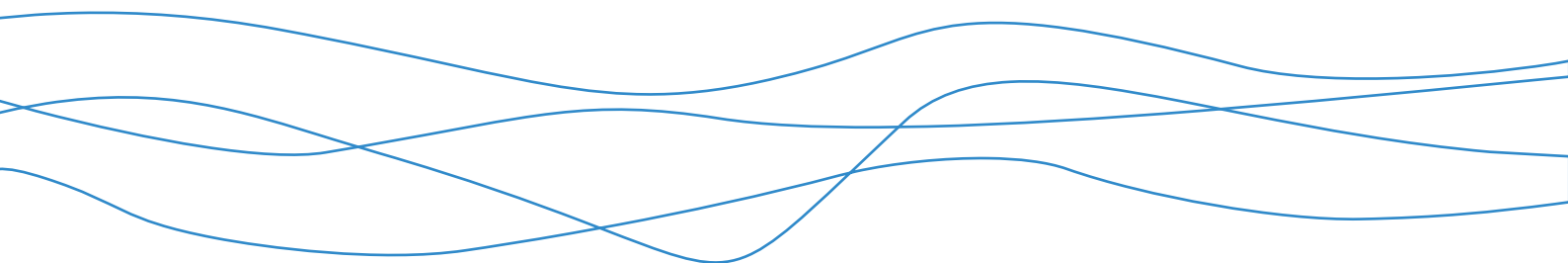




Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm, Onshore EIA Report

Volume 2, Appendix 8.1: Landscape Character
Types

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Glossary

Defined term	Definition
Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited	A Special-Purpose Vehicle (SPV) (legal entity) for the purpose of developing the Project.
Effect	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.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Assessment of the potential likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the physical, biological, and human environment during construction, operations and maintenance and decommissioning.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report	Document prepared to comply with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 in order to provide information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the baseline environment; • project description for the Proposed Development; • a systematic assessment of the Proposed Development's likely significant environmental effects; • measures to avoid, prevent, reduce or offset likely significant adverse environmental effects; • a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the Applicant; and • a non-technical summary.
Impact	A change caused by an action that occurs during a project's lifetime.
Landscape	An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is a result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.
Landscape Character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
Landscape Character Area (LCA)	These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape character type. Each has its own individual character and identity, even though it shares the same generic characteristics with other types. (Natural England, 2014)

Defined term	Definition
Landscape Character Assessment	The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscape distinctive.
Landscape Character Types (LCTs)	Distinct types of landscapes that are usually homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes. (Topic Paper 6, Countryside Agency and SNH 2002)
Landscape effects	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
Landscape quality (condition)	A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.
Landscape receptors	Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.
Landscape value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	A chapter within the EIA Report to systematically identify, predict, assess and report on the likely significant landscape and visual effects of a proposed project or development.
The Project	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 Grid Connection Point (GCP). The Project includes the Offshore Generation Assets, the Offshore Transmission Assets and the Onshore Transmission Assets.
The Proposed Development	Term used to define the onshore infrastructure associated with the Project landward of MLWS for which PPP is being sought. Further details of the parameters are

Defined term	Definition
	included in the Onshore EIA Report Volume 1, Chapter 2: The Proposed Development.
Sensitivity	A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.
Significance	Effect factor that is determined by the magnitude of impact along with the sensitivity of the receptor.
Study Area	For each environmental topic, the baseline environment will be characterised, and the potential environmental impacts will be described within a topic-specific study area. Specific study areas are defined for each topic and are based on the maximum spatial extent across which potential impacts of the Proposed Development may be experienced by the relevant receptors (i.e. Zone of Influence).

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GLVIA3	Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition
LCT	Landscape Character Types
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
MLWS	Mean Low Water Spring
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
NCN	National Cycle Network
NS	NatureScot
OS	Ordnance Survey
SLA	Scenic Landscape Area
SSEN	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks
TWP	Thistle Wind Partners Limited

Table of Units

Units	Definition
km	Kilometre

1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Appendix presents details of the Landscape Character Types (LCT) found within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Study Area for the onshore infrastructure of the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm ('the Project'). The onshore infrastructure of the Project, is the works landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS), including the intertidal area, and is referred to as 'the Proposed Development'. This Appendix supports the assessment reported in Volume 1, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

1.2 Landscape Character Types

1.2.1 In 2019 NatureScot published a Landscape Character Type Map with associated LCT descriptions as a tool to describe the landscape character of Scotland and these provide a basis for the landscape and visual assessment.

1.2.2 The LVIA Study Area is covered by three host LCTs. Summaries of the LCTs that fall within the LVIA Study Area, with their key characteristics, distances from the Proposed Development and their sensitivity are included in Volume 1, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual in Section 8.8 and locations of the LCT are shown on Figure 8.2 of the chapter.

1.2.3 The methodology used to assess the susceptibility, value and sensitivity of each LCT follows advice given in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) and is provided in Section 8.10 of Volume 1, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual.

1.2.4 Detailed descriptions of each of the NatureScot LCT that fall within the LVIA Study Area, together with information collated during site surveys are provided in this Appendix to explain judgements and reasonings on susceptibility, value and the sensitivity of each LCT.

1.2.5 This information is contained within Table 1.1 to Table 1.3 and has been used to provide a baseline against which the Proposed Development can be assessed in regard to likely effects upon landscape character.

Table 1.1: Summary of LCT 13 (Raised Beach Coast - Aberdeenshire)

	Description
Location and Context	The LCT comprises a narrow coastal strip 500 m – 1 km wide running along the southeast facing Aberdeenshire coastline from Inverbervie to the mouth of the River North Esk.
Topography	The landform consists of a raised beach with low gently sloping Sandstone cliffs falling to the sea.
Landcover and Land Use	Large scale arable and pasture fields with post and wire fencing and occasional windswept trees. Little woodland is present with steeper slopes and low cliffs well-vegetated with grasses and scrub.
Settlement and Features	Settlements include the fishing villages of Inverbervie, Gourdon, Benholm and Johnshaven, The A92 runs along the northern edge of the LCT parallel to the coast.
Landscape Scale and Nature of Views	The landscape is large scale and open with long distance views out to the North Sea increasing the sense of space.

	Description
Susceptibility	High. Due to the open, flat and uniform nature of the LCT any changes to landscape elements or landscape features are likely to be highly visible.
Value	<p>Landscape Designations: High. Southeast Aberdeenshire Coast Special Landscape Area (SLA), Johnshaven Conservation Area (CA), Benholm CA, Catterline CA.</p> <p>Landscape Quality/Condition: Medium. Farmland and field boundaries are generally well maintained.</p> <p>Scenic Quality: Medium. The open landscape gives clear views across the farmland out to the North Sea.</p> <p>Rarity: Low. The LCT is typical of much of the northeast coast of Scotland.</p> <p>Representativeness: Medium. The open views to the sea across large scale fields and the gently sloping landform are the dominant feature of this typical coastal landscape.</p> <p>Conservation/Cultural Interest: Medium. Both Johnshaven CA and Benholm CA contain numerous listed buildings.</p> <p>Recreational Value: Medium. Recreational features include a caravan park at Johnshaven, the National Cycle Network (NCN) 1 and the Aberdeenshire coastal path.</p> <p>Perceptual Aspects: Medium. The landscape is not wild due to the dominance of agriculture but does have a sense of tranquillity away from the A92.</p> <p>Associations: Medium. The writer Lewis Grassic Gibbon is associated with this part of the Aberdeenshire coast.</p> <p>Overall Value: High</p>
Sensitivity (derived from Value and Susceptibility)	High

Table 1.2: Summary of LCT 24 (Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire)

	Description
Location and Context	The LCT stretches from west of Stonehaven in the north to Marykirk in the south. It contains a broad inland strip of undulating farmland, sandwiched between the raised beach of LCA 13 and the upland plateau of LCT 29.
Topography	The landform is extremely undulating, comprising small hills and broad shallow valleys with narrow ravines often cutting through the broad ridges towards the coast.
Landcover and Land Use	Large scale arable and pasture fields bounded by post and wire fencing with few hedges or dykes. There is sparse woodland with coniferous shelterbelts planted on some ridges. Broadleaf woodlands, although small, commonly emphasise the landform, tracing water courses or planted on knolls.
Settlement and Features	Settlements include the villages of Drumlithie, Arbuthnot, Monboddo, Benholm and Marykirk with smaller traditional villages and numerous farms constructed from the vernacular warm red sandstone dispersed throughout the countryside. The A90, A92, A957 and East Coast Mainline run through parts of the LCT. There is some large-scale wind development and both wind turbines and telecommunication masts located on the higher hills provide vertical focal points in the generally horizontal landscape.

	Description
Landscape Scale and Nature of Views	The landscape is large scale and open with long distance views across the agricultural landscape increasing the sense of space. There is a strong coastal influence where more open slopes allow views of the sea to the east. Fields have a distinctive red-pink soil and the mixture of arable and pasture produces a strong patchwork pattern influenced by the different crops and ploughed fields.
Susceptibility	Medium. The undulating nature of this LCT will mean that any changes to landscape elements or landscape features may be screened by landform.
Value	<p>Landscape Designations: High. Southeast Aberdeenshire Coast SLA, Arbuthnott House Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL), Glenbervie House GDL, Catterline CA.</p> <p>Landscape Quality/Condition: Medium. Farmland and field boundaries are generally well maintained.</p> <p>Scenic Quality: Medium. The open agricultural landscape gives long distance views from more elevated east facing slopes across the farmland out to the North Sea.</p> <p>Rarity: Low. The LCT is typical of much of the northeast coast of Scotland.</p> <p>Representativeness: Medium. The open views across large scale fields and the undulating landform are the dominant feature of this agricultural landscape.</p> <p>Conservation/Cultural Interest: Medium. The area has a concentration of Bronze Age burial cairns often focussed on hilltops with views out to the sea.</p> <p>Recreational Value: Medium. Recreational features include the NCN1 cycle route and The Grassic Gibbon Visitor Centre in Arbuthnott.</p> <p>Perceptual Aspects: Medium. The landscape is not wild due to the dominance of agriculture but does have a sense of tranquillity away from the major roads.</p> <p>Associations: High. The writer Lewis Grassic Gibbon is strongly associated with Arbuthnott and the surrounding countryside.</p> <p>Overall Value: High</p>
Sensitivity (derived from Value and Susceptibility)	High

Table 1.3: Summary of LCT 29 (Summits and Plateaux - Aberdeenshire)

	Description
Location and Context	The LCT comprises the Mounth hills, which form an upland plateau on the edge of the Cairngorm massif. The southern boundary of the LCT within the Study Area is formed by the Brae of Glenbervie and extends towards the coast at Stonehaven.
Topography	Smooth rounded granite hills combine to form an expansive upland plateau with a rolling landform. The north-eastern foothills are less dramatic and form a more gradual transition with surrounding farmland.
Landcover and Land Use	Large expanse of commercial coniferous plantation on lower hills, particularly extensive in the north-east of the LCT. The central and western ridges are covered with expansive heather and grass moorland. A patchwork of unenclosed green pasture extends high into narrow valleys on the fringes of the uplands.

	Description
Settlement and Features	There is an almost complete absence of habitation on the upland ridges and the area is only crossed by two roads, the A957 and the B974 Cairn O'Mount. Settlement is generally limited to the edges of the LCT although pockets of farmland and isolated farms and estate buildings associated with lower ground are occasionally located in the core of these uplands. Large scale wind farm development is a significant presence in the upland part of this LCT including Fetteresso Forest. There are also medium and small-scale turbines at the edges of the LCT at the base of slopes.
Landscape Scale and Nature of Views	The hills are regionally prominent and form a backdrop in views from the farmland to the east and from the north as far as the fringes of Aberdeen city. Hillside walking routes and the B974 Cairn O'Mount road offer commanding views to the Howe of Mearns, the coast, and to Deeside. Views from the LCT are expansive but can be often limited by landform or forestry.
Susceptibility	Medium. The hills and forestry mean that change to landscape elements or landscape features may be screened by landform or vegetation.
Value	<p>Landscape Designations: Low. No landscape designations</p> <p>Landscape Quality/Condition: Medium. Forestry and field boundaries are generally well maintained.</p> <p>Scenic Quality: Medium. There is a juxtaposition of the steep scarp slopes of these rugged uplands with the expansive low-lying farmed and settled Howe of the Mearns.</p> <p>Rarity: Low. Commercial forestry and heather moorland are common within Scotland.</p> <p>Representativeness: Low. Commercial forestry and heather moorland are the dominant features of this upland landscape.</p> <p>Conservation/Cultural Interest: Medium. The archaeology of the area includes concentrations of prehistoric settlements and farm systems as well as pre-improvement farmsteads on the lower slopes of some of the hills. Of note is the Kincardine Deer Dyke, at Fasque/Fettercairn which is the remains of a medieval deer management system.</p> <p>Recreational Value: Medium. Recreational features include forest walks at Fetteresso Forest.</p> <p>Perceptual Aspects: Medium. The central hills have a wild, remote and windswept character but this reduces in the east due to the commercially forestry and wind turbines which give a developed character.</p> <p>Associations: Low. No particular associations with the LCT.</p> <p>Overall Value: Medium/Low</p>
Sensitivity (derived from Value and Susceptibility)	Medium/Low

2 References

Literature

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