



# **Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm, Offshore EIA Report**

Volume 2, Chapter 20: Seascape, Landscape and  
Visual Impacts

TWP-BOW-RPS-OFE-RPT-00036 | April 2026



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## Glossary

Defined Term	Definition
<b>Additional Mitigation</b>	Also referred to as secondary mitigation which is defined by The Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) (formerly Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) as: Actions that will require further activity in order to achieve the anticipated outcome. These may be imposed as part of the planning consent, or through inclusion in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report (sic).
<b>Applicant (the)</b>	Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited (BOWFL).
<b>Array Area</b>	The Array Area is the area in which the Offshore Generation Assets will be located.
<b>Baseline</b>	The status of the environment without the Proposed Development in place.
<b>Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited (BOWFL)</b>	A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) (legal entity) for the purpose of developing the Project. BOWFL are the Applicant for the Offshore Application.
<b>Crown Estate Scotland (CES)</b>	Public corporation accountable to Scottish Government, responsible for the management of land and property, including marine assets in Scotland owned by the monarch.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>	The effects of the Proposed Development assessed together with effects from the Onshore Infrastructure forming the Project as well as one or more different projects on the same receptor/resource.
<b>Designated Landscape</b>	Areas of landscape identified as being of importance at international, national or local levels, either defined by statute or identified in development plans or other documents.
<b>Effect</b>	Term used to express the consequence of an impact (i.e. the result of change or changes on specific environmental resources or receptors). The significance of an effect is determined by correlating the magnitude of the impact with the importance, or sensitivity of the receptor or resource in accordance with defined significance criteria.
<b>Embedded Mitigation</b>	<p>Measures that are adopted as part of the Proposed Development and therefore assessed within the EIA. The proposed approach for the EIA for the Proposed Development is that Embedded Mitigation includes both primary mitigation and tertiary mitigation. These are defined by the ISEP as follows:</p> <p>Primary: Modifications to the location or design of the development made during the pre-application phase that are an inherent part of the project, and do not require additional action to be taken.</p> <p>Tertiary: Actions that would occur with or without input from the EIA feeding into the design process. These include actions that will be undertaken to meet other existing legislative requirements, or actions that are considered to be standard practices used to manage commonly occurring environmental effects.</p>
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>	Process for the assessment of likely significant environmental effects of a project on the physical, biological, and human environment during construction, Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and decommissioning.

Defined Term	Definition
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA Regulations)</b>	Terminology used in this Offshore EIA Report to refer to three sets of regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017;</li> <li>• The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017; and</li> <li>• The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007.</li> </ul>
<b>European Economic Area (EEA)</b>	The European Economic Area consists of the Member States of the European Union (EU) and three countries of the European Free Trade Association - Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; excluding Switzerland.
<b>Export Cable</b>	The cables which will bring electricity from the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) to the Landfall, and then to the Onshore Substation.
<b>Export Cable Corridor</b>	The area seaward of MHWS which connects the Array Area with the Landfall within which the Offshore Export Cables will be installed.
<b>Impact</b>	A change caused by an action that occurs during a project's lifetime.
<b>Inter-Array Cables (IAC)</b>	Cables which link the Wind Turbines to each other and with the OSPs.
<b>Inter-Related Effects</b>	The potential effects of multiple impacts from the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project, affecting one receptor.
<b>Interconnector Cables</b>	Cables which will connect individual OSPs to each other to provide redundancy against cable failure elsewhere.
<b>Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscape</b>	The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes recognises sites where garden grounds and landscapes have been intentionally laid out for artistic effect which are of national importance. Their selection, assessment and designation is carried out by Historic Environment Scotland. Designed landscapes are managed primarily through the planning process by the appropriate planning authority.
<b>Landfall</b>	The area in which the Offshore Export Cables make landfall and is also the transitional area between the Offshore Transmission Assets and the Onshore Transmission Assets. Located in the Intertidal Area at Benholm.
<b>Landscape Character Type</b>	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another.
<b>Marine Directorate (MD)</b>	The Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government, formerly known as Marine Scotland. The planning and licensing authority for Scotland's seas and custodian of Scotland's National Marine Plan (NMP). The Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) are specifically responsible for managing Section 36 Consent and Marine Licence Applications seaward of MHWS.
<b>Maximum Design Scenario (MDS)</b>	The scenario within the design envelope likely to result in the greatest impact on a particular topic receptor, and therefore the one that should be assessed for that topic receptor.
<b>Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)</b>	The average tidal height throughout the year of two successive high waters during those periods of 24 hours when the range of the tide is at its greatest.

Defined Term	Definition
<b>Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS)</b>	The average tidal height throughout the year of two successive low waters during those periods of 24 hours when the range of the tide is at its greatest.
<b>Mitigation</b>	Measures to avoid, prevent, reduce or control effects on the environment. See also definitions for Embedded Mitigation and Additional Mitigation.
<b>National Scenic Areas</b>	Areas of land designated to preserve finest scenery and to ensure its protection from inappropriate development.
<b>Offshore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report (hereafter, 'Offshore EIA Report')</b>	Document prepared to report the findings of the EIA for the Proposed Development and produced in accordance with the EIA Regulations. The Offshore EIA Report is submitted to support the Offshore Application for the Proposed Development, and to comply with EIA Regulations.
<b>Offshore Export Cables</b>	Subsea cables used to transmit electricity generated offshore by the Wind Turbines from the OSPs to shore. The Transition Joint Bay (TJB) is the location where the Offshore Export Cables terminate, and the onshore cabling begins.
<b>Offshore Generation Assets</b>	The infrastructure of the Proposed Development required to generate electricity comprising of the Wind Turbines, Wind Turbine foundations and associated infrastructure (e.g. IACs).
<b>Offshore Infrastructure</b>	All of the Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development that is located seaward of MHWS, comprising the Offshore Generation Assets and the Offshore Transmission Assets.
<b>Offshore Scoping Report</b>	The Report that presents the findings of the EIA scoping process undertaken for the Proposed Development with the purpose of obtaining a Scoping Opinion. The Offshore Scoping Report defines what is intended to be assessed and reported as part of the EIA.
<b>Offshore Substation Platform(s) (OSPs)</b>	OSPs comprise the support structure, topside and electrical components used for collecting and/or converting electricity generated by the Wind Turbines for transmission by the Offshore Export Cables.
<b>Offshore Transmission Assets</b>	The infrastructure of the Proposed Development required to transmit the generated electricity comprising of the OSPs, Offshore Export Cables and associated infrastructure up to MHWS.
<b>Onshore Transmission Assets</b>	The transmission infrastructure associated with the Project above MLWS which is subject to the Planning Permission in Principle (PPP) Application submitted to Aberdeenshire Council (REF: APP/2025/1952).
<b>Operation and Maintenance (O&amp;M)</b>	The phase of the Proposed Development following completion of construction. This phase of development includes routine inspections, repairs and replacement of infrastructure and equipment (including Interconnector Cables and IACs), Scour Protection replenishment or replacement, major component replacement, painting and/or other coating works, removal of marine growth, and replacement of access ladders.
<b>Project (the)</b>	An overarching term for the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm (Bowdun OWF) comprising the offshore and onshore infrastructure required to generate and transmit electricity from the Array Area to the onshore GCP. The Project includes the Offshore Generation Assets, the Offshore Transmission Assets and the Onshore Transmission Assets.

<b>Defined Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Project Design Envelope (PDE)</b>	A description of the range of possible elements that make up the design options for the Proposed Development under consideration when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known.
<b>Proposed Development</b>	Term used to define the Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Project seaward of MHWS for which consent is being sought. Further details of the parameters are included in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description.
<b>Scoping Opinion</b>	A document produced by MD-LOT which is issued in response to submission and review of the Offshore Scoping Report. The Scoping Opinion is supported with feedback and advice from consultees, which details what is expected to be included in the Offshore EIA Report and what can be scoped out of the EIA process.
<b>Scoping Workshop</b>	A series of sessions preceding the finalisation of the Offshore Scoping Report to provide an opportunity for the Applicant to consult on the draft scope and for stakeholders to request additional information on key issues.
<b>Scottish Local Authority</b>	A council constituted under Section 2 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, providing public services, including planning, and is accountable to their local electorates.
<b>Section 36 Consent</b>	Scottish Ministers' consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 required to permit the generation and operation of an energy generation station.
<b>Sectoral Marine Plan (SMP)</b>	A plan developed by the Scottish Government which provides the strategically planned spatial footprint for offshore wind development in Scotland.
<b>Significance</b>	Effect factor that is determined by the magnitude of impact along with the sensitivity of the receptor.
<b>Site Boundary</b>	The boundary within which all elements of the Proposed Development will be located. The Site Boundary comprises the Array Area and Export Cable Corridor which ends at MHWS.
<b>Transition Joint Bay (TJB)</b>	Used to connect the Offshore Export Cables with the onshore export cables. These are typically concrete lined and are located above MHWS.
<b>Wind Turbines</b>	Structures comprising of a tubular tower, rotor blades, and a nacelle which houses the Wind Turbine generator.
<b>Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)</b>	A computer-generated tool to identify the likely (or theoretical) extent of visibility of a development. The elevation (or a set of elevations) of the development is tested against a 3D terrain model.

## Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
AQMA	Air Quality Management Areas
BOWFL	Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited
CEA	Cumulative Effects Assessment
CMS	Construction Method Statement
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
DSLPL	Development Specification and Layout Plan
EEA	European Economic Area
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ELC	European Landscape Convention
GDL	Gardens and Designed Landscapes
GLVIA3	Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition
HDD	Horizontal Directional Drilling
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HFoV	Horizontal Field of View
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
IAC	Inter-Array Cable
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
ISEP	Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals
LAT	Lowest Astronomical Tide
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LEZ	Low Emission Zone
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
MCA	Maritime & Coastguard Agency
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team
MDS	Maximum Design Scenario
MGN	Marine Guidance Notes
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
NLB	Northern Lighthouse Board
NMP	National Marine Plan
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
NSA	National Scenic Area
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
OWF	Offshore Wind Farm
PDE	Project Design Envelope
SAR	Search and Rescue
SCT	Seascape Character Type

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>SLA</b>	Special Landscape Area
<b>SLVIA</b>	Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
<b>SNH</b>	Scottish National Heritage
<b>TJB</b>	Transition Joint Bay
<b>WHS</b>	World Heritage Site
<b>ZTV</b>	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

## Table of Units

<b>Units</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>°</b>	Degree
<b>km</b>	Kilometre
<b>m</b>	Metre
<b>m<sup>2</sup></b>	Square Metre
<b>MW</b>	MegaWatt

## 20 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact

### 20.1 Introduction

20.1.1 This chapter of the Offshore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report presents the assessment of the likely significant environmental effects on seascape, landscape and visual amenity, that may potentially occur because of the offshore elements of the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm (OWF) (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) during the construction, Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and decommissioning phases.

20.1.2 Whilst the assessment of likely significant environmental effects on seascape, landscape and visual amenity are often interlinked, they are assessed and considered separately within this EIA chapter.

20.1.3 The assessment presented is informed by the following technical chapters and appendices:

- Volume 2, Chapter 21: Cultural Heritage;
- Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.1: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts Technical Report;
- Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; and
- Volume 3, Technical Appendix 21.1: Cultural Heritage Technical Report.

### 20.2 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Study Area

20.2.1 A single Study Area for the Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) has been selected, which extends to 60 km from the Array Area as shown in Figure 20.1 and comprises the open sea areas associated with the surrounding North Sea and coastal areas between Peterhead, in the north and lands to the north of Montrose along the eastern coast of Scotland.

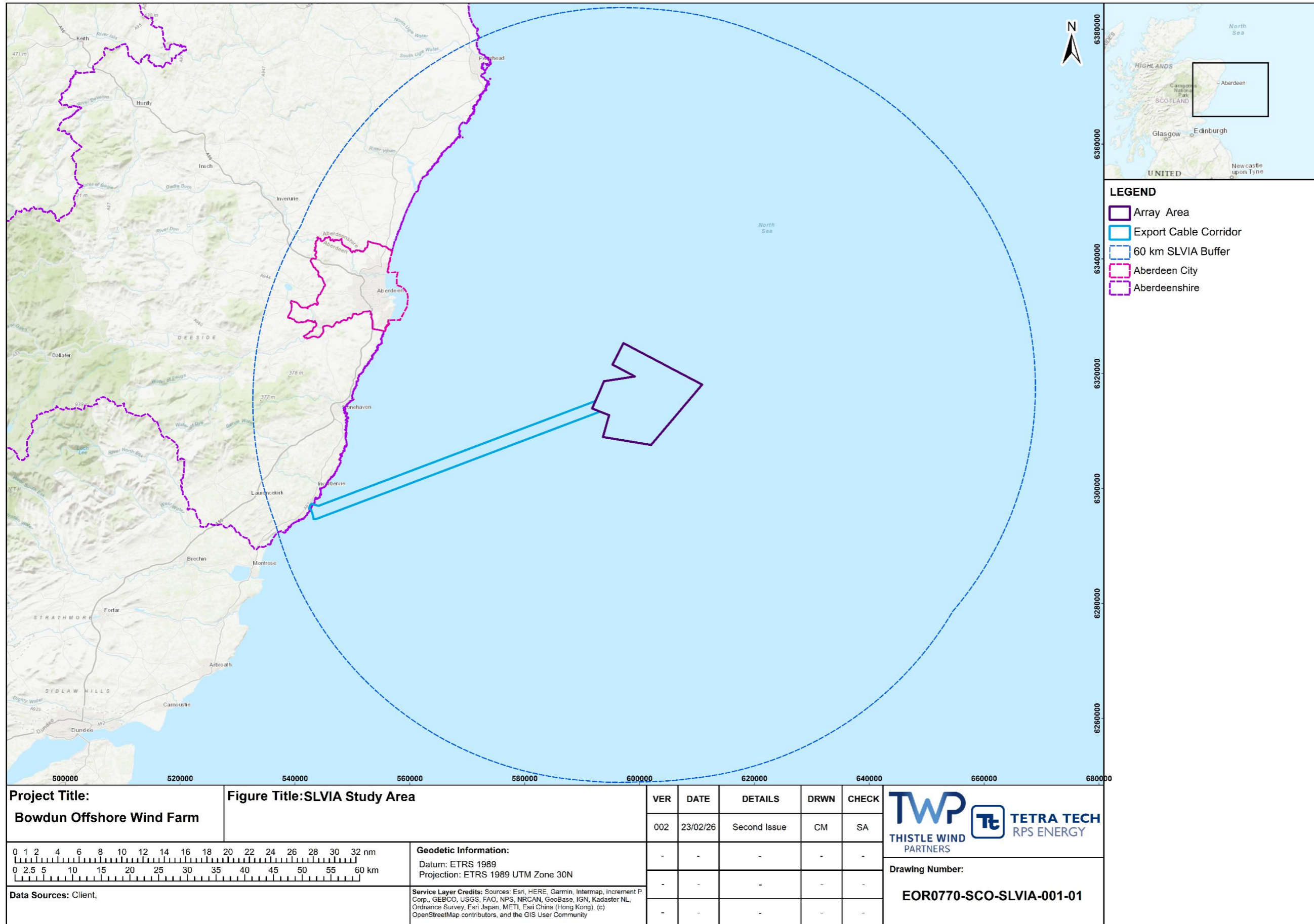
20.2.2 The SLVIA Study Area accords with NatureScot's guidance on the visual representation of wind farm developments (NatureScot, 2017), which recommends that Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) distances are used for defining Study Area based on Wind Turbine height. The guidance recommends 45 km for Wind Turbines greater than 150 m to blade tip, although it also recognises that "*...greater distances may need to be considered for the larger wind WTGs used offshore*" (NatureScot, 2017).

20.2.3 It is considered that seascape, landscape and visual receptors beyond the SLVIA Study Area are unlikely to experience significant effects. The SLVIA Study Area extends to include all areas within which direct and indirect seascape, landscape and visual effects are considered most likely to occur and is comprised of a 60 km buffer surrounding the Array Area. The buffer used to define the SLVIA Study Area is based on the Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) (set out in Table 20.12).

20.2.4 The SLVIA Study Area, which is indicated in Figure 20.1, was presented to NatureScot and Aberdeenshire Council during the Scoping Workshop held on

25 April 2024. The SLVIA Study Area was also included in and accepted by Aberdeenshire Council and NatureScot in response to the Offshore Scoping Report submitted on 22 August 2024 (Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT), 2024).

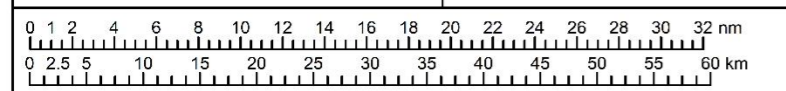
- 20.2.5 Scottish Ministers broadly agreed with the SLVIA Study Area in the Scoping Opinion (MD-LOT, 2024). Whilst Aberdeenshire Council commented on the scope of the SLVIA, they did not raise any issues with the proposed SLVIA Study Area, baseline conditions or overall approach of the SLVIA, and agreed with the location and variety of proposed viewpoints located in the Aberdeenshire Council administrative boundary.
- 20.2.6 Whilst onshore areas associated with the SLVIA Study Area are wholly contained within either the administrative boundary associated with Aberdeenshire Council or Aberdeen City Council, Angus Council did respond to the Scoping Report asking for “*provision of a viewpoint from the Angus shoreline (near Ethie Haven or Dunninald Castle)*” and requested “*that cumulative seascape, landscape and visual impacts be clearly illustrated in such wireframe/photomontage/visualisations*”.
- 20.2.7 In response to the comment raised by Angus Council for additional views from the Angus coastline, an additional ZTV to 75 km distance from the Array Area, along with wireline imagery from both identified viewpoint locations (Ethie Haven and Dunninald Castle) were provided as evidence that predicted visual impacts would be negligible. A request was made to Angus Council to have these additional viewpoints removed from the scope of the SLVIA, which was accepted during consultation with Angus Council Planners.
- 20.2.8 Scoping responses and the result of subsequent consultations are detailed in Section 20.4 of this chapter as well as Volume 1, Chapter 5: Consultation and Engagement and Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5.1: Consultation Log.
- 20.2.9 As part of the Offshore Scoping Report submission, a preliminary ZTV was prepared for the SLVIA Study Area, as shown in Figure 20.2, to ensure that all seascape, coastal landscapes and visual receptors of relevance had been identified.



**Project Title:**  
 Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm

**Figure Title:** SLVIA Study Area

VER	DATE	DETAILS	DRWN	CHECK
002	23/02/26	Second Issue	CM	SA



**Geodetic Information:**  
 Datum: ETRS 1989  
 Projection: ETRS 1989 UTM Zone 30N

-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-

**Data Sources:** Client,

**Service Layer Credits:** Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

**Drawing Number:**  
 EOR0770-SCO-SLVIA-001-01

Figure 20.1: SLVIA Study Area

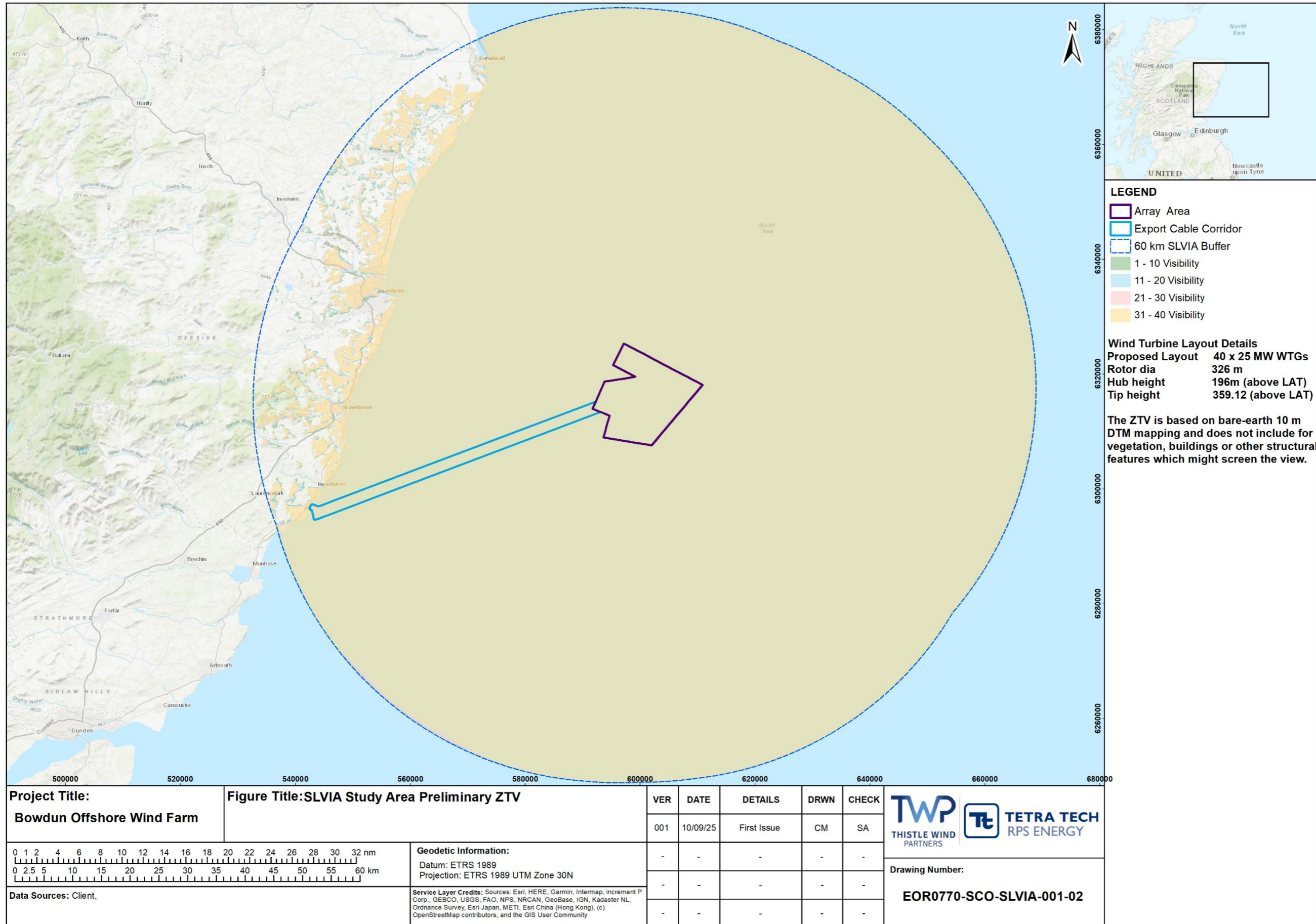


Figure 20.2: SLVIA Study Area Preliminary ZTV

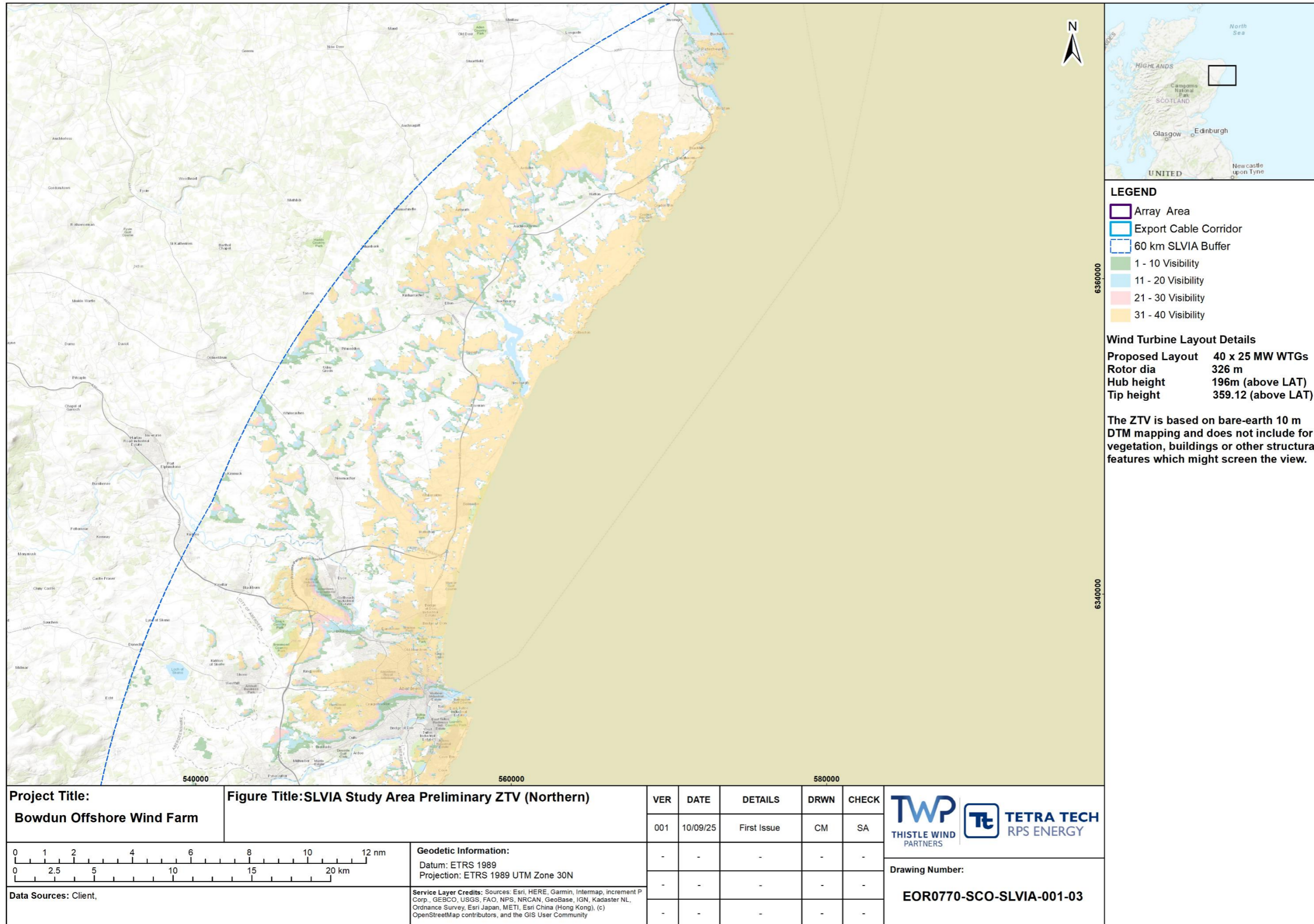


Figure 20.3: SLVIA Study Area Preliminary ZTV (Northern)

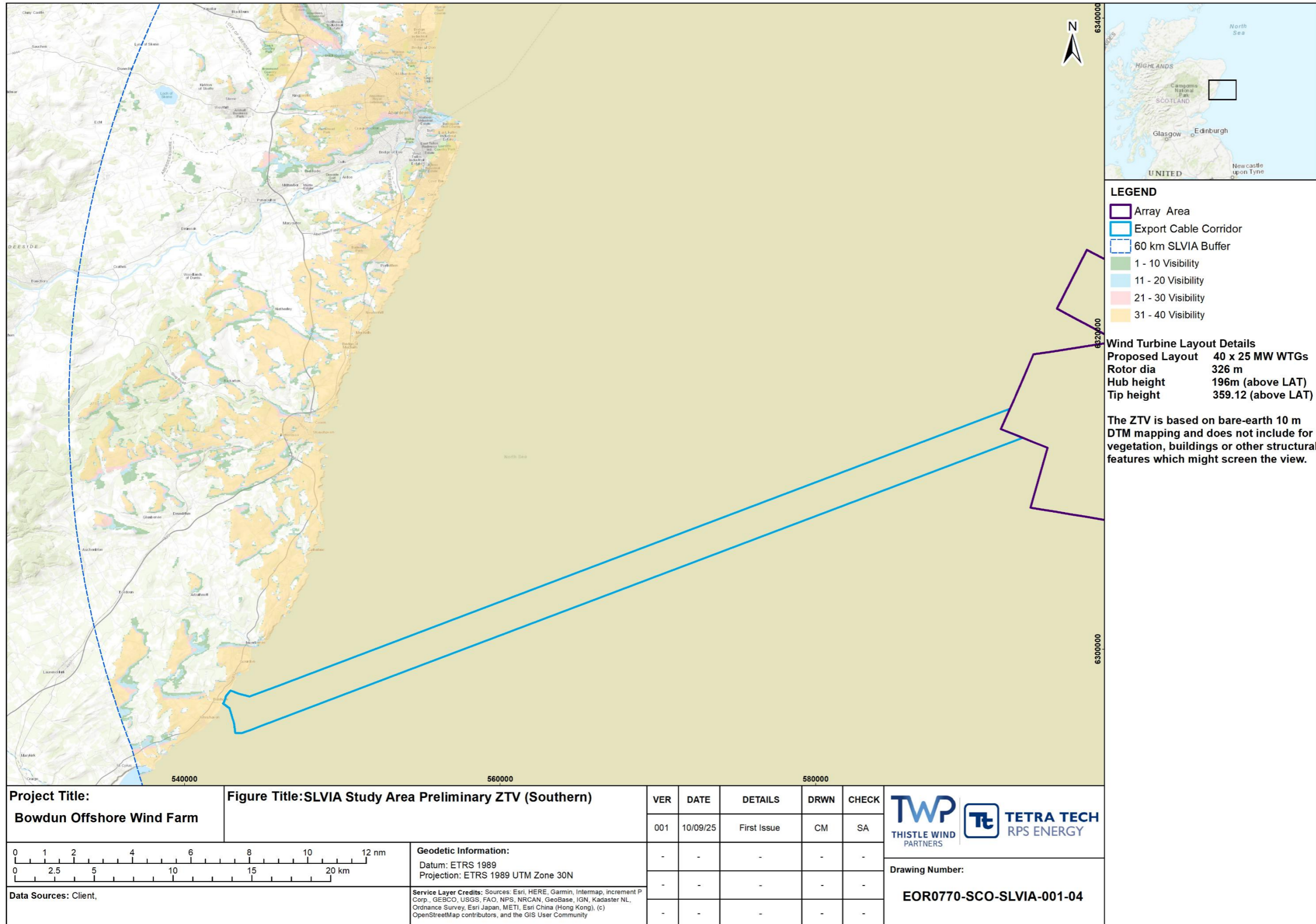


Figure 20.4: SLVIA Study Area Preliminary ZTV (Southern)

## 20.3 Legislative and Policy Context

- 20.3.1 The overarching policy and legislation applicable to the Proposed Development is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 2: Policy and Legislation. Legislation specific to seascape, landscape and visual impact is contained within the European Landscape Convention (ELC) and The Electricity Act (1989). A summary of the legislation relevant to landscape, seascape and visual impact are provided in Table 20.1.
- 20.3.2 Policy specific to seascape, landscape and visual impacts is contained in the National Marine Plan (NMP) (Scottish Government, 2015) and the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (Scottish Government, 2023).
- 20.3.3 Local policy is contained within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (Aberdeen City Council, 2023) and Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (Aberdeenshire Council, 2023). A summary of the relevant national policy relevant to landscape, seascape and visual impacts are provided in Table 20.2 below, with relevant local policy summarised in Table 20.3.

**Table 20.1: Summary of Legislation Relevant to Seascape, Landscape and Visual impact**

Summary of Relevant Legislation	How and Where Considered in the Offshore EIA Report
<b>ELC</b>	
<p><b>At the highest level, the ELC seeks to “promote landscape protection, management and planning, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues” (Ch. 1 Art. 3) and encompasses “the entire territory of the Parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It includes land, inland water and marine areas. It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as every day or degraded landscapes.” (Ch. 1 Art. 2), and therefore considers that all landscapes are important, not just the outstanding but also the everyday landscapes where most people live, work and spend much of their time.</b></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon the seascape/landscape (including Designated Landscapes) within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.10.</p>
<b>The Electricity Act 1989</b>	
<p><b>Schedule 9 relates to the preservation of amenity and states; ‘In formulating any relevant proposals, a licence holder or a person authorised by an exemption to generate, distribute, supply or participate in the transmission of electricity: (a) shall have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and (b) shall do what he reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside</b></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon the landscape (including Designated Landscapes) and the features of the landscape within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.10.</p>

Summary of Relevant Legislation	How and Where Considered in the Offshore EIA Report
<i>or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.'</i>	

Table 20.2: Summary of National Policy Relevant to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact

Summary of Relevant Policy	How and Where Considered in the Offshore EIA Report
<b>Scotland's NMP: A Single Framework for Managing Our Seas</b>	
<b>General Policy 7 (Landscape/Seascape) states that 'Marine planners and decision makers should ensure that development and use of the marine environment take seascape, landscape and visual impacts into account.'</b>	This chapter has assessed the potential impact upon designated landscapes such as National Scenic Areas, National Parks and World Heritage Sites (WHS) within Section 20.6.
<b>National Planning Framework 4</b>	
<b>Policy 4</b> <b>'c) Development proposals that will affect a National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest or a National Nature Reserve will only be supported where:</b> <b>i. The objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the areas will not be compromised;</b> <b>or</b> <b>ii. Any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance'</b>	This chapter has assessed the potential impact upon designated landscapes such as National Parks and National Scenic Areas within Section 20.6.
<b>Policy 4</b> <b>'d) Development proposals that affect a site designated as a local nature conservation site or landscape area in the Local Development Plan will only be supported where:</b> <b>i. Development will not have significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been identified;</b> <b>or</b> <b>ii. Any significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of at least local importance.'</b>	This chapter has assessed the potential impact upon designated landscapes, designated with the Local Development Plans associated with Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council within Section 20.6 and 20.10.
<b>Policy 7</b> <b>'i) Development proposals affecting nationally important Gardens and Designed Landscapes will be supported where they protect, preserve or enhance their cultural significance, character and integrity and where proposals will not significantly impact on important views to, from and within the site, or its setting.'</b>	The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon the Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered. They have not been taken through to assessment as very limited, or no visibility is predicted to be experienced from such receptors.
<b>Policy 11</b> <b>Policy 11 (e) states that 'In addition, project design and mitigation will demonstrate how the following impacts are addressed:</b>	This chapter has assessed the potential for significant landscape and visual impacts within Section 20.6 and Section 20.10.

Summary of Relevant Policy	How and Where Considered in the Offshore EIA Report
<p><i>ii. significant landscape and visual impacts, recognising that such impacts are to be expected for some forms of renewable energy. Where impacts are localised and/or appropriate design mitigation has been applied, they will generally be considered to be acceptable.'</i></p>	

Table 20.3: Summary of Local Development Plan Policy Relevant to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact

Summary of Relevant Policy	How and Where Considered in this Offshore EIA Report
<p><b>Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan</b></p>	
<p><b>Policy R1</b></p>	
<p><b>Special Rural Areas</b>  <i>'In order to safeguard the special nature of the green belt and coastal zone, development opportunities will be restricted and subject to the considerations set out in paragraphs R1.2 to R1.5. The boundaries of the green belt are shown on the proposals maps where applicable and in detail in Appendix 4, Boundaries of the Green Belt. The extent of the coastal zone is shown in detail in Appendix 5, Coastal Zone'</i></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon Special Rural Areas has been considered within Section 20.6.</p>
<p><b>Policy E2</b></p>	
<p><b>Landscape</b></p>	
<p><b>E2.1</b> <i>'We will refuse development that causes unacceptable effects through its scale, location or design on key characteristics, natural landscape elements, features or the composition or quality of the landscape character as defined in the Landscape Character Assessments produced by NatureScot. These impacts can be either alone or cumulatively with other recent developments. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) may be required to assess the effects of change on a landscape that could be experienced should a development proposal be approved. Appropriate mitigation should be identified.'</i></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon the Landscape Character within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.6 and Section 20.10.</p>
<p><b>E2.2</b> <i>'Development that has a significant adverse impact on the qualifying interests of a Special Landscape Area will not be permitted unless it is adequately demonstrated that these effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of at least local importance. Appendix 13 on Special Landscape Areas is also intended</i></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon Special Landscape Areas within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.6 and Section 20.10.</p>

Summary of Relevant Policy	How and Where Considered in this Offshore EIA Report
<p><i>to be used as a guide by prospective developers in assessing potential impact. Development, in terms of its location, scale, design, materials and landscaping, should be of a high standard and enhance the special qualities and character of the Special Landscape Area.'</i></p>	
<p><b>Policy HE 2</b></p>	
<p><b><u>Conservation Areas</u></b>  <b>HE2.1</b> <i>'We will resist development, including change of use or demolition, which would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area. This applies both to developments within the conservation area and proposals outwith that would affect its character or appearance. We will seek retention, restoration, and sympathetic adaptation of unlisted buildings which contribute positively to the special architectural or historic interest of the area, in preference to allowing their demolition.</i></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon Conservation Areas within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.6. They have not been taken through to assessment as very limited, or no visibility is predicted to be experienced from such receptors.</p>
<p><b><u>Battlefields, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes</u></b>  <b>HE2.3</b> <i>Development affecting an inventory battlefield or inventory garden and designed landscape will only be permitted if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>the proposal would not have an adverse impact that compromises the objectives of the designation of an inventory garden or designed landscape, or the key landscape characteristics and special qualities of an inventory battlefield; or,</i></li> <li>- <i>any significant adverse effects are outweighed by long term social or economic benefits of overriding public importance and there is no alternative site for the development.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>These conditions may also apply to developments outwith the designated sites. In either case, measures and mitigation must be taken to conserve and enhance the essential characteristics of the site as appropriate.</i></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon Gardens and Designed Landscapes within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.6. They have not been taken through to assessment as very limited, or no visibility is predicted to be experienced from such receptors.</p>
<p><b>HE2.4</b> <i>'All development affecting the character and/or the appearance of an inventory battlefield or inventory garden and designed landscape must be justified through a Design Statement and/or Landscape Management Plan'</i></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon Gardens and Designed Landscapes within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.6. They have not been taken through to assessment as very limited, or no visibility is predicted to be experienced from such receptors.</p>

Summary of Relevant Policy	How and Where Considered in this Offshore EIA Report
<b>Policy C2</b>	
<p><b>Renewable Energy</b>  <i>We will support renewable energy developments, including solar, wind, biomass (energy from biological material derived from living, or recently living organisms) and hydroelectricity projects, as well as energy storage projects, which are in appropriate sites and of the appropriate design. Assessment of the acceptability of such developments will take account of any effects on: socio-economic aspects; renewable energy targets; greenhouse gas emissions; communities; landscape and visual aspects; natural heritage; carbon rich soils; the historic environment; tourism and recreation; aviation, defence, telecommunications and broadcasting interests; road traffic; hydrology; and opportunities for energy storage. We treat biomass schemes as industrial processes suitable for business land. These may be hazardous developments through their impact on air quality. This support is not at the expense of other policies regarding Natural Heritage, the Historic Environment and Protecting Resources.</i></p>	<p>The potential for the Proposed Development to impact upon the landscapes and visual receptors within the SLVIA Study Area has been considered within Section 20.10.</p>
<b>Aberdeen Local Development Plan</b>	
<p><b>Policy R7 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments</b>  <i>‘Renewable and low carbon energy schemes will be encouraged and supported in principle, where the technology can operate efficiently, and the environmental and cumulative impacts can be satisfactorily addressed.</i></p> <p><b>Proposals will not:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. cause significant harm to the local environment, including landscape character and the character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas; or</i></li> <li><i>2. negatively impact on air quality. Biomass will only be accepted outwith Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) Low Emission Zones (LEZ) and will not be accepted within the city centre; or</i></li> <li><i>3. negatively impact on tourism; or</i></li> <li><i>4. have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of dwelling houses.</i></li> </ol> <p><b>Wind energy developments will meet the following specific requirements ensuring that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Development does not give rise to electro-magnetic interference to aviation communication, other</i></li> </ol>	<p>This chapter has assessed the potential for landscape impacts within Section 20.6 and Section 20.10.</p>

Summary of Relevant Policy	How and Where Considered in this Offshore EIA Report
<p><i>telecommunications installations, or broadcasting installations; and</i></p> <p><b>2. Development does not result in a significant cumulative effect on landscape and natural heritage; and</b></p> <p><b>3. Free standing Wind Turbines are set back from roads and railways a distance greater than the height of the turbine; and</b></p> <p><b>4. Wind Turbines are 10 rotor diameters from residential properties, and</b></p> <p><b>5. Conform with Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Wind Turbine Developments. Appropriate conditions (along with a legal agreement under Section 75, where necessary) will be applied, relating to the removal of Wind Turbine(s) and associated equipment, and to the restoration of the site, whenever the consent expires or the project ceases to operate for a specific period.'</b></p>	

## 20.4 Consultation

20.4.1 The approach to consultation for the Proposed Development is set out in Volume 1, Chapter 5: Consultation and Engagement. A summary of the issues raised during consultation activities undertaken to date specific to seascape, landscape and visual impact is presented in Table 20.4, together with how these issues have been considered in the production of this assessment. Further detail is presented within Volume 1, Chapter 5: Consultation and Engagement, Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5.1: Consultation Log and Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5.2: Pre-Application Consultation Report.

**Table 20.4: Summary of Key Consultation Issues Raised During Consultation Activities Undertaken for the Proposed Development Relevant to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts**

Date	Consultee and Type of Consultation	Summary of Issue(s) Raised	Response to Issue Raised and/or Where Considered in this Chapter
25/11/2024	Scottish Ministers  Scoping Opinion (MD-LOT, 2024)	The Scottish Ministers broadly agreed with the Study Area for seascape and landscape visual impact assessment outlined in Section 20.2 of the Scoping Report. This was also supported by Aberdeenshire Council.	Noted.
		An additional viewpoint from Angus Shoreline (near Ethie Haven or Dunninald Castle) recommended for inclusion within the SLVIA assessment. This was also supported by Angus Council.	Suggested viewpoint locations lie outside of the SLVIA Study Area, at distances beyond 60 km. However, additional wireline imagery has been provided within Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics but such locations have not been assessed as potential visual impacts are considered to be not significant at such distances.
17/09/2024	Angus Council Scoping Opinion (MD-LOT, 2024)	No viewpoints located on shoreline within Angus Council Area. Angus Council requested a viewpoint from the Angus shoreline (near Ethie Haven or Dunninald Castle). This request is consistent with the feedback provided in relation to the Morven OWF scoping request.	Following issue of information and email requests to have the identified viewpoints removed from the Scope of the SLVIA assessment, correspondence received from Angus Council on the 19/02/2026 confirmed that <i>"Having reviewed the submitted drawings and noting the limited visibility of the turbines from Angus, I would advise this Service would be content for the previously suggested Angus viewpoints to be removed from the SLVIA assessment for the proposed Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm scheme."</i>  Therefore, no ZTV, wirelines, montages or accompanying assessment will be provided as part of the SLVIA.

## 20.5 Data Sources

### Desktop Study

- 20.5.1 Information on seascape, landscape and visual resources within the SLVIA Study Area was collected through a detailed desktop review of existing studies and datasets which are summarised in Table 20.5.
- 20.5.2 Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.1: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts Technical Report includes full details of the analysis undertaken to develop the seascape, landscape and visual impact baseline

**Table 20.5: Summary of Key Data Sources**

Title	Source	Extent	Year	Author
<b>National Coastal Character Map</b>	Available online: Coastal Character Assessment   NatureScot	SLVIA Study Area	2018	NatureScot
<b>NatureScot Landscape Character Assessment 2019</b>	Available online: Scottish Landscape Character Types Map and Descriptions   NatureScot	SLVIA Study Area	2019	NatureScot
<b>Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan</b>	Available online: Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023	SLVIA Study Area	2023	Aberdeenshire Council
<b>Aberdeen Local Development Plan</b>	Available online: Aberdeen Local Development Plan   Aberdeen City Council	SLVIA Study Area	2023	Aberdeen City Council
<b>National Cycle Network</b>	Available online: Home - Sustrans.org.uk	SLVIA Study Area	2024	Sustrans
<b>Overview map for Long Distance Paths and Walks</b>	Available online: Overview Map for Paths and Walks	SLVIA Study Area	2024	Long Distance Walkers Association
<b>Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes</b>	Available online: Search for a Garden or	SLVIA Study Area	2024	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)

Title	Source	Extent	Year	Author
<b>(GDL) in Scotland</b>	Landscape   Historic Environment Scotland			
<b>Wild Land Areas map and descriptions 2014</b>	Available online: Wild Land Areas map and descriptions 2014   NatureScot	SLVIA Study Area	2014a	NatureScot
<b>National Scenic Areas in Scotland Map</b>	Available online: Special Landscape Qualities   NatureScot	SLVIA Study Area	2014b	NatureScot
<b>Ferry Routes – Orkney and Shetland</b>	Available online: Our Routes to Orkney and Shetland   NorthLink Ferries	SLVIA Study Area	2025	NorthLink Ferries
<b>Visit Scotland. Places to go, Aberdeenshire</b>	Available at: Aberdeenshire - Holidays & Breaks   VisitScotland	SLVIA Study Area	2025	Visit Scotland

### Identification of Designated Sites

20.5.3 All designated sites within the SLVIA Study Area, as illustrated on Figure 20.13 that could be affected, indirectly or directly, by the construction, O&M, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development were identified using the two-stage process described below:

- Step 1: All designated sites of international, national, and local importance within the SLVIA Study Area were identified using a variety of sources. These sources included NatureScot, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council datasets.
- Step 2: Using the above information and expert judgement, sites were included for further consideration if:
  - a designated site directly overlaps with the Proposed Development and therefore has the potential to be directly affected by the Proposed Development; or
  - sites and associated features were located within the SLVIA Study Area and indicated to experience visibility of the Proposed Development when reviewed against the ZTV (refer Figure 20.14)

## ZTV

20.5.4 The ZTV determines the areas of theoretical visibility, and subsequent areas of non-visibility associated with the Proposed Development within the SLVIA Study Area. The ZTV is a computer-generated analysis which evaluates visibility of the Proposed Development using project parameters as defined in the MDS (Table 20.12)) against a digital terrain model. It is important to understand that the ZTV is not used to determine actual visibility, only theoretical visibility. Actual visibility can only be determined on site; site surveys are used to “ground truth” those areas shown on the ZTV as theoretically visible. In some instances, it has been useful to confirm the nature of visibility with wireframe views as part of the analysis of the visibility mapping.

### ZTV Analysis

20.5.5 As evidenced from the blade tip ZTV presented in Figure 20.2, Figure 20.3 and Figure 20.4, the Proposed Development would be visible, theoretically, within the 60 km SLVIA Study Area in all directions, with scattered variable visibility more apparent on lands to the west, north-west and south-west of the Proposed Development (eastern coastline of Scotland). The extent to which the Proposed Development is theoretically visible on lands to the west is dependent upon elevation, with more elevated lands predicted to experience increased theoretical visibility than lands approximately 3 km to 5 km from the coastline. Theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development becomes more variable and scattered in extent on more inland areas of Aberdeenshire as intervening topographical changes screen or minimise visibility.

20.5.6 The ZTV associated with the northern section of the SLVIA Study Area presented on Figure 20.3 indicates theoretical visibility along the coastline between Boddam, in the north, and to the north of the urban development of Aberdeen. Further inland from these coastal areas, theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development soon becomes more variable and scattered in nature, with more elevated inland areas predicted to experience increased theoretical visibility based on topographical changes only. Urban areas associated with Peterhead in the north and Aberdeen in the south are predicted to experience large areas devoid of any theoretical visibility due to screening effects of topographical changes. The ZTV pattern is not regular along more inland coastal areas and soon becomes fragmented and limited where topography restricts theoretical views of the Proposed Development, leaving extensive areas free of predicted visibility associated with the Proposed Development.

20.5.7 The ZTV for the southern portion of the SLVIA Study Area presented in Figure 20.4 is similar in nature to that presented for the northern portion, with the majority of the eastern coastline predicted to experience theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. As indicated in Figure 20.4, visibility is predicted for eastern coastal areas between the southern extent of the urban development associated with Aberdeen, to the north, and Johnshaven to the south. Like the predicted visibility in the northern portion of the SLVIA Study Area, theoretical visibility soon becomes scattered and variable in nature, with more elevated inland areas predicted to experience visibility of the Proposed Development. Similarly, there are extensive areas within the southern portion

of the SLVIA Study Area that are predicted to experience no visibility of the Proposed Development.

### Site-Specific Surveys

20.5.8 Site-specific surveys were undertaken to inform this assessment (see Table 20.4 for further details). A summary of the surveys undertaken is outlined in Table 20.6.

**Table 20.6: Summary of Site-Specific Survey Data**

Title	Extent of Survey	Overview of Survey	Survey Contractor	Date
<b>Photographic Survey from agreed Viewpoints</b>	Various locations within the SLVIA Study Area	Baseline photography capture from agreed viewpoints in line with NatureScot Guidance	RPS	21/05/2025 to 22/05/2025
<b>Photographic Survey from various Cultural Heritage locations</b>	Various locations within the SLVIA Study Area	Baseline photography capture from agreed viewpoints in line with NatureScot Guidance	RPS	21/05/2025 to 22/05/2025

## Offshore Visibility

### Factors Affecting Long Distance Visibility

20.5.9 The SLVIA assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on the basis of the design parameters of the MDS, as described in Table 20.12, and assumes that atmospheric conditions would be such that the Array Area, located at 36.7 km from the eastern coastline of Scotland at its closest point, would be most visible from within the SLVIA Study Area. In other words, the Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development would be seen at their maximum colour difference and maximum visual significance. However, it is acknowledged that this situation seldom occurs, with the angle of the sun constantly changing thereby creating a partial shadow on a Wind Turbine. It is also recognised and acknowledged that atmospheric changes such as cloud cover, mist and fog all impact on visibility and will reduce the extent to which the Proposed Development may be visible at any given time within the available view. The accompanying SLVIA visualisations, which include wirelines and photomontages are illustrative of the MDS associated with the Proposed Development.

## 20.6 Baseline Environment

### Overview of Baseline Environment

20.6.1 This section outlines the current baseline conditions for seascape, landscape and visual amenity within the SLVIA Study Area. The seascape, landscape and visual baseline associated with this SLVIA assessment was established by

undertaking a detailed desk study, fieldwork, and analysis of findings to create a detailed understanding of the existing context of both the Array Area and its surrounding landscape within the SLVIA Study Area.

- 20.6.2 The desk-based assessment identified existing national seascape character types and national landscape character types within the Study Area. ZTV review and wirelines of the Proposed Development have aided in the identification of seascape, landscape and visual receptors which are likely to be applicable to the assessment.
- 20.6.3 Seascape Character Types (SCT), Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Designated Landscapes such as WHSs, National Scenic Areas (NSAs) and GDLs falling within the SLVIA Study Area which have been scoped out from further assessment as effects “*have been judged unlikely to occur or so insignificant that it is not essential to consider them further*” (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3)) have been identified and included in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.1: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts Technical Report. Reasoned justifications have been provided for the exclusion of landscape and visual receptors from further assessment in this chapter of likely significant environmental effects.

#### **Seascape Character**

- 20.6.4 SCTs are defined and described in the National Coastal Character Map (NatureScot, 2018), and two National Seascape Character Areas are found within the SLVIA Study Area. These have been identified as:
- Type 2: Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views; and
  - Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views.
- 20.6.5 The Proposed Development is located within the marine environment, with the Array Area over 35 km from coastal areas identified as Type 2 and Type 3 National Seascape Character Areas (Figure 20.5 and Figure 20.6). At such distances it is considered that elements of the Proposed Development located within the Array Area will have an indirect impact only.
- 20.6.6 The Landfall and connection to the Onshore Transmission Assets associated with the Proposed Development lies within an area of coastline identified as Type 2 National Seascape Character Area (Figure 20.6) associated with a short section of the coastline at Benholm. Only works associated with the cable installation and Landfall connections for the Proposed Development are therefore considered to have a direct impact on this National Seascape Character Area during the construction and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.

**Table 20.7: National Seascape Character Areas Relevant to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact**

Seascape Character Area	Closest Distance to Array Area (km)	Relevance
<b>Type 2: Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views</b>	38.4	Covers extensive portions of the eastern coastlines associated with Aberdeenshire, with direct effects predicted for a small portion only at Landfall.
<b>Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views</b>	36.7	Covers portions of the eastern coastlines associated with Aberdeenshire, with indirect effects predicted only.

### Landscape Character

20.6.7 LCTs are areas of consistent and recognisable landscape character, and a review of the available datasets (NatureScot, 2019) has identified that the LCTs identified in Table 20.8 are found within the SLVIA Study Area. These have been identified on Figure 20.11 and Figure 20.12 with the ZTV overlain.

20.6.8 Since the Scoping report, an additional nine LCTs have been identified within the SLVIA Study Area, that are predicted to experience theoretical impacts due to the Proposed Development. This variation in the number of LCTs is attributed to the refinement of the Proposed Development between these stages.

**Table 20.8: LCTs Found Within the SLVIA Study Area**

Map Ref.	LCT Number	LCT Name	Closest Distance to Array Area (km)
<b>Aberdeenshire Council Area</b>			
17	LCT 0	Urban	38.7
26	LCT 11	Fragmented Rocky Coast	38.4
39	LCT 8	Urban and Farmland	40.1
62	LCT 9	Wooded Estates – Aberdeen	44.5
63	LCT 26	Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire	47.4
86	LCT 1	Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeen	40.3
87	LCT 12	Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire	43.3
105	LCT 5	Low Hills – Aberdeen	38.7
141	LCT 22	Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire	53.7
169	LCT 31	Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley	40.9
170	LCT 33	Broad Wooded Valley with Estates	56.8
173	LCT 2	Cliffs and Rocky Coast – Aberdeen	38.4
209	LCT 17	Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire	44.6
214	LCT 3	Coastal Farmed Plain	38.8
215	LCT 24	Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills – Aberdeenshire	42.9
228	LCT 29	Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire	44.5

Map Ref.	LCT Number	LCT Name	Closest Distance to Array Area (km)
254	LCT 30	Narrow Winding Farmed Valley	49.3
258	LCT 20	Undulating Agricultural Heartland	56.8
288	LCT 6	Undulating Open Farmland	44.3
304	LCT 7	Undulating Wooded Farmland – Aberdeen	45.6
355	LCT 27	Farmed Moorland Edge – Aberdeenshire	39.4
366	LCT 13	Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire	46.6
369	LCT 4	River Valley – Aberdeen	40.6
382	LCT 25	Farmed Strath – Aberdeenshire	56.0
385	LCT 21	Farmland and Wooded Policies	58.9

20.6.9 The Proposed Development is located offshore (within Scottish Offshore Waters), approximately 38.4 km distance to the eastern edge of the of the closest LCT (LCT 11 (Fragmented Rocky Coast)). It is considered that impacts arising because of the Proposed Development will be indirect and long distance in nature, with no direct alteration to the landscape character or the elements contained within individual LCT areas. However, it is noted that a single unit of the LCT identified as Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 13), associated with coastal areas at Benholm is predicted to experience direct impacts due to the works associated with the construction of Landfall elements associated with the Proposed Development.

**Table 20.9: Landscape Character Type Relevant to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact**

Seascape Character Area	Closest Distance to Array Area (km)	Relevance
<b>LCT 13 Raised Beach Coast - Aberdeenshire</b>	46.6	Included for assessment due to impacts arising from Landfall being located within this LCT and connections to Offshore Transmission Assets of the Proposed Development.

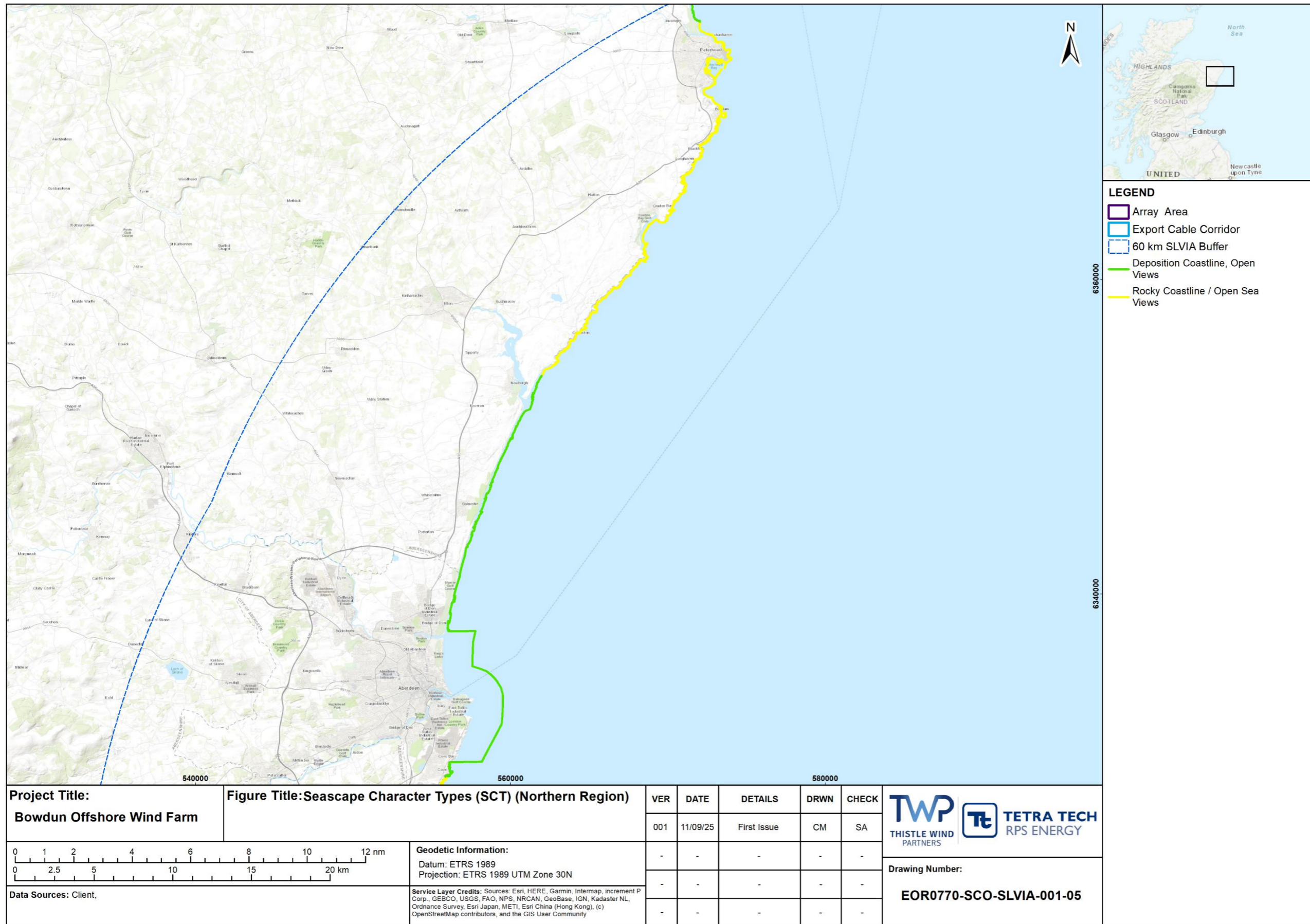


Figure 20.5: SCT (Northern Region)

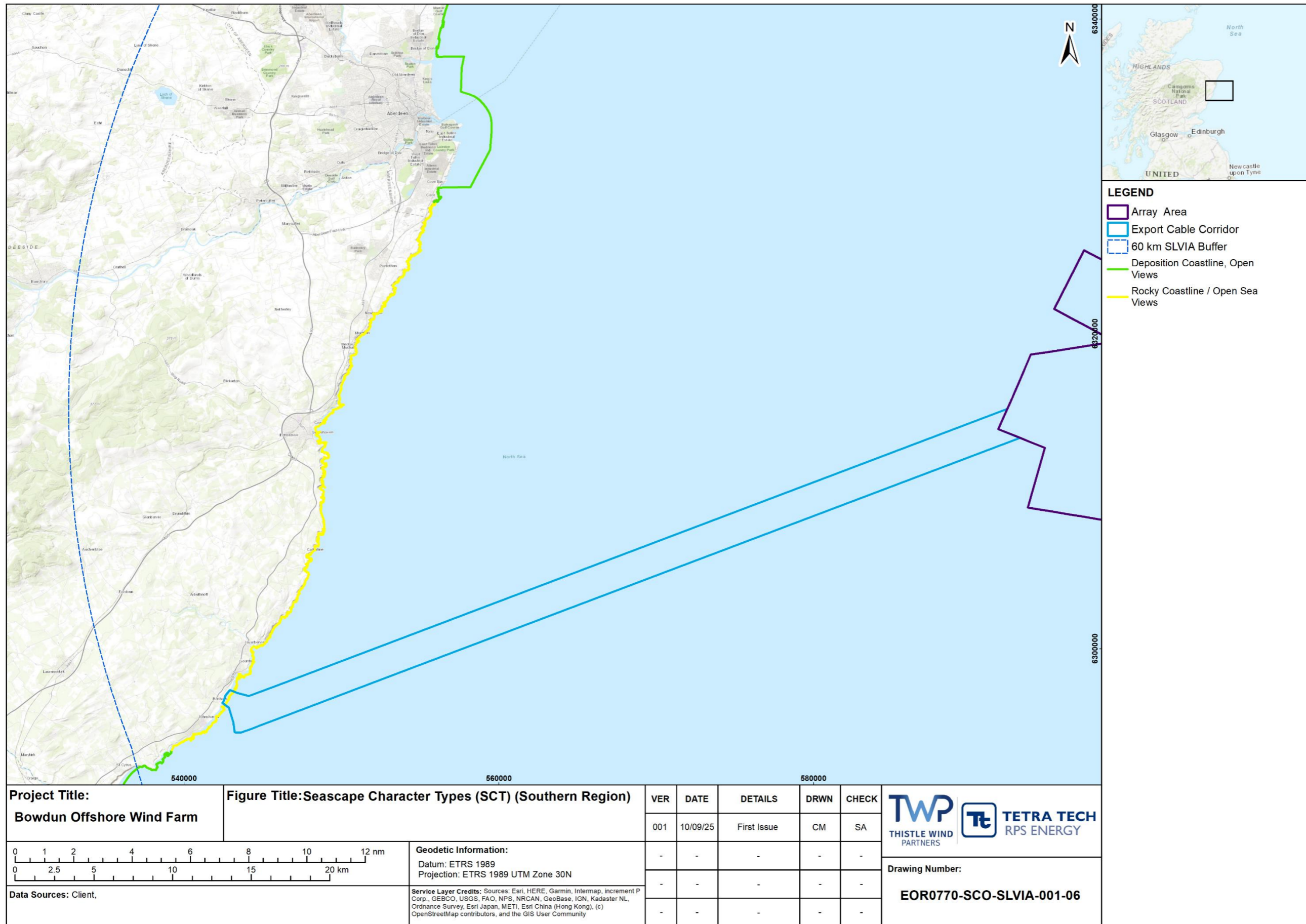


Figure 20.6: SCT (Southern Region)

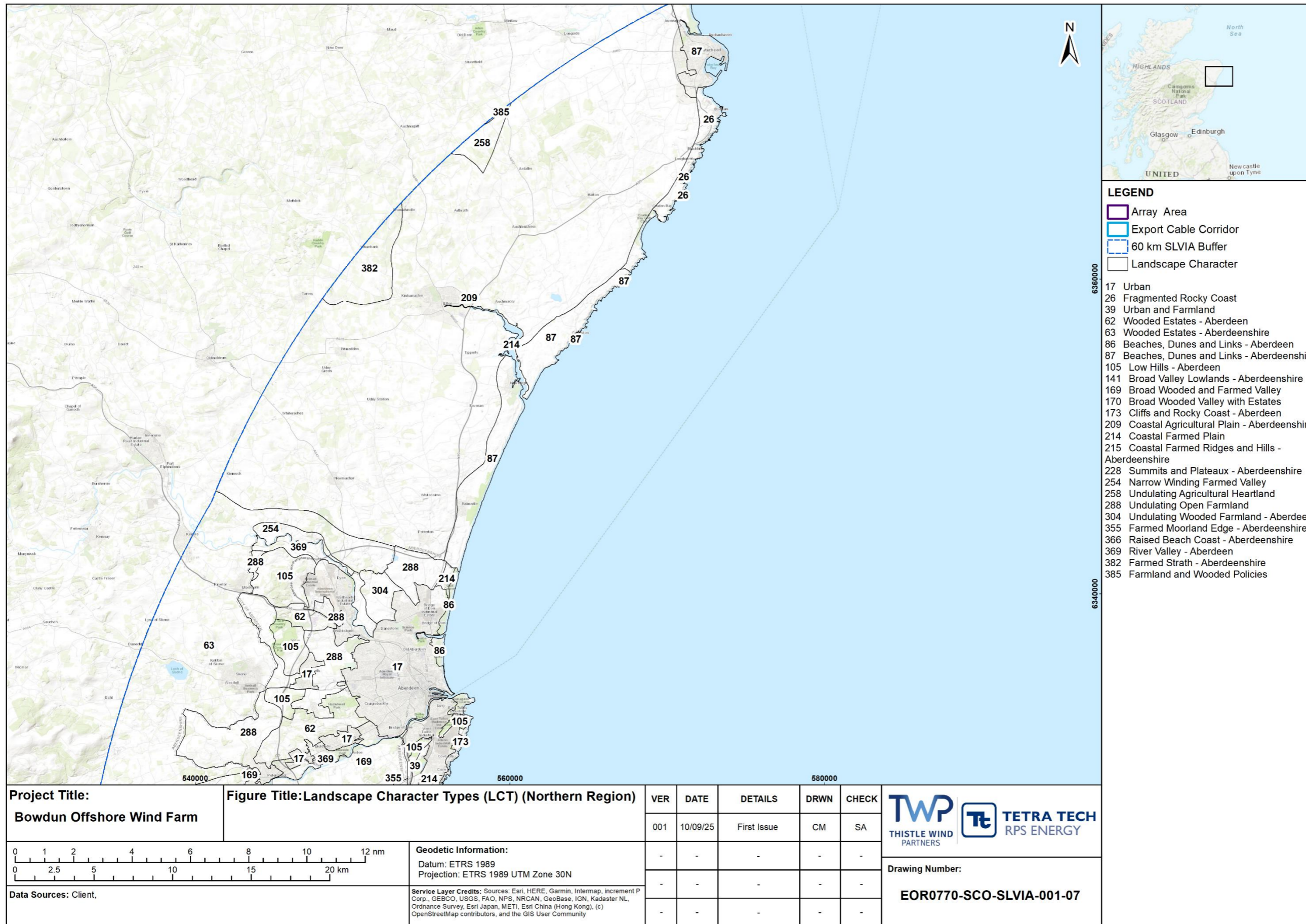


Figure 20.7: LCT (Northern Region)

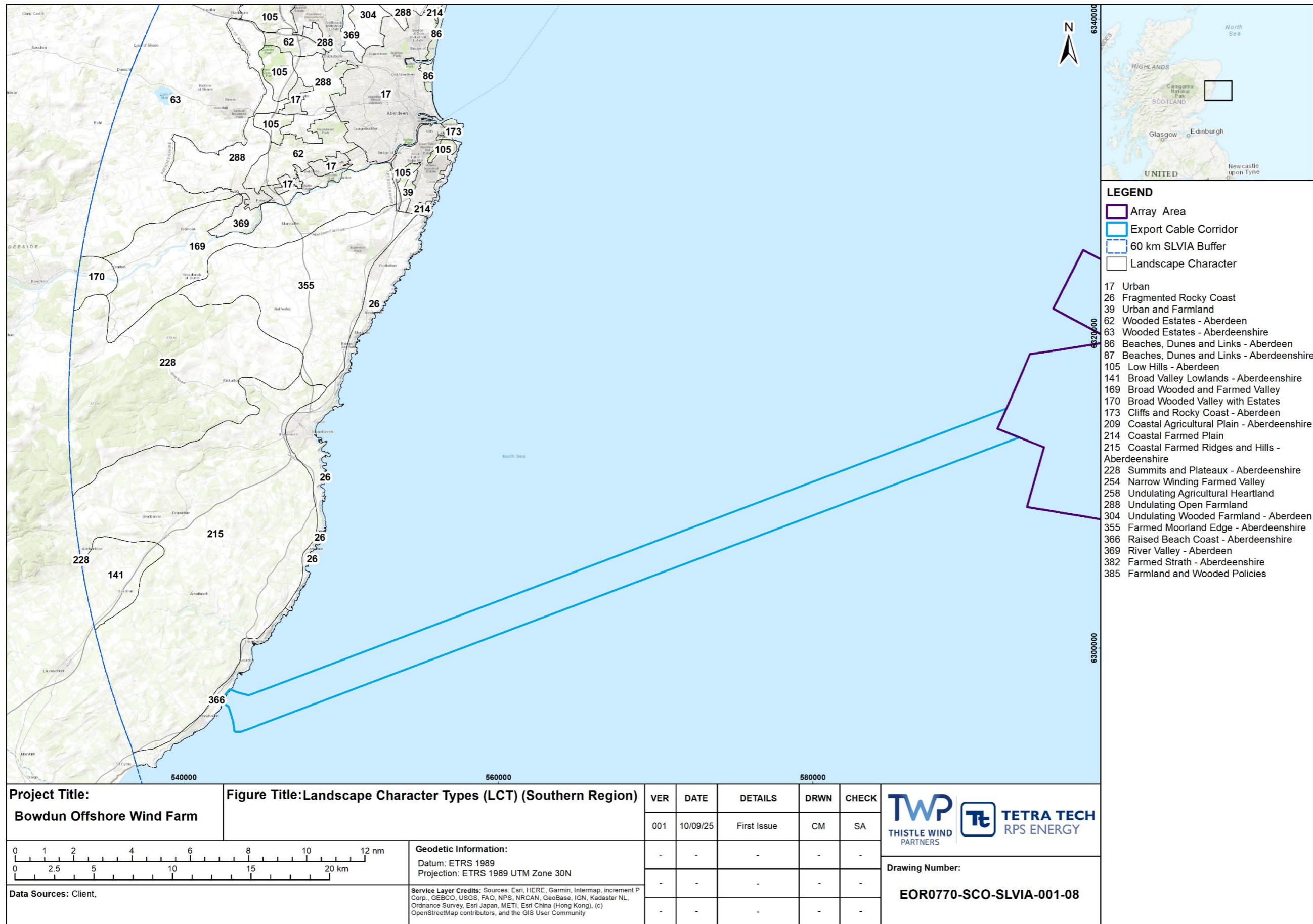


Figure 20.8: LCT (Southern Region)

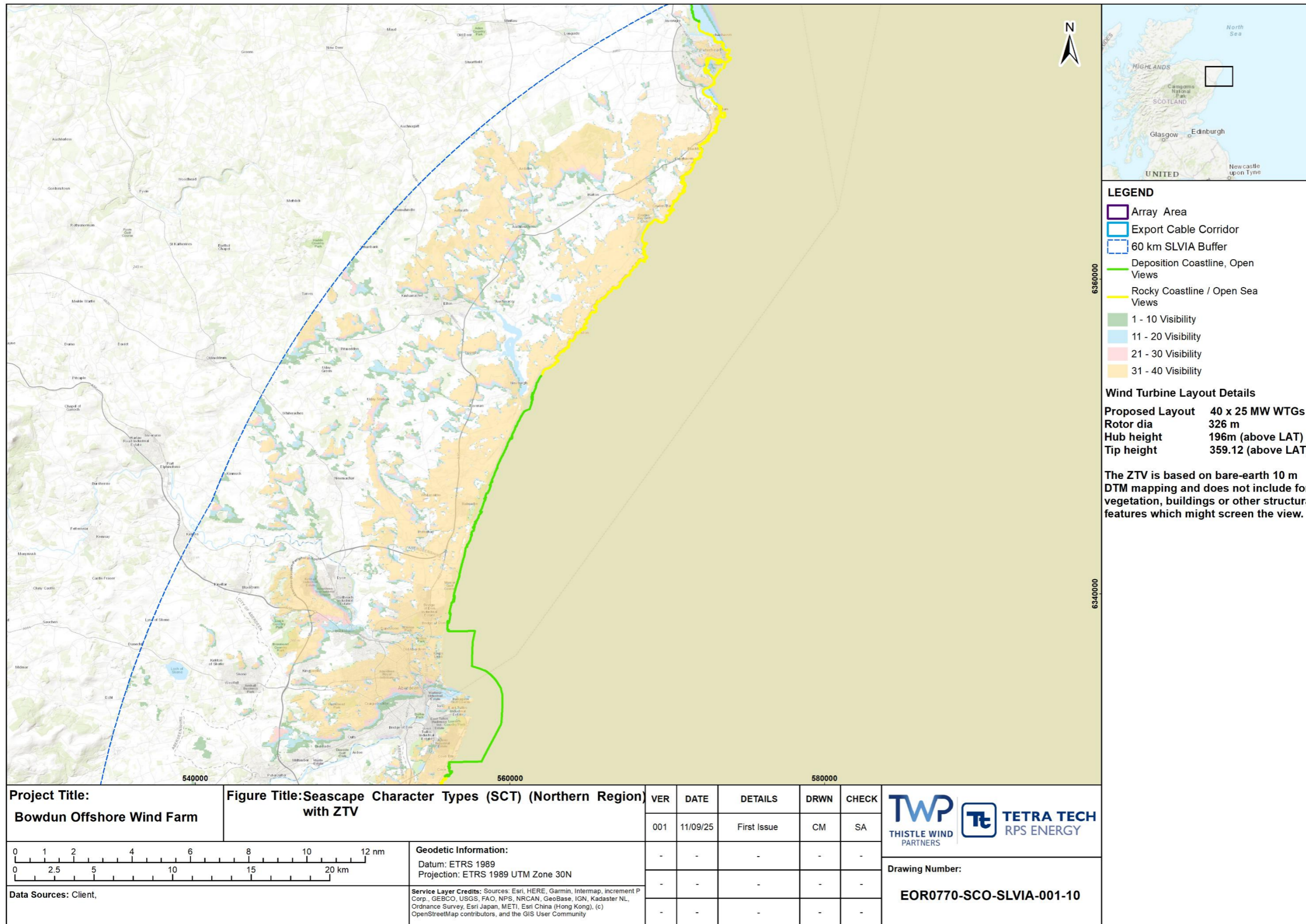


Figure 20.9: SCT (Northern Region) with ZTV

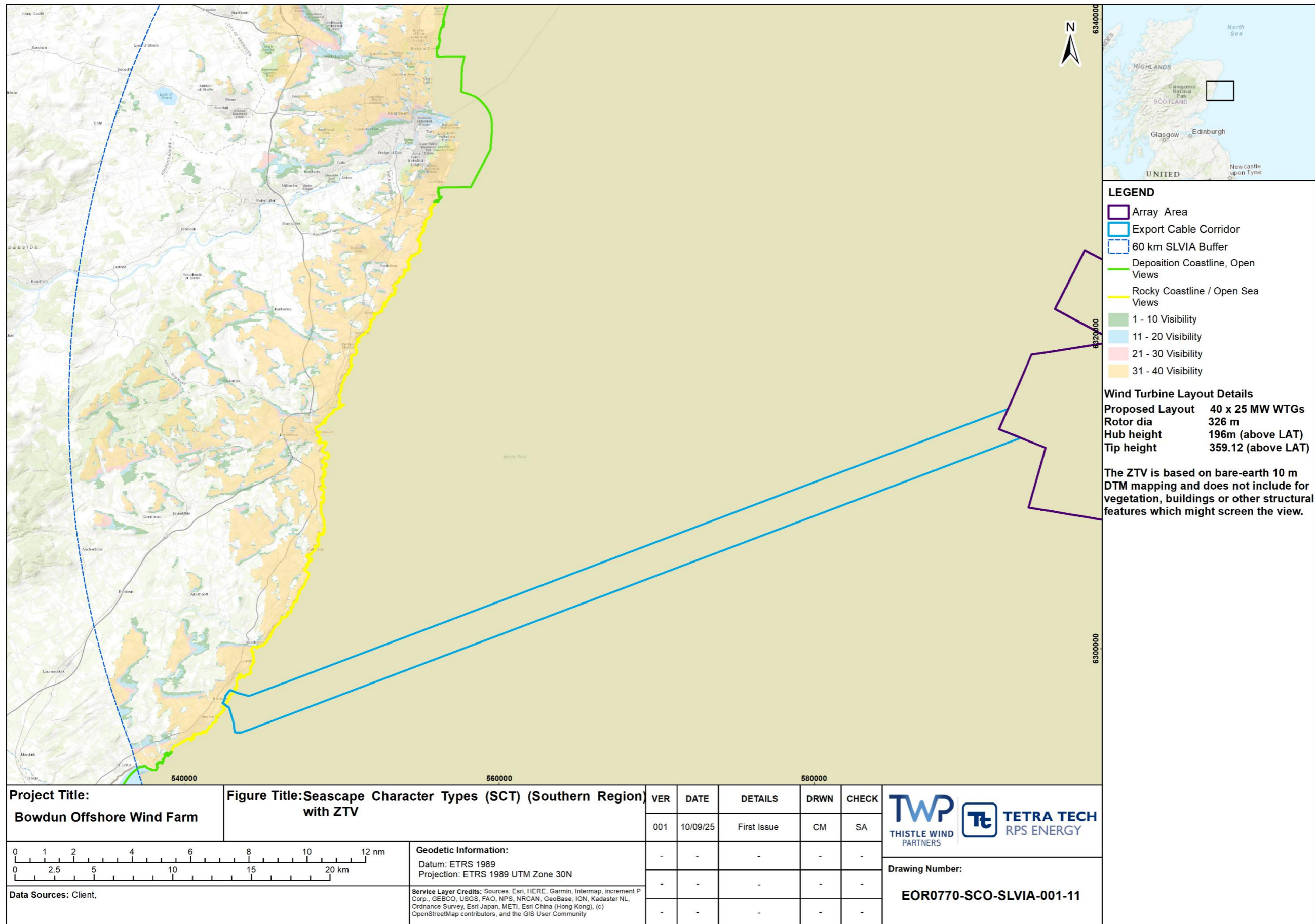


Figure 20.10: SCT (Southern Region) with ZTV

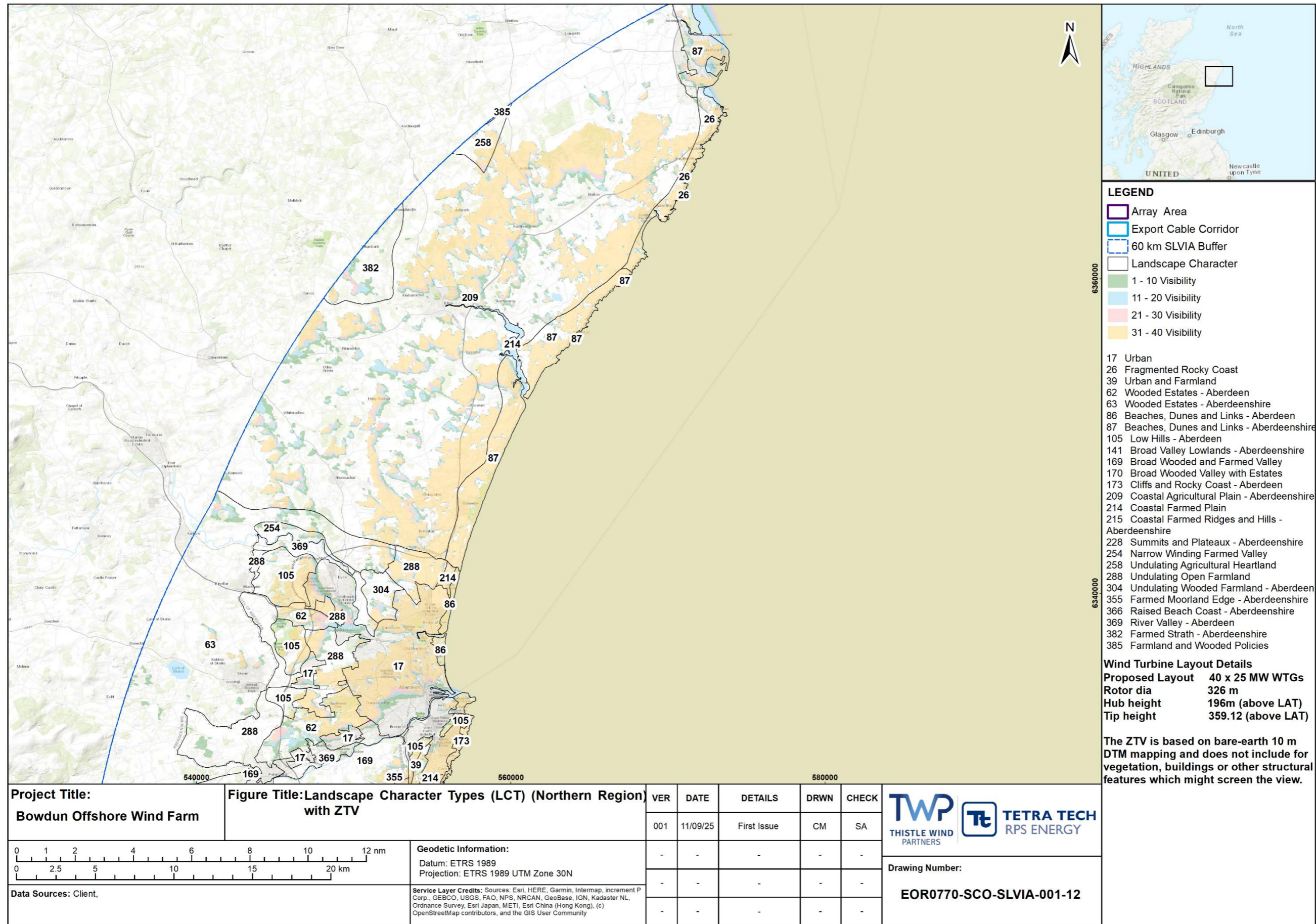


Figure 20.11: LCT (Northern Region) with ZTV

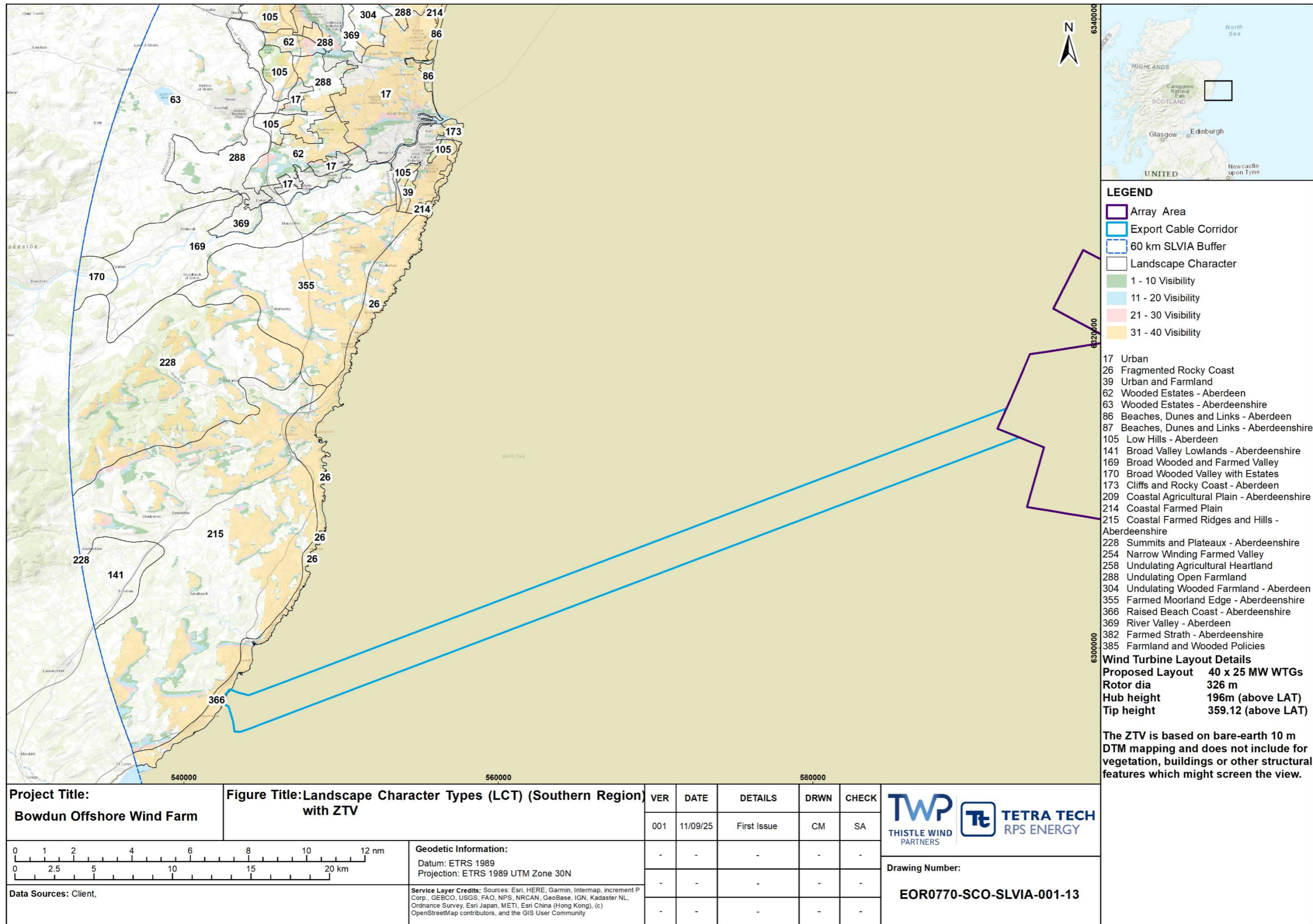


Figure 20.12: LCT (Southern Region) with ZTV

### **Designated Sites**

20.6.10 A screening of landscape designations falling within the SLVIA Study Area (Figure 20.13), such as WHSs, NSAs and GDLs, has been undertaken and has identified a number of landscape designations, which are further described in the following sections.

#### ***World Heritage Sites***

20.6.11 A review of the data set defining the areas identified as WHSs has identified that there are no WHSs located within the SLVIA Study Area.

#### ***National Scenic Areas***

20.6.12 A review of the dataset defining National Scenic Areas NSAs (NatureScot, 2014b) has identified that there are no NSAs located within the SLVIA Study Area.

#### ***Special Landscape Areas***

20.6.13 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) are a local landscape designation placed on areas that exhibit particular qualities and characteristics within them that are valued locally. SLAs complement the NSA designation, which identifies those landscapes that are seen as nationally important owing to their unsurpassed scenery.

20.6.14 The following four SLAs have been identified within the SLVIA Study Area and are shown on Figure 20.13:

- South East Aberdeenshire Coast, located over 38 km west of the Proposed Development;
- North East Aberdeenshire Coast, located over 43 km north-west of the Proposed Development;
- Braes of the Mearns, located over 58 km south-west of the Proposed Development; and
- Dee Valley, located over 49 km west of the Proposed Development.

20.6.15 Of the four SLAs found within the SLVIA Study Area, Dee Valley and Braes of the Mearns SLAs are shown by the ZTV to experience no theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. Remaining SLAs identified as North East Aberdeenshire Coast and South East Aberdeenshire Coast are predicted to experience indirect effects only because of the Proposed Development and have been carried forward for further assessment.

#### ***Gardens and Designed Landscapes***

20.6.16 The Inventory of GDLs managed by HES includes private gardens, parks, country estates and botanical gardens. GDLs are not statutory designated landscapes. The GDLs are identified in the inventory with notes of specific qualities attributable to each inventory property. Generally, GDLs are cultural heritage receptors but there is an overlap with the SLVIA where their designated aspect includes designed views, vistas and the property itself a feature of the surrounding landscape.

20.6.17 The following ten GDLs have been identified within the SLVIA Study Area and are shown on Figure 20.13:

- Arbuthnott House (GDL00016), located over 51 km south-west of the Proposed Development;
- Crathes Castle (GDL00119), located over 57 km west of the Proposed Development;
- Drum Castle (GDL00141), located over 52 km west of the Proposed Development;
- Dunecht House (GDL00153), located over 56 km north-west of the Proposed Development;
- Duthie Park (GDL00166), located over 41 km north-west of the Proposed Development;
- Glenbervie House (GDL00194), located over 53 km south-west of the Proposed Development;
- Park House (GDL00309), located over 53 km west of the Proposed Development;
- Pitmedden (GDL00314), located 57 km north-west of the Proposed Development;
- Straloch (GDL00351), located over 53 km north-west of the Proposed Development; and
- Piper Alpha Memorial Garden/North Sea Memorial Rose Garden (GDL00412), located over 46 km west of the Proposed Development.

20.6.18 Of the ten GDLs found within the SLVIA Study Area; Arbuthnott House, Glenbervie House, Park House, Crathes Castle and Duthie Park are all predicted to experience no visibility of the Proposed Development as illustrated on Figure 20.14. Therefore these designated sites are not carried forward for further assessment as they are considered not to experience any indirect or direct effect because of the Proposed Development.

20.6.19 Of the remaining five identified sites; Drum Castle, Dunecht House, Pitmedden, Straloch and Piper Alpha Memorial Garden/North Sea Memorial Rose Garden are all predicted to experience scattered, variable theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. However it is considered that for all of the above sites theoretical visibility is reduced by screening provided by strong belts of vegetation along boundaries forming edges of the GDLs and intervening built form, such that the Proposed Development is not considered to have potential for a significant effect on the setting or characteristics of the identified GDLs. Therefore none of the identified GDLs are carried forward for further assessment as they are considered not to experience any indirect or direct effect because of the Proposed Development.

### **Green Belt**

20.6.20 NPF4 provides the main national policy for green belts. It acknowledges that designating green belt is an important means of directing development to the most appropriate locations to manage growth more effectively and reduce the negative impacts of unplanned expansion. It also identifies the green belt as an

accessible means of recreation and gateway to the countryside. A review of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan has identified three physically separated areas designated as green belt within the SLVIA Study Area, which are shown on Figure 20.13.

- 20.6.21 Two of the areas designated as green belt are predicted to experience scattered, variable theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development, with one greenbelt area predicted to experience no theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. However, it is noted that none of the green belt areas will experience direct effects because of the Proposed Development, and that effects arising because of the Proposed Development are indirect only. Of the two areas predicted to experience scattered visibility, it is considered that landform, vegetation cover and built form further reduce predicted visibility such that the Proposed Development is not considered to have potential for a significant effect on the characteristics of the identified green belt areas. Therefore, none of the identified green belt areas are carried forward for further assessment as they are considered not to experience any indirect or direct effect because of the Proposed Development.

#### ***Tree Preservation Orders***

- 20.6.22 A Tree Preservation Order affords legal protection to specific trees or groups of trees that are deemed important for their environmental, cultural, or historical significance. A review of designations and protected areas within the Aberdeen City Council area has identified several Tree Preservation Orders within the SLVIA Study Area, which are shown on Figure 20.13.
- 20.6.23 It is considered that none of the areas identified and protected by Tree Preservation Orders will be directly affected by the Proposed Development, and that predicted effects are indirect only, relating to visibility of the Proposed Development. Whilst there is predicted to be scattered variable visibility across these areas, it is considered that intervening landform, vegetation cover and built form will further reduce predicted indirect impacts such that the Proposed Development is not considered to give rise to significant effects. Therefore, none of the identified areas protected by Tree Preservation Orders have been carried forward for further assessment as they are considered not to experience any indirect or direct effect because of the Proposed Development.
- 20.6.24 Designated sites and relevant qualifying features identified for the SLVIA are summarised in Table 20.10 and presented in Figure 20.14.

**Table 20.10: Designated Sites and Relevant Qualifying Features for the SLVIA**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Designated Site</b>	<b>Closest Distance to Proposed Development (km)</b>	<b>Relevant Qualifying Interest Feature(s)</b>
<b>Special Landscape Area</b>	North East Aberdeenshire Coast	43.2	SLA, identified by Aberdeenshire Council as <i>“Designation of this area distinguishes its strong sense of place, scenic qualities and uninterrupted views out to the North Sea. There are strong elemental qualities associated with this SLA. Its dynamic character features tangible, remote and wildness qualities. This SLA has long stretches of sandy beaches, and a more gradual, less abrupt character of coastal edge. Designation also recognises the ecological value of the area’s dune systems and other features that contribute to the landscape character, as well as being recognised as being nationally and/or internationally important for nature conservation.”</i>
<b>Special Landscape Area</b>	South East Aberdeenshire Coast	38.4	SLA, identified by Aberdeenshire Council as a <i>“narrow, but continuous, strip has been defined to include areas with strong coastal influence, the landward extent of which is generally restricted due to the high cliffs that separate the hinterland from the sea.”</i>

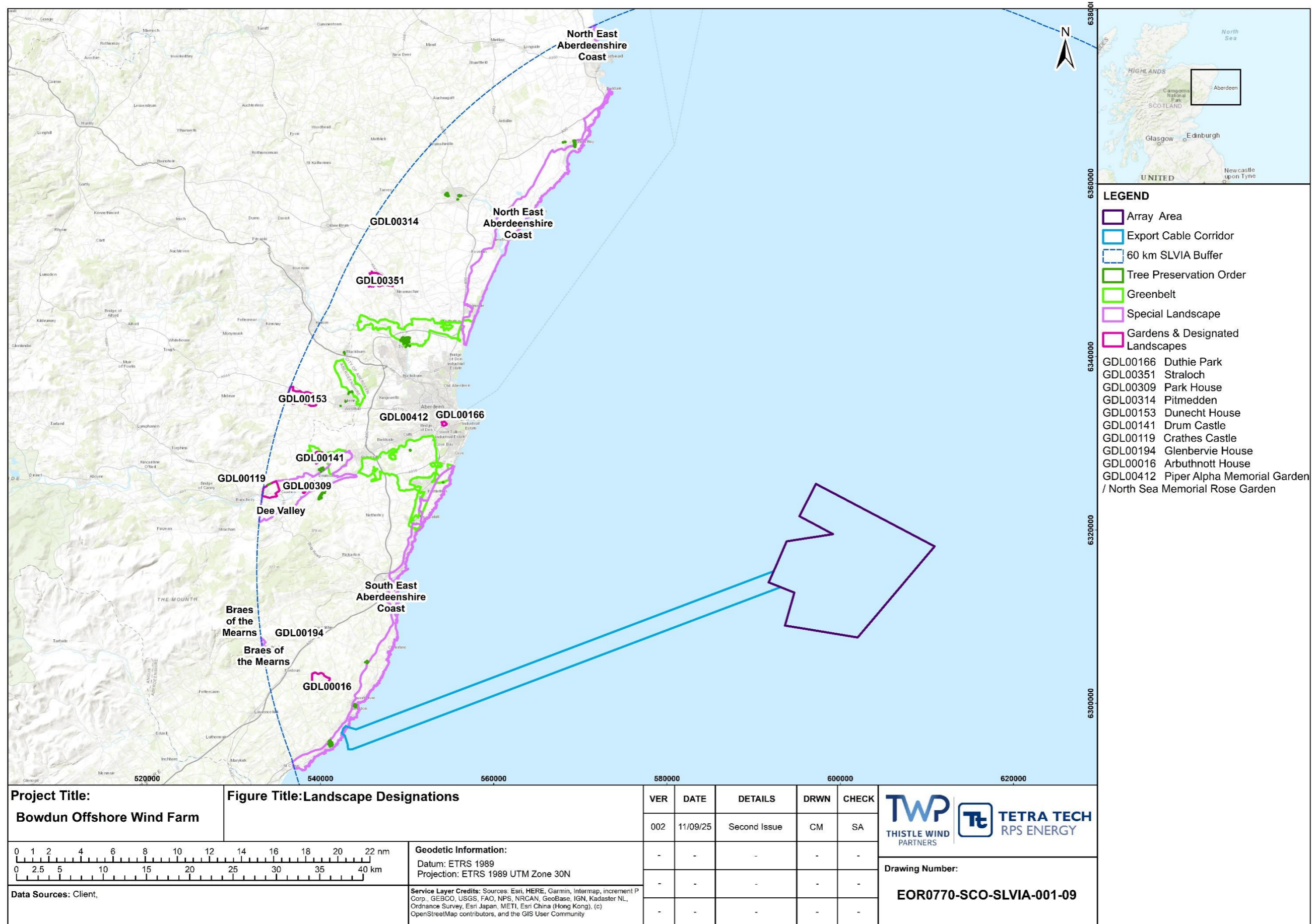


Figure 20.13: Landscape Designations

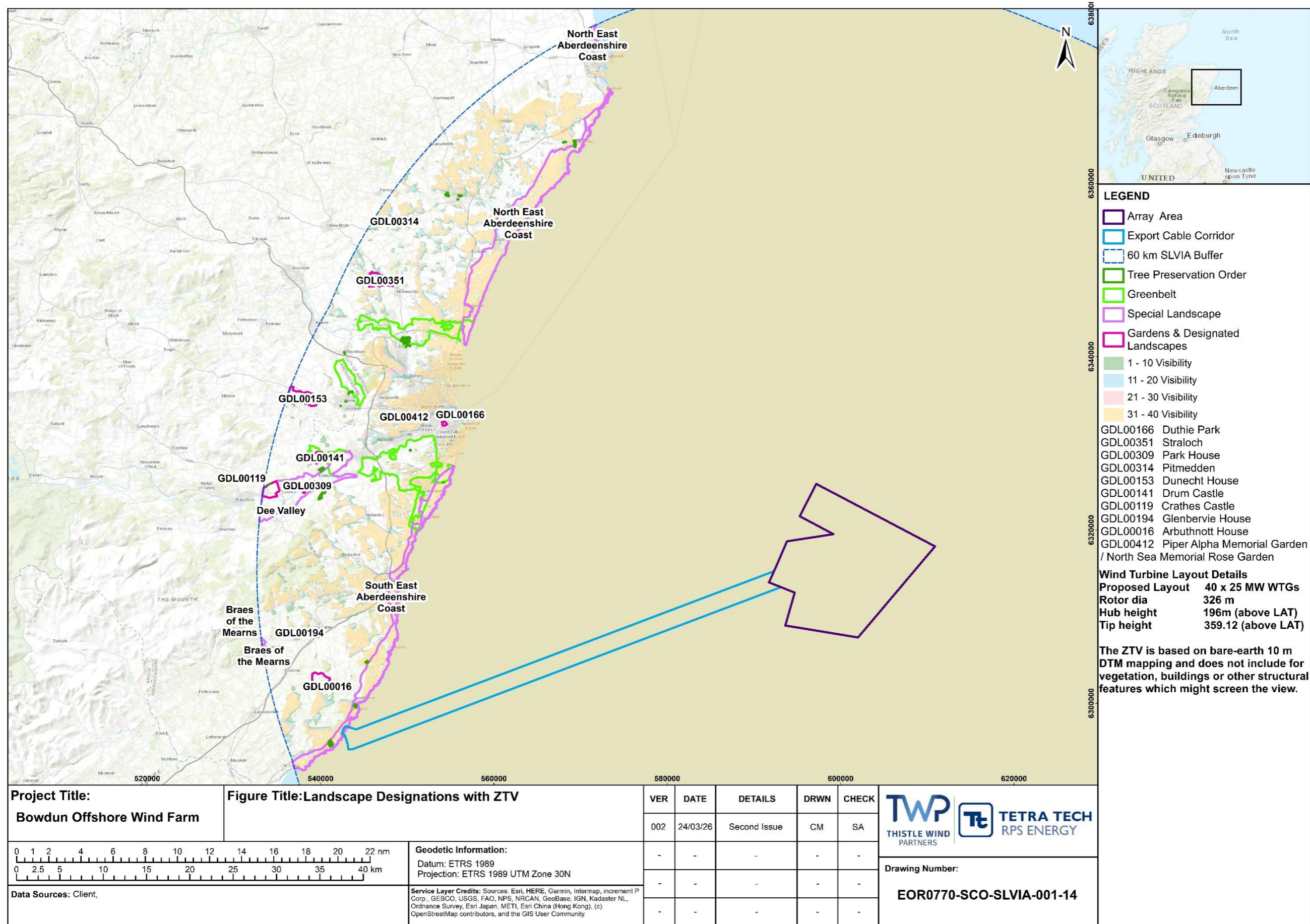


Figure 20.14: Landscape Designations with ZTV

### Viewpoint Locations

- 20.6.25 Visual receptors identified within the SLVIA Study Area that have been considered within this assessment include but are not limited to, the following receptors:
- recreational receptors:
    - walkers, equestrians and cyclists using the public rights of way networks;
    - users of beaches, public open spaces and common land;
    - tourists and visitors using facilities such as hotels and cafes within settlements;
    - tourists and visitors at coastal caravan and camping sites; and
    - tourists and visitors at attractions and points of interest.
  - residential receptors;
  - people at their places of work; and
  - transient receptors:
    - occupiers of vehicles traveling on local and national road networks.
- 20.6.26 For potential visual impacts arising because of the Proposed Development on water-based receptors, wireline imagery of the Proposed Development has been utilised to illustrate views from:
- passengers and workers on board commercial ferries or cruise liners;
  - people at their place of work on passing cargo, tanker or other commercial vessels;
  - people at their place of work on commercial fishing vessels; and
  - recreational water users.
- 20.6.27 Viewpoint locations for both land-based and water-based receptors were provided within the Seascape and Visual Impact Chapter of the Offshore EIA Scoping Report for discussion and agreement (Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited (BOWFL), 2024) (see Volume 1, Chapter 5: Consultation and Engagement, Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5.1: Consultation Log and Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5.2: Pre-Application Consultation Report).
- 20.6.28 The Scoping Opinion received from both NatureScot and Aberdeenshire Council confirmed that the selected viewpoints were appropriate for assessment purposes (MD-LOT, 2024) (refer Volume 1, Chapter 5: Consultation and Engagement, Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5.1: Consultation Log and Volume 3, Technical Appendix 5.2: Pre-Application Consultation Report).
- 20.6.29 Therefore the viewpoints selected and indicated in Figure 20.15 to Figure 20.18 have been utilised within the SLVIA assessment.
- 20.6.30 Viewpoint information is provided in Table 20.11 below.

**Table 20.11: Assessment Viewpoints and Relevant Qualifying Features for the SLVIA**

Viewpoint Number	Viewpoint Name	Viewpoint Location		Relevance
		Easting	Northing	
VP 01	Buchan Ness Lighthouse	413584	842239	51.1 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational and residential receptors in proximity.
VP 02	Slain's Castle	410144	836070	47.5 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 03	Cruden Bay	408751	836193	48.3 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to residential receptors and recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 04	Whinnyfold	408204	833236	46.3 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 05	Collieston	403987	828412	45.5 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to residential receptors and recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 06	Seal Beach, Newburgh	400634	824302	45.3 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 07	Balmedie Beach	397960	817957	44.1 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 08	Aberdeen/Orkney Ferry Link	564780	6341770	42.6 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors.
VP 09	Royal Aberdeen Golf Course, third Tee	395211	809549	42.4 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 09a	Royal Aberdeen Golf Course Clubhouse	395052	809703	42.6 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
VP 10	Aberdeen Esplanade	395292	807513	41.5 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational and residential receptors in proximity.
VP 11	Torry Battery	396553	805614	39.5 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative

Viewpoint Number	Viewpoint Name	Viewpoint Location		Relevance
		Easting	Northing	
				of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 12</b>	Girdle Ness Lighthouse	397216	805326	38.8 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 13</b>	Baron's Cairn	395770	803689	39.5 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 14</b>	Portlethan Pedestrian Railway Bridge	392356	796755	40.2 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational and residential receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 15</b>	Muchalls	390369	792284	41.1 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational and residential receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 16</b>	A92 Parking Bay	389247	789970	41.9 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational and transient receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 17</b>	Stonehaven Pier	387921	785490	43.0 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational and residential receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 18</b>	Stonehaven Memorial	387783	784899	43.2 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 19</b>	Bervie Bay	383298	771467	49.7 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational receptors in proximity.
<b>VP 20</b>	Ellon Roundabout	397806	830814	51.6 km from closest Wind Turbine, views considered to be representative of views available to recreational and transient receptors in proximity.

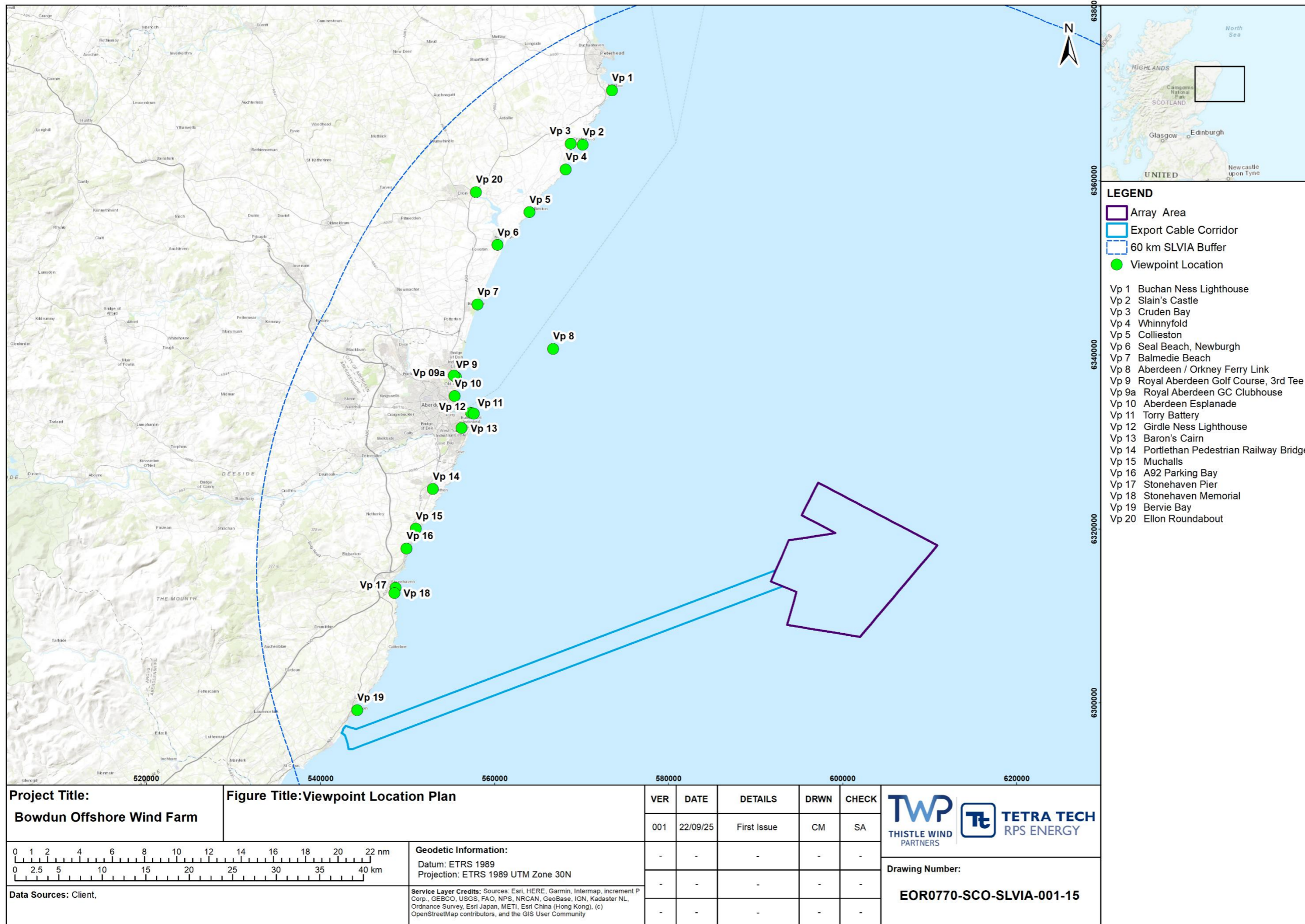


Figure 20.15: Viewpoint Location Plan

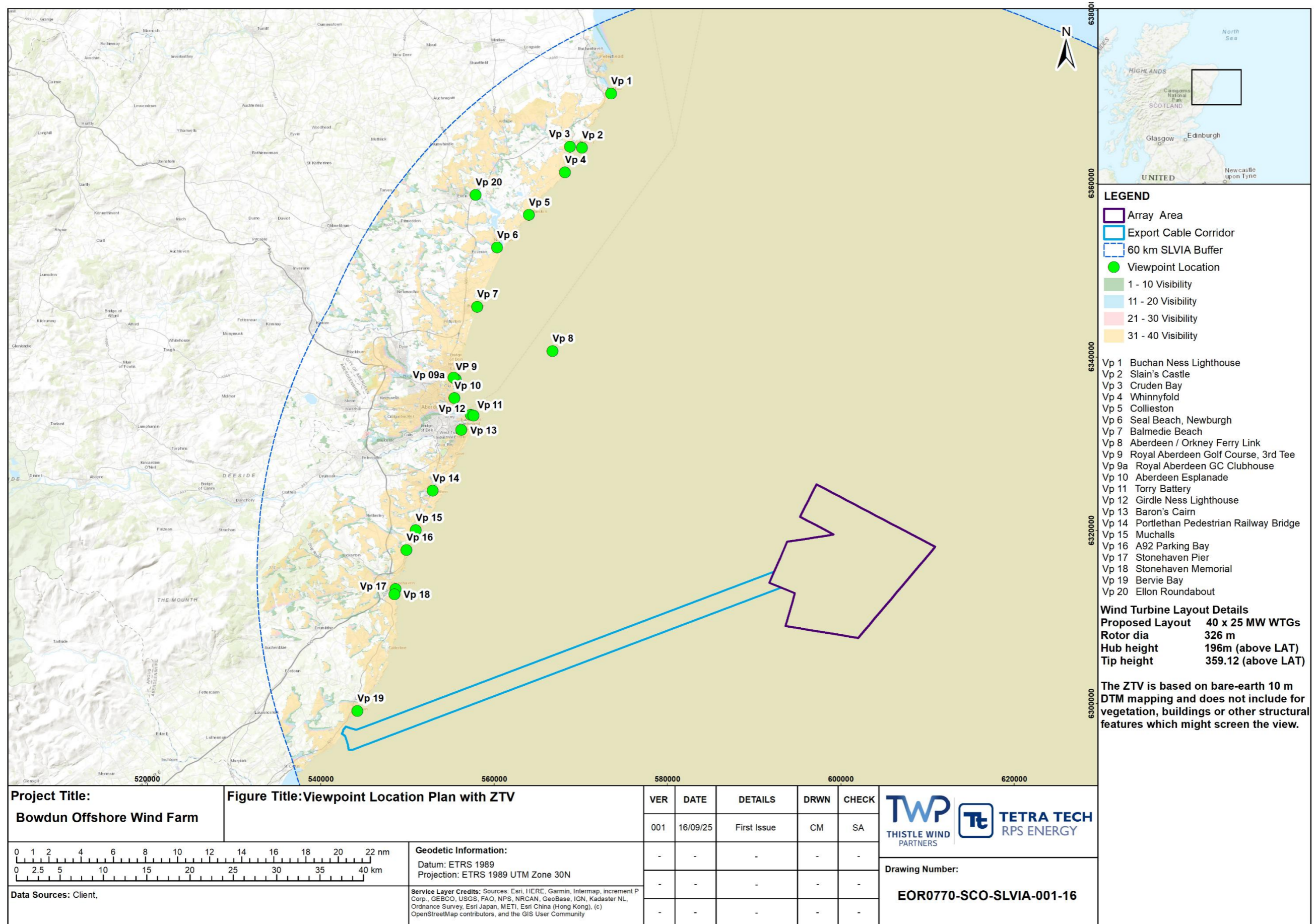


Figure 20.16: Viewpoint Location Plan with ZTV

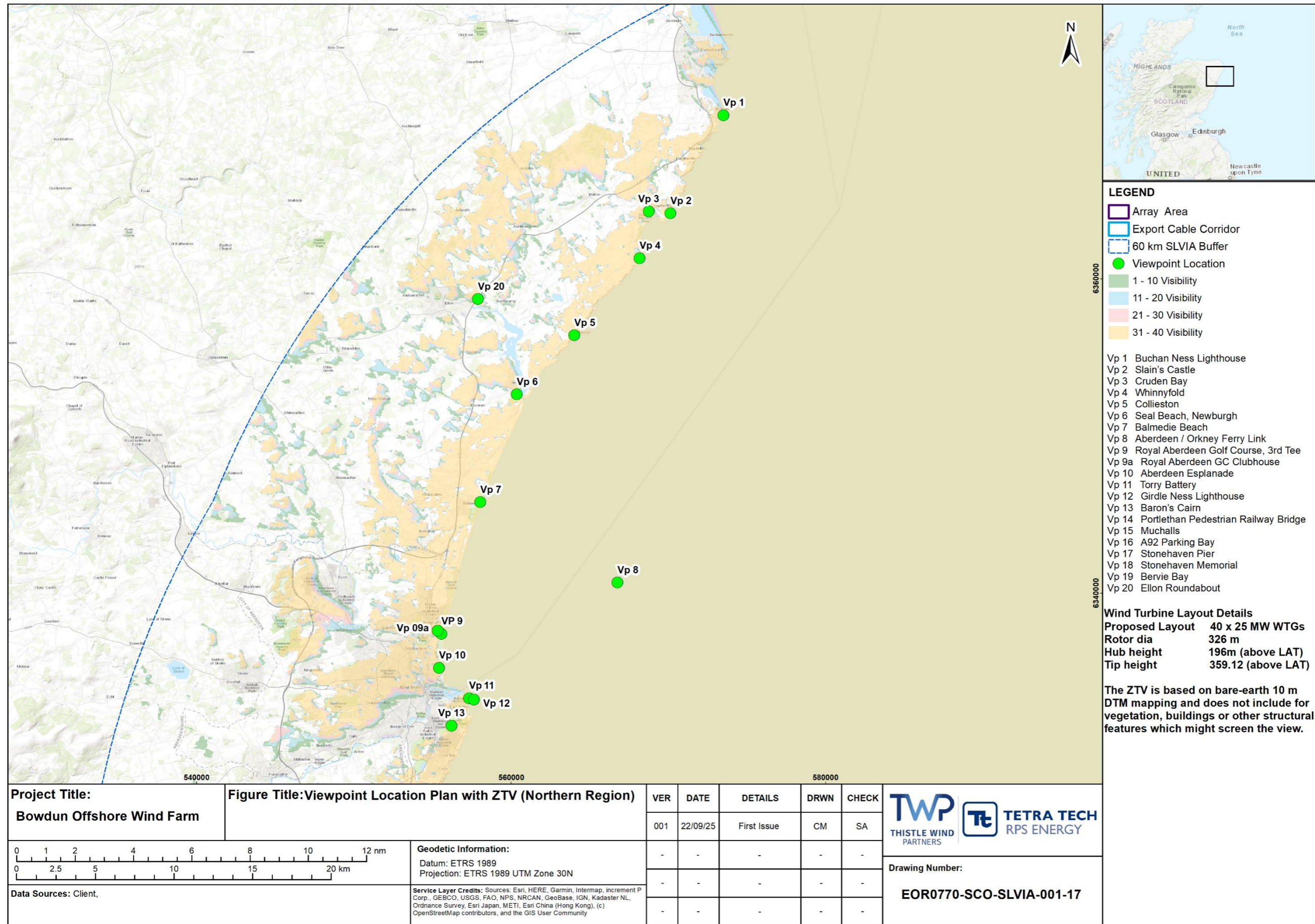


Figure 20.17: Viewpoint Location Plan with ZTV (Northern Region)

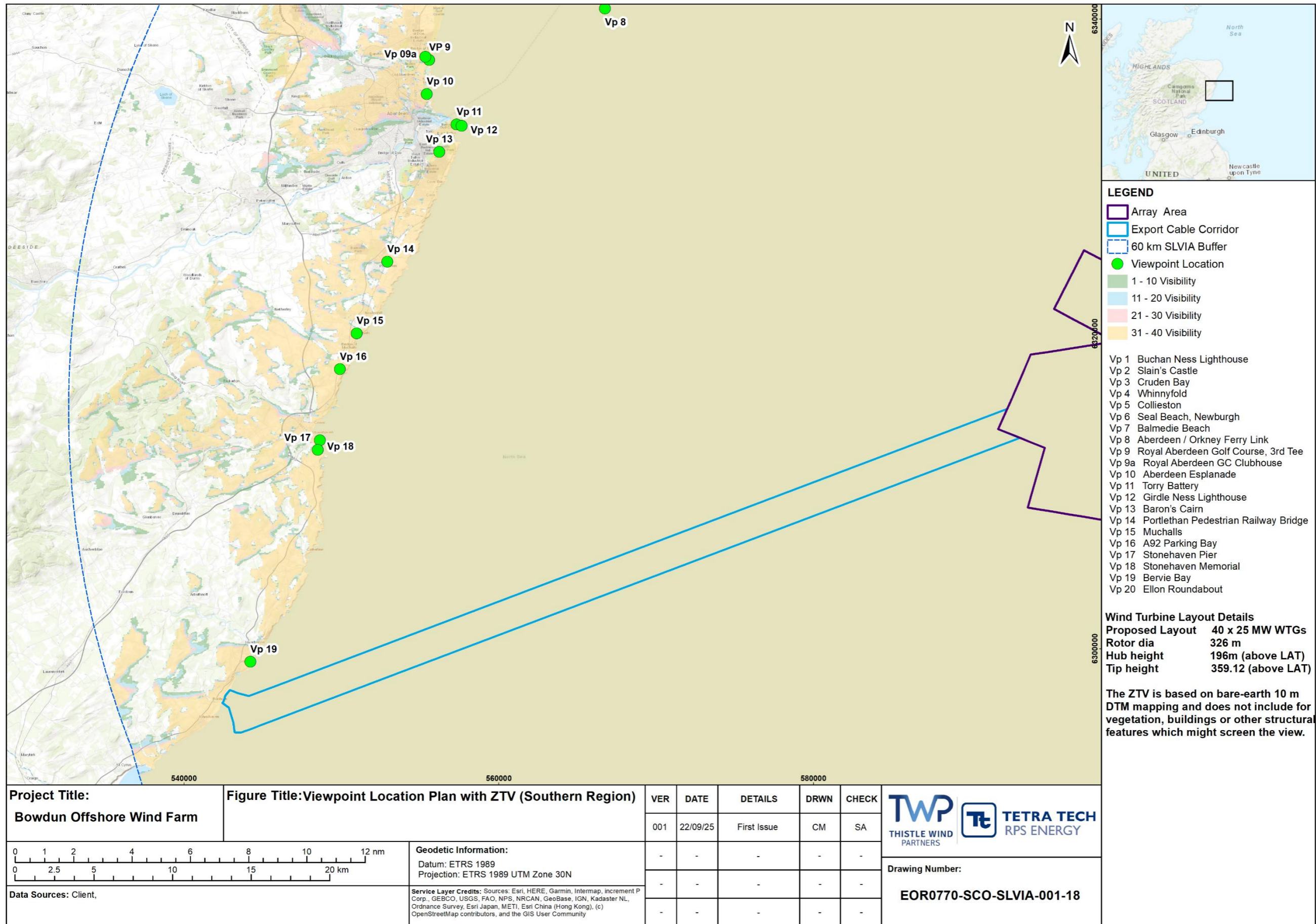


Figure 20.18: Viewpoint Location Plan with ZTV (Southern Region)

### **Future Baseline Scenario**

- 20.6.31 The EIA Regulations require both “a description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the project as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort, on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge” is included within the Offshore EIA Report.
- 20.6.32 If the Proposed Development does not come forward, an assessment of the ‘without development’ future baseline conditions has also been carried out and is described within this section.
- 20.6.33 The setting and character of the seascape, landscape and visual receptors considered within this assessment are subject to ongoing change because of development, land use changes and potentially climatic change. Changes because of future development and alterations to current land use will likely be controlled by relevant legislation and planning policy, such that adverse impacts as a result of such change will be reduced.
- 20.6.34 For the purposes of this assessment, it has been assumed that the baseline conditions associated with the seascape, landscape and visual receptors will remain unchanged in the long term.

### **Data Limitations and Assumptions**

- 20.6.35 The assessment of visual impacts from each of the identified viewpoint locations contained within this SLVIA has been based on clear visibility and hence the greatest level of visual change in setting. Predicted effects have not been amended or reduced either in magnitude or significance due to visual variations because of weather/visibility and how frequently/infrequently the effects will be experienced. Therefore, the assessments as presented need to be considered in the context of the period over which such effects will occur.

## **20.7 Key Parameters for Assessment**

### **Maximum Design Scenario**

- 20.7.1 The MDS identified in Table 20.12 are those parameters expected to have the potential to result in the greatest adverse effect on an identified receptor or receptor group. Any other development scenario within the Project Design Envelope (PDE), will result in the same, or less, level of environmental effect. The scenario has been selected from the details provided in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description.

Table 20.12: MDS Considered for Each Potential Impact as Part of the Assessment of Likely Significant Environmental Effects on Seascape, Landscape and Visual Resources

Potential Impact	Phase			Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	C	O	D		
<p><b>Temporary, Indirect and Direct Seascape, Landscape and Visual Effects arising because of the works associated with the Offshore Export Cable(s), Inter-Array Cables (IACs) and Landfall connection site</b></p>	✓	x	✓	<p><b>Construction Phase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction period: Up to 5 years with Offshore Export Cable installation taking place across one year.</li> </ul> <p><u>Interconnector Cables</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maximum number of cables: 3; and</li> <li>total cable length: 36 km.</li> </ul> <p><u>IACs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total cable length: 167 km; and</li> <li>maximum length on seabed: 151 km.</li> </ul> <p><u>Offshore Export Cables</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maximum number of cables: 3; and</li> <li>total cable length: 210 km (3 x 70 km).</li> </ul> <p><u>Landfall – Landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Export Cable Corridor width: 80 m;</li> <li>maximum number of Transition Joint Bays (TJBs): 4; and</li> <li>total area of TJBs: 320 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><u>Vessels &amp; Movements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maximum number of vessels (excluding helicopters) on site at any one time during construction phase of the Export Cable Corridor: 16;</li> <li>total number of vessel movements (excluding helicopters) during construction phase of Export Cable Corridor: 449;</li> <li>maximum number of vessels (excluding helicopters) within the Array Area at any one time during construction phase: 25; and</li> <li>total number of vessel movements (return trips) (excluding helicopters) within Array Area during construction phase: 1,671.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decommissioning Phase</b></p> <p>A Decommissioning Programme will be submitted to MD-LOT for consultation and approval. The Decommissioning Programme will be updated during the Project’s lifespan to take account of changing best practice and new technologies. The approach for decommissioning is yet to be determined, however, for the purposes of this MDS total removal of all infrastructure including buried cables and cable protection has been assumed, and as such the environmental impact of decommissioning will be the same if not lower than construction.</p>	<p><u>Interconnector Cables</u></p> <p>The MDS for this impact considers the construction and decommissioning works associated with the largest extent of IACs and Interconnector Cables (between Offshore Substation Platforms (OSPs)), resulting in a temporary increase in the number of vessels visible/present within the seascape. Interconnector Cables and IACs will not be visible during the O&amp;M phase.</p> <p><u>Offshore Export Cables</u></p> <p>The MDS for this impact considers the greatest extent of cabling associated with the Offshore Export Cable(s) between the OSPs and the TJBs, resulting in a temporary increase in the number of vessels visible/present within the seascape at varying distances. Works associated with the Offshore Export Cables between OSP locations to MHWS including vessels (e.g. jack ups etc.) but also nearshore cable installation seaward of the trenchless (e.g. Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD)) exit point.</p> <p>The Export Cable through the intertidal zone will be fully buried.</p>
<p><b>Temporary effects arising because of the construction and decommissioning works associated with the installation of Wind Turbines and OSPs</b></p>	✓	x	✓	<p><b>Construction Phase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>construction phase to last up to 5 years;</li> <li>temporary presence of specialised sea vessels for construction activities associated with 3 OSPs height 60 m above Lowest Astronomical Tide (LAT) x 50 m topside length x 40 m topside width;</li> <li>temporary presence of specialised sea vessels for construction activities associated with the construction of 40 Wind Turbines to 359.12 m tip height;</li> <li>views of 40 Wind Turbines and 3 OSP structures under partial and full construction;</li> <li>maximum number of vessels (excluding helicopters) within Array Area during construction phase: 25; and</li> <li>total number of vessel movements (return trips) (excluding helicopters) within Array Area during construction phase: 1,671.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decommissioning Phase</b></p> <p>A Decommissioning Programme will be submitted to MD-LOT for consultation and approval. The Decommissioning Programme will be updated during the Project’s lifespan to take account of changing best practice and new technologies.</p>	<p><u>Wind Turbines</u></p> <p>The MDS for this impact considers the partial and gradual construction of the tallest Wind Turbines: 40 Wind Turbines to 359.12 m tip height above Lowest Astronomical Tide (LAT), 33.12 m above LAT lower tip height, maximum rotor diameter 326 m and maximum hub height of 196 m above LAT with upper tower diameter of 8 m and lower tower diameter of 9 m.</p> <p>Tallest Wind Turbine (maximum tip height 359.12 m above LAT) has been considered as this results in the most extensive ZTV, resulting in the greatest degree of visual change in the setting of SLVIA Receptors.</p> <p><u>OSPs</u></p>

Potential Impact	Phase			Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	C	O	D		
				The approach for decommissioning is yet to be determined, however, for the purposes of this MDS total removal of all infrastructure including buried cables and cable protection has been assumed, and as such the environmental impact of decommissioning will be the same if not lower than construction.	Largest number of OSPs resulting in greatest degree of visual change in the setting of SLVIA receptors.
<b>Long term visual effects arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views.</b>	x	✓	x	<p><b>O&amp;M Phase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operational lifetime: up to 30 years.</li> </ul> <p><u>Wind Turbines</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maximum number: 40;</li> <li>maximum tip height: 359.12 m above LAT;</li> <li>lower tip height 33.12 m above LAT;</li> <li>maximum rotor diameter 326 m;</li> <li>maximum hub height 196 m above LAT;</li> <li>upper tower diameter 8 m;</li> <li>lower tower diameter 9 m;</li> <li>colour: RAL7035 (light grey); and</li> <li>lighting: navigational lighting in accordance with the requirements set out in the guidance provided by Maritime &amp; Coastguard Agency (MCA); Offshore Renewable Energy Installations: Requirements, guidance and operational considerations for Search and Rescue (SAR) and Emergency Response (Marine Guidance Note (MGN) 654 Annex 5).</li> </ul> <p><u>OSPs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maximum number: 3;</li> <li>height of top of main structure above LAT: 60 m; and</li> <li>maximum dimensions of topside: 50 m long x 40 m wide.</li> </ul> <p><u>Vessels</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total of 12 (excluding helicopters) vessels at any one time in the Array Area will be involved over the duration of O&amp;M phase (up to 30 years) making a total of up to 588 return trips per year. In addition to this, a further number of vessels will undertake another 146 return trips spread over the 30 year O&amp;M phase.</li> <li>A total of 8 vessels (excluding helicopters) at any one time in the Export Cable Corridor will be involved over the duration of O&amp;M phase (up to 30 years) making a total of up to 125 return trips per year. In addition to this, a further number of vessels will undertake another 114 return trips spread over the 30 year O&amp;M phase.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Wind Turbines</u></p> <p>Tallest Wind Turbines (maximum tip height 359.12 m above LAT) result in the most extensive ZTV and are likely to be perceived as resulting in the greatest degree of visual change in the setting of SLVIA receptors.</p> <p><u>OSPs</u></p> <p>Largest number of OSPs resulting in greatest degree of visual change in the setting of SLVIA receptors.</p> <p><u>Vessels</u></p> <p>Greatest number of vessel movements (return trips) resulting in the largest degree of visual change in the setting of SLVIA receptors.</p>

\* Proposed Development Phase refers to construction (C), O&M (O) and decommissioning (D).

### Impacts Scoped Out of the Assessment

20.7.2 On the basis of the baseline environment and the project description outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description, several impacts are scoped out of the assessment for seascape, landscape and visual impacts. These were proposed to be scoped out in the Offshore EIA Scoping Report (BOWFL, 2024) and no concerns were raised by consultees within the Scoping Opinion received (MD-LOT, 2024).

20.7.3 These impacts are outlined in, Table 20.13 together with a justification for scoping them out.

**Table 20.13: Impact Scoped Out of the Assessment for SLVIA**

Potential Impact	Phase*			Justification
	C	O	D	
Temporary night-time impacts on coastal landscape character and visual amenity because of temporary lighting within the Array Area	✓	x	x	Lighting associated with the Array Area construction activities are highly unlikely to be visible/perceptible due to distance.
Long term night-time impacts on coastal landscape character and visual amenity	x	✓	x	Aviation warning lights and navigation lights mounted on Wind Turbines are highly unlikely to be visible/perceived due to distance.
Temporary night-time impacts on coastal landscape character and visual amenity because of temporary lighting within the Array Area	x	x	✓	Lighting associated with the Array Area decommissioning activities is highly unlikely to be visible/perceived due to distance.

\* Proposed Development Phase refers to construction (C), O&M (O) and decommissioning (D).

## 20.8 Methodology for Assessment of Effects

### Overview

20.8.1 The assessment of effects for seascape, landscape and visual impact has followed the methodology set out in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology. Specific to the SLVIA, the following guidance documents have also been considered:

- Countryside Council for Wales, Brady Shipman and Martin, University College Dublin, Guide to Best Practice in Seascape Assessment (2001) Maritime Ireland/Wales INTERREG Report No. 5;
- Department of Trade and Industry, Guidance on the Assessment of the Impact of Offshore Wind Farm: Seascape and Visual Impact Report (2005) (hereafter referred to as the ‘DTI Guidance 2005’);
- Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (now The Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP)), GLVIA3; and

- An assessment of the sensitivity and capacity of the Scottish seascape in relation to wind farms. Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Commissioned Report No. 103 (2005).

#### **Criteria for Assessment**

- 20.8.2 The assessment methodology has been derived from the GLVIA3. The involvement of the IEMA in developing the GLVIA3 ensured that LVIA's undertaken within the EIA process can be effectively integrated with the rest of the topic assessments in an environmental statement.
- 20.8.3 The guidance contained in GLVIA3 ensures that the most relevant assessment principles and approaches are being utilised and offers guidance on setting out the context of the development and the receiving environment. The methodology approach, principles and processes utilised in the SLVIA aims to support compliance with EIA Regulations and to follow the principles set out in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology.
- 20.8.4 The SLVIA methodology, outlined below, also contains certain discipline-specific terminology which the SLVIA uses, and is provided in Volume 1, Overarching Glossary and Acronyms. Information about the Proposed Development (including the MDSs) and the proposed activities within all stages of the Proposed Development life cycle (construction, O&M, and decommissioning) shall be combined with information about the environmental baseline to identify the potential interactions between the Proposed Development and the environment.
- 20.8.5 As identified in the GLVIA3 the effects are identified by establishing and describing the changes resulting from the different components of the development and the resulting effects on individual landscape or visual receptors.
- 20.8.6 The effects of a Proposed Development are also considered in relation to direct changes to seascape/landscape features and resources, such as removal of existing vegetation, and indirect changes to the character of the surrounding seascape/landscape taking into consideration the scale, extent and the duration of the change.
- 20.8.7 Assessment of the significance of likely effects takes account of the nature of the effects ('magnitude'), as well as the nature of the receptors ('sensitivity') and differentiates between them according to the stages ('Construction stage', 'Operational stage' and 'Decommissioning stage') of the development in which they would occur (GLVIA3, Box 3.1).
- 20.8.8 Wherever possible, identified effects are quantified, however the nature of a SLVIA requires interpretation by professional judgement. To provide a level of consistency to the assessment, the prediction of the magnitude of impact, the sensitivity of the receptor and the assessment of significance of the residual landscape and visual impacts have been based on pre-defined criteria.
- 20.8.9 When determining the significance of likely effects, a process is used which involves defining the magnitude of the potential impacts and the sensitivity of the receptors. This section describes the criteria applied in this chapter to

assign values to the magnitude of potential impacts and the sensitivity of the receptors. The terms used to define magnitude and sensitivity are based on those which are described in further detail in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology.

20.8.10 The criteria for defining magnitude in this chapter are outlined in Table 20.15. The assessment of each impact considered the spatial extent, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact when determining magnitude, which is outlined within the magnitude section of each impact assessment (e.g. a duration of hours or days would be considered for most receptors to be of short term duration, which is likely to result in a low magnitude of impact).

### Sensitivity to Change

#### *Seascape/Landscape Receptors: Sensitivity*

20.8.11 The determination of the sensitivity of the landscape/seascape receptor is based upon an evaluation of the elements or characteristics of the landscape/seascape likely to be affected. The evaluation reflects factors such as its quality, value, contribution to landscape/seascape character and the degree to which the element or characteristic can be replaced or substituted.

20.8.12 GLVIA3 at paragraph 5.39 states that “*landscape receptors need to be assessed firstly in terms of their sensitivity, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape*”.

20.8.13 Susceptibility is defined by GLVIA3 at paragraph 5.40 as “*the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development without due consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies*”.

20.8.14 The value of a seascape/landscape receptor is determined with reference to the presence of relevant designations and their level of importance. For the purpose of this assessment, landscape value is categorised as:

- **Very High:** Areas of landscape/seascape acknowledged as being of national or international importance reflected in designation. These are of landscape/seascape significance within the wider region or nationally;
- **High:** Areas that have a very strong positive character with valued and consistent distinctive features that gives the landscape or seascape unity, richness and harmony. These are of landscape/seascape significance within the district;
- **Medium:** Areas that exhibit positive character, but which may have evidence of alteration/degradation or erosion of features resulting in a less distinctive landscape or seascape. These may be of some local landscape/seascape significance with some positive recognisable structure; and

- **Low:** Areas that are generally negative in character, degraded and in poor condition. No distinctive positive characteristics and with little or no structure. Scope for positive enhancement.

20.8.15 The criteria for defining sensitivity for landscape/seascape receptors are broadly defined in accordance with Table 20.14 below.

**Table 20.14: Definition of Terms Relating to Landscape/Seascape Sensitivity**

Sensitivity	Susceptibility	Value
<b>Very High</b>	Exceptional landscape/seascape quality, no or limited potential for substitution. Key elements/features well known to the wider public.  Little or no tolerance to change.	Nationally/internationally designated/valued landscape/seascape, or key elements or features of national/internationally Designated Landscape/seascape.  Little or no tolerance to change.
<b>High</b>	Strong/distinctive landscape/seascape character; absence of landscape detractors.  Low tolerance to change.	Regionally/nationally designated/valued countryside and landscape/seascape features.  Low tolerance to change.
<b>Medium</b>	Some distinctive landscape/seascape characteristics; few landscape detractors.  Medium tolerance to change.	Locally/regionally designated/valued countryside and landscape/seascape features.  Medium tolerance to change.
<b>Low</b>	Absence of distinctive landscape/seascape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors.  High tolerance to change.	Undesignated countryside and landscape/seascape features.  High tolerance to change.
<b>Negligible</b>	Absence of positive landscape/seascape characteristics; significant number of landscape detractors.  High tolerance to change.	Undesignated countryside and landscape/seascape features.  High tolerance to change.

***Seascape/Landscape Receptors: Magnitude***

20.8.16 The magnitude of impact on landscape/seascape receptors and the is based on combining judgements on “*size or scale, the geographic extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility*” (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.48).

20.8.17 The criteria for defining the magnitude of impact on landscape/seascape receptors is defined in Table 20.15 below.

**Table 20.15: Definition of Terms Relating to Magnitude of Landscape/Seascape Impact**

Magnitude of Impact	Definition
<b>High</b>	Total loss or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics, such that post development the baseline will be fundamentally changed. The Proposed Development is highly prominent or even dominant and could become the defining characteristic of views and seascape/landscape character.

Magnitude of Impact	Definition
<b>Medium</b>	Represents a notable loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics, such that post development the baseline will be noticeably changed. The Proposed Development appears as a prominent element/foci in the seascape/landscape and in views.
<b>Low</b>	Constitutes a partial loss to one or more key elements, features or characteristics, such that post development the baseline will be largely unchanged despite noticeable differences. The addition of the Proposed Development is less distinct through having a limited characterising influence within the broader seascape/landscape.
<b>Negligible</b>	The Proposed Development represents a barely discernible loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the baseline conditions. The underlying seascape/landscape character or view composition would be essentially unchanged.
<b>No Change</b>	No loss, alteration or addition to the receiving landscape/seascape resource.

### **Visual Receptors: Sensitivity**

- 20.8.18 Sensitivity of visual receptors is arrived at by combining judgements concerning their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the particular view.
- 20.8.19 Paragraph 6.32 of the GLVIA refers to the susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and states that susceptibility is mainly a function of *“the occupation or activity of different people experiencing the view at particular locations”* and *“the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations”*.
- 20.8.20 Judgements on the overall visual receptor sensitivity are provided in Table 20.16 below. The sensitivity of the visual receptor is based on combining judgements on the sensitivity of the human receptor (for example resident, commuter, tourist, walker, recreationist or worker, and the numbers of viewers affected) and judgements on the visual resource value (for example views experienced from residential properties, workplace, leisure venue, local beauty spot, scenic viewpoint, commuter route, tourist route or walkers’ route).

**Table 20.16: Definition of Terms relating to Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

Sensitivity	Susceptibility	Value
<b>Very High</b>	Observers, drawn to a particular view, including those who have travelled to experience the views.  Little or no tolerance to change.	Views of remarkable scenic quality, of and within internationally designated landscapes or key features or elements of nationally designated landscapes that are well known to the wider public.  Little or no tolerance to change.
<b>High</b>	Observers enjoying the countryside from their homes or pursuing quiet outdoor recreation are more sensitive to visual change.	Views from residential property. Public rights of way, National Trails, long distance walking routes and nationally designated

Sensitivity	Susceptibility	Value
	Little tolerance to change.	countryside/landscape features with public access.  Low tolerance to change.
<b>Medium</b>	Observers enjoying the countryside from vehicles on quiet/promoted routes are moderately sensitive to visual change.  Medium tolerance to change.	Views from local roads and routes crossing designated countryside/landscape features and “access land” as well as promoted paths.  Medium Tolerance to change.
<b>Low</b>	Observers in vehicles or people involved in frequent or infrequent repeated activities are less sensitive to visual change.  High tolerance to change.	Views from workplaces, main roads and undesignated countryside/landscape features.  High tolerance to change.
<b>Negligible</b>	Observers in vehicles or people involved in frequent or frequently repeated activities are less sensitive to visual change.  High tolerance to change.	Views from within and of undesignated landscapes with significant number of landscape detractors.  High tolerance to change.

**Visual Receptors: Magnitude**

20.8.21 The criteria for defining the magnitude of visual impact on visual receptors is provided in Table 20.17 below.

**Table 20.17: Definition of Terms Relating to Magnitude of Visual Impact**

Magnitude of Impact	Definition
<b>High</b>	Complete or very substantial change in view dominant involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline (e.g. through removal of key elements).
<b>Medium</b>	Moderate change in view: which may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline (i.e. pre-development view) through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the view would alter. View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.
<b>Low</b>	Minor change in baseline (i.e. pre-development view). Change would be distinguishable from the surroundings whilst composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances.
<b>Negligible</b>	Very slight change in baseline (i.e. pre-development view). Change barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered.
<b>No Change</b>	No alteration to the existing view.

- 20.8.22 The duration and reversibility of seascape/landscape and visual effects are based on the period over which the Proposed Development is likely to exist (during construction and O&M) and the extent to which the Proposed Development will be removed (decommissioning), with effects reversed at the end of that period.
- 20.8.23 Long term, medium term and short term seascape/landscape and visual effects are defined as follows:
- long term: more than ten years duration (may be defined as permanent or reversible);
  - medium term: of six to ten years duration; and
  - short term: one to five years duration.
- 20.8.24 Where a range is suggested for the significance of effect, for example, moderate to major, it is possible that this may span the significance threshold. The technical specialist’s professional judgement will be applied to determine which outcome defines the most likely effect, which takes into account the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact. Where professional judgement is applied to quantify final significance from a range, the assessment will set out the factors that result in the final assessment of significance. These factors may include the likelihood that an effect will occur, data certainty and relevant information about the wider environmental context.
- 20.8.25 The EIA Regulations require the identification and reporting of significant environmental effects. For the purposes of this assessment:
- a level of moderate or more will be considered a “*significant*” effect in terms of the EIA Regulations; and
  - a level of minor or less will be considered “*not significant*” in terms of the EIA Regulations.

**Table 20.18: Matrix Used for the Assessment of the Significance of the Effect**

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact				
	No Change	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
<b>Negligible</b>	None	Negligible	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor
<b>Low</b>	None	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate
<b>Medium</b>	None	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major
<b>High</b>	None	Minor	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major
<b>Very High</b>	None	Minor	Moderate or Major	Major	Major

**Table 20.19: Definition of Significance**

Impact	Justification
<b>None</b>	No effects or those that are beneath levels of perception, within normal bounds of variation, or within the margin of forecasting error.
<b>Negligible</b>	These beneficial or adverse effects are generally raised as local factors, where changes would have an indiscernible effect.
<b>Minor</b>	These beneficial or adverse effects are generally, but not exclusively, raised as local factors. They are unlikely to be critical in the decision-making process but are important in enhancing the subsequent design of the Proposed Development.
<b>Moderate</b>	These beneficial or adverse effects have the potential to be important and may influence the decision-making process. These effects are generally, but not exclusively, associated with sites or features of local or regional importance.
<b>Major</b>	These beneficial or adverse effects are very important and are likely to be material in the decision-making process. These effects are generally, but not exclusively, associated with sites or features of international, national, or regional importance. However, a major change in a site or feature of local importance may also enter this category.

## 20.9 Embedded Mitigation

20.9.1 As part of the Proposed Development design process, a number of Embedded Mitigation have been proposed to reduce the potential for impacts on seascape, landscape and visual impacts (see Table 20.20). They are considered at every stage of the Proposed Development through design and best practice and, as there is a commitment to implementing these measures, these have been considered in the assessment presented in Section 20.11 (i.e. the determination of magnitude and therefore significance assumes implementation of these measures). These Embedded Mitigations are considered standard industry practice for this type of development.

**Table 20.20: Embedded Mitigation Adopted as Part of the Proposed Development**

ID*	Embedded Mitigation Adopted as Part of the Proposed Development	Justification
7	Development of, and adherence to, a Construction Method Statement (CMS) along with a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP).	The CMS will specify the Proposed Development’s construction methods, setting out good practice construction measures and how agreed mitigation measures from the Offshore EIA Report, will be implemented during construction.
8	All relevant Health and Safety Executive (HSE) procedures will be followed.	To align with the health and safety measures outlined by the HSE.
21	Wind Turbine design to have a minimum lower blade tip height of 33.12 m above LAT.	To provide visual coherence within views.
24	Development of, and adherence to, a Development Specification and Layout Plan (DSLPL). The development of the DSLPL includes consultation with the relevant authorities for approval, including the MCA and Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB).	To provide visual coherence within views.

ID*	Embedded Mitigation Adopted as Part of the Proposed Development	Justification
35	Colouration of the Wind Turbines and blades to industry standard (light grey).	To reduce visibility and prominence of the Wind Turbines in open sea views.
46	Wind Turbines will be of consistent form and rotor diameter.	To provide visual uniformity and visual coherence in views.

\*see Volume 3, Technical Appendix 4.6: Schedule of Mitigation and Commitments

## 20.10 Assessment of Significance

20.10.1 Table 20.12 summarises the potential effects arising from the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development, as well as the MDS against which each impact has been assessed. An assessment of the likely significance of the environmental effects of the Proposed Development on the seascape, landscape and visual receptors caused by each identified impact is given below.

20.10.2 It should be noted that assessment is based on an indicative layout and that final layout will be developed post-consent, and that the assessments are based on the MDS.

### **IMPACT 1 - TEMPORARY, INDIRECT AND DIRECT SEASCAPE, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS ARISING BECAUSE OF THE WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OFFSHORE EXPORT CABLE(S), INTERCONNECTOR CABLES AND LANDFALL CONNECTION SITE**

#### ***Construction Phase***

*Temporary Indirect Effects Upon Seascape Character – Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline With Open Sea Views and Temporary Indirect Effects Upon Landscape Character – Raised Beach Coast - Aberdeenshire (LCT 13)*

#### Baseline and Sensitivity

20.10.3 The Landfall and connection to the Onshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development is located within a small overall section of coastline between Gourdon, to the north, and Johnshaven, to the south. Landfall is located with a small portion of the large LCT identified as Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 13) which aligns with the Type 2: Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views seascape character type. Both LCT 13 and the Type 2 SCT are located to the immediate north and south of the Landfall and form the main seascape and landscape character associated with this section of the eastern coastline.

20.10.4 The overall value of the landscape and the seascape within this area is judged to be high as whilst settlement is generally absent, occasional scattered dwellings, farmsteads (with outbuildings) can be found along the coastline, though these are often obscured by extensive shelterbelt plantings. Operational onshore Wind Turbines, located on more elevated land to the north, west of Gourdon form distinct visual elements in western and northern views from the coastline. Where roads exist, they are primarily aligned parallel to the coast, with access and views to the coast restricted due to the localised topographical changes and existing shelterbelt plantings which restrict view of the open sea

from inland areas, with only immediate coastal areas affording open sea views. Open panoramic views of the North Sea are generally along the coast and out to open sea, although open sea views are locally influenced by shipping movements at varying distances, and which at the time of survey, included both fishing trawler, private motorboat and larger shipping movements on the distant horizon, associated with the maintenance operations for existing OWFs. Seascape and landscape character areas associated with the Landfall site are associated with the South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.

- 20.10.5 The susceptibility of the seascape/landscape is judged to be high as whilst this coastal area is valued regionally and locally it is influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances and operational Wind Turbines to the north, visible within views experienced.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.6 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the seascape and LCT, the overall sensitivity of the receptor at this location is judged to be high.

Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.7 The magnitude of impact for landscape and seascape areas to the north and south of the Landfall is predicted to be of a local spatial extent, short term duration, and considered to be reversible. It is predicted that the impacts associated with implementation of all underwater cables, including interconnector cables, will be perceived indirectly with no direct impact upon the seascape character or landscape character beyond the Landfall site boundary and limited to the perception of additional shipping movement in offshore areas. The magnitude of impact is considered to be low as the Proposed Development will not directly affect the landscape/seascape and will be limited to the perception of additional shipping movements from within the landscape/seascape area. The presence of additional shipping and shipping movements within areas close to shore, whilst increasing the perception and occurrence of such elements in the view, is not considered to alter the composition and character of the available view, which would be like the pre-development circumstance.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.8 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** adverse, indirect, short term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms. This is judged as not significant in EIA terms, as additional shipping movements are not an uncommon feature within available views and would not alter the character or composition of the view.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.9 Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is assessed as not significant in EIA terms.

***Decommissioning Phase***

20.10.10 Decommissioning activities associated with the removal of the Landfall elements associated with the Proposed Development will have a short term duration, localised indirect effect upon a small, limited portion of the extensive seascape and landscape character areas within which it is located. The previously identified and assessed impacts that are predicted to occur during the construction phase, are considered to occur during the decommissioning phase.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.11 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the seascape and LCT the overall sensitivity of the receptor, previously identified and described for the coastal areas, is high.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.12 The impact is predicted to be of a local spatial extent and of short term duration. It is predicted that the impact will affect the receptor indirectly. The magnitude is therefore considered to be localised and low.

Significance of the Effect

20.10.13 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, and short term, with Landfall elements removed, which is judged as not significant in EIA terms as the effect arising from the removal of such elements is localised in extent and of short term duration reverting the landscape back to pre-development character.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

20.10.14 Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is not significant in EIA terms.

*Temporary Direct Effects Upon Seascape Character – Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline With Open Sea Views and Temporary Indirect Effects Upon Landscape Character – Raised Beach Coast - Aberdeenshire (LCT 13)*

**Construction Phase**

Baseline and Sensitivity

20.10.15 The Landfall location and connection to the Onshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development is located within a small overall section of coastline between Gourdon, to the north, and Johnshaven, to the south. The Landfall site forms a very minor overall portion of the extensive coastal LCT identified as Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 13) which aligns with the extensive Type 2: Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views seascape character type. Both LCT 13 and the Type 2 SCT align with the South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA designation.

20.10.16 Overall value of the landscape is judged to be high as the coastline is generally utilised by recreational receptors, though also experienced locally by residential receptors in proximity to the coast.

20.10.17 The susceptibility of the seascape/landscape is judged to be high as whilst this coastal area is valued regionally and locally it is influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances and operational Wind Turbines to the north, visible within views experienced.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.18 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the LCT, the overall sensitivity of the receptor at this location is judged to be high.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.19 The impact is predicted to be of a local spatial extent, short term duration, and considered to be reversible. It is predicted that the impact will affect the receptor directly. The magnitude is considered to be localised and low as effects do not alter the seascape or landscape character as elements of the Proposed Development will be buried or not visible following completion of the construction phase.

Significance of the Effect

20.10.20 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, short term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms. Assessed as minor rather than moderate as the predicted effects are not considered to alter the seascape or landscape character as elements will be buried or not visible following completion of the construction phase.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

20.10.21 Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is not significant in EIA terms.

***Decommissioning Phase***

20.10.22 Decommissioning activities associated with the removal of the Landfall elements associated with the Proposed Development will have a short term duration, localised direct effect upon a small, limited portion of the extensive seascape and landscape character areas within which it is located. The previously identified and assessed impacts that are predicted to occur during the construction phase, are considered to occur during the decommissioning phase.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.23 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the seascape and LCT the overall sensitivity of the receptor, previously identified and described for the coastal areas, is high.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.24 The impact is predicted to be of a local spatial extent and of short term duration. It is predicted that the impact will affect the receptor directly. The magnitude is therefore considered to be localised and low as effects do not alter the seascape or landscape character as elements of the Proposed

Development will be removed and character returned to the equivalent of pre-development state.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.25 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** beneficial, direct, and short term, with Landfall elements removed, which is judged as not significant in EIA terms as effects arising due to the removal of elements are not considered to alter the seascape or landscape character, is localised in extent and of short term duration reverting the landscape back to pre-development character.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.26 Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is not significant in EIA terms.

**IMPACT 2 - TEMPORARY EFFECTS ARISING BECAUSE OF THE CONSTRUCTION AND DECOMMISSIONING WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE INSTALLATION OF WIND TURBINES AND OSPS**

***Construction Phase***

- 20.10.27 The following assessment of the temporary effects arising because of works associated with the construction and decommissioning of the Offshore Infrastructure (Wind Turbines and OSPs) has been subdivided into separate assessments associated with SCT, LCT, Designated Landscapes and visual receptors.

*Seascape and Landscape Character Effects*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.28 The overall value of the landscape and seascape character within the SLVIA Study Area is judged to be high, as much of the coastal landscape associated with the easter coastline of Aberdeenshire has been designated as SLAs, which are experienced both locally and nationally.
- 20.10.29 The overall susceptibility of the seascape/landscape is judged to be medium as whilst this coastal area is valued regionally and locally it is influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances and operational Wind Turbines to the north, visible within views experienced.
- 20.10.30 The Proposed Development is considered to have an indirect effect on seascape and landscape character areas identified previously during the construction phase as indicated in Table 20.7 and Table 20.8.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.31 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the seascape/landscape, the overall sensitivity of the receptor is judged to be high.

Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.32 Construction phase impacts on perceived seascape and landscape character associated with coastal fringes will occur because of the construction activities

associated with the installation of Wind Turbines and OSPs, vessel movements and partially constructed Offshore Infrastructure. Such activities may combine to alter, indirectly, the perceived seascape and landscape character through visibility of the construction activities.

- 20.10.33 During the construction phase, associated with installation of the Offshore Infrastructure of the Proposed Development, the magnitude of impact on coastal seascape/landscapes will be less than that predicted to occur during the O&M phase (refer to the impact assessment of long term effects arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views), as the Wind Turbines are not fully constructed. Overall the magnitude of impact is considered to be low as the Proposed Development will not directly affect elements or features of the landscape or seascape. The presence of additional shipping and shipping movements within seascape areas close to shore, whilst increasing the perception and occurrence of such elements in the view is not considered to alter the composition and character of the seascape and or landscape, which would be similar to the pre-development circumstance.

Significance of Effect

- 20.10.34 Based on the combination of the overall high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** adverse, indirect, short term and reversible, which is judged as not significant in EIA terms. This is judged minor rather than moderate, as the presence of shipping and shipping movements associated with construction phase operations within seascape areas close to shore whilst increasing the perception of shipping movements within the view is not an uncommon feature within available views from coastal landscape/seascape areas.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.35 Effects from construction are assessed as being short term and temporary, occurring during the length of the construction phase and differing in nature from the O&M effects mainly due to the influence of the various construction vessels in the seascape, that will not be present or result in effects during the O&M Phase. Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is assessed as not significant in EIA terms.

*Landscape Character/Special Qualities of Designated Landscapes*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.36 The overall value of the SLA designation is judged to be high, as described in Section 20.6 previously.
- 20.10.37 The overall susceptibility of the landscape designation is judged to be medium as the coastal area within which this designation is located whilst valued locally and identified at a regional level, is influenced by visibility of operational Offshore Infrastructure and shipping movements at various distances within views experienced.
- 20.10.38 The Proposed Development is considered to have an indirect effect on the perceived landscape character/special qualities associated with the identified

designated sites: South East Aberdeenshire Coast, located over 38 km west of the Proposed Development; North East Aberdeenshire Coast, located over 43 km north-west of the Proposed Development; Braes of the Mearns, located over 58 km south-west of the Proposed Development; and Dee Valley, located over 49 km west of the Proposed Development.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.39 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the landscape designation, the overall sensitivity of the receptor is judged to be high.

Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.40 Construction phase impacts on perceived landscape character associated with the landscape designation will occur because of the construction activities associated with the installation of Wind Turbines and OSPs, vessel movements and partially constructed Offshore Infrastructure. Such activities may combine to alter the perceived landscape character through visibility of the construction activities.
- 20.10.41 During the construction phase associated with Offshore Infrastructure of the Proposed Development, the magnitude of impact will be less than that predicted to occur during the O&M phase (assessed within the assessment of long term effects arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views), as the Wind Turbines are not fully constructed. Overall, the magnitude of impact is considered to be low as the Proposed Development will not directly affect the landscape/seascape character. The presence of additional shipping and shipping movements within seascape areas close to shore, whilst increasing the perception and occurrence of such elements in the view is not considered to alter the composition and character of the landscape designation, which would be like the pre-development circumstance.

Significance of Effect

- 20.10.42 Based on the combination of the overall high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** adverse, indirect, short term and reversible, which is judged as not significant in EIA terms. Determined as minor rather than moderate as the operational Offshore Infrastructure at varying distances and shipping movements within seascape areas close to shore whilst increasing the perception of shipping movements within the view is not an uncommon feature within available views from coastal landscape/seascape areas.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.43 Residual effects are assessed as being short term and temporary in nature, occurring during the length of the construction phase and differing from the O&M effects mainly due to the influence of the various construction vessels in the seascape, that will not be present or result in effects during the O&M phase. Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is assessed as not significant in EIA terms.

### *Visual Effects*

- 20.10.44 The Proposed Development will have direct impacts on eastern views experienced by receptors within the SLVIA Study Area during the construction phase.
- 20.10.45 Construction phase effects on visual amenity will occur because of the construction phase activities, including the installation of Wind Turbines; the installation of OSPs, vessel movements and partially constructed Offshore Infrastructure, all of which will combine to alter the visual amenity through visibility of the construction activities.
- 20.10.46 The effects arising because of the construction of the Proposed Development are assessed as being of the same or lower magnitude of impact and significance on all visual receptors and viewpoints as those predicted to occur during the O&M phase, assessed within the assessment of long term effects arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views. This is because the impacts are short term and temporary, occurring during the length of the construction phase, and differ in nature from the operational effects mainly due to the influence of the various construction vessels in the seascape, that will not be present or result in effects during the O&M phase.
- 20.10.47 During the construction phase the magnitude of impact and predicted effect will be less than that predicted to occur during the O&M phase, assessed within the assessment of long term effects arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views, whilst the Wind Turbines are not fully constructed.

### ***Decommissioning Phase***

#### *Seascape and Landscape Character Effects*

##### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.48 The overall value of the landscape and seascape character within the SLVIA Study Area is judged to be high, as much of the coastal landscape associated with the easter coastline of Aberdeenshire has been designated as SLAs, which are both experienced locally and nationally.
- 20.10.49 The overall susceptibility of the seascape/landscape is judged to be high as whilst this coastal area is valued regionally and locally it is influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances and operational Wind Turbines to the north, visible within views experienced.
- 20.10.50 The Proposed Development is considered to have an indirect effect on seascape and landscape character areas identified previously during the decommissioning phase as indicated in Table 20.7 and Table 20.8.

##### Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.51 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the seascape/landscape, the overall sensitivity of the receptor is judged to be high.

Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.52 During the decommissioning phase, associated with the removal of the Offshore Infrastructure of the Proposed Development, the magnitude of impact on coastal seascape/landscapes will be less than that predicted to occur during the O&M phase (assessed within the assessment of long term effects arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views), while the Wind Turbines are partially removed. Overall, the magnitude of impact is considered to be low as the Proposed Development will not directly affect the landscape/seascape character.

Significance of Effect

- 20.10.53 Based on the combination of the overall high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the removal of the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** beneficial, indirect, and short term. Determined as minor rather than moderate as the presence of additional shipping and shipping movements within seascape areas close to shore, whilst increasing the perception and occurrence of such elements in the view are not considered to alter the composition and character of the available view,

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.54 Residual effects are assessed as being short term and temporary, occurring during the length of the decommissioning phase and differing in nature from the O&M effects mainly due to the influence of the various construction vessels in the seascape, that will not be present or result in effects during the O&M Phase. Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is assessed as not significant in EIA terms.

*Landscape Character/Special Qualities of Designated Landscapes*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.55 The overall value of the SLA designation is judged to be high, as described in Section 20.6 previously.
- 20.10.56 The overall susceptibility of the landscape designation is judged to be medium as the coastal area within which this designation is located whilst valued locally and nationally, it is influenced by visibility of operational Offshore Infrastructure and shipping movements at various distances within views experienced.
- 20.10.57 The removal of the Proposed Development is considered to have an indirect effect on the perceived landscape character/special qualities associated with the identified designated sites.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.58 Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the landscape designation the overall sensitivity of the receptor is judged to be high.

Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.59 Decommissioning phase effects on perceived landscape character associated with the landscape designation will occur because of the activities associated with the removal of Wind Turbines; OSPs, vessel movements and partially

removed Offshore Infrastructure. Such activities may combine to alter the perceived landscape character through visibility of the construction activities.

- 20.10.60 During the decommissioning phase the magnitude of impact will be less than that predicted to occur during the O&M Phase (assessed within the assessment of long term effects arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views), while the Wind Turbines are not fully removed. Overall the magnitude of impact is considered to be low as the Proposed Development will not directly affect the landscape/seascape character.

Significance of Effect

- 20.10.61 Based on the combination of the overall high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the removal of the Proposed Development is minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** beneficial, indirect, and short term. Determined as minor rather than moderate as effects, arising from the removal of infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development, although discernible locally would result only in a slight variation to the character and nature of the landscape/seascape experienced.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.62 Residual effects are assessed as being short term and temporary in nature, occurring during the length of the construction phase and differing from the O&M effects mainly due to the influence of the various construction vessels in the seascape, that will not be present or result in effects during the O&M phase. Additional Mitigation is not considered necessary because the likely effect in the absence of mitigation is assessed as not significant in EIA terms.

*Visual Effects*

- 20.10.63 The Proposed Development will have impacts on visual receptors/views during the decommissioning phase as indicated in Table 20.12.
- 20.10.64 Decommissioning phase effects on visual amenity will occur because of the activities, including removal of interconnector cables; incremental removal of Wind Turbines; incremental removal of OSPs, vessel movements and partially decommissioned/removed Offshore Infrastructure, all of which combine to alter the visual amenity through visibility of the associated activities and removal of the Offshore Infrastructure.
- 20.10.65 The effects arising as a result of the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development are assessed as being of the same or lower magnitude and significance on all visual receptors and viewpoints as those arising during the O&M phase of the Proposed Development, however the effects are assessed as being short term and temporary, occurring during the length of the decommissioning phase, and differing in nature from the operational effects mainly due to the influence of the various vessels in views, that will not be present or result in effects during the O&M phase.
- 20.10.66 During the decommissioning phase the magnitude of impact and effects on visual receptors/views will be less than during the O&M phase, while the Offshore Infrastructure are not fully decommissioned or removed.

### **IMPACT 3 - LONG TERM VISUAL EFFECTS ARISING BECAUSE OF THE PRESENCE OF WIND TURBINES AND OSPs ON VISUAL RECEPTORS/VIEWS**

#### ***O&M Phase***

#### *Viewpoint 1 – Buchan Ness Lighthouse*

##### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.67 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 1 Buchan Ness Lighthouse are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.20a, with a 53.5° Horizontal Field of View (HFoV) photomontage provided as Figure 20.20c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within northern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.
- 20.10.68 The viewpoint is located on the edge of the small island feature, upon which the lighthouse is located. Southern views from this location, as illustrated in the accompanying baseline image (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.20a), are generally open and panoramic in nature, partially constrained by existing rocky coastline to the immediate south of the viewpoint location. The view from this location is simple in nature and available to recreational receptors, visitors to the lighthouse and residential receptors in the vicinity.

##### Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.69 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is judged to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.70 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by receptors visiting the lighthouse, residential receptors in the vicinity and views from within northern portions of the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.
- 20.10.71 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be high as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea, despite the occurrence of shipping movements across the view, which add variety/interest. The view of the sea horizon is one of the primary foci of the view available from this location, though visual interest and draw is provided by the rocky and varied coastal edge to the immediate south of this viewpoint location. The Array Area boundary is distant and remote from this viewpoint location, separate to the viewpoint location by the open sea. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of movement of large shipping vessels at various distances within the view.

##### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.72 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 50 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5°

HFoV photomontage (refer to Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.20c) demonstrates that Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees, with hubs perceived above the distant horizon. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

- 20.10.73 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.74 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be perceived as a minor change, when viewed against the pre-development view, with the composition and character of the view judged to be similar in nature and scale following the introduction of the Proposed Development within the available view from this location.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.75 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be minor to moderate assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms as the Proposed Development would be perceived as a minor change to the existing view with the existing seascape character and composition similar to that experienced pre-development.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.76 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 2 – Slain’s Castle*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.77 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 2 Slain’s Castle are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.21a with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.21c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within northern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.
- 20.10.78 The viewpoint is located to the immediate south of Slain’s Castle, on an informal pedestrian access to the coastal edge forming a localised headland. South-

eastern views from this location are open, panoramic and expansive and simple in nature, characterised by the coastal edge and expansive views of the North Sea. The available view is considered to be available primarily to recreational receptors and visitors to Slain's Castle.

#### Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.79 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.80 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by receptors visiting Slain's Castle, and views from within the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.
- 20.10.81 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be high as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea. The wide view of the sea horizon is the primary focus of the view. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.82 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 47 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFOV photomontage (refer to Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.21c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.83 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.84 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across the central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed 'within' a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a prominent addition to the view, but the addition of the Proposed Development is considered not to substantially alter the scale and character of the view and the wider setting.

#### Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.85 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the

Proposed Development is predicted to be moderate to major assessed as **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms. Assessed as moderate rather than major, as the introduction of the Proposed Development within the view, whilst altering the composition of the view, is not considered to significantly alter the character of the existing view from this location as the Proposed Development would be viewed at distances of over 47 km within a small portion of the wider panoramic view.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.86 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development.

*Viewpoint 3 – Cruden Bay*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.87 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 3 Cruden Bay are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.22a, with a 53.5° HFOV photomontage provided as Figure 20.22c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within northern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire (LCT 17) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.
- 20.10.88 The viewpoint has been located on the northern footpath associated with the A975 (Aulton Road) located opposite to a local seating area, in proximity to existing residential properties fronting the A975 (Aulton Road) and close to the dune system forming a break between residential areas associated with built form of Cruden Bay and the coastal edge. South-eastern views from this location are constrained by the undulating topography associated with the sand dune system that forms the foreground and which limits visibility of the North Sea beyond. Where visible amongst the dunes, the North Sea forms the distant horizon and forms a strong visual draw and increased visual interest within the view.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.89 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.90 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors, residential receptors, transient receptors on the A975 and views from within the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.
- 20.10.91 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be high as views of the North Sea are limited and where visible, visibility of the North Sea forms a strong visual draw within the view. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the intervening dune system forming the foreground and the open sea, visible in minor portions of the view. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though where visible, visibility of

shipping at various distances does influence the visible portions of the North Sea within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.92 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 48 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.22c) demonstrates that Wind Turbines will be visible within a narrow portion of the view available from this location to varying degrees. Wind Turbines will be partially obscured by intervening topographical changes associated with the intervening dune system, such that upper blade sweeps would be perceived on the horizon. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, formed by the open sea within a minor portion of the overall view, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility.
- 20.10.93 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible within the small portion of open sea view, will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.94 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed within an enclosed central portion of the view available from this location, and viewed within an open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a discernible change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.95 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be minor or moderate assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms. Judged as minor rather than moderate as visible portions of the Proposed Development, would be perceived as a minor change to a small portion of the overall view, with foreground character and composition remaining largely unaffected.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.96 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 4 – Whinnyfold*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.97 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 4 Whinnyfold are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts –

Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.23a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.23c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within northern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.

20.10.98 The viewpoint is located on the access road to the immediate north of the small cluster of residential properties at Whinnyfold. South-eastern views from this location are open, panoramic and expansive and simple in nature, characterised by the coastal edge and expansive views of the North Sea. The view available from this location is considered to be available primarily to residential receptors, though would also be available to recreational receptors visiting Whinnyfold.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.99 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.100 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views primarily experienced by residential receptors, visiting recreational receptors and views from within the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.

20.10.101 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be high as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea. The wide view of the sea horizon is the primary focus of the view, though foreground features form localised points of interest. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.102 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 46 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.23c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.103 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.104 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed within the open seascape, rather than being viewed 'within' a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a distinguishable change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

20.10.105 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be Moderate to Major assessed as **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms. Assessed as moderate rather than major as the introduction of the Proposed Development within the view, whilst altering the composition of the view, is not considered to significantly alter the character of the existing view from this location as the Proposed Development would be viewed at distances of over 46 km within a small portion of the wider panoramic view.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

20.10.106 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development

*Viewpoint 5 – Collieston*

Baseline and Sensitivity

20.10.107 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 5 Collieston are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.24a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.24c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within northern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.

20.10.108 The viewpoint is in an area of open space to the immediate east of the built form of Collieston, in proximity to the sundial feature and seating area forming part of the open space. South-eastern views from this location are open, panoramic and expansive and simple in nature, characterised by the rocky coastal edge partially visible at lower elevation and expansive views of the North Sea. The view available from this location is considered to be available primarily to residential receptors, though would also be available to recreational receptors visiting Collieston.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.109 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.110 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views primarily experienced by residential receptors, visiting recreational receptors and views from within the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.

20.10.111 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be high as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea. The wide view of the sea horizon is the primary focus of the view, though foreground features form localised points of interest. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.112 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 47 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.24c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.113 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.114 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed within the open seascape, rather than being viewed 'within' a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a distinguishable change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

20.10.115 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be moderate to major assessed as **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms. Determined as moderate rather than major as the introduction of the Proposed Development within the view, whilst altering the composition of the view, is not considered to be necessarily visually discordant.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.116 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development.

*Viewpoint 6 – Seal Beach, Newburgh*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.117 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 6 Seal Beach, Newburgh are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.25a with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.25c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within northern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.
- 20.10.118 The viewpoint is located on the sandy beach area forming the southern boundary to the River Ythan, immediately south-east of Newburgh. Lower elevation, south-eastern views from this location are open and panoramic and expansive in nature, characterised by expansive areas of sandy beach, with eastern edges of the adjacent dune system visible in southern portions of the view. The view contains partial visibility of operational offshore Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen OWF, with two Wind Turbines partially visible above the landform to the right of the view, forming minor visual interest within the overall panoramic view. Shipping movement is also perceived in the view at distance, on the horizon. The view available from this location is considered to be available primarily to recreational receptors on the beach.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.119 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.120 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views primarily experienced by recreational receptors, from within the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.
- 20.10.121 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers and views are partially influenced by development in the sea. The wide view of the sea horizon is the primary focus despite partial visibility of operational Wind Turbines and frequent shipping movements at varying distances within the view. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is locally influenced by existing offshore development and is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.122 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 45 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape,

Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.25c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

- 20.10.123 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.124 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. Visible portions of the Proposed Development would be viewed as a separate, additional element within the view, perceived as a discernible change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.125 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.126 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 7 – Balmedie Beach*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.127 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 7 Balmedie Beach are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.26a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.26c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within central portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.
- 20.10.128 The viewpoint is located on the sandy beach area forming the eastern coastline, east of Balmedie. Lower elevation, south-eastern views from this location are open and panoramic and expansive in nature, characterised by expansive areas of sandy beach, with development associated with the northern edge of Aberdeen partially visible in southern portions of the view. The view contains visibility of operational offshore Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen OWF,

with 11 Wind Turbines fully visible in the representative view at mid-distance. Large shipping was, at the time of survey also present at mid-distance, viewed amongst the operational Wind Turbines, adding further visual interest to the view. Additional shipping movement is also perceived in the view at distance, on the horizon. The view available from this location is considered to be available primarily to recreational receptors on the beach.

#### Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.129 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.130 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors, from within the North East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA it is influenced by the operational Wind Turbines.
- 20.10.131 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers and views are influenced by development in the sea. The wide view of the sea horizon is a lesser focus within the view as a consequence of the visible operational Wind Turbines. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is influenced by existing offshore development and is further partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.132 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances of 44 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFOv photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.26c) demonstrates that Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.133 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.134 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond and below fully visible, operational Wind Turbines at mid-distance. Visible portions of the Proposed Development would be viewed as a separate, additional element within the view, perceived as a discernible change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.135 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.136 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 8 – Aberdeen/Orkney Ferry Link*

- 20.10.137 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 8 Aberdeen/Orkney Ferry Link are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.27a, with a 53.5° HFOV wireline provided as Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.27b. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within the North Sea.
- 20.10.138 The viewpoint is representative of eastern views from the outside areas of the ferry when traveling north. Eastern views from the ferry are open, expansive and panoramic in nature and comprised of a simple, open seascape. Northern and western views from this location would encompass views of the North Sea and eastern coastlines at varying distances. The view from this location is simple in nature and available to recreational receptors, tourists and persons at work (ferry workers) at this location.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.139 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the eastern portion of the view available from the ferry is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.140 Overall value of the view is judged to be medium as the eastern view from this location is representative of open sea views experienced primarily by recreational receptors and workers on the ferry, with western views available towards the eastern coastline of Scotland which are considered to be of more interest to those using the ferry link.
- 20.10.141 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea. The wide view of the sea horizon would be the primary focus of views in this direction; however it is acknowledged that receptors on the ferry would be more focused on the coastline and the direction of travel. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though would be partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.142 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 36 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The wireline provided as Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.27b, demonstrates that Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.143 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though where visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.144 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a small portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed within an open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The Proposed Development would be visible as a moderate change to the existing view, when viewed against the pre-development view, though not considered to significantly alter the character of the view from this location as the Proposed Development would be viewed at distances of over 36 km within a small portion of the wider panoramic view.

#### Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.145 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms.

#### Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.146 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development.

#### *Viewpoint 9 – Royal Aberdeen Golf Course, Third Tee*

#### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.147 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 9 Royal Aberdeen Golf Course, Third Tee are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.28a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.28c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within northern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.
- 20.10.148 The viewpoint is located adjacent to the third tee associated with Royal Aberdeen Golf Course, at a location immediately north of the River Don estuary

area where representative open sea views are available. Lower elevation, south-eastern views from this location are generally open and panoramic in nature, characterised by areas of sandy beach associated with the River Don estuary area. Existing development and large infrastructure elements are visible to the right of the view, associated with Nigg Bay, with Girdle Ness Lighthouse also discernible in the view. Operational offshore Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are discernible at distance, forming a minor visual draw to the south. Shipping movements are a feature of the view, due to the viewpoint's location in proximity to the port at Aberdeen, with oil rigs partially discernible within a very small central portion of the scheme. The view available from this location is considered to be available primarily to recreational receptors on the golf course.

#### Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.149 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.150 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors; the viewpoint is not located within any Designated Landscape areas.
- 20.10.151 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, it is locally influenced by existing development in the view, visible at varying distances. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is locally influenced by shipping movements various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.152 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances of over 42 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.28c) demonstrates that Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.153 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.154 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed within the open seascape, rather than being viewed 'within' a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a distinguishable change, when viewed against the pre-

development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.155 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.156 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 9a – Royal Aberdeen Golf Course Clubhouse*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.157 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 9a Royal Aberdeen Golf Course Clubhouse are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.29a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.29c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent southern views available from within central portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.
- 20.10.158 The viewpoint is located adjacent to the Royal Aberdeen Golf Club Clubhouse, at a location north of the River Don estuary area where representative open sea views are available. Lower elevation, south-eastern views from this location are generally open and panoramic in nature, characterised by areas of sandy beach associated with the River Don estuary area. Operational offshore Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are discernible at distance, forming a minor visual draw to the south. Shipping movements are a feature of the view, due to the viewpoint's location in proximity to the port at Aberdeen, with oil rigs partially discernible within a very small central portion of the scheme. The view available from this location is considered to be available primarily to recreational receptors on the golf course.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.159 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.160 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors, the viewpoint is not located within any Designated Landscape areas.
- 20.10.161 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, it is locally influenced by existing development in the view, visible at varying distances. The

Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is locally influenced by shipping movements various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.162 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances of over 42 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.29c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.163 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.164 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed within the open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a distinguishable change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

#### Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.165 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms.

#### Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.166 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

#### *Viewpoint 10 – Aberdeen Esplanade*

#### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.167 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 10 Aberdeen Esplanade are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.30a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.30c. The viewpoint is considered to be representative of views available from within northern portions of the Urban LCT (LCT 0) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.

20.10.168 The viewpoint is located on the footpath immediately east of the Esplanade which forms the eastern boundary of Aberdeen. The viewpoint has been located here as proposed viewpoint location on more elevated land at Broad Hill was not accessible due to construction works. South-eastern views from this location are open, panoramic and expansive in nature with coastline and infrastructure associated with Nigg Bay visible to the right of the view. Girdle Ness Lighthouse forms a point of visual interest, though is subsidiary to the larger infrastructure within Nigg Bay. The view from this location is simple in nature and available to recreational receptors, visitors and transient receptors in the vicinity.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.169 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.170 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors, the viewpoint is not located within any Designated Landscape areas.

20.10.171 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, the view is influenced locally by existing development and operations within Nigg Bay, which form a strong visual draw. The wide view of the sea horizon is the primary focus despite partial enclosure by landform at Nigg Bay. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.172 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 41 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.30c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.173 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.174 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed 'within' a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a noticeable change, when viewed against the pre-development

view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.175 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.176 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 11 – Torry Battery*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.177 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 11 Torry Battery are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.31a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.31c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent eastern views available from within central portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Cliffs and Rocky Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 2) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.
- 20.10.178 The viewpoint is located at Torry Battery on the southern edge of the main channel into Aberdeen Port, associated with the river mouth of the River Dee. Eastern views from this location are panoramic in nature with partial enclosure formed by the large ship and offshore rig structures present in Nigg Bay. Girdle Ness Lighthouse forms a prominent feature at mid-distance within the central portion of the view, whilst walls and features associated with Torry Battery are visible at lower elevation at close distance. Recreational facilities such as car parking, roads and footpaths are visible and form a visual connection with the Girdle Ness Lighthouse. Operational offshore Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are discernible in the view, forming minor points of visual interest. The view from this location is primarily available to recreational receptors and visitors to Torry Battery.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.179 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.180 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors at the monument, the viewpoint is not located within any Designated Landscape areas.
- 20.10.181 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, the view is

influenced locally by existing development and operations with Nigg Bay, which form a strong visual draw. The wide view of the sea horizon is the primary focus despite partial enclosure by operations and infrastructure at Nigg Bay. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.182 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 39 km to the east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFOV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.30c) demonstrates that Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.183 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be readily discernible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.184 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond more prominent features such as Girdle Ness Lighthouse, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a distinguishable change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

#### Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.185 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms.

#### Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.186 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development

#### *Viewpoint 12 – Girdle Ness Lighthouse*

#### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.187 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 12 Girdle Ness Lighthouse are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and

Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.32a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided Figure 20.32c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent eastern views available from within central portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Cliffs and Rocky Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 2) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.

20.10.188 The viewpoint is located on the eastern coastline adjacent to Girdle Ness Lighthouse, in proximity to Greyhope Road and associated footpath links. Lower elevation, south-eastern views from this location are generally open and panoramic in nature, characterised by open sea views with glimpses of the shoreline at close proximity. Frequent shipping movements are visible in the view at varying distances, and the operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF form a minor visual draw to the right of the view. The view available from this location is considered to be available primarily to recreational receptors visiting Girdle Ness Lighthouse.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.189 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.190 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors, the viewpoint is not located within any Designated Landscape areas.

20.10.191 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be high as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea. The wide view of the sea horizon is the primary focus of the view, though foreground features form localised points of interest. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not heavily influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.192 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 38 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.32c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.193 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.194 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed 'within' a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a noticeable change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

20.10.195 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

20.10.196 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development.

*Viewpoint 13 – Baron's Cairn*

Baseline and Sensitivity

20.10.197 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 13 Baron's Cairn are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.33a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as 20.33c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent eastern views available from within central portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Low Hills - Aberdeen (LCT 5) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT.

20.10.198 The viewpoint is located on a locally elevated portion of land, Tullos Hill, to the immediate north-west of Altens Industrial Estate on the southern fringes of Aberdeen. Eastern views from this location are generally open and panoramic in nature, though heavily influenced by the proximity of industrial units at lower elevation in the foreground of the view. The view from this location is relatively simple in nature and available to recreational receptors in the vicinity.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.199 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.200 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors, the viewpoint is not located within any Designated Landscape areas.

20.10.201 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea, the

immediate foreground is heavily influenced by the large scale industrial units and associated infrastructure. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.202 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 39 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.33c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.203 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be easily discernible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.204 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a distinguishable change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

#### Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.205 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms.

#### Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.206 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development.

#### *Viewpoint 14 – Portlethan Pedestrian Railway Bridge*

#### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.207 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 14 Portlethan Pedestrian Railway Bridge are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.34a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.34c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent eastern views available from within central portions of the

SLVIA Study Area, located on the western fringes of the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT11).

20.10.208 The viewpoint is located on the pedestrian bridge, crossing the East Coast Mainline railway at Portlethen. It has been selected to represent localised elevated views from within Portlethen from which it is predicted that the Proposed Development would be visible in eastern views. Eastern views, as represented, are partially constrained in nature by a combination of existing built form and upper canopies of trees and vegetation. Distant horizons formed by open sea, are visible amongst existing vegetation cover, though do not form the main visual draw within the available view. The view from this location is available to recreational receptors and visitors to Portlethan.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.209 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a medium value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.210 The overall value of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors, the viewpoint is not located within any Designated Landscape areas.

20.10.211 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords views out to sea from the elevated location, the immediate foreground is influenced by existing built form and screening provided by existing vegetation cover. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.212 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 40 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.34c) demonstrates that none of the Wind Turbines will be easily discernible in eastern views from this location due to screening effects of intervening vegetation. Visibility of the Proposed Development is limited in extent and limited to partial visibility of upper blade sweeps which will form very minor points of visual interest in the view.

20.10.213 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.214 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be negligible as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed as a very slight alteration to the baseline, such that visible elements will be barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.215 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the negligible magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be negligible to minor assessed as **Negligible** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms as visible portions of the Proposed Development would be viewed as a very slight addition to the view available from this location.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.216 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 15 – Muchalls*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.217 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 15 Muchalls are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.35a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.35c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent eastern views available from within the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.

- 20.10.218 The viewpoint is located on the eastern edge of Muchalls, where open sea views are available. Eastern views from this location are partially focused by existing vegetation with central portions of the view affording expansive open sea views. The view from this location is locally influenced by passing rail traffic on the East Coast Mainline, which is visible at mid-distance with rail infrastructure forming a definitive boundary between lands and sea. The view from this location is available to recreational receptors and residential receptors in the vicinity.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.219 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.220 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views primarily experienced by residential receptors, recreational receptors and views from within the South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.
- 20.10.221 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea, the view is influenced locally by passing rail traffic. The view of the sea horizon forms the primary focus despite partial enclosure by existing vegetation cover. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.222 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 41 km to the east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.35c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.
- 20.10.223 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will be discernible in the view, though form a minor addition to the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.
- 20.10.224 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be medium as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a distinguishable change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

#### Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.225 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the medium magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be Moderate to Major assessed as **Moderate** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as significant in EIA terms as whilst the Proposed Development is visible in the view, partially changing the character of the view, the introduction of the Proposed Development which, though uncharacteristic, does not substantially alter the scale or character of the wider view.

#### Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.226 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 can be applied to mitigate the predicted long term visual effect arising because of the Proposed Development.

#### *Viewpoint 16 – A92 Parking Bay*

#### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.227 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 16 A92 Parking Bay are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.36a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.36c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent eastern views available from within central portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Farmed Moorland Hills - Aberdeenshire (LCT 27) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.

20.10.228 The viewpoint is located on the eastern edge of the parking bay on the southbound side of the A92, at a location predicted to experience theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. Eastern views from this location are open, panoramic and expansive and simple in nature, characterised by agricultural land forming the coastal edge and expansive views of the North Sea. Existing built form associated with scattered farmsteads forms a minor element of the view, whilst passing rail traffic on the East Coast Mainline railway locally influences the view. The view from this location also contains visibility of operational offshore Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, with five Wind Turbines discernible within the central portion of the view. The available view is considered to be available primarily to transient receptors on the A92, though is also considered to be representative of views afforded by residential receptors in the vicinity and receptors at the layby.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.229 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be medium, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.230 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as whilst the view available from this location is representative of views primarily experienced by transient receptors on the A92, it is also available to residential receptors, recreational receptors and views from within the South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.

20.10.231 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea, the view is influenced locally by passing rail traffic and contains visibility of operational offshore development associated with Kincardine OWF. The Array Area boundary is remote and separated by the open sea from the viewpoint. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is influenced by existing offshore development, visibility of shipping at various distances within the view and passing rail traffic.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.232 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 41 km to the east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFOV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.36c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.233 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will be discernible in the view, though form a minor addition to the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.234 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic

view available from this location, within which existing operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are visible. The Proposed Development will be read in combination with the existing operational Wind Turbines and viewed as a discernible change, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.235 Based on the combination of the medium sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.236 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 17 – Stonehaven Pier*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.237 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 17 Stonehaven Pier are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.37a, with a 53.5° HFOV photomontage provided as Figure 20.37c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent eastern views available from within southern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.
- 20.10.238 The viewpoint is located on the Old Pier, Stonehaven which forms the eastern barrier to Cowie Harbour, on the eastern edge of Stonehaven. Eastern views from this location are partially constrained by existing coastline to the south, but are primarily open and expansive in nature and simple in character with open sea views forming the principal component. The view from this location contains visibility of offshore operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, which forms a minor visual draw within the central portion of the view. Views from this location are primarily available to recreational receptors, visitors and residential receptors in the vicinity.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.239 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a medium susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.240 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by residential receptors, recreational receptors and views from within the South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.

20.10.241 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, the view does contain visibility of existing operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF and is locally influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.242 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 43 km to the east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFOV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.37c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.243 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.244 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, within which existing operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are visible. The Proposed Development will be read in combination with the existing operational Wind Turbines and viewed as a discernible change, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

20.10.245 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms. Determined as minor rather than moderate as visible portions of the Proposed Development would be perceived as a minor alteration to the overall expansive view available from this location.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

20.10.246 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 18 – Stonehaven Memorial*

Baseline and Sensitivity

20.10.247 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 16 Stonehaven Memorial are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and

Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.38a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Figure 20.38c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent north-eastern views available from within southern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.

20.10.248 The viewpoint is located adjacent to the Stonehaven War Memorial, south of Stonehaven, which is located on locally elevated lands on the eastern coastline. Eastern views from this location are open, panoramic and expansive and simple in nature, characterised by coastal edges and open sea views. The view from this location also contains visibility of operational offshore Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, with Wind Turbines discernible within the central portion of the view. Views from this location are primarily available to recreational receptors and visitors to the Memorial.

#### Sensitivity of the Receptor

20.10.249 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.

20.10.250 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors and views from within the South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.

20.10.251 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be medium as whilst the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, the view does contain discernible visibility of existing operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF and is locally influenced by visibility of shipping at various distances within the view.

#### Magnitude of Impact

20.10.252 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 43 km to the north-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.38c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though all hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.253 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.254 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, within which existing operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are visible. The Proposed Development will be read in combination with the existing operational Wind

Turbines and viewed as a discernible change, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

- 20.10.255 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be minor to moderate, assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms. Determined as minor rather than moderate as visible portions of the Proposed Development are distinguishable however it is considered that the character and composition of the wider view available from this location are similar to the pre-change circumstance.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

- 20.10.256 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

*Viewpoint 19 – Bervie Bay*

Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.257 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 19 Bervie Bay are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.39a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.39c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent north-eastern views available from within southern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT.
- 20.10.258 The viewpoint is located on the coast path linking Gourdon, to the south, with Inverbervie to the north. North-eastern views from this location are open, panoramic and expansive in nature with the coastline to the north of Inverbervie restricting visibility of the horizons to the north. The immediate foreground is comprised of coastal grass areas and rocky shoreline. Shipping movements add local points of visual draw and interest, though are often difficult to perceive. The view from this location is relatively simple in nature and available to recreational receptor utilising the path network.

Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.259 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be high, reflecting that the view is of a high value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a high susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.260 The overall value of the view is judged to be high as the view available from this location is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors and views from within the South East Aberdeenshire Coast SLA.

20.10.261 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be high as the view from this location affords a direct view out to sea from the coastal edge, in which viewers are more liable to be influenced by development in the sea, despite the occurrence of shipping movements across the view, which add variety/interest. The view of the sea horizon is the primary foci of the view available from this location, though visual interest and draw is provided by the rocky and varied coastal edge. The Array Area boundary is distant and remote from this viewpoint location, separate to the viewpoint location by the open sea. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is not influenced by existing offshore development, though is partially influenced by visibility of movement of large shipping vessels at various distances within the view.

Magnitude of Impact

20.10.262 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 49 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.39c) demonstrates that all Wind Turbines will be visible from this location to varying degrees. The closest Wind Turbines will appear above the horizon line, with more distant Wind Turbines reducing in visibility, though hubs and upper blade tips will be visible in the expansive view.

20.10.263 Other Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development such as the OSPs will not be visible in the view. Shipping movements to and from the Proposed Development during the O&M phase will be difficult to perceive at this distance, though when visible will be viewed as a negligible addition to the view.

20.10.264 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be low as the Proposed Development will generally be viewed across a central portion of the panoramic view available from this location, and viewed beyond an open seascape, rather than being viewed ‘within’ a coastal/local seascape and clearly separated from the coast. The visual change associated with the Proposed Development would be viewed as a discernible change, when viewed against the pre-development view, though the composition and character of the view are judged to be similar in nature and scale with the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.

Significance of the Effect

20.10.265 Based on the combination of the high sensitivity of the receptor, and the low magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is predicted to be minor to moderate assessed as **Minor** adverse, direct, long term and reversible, judged as not significant in EIA terms as the Proposed Development, whilst distinguishable, does not substantially alter the existing seascape character and composition of the view.

Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

20.10.266 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

### *Viewpoint 20 – Ellon Roundabout*

#### Baseline and Sensitivity

- 20.10.267 The location and baseline panorama from Viewpoint 20 Ellon Roundabout are shown in Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.40a, with a 53.5° HFoV photomontage provided as Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.40c. The viewpoint has been utilised to represent north-eastern views available from within southern portions of the SLVIA Study Area, located within the Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire (LCT 17).
- 20.10.268 The viewpoint is located on the grassed verge forming the northern boundary of the A948 at its junction with the A90 and Lintmill Brae, to the east of Ellon. The viewpoint has been selected to interrogate the predicted visibility of the Proposed Development from this location. South-eastern views from this location are constrained by localised variations in topography associated with the linking roads and the roundabout junction facility. Embankments associated with the link road screen views of distant horizons, whilst existing coniferous tree cover locally elevate perceived horizons. Street lighting columns punctuate the perceived horizons adding additional verticality to the view. The view from this location is constrained and considered to be representative of views available primarily to transient receptors on the local road network.

#### Sensitivity of the Receptor

- 20.10.269 The sensitivity of the viewpoint is considered to be low, reflecting that the view is of a low value and that the receptors experiencing the view have a low susceptibility to change, for the reasons set out below.
- 20.10.270 The overall value of the view is judged to be low as the view available from this location representative of views experienced by receptors on main road networks within an area of undesignated landscape.
- 20.10.271 The susceptibility of the view is judged to be low as the view from this location is constrained and does not afford views of distant horizons or of coastal areas but rather affords a direct view along the direction of travel. The visual amenity experienced by receptors is heavily influenced by existing road infrastructure.

#### Magnitude of Impact

- 20.10.272 Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be located at distances beyond 51 km to the south-east of this viewpoint location. The 53.5° HFoV photomontage (refer Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.40) demonstrates that none of the Wind Turbines associated with the Proposed Development will be visible from this location due to screening provided by localised changes in topography.
- 20.10.273 The magnitude of visual impact is judged to be no change as there will be no alteration to the existing view because of the Proposed Development.

#### Significance of the Effect

20.10.274 Based on the combination of the low sensitivity of the receptor, and the no change magnitude of impact, the significance of effect arising from the Proposed Development is assessed as **None**, judged as not significant in EIA terms.

#### Additional Mitigation and Residual Effect

20.10.275 No Additional Mitigation over and above that identified in Table 20.20 is considered necessary because the predicted effect is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.

## **20.11 Inter-Related Effects**

20.11.1 A description of the likely Inter-Related Effects arising from the Proposed Development on seascape, landscape and visual receptors is provided in Volume 2, Chapter 23: Inter-Related Effects.

20.11.2 Inter-relationships are considered to be the impacts and associated effects of different aspects of the Bowdun OWF on the same receptor. Inter-related effects are considered to be either:

- Lifetime effects: Assessment of the scope for effects that occur throughout more than one phase of Bowdun OWF (construction, O&M and decommissioning), to interact to potentially create a more significant effect on a receptor than if just assessed in isolation in these three project stages
- Receptor-led effects: Assessment of the scope for all effects to interact, spatially and temporally, to create inter-related effects on a receptor. As an example, all effects on Infrastructure and Other Users, such as displacement of recreational activities and impacts to cables or pipelines or restrictions on access to these assets, may interact to produce a different, or greater effect on this receptor than when the effects are considered in isolation. Receptor-led effects may be short term, temporary or transient effects, or incorporate longer-term effects

20.11.3 For seascape, landscape and visual receptors, the following potential impacts have been considered within the inter-related assessment:

- changes to the perceived seascape (coastal) character of coastal areas;
- changes to the perceived landscape character and qualities of Designated Landscape; and
- changes to views experienced by people from specific and representative viewpoints and from visual receptors.

20.11.4 Table 20.21 lists the Inter-Related Effects (project lifetime effects) that are predicted to arise during the construction, O&M phase, and decommissioning of the Proposed Development and also the Inter-Related Effects (receptor-led effects) that are predicted to arise for seascape, landscape and visual receptors.

20.11.5 As noted above, effects on seascape, landscape and visual receptors also have the potential to have secondary effects on other receptors, and these effects are fully considered in the topic-specific chapters. These receptors and effects are:

- Volume 2, Chapter 21: Cultural Heritage:
  - temporary (during construction and decommissioning phases), long term (during O&M phase only) and reversible (post-decommissioning) addition of the Proposed Development resulting in direct effects on views from, and indirect effects to, perceived character of GDLs; and
- Volume 2, Chapter 18: Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation:
  - temporary (during construction and decommissioning phases), long term (during O&M phase only) and reversible (post-decommissioning) addition of the Proposed Development resulting in indirect effects to visitor and tourist use of the coast including receptors on beaches, recreational routes and visitor attractions.

**Table 20.21: Summary of Likely Significant Inter-Related Effects for Seascape, Landscape and Visual Receptors from Individual Effects Occurring Across the Construction, O&M and Decommissioning Phase of the Proposed Development (Project Lifetime Effects) and from Multiple Effects Interacting Across all Phases (Receptor-led Effects)**

Description of Impact	Phase*			Likely Significant Inter-Related Effects
	C	O	D	
<b>Project Lifetime Effects</b>				
<b>Temporary, indirect and direct seascape, landscape and visual effects arising because of the works associated with the Offshore Export Cable(s), Interconnector Cables, IACs and Landfall connection site</b>	✓	×	✓	No greater than the individually assessed effects. Although impacts are broken down into different receptors based upon physical and perceived characteristics (coastal character areas) the actual receptor is the same in each case (i.e. the people or person perceiving the effect on coastal character). Therefore, the receptors will only perceive the effect one way (visually) at one point in time, and will not experience an inter-related effect across the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases.
<b>Temporary effects arising because of the construction and decommissioning works associated with the installation of Wind Turbines and OSPs</b>	✓	×	✓	No greater than the individually assessed effects. Although impacts are broken down into different receptors based upon physical and perceived characteristics (LCT) and planning policies (landscape designations) the actual receptor is the same in each case (i.e. the people or person perceiving the effect on landscape or character within which the designation sits). Therefore, these people will only perceive the effect one way (visually) at one point in time, and will not experience the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases simultaneously.
<b>Long term effects (daytime) of the O&amp;M of the offshore elements of the Proposed Development on visual receptors/views</b>	×	✓	×	No greater than the individually assessed effects. Although impacts are broken down into different receptors (viewpoints and visual receptors) the actual receptor is the same in each case (i.e. the people or person perceiving the effect). Therefore, these people will only perceive the effect one way (visually) at one point in time, and will not experience the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases simultaneously.
<b>Receptor-led Effects</b>				
Receptor-led effects (i.e. those resulting from different impacts that interact, spatially and temporally, to create an inter-related effect on the same receptor) will not occur for seascape, landscape and visual receptors, since changes arising because of the Proposed Development are not experienced by the same receptor (people and or person) and are only experienced in one way (visually) at any one point in time. Therefore, effects on views and on perceived character of the seascape/landscape character are interlinked, but do not interact to produce a different, or greater effect on a receptor or receptors than when effects are considered in isolation.				

\*Proposed Development Phase refers to construction (C), O&M (O) and decommissioning (D)

## 20.12 Cumulative Effects Assessment

### Methodology

- 20.12.1 The Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) assesses the impact associated with the Proposed Development together with other relevant projects and activities. Cumulative effects are defined as the effect of the Proposed Development in combination with the effects from several different projects, on the same receptor or resource. Further details on CEA methodology are provided in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology.
- 20.12.2 The projects selected as relevant to the CEA presented within this chapter are based upon the results of a screening exercise (see Volume 3, Technical Appendix 4.4: Cumulative Effects Assessment – Screening). Volume 3, Technical Appendix 4.4: Cumulative Effects Assessment – Screening provides further information in relation to other projects and how this information is obtained and applied to the assessment. Each project has been considered on a case-by-case basis for screening in or out of this chapter's assessment based upon data confidence, effect-receptor pathways and the spatial/temporal scales involved.
- 20.12.3 In undertaking the CEA for the Proposed Development, it is important to bear in mind that other projects under consideration will have differing potential for proceeding to an operational stage and hence a differing potential to ultimately contribute to a cumulative impact alongside the Proposed Development. Therefore, a tiered approach has been adopted. This provides a framework for placing relative weight upon the potential for each project included in the CEA to ultimately be developed and the certainty in the project's parameters, based upon the project's current stage of maturity. The tiered approach which will be utilised within the Proposed Development CEA employs the following tiers:
- Tier 1 – The onshore elements of the Project;
  - Tier 2 – Projects that have an application submitted, are consented, under construction or are operational to the extent not already captured with the baseline;
  - Tier 3 – Projects which have submitted a scoping report and/or have received a scoping opinion; and
  - Tier 4 – Reasonably foreseeable projects including those with Crown Estate Scotland option or lease agreements.
- 20.12.4 Tier 1 projects, namely the Onshore Infrastructure of the Project, have been scoped out because the cable will be buried and above-ground structures associated with it (e.g. small wooden-fenced enclosures and markers) have no potential to significantly impact on views or seascape/landscape character or the associated receptor groups. Similarly, the substation has no potential to interact with receptors affected by the Proposed Development, owing to its inland location and lack of intervisibility.
- 20.12.5 Operational Tier 2 projects which form part of the existing visual baseline and are visible to varying degrees within available view, include Aberdeen OWF,

Kincardine OWF, Seagreen 1 OWF and Hywind OWF. Available information in relation to Tier 2 projects which do not form part of the existing visual baseline has been reviewed, and following the initial screening exercise the following projects have been identified that either lie within the SLVIA Study Area or are partially within the SLVIA Study Area and that have been scoped into the CEA for SLVIA in respect of potential cumulative visual effects;

- Berwick Bank OWF (Consented);
- Inch Cape OWF (Under Construction);
- Muir Mhor OWF (Application submitted);
- Ossian OWF (Application submitted);
- Salamander OWF (Consented); and
- Seagreen 1A OWF (Consented).

- 20.12.6 Whilst it is acknowledged that Salamander OWF is partially located within the SLVIA Study Area, at 58.68 km from the Proposed Development Array Area, the accompanying cumulative wirelines (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.20d to Figure 20.40d) do not include an indication of the Wind Turbines as the information available for review does not include a Wind Turbine layout and it is assumed that potential locations for offshore Wind Turbines will not intersect with the SLVIA Study Area.
- 20.12.7 Tier 3 projects have been reviewed and projects which lie wholly or partially within the SLVIA Study Area include Morven North OWF and Morven South OWF only. Due to the limited availability of information in relation to potential layouts for these planned projects, the cumulative wirelines provided have included indicative Wind Turbine locations along array boundary extents. Parameters for Wind Turbines associated with Morven North OWF and Morven South OWF have been based on available information gathered from the Scoping Opinion dated 30 November 2023 (MD-LOT, 2023).
- 20.12.8 Following review of information, it is considered that there is one foreseeable Tier 4 project (Flora Floating OWF) located within the SLVIA Study Area that may have a cumulative interaction with the Proposed Development.
- 20.12.9 The specific projects scoped into the CEA for SLVIA, are outlined in Table 20.22 and represented on Figure 20.19.
- 20.12.10 The range of potential cumulative impacts that are identified and included in Table 20.22 below, is a subset of those considered for the Proposed Development alone assessment. This is because some of the potential impacts identified and assessed for the Proposed Development alone are localised and temporary in nature. It is considered therefore, that these potential impacts have limited or no potential to interact with similar changes associated with other projects. These have therefore been scoped out of the CEA.
- 20.12.11 Similarly, some of the potential impacts considered within the Proposed Development alone assessment is specific to a particular phase of development (e.g. construction, O&M or decommissioning).

20.12.12 Where the potential for cumulative effects with other projects only have potential to occur where there is spatial or temporal overlap with the Proposed Development during certain phases of development, impacts associated with a certain phase may be omitted from further consideration where no projects have been identified that have the potential for cumulative effects during this period.

**Table 20.22: List of Other Projects Considered within the CEA for Seascape, Landscape and Visual Resources**

Project	Status	Distance from Array Area (km)	Description of Project	Dates of Construction (If Applicable)	Dates of Operation (If Applicable)	Overlap with the Proposed Development
<b>Tier 2</b>						
<b>Offshore Wind Projects and Associated Cables</b>						
<b>Berwick Bank Wind Farm OWF</b>	Consented	46.53	Berwick Bank Offshore Wind Farm is proposed for up to 307 Wind Turbines with a capacity of up to 4,100 MW. Operational lifetime 35 years.	2027 – 2032	2033 – 2067	All phases of the project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.
<b>Inch Cape OWF</b>	Under Construction	56.03	Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm is consented for up to 72 Wind Turbines with a capacity of 1,100 MW.	2025 – 2026	2027 – 2051	O&M and decommissioning phase of this project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.
<b>Muir Mhòr OWF</b>	Application submitted but not yet determined	52.50	Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm is proposed for up to 67 Wind Turbine at a capacity of 798 MW.	2027 – 2030	2031 – 2055	O&M and decommissioning phase of this project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.
<b>Ossian OWF</b>	Application submitted but not yet determined	25.36	The Ossian Floating Wind project is proposed for up to 265 floating Wind Turbines with a capacity of 3,600 MW. Operational lifetime 35 years.	2031 – 2038	2039 - 2073	All phases of the project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.
<b>Salamander OWF</b>	Consented	58.68	Salamander Offshore Wind Farm is proposed for up to 100 MW.	2027 – 2029	2030 – 2054	O&M and decommissioning phase of this project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.

Project	Status	Distance from Array Area (km)	Description of Project	Dates of Construction (If Applicable)	Dates of Operation (If Applicable)	Overlap with the Proposed Development
<b>Seagreen 1A Project</b>	Consented	27.87	Seagreen 1A is made up of the 36 remaining Wind Turbines consented as part of the Seagreen 1 Offshore Wind Farm. Seagreen 1A submitted a variation in consent to allow construction to take place between 2029 and 2032.	2029 - 2032.	2033 - 2057	All phases of the project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.
<b>Tier 3</b>						
<b>Offshore Wind Projects and Associated Cables</b>						
<b>Morven North OWF</b>	Pre-Application	10.03	Morven North Offshore Wind Array Project is proposed for up to 96 Wind Turbines at a capacity of 1,500 MW. Application of relevant consents and licences expected in 2026 with decision in 2027	2030 - 2036	2037 - 2061	All phases of the project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.
<b>Morven South OWF</b>	Pre-Application	43.61	Morven South Offshore Wind Array Project is proposed for up to 95 Wind Turbines at a capacity of 1,500 MW. Application of relevant consents and licences expected in 2026 with decision in 2027.	2030 - 2036	2037 - 2061	All phases of the project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development phases.
<b>Tier 4</b>						
<b>Offshore Wind Projects and Associated Cables</b>						
<b>Flora Floating OWF</b>	Pre-Planning	46.83	INTOG site 4 is proposed for up to 50 MW.	Not Available	Not Available	All phases of the project have the potential to overlap with the Proposed Development.

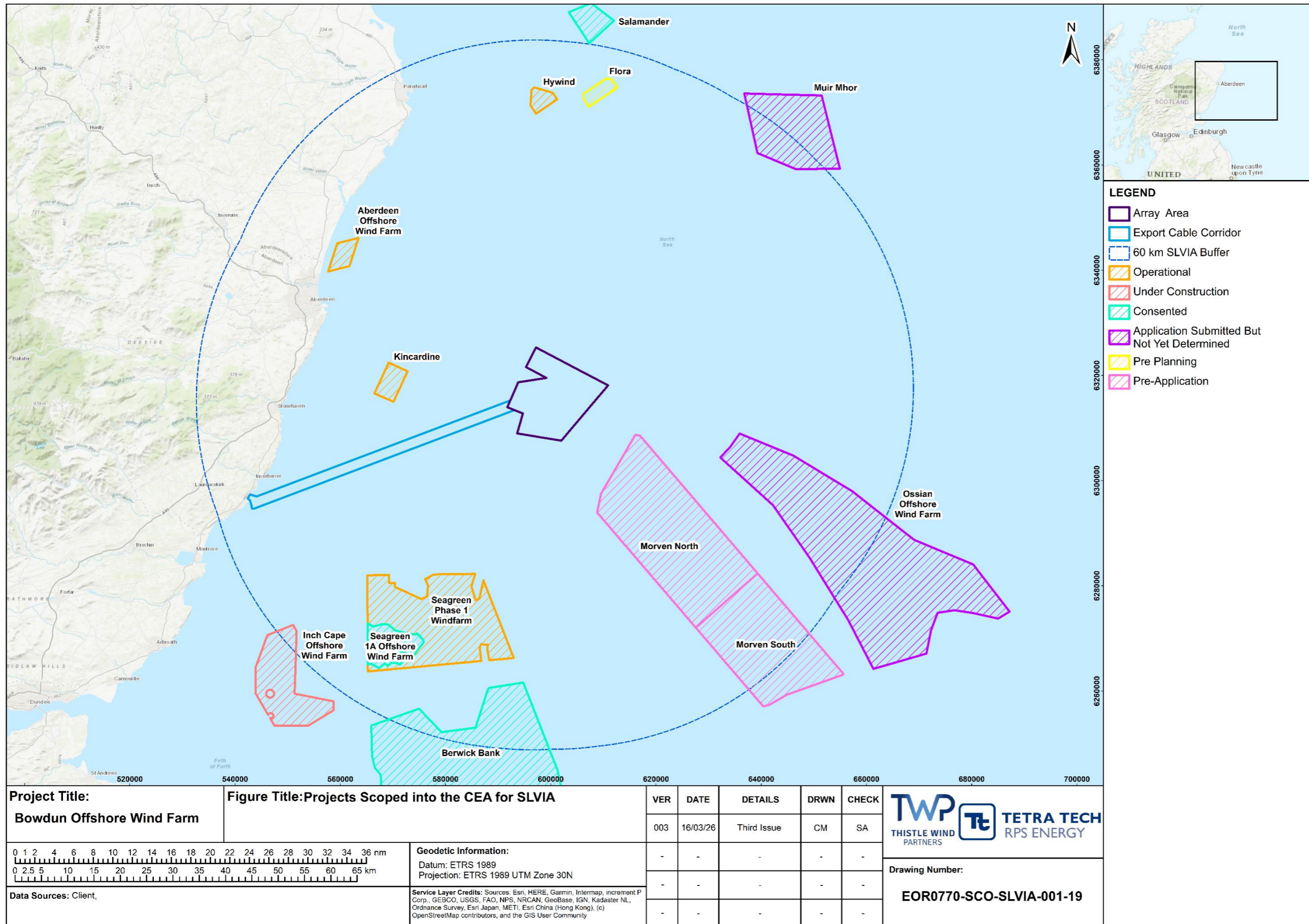


Figure 20.19: Cumulative Offshore

### **Maximum Design Scenario**

- 20.12.13 The MDS identified in Table 20.23 have been selected as those having the potential to result in the greatest effect on an identified receptor or receptor group. The cumulative effects presented and assessed in this section have been selected from the details provided in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description as well as the information available on other projects (see Volume 3, Technical Appendix 4.4: Cumulative Effects Assessment – Screening), to inform a 'MDS'. Any other development scenario within the PDE, will result in the same, or less, level of environmental effect.

### **Cumulative Effects Assessment**

- 20.12.14 An assessment of the likely significance of cumulative effects of the Proposed Development upon SLVIA receptors together with other projects or activities arising from each identified impact is given below in Table 20.23.

**Table 20.23: MDS Considered for Each Impact as part of the Assessment of Likely Significant Cumulative Effects on Seascape, Landscape and Visual Resources**

Potential Cumulative Effect	Phase			Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	C	O&M	D		
<b>Cumulative effect of the O&amp;M of the Proposed Development on Visual Receptors/Views</b>	x	✓	x	<p>The MDS is as detailed for the Proposed Development alone in Table 20.12, cumulatively with the following projects:</p> <p><b>Tier 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Berwick Bank OWF (all phases);</li> <li>• Inch Cape OWF (O&amp;M &amp; decommissioning phases);</li> <li>• Muir Mhor OWF (O&amp;M &amp; decommissioning Phases);</li> <li>• Ossian OWF (all phases);</li> <li>• Seagreen 1A OWF (all phases); and</li> <li>• Salamander OWF (O&amp;M &amp; decommissioning Phases)</li> </ul> <p><b>Tier 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morven North OWF (all phases).</li> <li>• Morven South OWF (all phases)</li> </ul> <p><b>Tier 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flora Floating OWF (all phases).</li> </ul>	<p><u>Wind Turbines</u>                      Largest number of Wind Turbines visible within views results in increased perceptions of Wind Turbines in sea views and represents greatest visual change in the setting of SLVIA Receptors.</p> <p><u>OSPs</u>                      Largest number of OSPs resulting in greatest degree of visual change in the setting of SLVIA Receptors.</p> <p><u>Vessels</u>                      Greatest number of vessel movements resulting in the largest degree of visual change in the setting of SLVIA receptors.</p>

\* Proposed Development Phase refers to construction (C), O&M (O) and decommissioning (D).

## CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF THE O&M OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON VISUAL RECEPTORS/VIEWS

### *Tier 2 Projects*

#### Viewpoint 1 – Buchan Ness Lighthouse

- 20.12.15 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 1 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.20d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind OWF are theoretically visible to the north, though are screened by intervening landform and are only perceived as a very minor element in the view. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF and Aberdeen Bay OWF are theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development, though due to attenuation by distance and screening by intervening landform visible elements of these operational schemes are difficult to perceive. Proposed offshore Wind Turbines associated with Muir Mohr OWF are theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development in combination with operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind OWF, though visible elements will be difficult to perceive within the view due to attenuation by distance.
- 20.12.16 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location.
- 20.12.17 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified high sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

#### Viewpoint 2 – Slain's Castle

- 20.12.18 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 2 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.21d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind OWF are theoretically visible to the north, perceived as a minor, separate element in the view. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, whilst theoretically visible to the south are not perceived in the view. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development, though due to attenuation by distance visible elements are difficult to perceive. Proposed offshore Wind Turbines associated with Muir Mohr OWF are theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development in combination with operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind, though

visible elements will be difficult to perceive within the view due to attenuation by distance.

- 20.12.19 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are difficult to perceive in the wider views available from this location.
- 20.12.20 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified high sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 3 – Cruden Bay

- 20.12.21 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 3 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.22d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with any of the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development, however due to attenuation by distance visible elements are not easily or readily perceived in the view.
- 20.12.22 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is essentially no cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects.
- 20.12.23 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as none and for the identified high sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **None** (there is no cumulative effect) which is not significant in EIA terms.

Viewpoint 4 – Whinnyfold

- 20.12.24 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 4 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.23d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF and Aberdeen Bay OWF are theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development, though due to attenuation by distance visible elements of these operational schemes are difficult to perceive. Proposed offshore Wind Turbines associated with Muir Mohr OWF are theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development, though visible elements will be difficult to perceive within the view due to attenuation by distance.
- 20.12.25 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between

the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location.

- 20.12.26 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified high sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 5 – Collieston

- 20.12.27 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 5 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.24d), illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind OWF are theoretically visible to the north, perceived as a minor, separate element in the view as there is clear separation between the Proposed Development and the Hywind OWF Wind Turbines. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, whilst theoretically visible to the south in combination with the Proposed Development are not easily or readily perceived in the view. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF whilst theoretically visible further south, are screened by intervening landform such that they are not visible in the view. Proposed offshore Wind Turbines associated with Muir Mohr OWF are theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development in combination with operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind, though visible elements will be difficult to perceive within the view due to attenuation by distance.

- 20.12.28 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are difficult to perceive in the wider views available from this location due to attenuation by distance and screening by intervening landform.

- 20.12.29 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified high sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 6 – Seal Beach

- 20.12.30 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 6 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.25d), illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind OWF are

theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development, though are difficult to perceive in the wider view due to attenuation by distance. No other identified Tier 2 projects are visible to the south of the Proposed Development due to screening by intervening landform.

- 20.12.31 Although the Proposed Development will introduce a new element onto a portion of the skyline of this view, there is essentially no cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects.
- 20.12.32 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as none and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **None** (there is no cumulative effect) which is not significant in EIA terms.

Viewpoint 7 – Balmedie Beach

- 20.12.33 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 7 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.26d), illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Hywind OWF is theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development, though visible elements will be difficult to perceived due to attenuation by distance. No identified Tier 2 project is visible in southern portions of the view due to screening by intervening landform.
- 20.12.34 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived beyond intervening operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF as a minor element on the skyline of this view, there is essentially limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects.
- 20.12.35 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as none and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **None** (there is no cumulative effect) which is not significant in EIA terms.

Viewpoint 8 – Aberdeen – Orkney Ferry

- 20.12.36 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 8 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.27c) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with any of the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. None of the Tier 2 projects are theoretically visible in combination with the Proposed Development due to attenuation by distance and screening by intervening horizon.
- 20.12.37 Although the Proposed Development will be perceived as an additional element of the view on the distant skyline of this view, there is essentially no cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects.

- 20.12.38 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as none and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **None** (there is no cumulative effect) which is not significant in EIA terms.

Viewpoint 9 – Royal Aberdeen Golf Course 3<sup>rd</sup> Tee

- 20.12.39 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 9 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.28c) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are visible to the north of the Proposed Development as a distinct element of the view, theoretically in combination with Hywind OWF, however visible elements of Hywind OWF are not easily or readily perceived in the view. To the south of the Proposed Development, operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are theoretically visible though are not readily perceived due to attenuation by distance.
- 20.12.40 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are often difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location due to attenuation by distance.
- 20.12.41 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 9a – Royal Aberdeen Golf Course Clubhouse

- 20.12.42 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 9a (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.29d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are visible to the north of the Proposed Development as a distinct element of the view, theoretically in combination with Hywind OWF, however visible elements of Hywind OWF are not easily or readily perceived in the view. To the south of the Proposed Development, operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are visible as a minor element of the view, whilst Seagreen OWF is theoretically visible, but not readily perceived due to attenuation by distance.
- 20.12.43 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are often difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location due to attenuation by distance.

20.12.44 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 10 – Aberdeen Esplanade

20.12.45 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 10 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.30d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are visible to the north of the Proposed Development as a distinct element of the view, theoretically in combination with Hywind OWF, however visible elements of Hywind OWF are not easily or readily perceived in the view. To the south of the Proposed Development, operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are theoretically visible above horizon formed by intervening landform, but not readily perceived due to attenuation by distance and screening effects of intervening landform.

20.12.46 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are often difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location due to attenuation by distance.

20.12.47 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 11 – Torry Battery

20.12.48 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 11 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.31d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are visible to the north of the Proposed Development as a distinct element of the view. Operational Hywind OWF, theoretically visible in the northern portion of the view, is not easily or readily perceived in the view due to attenuation by distance. To the south of the Proposed Development, operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are visible as a separate, disparate group, with Seagreen OWF theoretically visible as a minor element on the distant horizon.

20.12.49 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible

elements of identified Tier 2 projects are often difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location due to attenuation by distance.

- 20.12.50 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 12 – Girdle Ness Lighthouse

- 20.12.51 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 12 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.32d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are visible to the north of the Proposed Development as a distinct element of the view. Operational Hywind OWF, theoretically visible in the northern portion of the view, is not easily or readily perceived in the view due to attenuation by distance. To the south of the Proposed Development, operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF visible as a separate, disparate group. Seagreen OWF, Seagreen 1A OWF and Inchcape OWF elements are theoretically visible further south, though are not be perceived or viewed as an element of the view.
- 20.12.52 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are often difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location due to attenuation by distance.
- 20.12.53 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 13 – Baron’s Cairn

- 20.12.54 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 13 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.33d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are visible to the north of the Proposed Development as a distinct element of the view. Operational Hywind OWF and proposed Muir Mohr OWF are theoretically visible in the northern portion of the view, though not easily or readily perceived in the view due to attenuation by distance. To the south of the Proposed Development, operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF visible as a separate, disparate group. Seagreen OWF, Seagreen 1A OWF and Inchcape OWF are theoretically visible further south, though are not easily or

readily perceived or viewed as an element of the view due to attenuation by distance.

- 20.12.55 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived as a new element on the distant horizon, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects as visible elements of identified Tier 2 projects are often difficult to perceive in the wider view available from this location due to attenuation by distance.
- 20.12.56 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location

Viewpoint 14 – Portlethan Pedestrian Railway Bridge

- 20.12.57 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 14 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.34d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with any of the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Proposed Muir Mohr OWF is theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development, though due to attenuation by distance and screening by intervening horizon visible elements will not be easily or readily perceived in the view.
- 20.12.58 Although the Proposed Development will be visible in combination with operational Wind Turbines at Kincardine OWF on the skyline of this view, there is limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects.
- 20.12.59 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as small, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes would only be at slight variance with the existing view from this location.

Viewpoint 15 – Muchalls

- 20.12.60 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 13 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.35d) illustrates that there limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 project identified in Table 20.22. Inch Cape OWF, Seagreen OWF and Seagreen 1A OWF are all theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development. However, visibility of these identified Tier 2 projects is limited to blade tip only, and will not be perceived or viewed as an element of the view. None of the remaining Tier 2 projects are visible due to attenuation by distance and screening by intervening horizon.

- 20.12.61 Although the Proposed Development will be viewed in combination with operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, it does not introduce a new element into the view and would be perceived on the distant skyline of this view only.
- 20.12.62 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified high sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 16 – A92 Parking Bay

- 20.12.63 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 16 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.36d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Hywind OWF and Aberdeen Bay OWF are theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development, though are difficult to perceive in the wider view due to attenuation by distance. Inch Cape OWF, Seagreen OWF and Seagreen 1A OWF are all theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development. However, visibility of these Tier 2 projects is limited to blade tip only and will not be perceived or viewed as an element of the view.
- 20.12.64 Although the Proposed Development will be viewed in combination with operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, it does not introduce a new element into the view and would be perceived on the distant skyline of this view only.
- 20.12.65 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 17 – Stonehaven Pier

- 20.12.66 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 7 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.37d) illustrates that there limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 project identified in Table 20.22.
- 20.12.67 Although the Proposed Development will be viewed in combination with operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, it does not introduce a new element into the view and would be perceived on the distant skyline of this view only.
- 20.12.68 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified high

sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 18 – Stonehaven Memorial

- 20.12.69 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 18 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.38d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Aberdeen Bay OWF are theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development, though are difficult to perceive in the view due to attenuation by distance and screening by intervening landform. Inch Cape OWF, theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development is difficult to perceive in the view due to screening by intervening landform. Seagreen OWF and Seagreen 1A OWF are theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development, though due to attenuation by distance will be difficult to perceive as an element of the view.
- 20.12.70 Although the Proposed Development will be viewed in combination with operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF, it does not introduce a new element into the view and would be perceived on the distant skyline of this view only. There is essentially limited cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects.
- 20.12.71 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified medium sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is negligible to minor, assessed as **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 19 – Bervie Bay

- 20.12.72 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 19 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.39d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Wind Turbines associated with Kincardine OWF are theoretically visible to the north of the Proposed Development, though are difficult to perceive in the view due to attenuation by distance. Inch Cape OWF, Seagreen OWF and Seagreen 1A OWF are all theoretically visible to the south of the Proposed Development, though due to attenuation by distance will be difficult to perceive as an element of the view.
- 20.12.73 Although the Proposed Development may be perceived on the skyline of this view, it is considered that there would be a minor change in the overall view as visible elements of the Proposed Development would be difficult to perceive due to attenuation by distance, with the composition and character of view substantially unaltered.

20.12.74 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as negligible, and for the identified high sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **Minor** adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms, as proposed changes will have a barely noticeable cumulative effect on views from this location.

Viewpoint 20 – Ellon Roundabout

20.12.75 The cumulative wireline from Viewpoint 20 (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts – Accompanying Graphics; Figure 20.40d) illustrates that there is limited potential for the Proposed Development to be visible in combination with any of the Tier 2 projects identified in Table 20.22. Operational Aberdeen Bay OWF is theoretically visible, though significantly screened in the view by intervening landform. The Proposed Development is not visible in the view due to screening by intervening landform.

20.12.76 Although the Proposed Development is theoretically visible on distant horizons, the Proposed Development is screened by intervening landform and will not be visible, and as such there will be no cumulative change or interaction between the Proposed Development and any of the identified Tier 2 projects.

20.12.77 The cumulative magnitude of impact resulting from the addition of the Proposed Development is assessed as none and for the identified low sensitivity receptors at this location the additional cumulative effect of the Proposed Development is assessed as **None** (there is no cumulative effect) which is not significant in EIA terms.

***Tier 3 Projects***

20.12.78 There is no certainty in relation to the programme for delivery, nor the location of the offshore Wind Turbines associated with the Tier 3 project identified as Morven North OWF and Morven South OWF. Visibility of these identified Tier 3 Projects is limited in extent and comprised of upper blade tip only, which will be difficult to perceive as elements of the view. Both Morven North OWF and Morven South OWF are theoretically visible in combination with the Proposed Development, however visible elements are not readily perceived in the views assessed.

20.12.79 In relation to potential cumulative visual impacts arising because of the addition of the identified Tier 3 project, it is considered that offshore elements of the Tier 3 project will generally be difficult to perceive in combination with the Proposed Development due to attenuation by distance, due to the Tier 3 project being located beyond the Proposed Development. Where visible in views, offshore elements would be perceived in combination with the Proposed Development as a minor addition to the view.

20.12.80 It is therefore considered that the Tier 3 project will give rise to a negligible cumulative magnitude of impact, resulting in a **Minor** adverse and not significant visual impact, which is assessed as not significant in EIA terms.

### **Tier 4 Projects**

- 20.12.81 As with the previously identified Tier 3 project, there is no certainty in relation to the programme for delivery, nor the location of the offshore Wind Turbines associated with the Tier 4 project identified as Flora Floating OWF, which is located approximately 46 km north of the Proposed Development.
- 20.12.82 In relation to potential cumulative visual impacts arising because of the addition of the identified Tier 4 project, it is considered that offshore elements of the Tier 4 project will generally not be visible in combination with the Proposed Development but rather would be perceived sequentially as the Tier 4 project is located further north.
- 20.12.83 It is therefore considered that the Tier 4 project will give rise to a negligible cumulative magnitude of impact, resulting in a **Minor** adverse and not significant visual impact, which is assessed as not significant in EIA terms.

## **20.13 Proposed Monitoring**

- 20.13.1 The assessment of potential indirect effects arising because of the Proposed Development upon seascape and landscape receptors are identified as not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations, and accordingly no Additional Mitigation Measures, over and above those identified in Table 20.20, or subsequent monitoring is required as no significant effects have been identified.
- 20.13.2 In relation to potential effects upon visual receptors arising because of the Proposed Development during the O&M phase, it is recognised that significant effects have been identified for a range of visual receptors within the SLVIA Study Area. No Additional Mitigation measures, in above those identified within Table 20.20 have been identified that would aid in the further reduction of the identified significant effects. Subsequent monitoring of visual effects has not been included or identified as visibility of the Proposed Development is reliant upon the limitations of visibility out to sea at these distances where clear visibility to the horizon often occurs infrequently or is hampered by intervening weather conditions.

## **20.14 Transboundary Effects**

- 20.14.1 A screening of transboundary effects has been carried out (Volume 3, Technical Appendix 4.5: Transboundary Effects Screening) and has identified that there were no likely significant transboundary effects with regard to seascape, landscape and visual impacts from the Proposed Development upon the interests of European Economic Area (EEA) states.

## **20.15 Summary of Impacts, Mitigation, Likely Significant Environmental Effects and Monitoring**

- 20.15.1 Information on seascape, landscape and visual impact within the SLVIA Study Area was collected through desktop review, site surveys and consultation. This information is summarised in Table 20.4, Table 20.5 and Table 20.6.
- 20.15.2 Table 20.20 presents a summary of the Embedded Mitigation, potential impacts and the conclusion of likely significant environmental effects in EIA terms in

respect of seascape, landscape and visual impacts arising because of the Proposed Development on its own.

20.15.3 The impacts assessed, for the Proposed Development (in isolation) include:

- temporary, indirect and direct seascape, landscape and visual effects arising because of the works associated with the Offshore Export Cable(s), IACs, Interconnector Cables and Landfall;
- temporary effects arising because of the construction and decommissioning works associated with the installation of Wind Turbines and OSPs; and
- long term effects (daytime) of the O&M of the Offshore Infrastructure of the Proposed Development on Visual Receptors/views.

20.15.4 In relation to temporary, indirect seascape, landscape and visual effects arising because of the works associated with the Offshore Export Cable(s), IACs, Interconnector Cables and Landfall, it is concluded that none of the identified and assessed SCTs or LCTs within the SLVIA Study Area will experience significant effects because of the Proposed Development.

20.15.5 In relation to temporary effects arising because of the construction and decommissioning works associated with the installation of Wind Turbines and OSPs, during the construction or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development it is concluded that none of the identified and assessed SCTs or LCTs within the SLVIA Study Area will experience effects greater than that predicted within the assessment of the long term effects (daytime) of the O&M of the Offshore Infrastructure of the Proposed Development on Visual Receptors/views. Short duration decommissioning effects are beneficial in nature as Offshore Infrastructure (Wind Turbines and OSPs) are sequentially removed, and the visibility of such elements is reduced.

20.15.6 In relation to the long term effects (daytime) of the O&M of the Offshore Infrastructure of the Proposed Development on Visual Receptors/views, it is concluded that of the 20 viewpoints assessed, eight viewpoints are predicted to experience long duration, likely significant visual effects because of the Proposed Development during the O&M phase. It is however recognised that the significant visual effects identified and assessed are based on 'worst case' visibility, and that in reality actual visibility of the Proposed Development will be constrained by weather conditions which will reduce actual visibility of the Proposed Development. The remaining 12 viewpoints are not predicted to experience significant visual effects because of the Proposed Development.

20.15.7 As part of the assessment, information on operational, consented and proposed OWF development within the SLVIA Study Area was collected through desktop review, with relevant projects selected based upon the results of a screening exercise (see Volume 3, Technical Appendix 4.4: Cumulative Effects Assessment – Screening).

20.15.8 In undertaking the CEA for the Proposed Development, it is important to bear in mind that other projects under consideration will have differing potential for proceeding to an operational stage and hence a differing potential to ultimately

contribute to a cumulative impact alongside the Proposed Development. Therefore, a tiered approach has been adopted, which employed the following tiers:

- Tier 1 – The Onshore Infrastructure of the Project;
- Tier 2 – Projects that have an application submitted, are consented, under construction or operational to the extent not already captured within the baseline;
- Tier 2 – Projects that have an application submitted, are consented, under construction or operational to the extent not already captured within the baseline;
- Tier 3 – Projects which have submitted a scoping report and/or have received a scoping opinion; and
- Tier 4 – Reasonably foreseeable projects including those with Crown Estate Scotland option or lease agreements.

- 20.15.9 Table 20.25 presents a summary of the potential cumulative visual effects when considering Tier 2, Tier 3 and Tier 4 projects in combination with the Proposed Development.
- 20.15.10 Overall, it is concluded that there will be no likely significant cumulative visual effects arising because of the Proposed Development alongside either Tier 2, Tier 3, or Tier 4 projects.
- 20.15.11 No significant transboundary effects have been identified regarding effects of the Proposed Development

Table 20.24: Summary of Impact Assessment and Significance of Residual Effects

Description of Impact	Phase*			Embedded Mitigation ID	Receptor	Magnitude of impact	Sensitivity of receptor	Significance of effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance Residual Effect	Proposed monitoring
	C	O	D								
<b>Impact 1 - Temporary indirect and direct seascape, landscape and visual effects arising because of the works associated with the Offshore Export Cable(s), Interconnector Cables, IACs and Landfall connection site</b>	✓	×	✓	7	Seascape Character – Type 2: Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Landscape Character – Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 13)			Minor beneficial following removal of Landfall connection site		Minor beneficial following removal of Landfall connection site	
<b>Impact 2 - Temporary effects arising because of the construction and decommissioning works associated with the installation of Wind Turbines and OSPs</b>	✓	×	✓	3	All Seascape Character areas identified within the SLVIA Study Area	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Landscape Character areas identified within the SLVIA Study Area						
					Special Landscape Areas	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
<b>Impact 3 - Long term effects (daytime) arising because of the presence of Wind Turbines and OSPs on visual receptors/views</b>	×	✓	×	35	Viewpoint 1 – Buchan Ness Lighthouse (Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 2 – Slain’s Castle (Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Medium	High	Moderate adverse	No Additional Mitigation can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 3 – Cruden Bay (Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire (LCT 17) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 4 – Whinnyfold (Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Medium	High	Moderate adverse	No Additional can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 5 – Collieston (Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Medium	High	Moderate adverse	No Additional can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 6 – Seal Beach, Newburgh (Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Low	Medium	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 7 – Balmedie Beach (Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Low	Medium	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None

Description of Impact	Phase*			Embedded Mitigation ID	Receptor	Magnitude of impact	Sensitivity of receptor	Significance of effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance Residual Effect	Proposed monitoring
	C	O	D								
					Viewpoint 8 – Aberdeen/Orkney Ferry Link (Open Sea Views)	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	No Additional Mitigation can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 9 – Royal Aberdeen Golf Course Third Tee (Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Low	Medium	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 9a – Royal Aberdeen Golf Course Clubhouse (Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Low	Medium	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 10 – Aberdeen Esplanade (Urban (LCT 0) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Low	Medium	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 11 – Torry Battery (Cliffs and Rocky Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 2) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	No Additional Mitigation can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 12 – Girdle Ness Lighthouse (Cliffs and Rocky Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 2) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	No Additional Mitigation can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 13 – Baron’s Cairn (Low Hills - Aberdeen (LCT 5) and Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views SCT)	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	No Additional Mitigation over and above Embedded Mitigation can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 14 – Portlethan Pedestrian Railway Bridge (Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT11))	Negligible	Medium	Negligible adverse	None required.	Negligible adverse	None
					Viewpoint 15 – Muchalls (Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Medium	High	Moderate adverse	No Additional Mitigation can be applied to mitigate long term effect	Moderate adverse	None
					Viewpoint 16 – A92 Parking Bay (Farmed Moorland Hills - Aberdeenshire (LCT 27) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Low	Medium	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None

Description of Impact	Phase*			Embedded Mitigation ID	Receptor	Magnitude of impact	Sensitivity of receptor	Significance of effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance Residual Effect	Proposed monitoring
	C	O	D								
					Viewpoint 17 – Stonehaven Pier (Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT).	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 18 – Stonehaven Memorial (Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 19 – Bervie Bay (Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11) and Type 2: Mainland Rocky Coastline with open sea views SCT)	Low	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
					Viewpoint 20 – Ellon Roundabout (Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire (LCT 17))	No Change	Low	None	None required.	None	None

\* Proposed Development Phase refers to construction (C), O&M (O) and decommissioning (D).

Table 20.25: Summary of Cumulative Effects Assessment

Description of Impact	CEA Tier	Magnitude of Impact	Sensitivity of Receptor	Significance of Effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance Residual Effect	Proposed Monitoring
<b>O&amp;M Phase</b>							
<b>Cumulative effect of the Proposed Development on Visual Receptors/Views</b>	Tier 2	Negligible	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse cumulative impacts predicted for single viewpoint (Viewpoint 19) No cumulative impacts predicted for remaining 20 viewpoints.	None
<b>Cumulative effect of the Proposed Development on Visual Receptors/Views</b>	Tier 3	Negligible	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None
<b>Cumulative effect of the Proposed Development on Visual Receptors/Views</b>	Tier 4	Negligible	High	Minor adverse	None required.	Minor adverse	None

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