

Appendix 6.3 Viewpoint Assessment

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APPENDIX 6.3 Viewpoint Assessment

Introduction

This Appendix provides an assessment of the visual effects of the Proposed Development from a selection of 17 viewpoints. For each of the assessment viewpoints a short description is given of the baseline view followed by a description of the features of the Proposed Development which would be visible from that viewpoint. For each viewpoint there is a comment on how vegetation, buildings or topography would affect the visibility of the turbines. A comment on the sensitivity of the viewpoint, the magnitude of change experienced and the significance of visual impacts is given for each viewpoint. Finally, a judgement is provided regarding whether the overall effect for each viewpoint is considered to be significant or not in terms of the EIA Regulations.

A summary of the sensitivity of the viewpoint, magnitude of change in the view and significance of effect is given in Table A6.3.1 of this Appendix and is replicated at Table 6.7 of the LVIA (EIA Report Volume 1, Chapter 6). Where a viewpoint is representative of more than one type of visual receptor, the significance rating carried forward to Table A6.3.1 (replicated at Table 6.7 of Chapter 6) is the rating that represents the most sensitive receptor group represented by the viewpoint. Each assessment viewpoint is illustrated in Volume 4 of the EIA Report.

Viewpoint 1 – Braehead, Coalburn

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the most open views from certain properties at Braehead, Coalburn, orientated in a south-westerly direction. Viewpoint 1, as illustrated within Volume 4a of this LVIA, was taken from a field access track that leaves Bellfield Road and passes to the immediate west of the cul-de-sac of Midfield Road. The viewpoint illustrates the type of views available from the rear aspects of dwellings on Midfield Place, and on Bellfield Road, looking in a southerly direction towards the Proposed Development.

From this viewpoint, the primary experience is that of a view across a remediated colliery landscape which has been restored to a semi-natural state and includes areas of rough grassland and newly planted coniferous trees. In the distance, large blocks of plantation forestry and existing wind turbine development at the Hagshaw Hill Extension and Nutberry Wind Farm can be seen along and atop of the hills, forming the skyline from this location.

In the foreground there is a relatively flat area of unmanaged grassland which then falls away into the former opencast coal site in the middle distance of the view. Vegetation primarily consists of rough, overgrown grasses and some scrub as well as an unmanaged row of deciduous trees. This land forms the location of the consented Douglas West Wind Farm, which would form a prominent feature in the immediate view, once constructed. The consented Dalquhandy and Cumberhead Wind Farms would also occupy part of the view to the south west. These schemes are considered as part of cumulative scenario 1 in the main LVIA assessment.

In the middle distance an area of coniferous plantation begins to rise up to the skyline. In the far distance, Henry's Hill is visible, which is also covered in coniferous plantation on the north facing side. The Hagshaw Hill Extension wind turbines are visible at the top of Henry's Hill and follow the contours of the hillside. To the south-west of the viewpoint, the existing Nutberry Wind Farm can be seen beyond vegetation in the near view.

As the viewpoint represents the view from certain residential properties located at Braehead, Coalburn, it is considered to be of high sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

From this viewpoint the Proposed Development will be clearly visible above the horizon that forms the backdrop to the view in this direction. Whilst the turbines would form prominent features in the view to the south, they would clearly relate to a landscape that lies beyond the village in the distance. They would however undeniably appear as tall structures in this view in comparison to the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, but they would appear in the context of a landscape already partially typified by wind energy development. The Proposed Development would occupy a small part of the overall view available, and would not appear out of scale in the landscape when seen in the context of the consented turbines in the immediate view, as shown at Figure 6.32, as is addressed in cumulative scenario 1.

The Proposed Development would be partially visible with the easternmost turbines seen in the view; the westernmost turbines would be largely located beyond the horizon. Views from the properties along the southern side of Midfield Road and Bellfield Road would experience direct theoretical views towards the proposed turbines. However, rear garden fences and mature vegetation will filter and interrupt views of the proposed turbines. Views from first-storey windows would experience slightly clearer views above, and through, the lighter density vegetation of the tree canopies. Clearer views towards the Proposed Development are available from the fence line of the local fields as seen in the photomontage for this viewpoint. Such views have been recognised as part of the assessment and considered when determining the overall magnitude of change and the worst-case scenario for the purposes of this LVIA.

The addition of the Proposed Development would result in a worst-case medium magnitude of change in the view from this location.

Significance of Effect

Analysis and professional judgment have been applied to this viewpoint location and it is considered that the Proposed Development would result in a worst-case **moderate** level of effect on the views and visual amenity experienced by visual receptors represented by this viewpoint. This level of effect is therefore deemed to be significant. However, when cumulative scenario 1 is considered, which includes the consented Douglas West, Dalquhandy and Cumberhead schemes in the baseline, the additional effect of the Proposed Development turbines the on visual receptors in this location would reduce to a non-significant level, as discussed in the main report.

Viewpoint 2 – M74 Overbridge

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views of transient users of the minor road crossing the M74 motorway. The photograph has been taken adjacent to the bridge which crosses over the M74 motorway, on the road which travels between the B7078 towards Douglas Water. This is to demonstrate the availability for clear views which can be gained in the direction of the site from the bridge.

This viewpoint was originally selected to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Development upon the M74 motorway. However, after analysis of the motorway route, and the anticipated low sensitivity and orientation of the driver's line of sight being away from the turbines resulting in limited opportunities to view the proposed turbines, it was decided that a greater effect would be experienced from the minor road crossing the motorway. When travelling in vicinity of the viewpoint in a northerly direction along the M74, the Proposed Development would be located behind the receptor. When travelling in a southerly direction, the site would be seen perpendicular to the road in a westerly to south-westerly direction. Beyond the immediate views of the motorway infrastructure, views extend towards a predominantly rural landscape with the landform undulating and rising towards hills in the distance. The view looks across the recently regenerated opencast coal site where the consented Douglas West Wind Farm is located. The vegetation cover consists primarily of grassland which appears to be a combination of managed and unmanaged fields. Individual trees and tree belts are scattered across the landscape. Plantations can be seen in the distance, and cover many of the hill tops in the far distance.

The B7078 runs parallel to the motorway, and although relatively quiet, fast moving vehicles can be seen crossing the landscape along this route as well as the M74. Telegraph poles and overhead wires follow the B7078, and extend into the distance. Several farmsteads are scattered across the landscape, many of which are protected by tree shelter belts. Evidence of quarrying/opencast activity is also visible in the middle distance. A site of large, commercial scale storage/distribution warehouses can be seen from the viewpoint and the Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines are clearly visible at the top of Henry's Hill. The Nutberry Wind Farm is also visible within the view.

As this viewpoint represents the view from a minor road, the receptors are considered to be of medium sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

Where gaps in roadside vegetation allow, there would be clear views towards the Proposed Development with the easternmost turbines most prominent in the view at a distance of approximately 6.3 km. The proposed turbines located to the west of Common Hill, and those located on Broomerside Hill, would form less perceptible features as they would be seen immediately beyond the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines.

There would be six of the Proposed Development turbines seen above the horizon directly adjacent to the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, with a further five turbines located directly beyond the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, appearing set down in the view, beyond the horizon. Nutberry Wind Farm would also be visible in the view, visually separate from the Proposed Development. The consented Douglas West, Dalquhandy and Cumberhead Wind Farms would also appear in the same angle of view, in the near to middle distance and at closer proximity to the viewpoint than the Proposed Development. These schemes are considered separately in cumulative scenario 1.

Overall, the proposed turbines would form an additional feature in a landscape that is already typified by wind energy development. The proposed turbines would not appear disproportionately out of scale in the view,

particularly when seen alongside the consented Douglas West turbines in the closer view, as is discussed in cumulative scenario 1.

At this distance, considering the angle of view in which the turbines will be seen from this elevated position, and in the context of the existing view, it is considered that there will be a medium magnitude of change.

Significance of Effect

The Proposed Development would result in a medium magnitude of change resulting in a **moderate** level of effect on the views from this viewpoint and the visual amenity experienced by people travelling along the minor road crossing the M74 motorway. This effect is deemed to be significant. This is primarily due to the orientation of the route, and the elevated nature of the view towards the site. It is however recognised that this is a relatively short stretch of the route from Douglas Water to the B7078. It is also recognised that when cumulative scenario 1 is considered, which includes the consented Douglas West, Dalquhandy and Cumberhead schemes in the baseline, the additional effect of the Proposed Development turbines on the visual receptors in this location would reduce to a non-significant level, as discussed in the main report.

Viewpoint 3 – Monument at Douglas Castle (Castle Dangerous)

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from parts of the Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) where turbines would be visible. The ruin of Castle Dangerous is in close proximity to the location of this viewpoint; however, the viewpoint has not been taken at Castle Dangerous due to the vegetation surrounding the northern and western sides of the castle which restricts views towards the site.

From this viewpoint, views extend across managed grassland, across the Douglas Water valley, to Long Plantation. A line of telegraph poles and overhead wires run through the base of the valley. The land gently rises from the Douglas Water to the north-west and west with areas of deciduous woodland seen breaking up the appearance of the grass slopes, growing in the shelter of the undulating landform. Areas of coniferous plantation occupy the mid slopes and line the tops of the hill side. The existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines are visible above the horizon to the west. The consented Douglas West turbines would be seen in the immediate view, beyond Long Plantation, once constructed, as discussed in cumulative scenario 1.

As this viewpoint is representative of an area which is used for recreational purposes and to also visit the ruin of Castle Dangerous, the receptors in this area are considered to be of high sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

From the grounds of Douglas Castle seven of the proposed turbines would be clearly visible to various extents above Long Plantation beyond the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines. The westernmost turbines of the Proposed Development would be located beyond the horizon and as such views of these turbines would be limited. The vegetation within the Douglas Water Valley would provide heavy filtering of views to a number of the proposed turbines when leaves are present, although during winter months these turbines would be partially visible.

The nearest proposed turbine would be seen at a distance of approximately 4.4 km. It is acknowledged that the proposed turbines would appear taller in the view than the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, but they would appear less prominent in the view once the consented Douglas West turbines are constructed.

Whilst a number of the turbines would be clearly visible in the view towards the south-west, they would appear to relate to a separate landscape which lies somewhere beyond the Douglas Castle Policy Grounds. The addition of the turbines to the wider landscape would not prevent an understanding and appreciation of the underlying and surrounding area, nor would they prevent an enjoyment of the characteristics of the local valley landscape.

The addition of the proposed turbines would result in a medium magnitude of change in the view.

Significance of Effect

The Proposed Development would result in a **moderate** level of effect on the views from this viewpoint which is deemed to be significant. Once the Douglas West turbines are constructed however, the visual presence of these turbines in the near view would reduce the prominence of the Proposed Development in the wider landscape.

Viewpoint 4 – B7078 south of Lesmahagow

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views experienced by motorists travelling along the B7078 between Junction 11 of the M74 and Lesmahagow. This viewpoint is within close proximity to Lesmahagow and has been chosen as local route that is likely to experience some visibility of the proposed turbines.

The landscape between the viewpoint and the proposed site consists of rough grassland and scattered scrubby vegetation. In the distant views across the plateau farmland is the rising land which includes the Hagshaw Hill Extension Wind Farm as well as the operational turbines at Nutberry and Auchrobert. As mentioned previously many of these hills are covered with large blocks of coniferous plantation.

From this viewpoint there are several man-made features within the local landscape. The road itself presents the primary focus of view for motorists with the site located in an oblique field of vision to the south of the road. Large electricity pylons cross the landscape directly behind the viewpoint and cross the B7078 further to the north.

As this viewpoint is representative of views from a local vehicular route, receptors using this road are considered to be of medium sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

From this viewpoint location, clear views are available in the direction of the Proposed Development. The ZTV suggests that there would be visibility of up to all of the proposed turbines however, views towards the turbines from the route as a whole would be intermittently interrupted by roadside vegetation. The nearest proposed turbine is located approximately 7 km to the south west of this representative viewpoint.

The Proposed Development would, in part, appear above the horizon that forms the backdrop to the view. The five of the proposed turbines that would appear fully above the horizon would be prominent features in the view towards the south-west however, the majority of the turbines would appear beyond the horizon with just blades tip visible, if at all. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development would appear noticeably taller than the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, but once the consented Douglas West, Cumberhead and Dalquhandy turbines are constructed, the proposed turbines would appear at a similar scale to these wind farms, albeit located on higher ground. These matters are addressed in cumulative scenario 1.

From this viewpoint it is considered that there will be a worst-case medium magnitude of change in the view due to the presence of other wind energy development in the landscape.

Significance of Effect

It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development would result in a worst case **moderate** level of effect on the views from this viewpoint and route when experienced by people using the B7078. This effect is deemed to be significant, but again the additional effect of the Proposed Development turbines would reduce to a non-significant level once the other consented developments are considered in the baseline of the view.

Viewpoint 5 – A70 Rigside

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from the properties located on the north-western side of Rigside. The viewpoint has been taken from the nearest publicly accessible place to the properties which is on the A70 as it travels through Rigside village. In reality, views from the properties towards the Proposed Development would be oblique, partially filtered and interrupted by vegetation in the immediate intervening view.

From this elevated viewpoint, views extend along the urban edge of the A70 towards the undulating agricultural land and pronounced ridgeline which includes the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines. In terms of existing structures, there is a 48.5m wind turbine at Newtonhead Farm in the foreground and a line of large pylons and overhead wires can also be seen crossing the landscape in the distance. In general, farmsteads are scattered across the landscape, with large associated outbuildings. An area of large storage/distribution warehouses are also visible in the middle distance at Poniel. The Nutberry and Hagshaw Hill turbines can also be seen from this location.

As this viewpoint is representative of the views of residents on the western edge of Rigside, the viewpoint is considered to be of high sensitivity to change in the view.

People who are travelling along the A70 would gain similar views to those experienced by residents located along the A70. The views available from the A70 would be more direct than that of the properties. However, users of the A70 would be considered to be of low sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

From the north-western edge of Rigside, the Proposed Development would be clearly visible at a distance of approximately 9 km, but it will not be possible to see the ground levels components associated with the site due to distance. The proposed turbines would break the skyline of the distant hillside that forms the backdrop to the view and would be seen in the context of the numerous existing turbines in the landscape. It is acknowledged that the proposed turbines would appear taller in scale than the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, but once the consented schemes of Douglas West, Dalquhandy and Cumberhead are constructed and operational, the Proposed Development would appear similar in scale, as is addressed in relation to cumulative scenario 1.

Overall, it is considered that the addition of the proposed turbines would result in a medium magnitude of change in the view.

Significance of Effect

It is therefore considered that for the residents located on the south-western side of Rigside (assessed as being of high sensitivity to change in the view), there will be a **moderate** level of effect. This effect is considered to be significant, but again the additional effect of the Proposed Development turbines would reduce to a non-significant level once the other consented developments are considered in the baseline of the view.

Viewpoint 6 – Black Hill

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from the top of Black Hill, a scheduled monument which is a National Trust for Scotland specified viewpoint. Black Hill is the location of a fort and settlement, and its elevated position of approximately 290 m AOD, provides panoramic views across the Clyde Valley.

From the top of Black Hill, panoramic views of the surrounding landscape are available. The top of the fort includes limited vegetation and is covered by managed grassland. Clear views towards the Clyde Valley consist of primarily undulating pastoral farmland. The condition of this landscape varies with some areas appearing to express less management than others. The field pattern is quite large in size, and it is evident that hedgerows have been removed to increase their size. There is an overall sense that the surrounding area is a working and productive landscape.

Several farmsteads are scattered across the landscape, many of which express the local vernacular in appearance, being made of local stone while being seen in combination with large, modern farm sheds. Larger settlements can be seen scattered along the valley sides. In the direction of the site, several small scale wind turbines can be seen in the valley in the middle distance. Field boundaries are composed of broken hedgerows, and deciduous tree belts. In the distance, the undulating hills are clearly visible, some of which are covered in coniferous plantations.

From this vantage point panoramic views are available. On clear days it is possible to see many of the existing wind turbines in the distance which surround the Black Hill vantage point. Other human influences also occur within the landscape such as large electricity pylons and overhead lines which cross the land to the north. It is also possible to gain glimpses of the M74 motorway traffic as it passes to the west of this location.

As this viewpoint is a recognised vantage point and a historical feature, this viewpoint is considered to be of high sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

From this viewpoint atop Black Hill it will be possible to see the Proposed Development at a distance of approximately 12.7 km from the nearest turbine. The proposed turbines will, in part, be seen above the horizon, but many of the proposed turbines would be located beyond the hillside that forms the backdrop to the view and thus the blades tips only would be visible.

The Proposed Development would be seen in combination with the other turbines in the panoramic view including Hagshaw Hill Extension, Nutberry, Galawhistle and numerous single, small scale turbines in the local landscape. The proposed turbines would be additional identifiable features seen within an area which already includes existing wind turbine development. Once the consented Douglas West, Cumberhead and Dalquhandy wind farms are constructed, the Proposed Development would be seen as a backdrop to these more prominent schemes, as addressed in cumulative scenario 1.

Overall, the addition of the Proposed Development to the view from the summit of Black Hill is not considered to have a detrimental effect upon the appreciation of the wider panoramic views available.

From this viewpoint it is considered that there would be a medium to low magnitude of change in the view.

Significance of Effect

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would result in a **moderate to moderate/minor** level of effect on the visual amenity experienced by people visiting the high point of Black Hill fort and settlement.

Viewpoint 7 – Hyndford Bridge

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from Hyndford Bridge which forms a historical feature along the A73 and is identified as a recognised viewpoint within the *South Lanarkshire Spatial Framework*. The bridge includes footpaths on either side of a single lane of traffic, operated by a three-way traffic light system.

Views from Hyndford Bridge extend along the River Clyde valley looking across a predominantly rural landscape, comprising primarily of managed grazing land and unmanaged grassland. The River Clyde sweeps through the shallow valley, and is relatively wide at this point.

To the south there are views of the A70 as it travels through the River Clyde Valley with a few farmsteads including large agricultural buildings situated at elevated positions along the valley sides. A relatively large proportion of the surrounding land is used for grazing animals and blocks of woodland and belts of coniferous plantation run down the slopes to the south-west, providing texture and contrast to the landscape. In the far distance one hillside is framed by the slopes of the valley with the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines situated on the nearside with the blade tips of some of the Nutberry Wind Farm also visible.

As a road which is used for its scenic qualities as part of the Clyde Valley Tourist Route, and as the bridge itself is a historical feature, this location is considered to be of high sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

From this viewpoint location, the Proposed Development would be framed in the distance by the hillsides of the immediate Douglas Water valley. Therefore, when receptors are located on the bridge, views are gained directly along the River Clyde to the Douglas Water valley and towards the far hillside where the proposed turbines are situated.

The ZTV suggests intermittent visibility of the site in the vicinity of Hyndford Bridge, but that up to all of the proposed turbines will be visible from the bridge itself. In reality at least six of the turbines will be screened up to hub height by intervening landform and vegetation. The hub and blades of the turbines situated in the eastern part of the site will be visible. The nearest proposed turbine is located approximately 15.6 km from the viewpoint location.

When crossing Hyndford Bridge, receptors will experience a transient view of the bridge itself and the local landscape beyond it. The proposed turbines are situated almost perpendicular to the direction of the bridge and it is assessed that there will be a very low change on the visual experience of motorists. The worst case scenario will be experienced by pedestrians stopping at one of the turret style features along the south-western footpath to experience the views of Douglas Water valley and the distant hills.

When considering the existing nature of the view, the screening effect of intervening landform and vegetation, and the distance from the site, the addition of the proposed turbines in the view that already includes the Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines and Nutberry Wind Farm, would result in a worst-case low to medium magnitude of change.

Significance of Effect

It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development would result in no greater than a **moderate/minor to moderate** level of effect on the visual amenity of those travelling over the Hyndford Bridge. This effect is not deemed to be significant due to the distance between the bridge and the proposed turbines, as well as the layers of intervening vegetation and screening provided by the valley landform.

Viewpoint 8 – Tinto Hill

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from the vantage point of Tinto Hill, which is located at an elevation of approximately 710 m AOD. Clear panoramic views extend across a gently undulating rural landscape.

In the direction towards the site, a large patchwork of plantation covers extensive areas of land in the surrounding landscape. Substantial tree belts also form boundaries to some of the fields. Whilst it is evident that some field hedgerows have been removed to create larger fields. There are farmsteads scattered across the landscape, some with large agricultural sheds. There is a significant sense that surrounding Tinto Hill, the wider area is formed by a combination of rolling moorland as well as a working and productive landscape.

Within the view to the west, towards the site, the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines are visible on the top of Common Hill along with the Nutberry Wind Farm to the right of the view alongside Auchrobert Wind Farm. On clear days when long distance views can be gained, it is possible to see other existing wind farm sites in the far distance including Whitelee. Other features of the landscape include previously worked, regenerating and operational opencast coal sites and quarries.

As this viewpoint is representative of a recognised vantage point at the summit of a notable hill in the local landscape, receptors are considered to be of very high sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

From this viewpoint location, the Proposed Development would be visible in the middle distance. Due to the elevated nature of the viewpoint the towers, hubs and blades of each turbine would be visible.

The Proposed Development would form identifiable features in landscape at a distance of approximately 15.8 km. It is acknowledged that the turbines located on the highest ground within the site would break the horizon, but they would occupy a relatively narrow field of view and would be seen in the context of other existing wind energy development within the wider panoramic views available. The principal sense of openness and scale within the landscape as seen from the summit of Tinto would remain.

Overall, there would be no greater than a low magnitude of change in the view from the summit of Tinto.

Significance of Effect

It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development would result in a **moderate/minor** level of effect on the view for visitors to the vantage point at Tinto Hill. This level of effect is not significant.

Viewpoint 9 –A70 east of Monksfoot Bridge

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is located just off the A70 at a junction bell mouth to the east of Monksfoot Bridge, opposite the entrance to the existing Galawhistle Wind Farm. The view comprises the immediate hillside of Shiel Hill, a simple pastoral hill with a steep incline from the valley bottom in which the A70 passes through. The hillside appears to have been engineered due to its uniform nature in comparison to the natural appearance of the surrounding landscape.

The view is relatively featureless. The road corridor, and its associated paraphernalia, passes to the immediate north, as does the site access track to Galawhistle Wind Farm, and beyond the near horizon formed by Shiel Hill there is a single Galawhistle turbine visible against the sky.

As the viewpoint is representative of views from the A70, the sensitivity of receptors is considered to be low.

Magnitude of Change

The ZTVs suggest that there would be theoretical visibility of all of the proposed turbines from this viewpoint location. However, the visualisation at Figure 6.40 shows that the hubs and blades of eight of the proposed turbines would be visible against the skyline with the remaining six turbines seen as blade tips only.

The Proposed Development is located almost perpendicular to the A70 at Monksfoot Bridge, at a distance of approximately 1.1 km, and thus receptors using the route would not experience direct views towards the proposed turbines at this particular location.

The proposed turbines would extend the horizontal array of turbines in the view, but they would be seen in the context of the existing Galawhistle turbine that is already visible above the horizon. The Galawhistle turbine is located closer to the road than the Proposed Development at this location and thus the proposed turbines, although taller, would appear of similar scale in the landscape.

Overall, there would be a high magnitude of change in the view.

Significance of Effect

There would be a moderate visual effect upon receptors using the A70 at Carmacoup which is significant due to the distance between the proposed turbines and the receptors using the route. The proposed turbines would appear prominent features in the view to the north as receptors travel between Muirkirk and Douglas.

Viewpoint 10 – Victory Park, Muirkirk

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is located on the western edge of Victory Park to allow for views beyond the immediate built form towards the site. The immediate view comprises the public open space with dwellings located on Glasgow Road, Park Avenue and Burns Avenue located immediately beyond. The varied yet simple distant horizon is formed by a number of hills including Hareshaw Hill, Parisholm Hill, and Urit Hill. The hills are covered with upland grassland and moorland vegetation. Woodland and plantation punctuate the mid slopes and dense deciduous woodland covers much of the valley bottom.

The existing turbines of the Galawhistle Wind Farm occupy the horizon and form notable vertical features in the view with further Galawhistle turbines are also seen slightly set down in the landscape beyond the horizon.

As the viewpoint is located within a public park, the receptors using the space are considered to be of high sensitivity to changes in the view.

Magnitude of Change

The Proposed Development would be located in the view north-eastwards from Victory Park, in the same part of the view as the existing Galawhistle Wind Farm. The proposed turbines would be located beyond the existing turbines and thus they would appear similar in scale to the Galawhistle turbines.

The Proposed Development would introduce further vertical features to the distant landscape, but they would not extend the horizontal array of turbines in the view as the turbine blade tips of T1, T3 and T4 would be barely noticeable. The Proposed Development would reinforce the existing nature of the distant view, with the closest turbine located some 9.5 km away.

Overall, there would be a medium magnitude of change in the view from Muirkirk Park.

Significance of Effect

There would be a moderate visual effect experienced by receptors at Muirkirk Park. The effect is not considered to be significant due to the distance of the receptors from the site and the context in which the Proposed Development will be seen in.

Viewpoint 11 – Cairn Kinney

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is located at the summit of Cairn Kinney (493m AOD), which is located part way between the A70 at Glespin and the A76 at Sanquhar. The view from the summit in a northerly direction towards the site comprises an undulating upland grassland landscape punctuated by large areas of commercial plantation.

The view is long reaching and panoramic, and in clear weather conditions views reach beyond Carluke to the north east, where the existing Black Law Wind Farm can be seen. The existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines are clearly seen in the near landscape, above the horizon formed by Common Hill. The existing Nutberry and Galawhistle turbines are also visible in the same part of the view as the site.

Receptors at the hill summit are considered to be of high sensitivity to changes in the view.

Magnitude of Change

The Proposed Development will be clearly seen from the summit of Cairn Kinney, alongside some of the ground level components of the Proposed Development, at a distance of approximately 8 km. The proposed turbines would appear well spaced in the view, located within the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension Wind Farm and thus not further extending the horizontal array of turbines. The proposed turbines will appear taller than the existing turbines located to either side of the Proposed Development, but they would not appear disproportionate to the overall scale of the landscape as seen from the summit of Cairn Kinney.

The proposed turbines would reinforce the presence of commercial wind energy in the landscape to the north of Cairn Kinney. There would be an overall medium magnitude of change in the view.

Significance of Effect

The Proposed Development will give rise to a moderate visual effect as experienced from the viewpoint. This effect is not considered to be significant due to distance from the receptor and the context in which the Proposed Development will be seen in the view.

Viewpoint 12 – East of Glespin (on A70)

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from the A70 to the east of Glespin. It should be noted that the viewpoint does not portray the view that would be gained from Glespin village itself. The ZTV demonstrates that the northern side of Glespin does not fall fully within the ZTV, with varying levels of theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines, and therefore this viewpoint has been chosen to demonstrate views gained on the outskirts of the settlement where open views towards the site are available.

This viewpoint is located to the east of Glespin, just east of Jeanfield Bridge, located on the minor road immediately adjacent to the A70. The viewpoint is located at a slightly elevated position overlooking the Douglas Water valley. Views extend past the main road of the A70, to rough pastures beyond. Scrubby vegetation sweeps through the valley floor. As the landform rises beyond the valley floor there is a band of mixed woodland, namely Windrow Wood, as well as uniform blocks of plantation.

Some human influences within the landscape are visible and the primary focus for motorists will be the A70 and associated signposts, a post and wire fence runs along the road side, while telegraph poles and wires cross the landscape. A few lone farmsteads can be seen in the distance and the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines and the existing Galawhistle turbines are visible above the horizon that forms the backdrop to the view to the north.

As this viewpoint is representative of views from a road, receptors using this road are considered to be of low sensitivity to changes in the view.

Magnitude of Change

From this viewpoint all of the proposed turbines would be visible above the ridgeline to the north. They will be seen in the same part of the view as the existing Galawhistle and Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines and their presence in the landscape would only marginally extend the horizontal array of turbines in the view. It is acknowledged that the proposed turbines would appear taller in the view than the existing turbines, but they would not appear disproportionately out of scale with the simple and large scale nature of the baseline landscape.

The proposed turbines would be seen at a distance of approximately 2.4 km and they would appear as prominent features in the oblique view from the road as receptors travel between Douglas and Glespin.

From this viewpoint location there will be a high magnitude of change in the view.

Significance of Effect

It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development would result in **moderate** level of effect on the views from this viewpoint and the visual amenity experienced by people travelling along the A70 at this point. This effect is considered to be significant.

Viewpoint 13 – Auchensaugh Hill

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from a high point located on Auchensaugh Hill, approximately 392 m AOD, to the south-east of Douglas. Views stretch across a gently undulating shoulder landscape within the uplands, which then falls into the Douglas Valley before rising again to Common Hill, which forms the backdrop to the view. The landscape expresses a relatively clear, monochrome form, composed mainly of rough grasslands.

A line of pylons and overhead wires cross the large scale landscape and fields are separated by post and wire fences. Views towards the village of Douglas are screened by Pagie Hill while the coniferous plantation of Townhead Wood combine to reduce the visibility in this direction. To the north-west, the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines are visible.

From this viewpoint location facing in an easterly direction it is possible to gain views of the B7078 and M74 as they pass through the landscape. A large row of pylons and overhead wires also cross through the landscape.

As this hill may be used for recreational activities and is accessed by a Wider Network path which forms part of the *South Lanarkshire Core Paths Plan* (Nov 2012), receptors at Auchensaugh Hill are therefore considered to be of high sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

The Proposed Development would be visible from Auchensaugh Hill at a distance of approximately 6 km. The proposed turbines will be seen between the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines and Galawhistle Wind Farm. The Proposed Development would also be seen in the same part of the landscape as the consented Cumberhead and Douglas West wind farms, as is discussed separately in cumulative scenario 1.

It is acknowledged that there will be a clearly perceptible difference in turbine size between the Proposed Development and the Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines from this location but, as illustrated in the photomontage presented within Volume 4b, the proposed turbines would respond well to the scale of the underlying landform, which is relatively simple and large scale, and the proposed turbines would not dominate the landscape at this location.

From this viewpoint on Auchensaugh Hill, there would be a medium magnitude of change in the view.

Significance of Effect

The Proposed Development would result in **moderate** level of effect on the views and visual amenity experienced by people visiting this location. This effect is considered to be significant.

Viewpoint 14 – Nether Wellwood (A70)

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is located on the A70 at Nether Wellwood looking generally north east towards Muirkirk. The road winds its way through a heavily modified landscape at this location. The land to the south of the road has been subject to open cast mining with bunding and former spoil heaps creating variation in the landform. An area of open water can be seen to the south of the road.

The route of the A70 is relatively well treed with belts and blocks of mixed and coniferous trees located along the roadside. This vegetation interrupts the overall visual experience from the road. Larger areas of coniferous plantation can be seen in the middle ground view. Man made features can be seen in the near view including an electricity substation and lines of pylons. The consented Cumberhead turbines would also be visible in the landscape, once constructed.

Longer distance views are also available, particularly to the south east. The land massifs of Cairn Table and Wardlaw Hill form the backdrop to the view. The outline of Common Hill is also visible beyond the block of trees in the near view.

As the viewpoint is located on a primary 'A' road, the sensitivity of receptors is considered to be low.

Magnitude of Change

The Proposed Development would be visible in the middle distance view beyond an existing coniferous woodland block at a distance of approximately 14.2 km. The turbine blades of up to six of the proposed turbines would be seen above the tree line. The proposed turbines would appear similar in scale to the consented Cumberhead turbines once constructed.

Overall, the addition of the Proposed Development to the view from the A70 at Nether Wellwood would give rise to no greater than a low magnitude of change.

Significance of Effect

Taking into consideration the low sensitive of the receptors using the A70, and the low magnitude of change in the view, there would be no greater than a moderate/minor visual effect which is not significant.

Viewpoint 15 – Cairn Table

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

The viewpoint is located at the summit of Cairn Table, which is 594m AOD. At the summit is a trig point, a cairn, a war memorial (appearance of an intact stone cairn) and a 360 degree compass viewshed to enable receptors to orientate themselves when at the summit.

Cairn Table is accessed via a footpath that leaves Muirkirk and travels in a southerly direction and thus whilst walking to the summit the site is located directly beyond the receptor. From the summit there are panoramic and far reaching views in all directions, and the landscape in which the site is located forms a small part of the overall view available.

The view in the direction towards the site would be experienced by receptors at the summit and by those walking back in a northerly direction to the car park at Muirkirk. The view comprises an undulating landscape in which wind energy development is already a feature. The upland landform of Common Hill forms the middle ground view with long distance views experienced as far as the Pentland Hills.

As the summit of Cairn Table features a compass viewshed to assist in experiencing the view, the sensitivity of receptors is considered to be very high.

Magnitude of Change

The Proposed Development would be seen in the middle distance view from the summit of Cairn Table. A number of the turbines would be seen against the skyline, with those located on slightly lower ground seen back clothed by the landform beyond.

It is acknowledged that there would be a clearly perceptible difference in scale of turbines in the view with the proposed turbines seen beyond the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, and the proposed turbines would undoubtedly be prominent. However, there are already several wind farms visible in this view from Cairn Table, all of which are of various heights, and whilst the proposed turbines would further contribute to the existing varying nature of wind energy development in the middle distance, including the Galawhistle and Nutberry turbines, this forms only part of a much wider panoramic view from this location, which will also include the consented Kennoxhead and Penbreck turbines in the foreground of the views towards the east and south-east.

Overall, there would be a medium magnitude of change in the view experienced by receptors looking north from the summit of Cairn Table.

Significance of Effect

Considering the very high sensitivity of receptors at the viewpoint location, and the medium magnitude of change in the view, there would be a moderate effect upon visual amenity as experienced at the summit of Cairn Table. This effect is not however considered to be significant due to the distance of the Proposed Development from the viewpoint location, and the context in which the proposed turbines are seen within.

Viewpoint 16 – Douglas

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

This viewpoint is representative of the views from residential receptors located on the north-western edge of Douglas located on Crabtree Street. The photograph was taken at a publicly accessible location in the gateway to the playing fields to allow for a worst case open aspect view towards the site. In reality, the view from the properties is likely to be interrupted by vegetation in the immediate view.

Views extend in a north-westerly and westerly direction across well maintained playing fields beyond the small club house located in the foreground of the view. The grassy banks of the Douglas Water can be seen cutting through the valley bottom with the land on the other side of the bank gently rising up to Long Plantation. Blocks of deciduous woodland break up the rough grazing grassland. Long Plantation runs up and along the opposing valley hillside and extends along most of the sky line. The existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines and the Hazelside Farm turbine are visible to the west, as is the moorland in which they are located.

As this viewpoint is representative of the views from residential properties, the receptors are considered to be of high sensitivity to change in the view.

Magnitude of Change

The ZTV suggests that up to all of the proposed turbines would be visible from this viewpoint. In reality, views of the turbines would be more restricted than is suggested. The nearest proposed turbine is T9 at approximately 3.5 km to the west.

As can be seen in the visualisation at Figure 6.47, a number of the proposed turbines towers would be screened by the landform of Common Hill and three of the turbines would be only be visible as moving blade tips above the horizon. The vegetation in the immediate view would also interrupt views of three of the turbines at this particular location.

The turbines that are visible will break the skyline and will appear taller than the existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines, but once the consented Douglas West turbines are constructed, the proposed turbines would not appear out of scale in the landscape as the Douglas West turbines would appear much more prominent in the view, as is discussed in cumulative scenario 1.

From this viewpoint location there would be a medium magnitude of change to the view.

Significance of Effect

There would be a **moderate** level of effect on the views from this viewpoint which is considered to be significant. However, the Proposed Development would be clearly visually separated from the village and the intervening valley landscape of the Douglas Water and this view is only representative of a small area within Douglas.

Viewpoint 17 – Junction of A70 and Station Road, Douglas

Nature and Sensitivity of the Baseline View

The viewpoint is located on Station Road, Douglas, close to the junction with the A70. The existing view looks over the Douglas Water valley towards Common Hill and the site of the original Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm. The valley bottom comprises pastoral land grazed by both cattle and sheep. The farmsteads of Scrogton and Scrogtonhead are seen on the lower mid slopes of the valley. Larger areas of deciduous and mixed woodland also occupy the mid valley slopes, including Windrow Wood which has a strong visual presence, with coniferous plantation occupying the upper slopes alongside rough grassland and moorland.

The viewpoint is representative of views of receptors using the A70 on the south western edge of Douglas, and Station Road, a minor road leading to a number of farmsteads at Douglas West. It has been selected following a meeting with the Scottish Government, SNH, and SLC. As the view is also representative of a small number of residential receptors on the outskirts of Douglas, as well as receptors using a minor road, the sensitivity of receptors is considered to be high.

Magnitude of Change

The Proposed Development would be seen above the horizon at a distance of approximately 3.2 km. It would form a visually prominent feature in the landscape as one travels north westerly along Station Road, seen in the direct view beyond the valley. In views from the A70 the Proposed Development would be seen in the slightly oblique angle of view when travelling out of Douglas towards Glespin. When travelling towards Douglas, the proposed turbines would be located behind the receptor at the point of the junction with Station Road.

The visualisation at Figure 6.48 shows the likely appearance of the Proposed Development in the context of the valley. The proposed turbines would be prominent features in the view and they would be seen directly alongside the smaller, existing Hagshaw Hill Extension turbines. In addition, when constructed, the Douglas West turbines will also appear as a notable feature in the angle of view towards the site. As considered separately in cumulative scenario 1, in the context of these turbines which would appear larger in the view, the effect of the addition of the Proposed Development, would be reduced.

Although the proposed turbines would appear prominent, they would not dominate the landscape. They would appear in the context of a relatively simple landscape, associated with the upland moorland rather than the lower lying valley.

Overall, there would be a medium to high magnitude of change in the view from the junction of Station Road and the A70.

Significance of Effects

There would be moderate visual effects upon receptors using Station Road and nearby residential receptors. The effect would be significant. In terms of receptors using the A70, there would be a moderate/minor visual effect which is not considered to be significant.

Summary of Effects

Table A6.3.1 - Summary of Operational Effects on Assessment Viewpoints

Name/Receptor	OS Grid Ref	Distance to nearest turbine	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect	Significance
1. Braehead, Coalburn	281527, 634520	3778m (T14)	High	Medium	Moderate	Significant
2. M74 Overbridge	284424, 635419	6339m (T14)	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Significant
3. Monument at Douglas Castle	284112, 631743	4380m (T6)	High	Medium	Moderate	Significant
4. B7078 south of Lesmahagow	283120, 637377	7049m (T14)	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Significant
5. A70 Rigside	287708, 635192	9017m (T14)	High	Medium	Moderate	Significant
6. Black Hill	283198, 643552	12794m (T14)	High	Medium to Low	Moderate to Moderate/Minor	Not Significant
7. Hyndford Bridge	291488, 641453	15659m (T14)	High	Low to Medium	Moderate/Minor to Moderate	Not Significant
8. Tinto Hill	295316, 634372	15861m (T6)	Very High	Low	Moderate/Minor	Not Significant
9. A70 east of Monksfoot Bridge	278760, 628789	1172m (T1)	Medium	High	Moderate	Significant

Name/Receptor	OS Grid Ref	Distance to nearest turbine	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect	Significance
10. Victory Park, Muirkirk	269388, 627320	9625m (T1)	High	Medium	Moderate	Not Significant
11. Cairn Kinney	278468, 621429	8136m (T1)	High	Medium	Moderate	Not Significant
12. East of Glespin (on A70)	282035, 628719	2463m (T3)	Medium	High	Moderate	Significant
13. Auchensaugh Hill	285330, 627198	6091m (T3)	High	Medium	Moderate	Significant
14. Nether Wellwood (A70)	264995, 625824	14252m (T1)	Medium	Low	Moderate/Minor	Not Significant
15. Cairn Table	272410, 624235	8279m (T1)	High	Medium	Moderate	Not Significant
16. Douglas	283575, 631020	3654m (T6)	High	Medium	Moderate	Significant
17. Junction of A70 and Station Road, Douglas	283297, 630323	3284m (T6)	High	Medium to High	Moderate	Significant