack of grid connection details does not form an additional reason for the refusal of the application.

Aviation

7.163 NATS and Highland and Islands Airports Limited both raise no objection to the application in terms of its effects on aviation. The Ministry of Defence also raises no objection subject to planning conditions requiring aviation lighting and aviation charting and safety management. These conditions could reasonably be added to any grant of permission were the development to be consented, including a condition to avoid the presence of any visible aviation lighting given with this to be restricted to infrared given the proposed height of turbines.

Decommissioning and Aftercare

7.164 Planning permission is sought for an operational period of 35 years, after which the development would be decommissioned in accordance with current good practice. Should planning permission be granted, the environmental effects associated with decommissioning can be appropriately managed and mitigated through a planning condition requiring the submission and implementation of a Decommissioning and Restoration Plan, as well as a financial restoration guarantee which is standard planning practice.

Planning Compliance and Monitoring

7.165 Given the scale and complexity of the proposed development, were the application to be approved, it would be appropriate to secure the appointment of a Planning Monitoring Officer (PMO) through a planning condition. The PMO would oversee compliance with all planning conditions, obligations and agreements associated with the development and provide bi-monthly compliance reports to the Planning Authority to assist with the monitoring and discharge of planning requirements.

8. Matters to be secured by Legal Agreement / Upfront Payment

None.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The proposed development would make a contribution towards national renewable energy and climate change objectives through the provision of up to 28.8MW of renewable electricity generation and a 15MW battery energy storage system. The proposal would deliver biodiversity enhancement in terms of non-peatland habitats and also deliver economic benefits during both the construction and operational phases. The proposed development has been designed to avoid or minimise a range of environmental effects. Subject to mitigation and planning conditions, matters including ecology, ornithology, hydrology, peat, flood risk, aviation and construction impacts are generally capable of being satisfactorily addressed.

9.2 The application is the subject of considerable public objection, as detailed at section 4 of this report. In addition, the application is the subject of objections from the host Glen Urquhart Community Council and the neighbouring Strathglass Community Council. There are also objections from the Landscape Officer, the Forestry Team, the Historic Environment Team- Archaeology, Historic Environment Team-Conservation and from Historic Environment Scotland.

9.3 Notwithstanding the identified benefits and areas of compliance, the proposal would result in significant adverse effects on landscape character, visual amenity, transport, cultural heritage and forestry interests.

9.4 The development would give rise to significant adverse effects on the Dramatic Great Glen Special Quality of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig Special Landscape Area, including effects on views from the landmark hill of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and across Urquhart Bay and Loch Ness. Significant visual effects are also predicted for a wide range of sensitive receptors, including visitors to Corrimony Chambered Cairn, users of approximately 6km of the Affric Kintail Way, residents of Shenval, users of the A831 and A82, receptors on the eastern shores and waters of Loch Ness, and users of the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh. In addition, six residential properties would receive Significant Adverse effects to their residential visual amenity, although the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment threshold would not be breached. The proposal would break the pattern of development, introducing wind farm development into an area purposely kept free from such development, with this area already having been subject of a previous wind farm refusal. Although the Development Plan and other material considerations have moved on since the previous scheme's refusal, and now demand significant additional weight to be given

to renewable energy proposal's contribution towards tackling the climate emergency, this is not unqualified, with the current application resulting in significant landscape and visual effects on a wide range of receptors within Glen Urquhart and significant cumulative effects, particularly from elevated locations around Loch Ness. Significant visual effects would extend up to 16km and cannot reasonably be considered localised or sufficiently mitigated, with these covering several highly sensitive receptors, including visitors to the Corrimony Chambered Cairn and users of the waters of, and promoted visitor locations adjacent to, Loch Ness. Given the modest scale of the proposed wind farm, its limited turbine numbers and height, the energy benefits arising from this scheme are disproportionate to the extent of the detrimental landscape and visual impacts which are unacceptable, indicating this site is unsuitable for wind farm development.

9.5 In addition, the proposed turbines would have a significant adverse effect on the setting of Corrimony Chambered Cairn (SM90081), a nationally important scheduled monument. The development would introduce prominent modern structures into key views to and from the monument, eroding the ability to understand, appreciate and experience its relationship with the surrounding prehistoric landscape and adversely affecting the integrity of its setting. Historic Environment Scotland has therefore objected to the proposal on this basis, as has the Council Historic Environment Team.

9.6 In addition, the proposed development has the potential to cause a significant adverse effect on the setting of Lochletter Farm, Garden Pavilion (LB49692). The turbines would introduce prominent modern features into a key view across Loch Meiklie that contributes to the building's significance, potentially becoming a dominant element in the landscape. A Moderate and Significant effect is assessed, and the omission of a detailed setting assessment represents a significant deficiency in the EIAR.

9.7 The application does not demonstrate that the loss of Planted Woods on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) to accommodate the southern compound is necessary. The loss of PAWS is considered to be a Significant effect which has not been appropriately mitigated. The approach does not demonstrate compliance with the mitigation hierarchy and is contrary to the Scottish Government Control of Woodland Removals Policy, and therefore NPF4 Policy 6.

9.8 The submitted Transport Assessment is considered inadequate as its cumulative assessment excludes the Glen Earrach PSH and Bingally Substation schemes. Given the substantial combined traffic generation likely to arise from these developments there is a clear potential for significant cumulative effects on the road network that have not been assessed within the EIAR and, consequently, have not been appropriately mitigated. As a result, the assessment fails to provide sufficient information to fully understand the transport impacts of the proposal.

9.9 While significant weight has been given to the proposal's renewable energy generation, contribution to climate change targets, and associated economic and biodiversity benefits, these considerations do not outweigh the significant and unacceptable adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity, cultural heritage, and forestry. The proposal is therefore considered to conflict with National Planning Framework 4, the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and the Onshore Wind

Energy Supplementary Guidance and it is recommended that the application be refused.

9.10 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal does not accord with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is unacceptable in terms of applicable material considerations.

10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Resource: There are significant staffing and financial resource implications should the Council participate in a Public Local Inquiry.

10.2 Legal: Should the application be refused, it may be subject to appeal to the DPEA resulting in legal resource to defend the Council's position.

10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable

10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: The application comprises the generation of renewable electricity and therefore would contribute towards achieving climate change targets.

10.5 Risk: Not applicable

10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued: None

It is recommended to **REFUSE** the application for the reasons set out below:

1. **Landscape Impacts**

The proposed development would have a significantly detrimental impact on the Dramatic Great Glen Special Quality of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig Special Landscape Area by virtue of:

- its contribution to the sense of encirclement of the summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh by wind farm developments; and
- its adverse effect on key views from the eastern shores and waters of Loch Ness towards Urquhart Bay and Glen Urquhart, where it would introduce a prominent competing feature on the skyline, detracting from the prominence of Urquhart Castle and eroding its relationship with the surrounding landscape.

This significant adverse impact has not been adequately mitigated with the proposed development failing to demonstrate compliance with National Planning Framework 4 Policy 11 Energy, Highland-wide Local Development Plan Policies 69 Electricity Transmission Infrastructure and 28 Sustainable

Design, and the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance, including its sensitivity appraisal.

2. **Visual Impacts**

The proposed development would result in significant adverse and detrimental effects on visual amenity for visitors to Corrimony Chambered Cairn, users of approximately 6km of the Affric Kintail Way, residents of Shenval, users of the A831 and A82 roads, and receptors from the eastern shore of Loch Ness, the waters of Loch Ness and the summit of Meall Fuar'mhonaidh. In addition, the residents of Upperton of Buntait, Buntait, Shenval, Shewglie, Bearnock and Balnalick would experience a Major Adverse and Significant effect to their visual amenity. These effects are not localised, and appropriate design mitigation has not been applied. The proposal therefore fails to comply with National Planning Framework 4 Policy 11 (Energy) and Policies 28 (Sustainable Design), Policy 69 (Electricity Transmission Infrastructure) of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan, and the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance.

3. **Scheduled Monument**

The proposed development would result in a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the setting of the scheduled monument Corrimony, chambered cairn 600m ESE of, a nationally important prehistoric monument. The proposed wind turbines would be prominently visible in key views to, from and across the monument, including views aligned with and beyond the entrance passage and views towards contemporary archaeological sites within the wider landscape, and would erode important qualities of its setting which contribute to its cultural significance, understanding, appreciation and experience. The development would introduce large-scale modern structures into views that currently derive significance from their predominantly undeveloped and rural character, fundamentally altering the relationship between the monument and its surrounding landscape. As a result, the proposal would result in a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the setting of a scheduled monument and no exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify that impact. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy 7(h) (Historic assets and places) of National Planning Framework 4 and the objectives of the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland.

4. **Listed Building**

The application has failed to provide sufficient information to enable the Planning Authority to fully assess the effects of the proposed development on the setting and significance of the Category B listed Lochletter Farm, Garden Pavilion (LB49692). The listed building derives a substantial part of its special architectural and historic interest from its deliberate siting to obtain views across Loch Meiklie towards the surrounding hills. The proposed development would be located within these views and is likely to be highly visible from the listed building resulting in a Significant adverse effect from the proposed development based on the information currently submitted. Notwithstanding this, no wireline visualisations or detailed assessment have been provided to

adequately evaluate the magnitude of change or the significance of effects on the asset and its setting. Consequently, the Planning Authority is unable to conclude that the proposal would preserve the special interest, character or setting of the listed building and is unable to properly assess the likely significant effects of the development on the historic environment. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate compliance with Policy 7 (Historic assets and places) of National Planning Framework 4 and the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 in respect of the assessment of likely significant environmental effects.

5. **Loss of Planted Woods on Ancient Woodland Sites**

The proposed development would result in the loss of areas of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) within Enrick Forest, including woodland affected by the proposed southern construction compound. Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that all reasonable opportunities to avoid or minimise impacts on these nationally important woodland habitats have been fully explored through the application of the mitigation hierarchy, including consideration of alternative compound locations and further refinement of infrastructure design. Consequently, it has not been demonstrated that the significant adverse effects on PAWS habitat would be appropriately mitigated. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy 6 (Forestry, woodland and trees) of National Planning Framework 4 and the principles of the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, both of which include a strong presumption in favour of protecting ancient woodland.

6. **Cumulative Traffic Impact**

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report submitted in support of the proposed development contains an inadequate cumulative transport assessment, having failed to consider the traffic impacts associated with the Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro Scheme (the Highland Council [THC] ref: 25/01599/S36) and Bingally Substation (THC ref: 25/00592/FUL) developments. The significant level of HGV movements forecast for both developments creates clear potential for significant cumulative traffic impacts. The omission of these developments means that there remains potential for significant cumulative traffic and road safety effects which is unacceptable. This is contrary to National Planning Framework 4 [JW1.1] Policies 11 (Energy) and 18 (Infrastructure First), Highland-wide Local Development Plan Policy 67 (Renewable Energy Developments), and Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan Policy 9 (Delivering Development and Infrastructure).

7. **Shadow Flicker**

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) submitted in supported of the proposed development contains an inadequate assessment of shadow flicker in that its study area is 10x the rotor diameter rather than 11x distance that is required within Highland to account for its northern latitude. The application of an 11x rotor diameter study area would bring additional

residential receptors into the study area. The shadow flicker effect of the proposed development upon these receptors has not been assessed within the EIAR. In the absence of this assessment, the Council cannot conclude that the proposed development would not give rise to Significant Adverse effects on the residential amenity of these properties. The proposed development is therefore contrary to National Planning Framework 4 Policy 11 (Energy) and Highland-wide Local Development Plan Policy 67 (Renewable Energy Developments).

REASON FOR DECISION

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal does not accord with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is unacceptable in terms of applicable material considerations.

REASONED CONCLUSION

The Council does not agree with the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) that the proposed erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years, comprising up to 6 turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9 meters, battery energy storage system, and ancillary infrastructure is likely to give rise to only the significant effects summarised at Chapter 16: Summary of Residual Effects of the EIAR. In addition to these effects, additional Significant adverse effects have been identified to the Dramatic Great Glen Special Quality of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig Special Landscape Area, Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites, and to the setting of the Category B listed Lochletter Farm, Garden Pavillion (LB49692). Furthermore, the assessment of cumulative transport effects and shadow flicker within the EIAR is inadequate which creates the potential for further unassessed significant effects.

Signature:	Bob Roberson
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Author:	Jack Wiseman – Principal Planner
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Background Papers:	Documents referred to in report and in case file.
Relevant Plans:	Plan 1 – VOLUME 4A FIGURE 1-1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN
	Plan 2 - VOLUME 4A FIGURE 3-1 - DETAILED PROPOSED LAYOUT PLAN
	Plan 3 - VOLUME 4A FIGURE 3-2 - INDICATIVE TURBINE
	Plan 4 - VOLUME 4A FIGURE 3-5 - INDICATIVE BATTERY STORAGE FACILITY

Plan 5 - VOLUME 4A FIGURE 3-13 - INDICATIVE SUBSTATION COMPOUND

Plan 6 - VOLUME 4A FIGURE 3-14 - INDICATIVE BATTERY COMPOUND

Plan 7 - VOLUME 4A FIGURE 3-15 - INDICATIVE SUBSTATION BUILDING

Appendix 2 – Cumulative Wind Farm Developments within 25km

Wind Farm	Status	Turbines	Blade Tip Height (m)	Approximate distance and direction
Corrimony	Constructed	5	100	9.5, south-west
Bhlaraidh	Constructed	32	135	10.6, south
Auchmore	Constructed	1	79	16.7, north
Auchmore 2	Constructed	1	79	16.7, north
Fairburn	Constructed	20	100	18.6, north
Corriegarth	Constructed	23	119	23.2, south-east
Dunmaglass	Constructed	33	117	23.4, south-east
Aberarder	Under Construction	12	130	24.6, south-east
Bhlaraidh Extension	Consented	15	180	11.3, south-west
Easter Aberchalder	Consented	1	68	20.3, south-east
Corriegarth 2	Consented	14	149.9	22.8, south-east
Tomchrasky	Consented	14	185	24.5, south-east
Ballach	Application	20	230 and 200	12.6, north
Tarvie	Scoping	11	200	24.2, north
Loch Liath	Appeal	13	200	7.6, south

Appendix 3 – Development Plan and Other Material Policy Considerations

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

National Planning Framework 4 (2023)

A3.1 The NPF4 policies of most relevance to this proposal include:

National Development 3 (NAD3) - Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure.

Policy 1 – Tackling the climate and nature crisis

Policy 2 – Climate mitigation and adaptation

Policy 3 – Biodiversity

Policy 4 – Natural places

Policy 5 – Soils

Policy 6 – Forestry, woodland and trees

Policy 7 – Historic assets and places

Policy 11 – Energy

Policy 13 – Sustainable transport

Policy 22 – Flood risk and water management

Policy 23 – Health and safety

Policy 25 – Community wealth building

Policy 33 – Minerals

Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

A3.2 28 - Sustainable Design

29 - Design Quality and Place-making

30 - Physical Constraints

31 - Developer Contributions

36 – Wider Countryside

53 - Minerals

55 - Peat and Soils

56 - Travel

57 - Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage

58 - Protected Species

59 - Other important Species

60 - Other Importance Habitats

61 - Landscape

62 - Geodiversity

63 - Water Environment

64 - Flood Risk

66 - Surface Water Drainage

67 - Renewable Energy Developments

68 - Community Renewable Energy Developments

69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure

72 - Pollution

73 - Air Quality

74 - Green Networks

77 - Public Access

78 - Long Distance Routes

Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP)

A3.3 There are no site-specific policies covering the application site therefore the application requires to be assessed against the general policies of the Development Plan (NPF4 and HwLDP) referred to above.

Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) (2016)

A3.4 The Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) provides additional guidance on the principles set out in HwLDP Policy 67 for renewable energy developments. The Guidance sets out the Council's agreed position on onshore wind energy matters, and, although reflective of Scottish Planning Policy at the time of its adoption prior to the adoption of NPF4, the document remains an extant part of the Development Plan and is therefore a material consideration in the determination of onshore wind energy planning applications. Nevertheless, the Spatial Framework included in the document is no longer relevant to the assessment of applications as in effect, the policies of NPF4 (specifically Policy 11, Energy) removes Group 2 Areas of significant protection from consideration by effectively making all land in Scotland either Group 1 Areas where wind farms will not be acceptable (National Parks and National Scenic Areas), or Group 3, Areas with potential for wind farm development.

A3.5 The OWESG also contains the Loch Ness Landscape Sensitivity Study, the Black Isle, Surrounding Hills and Moray Firth Coast Sensitivity Study, and the Caithness Sensitivity Study.

Other Highland Council Supplementary Guidance

A3.6

- Biodiversity Enhancement Planning Guidance (May 2024)
- Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (August 2010)
- Developer Contributions (Mar 2018)
- Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Green Networks (Jan 2013)
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (Mar 2013)
- Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (May 2006)
- Physical Constraints (Mar 2013)
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)
- Special Landscape Area Citations (Jun 2011)
- Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)
- Trees, Woodland and Development (Jan 2013)

OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Emerging Highland Council Development Plan Documents and Planning Guidance

A3.7 The Council has recently commenced the preparation of a new-style Highland Local Development Plan (HLDP), with the tentative programme including an Evidence Report in 2026/2027 and subsequent Gate Check, with Proposed Plan stage in 2027/2028. Once adopted this new style HLDP will supersede and replace HwLDP and the Council ‘area’ LDP.

A3.8 In addition, the Council has further advice on delivery of major developments in a number of documents. This includes Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (Aug 2010) and The Highland Council Visualisation Standards for Wind Energy Developments (Jul 2016).

Other International and National Legislation, Policy, and Guidance

A3.9

- Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 – interim and annual targets replaced by Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill in November 2024
- Climate Change Committee Report to UK Parliament (July 2024)
- UK Government Clean Power Action Plan (Dec 2024)
- Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)
- Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement (2022)
- Draft Scottish Biodiversity strategy to 2045: tackling the nature emergency (2023)
- Scottish Energy Strategy (2017)
- 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy (2011)
- Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map, Scottish Government (2018)
- Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape, SNH (2017)
- Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas, Technical Guidance, NatureScot (2020)
- Wind Farm Developments on Peat Lands, Scottish Government (2011)
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland, HES (2019)
- PAN 1/2011 - Planning and Noise (2011)
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (2008)
- Circular 4/1998 – The use of Conditions in Planning Permissions – this states that planning conditions should only be imposed when they meet all of the following six tests: 1) Necessary, 2) Relevant to planning, 3) Relevant to the development to be permitted, 4) Enforceable, 5) Precise; and Reasonable in all other respects.
- Circular 1/2017: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2017)
- NatureScot: Guidance on Aviation Lighting Impact Assessment (2024)
- Managing Natural World Heritage (2012)
- Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA), Landscape Institute (March 2019)
- Scottish Forestry Woodland Creation Application Guidance (November 2017)
- Health and Safety Guidance for Grid Scale Electrical Energy Storage

Systems' (UK Government, Mar 2024)

- Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Battery Energy Storage Systems (March 2026)
- National Fire Chiefs Council's guidance - Guidance on Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning (Nov 2022) ('the NFCC guidance') and a related draft revision (Jul 2024) approved for publication (Dec 2025).

Appendix 4 – Compliance with the Development Plan/Other Material Policy Considerations

A4.1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) forms part of the statutory Development Plan and was adopted in February 2023. It establishes Scotland's spatial strategy, planning policies and supporting guidance, with a strong focus on addressing the climate and nature emergencies whilst supporting sustainable development.

A4.2 The spatial strategy recognises the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate change and support a transition to a net-zero economy. In the Highlands, NPF4 identifies renewable energy generation and associated transmission infrastructure as key components in delivering these objectives, whilst also safeguarding environmental assets.

A4.3 NPF4 places significant weight on the contribution of development proposals towards tackling climate change and enhancing biodiversity. Policy 11 supports renewable energy developments and associated infrastructure, provided impacts are appropriately addressed and mitigated. Considerable weight is to be given to a proposal's contribution towards renewable energy generation and greenhouse gas reduction targets. However, proposals must still be assessed against a range of environmental considerations, including landscape, visual, natural heritage, cultural heritage, impacts on communities and individual dwellings, and cumulative effects.

A4.4 NPF4 Policy 4 seeks to protect designated natural heritage interests unless adverse effects can be avoided or are clearly outweighed by benefits of national importance. The policy also provides increased support for renewable energy development in relation to Wild Land Areas by removing the previous requirement for buffer zones and largely limiting consideration to effects within designated areas. Overall, NPF4 establishes a strong presumption in favour of renewable energy development, whilst requiring a balanced assessment of environmental effects.

A4.5 NPF4 Policy 6 aims to protect and expand forests, woodlands and trees. It states that development proposals will not be supported where they will result in any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition. Development proposals involving woodland removal are required to achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits in accordance with relevant Scottish Government policy on woodland removal. Compensatory planting is required in most circumstances.

A4.6 NPF4 Policy 7 aims to protect and enhance historic environment assets and places. Development proposals affecting the setting of a listed building should preserve its character, and its special architectural or historic interest. Development affecting scheduled monuments will only be supported where direct

impacts are avoided, significant adverse impacts on the integrity of its setting are avoided, or exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify the impact and impacts on the monument have been minimised.

A4.7 NPF4 Policy 18 aims to encourage, promote and facilitate an infrastructure first approach to land use planning, which puts infrastructure considerations at the heart of placemaking. This requires development proposals to demonstrate that provision will be made to address impacts on infrastructure.

A4.8 The Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) remains part of the Development Plan. The site lies within the Wider Countryside under Policy 36, where development is assessed against relevant development plan policies. Policies 67 (Renewable Energy Developments) and 69 (Electricity Transmission Infrastructure) are of particular relevance. These policies support renewable energy and transmission infrastructure where proposals are appropriately located, sited and designed and do not give rise to significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, taking account of their contribution towards renewable energy targets.

A4.9 Whilst NPF4 now carries greater weight where any conflict arises with older development plan policies, the detailed assessment framework provided by HwLDP Policy 67 and the associated Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) remains an important material consideration. The OWESG provides a methodology for assessing landscape and visual effects, including cumulative impacts, and informs the appraisal of the proposal against the Council's assessment criteria.

A4.10 Other material considerations include the Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement (2022), which sets a national ambition of at least 20GW of installed onshore wind capacity by 2030 and recognises the important role of onshore wind in achieving Scotland's net-zero objectives. The statement acknowledges that significant landscape change will be necessary to achieve these targets but emphasises that development should be located in the right place and appropriately mitigated. The Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan similarly highlights the critical role of onshore wind and supporting infrastructure in responding to the climate crisis, although limited weight can be afforded to the document due to its draft status.

Appendix 5 - LVIA Methodology

A4.1. The applicant has presented a number of figures and visualisations to illustrate the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development both singularly and cumulatively with operational, consented and other proposed wind farm developments.

A4.2 Following a review of the LVIA in Volume 2 Chapter 5 of the EIAR and supporting appendices, sufficient information has been provided to enable an assessment and overall, the visualisations are considered to have been produced to a good standard. The exception to this is the applicant's poor baseline photography for Viewpoint 6: A82 near Strone and Viewpoint 7: East Loch Ness which have been noted in the officer's viewpoint appraisal in Appendix 6 of this report. However, further dialogue with the applicant has resulted in updated photography and visualisations been provided by the applicant on 15 October 2026 which is broadly acceptable to Officers. There is also no baseline photography produced for VP5: A833 north of Milton, VP13: Beinn a'Bhathaich and VP16: Sgurr na Ruaidhe. The applicant notes that weather conditions prevented photography being captured to an acceptable standard. However, there doesn't appear to be any mention of a second attempt to undertake photography which is standard practice when carrying out site visits.

A4.3 The EIAR Design Statement includes a description of the design process and evolution and design principles along with Volume 2, Chapter 4 of the EIAR which also includes the design evolution and alternatives, whilst the LVIA in Volume 2 Chapter 5 of the EIAR reports on the assessment of effects on various landscape and visual receptors including several LCTs and the SLQs of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA and Strathconan, Monar and Mullardoch SLA. Effects on other designated landscapes including the Glen Affric NSA and Central Highlands WLA have been scoped out of the assessment in agreement with NatureScot.

A4.4 In terms of visual amenity, the assessment of settlements including Achimony, Cannich and Drumnadrochit, road users of the A82, A831, A833, minor road from Cannich to Loch Beinn a'Mheadhoin and B852, recreational users of Core Paths, long distance routes such as Great Glen Way, Affric Kintail Way and hilltops, water based users of Loch Ness and visitor attractions such as Corrimony Chambered Cairn have been included in the LVIA. It should be noted that the applicant has incorrectly assessed and labelled Section 1 of the Affric Kintail Way between Drumnadrochit and Cannich in Figure 5-11 of the EIAR where the section of overlap with the A831 was re-routed in 2022. This has been explained in detail in the Officer's appraisal in the Visual Effects section of the report.

A4.5 A total of 17 viewpoints across a study area of 40 km have also been assessed in the LVIA, however the viewpoints extend out up to 30 km. These viewpoints are representative of a range of receptors including settlements, dispersed communities, outdoor recreational users, and road users including tourists. A bare earth visibility of the proposed development can be appreciated from the ZTV to Blade Tip (EIAR Figure 5-2) and ZTV to hub height (EIAR Figure 5-3). Other ZTV figures include Designated Landscapes (EIAR Figure 5-6), Landscape Character (EIAR Figure 5-9), Visual Receptors (EIAR Figures 5-10/11) and Cumulative ZTVs (EIAR Figures 5-14-1/2/3). Similar detailed ZTV figures are also provided in the EIAR.

A4.6 A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (Technical Appendix 5-6, Volume 3) has been undertaken by the applicant which includes 21 properties within 2.5 km. Other appendices include Landscape Character (Technical Appendix 5-2, Volume 3), Visual Assessment (Technical Appendix 5-3, Volume 3), Cumulative Assessment (Technical Appendix 5-4, Volume 3) and Designated Landscapes (Technical Appendix 5-5, Volume 3). The information submitted is considered sufficient to allow the Council to come to a reasoned conclusion on the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

A4.7 The methodology for the LVIA generally follows that set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3).

A4.8 It should be noted that the applicant's visual assessment (Technical Appendix 5-3, Volume 3) has been undertaken as a receptor-based assessment (giving consideration to all potential visual receptors) but does not also include a series of 'single point', viewpoint-based assessments given it is not a fundamental LVIA requirement in accordance with GLVIA 3. In this regard, the visualisation locations do not comprise specific viewpoints for visual assessment and a viewpoint-based assessment has not been undertaken. The visualisations therefore illustrate representative viewpoints, albeit that the applicant's visual assessment in Technical Appendix 5-3, Volume 3 is a receptor based (describing effects primarily in relation to receptors). In that way the applicant has presented a more cohesive analysis of their reasoning of the Significance of effect from various visual receptors. However, it is unclear why a viewpoint-based assessment was not undertaken for the proposed development as it wasn't specifically mentioned by the applicant in the scoping report and the same landscape consultant has undertaken viewpoint assessments for other wind farm applications including Tomchrasky and its proposed Variation, and Slickly in the Highlands, and Lees Hill Renewable Energy Park, Mid Hill Wind Farm and Oliver Forest in the Scottish Borders, for example.

A4.9 As set out in para 3.32 of GLVIA 3 the "LVIA should always clearly distinguish between what are considered to be significant and non-significant effects". The

applicant assessed significant effects following the combination of judgements based on the sensitivity of the receptor against the magnitude of change.

A4.10 The sensitivity of the receptor (landscape or visual) is defined by the receptor's susceptibility to the change brought about by the proposed development against the importance (value) of the landscape resource / view.

A4.11 For landscape, 'susceptibility' is the "ability of the landscape receptor…to accommodate the development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies" (GLVIA3, Page 88). Criteria that inform judgements of landscape susceptibility include landscape scale, landform, skylines, pattern and complexity, inter-visibility with adjacent landscapes, settlement and man-made influences and perceptual influences within the applicant's assessment. For visual receptors, susceptibility is a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view and the extent to which their attention is focused on views (GLVIA3, Page 113). The applicant's assessment includes a description of viewers of higher and lower susceptibility to changes in views.

A4.12 The value of a landscape receptor is informed with reference to a review of designated landscapes and the level of policy importance they signify, and other criteria such as landscape quality, scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects, and artistic associations. Recognition of the value of a view is determined with reference to planning designations, importance in relation to heritage assets and indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment and references to them in literature and art.

A4.13 Susceptibility and value are combined to form a judgement as the overall sensitivity of the landscape or visual receptor, recorded as High, Medium and Low in the applicant's assessment.

A4.14 Judgement of magnitude of change is based on an assessment of factors including size or scale of change; geographical extent of the effect, its duration and reversibility. The key elements of the proposed development that will influence the level of change on views are the movement, form, material, colour and scale of the turbines, although infrastructure is also considered. Magnitude of change is described as High, Medium, Low or Negligible. The duration of changes is taken as being short-term and temporary for construction and long term and theoretically reversible for operational effects.

A4.15 According to the definitions provided in the LVIA Methodology, Technical Appendix 5-1 of the EIAR, Volume 3 Tables 5-1-3 and 5-1-6, effects of Major

and Moderate correspond to significant effects. Those effects classified as Minor or Negligible are considered to be not significant.

A4.16 The assessment of the proposed development has included operational wind farms as part of the baseline. Whilst the approach of including operational wind farms to the baseline is not disputed, it should be noted that these wind farms are time limited and not permanent features in the landscape, and the effect on any receptor which includes their consideration would be of a temporal nature and may not fully reflect the actual effects of the proposed development which would have a longer operational period than the operational wind farms currently present in the baseline.

A4.17 Cumulative effects of the proposed development are considered under two scenarios in the LVIA:

1) Scenario 1 – Consented Scenario - the addition of the proposed development in the context of operational, under construction and consented windfarms, i.e. a likely future scenario; and
2) Scenario 2 - In-Planning Scenario: the addition of the proposed development in the context of operational, under construction, consented, undetermined planning applications and windfarm developments currently at appeal, i.e. a less certain future scenario.

A4.18 Whilst the applicant has included scoping wind farms in the viewpoint wirelines, these schemes have not been included in the cumulative assessment in accordance with NatureScot guidance.

A4.19 The assessment of cumulative effects includes a range of components or types of effect that have be identified in order to inform the decision maker on what ‘contribution is made by’ or ‘role played by’ the proposed development in the context of the overall accumulation of wind farms in the Study Area. Therefore, the cumulative assessment considers both the additional effects (which might be seen as quantitative effects) and the combined effects (which might be seen as qualitative effects). Officers acknowledge that the accepted approach to cumulative assessment is to determine the additional cumulative effects of a proposal over and above a baseline of cumulative developments, however, assessing combined effects can be useful in understanding strategic and long-term changes in a landscape or view which would also contribute to the overall effects of all the baseline developments.

A4.20 More significant cumulative landscape effects are considered to arise from changes to the landscape character of the study area whether through effects on key characteristics/features or whether the landscape is transformed into a different type, as set out in GLVIA3 at Paragraph 7.28. The methodology sets out that such effects occur where the proposed development extends or

intensifies a landscape effect, or it fills an area such that it alters the landscape resource, or, where the interaction between the proposed development and other wind farms is such that the effect is greater than it should otherwise be.

A4.21 Similarly, more significant cumulative visual effects are considered to occur where the proposed development would extend or intensify a visual effect, where the proposed development fills an area such that it alters the character of the view/visual amenity, and / or, where the interaction between the proposed development and other wind farms is such that the effect is greater than it should otherwise be. Sequentially, more significant cumulative visual effects are considered to occur where the proposed development lengthens the time over which an effect is experienced for receptors moving through the landscape.

A4.22 It is noted here that it would be perfectly reasonable to expect a development of the type, size, scale, and texture of a wind farm to result in significant landscape and visual effects, bearing in mind that significant effects are not relative to the size and scale of the proposed development, and do not necessarily equate to unacceptable effects.

A4.23 The summary of the applicant's assessment and officer appraisal of this assessment, which highlights the differences and any concerns with regard to visual effect, can be found in Appendix 6 of this report. As the applicant has not undertaken a specific viewpoint assessment, Officers have tried to include what would be the applicant's assessment at viewpoints from their visual assessment in Technical Appendix 5-3, Volume 3.

A4.24 Officers consider that the applicant has under-assessed the magnitude of change at VP12: Meall Fuar-mhonaidh which would result in a higher level of effect at this location, however, it is agreed that the effect at this viewpoint would be significant. Critically, Officers assess additional significant effects at VP: A82 near Strone as noted in Appendix 6 of this report. Officers also consider that the applicant has over-assessed the effect at VP11: Great Glen Way, near Ladycairn.

A4.25 A key part of the of the Council's assessment of landscape and visual effects is a consideration of the proposal against the Criterion set out in Section 4 of the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG), with the assessment against the criterion and view as to whether the threshold set out in the guidance is met or not, contained in Appendix 6 to this report. Furthermore, landscape and visual effects of the proposed development may be reversible as the scheme would be capable of being decommissioned as stated within the EIAR. However, as set out in Policy 11 (f) of NPF4, wind farm sites should be suitable in perpetuity, and it is therefore considered reasonable to assess the duration of all landscape and visual effects as non-reversible in that context.

Appendix 6- Viewpoint Appraisal

Cumulative Scenarios:
Consented Scenario (1) = the addition of the proposed development in the context of operational, under construction and consented windfarms, i.e. a likely future scenario. Operational wind farms are, however, included as part of the baseline and the LVIA represents the 'first level' of a cumulative assessment (that which would consider introducing the proposed development into the landscape in the context of existing wind farms).
In-Planning Scenario (2): the addition of the proposed development in the context of operational, under construction, consented, undetermined planning applications and windfarm developments currently at appeal, i.e. a less certain future scenario.

			Proposed Development			**Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)**		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
VP1 Cannich Distance 7.7 km Looking E	App	High (residents and road users)	Negligible	Negligible	Not Significant			
	THC	High (residents and road users) - High susceptibility and High value	Negligible	Negligible	Not Significant	No cumulative effect		
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on Cannich in section 4.2.2 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR and on the minor road ((Cannich to Loch Beinn a Mheadhoin) in section 4.3.1 of the same document. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for residents and road users as High is agreed. Residents are judged to be of High sensitivity as residents at their home attach high value to their existing view and visual amenity and are more susceptible to being affected by changes. Road users in this instance also include tourists heading towards the parking area at Loch Beinn a Mheadhoin and due to its location within a narrow strath is highly susceptible to tall structures and will be more aware of their surroundings. Up to one blade tip of the proposed development would be theoretically visible on the skyline however due to intervening trees it would be discernible in the view. No operational wind farms would be visible from this location. Magnitude is judged to be Negligible. The applicant's assessment of Negligible magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on residents and road users including tourists is agreed as Negligible and not significant. There would be no cumulative effects at this viewpoint.							
VP2	App	High (visitors) – High susceptibility and High value	High	Major	**Significant**			

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
Corrimony Chambered Cairn Distance 3.6 km Looking NE	THC	High (visitors) – High susceptibility and High value	High	Major	**Significant**	**Scenario 1**		
						No cumulative effect		
						Scenario 2		
						High	Major	**Significant**
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on Corrimony Cairn in section 4.6.1 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for visitors as High is agreed. This is due to its promotion and popularity with visitors which combined with a high susceptibility to change as people's attention would be focussed on the surrounding landscape which is sensitive to tall structures due to being located within the glen. All six of the proposed turbines would be visible on the skyline above farmland, woodland and forestry, which along with landform would provide some screening to towers and the hubs of the two eastern most turbines, and bases of the other four turbines. T1, T3, T4 and T5 would be highly prominent on the northern side above Glen Urquhart in this largely undeveloped rural landscape with turbine overlapping resulting in a poor composition. Whilst there are a small number of man-made features visible in the view such as overhead lines (located well beyond to the north), farm building and forestry, the proposed turbines including its rotating movement would form a new and detracting feature when seen from the cairn and its car park, drawing the eye away from the cairn. The turbines would appear larger from this lower-elevation viewpoint, with the trees on the horizon providing a visual reference for scale. The operational Farr wind farm would be discernible in the view due to distance and filtering of intervening trees. Magnitude is judged to be High. The applicant's assessment of High magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect of Major and Significant is agreed. The in-planning Lynemore wind farm would be barely discernible due to distance and filtering of intervening trees. The addition of the proposed development to this cumulative scenario (2) would remain a High magnitude of change and Major and Significant effect.							
VP3 Shenval Distance 2.4 km Looking NE	App	High (residents) - High susceptibility and High value	High	Major	**Significant**			
	THC	High (residents) - High susceptibility and High value	High	Major	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						No cumulative effect		
						Scenario 2:		
						High	Major	**Significant**

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	The applicant assesses residents at Shenval as part of the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment in Technical Appendix 5-6: RVAA, Volume 3 of the EIAR. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for residents and road users as High is agreed. Residents are judged to be of High sensitivity as residents at their home attach high value to their existing view and visual amenity and are more susceptible to being affected by changes. All of the proposed turbines would be visible from this location on the skyline. The turbines would be seen prominently above the northern slopes of Glen Urquhart at hub height, with four of the towers being screened by landform. T1 and T3 would be the most visible with their upper towers noticeable above the treeline. T6 appears as outlier in the view. In addition, turbine overlap and uneven gaps results in a poor composition from this location which is the main views for residents. There would be some partial screening by woodland along the horizon, although due to the location of these properties being further back on the southern side of the glen, greater visibility of the proposed turbines would be experienced. This is the principal open view from properties at this location which offer panoramic views across Glen Urquhart and would be disrupted by the proposed turbines. No operational wind farms would be visible from this location. Magnitude of judged to be High. The applicant's assessment of High magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect of Major and Significant is agreed. The in-planning Lynemore wind farm would be barely discernible due to distance and filtering of intervening trees. The addition of the proposed development to this cumulative scenario (2) would remain a High magnitude of change and Major and Significant effect.							
VP4 Balnain Distance 2.6 km Looking NW	App	High (residents and road users)	Low	Minor	Not Significant			
	THC	High (residents and road users) - High susceptibility and High value	Low	Minor	Not Significant	No cumulative effect		
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on the A831 in section 4.3.1 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR and as part of the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment in Technical Appendix 5-6: RVAA, Volume 3 of the EIAR for residents. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for road users and residents as High is agreed. Residents are judged to be of High sensitivity as residents at their home attach high value to their existing view and visual amenity and are more susceptible to being affected by changes. As noted and agreed with the applicant, this road is not designated but is scenic and popular with visitors heading westwards towards Cannich and Glen Affric. Due to being a glen, the landscape is highly susceptible to tall structures, and sensitivity is judged as High.							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	Up to five blades / blade tips of the proposed development would be theoretically visible on the skyline however views would be limited as a result of woodland in this direction. No operational wind farms would be visible from this location. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on residents and road users including tourists is agreed as Minor and not significant. There would be no cumulative effects at this viewpoint.							
VP5 A833 north of Milton Distance 7.6 km Looking W	App	High (road users)	Negligible	Negligible	Not Significant			
	THC	High (road users) - High susceptibility and High-Medium value	Negligible	Negligible	Not Significant	Negligible and not significant cumulative effect		
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on the A833 in section 4.3.1 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for road users. It is unfortunate that there is no photography from this location. The applicant notes that weather conditions prevented photography being captured to an acceptable standard. However, there doesn't appear to be any mention of a second attempt to undertake photography which is standard practice when carrying out site visits. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for road users as High is agreed. As noted and agreed with the applicant, this road is not designated but is scenic and popular with visitors heading between the farmland surrounding the Cromarty Firth and Glen Urquhart. This road passes over an upland landscape with overall sensitivity judged as High. Up to three blade tips of the proposed development would be theoretically visible on the skyline however they would be barely discernible in the view. Magnitude is judged to be Negligible. The applicant's assessment of Negligible magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on road users including tourists is agreed as Negligible and not significant. There would be negligible and not significant cumulative effects. Whilst other wind farms would be theoretically visible as indicated on the wireline, given the negligible effects of the proposed development, there would be no significant cumulative effects as a result of the addition of the proposed development.							
VP6 A82 near Strone	App	High (road users)	Low	Minor	Not Significant			
	THC	High (road users, visitors (incl walkers and cyclists) and	Medium-Low	Moderate	**Significant**	No cumulative effect		

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
Distance 10.3 km Looking NW		nearby residents) - High susceptibility and High value						
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on the A82 in section 4.3.1 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for road users. It is unfortunate about the poor weather conditions at this viewpoint given the importance of this location. Following further dialogue with the applicant, new photography has been undertaken and a revised visualisation produced by the applicant. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for road users as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, this road is popular with visitors and due to being in a glen, the landscape is highly susceptible to tall structures, and sensitivity is judged as High. There are also nearby residents who would have a similar view. This view is also representative of visitors including cyclists travelling along the track from Urquhart Castle to Drumnadrochit. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude is disputed. This viewpoint represents the first open view across the woodland at the confluence of the Endrick and Coiltie rivers, and over Drumnadrochit. The enclosing wooded hills frame the view and draw the eye towards Glen Urquhart, in the direction of the proposed development. All six proposed turbines would be theoretically visible on the skyline, with the towers screened by intervening landform. However, T1, T2 and T6 would be partially screened by intervening trees, while the hubs of T3 and T4 and the blade of T5 would be clearly visible on the horizon in the direction of travel. The enclosing landforms to the north and south funnel the view along Glen Urquhart, with the proposed turbines occupying a terminal position within the view. Their prominence would draw the eye towards the end of the glen, in comparison with other features in the landscape. The proposed development would therefore foreshorten the view at a key point along the route, where one enters a more settled part of the glen. Officers consider that the turbines would introduce a prominent terminal feature, reducing the appreciation of the way in which the wooded glen winds towards Glen Urquhart. The duration of the view would be approximately 30 seconds for road users and a few minutes for walkers and cyclists. Overall, Officers consider that the magnitude should be assessed as Medium-Low, rather than Low. The applicant's assessment of the effect on road users including tourists as Minor and not significant is disputed. As noted above, Officers consider the effect to be Moderate and Significant due to the higher magnitude of change assessed. No other wind farms would be visible from this location. Therefore, there would be no cumulative effects.						
VP7	App	High (road users including tourists)	Low	Moderate	**Significant**			

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
East Loch Ness Distance 13.2 km Looking NW	THC	High (road users including tourists) - High susceptibility and High value	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	No cumulative effect		
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on the General Wades Military Road / B852 in section 4.3.1 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for road users. It is unfortunate about the poor weather conditions at this viewpoint given the importance of this location considering its views across the loch to Urquhart Castle (not visible in the dark conditions) and Glen Urquhart. Following further dialogue with the applicant, new photography has been undertaken and a revised visualisation produced by the applicant. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, this road is popular with visitors and due to being in a glen, the landscape is highly susceptible to tall structures, and sensitivity is judged as High. This location is at a specific marked layby with picnic tables and access to the loch with views directed west and along the loch. All six proposed turbines (five hubs and one blade) would be visible on the skyline, with the towers screened by intervening landform. The turbines would appear conspicuous and break the skyline directly facing this viewpoint, overlapping with the rocky crest and twin tors Corbett of Sgorr na Diollaid distinctly visible beyond the glen. The Corbett is part of the Strathconon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA and Central Highlands WLA. The turbines would create a new focal point as a terminal focus of the glen and result in a discordant relationship with the landscape in which it sits. No operational wind farms are visible from this location. The proposed turbines on the skyline close to Urquhart Castle would detract from the Castle's prominence which is currently the main focus from this location, sitting on an irregular headland of rock jutting out into the loch. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on visitors is agreed as Moderate and Significant. However, the extent of effect is understated by the applicant. No other wind farms would be visible from this location. Therefore, there would be no cumulative effects.						
VP8 A831 Aigas Distance 9.8 km Looking SW	There would be no visibility of the proposed development from this location.							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
VP9 Ruisaurie, west of Beauly Distance 15.4 km Looking SW	App	Not assessed						
	THC	High	Negligible	Negligible	Not Significant	No cumulative effect		
	There is no assessment of this viewpoint in the LVIA. Up to one blade tip of the proposed development would be theoretically visible on the skyline however it would not be discernible in the view. Magnitude is judged to be Negligible, and the effect would be Negligible and not significant. Whilst other wind farms would be theoretically visible as indicated on the wireline, given the negligible effects of the proposed development, there would be no cumulative effects as a result of the addition of the proposed development.							
VP10 Carn na Leitire Distance 12.5 km Looking SW	App	High (hillwalkers)	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
	THC	High (hillwalkers) – High susceptibility and High value	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on hilltops to the east and southeast in section 4.5.4 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for hillwalkers. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for hillwalkers as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, all walking routes and hill tops are judged to have a High sensitivity due to their promotion as destinations, with this hilltop located on the edge of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, combined with a high susceptibility to change as people's attention would be focussed on the surrounding landscape. All six proposed turbines (four hubs and two blades) would be visible in the middle ground, lower down in the landscape and backclothed by the hills and mountains associated with Glen Affric in this panoramic view. The towers would be screened by intervening landform. However, the turbines would be introduced in an area unoccupied by wind farm development leading to a perception of encirclement from this location. The proposed development would							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	appear as a distinct separate development when seen against the pattern of other wind farm development around Loch Ness. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on hillwalkers is agreed as Moderate and Significant. However, as noted above, the proposed development deviates from the existing pattern of wind farm development into a largely unspoiled view unoccupied by wind farm development and the sense of being encircled by turbines from this location. The cumulative assessment for both scenarios is agreed as Moderate and Significant. The addition of the proposed development would result in significant cumulative effects primarily with the operational Bhlaraidh and Corrimony, consented Bhalraidh Extension and Chrathaich, and in-planning Loch Liath and Ballach wind farms (Scenarios 1 and 2). There would also be significant combined cumulative effects from this location under both scenarios.							
VP11 Great Glen Way, near Ladycairn Distance 15.1 km Looking SW	App	High (walkers)	Low	Minor	Not Significant			
	THC	High (walkers) – High susceptibility and High value	Negligible	Negligible	Not Significant	No cumulative effect		
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on the Great Glen Way in section 4.3.3 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for hillwalkers. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for walkers as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, all walking routes and hill tops are judged to have a High sensitivity due to their promotion as destinations, combined with a high susceptibility to change as people's attention would be focussed on the surrounding landscape. Up to two blade tips of the proposed development would be theoretically visible on the skyline however they would be barely discernible in the view. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant has over-assessed the effect at this location as the two blade tips would be barely discernible resulting in a Negligible magnitude of change and effect as Negligible and not significant.							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	Whilst other wind farms would be theoretically visible as indicated on the wireline, given the negligible effects of the proposed development, there would be no significant cumulative effects as a result of the addition of the proposed development.							
VP12 Meall Fuar-mhonaidh Distance 10.3 km Looking NW	App	High (hillwalkers)	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
	THC	High (hillwalkers) – High susceptibility and High value	Medium	Moderate to Major	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Medium	Moderate to Major	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Medium	Moderate to Major	**Significant**
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on hilltops to the east and southeast in section 4.5.4 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for hillwalkers. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for hillwalkers as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, all walking routes and hill tops are judged to have a High sensitivity due to their promotion as destinations, with this hilltop identified as a 'landmark hill' within the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA, combined with a high susceptibility to change as people's attention would be focussed on the surrounding landscape. All six proposed turbines (six hubs) would be visible in the middle ground, lower down in the landscape and backclothed by intervening landform in this panoramic view. Two of the turbine towers would be screened by intervening landform. The turbines would be introduced in an additional proportion of the view currently unoccupied by wind farm development leading to a perception of encirclement from this location. The proposed development would appear as a distinct separate development when seen against the pattern of other wind farm development around Loch Ness. In addition to the summit, the turbines would also be in view for the last 2 km of the route of 100 m altitude up and down the hill where views are more available to the north, east and west. Views of operational wind farms in other directions lie in a line approximately parallel to Loch Ness and already has a significant effect on this landmark hill in these directions. Operational wind farms such as Fairburn, Novar and others in the same field of view as the proposed development are							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	very distant to have a discernible effect. The proposed turbines would introduce an uninterrupted view of an array of turbines into a largely unspoiled view to the north / northwest. Magnitude is judged to be Medium. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is disputed. As noted above, Officers assess a Medium magnitude resulting in a Moderate to Major and Significant effect. The proposed development deviates from the existing pattern of wind farm development into a largely unspoiled view unoccupied by wind farm development and the sense of being encircled by turbines from this location. The cumulative assessment for both scenarios is assessed slightly higher by Officers as Moderate to Major and Significant. The addition of the proposed development would result in significant cumulative effects primarily with the operational Bhlaraidh and Corrimony, consented Bhalraidh Extension and Chrathaich, and in-planning Loch Liath and Ballach wind farms (Scenarios 1 and 2). There would also be significant combined cumulative effects from this location under both scenarios. Furthermore, the proposed Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro Scheme, the upper components of which would be prominently visible from the summit and occupy part of the same field of view as the proposed development, would exacerbate the significant cumulative effects.							
VP13 Beinn a' Bhathaich Distance 12.1 km Looking SE	App	High (hillwalkers)	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
	THC	High (hillwalkers) – High susceptibility and High value	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on hilltops to the north and northwest in section 4.5.4 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for hillwalkers. It is unfortunate that there is no photography from this location. The applicant notes that weather conditions prevented photography being captured to an acceptable standard. However, there doesn't appear to be any mention of a second attempt to undertake photography which is standard practice when carrying out site visits. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for hillwalkers as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, all walking routes and hill tops are judged to have a High sensitivity due to their promotion as destinations (Corbett), with this hilltop located within the Central Highlands WLA and on the							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	edge of the Strathconnon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA, combined with a high susceptibility to change as people's attention would be focussed on the surrounding landscape. All six proposed turbines (four hubs and two blades) would be visible in the middle ground, lower down in the landscape and backclothed by intervening landform in this panoramic view. The towers would be screened by intervening landform. However, the turbines would be introduced in an area unoccupied by wind farm development located closer to the summit in this direction. The proposed development would appear as a distinct separate development when seen against the pattern of other wind farm development. Operational wind farms in this view would appear too distant to have a discernible effect. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on hillwalkers is agreed as Moderate and Significant. However, as noted above, the proposed development deviates from the existing pattern of wind farm development appearing closer to the receptor in this direction. The cumulative assessment for both scenarios is agreed as Moderate and Significant. The addition of the proposed development would result in significant cumulative effects primarily with the operational Bhlaraidh and Corrimony, consented Bhalraidh Extension and Chrathaich, and in-planning Loch Liath and Ballach wind farms (Scenarios 1 and 2). There would also be significant combined cumulative effects from this location under both scenarios.							
VP14 Toll Creagach Distance 22.3 km Looking NE	App	High (hillwalkers)	Low	Minor	Not Significant	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Minor	Not Significant
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Minor	Not Significant
	THC	High (hillwalkers) – High susceptibility and High value	Low	Minor	Not Significant	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Minor	Not Significant
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Minor	Not Significant
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on hilltops to the southwest in section 4.5.3 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for hillwalkers. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for hillwalkers as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, all walking routes and hill tops are judged to have a High sensitivity due to their promotion as destinations (Munro), with this hilltop located within the Central Highlands WLA and on the edge of the Glen Affric NSA and Strathconnon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA, combined with a high susceptibility to change as people's attention would be focussed on the surrounding landscape.							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	All six proposed turbines (six hubs) would be visible in the middle ground, lower down in the landscape and backclothed by intervening landform in this panoramic view. They would be visible at almost full height including the towers. Despite being over 22.3 km, they would appear similar in scale to the operational Corrimony turbines which are slightly closer, nevertheless, they would be introduced in an additional proportion of the view unoccupied by wind farm development in this direction. The proposed development would appear as a distinct separate development when seen against the pattern of other wind farm development. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on hillwalkers is agreed as Minor and Not Significant. The cumulative assessment for both scenarios is agreed as Minor and Not Significant.							
VP15 A9 Tore Distance 27.3 km Looking SW	There would be no visibility of the proposed development from this location.							
VP16 Sgurr na Ruaidhe Distance 16.1km Looking SE	App	High (hillwalkers)	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
	THC	High (hillwalkers) – High susceptibility and High value	Low	Moderate	**Significant**	**Scenario 1:**		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
						Scenario 2:		
						Low	Moderate	**Significant**
	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on hilltops to the north and northwest in section 4.5.4 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR for hillwalkers.							

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
	It is unfortunate that there is no photography from this location. The applicant notes that weather conditions prevented photography being captured to an acceptable standard. However, there doesn't appear to be any mention of a second attempt to undertake photography which is standard practice when carrying out site visits. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for hillwalkers as High is agreed. As noted, and agreed with the applicant, all walking routes and hill tops are judged to have a High sensitivity due to their promotion as destinations (Munro), with this hilltop located within the Central Highlands WLA and the Strathconnon, Monar and Mullardoch SLA, combined with a high susceptibility to change as people's attention would be focussed on the surrounding landscape. All six proposed turbines (six hubs) would be visible in the middle ground, lower down in the landscape and backclothed by intervening landform in this panoramic view. The towers would be screened by intervening landform. However, the turbines would be introduced in an area unoccupied by wind farm development located closer to the summit in this direction. The proposed development would appear as a distinct separate development when seen against the pattern of other wind farm development. Operational wind farms in this view would appear distant to have a discernible effect in this direction. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on hillwalkers is agreed as Moderate and Significant. However, as noted above, the proposed development deviates from the existing pattern of wind farm development appearing closer to the receptor in this direction. The cumulative assessment for both scenarios is agreed as Moderate and Significant. The addition of the proposed development would result in significant cumulative effects primarily with the operational Bhlaraidh and Corrimony, consented Bhalraidh Extension and Chrathaich, and in-planning Loch Liath and Ballach wind farms (Scenarios 1 and 2). There would also be significant combined cumulative effects from this location under both scenarios.						
VP17 Drumnadrochit	App	High	Low	Minor	Not Significant			
	THC	High	Low	Minor	Not Significant	No cumulative effect		

			Proposed Development			Cumulative Assessment (Scenarios 1 and 2)		
Viewpoint	**App / THC**	**Sensitivity of Receptor** (Susceptibility of receptor to change / value of the view)	**Magnitude of change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration/reversibility)	**Level of Effect** (Sensitivity of receptor / Magnitude of change)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)	**Magnitude of Change** (Size and Scale / geographic extent / duration)	**Level of Effect** (Magnitude of change / Sensitivity of receptor)	**Significance** (Major and Moderate are Significant)
Distance 8.6 km Looking NW	The applicant references this viewpoint in the assessment of effects on Drumnadrochit in section 4.2.3 of Technical Appendix 5-3: Visual Assessment, Volume 3 of the EIAR and on the A82 in section 4.3.1 of the same document. The applicant's assessment of sensitivity for residents and road users as High is agreed. Residents are judged to be of High sensitivity as residents at their home attach high value to their existing view and visual amenity and are more susceptible to being affected by changes. Road users in this instance also include tourists and due to its location within a glen is highly susceptible to tall structures and will be more aware of their surroundings. Up to three blades / blade tips of the proposed development would be theoretically visible on the skyline however due to intervening woodland and forestry they would be largely screened. There may be some filtered views in the winter, however, they would not be discernible given the layering effect of vegetation. No operational wind farms would be visible from this location. Magnitude is judged to be Low. The applicant's assessment of Low magnitude of change is reasonable and the effect on residents and road users including tourists is agreed as Minor and not significant. There would be no cumulative effects at this viewpoint.							

Appendix 7 - Assessment against Landscape and Visual Assessment Criteria contained within Section 4 of the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance

1	Relationship between Settlements/Key locations and wider landscape respected.	The proposed development would adversely affect important key locations including contributing to the encirclement of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh. The proposal would not contribute to the perception of the main settlements in the area, Drumnadrochit and Cannich, being encircled by wind development. This threshold is met only in part.
2	Key Gateway locations and routes are respected.	Glen Urquhart is a gateway to the popular destinations of Loch Ness to the south and Glen Affric to the north. The proposal would be the only wind farm visible from most of Glen Urquhart and would detract from landscape characteristics that contribute to the transition between the mountainous terrain to the north and Loch Ness to the south. This threshold is not met.
3	Valued natural and cultural landmarks are respected.	The proposed development would contribute to the encirclement of the landmark summit of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh. It would also result in a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the scheduled Corrimony Chambered Cairn (SM90081) and Significant harm to the setting of the Category B listed Lochletter Farm, Garden Pavillion (LB49692). The proposed development would detract from the prominence of Urquhart Castle. This threshold is not met.
4	The amenity of key recreational routes and ways is respected.	Significant adverse effects are identified on approximately 6 km of the Affric Kintail Way, Core Path 201 and the Corrimony to Tomich Scottish Hill Track. It would significantly detract from the visual appeal of these key routes. This threshold is not met.
5	The amenity of transport routes is respected.	The wooded character of Glen Urquhart restricts visibility of the proposed development from much of the A831, the main transport route through Glen Urquhart. Nevertheless, significant visual effects are identified for users of the B852, sections of the A82, and parts of the A831. The visual appeal of these key routes would be diminished. This threshold is met in part.
6	The existing pattern of Wind Energy Development is respected.	The proposal would introduce wind farm development into an area currently unoccupied by wind farms and would depart from the established pattern around Loch Ness. The development sits in a gap between existing wind developments and introduces visibility to Loch Ness at water level. This threshold is not met.
7	The need for separation between developments and/ or clusters is respected.	Significant cumulative effects are identified with the Bhlaraidh group, Loch Liath, Ballach, Chrathaich and other schemes. The proposal would reduce perceived separation and contribute to a sense of turbine encirclement around Loch Ness and surrounding hilltops. The need for separation between developments is not respected. This threshold is not met.

8	The perception of landscape scale and distance is respected.	The turbines would become prominent terminal features in views up Glen Urquhart, from Loch Ness and from the A82, effectively foreshortening views and altering the perception of scale and spatial relationships within the landscape. This threshold is not met.
9	Landscape setting of nearby wind energy developments is respected.	The proposal would undermine the design mitigation secured for existing and consented wind farms around Loch Ness, particularly by introducing visibility of wind development to Loch Ness at water level, and would fail to maintain the landscape setting of those schemes. It would create a new focus in views where operational and consented turbines are currently largely limited to occasional blade tips. This threshold is not met.
10	Distinctiveness of Landscape character is respected.	The scheme would detrimentally affect landscape character and sense of place with significant effects identified on the host LCTs (Rocky Moorland Plateau and Wooded Glen), Glen Urquhart, and the Dramatic Great Glen Special Quality of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA. This threshold is not met.

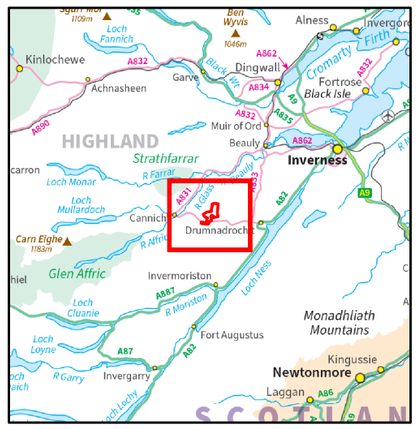
Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm

E Power

Figure 1-1
Site Location Plan

Key

Site boundary



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0 0.5 1 2
Kilometers

N

Scale @ A3:
1:50,000

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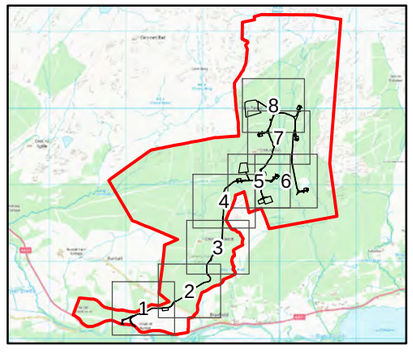
Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Overview

Key

- Site boundary
- Proposed Turbine Location

Proposed Infrastructure

- Turbine Foundation
- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Access Track - floating
- Installation Area
- Substation
- Construction Compound
- Battery Storage
- Borrow Pits
- Met Mast
- Major new watercourse crossing
- New watercourse crossing
- Upgraded watercourse crossing



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0 175 350 700
Meters

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Scale @ A3:
1:15,000

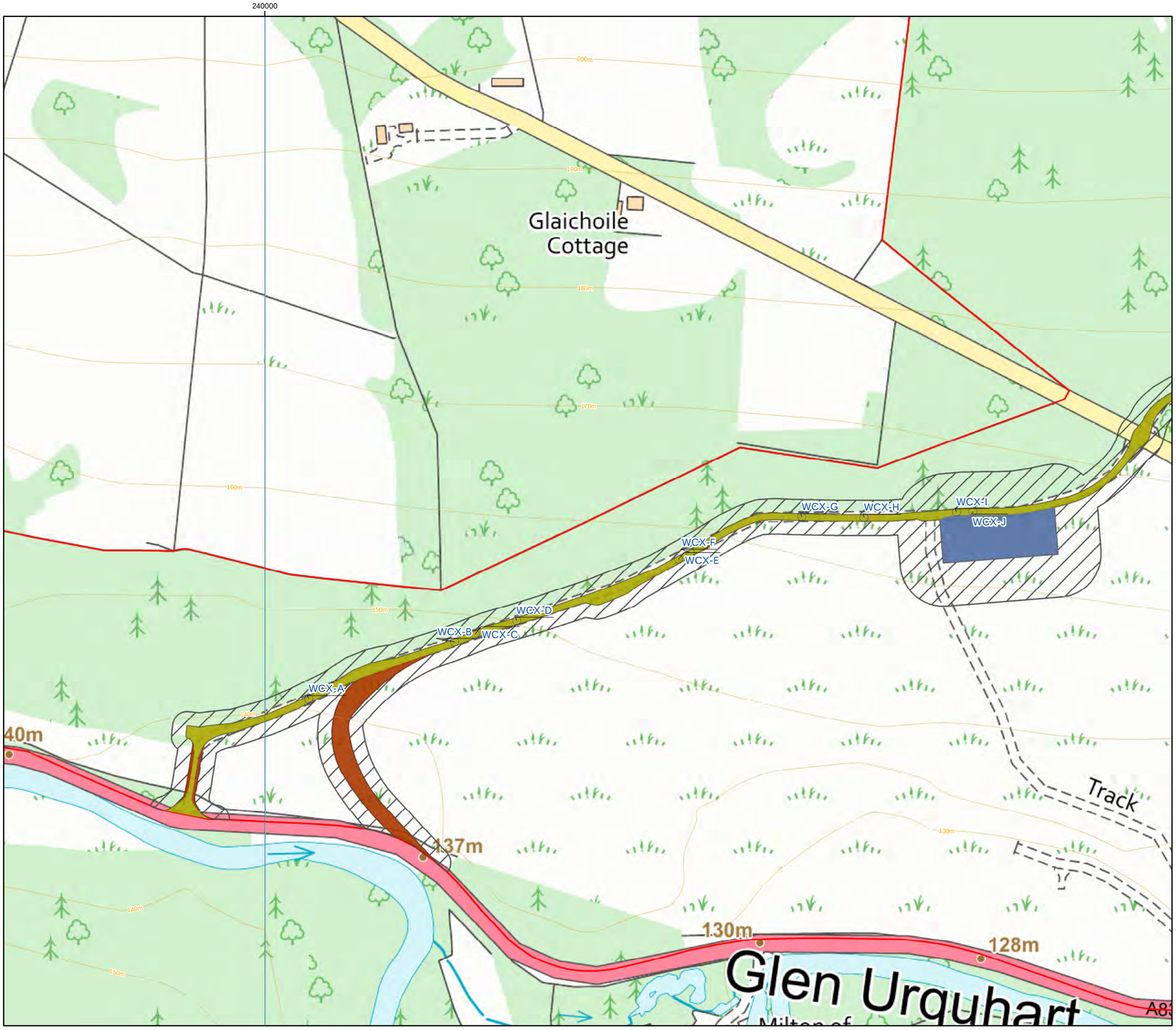
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Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 1

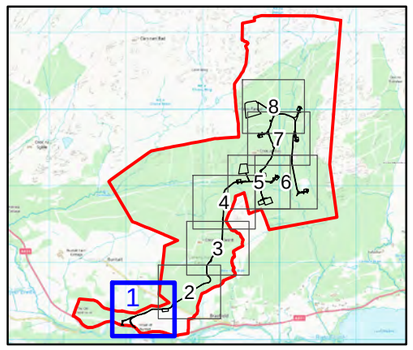


Key

- Site boundary

Proposed Infrastructure

- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Construction Compound
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- Upgraded watercourse crossing



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0 25 50 100
Meters

N

Scale @ A3:
1:2,500

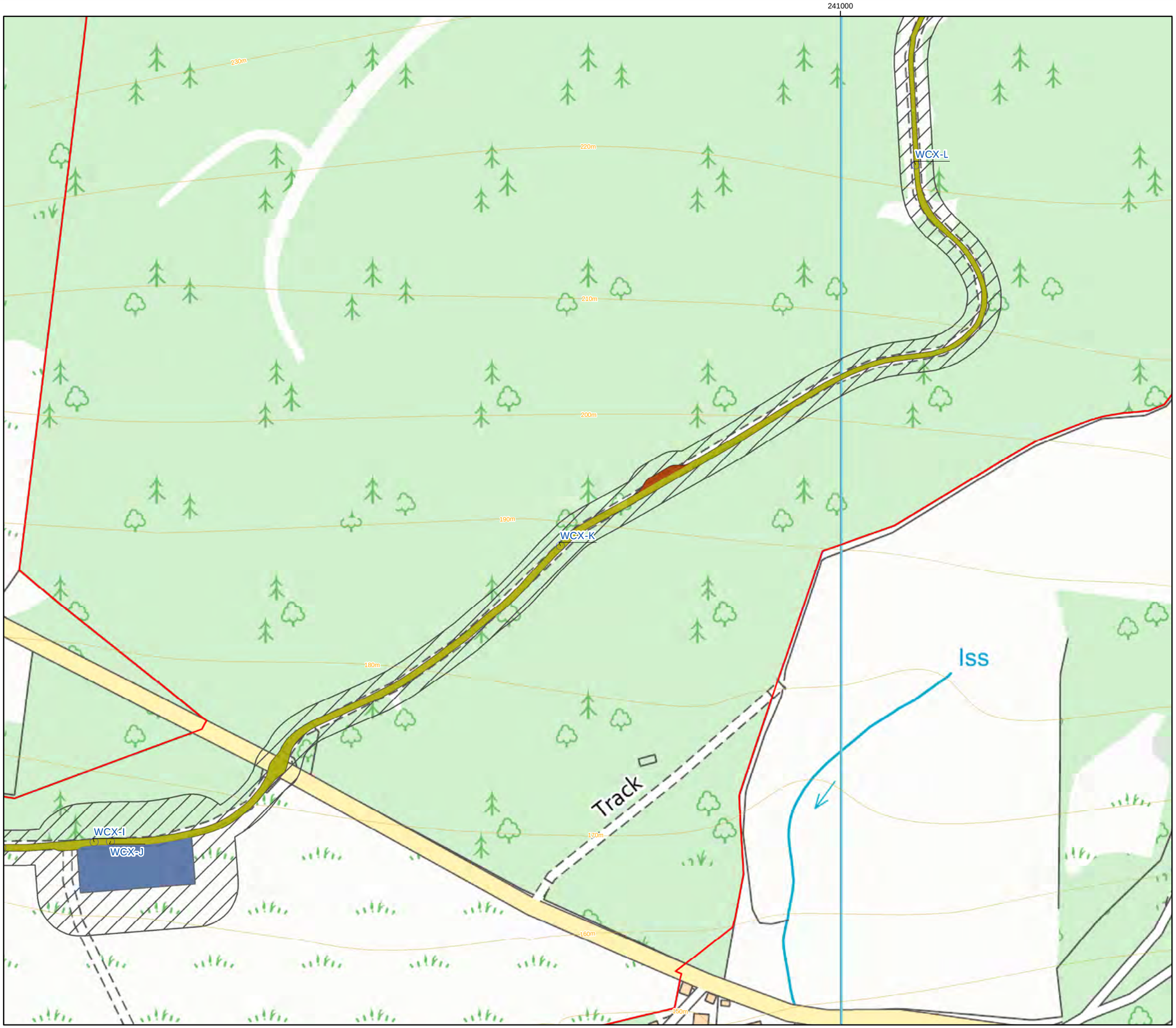
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Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 2

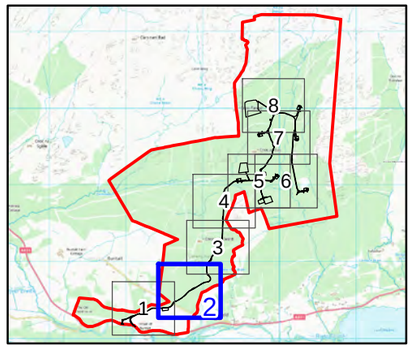


Key

- Site boundary

Proposed Infrastructure

- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Construction Compound
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- Upgraded watercourse crossing



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0 25 50 100
Meters

N

Scale @ A3:
1:2,500

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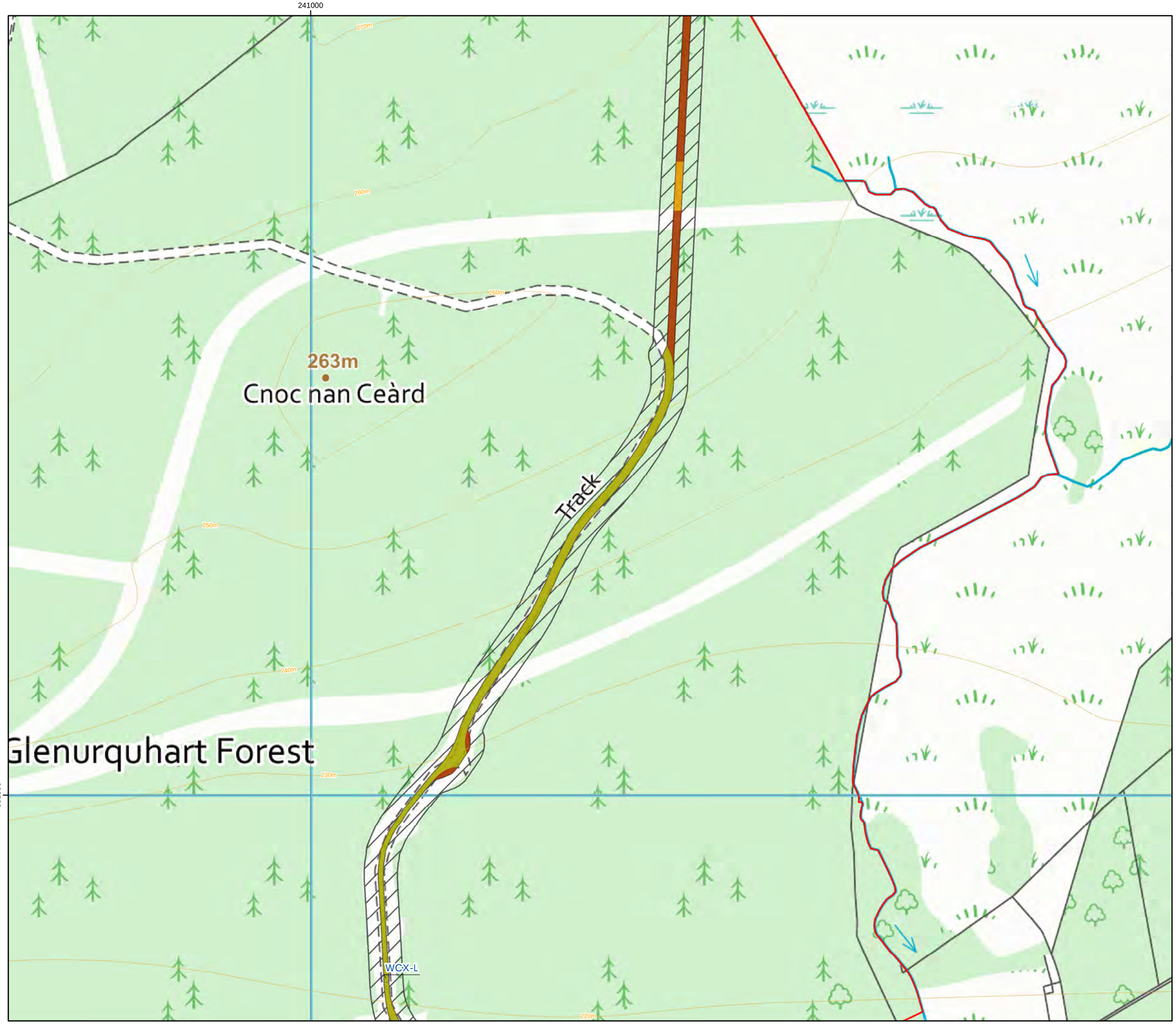
Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 3

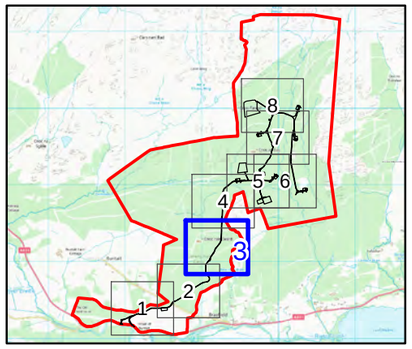
Key

- Site boundary

Proposed Infrastructure

- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Access Track - floating
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- Upgraded watercourse crossing





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Meters

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Scale @ A3:
1:2,500

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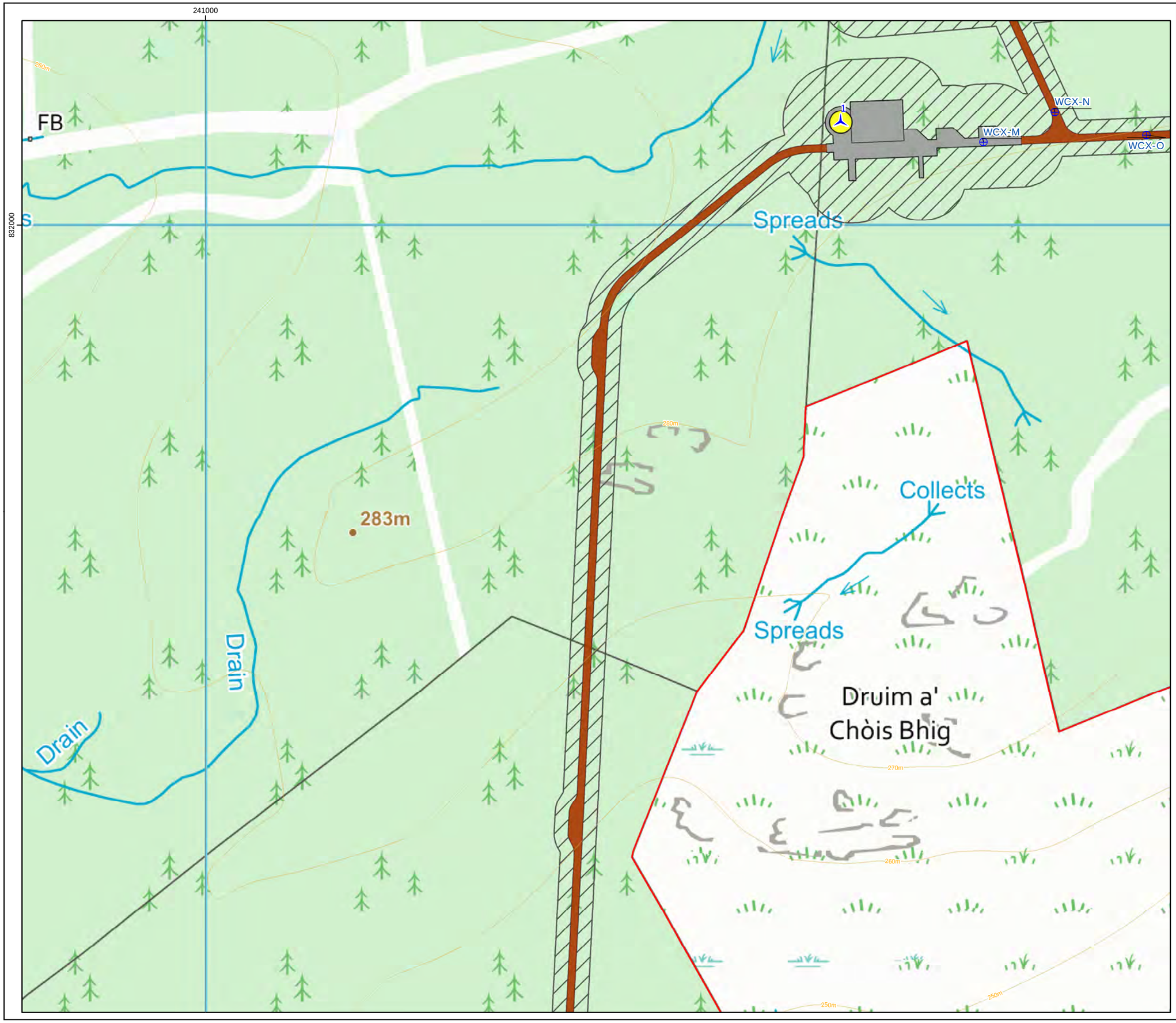
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Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm

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Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 4

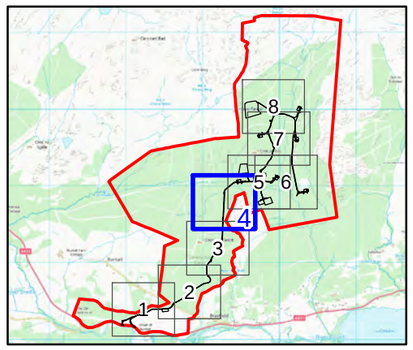


Key

- Site boundary
- Proposed Turbine Location

Proposed Infrastructure

- Turbine Foundation
- Access Track - cut
- Installation Area
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- New watercourse crossing



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0 25 50 100
Meters

N

Scale @ A3:
1:2,500

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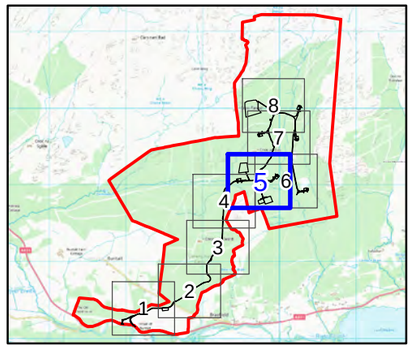
Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 5

Key

- Site boundary
- Proposed Turbine Location

Proposed Infrastructure

- Turbine Foundation
- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Installation Area
- Substation
- Construction Compound
- Battery Storage
- Borrow Pits
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- Major new watercourse crossing
- New watercourse crossing



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0 25 50 100
Meters

N

Scale @ A3:
1:2,500

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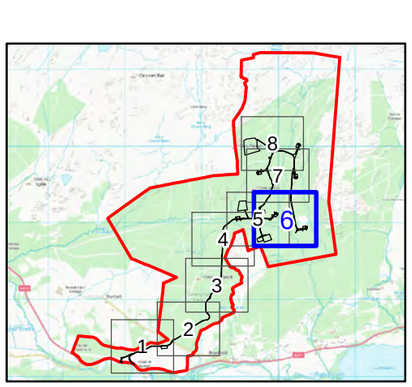
Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 6

Key

- Site boundary
- Proposed Turbine Location

Proposed Infrastructure

- Turbine Foundation
- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Installation Area
- Substation
- Construction Compound
- Battery Storage
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- Major new watercourse crossing
- New watercourse crossing



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Meters

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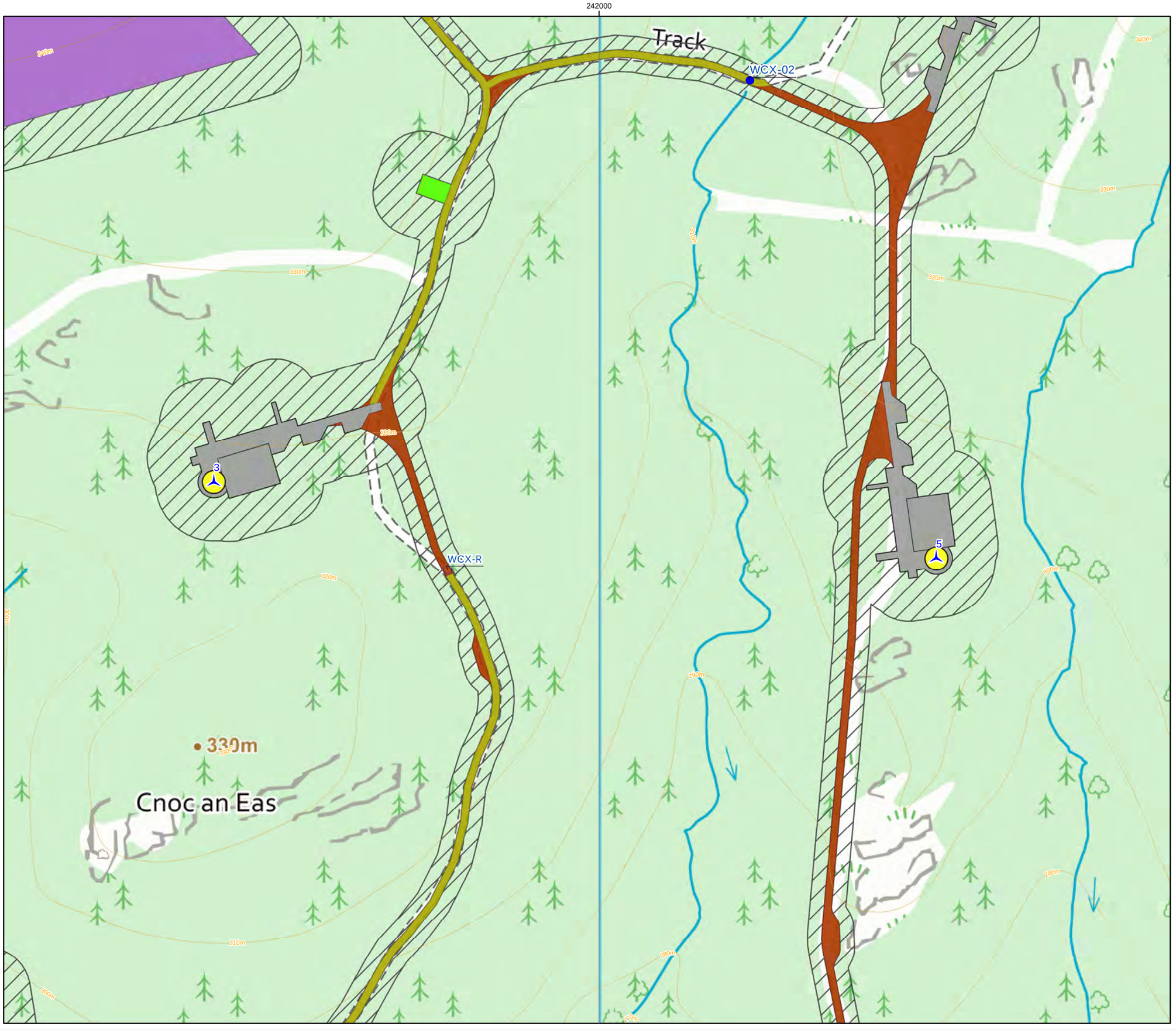
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Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 7

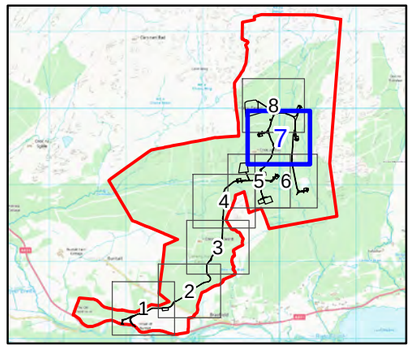


Key

- Site boundary
- Proposed Turbine Location

Proposed Infrastructure

- Turbine Foundation
- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Installation Area
- Borrow Pits
- Met Mast
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- Major new watercourse crossing
- Upgraded watercourse crossing



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0 25 50 100
Meters

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Scale @ A3:
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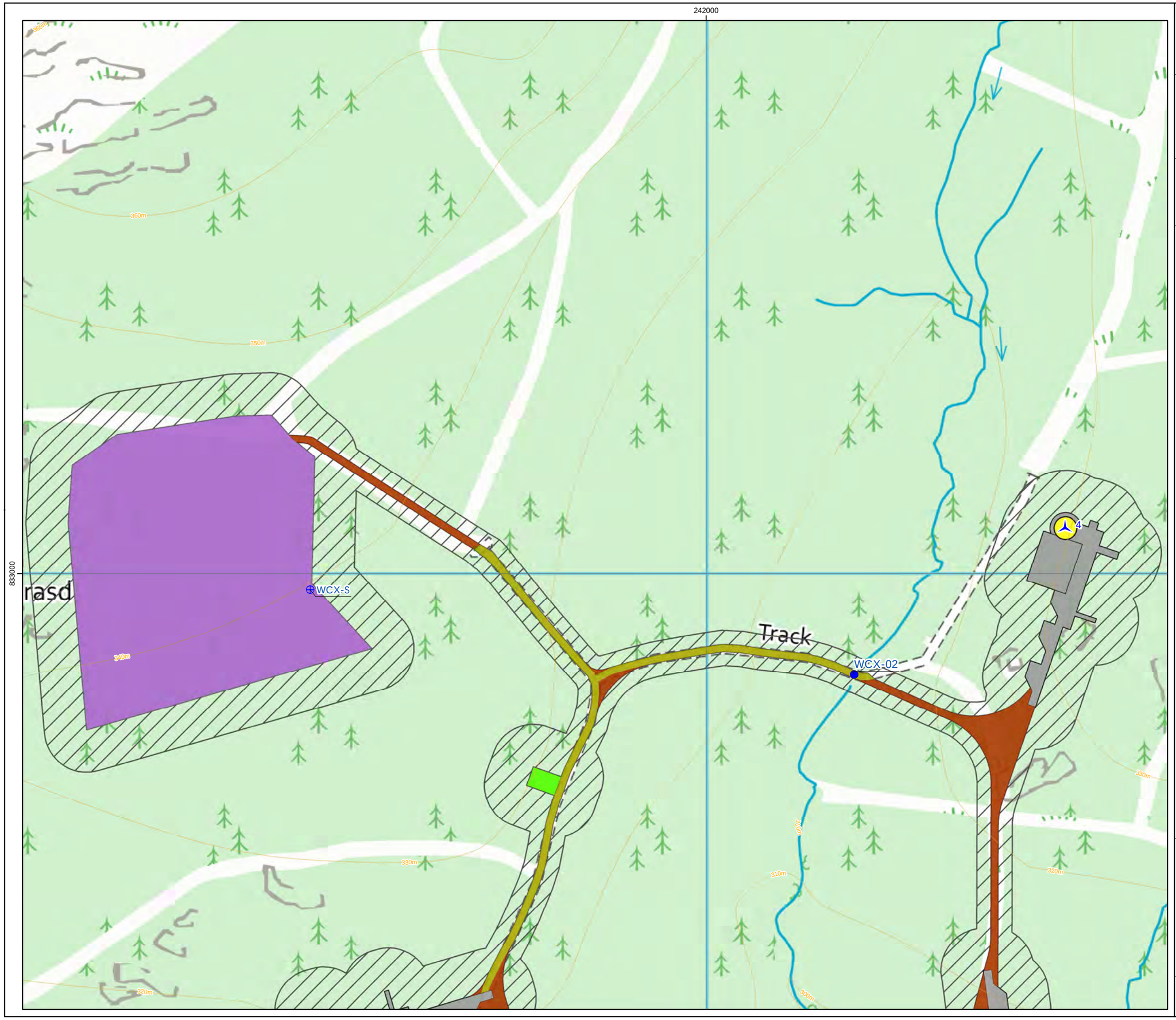
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Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm

E Power

Figure 3-1
Detailed Proposed Layout Plan - Map 8

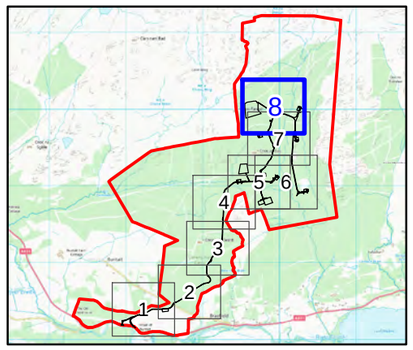


Key

- Site boundary
- Proposed Turbine Location

Proposed Infrastructure

- Turbine Foundation
- Access Track - cut
- Access Track - upgraded
- Installation Area
- Borrow Pits
- Met Mast
- Construction corridor (worst-case)
- Major new watercourse crossing
- New watercourse crossing



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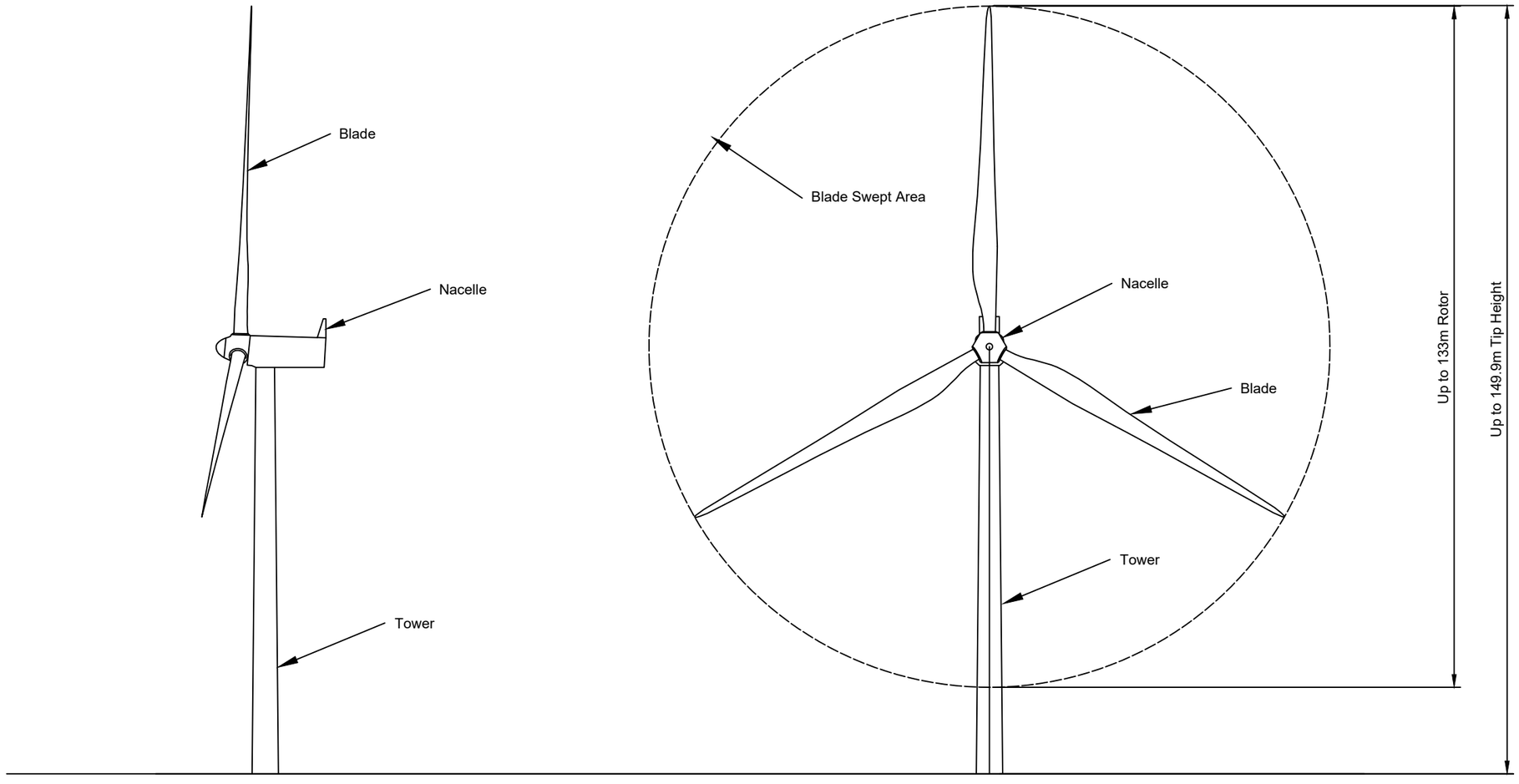
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28/08/2025 Rev15 56271/SL/004k
Drawn by: TH Checked by: TH Approved by: DR



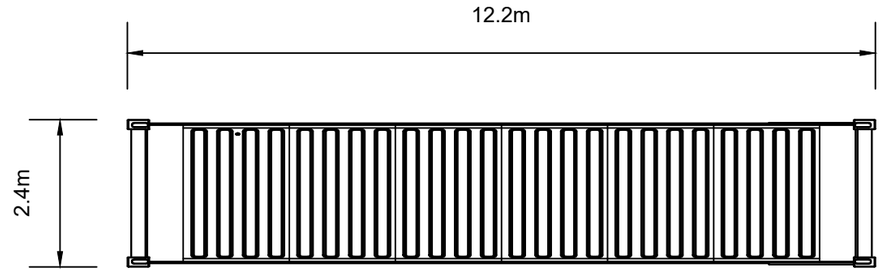
Typical Turbine Elevation

E Power

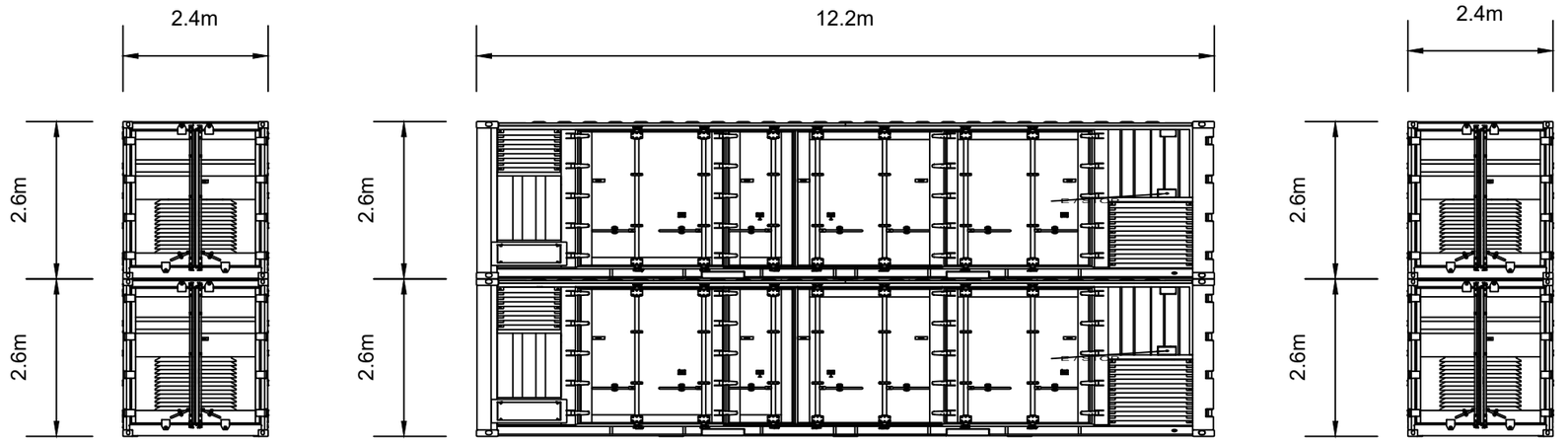
Produced by: PMJ	Checked by: DF
Date: 19/08/25	Scale@A3: 1:1,000

Figure 3-2 Indicative Turbine

Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm



PLAN VIEW



END ELEVATION

FRONT ELEVATION

END ELEVATION

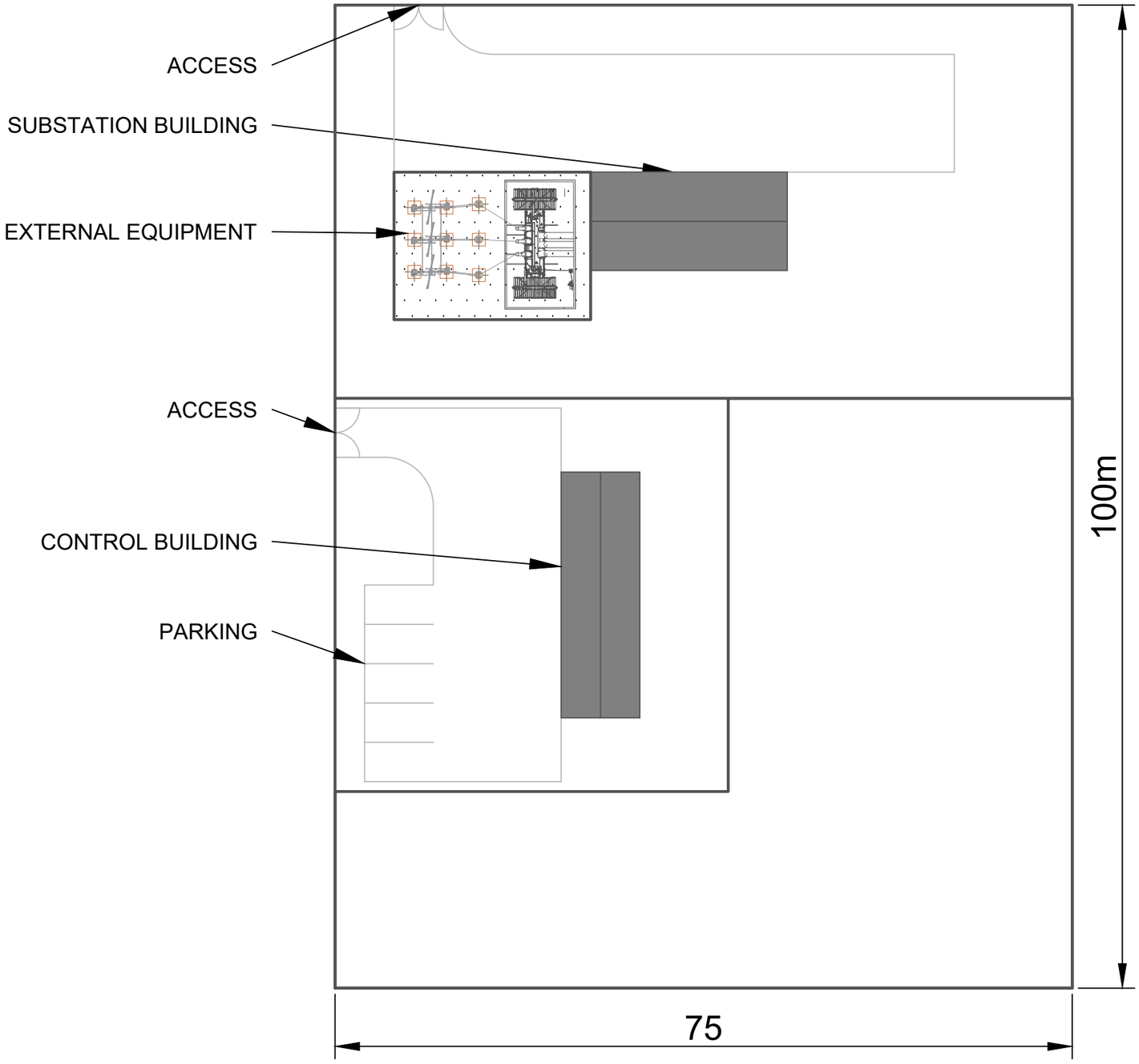
Typical Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) / Switchgear Container

E Power

Produced by: PMJ	Checked by: DF
Date: 19/08/25	Scale@A3: 1:100

Figure 3-5 Indicative Battery Storage Facility

Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm



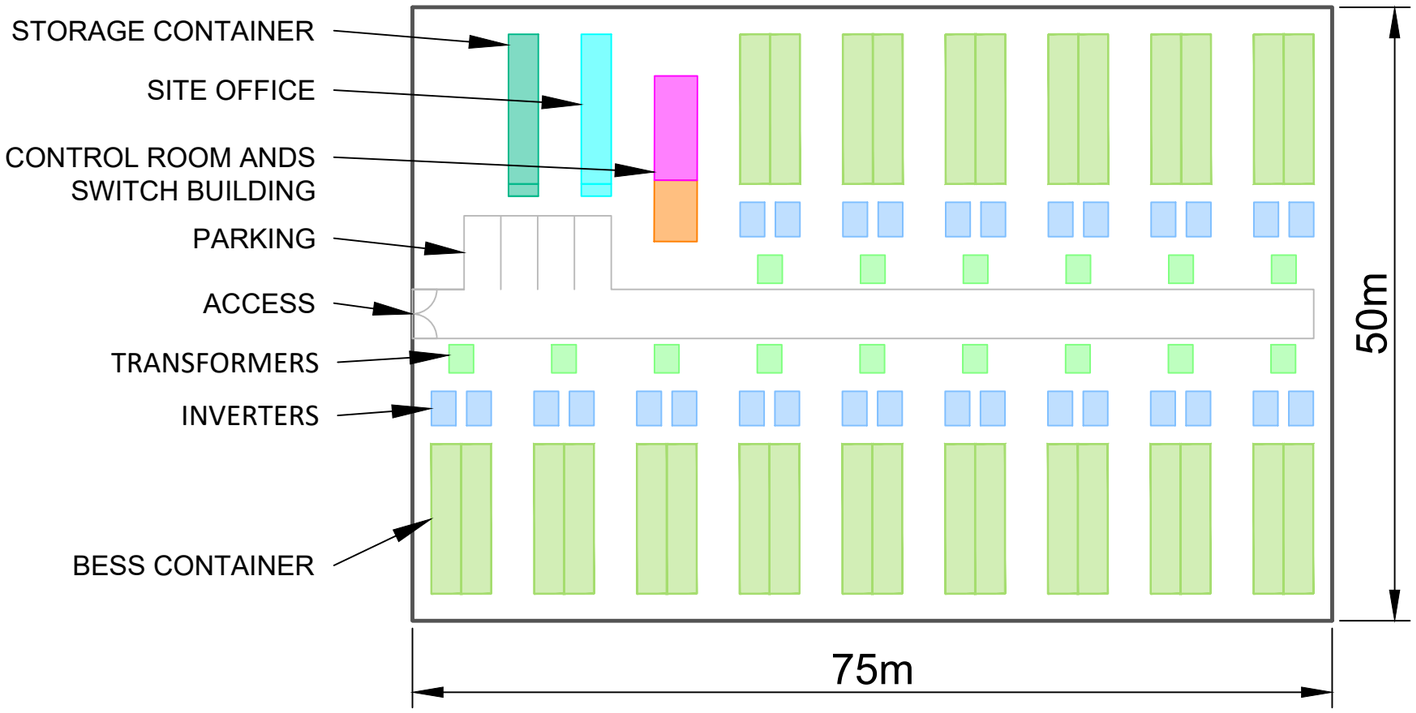
Typical Substation Compound

E Power

Produced by: PMJ	Checked by: DF
Date: 19/08/25	Scale@A3: 1:500

Figure 3-13 Indicative Substation Compound

Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm



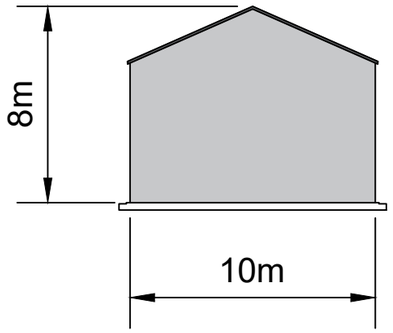
Typical Energy Storage Compound

E Power

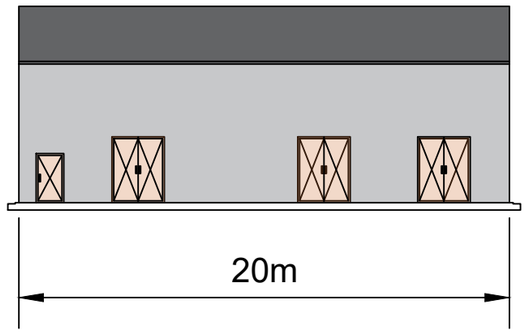
Produced by: PMJ	Checked by: DF
Date: 19/08/25	Scale@A3: 1:500

Figure 3-14 Indicative Battery Compound

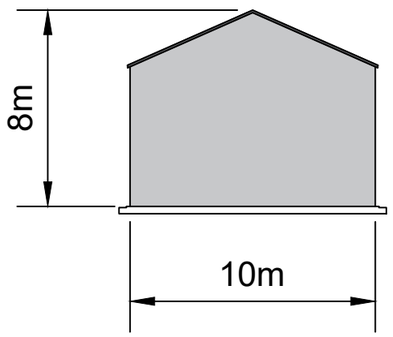
Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm



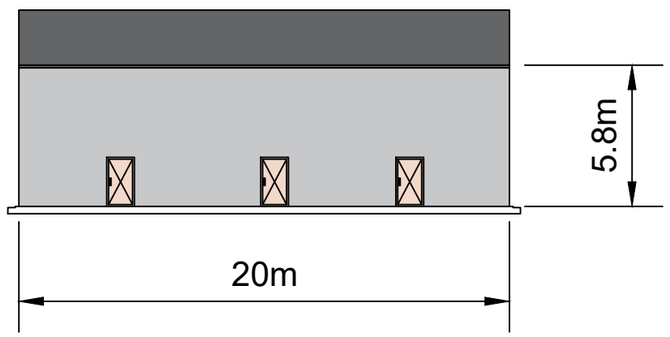
END ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION



END ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION

Typical Substation Building & Elevations

E Power

Produced by: PMJ	Checked by: DF
Date: 19/08/25	Scale@A3: 1:250

Figure 3-15 Indicative Substation Building

Cnoc Farasd Wind Farm