



Wind Power North Two Limited

Balblair Wind Farm

Environmental Impact Assessment Report (Volume 2)

Chapter 10 – Cultural Heritage

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10 CULTURAL HERITAGE

10.1 Introduction

- 10.1.1 This chapter presents the findings of the assessment of likely significant effects with respect to Cultural Heritage associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed Development.
- 10.1.2 A heritage asset is any element of the historic environment which has cultural significance. Both discrete features, and extensive landscapes defined by a specific historic event, process or theme, can be defined as heritage assets; assets may overlap or be nested within one another. Designated assets include Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, World Heritage Properties, Conservation Areas, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Inventory Historic Battlefields and Historic Marine Protected Areas. Other assets may also be locally designated through policies in the Local Development Plan.
- 10.1.3 The majority of heritage assets are not designated. Some non-designated assets are recorded in Historic Environment Records (HER) maintained by local authorities and other agencies. Many heritage assets are currently unrecorded, and the information contained in HERs is not definitive, since they may include features which, for instance, have been entirely removed, or are of uncertain location, dubious identification, or negligible importance. The identification of non-designated heritage assets is therefore to some extent a matter of professional judgement.
- 10.1.4 Some heritage assets may coincide with visual receptors or landscape character areas in terms of the potential for effects of the proposed Development on visual experiences. In such cases, it is important to recognise the difference in approach between these two topics. The cultural heritage assessment addresses effects on the cultural heritage significance of heritage assets, which may result from, but are not equivalent to, visual impacts. **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** focuses more on subjective present experience and amenity, while cultural heritage has a focus on understanding of cultural significance, both intellectually and emotionally, across past, present and future generations. An effect on a landscape character area does not therefore equate to an effect on the cultural significance of heritage assets within it.
- 10.1.5 The objectives of the chapter are to:
- Describe the baseline; the location, nature and extent of any known heritage assets or areas of archaeological potential which may be affected by the proposed Development;
 - Describe the assessment methodology and significance criteria used in completing the assessment;
 - Describe the potential effects, including cumulative effects;
 - Describe the mitigation measures proposed to address likely significant effects (if required); and
 - Assess the residual effects remaining following the implementation of mitigation (if required).

10.1.6 This chapter is supported by the following figures and technical appendices which provide further information and are referenced throughout the chapter:

- EIA Report **Volume 3a: Figures**
 - **Figure 10.1** - Known Heritage Assets within the Site.
 - **Figure 10.2** - Cultural Heritage Viewpoints (CHVPs) within the Outer Study Area (OSA) and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for the proposed Development.
- EIA Report **Volume 3d: Cultural Heritage Visualisations**
 - **CHVP01 Figure 10.3a to 10.3d** - Category B Listed Building LB52528 Lydsurach Crofthouse, Balblair Estate, near Bonar Bridge. Photomontage from crofthouse.
 - **CHVP02 Figure 10.4** - Category B Listed Building LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates. Wireline from castle.
 - **CHVP03 Figure 10.5** - Scheduled Monument SM1785 Drumliah, chambered cairn, hut circles & clearance cairns, Tulloch. Photomontage looking towards cairn in foreground.
 - **CHVP04 Figure 10.6** - Scheduled Monuments SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosure / SM1758 Achany, cairn 890 m NW of. Representative Photomontage from position between the monument group.
 - **CHVP05 Figure 10.7** - Scheduled Monument SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosure. Wireline from stone circle.
 - **CHVP06 Figure 10.8** - Scheduled Monument SM1758 Achany, cairn 890 m NW of. Wireline from cairn.
- EIA Report **Volume 4: Technical Appendices**
 - **Technical Appendix 10.1** - Cultural Heritage Baseline Desk-based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment (including **Annex 1: Cultural Heritage Gazetteer**).

10.2 Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Legislation

- 10.2.1 Relevant legislation and guidance documents have been taken into account as part of this Cultural Heritage assessment.
- 10.2.2 The regulatory basis for the assessment presented in this chapter is The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.
- 10.2.3 The chapter is also prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Electricity Act 1989. Paragraph 1 (1) of Schedule 9 of this Act states:

“In formulating any relevant proposals, a licence holder or a person authorised by 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 or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.”
- 10.2.4 As the Applicant is not a licence holder or person so authorised, and where consent is required under section 36 of the Electricity Act, per paragraph 3 (2) of Schedule 9, the Scottish Ministers shall have regard to –
- (a) the desirability of the matters mentioned in paragraph (a) of subparagraph (1) above; and
- (b) the extent to which the person by whom the proposals were formulated has complied with his duty under paragraph (b) of that sub-paragraph”.
- 10.2.5 Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are protected by statute:
- Legislation regarding Scheduled Monuments is contained within *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*.
 - Legislation regarding Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is contained in *The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997*.
- 10.2.6 The 1979 Act makes no reference to the settings of Scheduled Monuments.
- 10.2.7 The 1997 Act places a duty on the consenting authority with respect to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, and their settings. Section 59 of the 1997 Act states:
- “In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, a planning authority or the Scottish Ministers, as the case may be, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”*
- 10.2.8 Section 64 of the 1997 Act states:
- “In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under [the planning Acts]..., special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*
- 10.2.9 The proposed Development does not include buildings or other land in a conservation area, so section 64 does not apply in this case.
- 10.2.10 The Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014 defines the role of the public body, Historic Environment Scotland (HES), and the processes for the designation of heritage assets, consents and rights of appeal.

Policy

- 10.2.11 The historic environment is defined as “...*the physical evidence for past human activity. It connects people with place, and with the traditions, stories, and memories associated with places and landscapes*” in ‘Our Past, Our Future: The Strategy for Scotland’s Historic Environment’ (2023, 10) and in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) as “*the physical evidence for human activity that connects people with place, linked with the associations we can see, feel and understand*” (Annex F – Glossary of definitions). These documents

present the Scottish Government’s strategy for the protection and promotion of the historic environment.

- 10.2.12 NPF4 Part 1 A National Spatial Strategy for Scotland 2045 describes how the future spatial development of Scotland can contribute to planning outcomes. It shows where there will be opportunities for growth and regeneration, investment in the low carbon economy, environmental enhancement, and improved connections across the country.
- 10.2.13 Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS, HES, 2019a) defines the Historic Environment and Scottish Government Policy. It sets out the vision and key principles on how to care for and protect Scotland’s historic environment including designations of ancient monuments, principles for scheduling and listing, contexts for conservation areas, marine protected areas, gardens and designated landscapes, historic battlefields and consents and advice.

NPF4 – Part 2: Historic Assets and Places Policy 7

- 10.2.14 The Scottish Government’s planning policies in relation to the historic environment are set out in NPF4 Part 2 National Planning Policy (The Scottish Government, February 2023). Policy 7: Historic assets and places applies its principles to designated and non-designated assets. As set out in full in **Technical Appendix 10.1**, NPF4 Policy 7 (a), (c), (h), and (o) are relevant to the assessments in this chapter.

Local Planning Policy

- 10.2.15 The Highland Council adopted their Local Development Plan (LDP) in April 2012. Policy 57: Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage of the LDP 2012 relates to the historic environment. This Policy is set out in **Table 2** of **Technical Appendix 10.1**.
- 10.2.16 Due to the date of adoption of the HwLDP which predates NPF4, planning legislation notes that where there is policy conflict between the HwLDP and NPF4, NPF4 will take precedence. Whilst there is no clear conflict between HwLDP and NPF4, both of which seek to protect the historic environment, due to the planning legislation notes NPF4 forms the main reference policies for the assessment in this chapter.

Guidance

- 10.2.17 The methodology for this cultural heritage impact assessment is consistent with the Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook (v5 NatureScot & HES 2018), guidance for competent authorities, consultation bodies, and others involved in the Environmental Impact Assessment process in Scotland, Appendix 1.
- 10.2.18 HES also provides guidance in a series of documents entitled ‘Managing Change in the Historic Environment’ (MCHE). These provide guidance to planning authorities and stakeholders regarding key issues relating to development, the planning process, and key issues pertaining to the historic environment. Most relevant to this assessment are the guidance notes covering Setting (June 2016 updated 2020), and Works on Scheduled Monuments (2016 updated 2020).
- 10.2.19 HES published Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (DPSG, 2019b) to accompany HEPS. DPSG outlines the policy and selection guidance used by HES when designating sites and places of national importance.

- 10.2.20 Planning Advice Note (PAN) 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology provides technical advice to planning authorities and developers on dealing with archaeological remains. Among other issues it considers the balance in planning decisions between the preservation in situ of archaeological remains and the benefits of development; setting; the circumstances under which developers can be required to provide further information, in the form of a field evaluation to allow planning authorities to reach a decision; and measures that can be taken to mitigate adverse impacts.
- 10.2.21 Standards and Guidance published by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) have been followed in preparing this assessment, in particular the ‘Standard and guidance for commissioning work or providing consultancy advice on archaeology and the historic environment’ (2020a) and the ‘Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment’ (2020b).
- 10.2.22 This assessment has also been prepared with reference to IEMA, IHBC and CIfA’s July 2021 publication ‘Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK’. This document presents good practice for assessment of the impact of a development proposal on cultural heritage assets.
- 10.2.23 The cultural heritage visualisations supporting this chapter have been produced by the Landscape and Visual team in accordance with NatureScot’s 2017 guidance ‘Visual Representations of Wind Farms’; the methodology for preparing these is described in **Appendix 6.2: Visualisation Information**.

10.3 Consultation Undertaken

- 10.3.1 Throughout the scoping process, and subsequently during the ongoing EIA process, relevant organisations were contacted with regards to the proposed Development. **Table 10.1** outlines the consultation responses received in relation to Cultural Heritage.

Table 10.1: Summary of consultation responses relevant to this chapter

Consultee	Issues Raised	Response/Action Taken
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)		
Scoping Response Case ID 300072542 09 May 2024	<p>The proposed Development has the potential to have a negative impact on the setting of a large number of scheduled monuments in the vicinity, especially to the north along the valley of the River Shin. The following list of monuments are particularly vulnerable to impacts from the development and should be included for detailed assessment. This list is not considered to be exhaustive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM1792 Invershin Station, chambered cairn 400m N of • SM1791 Invershin Farm, standing stone 220m ENE of 	<p>A Stage 1 Setting Assessment was completed for study areas as agreed through scoping.</p> <p>A number of the assets listed by HES in their scoping response were found to lie outwith the ZTV for the proposed Development with no impacts anticipated. HES was consulted on the heritage assets proposed for detailed assessment in the EIA Report through submission of a Stage 1 Setting Assessment on 03 September 2024.</p>

Consultee	Issues Raised	Response/Action Taken
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SM1761 Achinduich, stone circle 950m NNE of SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, Stone Circle, Cairns, Hut Circles and Enclosure SM1759 Achany, Chambered Cairn 250m NE of SM1785 Drumliah, chambered cairn, hut circles & clearance cairns, Tulloch 	<p>HES's comments are incorporated into the final version of Technical Appendix 10.1 (December 2024). The final list of agreed assets for detailed assessment is presented in the row below.</p>
<p>Consultation Case ID 300072542 12 September 2024</p>	<p>We have reviewed the draft wirelines supplied and are content that the [assets as requested] can be scoped out of further detailed assessment.</p> <p>We request that visualisations in the form of photomontages are produced for the monuments identified below to aid assessment of the likely level of impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SM1784 Drum Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosures SM1785 Drumliah, chambered cairn, hut circles & clearance cairns, Tulloch SM1758 Achany, cairn 890m NW of <p>(From the information provided, we are content that a photomontage produced for SM1784 may be sufficient to act as a proxy to allow the assessment of impacts on the setting of SM1758).</p>	<p>Assessment of all heritage assets with all supporting visualisations as requested by HES are included in this chapter.</p> <p>The agreed list of heritage assets within HES's remit for detailed assessment is:</p> <p><u>Scheduled Monuments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SM1784 Drum Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosures SM1785 Drumliah, chambered cairn, hut circles & clearance cairns, Tulloch SM1758 Achany, cairn 890m NW of <p>Photomontages for agreed cultural heritage viewpoints (CHVPs) are presented at EIA Report Volume 3d: Cultural Heritage Visualisations. Although SM1785 is located within thick vegetation, a photomontage is provided as requested.</p>
<p>The Highland Council (THC)</p>		
<p>Scoping Response 27 May 2024</p>	<p>The EIAR needs to identify all designated sites which may be affected by the development either directly or indirectly.</p> <p>We would expect any assessment to contain a full appreciation of the setting of these historic environment assets and the likely impact on their settings. Where the</p>	<p>All designated and non-designated heritage assets that may be affected by the proposed Development, either directly, indirectly, or through change within their settings, are considered in this chapter and in Technical Appendix 10.1.</p>

Consultee	Issues Raised	Response/Action Taken
	<p>assessment finds that significant impacts are likely, appropriate visualisations such as photomontage and wireframe views of the development in relation to the sites and their settings should be provided. Visualisations illustrating views both from the asset towards the proposed Development and views towards the asset with the development in the background would be helpful.</p> <p>It is noted that open-access lidar data is available from the National Library of Scotland Maps website and that this should be included in the baseline research.</p>	<p>A Stage 1 Setting Assessment was completed for study areas as agreed through scoping. Photomontages for cultural heritage viewpoints (CHVPs) are presented at EIA Report Volume 3d: Cultural Heritage Visualisations.</p> <p>The baseline for this assessment presented in Technical Appendix 10.1 includes consideration of LiDAR data. Identified anomalies were visited for ground-truthing during the field visit.</p>
<p>THC was consulted on the heritage assets proposed for detailed assessment in the EIA Report through submission of Technical Appendix 10.1 on 03 September 2024.</p>	<p>The consultation stated that if no reply was received in four weeks then the list of assets proposed for detailed assessment in the EIA Report would be considered agreed.</p> <p>No reply was received until receipt of the pre-app advice (09 December 2024) where THC deferred to the advice of HES regarding assessment of the operational phase of the proposed Development.</p>	<p>The agreed list of heritage assets within THC's remit for detailed assessment is:</p> <p><u>Listed Buildings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LB52528 Lydsurach Crofthouse, Balblair Estate, near Bonar Bridge (Cat B) • LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates (Cat B) <p><u>Non-designated</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHG10054 Leathad Breac Hut Circle; Field System • MHG10058 Coirshellach Township • MHG10335 Craigton Hut Circle • MHG18357 Leathad Breac Farmstead • MHG18358 Coirshellach Farmstead
<p>Pre-Application Advice Ref: 24/03315/ PREMAJ 09 December 2024</p>	<p><i>With such a density of (undesignated) remains across the site, it is likely that there will be direct impacts. In particular, the site compound, battery storage and substation shown on the Site Layout plan will impact on a known prehistoric settlement. Ideally all direct impacts should be avoided by</i></p>	<p>Direct physical impacts have been minimised by design and any that remain are unavoidable in the context of other constraints.</p> <p>The results of Phase 2 peat surveys were used to inform layout and design of the proposed Development. Deep peat (peat ></p>

Consultee	Issues Raised	Response/Action Taken
	<p><i>the development (by design of the final access and turbine layout, etc), but if impacts prove unavoidable, then a programme of archaeological works will be required. In addition, it is considered appropriate to recommend that palaeoenvironmental survey is carried out.</i></p>	<p>1 m) has been avoided as far as practicable. Refer to EIA Report Chapter 3: Site Selection and Alternatives Considered which describes the evolution of design and the alternatives considered to arrive at the best environmental design.</p> <p>Impacts upon peat is addressed in Chapter 9: Geology, Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat.</p> <p>A programme of archaeological works, including palaeoenvironmental survey as necessary, is committed to in Part 10.8, the scope and nature of which will be outlined in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and agreed with THC in advance of construction, a matter which the Applicant agrees can be secured as a condition of consent.</p>

10.4 Approach to the Assessment

Scope of Assessment

- 10.4.1 The scope of this assessment has been established through an ongoing scoping process. Further information can be found in **Chapter 4: EIA Approach and Methodology**.
- 10.4.2 The approach to assessment in this chapter, described in detail below, is in accordance with relevant guidance on cultural heritage impact assessment provided by: 'Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook' (NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland, 2018), 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting' (Historic Environment Scotland, 2020), and the 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK' (IEMA, IHBC and ClfA, 2021).
- 10.4.3 This assessment is concerned with impacts upon the cultural significance of heritage assets. It identifies assets that may be affected by the proposed Development by considering cultural significance including the contribution made by its setting. If an asset's setting is found to make a substantive contribution to its cultural significance, and this contribution is likely to be affected as a result of the proposed Development, the asset is considered to be 'sensitive'. Assets that are found to be sensitive to the predicted changes in their setting may experience a higher magnitude of impact than an asset that is less sensitive to changes in its setting.
- 10.4.4 The magnitude of an impact is a measure of the degree to which the cultural significance of an asset is diminished or enhanced by a proposed development. This definition of magnitude of impact, and the assessment methodology as a whole, apply to likely effects

resulting from changes to the setting of heritage assets as well as likely physical effects. The EIA significance of this effect is determined by comparing the predicted magnitude of impact with the level of importance assigned to the specific asset (reflecting the greater protection in policy afforded to assets of higher importance).

10.4.5 The cultural heritage assessment has been carried out in the following stages:

- Definition of baseline conditions, comprising desk-based study and visits to heritage assets, leading to the identification of the cultural significance and importance of heritage assets potentially affected by the proposed Development;
- Assessment of the magnitude of impacts (physical, indirect, setting and cumulative) during construction and operation of the proposed Development on the cultural significance of heritage assets, informed by baseline information, field visits, Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping, wireframes and photomontages;
- Assessment of the significance of effects, broadly a product of the asset's importance and the magnitude of the impact;
- Proposal of mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or offset significant adverse effects where necessary; and
- Presentation of residual effects and any monitoring proposals.

Receptors/Matters Scoped Out of Further Assessment

10.4.6 This section provides an update to the scope of the assessment and re-iterates/updates the evidence base for scoping out matters following further iterative assessment.

10.4.7 **Table 10.2** presents the matters that are scoped out of further assessment in this chapter, with appropriate justification. Where a change has occurred since EIA scoping, this is clearly stated and justified.

Table 10.2: Receptor/matters scoped out of further assessment

Receptor/matter	Phase	Justification	Change since EIA Scoping?
Construction phase setting effects on all heritage assets	Construction	Construction phase setting effects would be temporary and are not considered to be significant due to their very short duration	No change. Agreed with consultees during scoping
Decommissioning phase effects on all heritage assets	Decommissioning	The extent of ground disturbance associated with decommissioning will not extend beyond the construction footprint and so decommissioning effects on heritage assets within the Site will not occur. Any residual operational phase setting effects will be reversed and the current baseline would be restored with no potential for significant effects	No change. Agreed with consultees during scoping

Receptors/Matters Scoped Into Further Assessment

10.4.8 **Table 10.3** presents the receptors/matters that are scoped into further assessment, together with appropriate justification. Where a change has occurred since EIA scoping, this is clearly stated and justified.

Table 10.3: Receptor/matters scoped into further assessment

Receptor/matter	Phase	Justification	Change since EIA Scoping?
Direct and indirect physical effects upon heritage assets within the Site, including assets that may extend into the Site	Construction	Groundworks for construction have the potential to disturb archaeological remains and cultural heritage assets. Assessment will also include the potential for accidental damage and will account for micrositing tolerances	No change. Agreed with consultees during scoping
Potential archaeological remains	Construction	Groundworks for construction have the potential to disturb potential (currently unknown) archaeological remains	No change. Agreed with consultees during scoping
Setting effects on all heritage assets	Operation	Change within the setting of heritage assets has the potential to impact upon understanding, appreciation or experience of their cultural significance	No change. Agreed with consultees during scoping
Cumulative setting effects on heritage assets for which a setting effect of Minor or higher is identified as a result of the proposed Development in isolation	Operation	Cumulative change within the setting of heritage assets has the potential for increased impact upon understanding, appreciation or experience of their cultural significance as compared with the proposed Development in isolation	No change. Agreed with consultees during scoping

Baseline Methodology

Desk Study and Field Surveys

Study Areas

10.4.9 The Site application boundary has been used to gather baseline data on the known and potential archaeological resource to inform the EIA (**Figure 10.1**). Within the Site all heritage assets are considered for construction and operational effects. Heritage assets within 2 km of the Site have been identified and considered to inform the assessment of archaeological potential.

10.4.10 Heritage assets have been included in the assessment for nested Outer Study Areas (OSA) based on their level of importance (see **Figure 10.2**) to ensure that likely significant

effects are identified. The OSA reflects the fact that the more important the asset, the more likely significant effects could be generated over greater distances. Therefore, the following study area boundaries have been applied:

- Up to 2 km from proposed turbines: Category C Listed Buildings, and non-designated heritage assets;
- Up to 5 km from proposed turbines: Category B Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and Inventory Historic Battlefields;
- Up to 20 km from proposed turbines: World Heritage Properties, Scheduled Monuments, Category A Listed Buildings and Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

10.4.11 In addition, beyond the OSA as defined above, any other designated assets which are within the ZTV are included in the assessment where a significant impact is considered possible as a result of the proposed Development i.e. an asset is considered exceptionally important and/or sensitive to visual change within its setting, and/or where long-distance views from or towards the asset are thought to contribute to cultural significance in the opinion of the assessor or consultees. This screening exercise is based on the approach set out in *Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting* (Historic Environment Scotland, 2016 updated 2020) and supplemented through scoping and further consultation with statutory consultees. In the case of the proposed Development, no assets have been identified beyond the defined OSAs and in the ZTV requiring consideration in the Stage 1 Setting Assessment.

Data Sources

10.4.12 The baseline for the assessment has been informed by a comprehensive Cultural Heritage Baseline Desk-based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment (**Technical Appendix 10.1**) based on all readily available documentary sources, following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) 'Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment'. The following sources of information were referred to:

- Designation data downloaded from the Historic Environment Scotland website in October 2024;
- The National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE), including the Canmore database and associated photographs, prints/drawings and manuscripts held by HES;
- Historic Environment Record (HER) data, digital extract received from The Highland Council Historic Environment Team (THC HET) in April 2023;
- Historic Landscape Assessment (HLA) data, viewed through the HLA Map website (<https://hlamap.org.uk/>);
- LiDAR data from the Scottish Remote Sensing Portal;
- The National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP);
- Geological data available online from the British Geological Survey (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>);
- Historic maps held by the National Library of Scotland (<https://maps.nls.uk/>);
- Unpublished maps and plans held by the National Records of Scotland;
- Relevant internet resources, including Google Maps, Google Earth, Bing satellite imagery and PastMap;
- Readily available published sources and unpublished archaeological reports;

- Findings of other environmental topics (LVIA, peat depth, ground conditions, noise and vibration);
 - A zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) and photomontage and wireline visualisations; and
 - Field surveys.
- 10.4.13 A field visit was undertaken on 11-12 September 2024 in mixed weather conditions. Notes were made regarding Site characteristics, any visible archaeology and geographical/geological features which may have a bearing on previous land use and archaeological survival, as well as those which may constrain subsequent archaeological investigation. Records were made regarding extant archaeological features, such as earthworks or structural remains, any negative features, local topography and aspect, exposed geology, soils, watercourses, health and safety considerations, surface finds, and any other relevant information.
- 10.4.14 Field visits for the purposes of setting assessment were undertaken during these dates in mixed weather conditions with moderate long-distance visibility, sufficient for the assessment of the settings of the selected heritage assets.
- 10.4.15 A detailed programme of peat depth surveying has been completed and the results used to inform the Site design. Information on the study area was compiled using data gathered within a desk study and verified by an extensive programme of fieldwork.
- 10.4.16 Designated heritage assets are discussed in this EIA Report chapter with the designation reference number assigned by HES. Non-designated assets are discussed with their reference number assigned by the HER. Previously unrecorded heritage assets within the Site have been assigned a number (prefixed HA for Heritage Asset). A single asset number can, for convenience, refer to a group of related features, which may be recorded separately in the HER and other data sources.
- 10.4.17 The full list of known heritage assets within these study areas is presented in the Gazetteer (**Technical Appendix 10.1: Annex 1**). Known heritage assets within the Site are shown on **Figure 10.1** with detailed descriptions in **Technical Appendix 10.1**. Cultural Heritage Viewpoints (CHVPs) within the OSA are shown on **Figure 10.2** along with the proposed Development Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).

Potential for Unknown Heritage Assets in the Site

- 10.4.18 The likelihood that undiscovered heritage assets may be present within the Site is referred to as archaeological potential. Overall levels of potential can be assigned to different areas of the Site, while recognising that the archaeological potential of any area will relate to particular historical periods and types of evidence. The following factors are considered in assessing archaeological potential:
- The distribution and character of known archaeological remains in the vicinity, based principally on an appraisal of data in the HER;
 - The history of archaeological fieldwork and research in the surrounding area, which may give an indication of the reliability and completeness of existing records;
 - Environmental factors such as geology, topography and soil quality, which would have influenced land-use in the past and can therefore be used to predict the distribution of archaeological remains;

- Land-use factors affecting the survival of archaeological remains, such as ploughing or commercial forestry planting; and
- Factors affecting the visibility of archaeological remains, which may relate to both environment and land-use, such as soils and geology (which may be more or less conducive to formation of cropmarks), arable cultivation (which has potential to show cropmarks and create surface artefact scatters), vegetation, which can conceal upstanding features, and superficial deposits such as peat and alluvium which can mask archaeological features.

10.4.19 In the Archaeological Potential section of this assessment, the likelihood that the Site may contain undiscovered heritage assets, their likely location and potential density, and their likely level of importance is assessed, described, and justified.

Cultural Significance

10.4.20 Cultural heritage impact assessment is concerned with effects on cultural significance, which is a quality that applies to all heritage assets, and as defined by Historic Environment Scotland (Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook, NatureScot & HES 2018, v5 Appendix 1 page 175), relates to the ways in which a heritage asset is valued both by specialists and the public. The cultural significance of a heritage asset will derive from factors including the asset's fabric, setting, context and associations. This use of the word 'significance', referring to the range of values attached to an asset, should not be confused with the unrelated usage in terms of the conclusions reached on the significance of likely environmental effects in accordance with the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

10.4.21 Cultural significance is assessed in relation to the criteria in DPSG Annexes 1-6, which are intended primarily to inform decisions regarding heritage designations but may also be applied more generally in identifying the 'special characteristics' of a heritage asset, which contribute to its significance (intrinsic, associative, or contextual as outlined below). DPSG Annex 1 is widely applicable in assessing the cultural significance of archaeological sites and monuments, for instance, while the criteria in Annex 2 can be used in defining the architectural or historic interest of buildings, whether listed or not. Cultural significance of assets is considered in terms described in DPSG Annex 1:

- Intrinsic Characteristics - those inherent in the monument i.e., "*how the physical remains of a site or place contribute to our knowledge of the past*";
- Associative Characteristics - subjective associations, including those with current or past aesthetic preferences i.e., "*how a site or place relates to people, practices, events and/or historic and social movements*"; and
- Contextual Characteristics - those relating to the monument's place in the landscape or in the body of existing knowledge i.e., "*how a site or place relates to its surroundings and/or to our existing knowledge of the past*".

Contribution of Setting to Cultural Significance

10.4.22 The characteristics which contribute to an asset's cultural significance may include elements of its setting. Setting is defined in 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting' (HES 2016 updated 2020, Section 1) as "the way the surroundings of a historic asset or place contribute to how it is understood, appreciated and experienced". The setting of a heritage asset is defined and analysed according to Stage

2 of the three-stage approach promoted in ‘MCHE: Setting’, with reference to factors listed on pages 9-10, as follows:

- *“Current landscape or townscape context;*
- *Views to, from and across or beyond the historic asset or place;*
- *Key vistas: for instance, a ‘frame’ of trees, buildings or natural features that give the historic asset or place a context, whether intentional or not);*
- *The prominence of the historic asset or place in views throughout the surrounding area, bearing in mind that sites need not be visually prominent to have a setting;*
- *Aesthetic qualities;*
- *Character of the surrounding landscape;*
- *General and specific views including foregrounds and backdrops;*
- *Views from within an asset outwards over key elements in the surrounding landscape, such as the view from the principal room of a house, or from a roof terrace;*
- *Relationships with other features, both built and natural;*
- *Non-visual factors such as historical, artistic, literary, place name, or scenic associations, intellectual relationships (e.g. to a theory, plan, or design), or sensory factors; and*
- *A ‘sense of place’: the overall experience of an asset which may combine some of the above factors.”*

10.4.23 The relevance of these factors to the understanding, appreciation and experience of the asset determines how, and to what extent, an asset’s cultural significance derives from its setting. All heritage assets have settings; however, in some cases, setting may contribute very little to the asset’s significance, or only certain elements of the setting may be relevant. The above range of factors were taken into consideration when determining which assets are sensitive to change within their setting and thus may be impacted by the proposed Development.

10.4.24 Operational and/or under-construction wind energy developments (and any other existing developments that may also be relevant) are described as part of the existing baseline in the impact assessment section.

Integrity

10.4.25 In relation scheduled monuments, NPF4 Policy 7(h) states that:

*‘Development proposals affecting scheduled monuments will only be supported where:
ii. significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the setting of a scheduled monument are avoided.’*

10.4.26 NPF4 does not define ‘integrity’ in the context of Policy 7(h), therefore for the purposes of the assessment, HES recommend that the following shared definition (which emerged from the Riggill Wind Farm Public Inquiry (DPEA Reference: PPA-310-2034) for the concept of integrity of setting is used:

‘changes to factors of setting that contribute to cultural significance such that the understanding, appreciation and experience of an asset are not adequately retained will affect the integrity of setting.’

Importance of Heritage Assets

- 10.4.27 The importance of a heritage asset is the overall value assigned to it based on its cultural significance, reflecting its statutory designation or, in the case of non-designated assets, the professional judgement of the assessor (**Table 10.4**).
- 10.4.28 Heritage Assets are defined as “*Features, buildings or places that provide physical evidence of past human activity identified as being of sufficient value to this and future generations to merit consideration in the planning system*” (NatureScot & HES 2018, Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook, v5, p.122). Thus, any feature which does not merit consideration in planning decisions due to its cultural significance may be said to have negligible (cultural heritage) importance; in general, such features are not considered as heritage assets and are excluded from the assessment (see **Technical Appendix 10.1** for features and remains of negligible importance that have been excluded from the impact assessment in this chapter as significant effects are not possible).

Table 10.4: Criteria for assessing the importance of heritage assets

Importance	Criteria
Very High	Assets valued at an international level, e.g. World Heritage Properties and other assets of equal international importance that contribute to international research objectives.
High	Assets valued at a national level, e.g. Scheduled Monuments, Category A Listed Buildings, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Inventory Battlefields, Historic Marine Protected Areas, some conservation areas and non-designated assets that meet the relevant criteria for designation in the opinion of the assessor. Category B or C-listed buildings where the existing designation does not adequately reflect their value, in the opinion of the assessor.
Medium	Assets valued at a regional level, e.g. Category B Listed Buildings, some conservation areas and non-designated assets of similar value in the opinion of the assessor. Category C-listed buildings where the existing designation does not adequately reflect their value, in the opinion of the assessor.
Low	Assets valued at a local level, e.g. Category C Listed Buildings, some conservation areas and non-designated assets of similar value in the opinion of the assessor.

Source: NatureScot & HES 2018, Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook, v5 Appendix 1, Figure 2

Assessment Methodology

Effects of the Proposed Development

- 10.4.29 Effects of the proposed Development on the historic environment can arise through direct physical impacts, indirect impacts, or impacts on setting:
- Direct physical impacts describe those activities of the proposed Development that directly cause damage to the fabric of a heritage asset. Typically, these activities are related to construction works and will only occur within the application boundary.

- Indirect impacts describe secondary processes, triggered by the proposed Development, that lead to the degradation or preservation of heritage assets. For example, changes to hydrology may affect archaeological preservation; or changes to the setting of a building may affect the viability of its current use and thus lead to dereliction.
- An impact on the setting of a heritage asset occurs when the presence of the proposed Development changes the surroundings of a heritage asset in such a way that it affects (beneficially or adversely) the cultural significance of that asset. Visual impacts are most commonly encountered but other environmental factors such as noise, light or air quality can be relevant in some cases. Impacts may be encountered at all stages in the life cycle of a development from construction to decommissioning but they are only likely to lead to significant effects during the prolonged operational stage of the proposed Development.

10.4.30 Likely significant direct or indirect effects on known and unknown heritage assets are discussed in terms of the risk that a significant effect could occur. The level of risk depends on the level of archaeological potential combined with the nature and scale of disturbance associated with construction activities and may vary between high and negligible for different elements or activities associated with a development, or for the proposed Development as a whole.

10.4.31 Likely significant effects on the settings of heritage assets are identified from an initial desk-based appraisal of data from HES and the HER, and consideration of current maps and aerial images. Photomontage, photowire and wireline visualisations have been prepared to illustrate changes to key views, and to aid assessment where potential setting effects have been identified (**Figures 10.3 to 10.8** in EIA Report **Volume 3d**). The visualisations have been produced by the Landscape and Visual team and the methodology for preparing these is described in **Appendix 6.2**.

Cumulative Effects

10.4.32 A cumulative effect occurs where the magnitude of the combined effect of two or more developments is greater than that of the developments considered individually.

10.4.33 The impact assessment for the proposed Development on its own merits, identifies the impact of that development alone upon cultural significance of heritage assets relative to a baseline scenario that includes all operational and under-construction wind farms. The cumulative impact assessment, using the same criteria of impact magnitude (as defined in **Table 10.5** below), assesses the impact of the proposed Development combined with the impact of wind farm developments that are consented but not yet built and those that are currently at application stage (for which sufficient detail is known) relative to the baseline scenario.

10.4.34 Cumulative effects are considered in this chapter for heritage assets where an effect of ‘**Minor**’ or greater significance has been identified as a result of the proposed Development. The purpose of this threshold is to ensure that the assessment remains proportionate and focused on those cases where there is potential for a significant effect (in EIA terms) to arise were the proposed Development to be consented.

10.4.35 Developments considered as part of the cumulative assessment are identified from the agreed list presented in EIA Report **Chapter 6, Table 6.12**. Visualisations supporting this chapter from an agreed suite of cultural heritage viewpoints (CHVPs) include cumulative developments (**Figures 10.3 to 10.8** in EIA Report **Volume 3d**).

Magnitude of Impact on Cultural Significance

- 10.4.36 The magnitude of an impact is a measure of the degree to which the cultural significance of a heritage asset will potentially change as a result of the proposed Development (NatureScot & HES 2018, Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook, v5 Appendix 1, para 42).
- 10.4.37 Conclusions of the assessed magnitude of impacts are a product of the consideration of the elements of an asset and its setting that contribute to its cultural significance and the degree to which the proposed Development would change these contributing elements. The assessment therefore reflects the varying degrees of sensitivity of different assets to change brought about by different types or scale of possible developments. The extent to which a heritage asset is sensitive to change within its setting, and thus the extent to which its cultural significance may be impacted through change to this setting, will be reflected in findings regarding the magnitude of impact.
- 10.4.38 This definition of magnitude and assessment methodology applies to likely impacts resulting from change in the setting as well as likely physical impacts on the fabric of an asset.
- 10.4.39 The methodology adopted for the identification and assessment of potential impacts resulting from change in setting follows the approach set out in Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (Historic Environment Scotland, 2016 updated 2020) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook (NatureScot & HES, 2018, v5 Appendix 1). The guidance sets out three stages in assessing the impact of development on the setting of a heritage asset or place as follows:
- *“Stage 1: Identify the historic assets that might be affected by a development;*
 - *Stage 2: define and analyse the setting by establishing how the surroundings contribute to the ways in which the historic asset or place is understood, appreciated and experienced; and*
 - *Stage 3: evaluate potential effect of the proposed changes on the setting, and the extent to which any negative effects can be mitigated.”*
- 10.4.40 The ‘Stage 1’ Setting Assessment methodology considers each heritage asset in turn to identify those assets in the ZTV which have a wider landscape setting that contributes to their cultural significance and whether it is likely that cultural significance could be materially harmed by the proposed Development (**Figure 10.2**). Where heritage assets are located outwith the ZTV, viewpoints located within the ZTV which may provide a culturally significant view towards the heritage asset and the proposed Development were considered.
- 10.4.41 It is important to draw a distinction between Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and assessment of the setting of a heritage asset. In LVIA, magnitude of impact would be directly related to the level of visual change, whereas cultural heritage assessment is concerned with visual change only where it affects the contribution that setting makes to an asset’s cultural significance. As a result, there is no simple relationship between change and impact on setting and this is reflected in the advice given in Stages 2 and 3 in HES’s ‘Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting’ guidance (2020, pages 9-10). It is necessary to understand how setting contributes to significance (Stage 2) before assessing how change would impact on setting (Stage 3). Therefore, the magnitude of an impact resulting from change within setting is not a direct measure of

the visual prominence, scale, proximity or other attributes of the proposed Development itself, or of the extent to which the setting itself is changed. Moreover, it is necessary to consider whether, and to what extent, the characteristics of the setting which would be changed contribute to the asset’s cultural significance. This methodology is in accordance with NatureScot & HES 2018, Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook, v5 Appendix 1, paras 42 and 43.

10.4.42 Magnitude of impact on cultural significance of heritage assets is assessed as ‘High’, ‘Medium’, ‘Low’, ‘Negligible’, or ‘No Impact’, and adverse or beneficial, using the criteria in **Table 10.5** as a guide. In assessing the likely effects of a development, it is often necessary to take into account various impacts which affect an asset’s cultural significance in different ways. For instance, there may be adverse effects on an asset’s fabric and beneficial effects on cultural significance resulting from change in setting arising from a development which would not otherwise occur in a ‘do-nothing’ scenario; a heritage asset that might otherwise degrade over time could be preserved or consolidated as a consequence of a development. The impact assessment identifies beneficial and adverse impacts for consideration separately.

Table 10.5: Criteria for assessing the magnitude of impacts on cultural significance of heritage assets

Magnitude	Summary
High Beneficial	Preservation of the asset in situ where it would be completely or almost completely lost in the do-nothing scenario.
Medium Beneficial	Changes to key elements of the asset’s fabric or setting that result in its cultural significance being preserved, where they would otherwise be lost, or restored.
Low Beneficial	Changes that result in elements of the asset’s fabric or setting that detract from its cultural significance being removed.
Negligible / No Impact	Changes to fabric or setting that leave significance unchanged.
Low Adverse	Changes to the elements of the fabric or setting of the heritage asset that contribute to its cultural significance such that this is slightly altered
Medium Adverse	Changes to the elements of the fabric or setting of the heritage asset that contribute to its cultural significance such that this is substantially altered
High Adverse	Changes to the fabric or setting of a heritage asset resulting in the complete or near complete loss of its cultural significance, such that it may no longer be considered a heritage asset

Source: NatureScot & HES 2018, Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook, v5 Appendix 1, Figure 1

Mitigation

10.4.43 Assessment of impacts is an iterative part of the design process. For any identified effect the preferred mitigation option is always to avoid or reduce effects through design (embedded mitigation), or through precautionary measures such as fencing off heritage assets during construction works to avoid accidental direct effects (additional mitigation). Details of the design iteration process are contained within **Chapter 3**.

10.4.44 Effects which cannot be mitigated by design may lead to adverse direct or indirect physical effects which may be mitigated by an appropriate level of survey, excavation, recording, analysis and publication of the results, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (NPF4 Policy 7(o) and PAN2/2011 sections 25-27) (additional mitigation).

Determination of Effect Significance

10.4.45 The significance of an effect ('EIA significance') on the cultural significance of a heritage asset, resulting from a direct or indirect physical effect or an effect on its setting, is assessed by weighting the magnitude of the impact and the importance of the heritage asset.

10.4.46 EIA significance may be described on a continuous scale from '**None**' to '**Major**'. The matrix in **Table 10.6** provides a guide to decision-making but is not a substitute for professional judgement and interpretation, particularly where the asset importance or effect magnitude levels are not clear or are borderline between categories.

Criteria for Assessing Significance of Effect

10.4.47 The predicted significance of effect is determined through a standard method of assessment, moderated by professional judgement. It considers the assessed importance of the heritage asset and the magnitude of impact upon cultural significance as detailed in **Table 10.6**.

10.4.48 Following the Importance of Heritage Assets methodology presented above, any feature of negligible importance is excluded from the assessment of effect, as a significant effect in EIA terms is not possible.

Table 10.6: Criteria for assessing the significance of effects on heritage assets

Heritage Asset Importance	Magnitude of Impact on Cultural Significance			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible/No Impact
Very High	Major	Major	Moderate	Negligible/None
High	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible/None
Medium	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible/None
Low	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible/None

10.4.49 In this assessment '**Major**' and '**Moderate**' effects are considered '**Significant**' in EIA terms, while '**Minor**' and '**Negligible**' effects are regarded as '**Not Significant**'. Effect significance conclusions are expressed in the assessment as 'beneficial' or 'adverse', following from the impact magnitude. Conclusions are also expressed in terms of NPF4 Policy 7 tests.

Difficulties and Uncertainties

10.4.50 Information held by public data sources is generally considered to be reliable; however, the following general points are noted:

- Only 80% of the Site is covered by freely available LIDAR data. The part that is missing includes a portion of the proposed turbine area. This is addressed by field survey;
- Documentary sources are rare before the medieval period;
- Wherever such documentary sources are used in assessing archaeological potential professional judgment is used in their interpretation;
- HER records can be limited because opportunities for research, fieldwork and discovery depend on the volume and frequency of commercial development and occasional research projects, rather than the result of a more structured research framework. A lack of data within the HER records does not necessarily equal an absence of archaeology;
- Where archaeological assets have been identified solely from aerial imagery without confirmation from archaeological excavation or supporting evidence in the form of find-spots for example, it is possible the interpretation may be revised in the light of further investigation;
- The significance of heritage assets can be difficult to identify from HER records, depending on the accuracy and reliability of the original source;
- There can often be a lack of dating evidence for archaeological assets; and
- Any archaeological field visit has inherent limitations, primarily because archaeological remains below ground level may have no surface indicators.

10.5 Existing Environment

Existing Baseline

- 10.5.1 The full list of known heritage assets within the Study Areas is presented in the Gazetteer (**Technical Appendix 10.1: Annex 1**). The cultural significance of these assets is discussed by period in the Statement of Significance and Importance section of **Technical Appendix 10.1**.

Geology and Geomorphology

- 10.5.2 Land within the Site is situated on bedrock of the Altnaharra Psammite Formation of the Morar Group, comprising metasedimentary psammities from the Neoproterozoic period.
- 10.5.3 A monzogranite pluton is present in the south eastern region of the application boundary, which forms the higher ground of Creag a'Ghobhair and adjacent hills. This forms part of the Argyll and Northern Highlands Granitic Suite. A small group of east to west or south east to north west trending magmatic dykes are present within the south and south western regions of the Site.
- 10.5.4 Large sections of the southern area of the Site are without mapped superficial deposits. Till and morainic deposits are described as undifferentiated, poorly sorted diamicton, sand and gravel of highly variable glacial sediment, ranging in size from clay to boulders. Superficial deposits are variable, with an even distribution of till and morainic deposits and peat.
- 10.5.5 Peat survives under waterlogged anaerobic conditions and therefore has excellent preservation conditions for organic material. It may also seal an undisturbed ground surface with contemporary (i.e. Prehistoric) archaeological remains. Study of the organic remains preserved within stratified peat deposits enables the construction of a narrative

of changes to the surrounding environment brought about by human activities and natural events in the prehistoric and historic periods.

- 10.5.6 Peat is present in pockets of variable size and depth, distributed around the application boundary. Peat is described as the accumulation of organic material that can form beds and lenses within lagoons, bogs and swamps. The largest areas of peat are found along the Site north western and eastern boundaries. Patchier areas of peat are dispersed through the north and central areas.
- 10.5.7 Two small pockets of alluvium are present within the Site which are associated with tributaries to Migdale Burn and Henman's Burn in the south west and east respectively.
- 10.5.8 No artificial ground was identified within the Site.

Overview of the Historic Environment

Site Boundary

- 10.5.9 There are 49 features of heritage interest identified within the Site in **Technical Appendix 10.1**. Of these, nine are discounted from further assessment as they are of 'Negligible' importance; 40 known heritage assets within the Site are therefore assessed for direct and indirect physical impacts as a result of the proposed Development.
- 10.5.10 There is one designated heritage asset within the Site: Lydsurach Crofthouse (Cat B LB52528) a mid-19th century, single storey with attic crofthouse.
- 10.5.11 The Highland Council HER records 31 non-designated heritage assets; 15 have the potential to be prehistoric in date comprising 10 hut circles or settlement activity, one cairn, one cairnfield, a field system, and two find spots.
- 10.5.12 The remaining 16 assets recorded in the HER are of post-medieval origin. These include townships at Coirshellach, Lydsurach and Coire Buidhe, nine farmsteads, a building, an area of peat cutting, a walled dyke and an undated longhouse which may have a medieval origin.
- 10.5.13 In the course of this assessment a further 11 features have been identified within the Site from the study of late 19th century – modern OS mapping, three features from a study of the LIDAR data, and three features were added to the gazetteer following field survey of the Site (**Technical Appendix 10.1: Annex 1**).

Outer Study Area

- 10.5.14 Within the 2 km OSA (from proposed turbines) there are two Scheduled Monuments, one Category B Listed Building and 69 non-designated heritage assets recorded on the Highland Council HER.
- 10.5.15 Within the 5 km OSA (from proposed turbines) there is one Inventory Battlefield, nine Scheduled Monuments, one Category A Listed Building and 11 Category B Listed Buildings.
- 10.5.16 Within the 10 km OSA (from proposed turbines) there are 18 Scheduled Monuments.
- 10.5.17 Within the 20 km OSA (from proposed turbines) there is one Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape, 76 Scheduled Monuments and 13 Category A Listed Buildings.

- 10.5.18 No further heritage assets have been identified within the ZTV and beyond the defined OSAs, where their significance and contribution made by setting is such that a significant impact is anticipated as a result of the proposed Development.
- 10.5.19 See **Technical Appendix 10.1** part 6.2 and **Annex 1** for detailed consideration of heritage assets within the OSA.

Archaeological Potential

- 10.5.20 The Site predominantly comprises unforested hills (up to c.300 m AOD), with resources including several rivers and streams. The Site boundary also includes an area of lower and relatively flatter ground towards the Kyle of Sutherland river glen to the west. The proximity to a major water source and the relative ease of access to the areas of higher ground seems to have provided a suitable area for settlement. Accordingly, the known designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Site demonstrate occupation/activity during both the Prehistoric and the post-medieval periods. Including the listed building and additional heritage assets identified in this assessment, there are 46 known heritage assets recorded within the Site, equally split between Prehistoric and post-medieval assets, demonstrating the suitability of the area for exploitation. There appears to have been a hiatus of activity in the medieval period, thought to be as a result of afforestation of the area, however this may be a result of the activities being carried out in this period leaving a lack of readily visible or recoverable physical evidence.
- 10.5.21 Within the Site the Prehistoric activity is generally located on the south- and east-facing slopes of Choc Blar na Curaich and Cnoc a Choire Bhuidhe. This Prehistoric settlement activity comprises a mixture of hut circles and field systems evenly spread across the lower slopes of these hills. There is also Prehistoric settlement activity close to the entrance of the proposed access track to the north extent of the Site, as well as in the lower elevations (below 100 m AOD) alongside the river glen associated with much denser areas of Prehistoric domestic and ritual activity. The post-medieval settlements comprising small farmsteads surrounded by a variety of enclosures are also evenly spread across the upland landscape within the Site although avoiding the highest areas. The boundary of the Site does not represent the boundary of these activity trends, as is demonstrated by the presence of similar known remains within the OSA.
- 10.5.22 The identification of many of the Prehistoric sites on the historical mapping suggests a lack of disturbance occurring across these areas into the 20th century. It is therefore reasonable to expect that the majority of the Prehistoric remains preserved as visible surface features would have also been mapped. As no such additional features have been identified across the Site, including during LIDAR and field survey for this assessment, the potential for further well-preserved surface earthworks of Prehistoric date to exist within the Site is considered to be low. However, given the obvious suitability and preference of the area for Prehistoric settlement, there is considered to be a high potential for hitherto unknown associated Prehistoric remains to be preserved beneath the ground surface within the Site, including a high chance for further find spots such as the previous polished axe findspot (MHG14153). As these are not likely to be as well preserved as the visible surface remains, these can be considered as being of ‘**Low**’ (Local) importance.
- 10.5.23 Most of the remaining known assets representing occupation activity within the Site relates to the agricultural use of the land either through pastoral use, or to a lesser extent

small scale arable farming. The Site, being predominantly on higher ground, is perhaps more suited to pasture/grazing, and it may be that much of the preserved archaeological remains relates to seasonal occupation.

- 10.5.24 There is considered to be a low potential for previously unrecorded remains associated with medieval / post-medieval upland grazing and settlement to exist within the Site. It is considered that any features relating to this period, if present, would still be visible to some extent. Any previously unrecorded remains of medieval date, if present within the Site, would be presumed to be of **'Medium'** (Regional) importance for their rarity and intrinsic value as the physical evidence of previously unknown activity that would contribute to the Highland Archaeological Research Framework.
- 10.5.25 There is a high potential for below-ground and earthwork remains of post-medieval date relating to the known shielings or farmsteads and these would be presumed to be of **'Low'** (Local) importance.

Heritage Assets Considered for Setting Effects

- 10.5.26 A 'Stage 1' Setting Assessment has been carried out to consider whether further detailed assessment is required for heritage assets within the Site and OSA, based on whether it is likely that their cultural significance could be harmed through development within their setting. Results are presented in Part 6.2 and **Technical Appendix 10.1: Annex 1**.
- 10.5.27 Following consultation, the 'Stage 1' Setting Assessment found the potential for effects through changes within their setting on the cultural significance of three Scheduled Monuments, two Category B Listed Buildings, and five non-designated heritage assets (**Figure 10.2**). These ten heritage assets are assessed in detail in this chapter. Designated heritage asset assessments are supported with photomontage and/or wireline visualisations as appropriate (**Figures 10.3 to 10.8** in EIA Report **Volume 3d**):
- **CHVP01 Figure 10.3a to 10.3d** - Category B Listed Building LB52528 Lydsurach Crofthouse, Balblair Estate, near Bonar Bridge. Photomontage from crofthouse.
 - **CHVP02 Figure 10.4** - Category B Listed Building LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates. Wireline from castle.
 - **CHVP03 Figure 10.5** - Scheduled Monument SM1785 Drumliah, chambered cairn, hut circles & clearance cairns, Tulloch. Photomontage looking towards cairn in foreground.
 - **CHVP04 Figure 10.6** - Scheduled Monuments SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosure / SM1758 Achany, cairn 890 m NW of. Representative Photomontage from position between the monument group.
 - **CHVP05 Figure 10.7** - Scheduled Monument SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosure. Wireline from stone circle.
 - **CHVP06 Figure 10.8** - Scheduled Monument SM1758 Achany, cairn 890 m NW of. Wireline from cairn.

10.6 Embedded Mitigation

Design Considerations

- 10.6.1 See design evolution and the embedded mitigation measures by design in **Chapter 3**. Direct (physical) impacts upon known heritage assets within the Site have been minimised through the design process. The proposed infrastructure layout has been designed to minimise impacts upon known heritage assets within the Site identified through **Technical Appendix 10.1**.

Best Practice Measures

- 10.6.2 This assessment has been prepared with reference to IEMA, IHBC and ClfA's July 2021 publication 'Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK'. This document presents good practice for assessment of the impact of a development proposal on cultural heritage assets.
- 10.6.3 The preferred mitigation option in respect of direct, physical impacts is always to avoid or reduce impacts through design.
- 10.6.4 An Outline CEMP has been prepared and is included in **Technical Appendix 2.1: Outline Construction Environment Management Plan**. The Outline CEMP includes best-practice measures to mitigate any direct physical impacts upon hitherto unknown heritage assets, or accidental impacts upon known heritage assets within the Site during construction.
- 10.6.5 Good practice guidance in Part 6 (Historic Environment/Archaeology) of NatureScot's Good Practice During Wind Farm Construction (NatureScot, 2024) is also adhered to in the mitigation proposals for the proposed Development.

10.7 Predicted Effects

Potential Construction Effects

- 10.7.1 Development activities within the Site boundary have the potential to truncate or remove buried archaeological remains, resulting in a direct impact on these assets. Direct physical impacts may occur during construction as a result of intrusive groundworks, comprising enabling works including habitat management, any areas of cut and fill, bulk excavation and topsoil stripping, site compound establishment, and excavations for turbine and crane footings, access tracks and utilities. The assessment of direct physical impacts also accounts for the 50 m micrositing tolerance.
- 10.7.2 Accidental direct physical impacts within the Site may arise should activities such as, but not limited to, ancillary drainage works and uncontrolled plant movement take place in the vicinity of heritage assets. The micrositing tolerance of 50 m for the proposed Development infrastructure is also used as a proportionate study area/proximity for the assessment of possible accidental impacts upon heritage assets during the construction phase.
- 10.7.3 Indirect impacts describe secondary processes, triggered by the proposed Development, that lead to the degradation or preservation of heritage assets. For example, changes to hydrology may affect archaeological preservation.

Direct and Indirect Physical Impacts within the Site

Known Heritage Assets

10.7.4 There are 40 known heritage assets (of a minimum ‘Low’ importance) located within the Site (**Table 10.7**).

Table 10.7: Known heritage assets within the Site

Ref	Name	Description	E	N	Status	Period	Importance
LB52528	Lydsurach Crofthouse, Balblair Estate, near Bonar Bridge	A remarkably unaltered single storey and attic, three-bay, former crofthouse.	261187	895350	Cat B LB	19th Century	High
MHG10053	Hut circle, Strone Achvachy	HUT CIRCLE; BOTHY	261932	898055	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10054	Leathad Breac	HUT CIRCLE; FIELD SYSTEM	261756	897481	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10058	Coirshellach	TOWNSHIP; HEAD DYKE	260843	896395	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG10083	Maikle Wood	LONGHOUSE	261000	894900	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG10084	Garbh-Leathad	BUILDING	261300	893901	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG10093	Hut circle, NE of Lydsurach	HUT CIRCLE	261280	895430	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10094	Hut circle etc, Coire Buidhe	HUT CIRCLE; CLEARANCE CAIRN	261270	895830	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10095	Coire Buidhe	HUT CIRCLE	261710	896050	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10321	Leathadbreac	HUT CIRCLE	262580	896900	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10322	Leathadbreac	HUT CIRCLE	262376	896813	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10323	Leathadbreac	HUT CIRCLE	262396	896639	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10335	Craigton	HUT CIRCLE	262420	897070	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG10336	Craigton	HUT CIRCLE	262596	896480	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG12881	Altnagar Lodge Hotel	CAIRNFIELD	258238	899181	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low

Ref	Name	Description	E	N	Status	Period	Importance
MHG12898	Balblair Wood	HUT CIRCLE; FIELD SYSTEM	258243	895625	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
MHG18356	Blar Na Curaich	FARMSTEAD	261800	896500	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG18357	Leathad Breac	FARMSTEAD	261450	897080	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG18497	Lydsurach	TOWNSHIP	261000	894900	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG19070	Shean	FARMSTEAD	258600	895600	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG19279	Lydsurach	FARMSTEAD	261000	894900	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG19281	Lydsurach	FARMSTEAD	261000	894900	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG19292	Lydsurach	FARMSTEAD	260700	894600	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG19308	Cnoc A' Choire Buidhe	FARMSTEAD	260360	895570	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG24628	Allt Garbh-Airigh	FARMSTEAD	260100	895700	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG25258	Coire Buidhe	TOWNSHIP	261394	895878	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG33317	Farmstead - Lydsurach	FARMSTEAD	261222	895351	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG33319	Walled dyke, SE of Lydsurach	WALL	261318	895357	Non-designated	Historic	Low
MHG33320	Cairn, SE of Lydsurach	CAIRN	261449	895202	Non-designated	Prehistoric?	Low
MHG9290	Cnoc na Moine	FIELD SYSTEM	258469	899334	Non-designated	Prehistoric	Low
HA2	An Sithean Farmstead	1st ed OS	259011	895718	Non-designated	Historic	Low
HA3	Moin Buidhe Buildings	1st ed OS	259851	896461	Non-designated	Historic	Low
HA4	Buildings	1st ed OS	259276	895979	Non-designated	Historic	Low
HA5	Coirebuidhe, enclosures	1st ed OS	261342	895768	Non-designated	Historic	Low
HA6	Lon-a-bhotain Farmstead	1st ed OS	262050	896100	Non-designated	Historic	Low

Ref	Name	Description	E	N	Status	Period	Importance
HA7	Leathadbreac farmstead and enclosures	1st ed OS	262452	896941	Non-designated	Historic	Low
HA8	Buildings and well	1st ed OS	260710	894684	Non-designated	Historic	Low
HA9	Buildings	1st ed OS	261080	894950	Non-designated	Historic	Low
HA10	Moin Bhuidhe Building	1st ed OS	259362	896094	Non-designated	Historic	Low
FV01	Farm building	Field Visit	261954	896629	Feature	Historic	Low

10.7.5 Four known non-designated heritage assets within the Site boundary would be subject to a direct physical impact during the construction phase as a result of proposed Development infrastructure (**Figure 10.1**):

- MHG9290 Cnoc na Moine, field system
- MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system
- MHG18357 Leathad Breac, farmstead
- MHG10058 Coirshellach, township and head dyke

10.7.6 MHG9290 Cnoc na Moine, field system comprises two prehistoric stone-walled huts and an associated field system. Both of the huts lie outwith the Site boundary and would not be impacted by the proposed Development. The field system is defined by stone clearance heaps, with lynchets and occasional field walls forming cultivation plots with average sizes of about 30 m by 20 m. Within the Site boundary, are five platforms, two of which are probably natural, and three probably due to cultivation, although somewhat resembling huts. These would also be avoided by proposed Development infrastructure. Establishment of the Garvary wind farm construction compound is proposed within the area defined by the HER as containing the earthworks comprising MHG9290. There is also an existing modern trackway already established through the area that would be widened and realigned as part of the proposed Development. A very small part of the heritage asset MHG9290 (overall measuring 785 m x 290 m maximum dimensions in plan) could therefore be physically impacted by the construction compound (should Garvary not be constructed) and a stretch of proposed access track measuring 120 m in length as a result of the proposed Development. It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **'Negligible'** adverse impact on MHG9290, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Negligible'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.

10.7.7 MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system comprises two hut circles with an accompanying field system. Both huts survive as penannular turf covered earthworks, however, they are also partially peat covered which may obscure other related remains. The first hut circle measures 14 m in diameter, comprising a sparse wall exhibiting one or two outer facing stones in situ and opposing slabs in the ESE give an entrance width of 1.3 m. The second hut circle, set back in the slope, measures approximately 5.1 m in

diameter, comprising a wall spread to 2 m and up to 0.7 m high; the entrance is in the east and large blocks are evident in the wall. These would also be avoided by proposed Development infrastructure. The field system comprises numerous heaps of stone clearance and tenuous traces of occasional lynchets. No measurable plots are discernible. The proposed Development design includes the construction compound (requiring benching measuring c.120 m x 80 m in plan) and 585 m of internal site access track through the area defined by the HER as a field system. In addition to the identified direct physical impact, it is considered likely that groundworks for the proposed Development and its associated drainage programme could potentially result in a lower water table in the vicinity of MHG10054. This may lead to a further indirect physical impact through the degradation of waterlogged organic remains within and associated with the heritage asset. It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **'High'** adverse impact on MHG10054, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Minor'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.

- 10.7.8 MHG18357 Leathad Breac, farmstead is recorded on the HER as comprising two unroofed buildings. These would also be avoided by proposed Development infrastructure. The NRHE records a larger area defining an associated enclosure defined by field walls. The field visit for this assessment recorded that the farmstead is in a poor condition comprising a long rectangular building with only the lowest turf-covered courses of stone wall remaining. The surrounding enclosure walls were difficult to identify due to the covering heather and scrub grass. The proposed Development design includes Turbine 4, its crane pad, and c. 500 m of access track located within the enclosure for MHG18357. It is calculated that a total of c.200 m of enclosure walling would need to be removed for the proposed Development. Benching for Turbine 1 and its crane pad, although within the HER-defined area, would avoid any OS-mapped surface boundary remains. It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **'Medium'** adverse impact on MHG10054 Leathad Breac, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Minor'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.
- 10.7.9 MHG10058 Coirshellach, township and head dyke comprises an area of 18th/19th century depopulation consisting of seven building footings, dimensions from 7 m x 4 m to 30 m x 5 m, with accompanying enclosures and field walls. Outwith the head dyke or bank are several random building footings. All of the township buildings would be avoided by the proposed Development infrastructure, however, one of the outlying buildings at NGR 260838, 896597 and a c.120 m section of head dyke would be removed by the proposed access track to Turbine 7. It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **'Medium'** adverse impact on MHG10054 Leathad Breac, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Minor'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.
- 10.7.10 In addition, a number of modern field boundaries and buildings noted in **Technical Appendix 10.1** would be physically impacted by the proposed Development. As these are of **'Negligible'** importance, they have not been included in the EIA impact assessment as a **'Significant'** impact is not possible. Nevertheless, it is proposed that their presence is proportionately recorded as necessary during the proposed fieldwork mitigation programme (see **Part 10.9: Additional Mitigation**).
- 10.7.11 The location of known heritage assets is considered in the Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (OBEMP) (**Technical Appendix 8.6: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan**). All known heritage assets considered

in the EIA are avoided in the OBEMP for any proposals potentially involving ground-breaking works and therefore with a potential for a direct physical impact upon surface or subsurface archaeological remains (i.e. riparian tree planting proposals). It is proposed that the removal of self-seeding non-native conifers across the Site is undertaken by hand (see **Chapter 8: Ecology**). No direct physical impacts are anticipated as a result of the OBEMP proposals. It is considered that OBEMP proposals for the removal of self-seeding non-native conifers would have a **'Negligible'** beneficial impact on all heritage assets within the Site through reducing the potential for root damage, resulting in a beneficial effect of **'Negligible'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.

Accidental Impacts and Micrositing

10.7.12 In addition to those four non-designated assets outlined above that would be directly physically impacted by the proposed Development, there are two further known heritage assets within the Site boundary that lie within the 50 m micrositing tolerance for the proposed Development (**Figure 10.1**):

- MHG12881 Altnagar Lodge Hotel, cairnfield
- MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle

10.7.13 At the Site access alongside the A836, MHG12881 Altnagar Lodge Hotel, cairnfield comprises a well-defined hut platform surrounded by a stone wall 1.6 m wide. To the east is another less well-defined hut measuring 12.5 m N-S by 11.5 m. Around the huts are a few stone clearance heaps from contemporary cultivation plots. Both the hut circles lie outwith the Site boundary and would not therefore be impacted by the proposed Development micrositing. It is concluded that the proposed Development could potentially result in a **'Negligible'** adverse impact on the cairnfield associated with MHG12881 as a result of micrositing or accidental impacts, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Negligible'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.

10.7.14 Less than 50 m south east of Turbine 3, MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle comprises stone clearance heaps and two hut circles. Depending on the extent of micrositing or accidental damage, it is concluded that the proposed Development could potentially result in a **'High'** adverse impact on MHG10335, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Minor'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.

Archaeological Potential

10.7.15 The Site is considered to hold high archaeological potential for hitherto unknown subsurface archaeological remains of the Prehistoric and/or post-medieval periods, which if present are anticipated to be of up to **'Low'** importance. Medieval period remains would be of up to **'Medium'** importance, however the potential for these is considered to be low.

10.7.16 Direct physical construction impacts on previously unknown heritage assets in the Site is therefore possible.

10.7.17 Effect significance cannot be fully assessed for unknown heritage assets, as neither the cultural significance of the asset, importance, nor the magnitude of the impact is known. This assessment uses the precautionary principle. The assessment assumes an occurrence of unexpected archaeological remains in a reasonable worst-case scenario.

Consequently, an assessment of construction effects upon archaeological potential is considered.

- 10.7.18 The assessment of archaeological potential has identified that any remains may be of up to **'Medium'** importance, based on a 'worst case' scenario. If such unexpected remains are present and discovered during construction phase groundworks, this may result in a construction-phase physical impact of up to **'High'** adverse magnitude. On a precautionary basis, therefore (i.e. unknown remains of up to Medium importance are not necessarily present within the Site boundary) without mitigation, any adverse effect resulting from a physical impact upon unexpected archaeological remains discovered during construction-phase may be of up to **'Moderate'** adverse significance, which is **'Significant'**. Mitigation to minimise the effect significance is therefore proposed.
- 10.7.19 The results of Phase 2 peat surveys were used to inform layout and design of the proposed Development. Deep peat (peat > 1 m) has been avoided as far as practicable and a Peat Slide Risk Assessment and Peat Management Plan have been produced which show that areas of deep peat can be avoided and peat resources can be safeguarded. Peat is not considered a 'heritage asset' for the purposes of this chapter and impacts upon peat is addressed in **Chapter 9**. However, given the potential for peat to preserve organic deposits of archaeological and palaeoenvironmental significance, for completeness, peat impacts are acknowledged in this chapter and proportionate mitigation is proposed. Refer to EIA Report **Chapter 3** which describes the evolution of design and the alternatives considered to arrive at the best environmental design. EIA Report **Figure 3.2** shows the extent of the proposed works, temporary and permanent, overlain with peat depth data.

Construction Phase Setting Effects

- 10.7.20 Construction phase setting effects of the proposed turbines within the Site will be temporary and are not considered to be significant in EIA terms due to their short duration. With the agreement of HES during scoping, assessment of these is scoped out of the EIA.

Potential Operational Effects

- 10.7.21 As agreed with HES through submission of **Technical Appendix 10.1**, three Scheduled Monuments, two Category B Listed Buildings, and five non-designated heritage assets are assessed in detail in this section.
- 10.7.22 Cultural Heritage Viewpoints (CHVPs) agreed with HES and illustrative of views towards, across or from heritage assets considered for setting effects are shown on **Figure 10.2: Cultural Heritage Viewpoints (CHVPs) within the Outer Study Area (OSA) and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)**. Assessments of designated heritage assets are supported with photomontages, the locations of which were also agreed with HES (**Figures 10.3 to 10.8** in EIA Report **Volume 3d**).
- 10.7.23 All other heritage assets within the OSA are proportionately considered for potential operational effects in **Technical Appendix 10.1: Annex 1**. No likely significant effects are anticipated and these assets are not considered further in this chapter.

Listed Buildings

LB52528 Lydsurach Crofthouse, Balblair Estate, near Bonar Bridge

- 10.7.24 The Category B Listed Building is an unaltered single storey and attic, three-bay, former crofthouse probably dating to around the mid-19th century. It is an important part of Scotland's vernacular building history and its crofting history, with particular relevance to the Scottish Highlands. The house would have been inhabited by a crofter, sustaining themselves and their family upon the surrounding arable land and pasture. It is remotely situated on a steep hillside of heather and rough grassland at around 300 m above sea level. This remoteness has largely ensured its survival.
- 10.7.25 Intrinsically, Lydsurach Crofthouse is an important example of an unaltered survivor of a crofter's cottage, once a common building type. While buildings such as these (three bay single storey and attic rural cottages) do survive in Scotland, almost none survive as they were built, without any modernisation or additions whatsoever. The plan form is as it was built as is the interior. Neither its exterior nor its interior have been altered to any significant degree since it was built and it remains unmodernised with no electricity, running water or sanitaryware. It is this lack of alteration which is exceptional.
- 10.7.26 Associatively, it is an example of the successor to the longhouse (now a nearby ruin) where people and animals lived in one building. There are also remains of walled enclosures likely used for livestock. It demonstrates the evolution of crofthouse buildings in the 19th century.
- 10.7.27 It is a practical design carefully situated in a dip in the landscape to give it the best protection from the severe weather found in this location; this has the result that the crofthouse is well hidden and barely visible on approach. The entrance faces downhill (south west) and from here (if it were not in trees) its setting has exceptional views across the Dornoch Firth and to the surrounding Highland landscape.
- 10.7.28 Comparatively it is also associated with other once-common crofthouses in the wider Highlands, albeit there are not many of these remaining; Lydsurach is a rare well-preserved example and this is cited as a reason for designation. The historic homes and buildings of previous neighbouring crofters are largely no longer extant, the remnants of these buildings show that historical development of the wider setting. The 1874 OS map shows a collection of similar crofthouses, outbuildings and livestock enclosures across the wider landscape. Contextually, therefore, the crofthouse's immediate landscape setting has changed from a much more populous one with many crofts, to a more sparsely inhabited one. The other buildings associated with the crofthouse appear now in various states of ruination or just as foundations in the landscape.
- 10.7.29 The building is located within woodlands which have developed perhaps naturally due to the sheltered nature of the dip that the house was also built to benefit from. As these trees are likely to have self-seeded, this assessment has been carried out assuming they may be removed in the future. Whilst a photomontage viewpoint was sought which illustrates a view of the crofthouse front elevation (its south west face), with the proposed Development to the rear, no such viewpoint exists as these views are shielded by the trees. A further bank of trees is present in the landscape, 65 m north of the crofthouse. Nevertheless, given the highly varied local topography, Photomontage CHVP01 (**Figure 10.3**) is representative of views from and of the building; this illustrates the view from the

rear of the crofthouse, unincumbered by enclosing trees and presented as a 360 degree view to also provide a reproduction of the expansive views from its front door.

- 10.7.30 Photomontage CHVP01 (**Figure 10.3a**) shows that the hub and blades of five proposed turbines would be visible (four of which are currently obscured by trees), with blade tips only of a further two turbines also theoretically visible from the rear of the listed building. The nearest proposed turbine would be Turbine 7, located 1.2 km to the north.
- 10.7.31 Due to steeply downward sloping topography, the enclosed and improved area to the south of the listed building which would have been exploited by its inhabitants, and from where the architecture of the crofthouse could theoretically be viewed were it not within trees, the proposed Development becomes less visible, being obscured by the ridgeline of Cnoc a Choire Bhuidhe.
- 10.7.32 The rare, well-preserved building would remain physically unaltered by the proposed Development, and it would therefore remain available for regional comparison and study purposes. The building's relationship with surrounding ruins of its predecessor and contemporary enclosures would similarly remain unaffected for the study, appreciation and experience of the evolution of regional crofthouse vernacular. Despite visibility of the proposed Development (albeit mostly shielded by a bank of trees), it would remain possible to appreciate and experience the building's remote upland landscape setting which is understood to have resulted in its exceptional preservation.
- 10.7.33 The only element of the building's setting that is considered to be intentional, thereby contributing to its cultural significance, is the decision to build it in a dip in order to take advantage of the provided shelter. An understanding, appreciation and experience of this situation would remain unaffected by the proposed Development. It is considered that views from the crofthouse do not contribute to its cultural significance. It was placed in a sheltered position in order that its inhabitants could take advantage of the surrounding viable land. The fact that the house is in an elevated position affords 'exceptional views across the Dornoch Firth' however it is considered that the crofthouse was not constructed in order to enjoy exceptional views. Nevertheless, the proposed Development would be located in the opposite direction from Dornoch Firth and these views would remain unchanged (CHVP01 **Figure 10.3b&c**).
- 10.7.34 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have '**No Impact**' on the cultural significance of Category B LB52528 Lydsurach Crofthouse, Balblair Estate, near Bonar Bridge, an asset of '**Medium**' importance, resulting in an effect of '**None**', which is '**Not Significant**'.
- 10.7.35 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(c), the proposed Development would preserve the character, special architectural or historic interest of listed building LB52528.

LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates

- 10.7.36 The Category B Listed Building is a large Baronial mansion, roughly L-plan; 2 storey and attic. Probably designed by John Robertson of Inverness in 1907. Built of a local dark stone, it has a sombre appearance and is a strange amalgam of styles of different dates.
- 10.7.37 On approach, the stone gate piers are like miniature towers with arrowslits and battlements, and they support attractive cast iron gates. Proceeding up the drive past the equally battlemented service block, female figures on the rainheads to the downpipes are

notable. At the top of the drive are more gates, and a courtyard overlooking the Kyle of Sutherland with the house to the right.

- 10.7.38 On the north side: The clock tower was said in 1912 to show 'the stern strength which belongs to the Scottish Baronial style' but the wing opposite is English Tudor with stone mullioned windows and fancy gables, and between the two is a hall block with three curved bays.
- 10.7.39 Previously a youth hostel (closed in 2011), the 19-room castle has in the last two years been refurbished with the aim of establishing a luxury hotel, restaurant, and event venue. But these plans have been abandoned. Previously the internal spaces included a hall full of 19th-century white marble statues by various noted European sculptors, a carved wooden staircase copying one by Grinling Gibbons, and some other original fittings. It is unknown if these survived the refurbishment. Photos of the recent refurbishment appears to have been carried out sensitively in terms of the features and furnishings as shown on historic photos of the castle interior recorded on the NRHE and it would seem that the current owner has attempted to conserve the earlier cultural significance of the internal spaces.
- 10.7.40 Associatively, Carbisdale was built for 'Duchess Blair', the mistress and second wife of the 3rd Duke of Sutherland. Carbisdale was later the home of the Salvesen family, and King Hakon VII of Norway lived here during World War II. Carbisdale is also connected with the Covenanted Wars.
- 10.7.41 Contextually, Carbisdale Castle stands imposingly on a wooded bluff overlooking the Kyle and the railway bridge, and is well seen from the A836 to Lairg on the other side of the valley. Gardens lie to the south with a view down to the Dornoch Firth. Clearly, the chosen situation for the castle intended to gain sight of the Kyle of Sutherland, and perhaps be visible in reciprocal views. This is likely to have been an aesthetic decision.
- 10.7.42 In terms of the internal layout and the function of rooms, despite the provision of a floor plan on the NRHE, this is unknown as the room names are not decipherable. However, it can only be assumed that, given the presence of large windows on the east-facing façade, and the clear intentional aesthetic, that some of these rooms would have been principal entertaining rooms, designed with the intention of displaying the curated views over the Kyle of Sutherland to visitors and guests.
- 10.7.43 Wireline CHVP02 (**Figure 10.4**) shows that the hub and blades of five proposed turbines would be visible, with blade tips only of a further two turbines also theoretically visible from the east-facing rooms of the listed building. The nearest proposed turbine would be Turbine 7, located 3.8 km to the north east. The proposed Development may also be visible from the castle's entrance court, although it would not be visible on its approach which is from the west (as the proposed Development would be obscured by the castle itself).
- 10.7.44 The visual relationship with the Kyle of Sutherland (and the railway bridge) and Dornoch Firth beyond would remain unaffected, as would more immediate designed views over the castle gardens to the south.
- 10.7.45 The prominence of the castle as viewed from the Kyle and the A836 would also remain unaffected.

- 10.7.46 Whilst views of the hillside over which the proposed Development would be visible was probably not an intentional factor in the siting of the castle, the proposed Development would become prominently visible within views over the Kyle of Sutherland, a view which is considered to contribute to the listed building's cultural significance.
- 10.7.47 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a '**Low**' adverse impact on the cultural significance of Category B LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates, an asset of '**Medium**' importance, resulting in an adverse effect of '**Minor**' significance, which is '**Not Significant**'.
- 10.7.48 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(c), the proposed Development would preserve the character, special architectural or historic interest of listed building LB7165.

Scheduled Monuments

SM1785 Drumliah, chambered cairn, hut circles & clearance cairns, Tulloch

- 10.7.49 The scheduled area SM1785, measuring 180 m north east – south west by 100 m north west – south east, designates a chambered cairn, hut circle and clearance cairns within a larger non-designated area including hut circles and a field system (MHG10014). On the south west slopes of Druim Liath, the group of three circular stone-walled hut circles, each with a poorly defined entrance in the south east, and an associated field system is centred. Only the westernmost hut circle lies within the scheduled area, along with a chambered cairn. Within the scheduled area, hut circle MHG32597 measures c.11.5 m in diameter, with tumbled walling spread to c.2.5 m all round. Also within the scheduled area chambered cairn MHG10010 has been excavated, and much of the stone removed, especially from the east side. The diameter is about c.20 m, and the greatest height is 2.75 m. Certain large stones, set upright, suggest a chambered character, however, as the passage and chamber are filled with rubbish nothing can be seen of the structure except the top of a large stone near the centre. One at the eastern edges probably indicates the commencement of the chamber, and the pointed head of a large boulder, set with its broad face to the east seems to have formed the back.
- 10.7.50 Intrinsically and associatively, excavation of the cairn would reveal information about the chronology and burial practices of the community who constructed the cairn, which could be compared with excavation data for other cairns in the region. This would allow development of cairn typologies in the region.
- 10.7.51 Contextually, Druim Liath, means 'grey ridge' and refers to the low ridge overlooking the Kyle of Sutherland. A site visit to the scheduled monument discovered that the chambered cairn lies within mature trees, and the remainder of the designated area containing one hut circle and clearance cairns associated with adjacent prehistoric agriculture lies within head-height gorse. It is therefore difficult in the field to read the landscape setting that contributes to the cultural significance of the area of settlement. However, map based evidence and Historic Environment Record data suggests that the whole of Druim Liath was suitable for prehistoric agriculture, likely with well-drained, fertile soils, a water source, and flat ground suitable for settlement.
- 10.7.52 The community who occupied and farmed the land most likely raised the chambered cairn as a practical place to inter the dead, and perhaps to lay ownership to the immediate landscape and its resources though construction of the prominent structure, visible across the area being farmed. This would perhaps have been visible from the lower ground, a

travel corridor, to the south, thereby communicating occupation and ownership of Druim Liath to others travelling through the area.

- 10.7.53 Photomontage CHVP03 (**Figure 10.5**) shows the current baseline situation with the cairn prominently visible in the foreground surrounded by mature trees and undergrowth. Wireline CHVP03 (**Figure 10.5**) shows that should the tree cover be removed the blade tips of one turbine would theoretically be visible over the horizon, built on a part of the landscape that is not currently visible from the monument. The nearest proposed turbine would be Turbine 7, located 3.6 km to the north.
- 10.7.54 The ground on which the proposed Development is located forms a distinct topographical landscape zone to the chambered cairn and its settled hinterland. The proposed Development is not located in any parts of the landscape that contribute to the chambered cairn's cultural significance, i.e. the settlement as evidenced by hut circles and field systems on Druim Liath, and potentially the Kyle of Sutherland, which would potentially have provided a sheltered valley, a water source with its related resources, and a prehistoric travel corridor through the landscape. A view towards the proposed Development from the cairn/settlement is therefore peripheral and incidental. Theoretical intervisibility between the cairns and its associated settlement would similarly remain unaffected.
- 10.7.55 There is no evident chamber to the cairn which would indicate important sightlines orientated in any particular direction.
- 10.7.56 From the lower ground to the south, from where the cairn was potentially also intended to be experienced, the proposed Development would be outwith the ZTV, with no change in these views anticipated.
- 10.7.57 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have '**No Impact**' on the cultural significance of SM1785 Drumliah, chambered cairn, hut circles & clearance cairns, Tulloch, an asset of '**High**' importance, resulting in an effect of '**None**', which is '**Not Significant**'.
- 10.7.58 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(h) the understanding, appreciation and experience of SM1785 would be adequately retained such that the integrity of setting would not be significantly adversely affected.

SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosure

- 10.7.59 The monument comprises a group of prehistoric remains in the south west part of Gruids Wood. The scheduled area SM1784 comprises four parts: the remains of the stone circle (MHG11975) and a cairn (MHG12072); a second cairn (MHG12076); a hut circle (MHG33612); and a second hut circle (MHG12207) within an enclosure (MHG19549). All components of the scheduled monument other than the hut circle MHG12207 within enclosure MHG19549 currently lie within plantation. MHG12207 and MHG19549 have however been recently planted and will also be enveloped within plantation over the coming years.
- 10.7.60 The scheduling description notes that the stone circle remains MHG11975, comprise three stones set in an arc and are obscured by growing and fallen timber; however, the HER description from a field visit in 1911 describes up to 10 stones. The HER concludes that some stones may have been removed when area was ploughed and afforested. The remaining stones are 0.80 m high. The cairn MHG12072 lies just to south and is bell-

shaped in profile, 12.1 m across and up to 1.8 m high, although only 1.2 m of this height appears to be manmade, as the cairn lies on the edge of a dip. Cairn MHG12076, 240 m to the north east, measures 15 m east-west by 11 m and stands just over 1.0 m high. Hut circle MHG33612 is c.12 m across. It has been ploughed, but is still clearly visible. Finally, hut circle MHG12207 lies 250 m to the west, with an enclosure MHG19549 around it. The hut circle is c.14 m north-south by 18 m east-west, within a relatively well-preserved oval enclosure measuring c.200 m NNE-SSW by 165 m north west-south east. The enclosure appears much later than the hut circle, and may be a medieval or later rebuild of an earlier boundary.

- 10.7.61 Intrinsically, excavation of the remains would reveal information about the dates of occupation, construction techniques, depending on the degree of preservation, potentially on activities carried out in the settlement.
- 10.7.62 Associatively, the individual monuments have been interpreted as forming a group and can therefore be considered parts of a related settlement. The scheduled monument is unlikely to form the boundary of the settlement, however, only representing its best preserved elements. There are further non-designated hut circles and cairns in the vicinity and it is likely that the prehistoric settlement and associated activity occupied the east-facing slope suitable for agriculture overlooking, and with access to the resources of, the River Shin to the east.
- 10.7.63 Contextually, the settlement and funerary remains, which in combination with the stone circle are indicative of a self-contained community, cluster on the south and east facing slopes overlooking the River Shin, and its tributary Allt a Bhadain to the south. The valley of the River Shin was likely to have been attractive for settlement due to the availability of shelter, well-drained and fertile soils with an aspect and angle suitable for agriculture, access to a water source and resources provided by the river, and communications via the river travel corridor. The remains of the purported stone circle appears to have occupied a relative high-point on a south east projecting ridge, above the settlement and funerary remains. It may be that it was intended for the stone circle to be prominently visible from the settlement or on approach from the lower ground, or that views of the valley from the monument during ceremonies was important to those who used it. It is noted that the remaining standing stones are earthfast (natural) boulders, and the previous presence of a stone circle is recorded from documentary evidence only (a survey in 1911). At 0.8 m high, the stones are not particularly prominent and would have been visible across a relatively local area only.
- 10.7.64 This group of remains is considered to represent a secular and ritual landscape, formed through use by the daily lives of an active farming community. Their setting relates to the suitability of the land for farming and the cairns were intended to be prominently visible within the community, integrating the ancestors into daily life and communicating occupation and ownership to others travelling through the area, perhaps from as far as the valley of the River Shin travel corridor.
- 10.7.65 Photomontage CHVP04 (**Figure 10.6**) is an alternative 'representative view' taken 160 m east of SM1784 (MHG33612), and on the same contour, as the entirety of the scheduled areas either lie within plantation or were inaccessible on safety grounds (boggy terrain) for obtaining supporting photography. To supplement CHVP04, CHVP05 (**Figure 10.7**) is a wireline generated from the remains of the stone circle MHG11975, at the monument's topographical high-point. Both CHVP04 and CHVP05 show that the hubs

and blades of all eight turbines would be visible from the scheduled monument, over the horizon, built on a part of the landscape that is not currently visible from the monument. The bases of none of the turbine towers would be visible. The nearest proposed turbine would be Turbine 4, located 7.9 km to the south east.

- 10.7.66 The ground on which the proposed Development is located forms a distinct topographical landscape zone to the settlement at Gruids Wood, beyond the valley of the River Shin. It is likely that the proposed Development Site was occupied by a different community and there is no evidence that it is within part of the landscape that contributes to, or that views in this direction, contribute to the settlement's cultural significance. A view towards the proposed Development is therefore peripheral and incidental. Intervisibility between the various elements of the scheduled monument, including potentially important views looking uphill towards the stone circle from the settlement, or from the stone circle over the valley of the River Shin, would remain to be appreciated. The burial cairns, intended to be clearly visible from within or adjacent to the settlement, and potentially from the River Shin travel corridor, would remain prominently visible and unchallenged by the proposed Development.
- 10.7.67 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have **'No Impact'** on the cultural significance of SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosure, an asset of **'High'** importance, resulting in an effect of **'None'**, which is **'Not Significant'**.
- 10.7.68 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(h) the understanding, appreciation and experience of SM1784 would be adequately retained such that the integrity of setting would not be significantly adversely affected.

SM1758 Achany, cairn 890m NW of

- 10.7.69 The monument is a round cairn, measuring c.17 m in diameter and 1.8 m in height. The NRHE description describes that a portion of the cairn has been removed and subsequently infilled. Neither a cist nor a chamber has been exposed.
- 10.7.70 Intrinsically, excavation of the cairn would reveal information about its date of construction and typology, and likely provide information regarding prehistoric burial rites.
- 10.7.71 Associatively, the cairn is likely associated with surrounding settlement evidence, and would have been a place to inter the dead of a prehistoric community who farmed the area. It is likely associated with the stone circle, cairns, hut circles and enclosure of SM1784 Druim Baile Fuir, located on the same hillside less than 1 km to the west.
- 10.7.72 Contextually, it is likely that the prehistoric community who constructed the cairn occupied the east-facing slope suitable for agriculture overlooking, and with access to the resources of, the River Shin to the east, and its tributary Allt a Bhadaoin to the south. The valley of the River Shin was likely to have been attractive for settlement due to the availability of shelter, well-drained and fertile soils with an aspect and angle suitable for agriculture, access to a water source and resources provided by the river, and communications via the river travel corridor.
- 10.7.73 The cairn is not a hilltop cairn, being located mid-slope overlooking the River Shin. The cairn is one prominent part of a prehistoric settled landscape, intended to be visible from within, and perhaps lay claim of ownership of, the sheltered and fertile land suitable for farming from the travel corridor of the River Shin beneath.

- 10.7.74 Photomontage CHVP04 (**Figure 10.6**) is a ‘representative view’ taken 630 m west of SM1758 at the request of HES. To supplement CHVP04, CHVP06 (**Figure 10.8**) is a wireline generated from the cairn. CHVP06 shows that the hubs and blades of five turbines would be visible from the scheduled monument), with blade tips only of a further two turbines also theoretically visible, over the horizon, built on a part of the landscape that is not currently visible from the monument due to topography. The bases of none of the turbine towers would be visible. The nearest proposed turbine would be Turbine 1, located 7.1 km to the south east.
- 10.7.75 The ground on which the proposed Development is located forms a distinct topographical landscape zone to the settlement at Gruids Wood, which provides the context of cairn SM1758. A view towards the proposed Development is therefore peripheral and incidental. The cairn, intended to be clearly visible from within or adjacent to the settlement, and potentially from the River Shin travel corridor, would remain prominently visible and unchallenged by the proposed Development.
- 10.7.76 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have ‘**No Impact**’ on the cultural significance of SM1758 Achany, cairn 890m NW of, an asset of ‘**High**’ importance, resulting in an effect of ‘**None**’, which is ‘**Not Significant**’.
- 10.7.77 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(h) the understanding, appreciation and experience of SM1758 would be adequately retained such that the integrity of setting would not be significantly adversely affected.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 10.7.78 There are 39 known non-designated heritage assets within the Site, however of these, only five are considered to derive cultural significance from their setting within areas that include the location of infrastructure for the proposed Development, and these may therefore be impacted:

MHG10054 Leathad Breac Hut Circle; Field System

- 10.7.79 MHG10054 denotes two hut circles with an accompanying field system. Both huts survive as penannular turf covered earthworks, however, they are also partially peat covered which may obscure other related remains. The first hut circle measures 14 m in diameter, comprising a sparse wall exhibiting one or two outer facing stones in situ and opposing slabs in the ESE give an entrance width of 1.3 m. The second hut circle, set back in the slope, measures approximately 5.1 m in diameter, comprising a wall spread to 2 m and up to 0.7 m high; the entrance is in the east and large blocks are evident in the wall. The field system comprises numerous heaps of stone clearance and tenuous traces of occasional lynchets. No measurable plots are discernible.
- 10.7.80 Intrinsically, excavation of the hut circles would reveal information about their date of construction and typology, and likely provide information regarding prehistoric occupation.
- 10.7.81 Associatively, the hut circles can be compared with other numerous examples in the vicinity.
- 10.7.82 Contextually, these hut circles are located across the lower north-facing slopes of Cnoc Blar na Curaich, overlooking the fertile land flanking the Allt Loch Leisgein burn. The

setting of the hut circles that contributes to their significance includes the surrounding field system, and with evident ready access to the resources of the adjacent burn.

- 10.7.83 The nearest proposed turbine (Turbine 2) would be located 255 m to the south east, however, the proposed Development design includes the construction compound and 585 m of internal site access track through the associated field system area. Both of the hut circles would be avoided.
- 10.7.84 The relationship with the Allt Loch Leisgein burn would be preserved, however the setting relationship between the two hut circles would be divorced, as would the field system which would be bisected by the proposed access tracks. The presence of the construction compound within 30 m of the hut circles would adversely impact on an experience of their cultural significance as it would become more difficult to appreciate the extent of their associated field system.
- 10.7.85 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **'High'** adverse impact on the cultural significance of MHG10054 Leathad Breac Hut Circle; Field System, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Minor'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.
- 10.7.86 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(o), the proposed Development would not preserve the setting of non-designated asset MHG10054, however, as these impacts cannot be avoided they have been minimised. Both hut circles have been avoided with a buffer zone and will be protected throughout construction and operation of the proposed Development.

MHG10335 Craigton Hut Circle

- 10.7.87 MHG10335 denotes two hut circles. Both huts survive as penannular turf covered earthworks, however, they are also partially peat covered which may obscure other related remains. The first hut circle measures 12 m in diameter with an entrance gap in the south east. The second hut circle, in a poorer state of preservation, measures 9.0 m (max.) in diameter with no entrance gap evident.
- 10.7.88 Intrinsically, excavation of the hut circles would reveal information about their date of construction and typology, and likely provide information regarding prehistoric occupation.
- 10.7.89 Associatively, the hut circles can be compared with other numerous examples in the vicinity.
- 10.7.90 Contextually, these hut circles are located across the lower north-facing slopes of Cnoc Blar na Curaich, overlooking the fertile land flanking An Uidh burn. The setting of the hut circles that contributes to their significance includes the evident access to the resources of the adjacent burn.
- 10.7.91 The nearest proposed turbine (Turbine 3) would be located 100 m to the north west.
- 10.7.92 The relationship with An Uidh burn and the surrounding land that would have been exploited by the inhabitants of the roundhouses would be preserved, however the presence of Turbine 3 would adversely impact on an experience of the hut circles' cultural significance as it would be an imposing, distracting and noisy presence in close proximity.
- 10.7.93 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **'Medium'** adverse impact on the cultural significance of MHG10335 Craigton Hut Circle, an asset of **'Low'**

importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **‘Minor’** significance, which is **‘Not Significant’**.

- 10.7.94 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(o), the proposed Development would not preserve the setting of non-designated asset MHG10335, however, as these impacts cannot be avoided they have been minimised through establishment of a buffer zone for proposed turbines of a minimum of 50 m.

MHG10058 Coirshellach Township

- 10.7.95 MHG10058 comprises remains of an 18th/19th century depopulated settlement consisting of seven building footings, dimensions from 7 m by 4 m to 30 m by 5 m, with accompanying enclosures and field walls. The buildings and enclosures survive as low stone walls plus an area of improved land surrounding the buildings. Outwith the head dyke or bank are several random building footings, one of which to the south east survives to the height of the gables. The eastern boundary of the head dyke follows the contour, likely intentionally.
- 10.7.96 Intrinsically, excavation of the buildings would reveal information about their date of construction and typology, and likely provide information regarding post medieval crofting.
- 10.7.97 Associatively, the buildings can be compared with other numerous examples in the vicinity.
- 10.7.98 Contextually, these buildings are located on the west-facing upper slopes of Cnoc Blar na Curaich. The setting of the township that contributes to their significance includes an area of improved land surrounding the buildings which appears to have exploited a flattish area to the west and north west.
- 10.7.99 The nearest proposed turbine (Turbine 7) would be located 130 m to the north east, and a proposed access track would impact physically upon the northern head dyke and an outlying building located at NGR 260838, 896597.
- 10.7.100 The relationship between MHG10058 and the surrounding improved land that would have been exploited by the inhabitants of the township would be preserved, however the presence of Turbine 7 and the access track would adversely impact on an experience of the township’s cultural significance as it would physically alter its extent, as well as being an imposing, distracting and noisy presence in close proximity.
- 10.7.101 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **‘Medium’** adverse impact on the cultural significance of MHG10058 Coirshellach Township, an asset of **‘Low’** importance, resulting in an adverse effect **‘Minor’** significance, which is **‘Not Significant’**.
- 10.7.102 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(o), the proposed Development would not preserve the setting of non-designated asset MHG10058, however, as these impacts cannot be avoided they have been minimised through establishment of a buffer zone for proposed turbines of a minimum of 50 m.

MHG18357 Leathad Breac Farmstead

- 10.7.103 A farmstead MHG18357 comprises two unroofed buildings and an enclosure. The buildings are in a poor condition with low turf covered walls surrounded by areas of rough grass. It survives as a long rectangular building with only the lowest courses of stone wall

remaining. The surrounding enclosure walls are difficult to identify due to the covering heather and scrub grass.

- 10.7.104 Intrinsically, excavation of the buildings would reveal information about their date of construction and typology, and likely provide information regarding post-medieval crofting.
- 10.7.105 Associatively, the buildings can be compared with other numerous examples in the vicinity.
- 10.7.106 Contextually, these buildings are located on the lower north west facing slopes of Cnoc Blar na Curaich. The setting of the farmstead that contributes to its significance includes its enclosure.
- 10.7.107 Turbine 4, its crane pad and access track would be entirely located within the enclosure for MHG18357. All the buildings of the farmstead have been avoided. Turbine 4 would be located 300 m west of the buildings, and Turbine 1 would be located 180 m to the north.
- 10.7.108 Field walls of the heritage asset would be removed and the presence of Turbines 1 & 4 and associated infrastructure would adversely impact on an experience of the farmstead's cultural significance as it would become more difficult to appreciate its enclosed field system.
- 10.7.109 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have a **'High'** adverse impact on the cultural significance of MHG18357 Leathad Breac Farmstead, an asset of **'Low'** importance, resulting in an adverse effect of **'Minor'** significance, which is **'Not Significant'**.
- 10.7.110 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(o), the proposed Development would not preserve the setting of non-designated asset MHG18357, however, as these impacts cannot be avoided they have been minimised. All buildings of the asset have been avoided with a buffer zone and will be protected throughout construction and operation of the proposed Development.

MHG18358 Coirshellach Farmstead

- 10.7.111 A farmstead MHG18358 comprises three roofed buildings and two unroofed buildings, one of which has two compartments.
- 10.7.112 Intrinsically, excavation of the buildings would reveal information about their date of construction and typology, and likely provide information regarding post-medieval crofting.
- 10.7.113 Associatively, the buildings can be compared with other numerous examples in the vicinity.
- 10.7.114 Contextually, these buildings are located on the lower west-facing slopes of Cnoc a Choire Bhuidhe. The setting of the farmstead that contributes to its significance includes the slopes of Cnoc a Choire Bhuidhe which were evidently exploited from this position.
- 10.7.115 The nearest proposed turbine (Turbine 7) would be located 590 m to the north. The buildings of the farmstead lie outwith the Site boundary.
- 10.7.116 The relationship between MHG18358 and the surrounding land that would have been exploited by the inhabitants of the farmstead would be preserved, with no infrastructure proposed on the slopes of Cnoc a Choire Bhuidhe.

10.7.117 It is concluded that the proposed Development would have **‘No Impact’** on the cultural significance of MHG18358 Coirshellach Farmstead, an asset of **‘Low’** importance, resulting in an effect of effect of **‘None’**, which is **‘Not Significant’**.

10.7.118 In terms of NPF4 Policy 7(o), the proposed Development would preserve the setting of non-designated asset MHG18358.

Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan

10.7.119 It is considered that proposals in the Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (OBEMP) (**Technical Appendix 8.6**) for the removal of self-seeding non-native conifers across the Site (see **Chapter 8**) would have a **‘Negligible’** beneficial impact on all heritage assets within the Site through better revealing their significance, resulting in a beneficial effect of **‘Negligible’** significance, which is **‘Not Significant’**.

Potential Decommissioning Effects

10.7.120 The assessment of decommissioning effects of the proposed Development is scoped out of this chapter with the agreement of consultees.

10.8 Additional Mitigation

Mitigation during Construction

10.8.1 The preferred mitigation option in respect of direct physical impacts is always to avoid or reduce impacts through design (embedded mitigation), or through precautionary measures such as fencing off of heritage assets during construction works. Impacts which cannot be eliminated in these ways will lead to residual effects.

10.8.2 Where construction impacts are unavoidable, these will be offset by excavation and recording of the remains in accordance with NPF4 Policy 7(o) and PAN2/2011, sections 25-27, and THC HwLDP Policy 57.

10.8.3 A programme of archaeological monitoring, fieldwork, recording, and reporting is likely to be required, to be specified in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). THC has indicated through consultation that a programme of palaeoenvironmental survey would also be appropriate.

10.8.4 The scope and nature of additional mitigation will be outlined in a WSI and agreed with THC in advance of construction, a matter which the Applicant agrees can be secured as a condition of consent.

10.8.5 Further guidance on appropriate mitigation can be found at Part 6 (Historic Environment/Archaeology) of NatureScot’s Good Practice During Wind Farm Construction (NatureScot, 2024).

Direct and Indirect Physical Impacts within the Site

Known Heritage Assets

10.8.6 Construction impacts on MHG9290 Cnoc na Moine, field system, MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system, MHG18357 Leathad Breac, farmstead, and MHG10058 Coirshellach, township and head dyke would be mitigated by a programme of archaeological fieldwork. It is proposed that this work comprises advance

archaeological excavation in the case of MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system including a programme of palaeoenvironmental survey as appropriate, and archaeological monitoring of groundworks during construction for the remaining assets.

- 10.8.7 In addition it is proposed that any modern field boundaries and buildings noted in **Technical Appendix 10.1** that would be physically impacted by the proposed Development are proportionately recorded as necessary during the proposed fieldwork mitigation programme.

Micrositing

- 10.8.8 Any construction impacts as a result of programmed micrositing on MHG12881 Altnagar Lodge Hotel, cairnfield, and MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle would be mitigated by a programme of archaeological fieldwork. It is proposed that this work comprises advance archaeological excavation in the case of MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle, and archaeological monitoring of groundworks during construction for MHG12881 Altnagar Lodge Hotel, cairnfield.

Accidental Impacts

- 10.8.9 It is proposed that the risk of accidental physical impacts is minimised through the fencing off of MHG9290 Cnoc na Moine, field system, the hut circles of MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system, MHG12881 Altnagar Lodge Hotel, cairnfield, and MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle throughout the construction phase for the proposed Development.

Archaeological Potential

- 10.8.10 The Site is considered to hold low archaeological potential for hitherto unknown prehistoric remains, low potential for Medieval remains, and high potential for subsurface archaeological remains of the post-medieval period. The assessment of archaeological potential has identified that Medieval remains may be of up to **'Medium'** importance, which is therefore considered 'worst case' for the impact assessment of archaeological potential.
- 10.8.11 Direct physical impacts on unexpected archaeological remains may therefore occur during the construction phase. Preservation by record through archaeological monitoring (watching brief) is likely to be required over some or all construction groundworks for the proposed Development, to be agreed through a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

Mitigation during Operation

- 10.8.12 Adverse operational effects which are **'Minor'** are predicted upon:
- Category B Listed Building LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates (CHVP02 **Figure 10.4**).
 - Non-designated MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system
 - Non-designated MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle
 - Non-designated MHG10058 Coirshellach, township
 - Non-designated MHG18357 Leathad Breac, farmstead

10.8.13 These effects are **‘Not Significant’** and no additional mitigation beyond the applied mitigation embedded in the design of the proposed Development to minimise effects upon the historic environment is proposed.

10.9 Residual Effects

Residual Construction Effects

10.9.1 Implementation of the proposed programme of mitigation (Part 10.8), comprising protection with fencing and implementation of additional mitigation for construction impacts upon known heritage assets and any areas of archaeological potential in the Site, would result in adverse residual physical construction effects of **‘Negligible’** significance which are **‘Not Significant’**.

Residual Operational Effects

10.9.2 In respect of the setting of heritage assets, no additional mitigation is proposed and therefore adverse residual operational effects of **‘Minor’** significance and **‘Not Significant’** are predicted upon:

- Category B Listed Building LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates (CHVP02 **Figure 10.4**).
- Non-designated MHG10054 Leathad Breac Hut Circle; Field System.
- Non-designated MHG10335 Craigton Hut Circle.
- Non-designated MHG10058 Coirshellach Township.
- Non-designated MHG18357 Leathad Breac Farmstead.

10.10 Cumulative Effects

Cumulative Construction Effects

10.10.1 There is no potential for cumulative construction effects on any known or unknown and previously unrecorded cultural heritage assets. Any effects would be contained within the Site boundary, and none will be further directly impacted by any other developments outside this area.

Cumulative Operational Effects

10.10.2 Cumulative operational effects can occur when the contribution made to the cultural significance of a heritage asset by its setting is directly altered by the proposed Development in combination with other developments. The assessment of effects uses the same methodology applied in considering the likely effects of proposed Development alone. All analysis of asset significance and the contribution made by setting remains unchanged. All that is altered is the nature of change predicted for the one or more scenarios under consideration.

10.10.3 Cumulative operational effects are considered in cases where an effect of **‘Minor’** or greater operational significance has been predicted as a result of the proposed Development.

10.10.4 In terms of operational impacts upon the cultural significance of heritage assets in the study area through development within their setting, an adverse effect of ‘**Minor**’ significance is anticipated upon:

- Category B Listed Building LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates (CHVP02 **Figure 10.4**).
- Non-designated MHG10054 Leathad Breac Hut Circle; Field System.
- Non-designated MHG10335 Craigton Hut Circle.
- Non-designated MHG10058 Coirshellach Township.
- Non-designated MHG18357 Leathad Breac Farmstead.

10.10.5 For the cumulative assessment, other developments (consented but not yet built and those that are currently at application stage (for which sufficient detail is known) are considered where they also feature within views from or towards these assets as demonstrated by the suite of visualisations as agreed with HES.

10.10.6 In summary, **no cumulative effects** are identified. Detailed cumulative assessments are presented below:

Category B Listed Building LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates

10.10.7 CHVP02 (**Figure 10.4**) shows that in east-facing views from LB7165 Carbisdale Castle, in addition to the proposed Development, there is a potential for the proposed Garvary and Acheilidh wind farms (both of which are in planning) to also be visible over the horizon should they be consented and constructed. These would be visible to the north of the proposed Development at a distance of 3 km and 6 km respectively (thus further away from the castle than the proposed Development).

10.10.8 Based on the assessment of cultural significance of LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and contribution made by its setting as presented in Part 10.7 above, it is considered that a cumulative impact assessment considering the proposed Development, Garvary and Acheilidh wind farms in combination would result in no more than the proposed Development in isolation, i.e., a ‘**Low**’ adverse impact on the cultural significance of Category B LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates, an asset of ‘**Medium**’ importance, resulting in an adverse effect of ‘**Minor**’ significance, which is ‘**Not Significant**’.

Non-designated MHG10054 Leathad Breac Hut Circle; Field System, MHG10335 Craigton Hut Circle, MHG10058 Coirshellach Township & MHG18357 Leathad Breac Farmstead

10.10.9 These non-designated heritage assets for which adverse impacts are predicted through the operation of the proposed Development are within the Site, and are not of a type whose cultural significance would be impacted through development located at distance (beyond the Site boundary). It is considered there is no potential for cumulative adverse effects on these assets.

10.11 Summary of Effects

10.11.1 **Table 10.8** provides a summary of the conclusions of the impact assessment with respect to cultural heritage taking into consideration embedded and any additional mitigation measures.

Table 10.8: Summary of effects

Potential impact	Pre-mitigation		Mitigation	Residual	
	Effect	Significance		Effect	Significance
Construction Phase					
<p>Direct and/or indirect physical impact upon known heritage assets during construction, including micro-siting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •MHG9290 Cnoc na Moine, field system, •MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system, •MHG18357 Leathad Breac, farmstead, and •MHG10058 Coirshellach, township and head dyke •MHG12881 Altnagar Lodge Hotel, cairnfield, •MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle •Any modern field boundaries or buildings 	Adverse	(Up to) Minor	<p>Where construction impacts are unavoidable, these will be offset by excavation and recording of the remains in accordance with NPF4 Policy 7(o) and PAN2/2011, sections 25-27, and THC HwLDP Policy 57.</p> <p>A programme of archaeological monitoring, fieldwork including a programme of palaeoenvironmental survey as appropriate, recording, and reporting is likely to be required, to be agreed through a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).</p> <p>The scope and nature of additional mitigation will be outlined in a WSI and agreed with THC in advance of construction, a matter which the Applicant agrees can be secured as a condition of consent.</p>	Adverse	Negligible
<p>Potential accidental direct physical impacts upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •MHG9290 Cnoc na Moine, field system, the hut circles of •MHG10054 Leathad Breac, hut circle and field system, •MHG12881 Altnagar Lodge Hotel, cairnfield, •MHG10335 Craigton, hut circle 	Adverse	(Up to) Minor	<p>Fencing off of assets throughout construction to protect from accidental impact.</p> <p>The scope and nature of additional mitigation will be outlined in a WSI and agreed with THC in advance of construction, a matter which the Applicant agrees can be secured as a condition of consent.</p>	None	None
<p>Direct (physical) impact upon unexpected archaeological remains within the Site</p>	Adverse	(up to) Moderate	<p>Where construction impacts are unavoidable, these will be offset by excavation and recording of the remains in accordance with NPF4 Policy 7(o) and PAN2/2011, sections 25-27, and THC HwLDP Policy 57.</p> <p>A programme of archaeological monitoring, fieldwork, recording, and reporting is likely to be required, including a programme of palaeoenvironmental</p>	Adverse	Negligible

Potential impact	Pre-mitigation		Mitigation	Residual	
	Effect	Significance		Effect	Significance
			survey as appropriate, to be agreed through a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). The scope and nature of additional mitigation will be outlined in a WSI and agreed with THC in advance of construction, a matter which the Applicant agrees can be secured as a condition of consent.		
Operational Phase					
Effect upon cultural significance through development within setting of: •Category B Listed Building LB7165 Carbisdale Castle and Entrance Gates (CHVP02 Figure 10.4). •Non-designated MHG10054 Leathad Breac Hut Circle; Field System. •Non-designated MHG10335 Craigton Hut Circle. •Non-designated MHG10058 Coirshellach Township. •Non-designated MHG18357 Leathad Breac Farmstead.	Adverse	Minor	None proposed	Adverse	Minor
Decommissioning Phase					
None					
Cumulative effects					
None					

10.12 References

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