

Technical Appendix 4.8: Evaluation against Supplementary Guidance Criteria

Section 4 of THC’s Adopted Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (2016) contains a series of criteria relating to potential landscape and visual effects of developments. It should be noted that these criteria are not policy tests but are intended as a framework and focus against which the THC can assess proposals. Table 4.8.1: Evaluation Against Supplementary Guidance Criteria, below, summarises these criteria along with an evaluation of the proposed development’s performance against them. This should be read in conjunction with the findings in Section 4.6: Residual Effects.

Table 4.8.1: Evaluation Against Supplementary Guidance Criteria		
Criteria	Measure	Evaluation
Criteria 1: Relationship between settlements/key locations and wider landscape respected.	<p>The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">It would not contribute to perception of settlements or key locations being encircled by wind energy development.Proposed turbines would not be visually prominent in the majority of views within or from settlements/key locations or from the majority of settlement approach routes.	<p>The proposed development would form a lateral extension to an existing wind farm and would not be visible from settlements within the study area. Consequently, it would not spatially or visually add to the perception of encirclement of settlements. Additionally, the proposed development would be physically and perceptually separate from settlements and approaches to them and would not alter their ‘setting’. Consequently, the proposed development is considered consistent with Criteria 1.</p>
Criteria 2: Key gateway locations and routes are respected.	<p>The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where it does not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduce or detract from the transitional experience of key gateway locations and routes.Overwhelm or otherwise detract from landscape characteristics which contribute the distinctive transitional experience found at key gateway locations and routes.	<p>The proposed development would not be visible from the gateway locations identified in the SG and is therefore considered consistent with Criteria 2.</p>
Criteria 3: Valued natural and cultural landmarks are respected.	<p>The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The proposal would not significantly affect the fabric and setting of valued natural and cultural landmarks.Does not, by its presence, diminish the prominence of the landmark or disrupt its relationship to its setting.	<p>The proposed development has been devised to form a lateral extension to the existing Stronelairg Wind Farm and is not located on or immediately adjacent to distinctive landmark summits or mountain ranges such as the Cairngorm Mountain range. The proposed development would also not interrupt views of key summits/landmark features. Consequently, the proposed development would not significantly affect the fabric or setting of local landmarks and is considered consistent with Criteria 3.</p>
Criteria 4: The amenity of key recreational routes and ways is respected.	<p>The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">It does not significantly affect the amenity of key recreational routes and ways (e.g. Core Paths, Munros and Corbetts, Long Distance Routes etc.).Proposed development’s turbines or other infrastructure do not overwhelm or otherwise significantly detract from the visual appeal of key routes and ways.	<p>All wind energy developments result in some significant effects on the character and amenity of recreational routes and summits. However, the proposed development would often be seen in conjunction with the existing Stronelairg Wind Farm from key summits. The exception to this being views from the eastern end of the Glen Roy to Corrieyairack Pass and locations along the Laggan to Ardachy Road footpaths, between</p>

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		Garva Bridge and Garvamore, where the proposed development would be seen on its own. Given the limited and localised nature of such effects the proposed development is not considered to pose a significant effect on the amenity of the recreational amenity of the area. Consequently, the proposed development is considered to be broadly consistent with Criteria 4.
Criteria 5: The amenity of transport routes is respected.	<p>The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">It would not significantly affect the amenity of transport routes (tourist routes as well as rail, ferry routes and local road access).The proposed development’s turbines or other infrastructure would not overwhelm or otherwise significantly detract from the visual appeal of transport routes.	<p>None of the transportation routes in the study area would be subject to views of the proposed development. Consequently, the proposed development is considered to be consistent with Criteria 5.</p>
Criteria 6: The existing pattern of Wind Energy development is respected.	<p>Development should seek to achieve a threshold where the proposal fits with the existing pattern of nearby wind energy development. Considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Turbine height and proportions.Density and spacing of turbines within developments, density and spacing of developments.Typical relationship of development to the landscape.Previously instituted mitigation measures.Planning Authority stated aims for development of area.The extent to which the proposed development contributes positively to existing pattern or objectives for development in the area.	<p>The proposed development would be located in Monadhliaths and would be set back from the Great Glen. It has been designed to be broadly consistent with the Stronelairg Wind Farm. It would generally be backclothed rather than skylined, in keeping with adjoining wind farms in the Monadhliaths, and in accordance with objectives identified in the SG.</p>
Criteria 7: The need for separation between developments and/ or clusters is respected.	<p>The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where the proposal maintains the spaces/separations between existing developments and/ or clusters.</p>	<p>There is an established pattern of development within the Monadhliaths which is based on large to very large developments positioned within the interior of the Monadhliaths. Developments generally have a separation distance of 7 km. The proposed development has been designed to appear as an extension to the Stronelairg Wind Farm and as such abuts this existing scheme and utilises comparable turbine sizes. Its position on the southern side of the Stronelairg array is intended to avoid causing or contributing to coalescence of separate developments in the vicinity, the</p>

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		nearest existing/ consented development to Stronelairst being Corregarth Wind Farm, which is located approximately 8 km to the north east. On this basis, the proposed development is considered to be consistent with the objectives of Criteria 7.
Criteria 8: The perception of landscape scale and distance is respected.	The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where it maintains or affects receptors’ existing perception of landscape scale and distance.	The proposed development is located in a large scale and expansive landscape that is considered suitable for such a development. With the exception of a small number of locations at the eastern end of Glen Roy, Corrieyairack Pass, the proposed development would be seen in the context of the large scale Monadhliaths, and generally in the context of the Stronelairst array. Consequently, the proposed development is considered to be broadly consistent with Criteria 8.
Criteria 9: Landscape setting of nearby wind energy developments is respected.	<div>The proposed development should seek to achieve a threshold where:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The landscape setting of nearby wind energy developments is not significantly affected by the proposal.• It relates well to the existing landscape setting and does not increase the perceived visual prominence of surrounding wind turbines.</div>	It’s not clear from the SG what is meant by the setting of existing wind farms. The proposed development, whilst prominent itself in views from some views (See EIAR Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.7) would not increase the perceived visual prominence of the Stronelairst Wind Farm.
Criteria 10: Distinctiveness of landscape character is respected.	Development should seek to achieve a threshold where it would not significantly affect the integrity of the landscape or the distinction between neighbouring landscape character types, in areas where the variety of character is important to the appreciation of the landscape.	<div>The proposed development is located on the northern side of the Uplands and Glens LCT, which forms the southernmost edge of the Monadhliaths and adjoins the Rolling Uplands LCT, to the north. The difference between these two LCTs is not immediately apparent from the majority of viewpoints (as demonstrated in the Visualisations in in the figures in Volume 3 of the EIAR) and is primarily related to the steepening of slopes and relation to the Cairngorm Straths LCT, to the south. A comparison of the description of key characteristics for each LCT in EIAR Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.2 highlights the areas of commonality between the Uplands and Glens and LCTs.</div> <div>The proposed development would not represent a significant erosion of landscape differences in respect of the uplands. Seen from a small number of locations in lower lying, incised landscapes, such as the Cairngorm Strath, the proposed development would clearly be associated with elevated moorland that overlooks but is not considered</div>

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		to erode the differentiation between the strath and upland landscapes. Consequently, the proposed development is considered to be consistent with Criteria 10 of the SG.