

Appendix 6.3

Landscape Sensitivity

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Landscape Character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
Landscape Character Types	These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur, they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes.
Landscape Effects	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
Landscape Elements	Individual components which make up the landscape, such as trees and hedges.
Landscape Receptor	Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.
Sensitivity	A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.
Significant Effects	It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to determine the likely significant effects of development on the environment, which should relate to the level of an effect and the type of effect. Where possible, significant effects should be mitigated. The significance of an effect gives an indication as to the degree of importance (based on the magnitude of the effect and sensitivity of the receptor) that should be attached to the impact described. Whether an effect should be considered significant is not absolute and requires the application of professional judgement.
Wildness	A quality of appearing to be remote, inaccessible and rugged with little evidence of human influence.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
ABC	Argyll and Bute Council
ABLWECS	Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study 2017
AWI	Ancient Woodland Inventory
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LI	Landscape Institute
NSA	National Scenic Area
SPA	Special Protection Areas
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Abbreviation	Description
TGN	Technical Guidance Note
WLA	Wild Land Area

A6.3. Landscape Sensitivity

- A6.3.1. The sensitivity of the host Landscape Character Type (LCT), which may receive significant landscape effects, is assessed below. Landscape sensitivity is not absolute and can only be defined in relation to each development and its location.
- A6.3.2. To assess the sensitivity of a particular landscape, it is good practice to consider the value attached to the landscape and its susceptibility to the particular form of change likely to result from the Proposed Development. Assessment text relates to the sensitivity of the landscape receptor as a whole, to the Proposed Development, with additional comments regarding the site where relevant. Details have been taken from the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study (2017) (ABLWECS)¹ and the NatureScot Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland digital map-based LCA (2019)² (quotes shown in *italics*), as well as from local sources and site assessment.
- A6.3.3. **Table A6.3.1:** Host Landscape: LCT 39: Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (NatureScot 2019) / ABC 6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (ABC 2017) below is based on guidance provided within LI TGN 02/21³ - specifically Table 1 within that document.

¹ Argyll and Bute Council (2017). Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study. Argyll and Bute Council. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/landscape-wind-energy-capacity-study> [Accessed 13/05/2026]

² NatureScot (2019). Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland digital map-based LCA. Available at <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/scottish-landscape-character-types-map-and-descriptions> [Accessed 13/05/2026]

³ Landscape Institute (2021). Technical Guidance Note 02/2021: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations. Available at: <https://landscapeinstitute.org/publication/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations/> [Accessed 13/05/2026]

Table A6.3.1: Host Landscape: LCT 39: Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll (NatureScot 2019) / ABC 6 Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (ABC 2017)

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Value attached to Landscapes				
Designated scenic quality	No specific designation	National or regional designation	No national or local landscape designations within this landscape.	Community
Natural Heritage	Low presence of ecological or geological / geomorphological interest.	High presence of ecological or geological / geomorphological interest.	Ramsar, SPA and SSSI sites associated with lochs, in the north and south of the character type. Scattered Ancient Woodland across the LCT.	Regional/Community
Cultural Heritage	Low presence of archaeology or historical interests	High presence of archaeology or historical interests	Some historic features within upland areas and cultural associations within this landscape type including nearby assets of Carragh an Talaidh chambered cairn.	Regional
Distinctiveness	Commonplace elements and features, or the landscape itself. Lacking distinctive and strongly expressed character and with no important relationship to a settlement.	Presence of rare elements or features or rarity of the landscape itself. Landscape with a distinctive and clearly expressed character and/to with an important relationship to a settlement.	Blanket bog and deciduous woodland are valued landscape elements and are in good condition, but the forestry had adversely affected the distinctiveness to a degree.	Community/ Regional
Amenity and recreation	Limited amenity/recreational function where experience of the landscape is important	Well used for recreation where experience of the landscape is important; or forms part of a view that is important to a recreational experience. May contain National Trails or other long-distance routes.	The Kintyre Way runs the length of the LCT. However, remaining parts of this LCT are predominantly inaccessible due to the ground conditions.	Regional

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Perceptual (Scenic)	Landscape with no particular scenic/visual appeal.	Landscape with strong appeal to the senses, particular visual.	<i>'This landscape is difficult to access, particularly in the north, and although a sense of seclusion can be experienced in many areas, the perception of naturalness is reduced by the presence of extensive commercial forestry and wind farm development'</i> (ABLWECS).	Regional/ Community
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	Busy with evidence of human activity, well-lit.	Remote, peaceful or with a sense of wildness. Dark skies.	There is a sense of remoteness in places given the rugged landform, lack of roads and settlement although reduced by commercial forestry.	Regional/ Community
Function	No important blue/green infrastructure function or important relationship with national landscape designation.	Landscape with important blue/green infrastructure function or strong relationship that is important to a national landscape designation.	Upland lochs, areas of peat and commercial forestry which have a function.	Regional
Overall Judgement of Value				Regional/ Community
Susceptibility				
Scale	Large scale landscapes where the turbines may be in proportion with the landscape are generally less sensitive.	Small scale intimate landscapes are generally more sensitive to large scale structures.	<i>'Extensive, large-scale mosaic of open moorland and forestry'</i> (NatureScot). It is also noted that the <i>'scale is considerably reduced within the more complex irregular small hills found on the outer fringes of this character type...'</i> (ABLWECS).	Medium

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Landform	Smooth regular flowing, flat or uniform landscapes	Dramatic, rugged and complex landscapes	<i>'The uplands within the Kintyre peninsula generally form a homogenous undulating plateau- generally lower in the middle-with broad gentle slopes and rounded summits. Occasional more craggy slopes and pronounced hills....., protrude above forest.'</i> (ABLWECS).	Medium
Openness/enclosure	Open and exposed landscapes	Enclosed and sheltered landscapes	The landscape type is generally open and exposed, however there is more enclosure and shelter within the valleys which incise this landscape type. The Site is commercial forestry, and this provides some enclosure locally.	Medium/Low
Land cover	Extensive areas of simple or regular landcover (including intensive farming and forestry)	Complex, intimate or mosaic cover	<i>'A large-scale mosaic of extensive coniferous forestry and open moorland with some blanket bog cover. Dense forestry extends down lower slopes close to the coastal edge and the adjacent Rocky Mosaic (20) in places. Small enclosed pastures occur on lower slopes and valley at the transition with the Rocky Mosaic (20) and Hidden Glens (3)... Lochs and occasional reservoirs pattern the interior of these uplands'</i> (ABLWECS).	Medium/Low
Complexity and patterns	Simple and sweeping lines, linear feature and patterns	Complex or irregular patterns	Simple yet <i>'... extensive mosaic of open moorland and forestry.'</i> (ABLWECS).	Medium/Low
Built Environment	Contemporary masts, pylons, industrial elements, buildings infrastructure, settlements	Established, traditional or historic built character	Sparse settlement, and the presence of other windfarms within the upland plateau.	Medium

Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Explanation	Judgement
Views intervisibility	Visually contained and have limited inward or outward views	Extensive views within or of the area with distant horizons.	<i>'Views from the A83 and B842 which are aligned close to the Kintyre coast and from coastal settlement into the interior of these uplands are generally restricted by forestry and landform. The small hills and outer slopes on the edge of these upland areas are more visually sensitive often being prominent in views along the coast. (ABLWECS).</i>	High/Medium
Landscapes that form settings, skylines, backdrops, focal points	Generally low-lying landscapes without distinctive landform or horizon	Areas with strong features, focal points that define the setting or skyline	This landscape forms the backdrop from Arran and the Kilbrannan Sounds as well as Gigha and Gigha Sound, as well as West Loch Tarbert and the outer Loch Fyne, all surrounding the Kintyre Peninsula. Whilst this LCT forms the backdrop, it tends to be an unremarkable landform, compared to the more dramatic landscapes in the surrounding area.	Medium
Overall Judgement of Susceptibility				Medium
Overall Judgement of Sensitivity				Medium