# Contents

# 7.0 ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the likely significant effects on Cultural Heritage associated with the construction and operation of the proposed development.

The cultural heritage of an area comprises archaeological sites, historic buildings, Inventoried Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Inventoried Battlefields and other historic environment features (collectively known as 'cultural heritage assets'). It also includes features or places which have the capacity to provide information about past human activity, or which have cultural heritage significance due to associations with literary or artistic work, folklore or historic events. The setting of an asset within the wider landscape may contribute to the understanding and appreciation of the asset, and thereby the experience of it and its cultural heritage significance.

The specific objectives of the chapter are to:

- describe the current baseline;
- describe the assessment methodology and significance criteria used in completing the impact assessment;
- describe the potential effects, including direct, indirect, settings, and cumulative effects;
- describe the mitigation measures proposed to address the likely significant effects; and
- assess the residual effects remaining following the implementation of mitigation measures.

The assessment has been carried out by Erin Ashby PCIfA, Project Archaeological Consultant and Beth Gray ACIfA, Associate Consultant of SLR Consulting Ltd. All contributors to this chapter are members of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and have adhered to the relevant policy and guidance.

The chapter is supported by:

- **Technical Appendix 7.1: Cultural Heritage Gazetteer**
- **Technical Appendix 7.2: Cultural Heritage Screening Report**
- **Technical Appendix 7.3: Cultural Heritage Swept Path Analysis Historic Environment Assessment**

**Figures 7.1 – 7.2** are referenced in the text where relevant.

## 7.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

### 7.2.1 Legislation

Relevant legislation includes:

- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979;
- Scottish Statutory Instrument No. 101 The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017; The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997; and
- The Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011 (this includes amendments to the above).

### 7.2.2 Planning Policy

Planning policies relevant to archaeology and cultural heritage are listed below. Further information regarding planning policy is provided in **Chapter 4: Climate Change, Renewable Energy and**

**Planning Policy**, and in **Chapter 5: Approach to EIA and Consultation.** The **Planning Statement** addresses the planning policy position in full and should be referred to.

Relevant planning policy includes:

- National Planning Framework (NPF) 4, Adopted 2023 (Scottish Government);
- Our Past, Our Future: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (Scottish Government, 2023);
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS 2019);
- Historic Environment Circular 1 (Historic Environment Scotland 2019); and
- Moray Local Development Plan 2020.

### 7.2.3 Guidance and Standards

Historic Environment Scotland (HES), and the professional archaeological body, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). These publications are:

- Planning Advice Note Planning and Archaeology PAN 2/2011;
- HES's Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (2020);
- HES's Designation, Policy and Selection Guidance (2019);
- Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook (Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot) and HES 2019);
- CIfA's Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (CIfA 2014a, updated 2017), which gives best practice for the execution of desk-based assessment;
- A Guide to Climate Change Impact: On Scotland's Historic Environment (2019); and
- CIfA's Code of Conduct (CIfA 2022).

## 7.3 Scope and Consultation

### 7.3.1 Consultation

In undertaking the assessment, consideration has been given to the scoping responses and other consultation undertaken as detailed in **Table 7-1**.

**Table 7-1: Consultation with Stakeholders**

| Consultee and Date | Scoping/Other Consultation | Issue Raised | Response/Action |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS) – 20th January 2022** | Scoping | Historic Environment Record (HER) data needs to be purchased in order to make sure it is up to date and includes all undesignated sites.<br>Due to potential for extensive visibility beyond 5km, a 10km study area should be considered.<br>For regionally significant undesignated heritage assets, they should be assessed at a similar level to designated assets.<br>The transport route should be subject to assessment for direct impact on any heritage assets that may be impacted | HER data was purchased from ACAS on the 30/03/2022.<br>Regionally significant assets were assessed at the same level as designated assets of the same value within the assessment report.<br>Direct impacts caused by the transport route will be considered within the EIA where appropriate. |

| Consultee and Date | Scoping/Other Consultation | Issue Raised | Response/Action |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | by any proposed changes to the highway.<br>Durn Hill hillfort (HER NJ56SE0003) should be included within the cultural heritage assessment. | Durn Hill hillfort was highlighted for consideration within the EIA due to it being scheduled on 23/03/2022.<br>A 10km study area was adopted. |
| **Historic Environment Scotland (HES) – 31st January 2022** | Scoping | HES raised that there was potential for extensive visibility beyond 5km, a 10km study area was suggested.<br>Settings assessments should include potential impacts on views both towards and from assets that contribute to their setting. The potential cumulative impact of the development should be assessed. An assessment report should be produced addressing potential impacts on all Category A Listed Buildings out to 10km, which should address the reason for scoping out any assets.<br>Significant concern was raised for Letterfourie House (LB15541), a wireline was requested as an initial starting point.<br>The following assets should be included in the cultural heritage assessment:<br>• Gordon Castle (Bog of Gight) GDL (GDL00198)<br>• Cullen House GDL (GDL00121)<br>• St John's Church and Tower of Deskford (SM90095)<br>• Ha' Hillock, motte (SM11046)<br>• Inaltry, castle 30m NNW of (SM11178)<br>• Davie's Castle, fort (SM11042) | A 10km study area was adopted at the request of HES and ACAS.<br>Cumulative impact will be addressed within the EIA report.<br>The assessment report considered the specified assets, see **Technical Appendix 7.2**: **Cultural Heritage Screening Report**. |
| **Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service – 30th May 2022** | Consultation | ACAS are content with extended 10km study area and revised assessment scope.<br>A walkover is expected to be undertaken of the proposed turbine sites as part of the assessment<br>A cultural heritage assessment of the transport route was requested, due to the potential impact from any road widening or bridge realignment required to facilitate haulage of the turbines. | A walkover was undertaken on 4th and 5th of July 2022 to inform the assessment.<br>A cultural heritage appraisal for the transport route can be found in **Technical Appendix 7.3: Cultural Heritage Swept Path Analysis Historic Environment Assessment**. |
| **Historic Environment Scotland – 7th June 2022** | Consultation | Proposals are likely to give rise to significance adverse impacts on the setting of Letterfourie House and Fountains (LB15541), which a likely to | Mitigation through design has been undertaken with respect to Letterfourie House. This is set out |

| Consultee and Date | Scoping/Other Consultation | Issue Raised | Response/Action |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | be of a severity that would raise issues in the national interest and cause HES to object to the proposals in their current form<br>As such, further mitigation by design was recommended to reduce and avoid these impacts. This may include the removal or relocation of Turbines 13 and 14 to reduce impacts on setting.<br>HES would like visualisations (e.g., photographs) from both the inside and outside of LB15541), specifically from principal rooms and the gardens and lawns.<br>HES is satisfied with a 10km study area and is broadly content with the list of heritage assets within the Heritage Appraisal Table (Appendix 7.2)<br>HES would like the following assets included in the EIA report for impact assessments:<br>• St John's Church and Tower of Deskford (SM90095)<br>• Ha' Hillock, motte (SM11046)<br>• Inaltry, castle 30m NNW of (SM11178)<br>• Davie's Castle, fort (SM11042) | within **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design Alternatives.**<br>It was not possible to secure permission from the owners to photograph from within the property.<br>Assets HES has requested have been assessed within **Technical Appendix 7.2: Cultural Heritage Screening Report**. and within the main body of this chapter. |

### 7.3.2 Effects Assessed in Full

The following effects have been assessed in full:

- direct effects on all heritage assets within the Site;
- significant effects on the setting which contribute to the cultural significance of designated heritage assets of national importance within the study areas; and
- assets agreed with HES as set out in consultation within **Table 7-7**.

### 7.3.3 Effects Scoped Out

The following effects have been scoped out:

- heritage assets more than 10km from the proposed development unless identified as being particularly sensitive to distant landscape change;
- heritage assets for which there is clear justification for their being scoped out, as outlined in **Technical Appendix 7.2: Cultural Heritage Screening Report**; and
- heritage assets within the study area shown by the ZTV not to be intervisible with the proposed development, and where there is no identified viewpoint of the heritage assets which contributes to our understanding, appreciation and experience of the same within the ZTV.

# 7.4 Approach and Methodology

## 7.4.1 Baseline Characterisation

### 7.4.1.1 Study Area

There is no guidance from HES that defines a required study area for the archaeological and cultural heritage assessment of wind farms. Two study areas are therefore proposed on the grounds of professional experience:

- a 1km radius study area, as measured from (but including) the Site boundary, to inform the predictive modelling of archaeological potential and potential for direct impact (**Figure 7.2**); and
- a 10km radius study area, as measured from the Site boundary, comprising land beyond the Site within which the proposed wind turbines might theoretically be visible from, or within views of, nationally important designated assets (**Figure 7.1**). The 10km radius has been selected at the request of Consultees (**Table 7-1**).

### 7.4.1.2 Information and Data Sources

**Table 7-2** sets out the main data sources used in this study.

**Table 7-2: Historic Environment Data Sources**

| Subject | Source | Location |
|---|---|---|
| Designated heritage assets (except conservation areas) | Historic Environment Scotland | HES digital data download |
| Conservation areas | Aberdeenshire Archaeological Service on behalf of Moray Council | HES digital data download |
| Non-Designated heritage assets | The database of Historic Environment Scotland (HES), 'Canmore' | Digital data supplied as download |
| Non-Designated heritage assets | Historic Environment Record (HER) data held by ACAS on behalf of Moray Council | Digital data supplied as download |
| Historic maps | National Library of Scotland | Online |
| Aerial photography | HES | HES database Canmore and National Collection of Aerial Photograph (NCAP) (online) |
| Historic Land-Use Assessment | HES | On-line |
| Historic environment | Unpublished reports | Various |
| | Published synthetic works | Various |
| Current OS maps | Ordnance Survey | Licence acquired for project |
| Condition of recorded heritage assets within proposed development | Field inspection | Inspected by SLR Consulting on the 4th and 5th of July 2022. |
| Setting of heritage assets | Field inspection within study areas and other specified assets from areas of public access. | Inspected by SLR Consulting on the 10th of October 2022. |

Non-designated heritage assets within the 1km Study Area are numbered in the following text as set out in the gazetteer in **Technical Appendix 7.1: Gazetteer of Heritage Assets**. As this gazetteer is composed of records from a number of sources these have been combined into a single sequence with each assigned an SLR Number. References to other coding systems, e.g. Canmore, are also included in **Technical Appendix 7.1**. The designated assets are listed separately within this Chapter, identified by the number by which they are designated on the relevant statutory register or index.

Non-designated and designated heritage assets assessed are mapped in **Figure 7.1** and **Figure 7.2**.

#### 7.4.1.3 Desk Study / Field Survey

A targeted walkover survey was carried out on the 4th and 5th of July 2022. Turbine locations were visited to confirm the presence/absence of unknown archaeological remains and known heritage assets along the main trackways within the Site boundary were visited to confirm absence/ presence. Out of the Turbine locations, T8 and T12 were inaccessible due to heavy forestry, felled trees, or ongoing works at the other locations.

Out of the visited heritage assets, only six assets were visible (SLR07, SLR118, SLR146, SLR151, SLR175, SLR224). The other assets visited were not identified during the field survey due to thick forestry either obscuring or having removed the asset. All assets recorded on the HER within the Site were visited as listed within **Technical Appendix 7.1: Site Gazetteer**. There were no new or unknown heritage assets recorded on the Site.

### 7.4.2 Assessment Methods

Impacts have the potential to be caused by the proposed development where it changes the baseline condition of either the asset itself or its setting; it being noted that change does not necessarily result in an impact.

In accordance with EIA Regulations, this assessment will identify impacts and effects as either direct or indirect, adverse or beneficial, and short-term, long-term or permanent. The definition of impact is described below:

- Direct (physical) impacts: occur where the physical fabric of the asset is removed or damaged, or where it is preserved or conserved, as a direct result of the proposal. Such impacts are most likely to occur during the construction phase and are most likely to be permanent.
- Indirect (physical) impacts: occur where the fabric of an asset, or buried archaeological remains, is removed or damaged, or where it is preserved or conserved, as an indirect result of the proposal, even though the asset may lie some distance from the proposal. Such impacts are most likely to occur during the construction phase and are most likely to be permanent.
- Setting impacts: result from the proposal causing change within the setting of a heritage asset that affects its cultural significance or the way in which it is understood, appreciated, and experienced. Such impacts are generally, but not exclusively, visual, occurring directly as a result of the appearance of the proposal in the surroundings of the asset. Setting impacts may also relate to other senses or factors, such as noise, odour or emissions, or historical relationships that do not relate entirely to intervisibility, such as historic patterns of land-use and related historic features. Such impacts may occur at any stage of a proposal's lifespan and may be permanent, reversible, or temporary.
- Cumulative impacts: can relate to the physical fabric or setting of assets. They may arise as a result of impact interactions, either of different impacts of the proposal itself, or additive impacts resulting from incremental changes caused by the proposal together with other projects already in the planning system or allocated in a Local Development Plan.

Settings impacts on the cultural heritage significance of heritage assets will be identified and assessed with reference to Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (HES 2020) and the guidance set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook (SNH (Naturescot) and HES 2019). Assessment will be conducted in the following stages:

- initial consideration of intervisibility and other factors leading to the identification of potentially affected assets;
- assessment of the cultural heritage significance of potentially affected assets;
- assessment of the contribution of the setting to the cultural heritage significance of those assets;
- assessment of the magnitude of impact of the proposed development on the contribution of settings to the cultural significance of assets (by causing change within those settings); and
- prediction of the significance of the effect.

Assessment will be undertaken separately for direct, indirect, settings and cumulative impact. The magnitude of both beneficial and adverse impact will be assessed according to scale of impact, from high to neutral/none.

#### 7.4.2.1 Cultural Heritage Significance

The cultural significance of undesignated heritage assets will be assessed by a consideration of their intrinsic, contextual, and associative characteristic as defined in Annex 1 of Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS 2019). In relation to these assets, this assessment will focus upon an assessment of the assets' inherent capability to contribute to our understanding of the past; the character of their structural, decorative and field characteristics as determined from the HER and Canmore records and / or site visits; the contribution of an asset to their class of monument, or the diminution of that class should an asset be lost; the contribution of the assets' setting to its signficance; and how a site relates to people, practices, events, and/or historical or social movements. Assessments of significance recorded within the HER will be taken into account where available.

**Table 7-3** shows the potential levels of heritage significance of an asset related to designation, status and grading, and where non-designated, to a scale of Highest to Negligible importance. This table will act as an aid to consistency in the exercise of professional judgement and provides a degree of transparency for others in evaluating the conclusions that could be reached during assessment.

**Table 7-3: Cultural Heritage Significance**

| Cultural Heritage Significance | Explanation |
|---|---|
| Highest | Designated assets of international importance, including:<br>• World Heritage Sites. |
| High | Designated assets of national importance, including:<br>• Scheduled Monuments;<br>• Category A Listed Buildings;<br>• Gardens and Designed Landscapes included on the national inventory; and<br>• Designated Battlefields. |
| Medium | Designated assets of regional importance, including:<br>• Category B Listed Buildings;<br>• Some Conservation Areas; and<br>• Non-designated assets of equivalent significance. |

| Cultural Heritage Significance | Explanation |
|---|---|
| Low | Assets of local importance, including:<br>• Category C Listed Buildings;<br>• Some Conservation Areas; and<br>• Non-designated assets of equivalent significance. |
| None | Features that do not retain any cultural heritage significance. |
| Unknown | Assets of indeterminable significance. |

### 7.4.2.2 Magnitude of Impact

Determining the magnitude of any likely impacts requires consideration of the nature of activities proposed during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development.

The changes could potentially include physical direct change (e.g. ground disturbance), indirect physical change, and change to the setting of the asset (e.g. visible change, noise, vibration, traffic movements affecting the setting of the asset). Impacts may be beneficial or adverse, and may be short term, long term or permanent. Magnitude of impact will be assessed with reference to the criteria set out in **Table 7-4.**

**Table 7-4: Magnitude of Impact**

| Magnitude of Impact | Explanatory Criteria |
|---|---|
| High Beneficial | The proposed development would considerably enhance the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it. |
| Medium Beneficial | The proposed development would enhance to a clearly discernible extent the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it. |
| Low Beneficial | The proposed development would enhance to a minor extent the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability understand, appreciate and experience it. |
| Very Low Beneficial | The proposed development would enhance to a very minor extent the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability understand, appreciate and experience it. |
| Neutral/None | The proposed development would not affect or would have harmful and enhancing effects of equal magnitude on the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability understand, appreciate and experience it. |
| Very Low Adverse | The proposed development would erode to a very minor extent the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability understand, appreciate and experience it. |
| Low Adverse | The proposed development would erode to a minor extent the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability understand, appreciate and experience it |
| Medium Adverse | The proposed development would erode to a clearly discernible extent the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it. |
| High Adverse | The proposed development would considerably erode the cultural significance of the affected asset, or the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it. |

#### 7.4.2.3 Significance of Effect

The significance criteria are presented in **Table 7-5**. **Table 7-6** provides a matrix that relates the heritage significance of the asset to the magnitude of impact on its significance (incorporating contribution from setting where relevant), to establish the likely overall significance of effect. This assessment will be undertaken separately for direct, indirect and settings effects, the latter being principally concerned with effects through development within the setting of heritage assets. Those assets which the matrix scores as Major or Moderate will be considered as receiving a significant effect.

**Table 7-5: Significance Criteria**

| Significance | Description |
|---|---|
| Major | Severe harm or enhancement such as total loss of significance or integrity of the setting, or exceptional improvement by the development on the cultural significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the asset in its setting. |
| Moderate | Harm or enhancement such as the introduction or removal to the baseline of an element that would affect to a clearly discernible extent the cultural significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting. |
| Slight | To a minor extent the development would introduce change to the baseline that would harm or enhance the cultural significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting. |
| Very Slight | To a barely discernible extent the development would introduce change from the baseline that would harm or enhance the cultural significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting. |
| Negligible | The development would not affect or would have harmful and enhancing effects of equal magnitude, on the cultural significance of the affected asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting. |
| Neutral/Nil | The development have would no effect on the cultural significance of the affected asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting. |



**Table 7-6: Significance of Effect**

| Magnitude of Impact | Heritage Significance (excluding negligible and nil) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Highest | High | Medium | Low |
| High beneficial | Major | Major | Moderate | Slight |
| Medium beneficial | Major | Moderate | Slight | Very slight |
| Low beneficial | Moderate | Slight | Very slight | Very slight |
| Very low beneficial | Slight | Very slight | Negligible | Negligible |
| Neutral/None | Neutral/Nil | Neutral/Nil | Neutral/Nil | Neutral/Nil |
| Very low adverse | Slight | Very slight | Negligible | Negligible |
| Low adverse | Moderate | Slight | Very slight | Very slight |
| Medium adverse | Major | Moderate | Slight | Very slight |
| High adverse | Major | Major | Moderate | Slight |

Assessment of visual impact has been assisted by a ZTV calculation, prepared principally for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and presented in **Figure 7.1**. The ZTV calculation methodology is set out in detail in **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**, but in summary it maps the predicted degree of visibility of the proposed development from all points within a study area around the site, as would be seen from an observer's eye level two metres above the ground. The ZTV model presented in **Figure 7.1** is based on the maximum height of the blade tips of the proposed Development. The ZTV model is used to inform the potential impacts on the setting of designated assets within the Study Area.

The ZTV is theoretical because it is based on landform only and does not take into account the screening or filtering effects of vegetation, buildings or other surface features, and in that respect is likely to provide an over-estimate of the actual visibility.

Assets that fall outwith the ZTV are excluded from any further assessment, with the exception of where a view is identified which includes the heritage asset and the proposed wind turbines, and that view may enable appreciation of the assets' heritage significance.

### 7.4.3 Mitigation

Where adverse effects on cultural heritage are identified, measures to prevent, reduce, and / or where possible offset these effects, will be proposed. Mitigation measures may be applied in respect of direct, indirect and settings impacts.

Direct and Indirect Impact mitigations may include:

- the micro-siting of proposed development infrastructure away from sensitive locations;
- the fencing off or marking out of heritage assets or features in proximity to construction activity in order to avoid disturbance where possible;
- a programme of archaeological work where required, such as an archaeological watching brief during construction activities in or in proximity to areas of particular concern, or excavation and recording where damage is unavoidable;
- production and compliance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP);or
- a working protocol to be implemented should unrecorded archaeological features be discovered.

Mitigation to limit impacts upon an assets setting has been embedded into the design of the proposed development, as detailed in **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design Evolution**. Mitigation to impacts upon an asset's setting may include:

- alteration of turbine layout;
- reduction of turbine height; and
- turbine colour.

### 7.4.4 Residual Effects

A statement of the residual effects has been given following consideration of any further site-specific mitigation measures, where these have been identified.

### 7.4.5 Cumulative Effects

A cumulative effect is considered to occur when there is a combination of:

- An above Slight effect on an asset or group of assets due to changes which would be caused by the main development under assessment; and
- an effect on the same asset or groups of assets which would be caused by another development or developments.

Consideration of the other developments will be limited to:

- live wind farm applications that have a decision pending; and
- wind farm applications which have been granted permission but not yet constructed.

Effects from operational wind farms would be included in the baseline. Cumulative effects would be addressed in two stages:

- assess the combined effect of the developments including the proposed development; and
- assess the degree to which the proposed development contributes to the combined effects from the other wind farm developments.

A cumulative assessment is presented in **Section 7.7**.

### 7.4.6 Statement of Significance

The cultural heritage assessment concludes with a Statement of Significance summarising the predicted significance of the effects arising from the proposed Development. Effects that are considered significant in EIA terms are those that are assessed to be moderate or substantial, in accordance with the suggestion contained in current guidance HES and SNH (2018) Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook, Section C, Page 75.

### 7.4.7 Assumptions, Limitations and Confidence

The assessment is based on the sources outlined in References and, therefore, shares the same range of limitations in terms of comprehensiveness and completeness of those sources.

During the Site visit carried out on the 4th and 5th of July 2022, two proposed turbine locations were inaccessible, T8 and T12, due to their location within commercial forestry. The closest accessible location was visited and no unrecorded heritage assets were identified.

HES requested that photomontages be taken from inside Letterfourie House (**LB15541**). Due to the inaccessibility of the building being derelict and the owners of the property being unresponsive to correspondence, it was not possible to access the internal property. As such, a location to the south of the property has been selected. This is considered representative of the requested view.

# 7.5 Environmental Baseline and Potential Sources of Impact

## 7.5.1 Current Baseline

### 7.5.1.1 Introduction

A full description of the site and environs is given in **Chapter 3: Site Description and Design Evolution**. All heritage assets within the Site and 1km of this area are shown on **Figure 7.2**. Designated cultural heritage assets within the study areas are shown in relation to the ZTV on **Figure 7.1.**

All recorded non-designated heritage assets within the Site and 1km of the Site are listed in the gazetteer that is contained within **Technical Appendix 7.1**. Where designated assets are tabulated in this Chapter they are identified by the index number (i.e., Scheduled Monuments) or reference number (i.e. Listed Buildings) under which they are registered by HES.

### 7.5.1.2 Nationally Designated Heritage Assets

There are no designated cultural heritage assets within the Site or 1km of the Site. There is one regionally significant asset recorded within the Historic Environment Record within the site, comprising the remains of a cairn (NJ45NW00001) located c.0.8km north-east of the proposed location of Turbine 1.

There are 65 nationally significant designated heritage assets within 10km of the Site boundary, comprising 20 Scheduled Monuments, 43 Category A Listed Buildings, and 2 Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes. In addition, there are 41 Category B Listed Buildings and 3 Conservation Areas within 5km of the Site boundary. As per correspondence with HES and ACAS on the 30/05/2022, it was agreed through a heritage appraisal (**Technical Appendix 7.2**) that the assets to be considered for further assessment in regards to impacts on their setting are as stated in **Table 7-7**.

**Table 7.7: Assets assessed as agreed with Statutory Consultees**

| Reference | Name | Type | Distance to Closest Turbine in km |
|---|---|---|---|
| SM11042 | Davie's Castle | Scheduled Monument | 5.6 |
| SM90095 | St John's Church and Tower of Deskford, Deskford | Scheduled Monument | 4.3 |
| SM11046 | Ha' Hillock, motte | Scheduled Monument | 5.1 |
| SM11178 | Inaltry, castle 30m NNW of | Scheduled Monument | 5.9 |
| SM13748 | Durn Hill | Scheduled Monument | 10.8 |
| LB15541 | Letterfourie House and Fountains | Category A Listed Building | 3.4 |
| LB15542 | Craigmin Bridge, Letterfourie House (Assessed as part of LB15541) | Category A Listed Building | 3.4 |
| LB15544 | Home Farm and Granary, Letterfourie House (Assessed as part of LB15541) | Category B Listed Building | 3.6 |
| LB15545 | Walled Garden and Garden Cottage, | Category B Listed Building | 3.0 |

| Reference | Name | Type | Distance to Closest Turbine in km |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Letterfourie House (Assessed as part of LB15541) | | |
| LB2209, LB2212, LB2210 | Old Church of St John, burial ground excluding scheduled monument SM90095, Kirkton of Deskford, St John's Church Deskford, and Muckle Hoose, Deskford. | Category A Listed Building and two Category B Listed Buildings | 4.3 |
| GDL00198 | Gordon Castle | Garden and Designed Landscape (including associated designated heritage assets) | 4.7 |
| GDL00121 | Cullen House | Garden and Designed Landscape (including associated designated heritage assets) | 6.4 |
| CA198 | Berryhillock | Conservation Area (and associated designated heritage assets) | 3.3 |
| NJ46SW0001 | Meiklehill | Non-Designated Heritage Asset Of Regional Importance | 3.0 |
| NJ45NW0001 | Tor Sliasg | Non-Designated Heritage Asset Of Regional Importance | 0.8 |

All other relevant assets within 10km were included in the appraisal (**Technical Appendix 7-2**), with their reason for being scoped out of further assessment being stated accordingly.

#### 7.5.1.3 Known Cultural Heritage Assets within the Site

**Prehistoric and Roman**

There is one recorded prehistoric asset within the Site boundary. The remains of a cairn (**SLR07**) are located approximately 0.6km north-east of Turbine 3, close to the crest of Tor Sliasg. The Cairn, a regionally important heritage asset, is described as being partially mutilated with the centre quarried away and rubbish dumped inside.

There are three references to prehistoric activity within 1km of the Site. Two burnt mounds, a fire pit, two small pits and a potential paleochannel were uncovered during a watching brief (**SLR01**), approximately 1km west of Turbine 2 and 0.25km west of the Site boundary. There are the remains of a stone circle (**SLR03**), approximately 0.8km north of the Site boundary. There is only one stone remaining, with the rest having been removed in 1867. A rectangular cropmark, associated with possible pits and a potential hut stance, (**SLR02**) is located approximately 500m north of the proposed Site boundary.

There are no Roman remains within the Site or within 1km of the Site. Such remains are rare and are not likely to occur within the vicinity of the proposals.

**Medieval**

There are no recorded medieval heritage assets within the Site boundary. There is one recorded medieval heritage asset within 1km of the Site, a documentary record of the site of a former chapel (**SLR08**) approximately 0.95km east of the Site boundary. There are no known archaeological

remains associated with the chapel, however, 19th Century farming activity was noted 80m south-east during a watching brief.

**Post-medieval**

There are 90 recorded heritage assets within the Site boundary.

Within the Site boundary, 32 of these assets are recorded as Documentary Records. These have been taken from historic mapping or other resources and there are no upstanding remains. These assets comprise the site of a cairn (**SLR81**), a croft and enclosure (**SLR95**), two farmsteads (**SLR101**, **SLR212**), 21 sites of boundary stones[1], and the location of seven wells[2].

Within the Site boundary, there are 21 records categorised as earthworks. These records include a mill dam and lade (**SLR26**), eight hollow ways/trackways[3], six areas of peat cutting[4], and six areas of quarrying[5].

Within the Site boundary, there are 37 records categorised as standing structures. Out of these records, 16 are boundary cairns or stones[6], an area of clearance remains (**SLR35**), an enclosure (**SLR98**), 11 farmsteads[7], three kilns (**SLR12**, **SLR159**, **SLR238**), four wells (**SLR131**, **SLR40**, **SLR102**, **SLR241**), and a trackway (**SLR151**).

The recorded post-medieval assets are primarily agricultural in nature, demonstrating the extensive exploitation of the land within this period. The evidence suggests a high level of post-medieval activity within the Site.

Within 1km of the Site boundary, there are 151 recorded post-medieval heritage assets. Of these heritage assets, 65 are documentary records referencing assets with no surviving upstanding remains, four are recorded areas of earthworks, and 81 are recorded standing structures. The majority of these records are agricultural and domestic in nature, and reflect the post-medieval assets within the Site boundary. The post-medieval HER records from outwith the Site boundary can be found in the **Site Gazetteer in Appendix 7.1.**

**Modern**

There are two recorded modern heritage assets within the Site boundary (**SLR249**, **SLR250**). Both records are the location of Second World War mortar pits and a possible target. The assets were identified from RAF aerial photographs, taken between 1944 and 1946, however, they appear to be no longer visible due to forestation.

**Undated Features or Structures**

There are two undated recorded heritage assets within the Site boundary. **SLR254** is recorded as the site of a 'great cairn' within the eastern extent of the Site, approximately 1km south-east of Turbine 15. The asset has been removed since its recording in 1866, and no remains survive. Another cairn (**SLR251**) is recorded approximately 0.6km north-west of Turbine 6. This cairn is partially surviving, comprising a turf-sunken mound with some loose boulders.

There are three undated recorded heritage assets within 1km of the Site boundary. **SLR255** is located 70m south-west of **SLR254**, and, as with its neighbour, is a documentary record and there are no upstanding remains. A sub-oval enclosure (**SLR252**), only visible as a cropmark, is recorded approximately 0.65km north of the Site boundary.

[1] SLR24, SLR49, SLR55, SLR56, SLR70, SLR82, SLR88, SLR91, SLR107, SLR111, SLR124, SLR139, SLR148, SLR150, SLR162, SLR176, SLR197, SLR202, SLR207, SLR233, SLR237

[2] SLR58, SLR69, SLR149, SLR182, SLR210, SLR222, SLR234

[3] SLR206, SLR63, SLR71, SLR118, SLR134, SLR146, SLR204, SLR217

[4] SLR19, SLR32, SLR53, SLR121, SLR123, SLR170

[5] SLR37, SLR103, SLR137, SLR156, SLR187, SLR246

[6] SLR61, SLR158, SLR184, SLR216, SLR09, SLR48, SLR76, SLR142, SLR223, SLR14, SLR66, SLR140, SLR169, SLR174, SLR203, SLR209

[7] SLR175, SLR160, SLR194, SLR50, SLR224, SLR235, SLR132, SLR167, SLR165, SLR15, SLR129

#### 7.5.1.4 Historic Mapping and Historic Land-Use Assessment

Assessment of the Historic Land Use Assessment (HLA) map indicates that the land within the Site boundary was primarily used as an area of settlement and agriculture during the medieval and post-medieval periods. The entry for this category of land-use notes that this includes a range of structures, including farmsteads, mills, enclosures and field boundaries. This is consistent with the post-medieval heritage assets recorded within the Site. The HLA map identifies the current use of the site as a plantation; an area of densely planted coniferous trees.

A review of the online historic mapping available from the National Library of Scotland was undertaken. The area of the Site is visible on multiple maps. The area is visible on the Banff Pont Map (1583-1596) where it is named as 'Moore of Ald'. The area can be seen on Robert Gordon's map of Strathbogie and Aenzie (1636-1652), where the area is named as 'The Hills Off Auldmor'. The area containing the Site is visible on the Roy Highlands Map[8] (1747-1755), where it is named 'Old Moor'. The area is also seen in John Thomson's Atlas of Scotland (1832), where is it named 'Altmore Ridge'. No additional heritage assets are noted on these maps.

The earliest Ordnance Survey map showing the Site is the Six-Inch 1st edition, surveyed in 1867 and published in 1871. No additional heritage assets were identified on this map. A review of further Ordnance survey mapping from the late 1800s to 1964 indicates very little change to the landscape, with it primarily being used for agricultural purposes. Again, no additional heritage assets were identified.

#### 7.5.1.5 Aerial Photography

The online aerial imagery of NCAP was examined for evidence of archaeological sites. No oblique aerial imagery in the HES archives on Canmore was found. No further archaeological sites were identified.

#### 7.5.1.6 Discussion of the Site

Analysis of the historic environment suggests that the Site would have been within a wider area of prehistoric activity. The presence of a cairn within the Site (Tor Sliasg (**SLR07**)) indicates the potential for a funerary landscape extending across the Site. The further prehistoric assets within 1km of the Site support this hypothesis. There are no Roman heritage assets identified within the Site or within 1km of the boundary indicating that there was little or no Roman activity within the vicinity of the Site.

There is a singular medieval heritage asset within 1km of the Site boundary, the proposed location of a former chapel (**SLR08**). However, there are no known upstanding remains associated with this record. There are no recorded medieval heritage assets within the Site and medieval potential is considered to be minimal.

There are 90 recorded post-medieval heritage assets within the Site boundary, and a further 151 recorded post-medieval heritage assets within 1km of the Site boundary. These records are a mixture of earthworks, standing remains, and documentary records taken from historic mapping. The majority of these assets are agricultural in nature, consisting of farmsteads, enclosures, and other associated buildings. Additionally, there is evidence of land exploitation outwith purely agricultural techniques, including peat-cutting, quarrying, and lime kilns. This indicates a high level of post-medieval activity within the Site.

There are two modern heritage assets within the Site, consisting of Second World War mortar pits and targets (**SLR249**, **SLR250**). The presence of Second World War heritage assets within the site indicates that it was used for training during this period.

There are two undated heritage assets within the Site, both are cairns (**SLR251**, **SLR254**) with one being a record only and one having upstanding, though damaged, remains. Whilst they are recorded

[8] Roy Map Strip: 29, Section: 3a. Shelfmark: British Library Maps CC.5.a.441 29/3a.

as cairns, their proper form and function is unknown. It is not certain whether they are funerary cairns of prehistoric origin or later clearance cairns. A further two heritage assets are within 1km of the Site boundary, comprising of a potential cairn site (**SLR255**) and an ovular cropmark.

The site was subject to a Cultural Heritage walkover survey as part of the 2007 planning application, no additional assets were identified during this survey. Furthermore, the majority of the Site is covered with commercial forestry, confirmed during the walkover undertaken on the 4th and 5th of July 2022. Only six heritage assets were visible during the walkover, with the others either presumed destroyed due to forestry activity or within inaccessible locations due to dense forestry.

#### 7.5.1.7 Potential for Unknown Heritage Assets

Within the Site there is a potential for unknown heritage assets that could be directly impacted by the proposed development.

The potential for unknown prehistoric heritage assets within the Site is low. There are four recorded prehistoric heritage assets within the Site and 1km of its boundary (SLR07, SLR01, SLR02, SLR03), and the presence of multiple peat bogs within the Site boundary indicates anaerobic conditions which could preserve remains or deposits of prehistoric potential. However, disturbance of any former upstanding prehistoric remains by the high amount of post-medieval heritage activity within the Site boundary may have eroded the archaeological significance of other unknown earlier assets should they have been present.

There is very low potential for unknown Roman heritage assets within the Site, as there are no recorded Roman assets within the Site boundary or 1km of its boundary.

The potential for unknown medieval heritage assets is low, as the singular recorded heritage asset within the Site is a documentary record with no known archaeological remains. As with the prehistoric heritage assets, it is likely that any unknown medieval assets have been disturbed by the high level of post-medieval activity within the Site.

The potential for unknown post-medieval heritage assets is moderate due to the high number of recorded assets within the site.

It must be noted that the majority of the site is covered by commercial forestry, with areas of both felled and unfelled trees. In these areas it is likely that the forestry activity has damaged any unknown archaeological remains.

### 7.5.2 Future Baseline (under do-nothing scenario)

If the proposed development was not to proceed, there would likely be no change to the baseline condition of the various heritage assets and features that presently survive within the site.

Implications of Climate Change – as per 'A Guide to Climate Change Impacts on Scotland's Historic Environment' (October 2019), peat is classed as a cultural heritage resource due to its formation during the Bronze Age as mass deforestation occurred. Due to the anaerobic conditions under which peat is formed, it is often seen as a 'window' onto the palaeo-environment. The presence of peat across site, as detailed in Chapter 9: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soil, means there is a potential for environmental or organic deposits to survive. Climate change could affect naturally formed peat deposits leading to the destruction of paleoenvironmental evidence. This might result in the loss of previously unrecorded cultural heritage assets.

Other impacts of climate change on buried remains might result from increased rainfall and fluctuating temperatures, with the sequence and frequency of natural soil saturation and desiccation changing the preservative conditions. This might result in damage or loss of organic artefacts. For upstanding remains, such change has the potential to result in increased water penetration, which may then cause/accelerate erosion/decay of historic fabric.

Notwithstanding the above, it is considered that the description of the baseline conditions remains robust for the purposes of this assessment, and that it allows for a robust assessment of the impacts of the proposed development on cultural heritage

# 7.6 Assessment of Potential Effects

## 7.6.1 Construction Effects

### 7.6.1.1 Predicted Construction Effects

Assessment of potential direct impacts on cultural heritage assets is based on the maximum likely impact that could be caused by the proposed development.

Direct impacts would derive from any groundworks or other ground disturbance undertaken as part of the construction phase of the proposed development. Specific activities which have the potential to cause impacts in this way include:

- excavation of turbine bases, substation foundations, crane hardstandings, borrow pits and cable trenches;
- felling works or removal of forestry and
- construction and upgrading of access tracks, working compounds and laydown areas.

Where significant ground disturbance takes place, these activities would remove or change any cultural heritage assets within the area of ground disturbance. This damage would be irreversible and permanent.

With reference to **Figure 7.2**, the proposed development has the potential for a direct impact upon the assets listed in **Table 7-8**. Other known assets within the Site would be avoided with a 10m buffer to avoid both direct and indirect impacts as a result of the proposed development. .

These assets are likely to be of low cultural heritage significance due to their post-medieval date and the nature of the archaeology. Due to their location within the Site boundary an adverse impact is predicted of up to high magnitude in the worst-case scenario. The overall significance of effect would be slight. This is not a significant impact.

With regard to as yet unknown remains, the presence of remains of prehistoric date within the footprint of disturbance cannot be ruled out. Remains of this date, with due regard to the recorded prehistoric assets within the 1km study area and levels of likely truncation caused by post-medieval activities, would be of low cultural significance.

Whilst potential direct impacts upon any unknown remains is high, due to the estimated low potential significance of the remains and the level of disturbance of unknown remains from later agricultural practises, the overall significance of effect would likely be slight.

**Table 7-8: Cultural Heritage Assets with predicted direct impacts**

| SLR Number | Site Name | Monument Type | Period | Likelihood |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SLR118 | Millstone Hill | Hollow-Ways, Trackways | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR121 | Black Hill | Peat-Cuttings | Post-medieval | Potential |
| SLR146 | Little Millstone Hill | Hollow-Ways, Trackways | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR149 | Limer's Well | Wells | Post-medieval | Potential |
| SLR151 | Gateside | Trackways | Post-medieval | Potential |
| SLR156 | Little Millstone Hill | Quarries | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR175 | King's Cairn | Buildings, Enclosures, Farmsteads, Hollow-Ways, Kilns | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR204 | Millstone Hill | Hollow-Ways, Trackways | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR212 | Whitestripe | Enclosures, Farmsteads | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR222 | Sweet Well | Wells | Post-medieval | Yes |

| SLR Number | Site Name | Monument Type | Period | Likelihood |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SLR223 | Aultmore | Cairns, Stones | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR32 | Aultmore Forest | Peat-Cuttings | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR37 | Gibbscott Well | Pits, Quarries | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR58 | Gibbscott Well | Wells | Post-medieval | Potential |
| SLR63 | Lady's Bridge | Hollow-Ways, Trackways | Post-medieval | Yes |
| SLR76 | Aultmore | Cairns, Stones | Post-medieval | Yes |

#### 7.6.1.2 Proposed Mitigation

Mitigation of direct impacts on cultural heritage assets has taken the form of avoidance through design. Appropriate mitigation undertaken during construction would be in the form of:

- fencing off and avoidance of known assets that could otherwise be accidentally damaged during construction works; and
- a watching brief on the elements of the groundworks that have the potential to have a direct impact on unrecorded buried archaeology.

The precise scope of any watching brief would be negotiated with Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service and the agreed mitigation programme would be documented in an agreed Written Scheme of Investigation.

#### 7.6.1.3 Residual Construction Effects

The completion of the archaeological mitigation programme outlined above would offset direct adverse impact upon archaeological remains. Any harm caused to buried remains as a result of ground disturbance during construction would be offset to some degree by the benefits provided through the information gained during the archaeological investigation and reporting process. Any significant impacts identified in relation to buried archaeological remains should be considered in this context.

### 7.6.2 Operational Effects

#### 7.6.2.1 Letterfourie House (LB15541)

Letterfourie House, is a category A listed building located 2.2km north of the Site boundary, and 3.4km north of the nearest turbine (turbine 6). It sits with an associated designed landscape comprising of Craigmin Bridge (**LB15542**), Home Farm (**LB15544**) and the Walled Garden (**LB15545**). Built in 1773 and designed by Robert Adam, a prolific 18th century architect in Scotland who had other notable works throughout Great Britain such as Argyll House, Inverary and Pulteney Bridge, Bath. Letterfourie House is a three-storey cubed building with 2 storey outer wings which overlook the gardens to the south where fountains sit. The fountains sit on the southern elevation within a formal garden with a ha-ha which overlooks agricultural fields to the south-east.

The original approach to the house was from the west, including Craigmin Bridge (**LB15542**). This revealed the southern elevation of the house to the visitor. The designed approach to the house would have revealed its architectural interest to the rear of the formal gardens and fountains.

Based on an assessment caried out on the 31/10/22, the house was in a significant state of disrepair (Plate 7.1). At the request of HES on the 07/06/2022, a photomontage was requested from inside the house. As per section 7.4.1.5 this was unable to be obtained. As an alternative solution a visualisation was prepared from the grounds, see Cultural Heritage Viewpoint 1.

Letterfourie Estate is situated on the southern slopes of Hill of Maud, with Drybridge 1km to the north west. Beyond the immediate designed landscape, the landscape is characterised by agricultural fields with views towards Aultmore Hill overlooking the valley of Burn of Letterfourie, see

Cultural Heritage Viewpoints 1a and 1b. Scattered amongst the agricultural fields are post medieval farmsteads in the area which may have been a part of the estate during the occupation of the house. Historic conifer plantation sits 0.5km to the north of the house, which would have likely been connected to the house.

**Plate 7.1: Letterfourie House (LB15541).**

There is little alteration to the landscape surrounding the designed landscape around the house since its inception with many of the agricultural farmsteads dating to a similar period. Generally, the views outward of the house are restricted by the deliberate planting around the edge of the grounds of the house. The grounds of the house have been altered however, with the house in clear dilapidation with a number of the south facing windows, boarded or smashed. Graffiti was noted on the ground floor of the building. It is noted from aerial photography as recorded on Canmore that a large structure has been erected between the years of 2015 to 2017, no planning record can be found on this but based on its location and historic map regression, it appears that this building overlies the original approach along the grounds to the south. Whilst this approach is no longer in use today, which has changed to the northern approach, it is still key to the appreciation of the gardens and house and the original design intentions in respect to the approach to the house.

The proposed development is located 2.2km to the south of the asset, with the closest turbine being Turbine 6, 3.4km to the south-east. Based on **Figure 7.1** and Cultural Heritage Viewpoint 1, it is predicted that all 16 turbines of the proposed development would be theoretically visible, albeit some screening would be provided by mature trees which would reduce this level of visibility.

The contributing aspects which contribute to the asset's significance primarily derive from its architectural and historical significance with its association with Robert Adam being particularly important. In respect to its setting, the designed landscape is purposefully enclosed in the deciduous planting that surrounds the gardens and the house and the intended historic approach from the west would not be affected by turbines present oblique to the view and not infringing on views of the house on approach. Whilst the interior views from the house may have views outward above the treeline and views of the proposed development, this would not impact the ability to understand, appreciate or experience the contributing factors to the significance of the building which predominantly sit within the fabric of the building, its immediate grounds and its revelation on approach from the west and south.

Mitigation through design of the development has taken place as outlined in **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design Alternatives**, this has been shared with HES and has removed an objection to the proposed development. With these mitigation measures and the contributing aspects of the buildings' significance not being impacted in a significantly detrimental way. It is considered that the

magnitude of impact on Letterfourie House and the associate Listed Buildings from the proposed development is Low, resulting in an overall Slight Significance of Effect.

#### 7.6.2.2 Davie's Castle (SM11042)

Davie's Castle is a fortified enclosure, theorised to be a prehistoric hill fort or a medieval motte. The asset is roughly ovular in nature, aligned east to west, and measures approximately 30m by 50m. The asset is mostly enclosed by a 5m wide and 2m deep ditch, which appears to stretch around 80% of the asset. There appears to be an entrance at the west-south-west, with a visible gap of approximately 16m. The asset's size indicates a settlement of substantial importance and high status, and as such, further investigation into the asset could provide the opportunity to enhance our understanding of high-status defensive sites.

However, the asset appears to have been quarried greatly, with extensive quarrying at the eastern end. In addition, the asset sits within an area of dense commercial forestry, which covers the entire scheduled area. The presence of commercial forestry within the scheduled area has likely disrupted the stratigraphy of any buried remains, thus impacting the ability to interpret any archaeological remains and for archaeological investigation to contribute further to our understanding. Any removal of this forestry would likely further disrupt the archaeological potential of the asset. As such, whilst the asset's archaeological potential contributes to its significance, this contribution is reduced.

The asset is located on a small hillock (100m above ordnance datum (AOD)) on the south-east bank of the Glen Burn. Glen Burn joins the larger Burn of Deskford, c.1.7km to the north-east. To the north, the landscape slopes down, following the path of the Glen Burn. To the west of the burn, the landscape rises sharply, towards Small Bin and the Bin of Cullen, located c.1km and c.1.8km to the west of the asset respectively. The asset's placement along the burn indicates that it was intended to monitor and control access along this route, potentially a route inland from the Moray Firth, located c.3km to the north. The surrounding topography, which rises sharply to the west of the asset, also provides some natural defence. As such, the surrounding landscape of the asset contributes to its significance, as it illustrates the topographical factors which led to the strategic placement of a feature at this location.

The dating of the asset is unknown, with the Scheduled Monument description stating it is either prehistoric or medieval in date. There are two nearby mottes, Ha' Hillock (SM11046) located c.1.9km to the south-east of the asset and Castle Hill (SM355) located c.2.8km to the north-east of the asset. All three assets share a similar setting, placed along watercourses and monitoring approaches through the landscape. If Davie's Castle was contemporary in date, it may have shared intervisibility with these assets and formed part of a network of mottes controlling access to the land from the Moray Firth to the north. Thus, the asset's potential placement within a wider landscape of contemporary mottes provides an opportunity for further investigation into medieval defensive structures and their interactions.

Since the initial construction of the asset there has been development across the surrounding landscape. The asset now sits within commercial forestry, which whilst technically temporary, currently obscures the asset completely from view within the surrounding landscape and occludes any views out from the asset. Modern tracks cut through the forestry. Small settlements and farmsteads are scattered throughout the landscape, with the closest farm being c.0.7km to the south-east and the nearest village, Lintmill, being c.2km to the north-east. Commercial forestry currently obscures the views along the burn and currently, the ability to appreciate and understand the connection between the asset and its landscape is severely impacted. However, the nature of commercial forestry means that this connection may be reinstated when felling commences. With regards to felling activities, the fact that the forestry is intruding on the scheduled area, any felling activities will further displace any in situ remains and further erode the monument and its stratigraphy.

The proposed development is located to the south-west of the asset, with the closest turbine (Turbine 8) located at a distance of c.5.6km. The ZTV (Figure 7.1) indicates that there would be 12 turbines visible from the asset under a bare earth scenario, and this is confirmed by wireline in Figure 7.7. However, these does not account for the potential continued presence of commercial forestry.

Notably, the ZTV indicates that the proposed development would not be visible when approaching the asset along the Glen Burn, from the north-east or south-west.

The proposed development is not anticipated to impact any potential intervisibility between the asset and Ha' hillock (SM11046), due to their orientation away from the Site. The proposed development may be visible in long views from Castle Hill (SM355) towards the asset, however, due to the distance, intervening modern development, and the potential persisting commercial forestry, these views are not considered to be important in respect to the monument. Thus, the aspects of the asset's setting which contribute to its significance would not be impacted by the proposed development.

As a Scheduled Monument, the asset is considered to be of high cultural heritage significance. The magnitude of impact is anticipated to be very low adverse, and as such, the significance of effect is very slight.

#### 7.6.2.3 Ha' Hillock, Motte (SM11046)

Ha' Hillock is a late Iron Age or early medieval motte, visible as an oval mound approximately 6m in height. An auguring survey was undertaken in 2019 and produced a late Iron Age date for the construction of the mound, with continued use into the medieval period. The mound measures approximately 28m in diameter, with an entrance causeway to the north-north-west. The asset has a broad defensive ditch to the west and is defended by the gully of the Ha' Burn to the east.

The asset's significance partially derives from its potential to further our understanding of medieval Scotland. Further investigation into the Motte could inform our knowledge of medieval defensive structures and medieval society in the area. The scheduling description notes that it is a classic field monument of its kind, giving it particular importance due to its good preservation and example of that style of asset.

The asset is situated along the western bank of Ha' Burn, the gully of which forms a natural defence along the eastern border of the asset. The larger Burn of Deskford runs 0.4km to the east of the asset and the asset sits within a shallow valley that follows the course of the Burn. The asset is located at approximately 80m AOD, on the north-eastern slopes of an unnamed hill offering views along the Burn of Deskford to the north-east. The landscape remains relatively flat towards the east and slopes more sharply upwards towards the west.

As previously stated, the placement of the asset along the Ha' Burn forms a natural defence along its eastern side. Furthermore, its placement within the wide and open valley that follows the Burn of Deskford affords long-ranging views in all directions. This would have allowed the occupiers of the asset to use the position to monitor and control access through the valley, which may have been a key route to or from the Moray Firth, c.4.5km to the north. The positioning of the asset within the landscape preserves this sense of the strategic use of topography and is still able to be appreciated today, thus contributing to the asset's significance.

The asset is located within a wider landscape of medieval defensive structures. Davie's Castle (SM11042), a potential Iron Age fort or medieval motte, and Castle Hill motte (SM335) are located c.1.8km north-west and 4.1km north of the asset respectively. These assets are of the same form and potentially a similar date, meaning that their proximity to each other may have been intentional. Castle Hill motte shares a similar setting to Ha' Hillock, being located along the Burn of Deskford and likely controlling access along the valley from the Moray Firth. These assets may have shared intervisibility during their use, with this connection furthering our understanding of their relationship, as well as medieval society, economy and defensive networks in the north of Scotland.

Inaltry Castle (SM11178), the site of a 13$^{th}$-century castle, is located c.0.8km to the north-east of the asset, along the eastern bank of the Burn of Deskford. Whilst there is no indication that these assets were occupied contemporaneously, the placement of the motte may have informed the placement of the castle due to the motte predating the castle. These assets are likely to have had intervisibility, however, due to their difference in form and date, it is unlikely that this intervisibility was important to the occupiers. As such, any intervisibility between the asset and Inaltry Castle does not contribute to the significance of the asset.

The setting of the asset has changed since its initial construction. The asset sits within agricultural fields, with the asset itself covered in deciduous trees which are surrounded by a wood and wire fence. Due to the tree coverage, the asset is obscured from view when approaching along the B9018, which it is located directly west of. A set of telegraph poles and a set of power lines are located c.0.5 and c.0.8km west of the asset. Several farmsteads and single houses are scattered throughout the surrounding landscape, with the nearest being located c.0.35km to the north and c.0.3km to the south of the asset. The modern additions within the landscape diminish both the prominence of the asset within the landscape, with more modern structures being more visible, as well as obscuring the wide-ranging views. In addition, the modern development within the landscape provides a distraction to any intervisibility between associated heritage assets, especially Castle Motte, which would be obscured by the settlement of Cullen.

The closest proposed turbine, Turbine 8, is located c.5km south-west of the asset. The ZTV (Figure 7.1) and the wireline (Figure 7.5)indicate that 13 blade tips will be visible, all orientated to the south-west of the asset. The proposed development may be visible in views from the asset towards the south-west, however, the majority of the proposed development is orientated to the west and is peripheral to key views along the valley. It is noted that the proposals would not affect any understanding of the topographical advantage held by the asset and therefore its intended function. Neither would the proposals infringe on any inter-visibility between the asset and the potentially contemporary assets which are located to the assets north-west. As such it is anticipated that no important views would be affected.

As a Scheduled Monument, the asset is considered to be of high cultural heritage significance. The magnitude of impact is anticipated to be very low adverse, and as such, the significance of effect is very slight.

#### 7.6.2.4 Inaltry Castle (SM11178)

Inaltry Castle comprises the remains of an enclosure castle, thought to have been constructed in the 13th century. It is located 4.4km north-east of the Site. Anecdotal evidence suggests the castle once belonged to the Lawtie family. The upstanding remains comprise a singular stone wall, measuring 17m in length, 2.5m in width and 3m in height. The stubs at the end of the wall insinuate this would have comprised the south wall of the enclosure. The wall has two visible niches, with one being a possible latrine shoot. A deep circular hole, potentially a well, can be found inside the building, however, it has been filled with modern rubbish. There is anecdotal evidence of a vault with a stairwell leading to it, however, this has not been located. Whilst the standing remains of the asset are ruinous and incomplete, the asset holds significance as a 13th-century enclosure castle. Castles of this type are rare within the north-east of Scotland. As such, the asset holds the archaeological potential to further inform our understanding of this type of structure, as well as medieval defensive structures in general, and further inform our understanding of the scheduled monument.

The asset is located on a north-west facing slope at 55m AOD above the eastern bank of the Burn of Deskford. The slope on which the asset sits continues to ascend to the south-east of the asset. The Burn of Deskford sits within a relatively open valley, with gentle rolling hills in all directions. The placement of the asset at this location would have allowed its occupants to monitor the valley, controlling access. Furthermore, due to its size, it was likely to have been a significant visible presence within the valley. The asset strategically utilises the surrounding topography and as such, the asset's setting contributes to its significance.

The asset is located within a medieval landscape, with fortified assets from throughout the medieval period. The asset is located c.0.8km north-east of Ha' Hillock, an earlier medieval motte (SM11046) and c.1.6km north-east of the Tower of Deskford (SM90095), a 14th-century tower house. Whilst there is no indication that the assets were occupied simultaneously, their placement throughout the landscape and utilisation of the same landscape feature, the Burn of Deskford, indicates that their placement may have influenced one another. It is unlikely that intervisibility between these assets was important, as there is no indication that they were used contemporaneously, however, further investigation into their spatial positioning may further our understanding of the control of the area throughout the medieval period.

The setting of the asset has changed since its initial construction. A modern single-track unnamed road is located c.20m to the west of the asset. Inaltry Farm, a post-medieval farmhouse and associated buildings, is located directly to the south of the asset. The asset itself sits within grazing land, surrounded by a small wire and wood fence. Two sets of telephone wires pass either side of the asset, converging in the field to the north. There are multiple farmsteads and domestic buildings within the surrounding landscape. The presence of modern development within the immediate vicinity of the asset impacts its prominence within the valley and impacts views towards the south, impacting the ability to appreciate and understand the asset within its setting.

The closest proposed turbine, Turbine 8, is located c.5.9km to the south-east of the asset. The ZTV (Figure 7.1) and the wireline (Figure 7.6) indicate that there will be 13 turbine tips visible. Whilst visible from the asset, the proposed development is anticipated to be peripheral in key views along the Burn of Deskford. Due to the larger distraction of modern development, the proposed development is anticipated to be a minor distraction in any views. As such, none of the other aforementioned aspects of setting which contribute to the significance of the asset, including the association with the burn, would be impacted.

As a Scheduled Monument, the asset is considered to be of high cultural heritage significance. The magnitude of impact is anticipated to be very low adverse, and as such, the significance of effect is very slight.

#### 7.6.2.5 Durn Hill (SM13748)

Durn Hill is a palisaded Iron Age hill fort, occupying the summit of Durn Hill. Excavation at the site dates the fort at the Early Iron Age (approximately 760-410 cal BC). There are three concentric lines of defence encircling the fort, consisting of ramparts and trenches. The monument measures roughly 280m by 160m and is oval in shape. The inner and outer defences likely held palisades, wooden timber post walls. The middle line of defence would have been similar, however, the south-west side also has an earthwork bank and ditch. There is a visible entrance on the south-west side. The interior of the fort has no contemporary visible features, however, does have a modern cistern and an Ordnance Survey Triangulation Point.

The asset's archaeological interest contributes heavily to its significance. Palisaded enclosures are more commonly found as crop marks, with upstanding remains, such as those found at Durn Hill, being uncommon. Thus, the asset is rare in style and is well preserved for its type. Initial analysis of the fort indicates that it may have been constructed in multiple phases, with further study into its construction having the potential to further our understanding of iron age construction techniques and the use of the site over multiple phases. In addition, previous excavations of the asset have shown good potential for surviving archaeological features and deposits. Further excavation has the potential to further our understanding of the occupation and abandonment of the asset, as well as inform our understanding of iron age settlement, land use, social structure, diet, and economy.

The asset is located at the summit of Durn Hill, at approximately 200m AOD. Durn Hill is at the northern end of a ridge, with the Burn of Fordyce running 1.4km to the west and the Burn of Durn running 1.1km to the east. Durn Hill and the associated Ridge stand out from the surrounding environment, which is relatively flat. The Moray Firth and its undulating coastline is located 2.7km to the north of the asset, which is visible due to the topography of the surrounding landscape.

This aspect of the assets setting contributes to its significance, with the asset's positioning providing wide-ranging views throughout the surrounding landscape, especially along the coast of the Moray Firth. The asset's original occupiers would have taken advantage of its topographical positioning to monitor and control the coastline, using the adjacent burns as a point of control within the landscape and control any movement inland from the Moray Firth.

There are a number of prehistoric settlements and defensive structures within the surrounding landscape. Notably, Castle Point Fort (SM11111) is located on the coast, c.2.7km to the north-east. There was likely intervisibility between the asset and Castle Point fort, with the asset defending and monitoring the land in between and Castle Point likely monitoring access along the coast itself. There is intervisibility between the assets and this was likely important when placing the fort. The spatial and visual connection between these prehistoric defensive structures contributes to the

significance of the singular assets, as their connection has the potential to further our understanding of their interrelationship, as well as Iron Age society, economy and social hierarchy.

The asset is situated within scrubland and is surrounded on all sides by modern agricultural land and commercial forestry. A fence abuts the asset to the south-west. There are scattered modern settlements throughout the surrounding landscape, with the towns of Fordyce located c.1.3km to the east and Portsoy located c.2.3km to the north. In addition to these larger settlements, there are numerous farmsteads and domestic buildings, with the closest being c.0.6km to the north-east. There are a number of roads surrounding the hillfort, mainly comprising minor roads and tracks. The A98 lies 1.4km to the north of the asset, the dual carriageway generates a significant traffic flow and creates both a visual and acoustic distraction to the views to the north of the asset out to the coast which is a clear contributor to the asset.

The proposed development is situated c.9.3km to the south-west of the asset, with the closest proposed turbine (Turbine 8) being situated c.10.8km to the south-west. The ZTV predicts (Figure 6.2), that all 16 blade tips would be visible from the monument, all orientated to the south-west of the asset. The proposed turbines are not anticipated to be visible in views of the asset from the coast, nor when approaching the asset from the lowland/valleys on either side of the asset. There is no anticipated impact on the intervisibility between Durn Hill and nearby prehistoric assets, including Castle Point, due to the orientation of the wind farm. As such, none of the other aforementioned aspects of setting which contribute to the significance of the asset, including the association with the Moray Firth and the asset's defensive topography, would be impacted.

As a Scheduled Monument, the asset is considered to be of high cultural heritage significance. The magnitude of impact is anticipated to be very low adverse, and as such, the significance of effect is very slight.

#### 7.6.2.6 Gordon Castle Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape, Gordon Castle, and its Associated Listed Buildings (Bog of Gight) (LB1596/ GDL00189)

Gordon Castle is an Inventoried Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL) surrounding Gordon Castle and the associated estate, which once encompassed the former village of Bog of Gight. A prior castle, 'Old Castle Gordon', once stood on the site, but was almost entirely remodelled in the late 18th century, with only the central tower, east wing, conservatory and part of the west wing. The landscape surrounding the remodelled castle was designed by the notable landscape designer Thomas White Snr, providing a more relaxed layout to the park than the previous formal gardens. Further work on the gardens was done in the 19th century, with a formal garden planted in the 1950s and forestry after 1937.

The designed landscape contains a large number of listed buildings, all notable for their architectural interest. Gordon Castle is notable as a tooled ashlar building, with a substantial castellated Georgian range, designed and renovated by multiple renowned architects including John Baxter (1769-83), Archibald Simpson (1827) and Schomberg Scott (1961-65). The category B listed buildings within the GDL echo the architectural style of the main building and the ornamental fountain (LB1597) contains fragments of 16th and 17th century carved panels, having been constructed in the 19th century. The listing description notes that the designed landscape is the setting of the Grade A and Grade B listed buildings that it contains, including the castle (LB1595). This settings assessment covers all of the category A and B Listed Buildings within the GDL boundary. These Listed Buildings provide outstanding architectural interest for the GDL.

The asset is noted as having outstanding historic interest, relating to the design of the landscape by Thomas White Senior as well as the association with the Gordon Family. The Gordon Family owned the land from as early as 1449, with the original Bog of Gight Castle being built in 1498. The Gordon's are important figures in Scottish history, with involvement in key events such as the civil war of the 17th Century and the Jacobite Risings of the 18th Century.

The GDL is noted as having outstanding artistic interest, some horticultural interest, and high scenic interest, stemming from the numerous landscape features. At its original creation, Gordon Castle was recorded as having 1,300 acres of wooded deer park and policies. The land is no longer used as a

deer park, however, to the north of the castle there is still a significant amount of wooded land and the policies remain close to the original design. The formal gardens are located to the south of the castle, retaining some original features. Originally, these gardens would have been symmetrical in design and bisected by an avenue known as the Broad Walk which ran southwards from the centre of the castle. The formal gardens to the south of the east wing of the castle were restored after the Second World War, with the Broad Walk being grassed over. A pond with a fountain dating to 1540 were retained within these restored formal gardens.

Furthermore, the walled kitchen garden is located to the south-west of the castle, with 4.5m high walls. The kitchen garden potentially predates the designed landscape and was associated with the Bog of Gight village that originally stood on the Site.

The main entrance into the GDL is from the village of Fochabers, to the south of the castle. The drive runs north from the village, turns east towards the farmstead (LB1623), and turns north again before curving round to the north side of the castle. Other entrances to the GDL include from the B9104 through the Roman Camp Gate (LB1632) at the north-west of the asset, although the Listing Description states that this drive is now disused, and a minor entrance from the A98 to the east of the asset, which passes through modern commercial forestry.

The ZTV indicates that between 0-16 proposed turbines would be visible from the GDL, with the higher end of potential visibility being from the north-east of the GDL within the area of commercial forestry. Views of the proposed turbines are anticipated to be limited from the key approach towards the castle from Fochabers in the south, with the topography of the landscape screening views of the proposed development to the east and south-east. The proposed development would be peripheral to any views when approaching along the now unused drive from the north-west. Any views towards the proposed development from inside the GDL would be peripheral to any key views and would not be dominant within these outward views in that they would greatly alter the understanding of the setting of the asset. The relationship between the GDL, its contained listed buildings and the village of Fochabers to the south would also not be impacted by the proposed development. The development would have no impact on the cultural heritage significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting.

Gordon Castle GDL, Gordon Castle, and the associated Listed Buildings are considered to be of high (national) importance. The magnitude of impact upon the assets would be very low adverse, resulting in a significance of effect of very slight.

#### 7.6.2.7 St John's Church and Tower of Deskford (SM90095/LB2209/LB2212)

Located 4.3km north-east of the Site. The Tower of Deskford along with the adjacent old Church of St John and sacrament house form a scheduled monument (SM90095) with the associated burial ground registered as a Category A listed building (LB2209) and the replacement, and currently in use, church (LB2212) registered as a Category B Listed Building.

The tower was constructed as four storeys in the late 14$^{th}$century by the Sinclairs of Findlater and Deskford. In 1790, the tower was portrayed as three storeys with a garret, rising above a large barrel-vaulted entrance chamber. It was attached to the north wall of the chapel, which was first mentioned in 1541, until 1872, when the church was unroofed, its walls consolidated, and the abutting wall of the tower to the church cut away. The tower today is in a ruinous condition, comprising two fragments of walling of coursed rubble, 1.4m thick and 2.3m high. A doorway, traces of the barrel-vaulting of a basement, and a newel stair at the south-west corner remain visible.

The tower holds historical and architectural value, providing evidence for domestic architecture, social organisation and material culture in Scotland during the period of its construction and occupation.

Tower houses in Scotland were constructed for defensive and habitation purposes. The four storey height of Deskford Tower would have allowed for commanding views of the valley of the Burn of Deskford. Not only did this give the occupants a strategic advantage against potential enemies, but the scale of the tower was also a physical display of power and status. Such a tower was a permanent monument to the Sinclair family, symbolising prestige, authority and presence.

The asset is situated within the village of Kirktown of Deskford, which lies within a relatively sheltered dip between the B9018, the main road between Keith and Cullen located to the west, and the wooded ravine of the Burn of Deskford located to the east. The village lies on generally sloping land to the south-east, down to the burn. The asset is located on the eastern side of the access road, to the north of the church and church yard, and to the east of the Muckle Hoose (**LB2210**). An area of mature woodland is located to the east of the tower, which follows the course of the Burn of Deskford. Beyond the settlement, the landscape is generally open and undulating, comprising extensive farmland interspersed with banks of trees and large plantations located on the higher ground.

Generally, views are restricted through the village due to the vegetation with glimpses north of the wider undulating landscape. Due to the immediately surrounding buildings and mature planting, views are restricted outwards from the tower and it is not visible from the roadside.

The setting of the tower which contributes to its significance primarily relates to its location and association with Kirktown of Deskford, as the residence of the local landowners of Sinclair and then the Ogilvies of Cullen and Deskford. Its location between a major routeway and the Burn of Deskford suggests deliberate placement to control the valley, a strategy which is echoed with other medieval fortified assets in the area which are discussed within this report including Inaltry Castle (SM11178) and Ha' Hillock (SM11046). Its former visibility and prominence within the wider landscape when constructed (before the tower was removed) is also important to an understanding of its significance not only as a status symbol, but also as a building that could have been used for defensive purposes when necessary.

The proposed development is located 2.9km south-west of the asset with Turbine 8 being the closest (4.3km). The ZTV (Figure 7.1) and the wireline (Figure 7.4) indicate visibility of 11 turbine tips. The development would not alter the historic association between the tower and its former occupants. The relationship of the tower and the village would remain unaltered as would its historic relationship with its surrounding assets including the church and the Muckle Hoose. The setting of the asset which contributes to our understanding of the placement of the tower would not be altered by the visibility of the turbines, which would be visible at a distance and viewed as wholly unconnected with the asset. The development would have no impact on the cultural heritage significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting.

As a scheduled monument, the SM90095 is considered to be of high importance. As a Category A Listed Building, the LB2209 is also considered to be of high importance, with the more modern St John's Church (LB2212) and nearby Muckle Hoose (LB2210) considered as being of medium importance due to being registered as Category B. The magnitude of impact upon the assets would be very low adverse, resulting in a significance of effect of very slight.

#### 7.6.2.8 Cullen House Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape, Cullen House, and the associated Listed Buildings (LB2219/GDL00121)

Located 5km north-east of the Site. Cullen House, listed Category A, dates from the 17th century with alterations made in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries (LB2219). It is located within an 18th century designed landscape (GDL) which is registered in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDL000121).

Cullen House and its GDL holds historical value as the family seat of the Ogilvy family, Earls of Findlater and Seafield as well as the extensive documentary evidence of the development of the estate, including survey plans. The earliest records of a house at Cullen dates to 1232 and originally belonged to the St Clair family, before passing to the Ogilvies. In 1543, the Collegiate Church of Cullen was founded and its canons were provided with an apartment and garden on the site. Parish records show that in 1600 Cullen House which stands today, was constructed. The house holds architectural value, being originally constructed as a tower house, with subsequent extensions and remodels commissioned by various generations of Earls of Seafield and undertaken by prominent architects of their day. This includes alterations made in 1711 by Smith and McGill, in 1767 by James Adam, in 1859 by David Bryce, and in 1983 by Kit Martin assisted by Douglas Forrest. The house has

been described by the architectural historian Charles McKean as "one of the grandest houses in Scotland".

The outstanding historical and architectural values of Cullen House GDL are further derived from the numerous listed estate buildings it contains, including four listed at Category A. This includes the Parish Church, which is cruciform in plan and of various builds (LB2218). It mostly dates to the 16th century although incorporates a 13th century choir and nave and 18th century additions. The church was formerly the centre of the old Kirkton of Cullen until 1820-30 when the township was moved to the present location of Cullen to the north-west of the estate. In 1744, William Adam designed Cullen House bridge which crosses the Burn of Cullen to the west of Cullen House (LB2220). It is listed at Category A due to its quality build and material of granite ashlar with rubble spandrels and of particular interest is its unusual interlocking keyed and tooled ashlar cope to the parapet. The main gate and twin lodges which stand at the south-east entrance of the estate are also listed at Category A (LB2227). Designed by James Adam in c.1767 and known as the Great Entrance, it was built in the form of a triumphal arch and made for carriages to pass through. Features of architectural value include Ionic columns, armorial decoration in the tympanum and carved lions which are rampant at the apex, and recumbent to the sides. The flanking gate lodges are linked to the entrance by simple harled screen walls pierced by single pedestrian entrances each side. The final Category A listed building within the GDL is the Temple of Pomona (LB15520) which is located in the north of the grounds on a hilltop. Constructed by William Robertson in 1822 it follows designs by James Playfair dated 1788. It is constructed of polished ashlar with an open rotunda with a leaded roof and a plasterwork ceiling supported by eight Ionic columns.

The listing description states that the GDL is considered to have outstanding value as a Work of Art, albeit parts have been lost. A predominantly informal landscape designed by Thomas White (Senior) in the late 18th century, it overlays an earlier formal 17th century design, which is shown on the survey plan of 1764 by Peter May. Of particular interest are the policy wall, woodlands and the Temple which contribute to the outstanding scenic value of the designed landscape as well as its other contained listed buildings which provide outstanding architectural value. Cullen House GDL is situated to the south-west of the town of Cullen on the flat coastal plain of the Moray Firth. To the south-west of the designed landscape, the Bin of Cullen ascends to a height of 320m and forms a significant feature in the surrounding landscape.

The policy woodlands of the estate extend along the four main drives to Cullen House (north, west, east and south-east) as shown on historic mapping and the designation listing notes that '*The setting of the policies on the coastal plain renders them relatively inward looking and views out to the surrounding agricultural land and woodland of the Bin of Cullen are gained from only some points within the site*'. As such, it would appear that the setting of the largely wooded core of the designed landscape which contains the listed buildings, is one of closeness and relatively introspective. The majority of the listed buildings are likely best viewed and appreciated from relatively close quarters or possibly from places where clearances within the policies exist, for example Cullen House can be clearly seen from Cullen House Bridge to its west. An exception to this is the Temple which being located on a hilltop, is likely to have more extensive views across the landscape. For example, it is visible from Castle Hill to its south-east which is also located within the GDL. It is likely that the wider open parkland and open fields which are located beyond the insular wooded core of the GDL have more extensive views across the surrounding landscape although restricted to the south-west by the Bin of Cullen.

The proposed development is located 4.7km south-west of the GDL with Turbine 8 being the closest (6.4km). The ZTV (Figure 7.1) indicates visibility of up to 16 turbine tips across the GDL although this will be dependent on the presence of woodland. Whilst visibility of the turbines may be possible from parts of the mainly wooded core of the GDL, the significance of its features including the listed buildings is best appreciated and understood from within the designed landscape. Views of the proposed development may also be possible from within the southern part of the GDL within the open fields. However, the distance from the proposed development is such that the turbines, if



visible, would not be dominant within these outward views such that they would greatly alter an understanding of the wider agricultural setting of the GDL and would be viewed as part of a wider landscape which already contains modern intrusions for example pylons and single turbines. The relationship between the GDL, its contained listed buildings and features and its historic relationship with the village of Cullen to its north-west, would not be altered by the proposed development. The development would have no impact on the cultural heritage significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting.

Cullen House GDL, Cullen House and the associated Listed Buildings are considered to be of high (national) importance. The magnitude of impact upon the assets would be very low adverse, resulting in a significance of effect of very slight.

#### 7.6.2.9 Berryhillock Conservation Area

Berryhillock Conservation Area (CA198) located 2km east of the Site contains a line of 19th century cottages (one Category B listed and five Category C listed) and the Old Mill of Berryhillock (LB2213, Category C listed) located to the east. The majority of the cottages line the eastern side of the village road and face west across the road onto an open field which is bounded on its western side by the B9018. This open land has been included within the CA boundary and contributes primarily to the setting of the CA. The historical and architectural values of the settlement derive from its development as a small agricultural hamlet comprising an 1800s corn mill and simple, vernacular cottages of stone and slate.

A key heritage asset within the Conservation Area is 10 Berryhillock (LB2207), a Category B Listed Building, noted for its preserved early 19th century architecture. The setting of 10 Berryhillock comprises the centre of the settlement of Berryhillock, which provides context for its early 19th century construction and provides a visual relationship between the surrounding historic buildings. In turn the presence of 10 Berryhillock within the Conservation Area supports the early 19th century character.

The village is situated relatively low in the landscape, adjacent to the the wooded ravine of the Burn of Deskford to the east. The land rises directly to the south-west of the village which is located at approximately 85m AOD, up to the summit of the Hill of Clashmadin which lies at a height of 289m AOD. Beyond the settlement, the landscape is generally open and undulating, comprising extensive farmland interspersed with banks of trees and large plantations located on the higher ground.

The situation of the village, partly sheltered by the bank of sloping land particularly to the south-west and against the backdrop of the mature woodland, means that extensive views into and out of the CA are limited. Views are generally restricted to those across and through the CA allowing an understanding and appreciation of the significance of the buildings and their historic relationship and development with specific reference to the footprint of the CA itself.

The proposed development is located 2.0km south-west of the asset with Turbine 8 being the closest (3.3km). The ZTV (Figure 7.1) indicates visibility of 11 turbine tips. Whilst visibility of the turbines may be possible from parts of the Conservation Area including from the open field in the western part of the CA and from the listed buildings which line the village road, the significance of the CA and its listed buildings is best appreciated and understood from within the CA where the historic and architectural appreciation of the buildings is best appreciated. The proposed development would not alter the historic relationship between the listed buildings nor the understanding of the development of the footprint of Berryhillock. The development would have no effect on the heritage significance of the assets and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience their setting.

The Conservation Area and 10 Berryhillock are considered to be of medium (regional) importance. It is predicted that the operation of this proposed development would result in a Very low Adverse Magnitude of impact on these assets based on the contributing factors to their significance and therefore is has an overall significance of effect as Negligible.

#### 7.6.2.10 Tor Sliasg (NJ45NW0001, SLR07)

Located within the Site is the remains of a cairn, recorded as a non-designated heritage asset within the HER. The HER details that the monument measures c.14m north-west to south-east by 12m north-east to south-west and is 1.2m high. The northern arc is mutilated and the centre has been quarried away. The cairn dates to the Bronze Age and has archaeological value for its potential to contain archaeological deposits and/ or material which could inform on prehistoric social or cultural structures and palaeo-environmental factors.

The monument is situated close to the crest of Tor Sliasg, which stands at a height of 304m AOD. It is located on its south-east side and at the time of its construction, would have had views eastwards overlooking the Burn of Fernking and across to the crest of Black Hill. Today, these views outwards are not possible due the surrounding conifer plantations with only glimpsed views possible between the trees. The trees also screen views towards the monument which is overgrown with turf and shrubs such that it is not immediately discernible. In close proximity to the asset the HER records seven possible mortar pits and four saw pits which are of a modern date.

The cairn is located approximately 0.8km north of Turbine 3. The monument would not be physically impacted upon by development and therefore its archaeological value which primarily contributes to its significance would remain unchanged. The turbines are located to the south and east of the asset. Visibility of the turbines from the asset is dependent on the tree screening that is presently surrounding it however it is anticipated that there will be partial or full views of the majority of the turbines. The presence of the turbines, whilst a prominent addition to the landscape, would only affect possible views of Black Hill, the relationship between the asset and the valley of Fernking remaining. However, it should be noted that an appreciation of the wider prehistoric landscape and how the asset was perceived within it when it was first constructed including any relationship with landscape features, has already been diminished by the presence of the conifer plantations which have effectively changed and interrupted any intended intervisibility.

The council regard the monument is to be of medium (regional) importance. The magnitude of impact upon the asset would be Low Adverse Magnitude based on the contributing factors to the asset's significance, resulting in a significance of effect of Very Slight.

#### 7.6.2.11 Meiklehill (NJ46SW0001, SLR03)

The asset comprises a single stone which is all that remains of a small circle of upright stones enclosing a large cairn, that was dismantled and removed in 1867. Nothing of antiquarian interest was known to have been found. The monument has some archaeological value for any residual buried remains albeit if present, these would likely have been heavily disturbed by the activities of 1867.

The monument is situated on the southern slopes of Meiklehill which would have allowed for extensive views across the wider landscape up and down the valley to the east and west as well as south to the higher ground including the Hill of Stonyslacks, Addie Hill, Black Hill and Hill of Clashmadin. Whilst the HER does not record any contemporary Bronze Age assets with intervisibility with the monument, this cannot be ruled out. Today the monument is enveloped within woodland and views are completely screened.

The proposed development is located 0.7km south of the asset with turbine 1 being the closest (3km). Whilst the ZTV indicates visibility of the proposed development, the woodland surrounding the asset likely means that views will be heavily interrupted if indeed any views are possible at all. The presence of the turbines, whilst a prominent addition to the landscape, would not interrupt any intended relationship between the asset and landscape features which contribute to an understanding of its setting, being set back from the summits of Hill of Stonyslacks, Addie Hill, Black Hill and Hill of Clashmadin. The development would have no effect on the heritage significance of the asset and the ability to understand, appreciate and experience it in its setting.

The council regard the monument to be of medium (regional) importance. The magnitude of impact upon the asset would be none, resulting in a significance of effect of nil.

#### 7.6.2.12 Mitigation and Residual Effects

Mitigation through design has been embedded as outlined in **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design Evolution** and efforts have been taken to ensure that the assets outlined in **Section 7.6** have been considered during the design process as well as seeking ongoing advice from HES in regard to mitigating any effects where possible. No further mitigation with regards to impact on setting is required.

As such, any residual effects of the proposed development will be as concluded above.

### 7.6.3 Decommissioning Effects

It is assumed that the decommissioning of the proposed development would return the landscape to its current state after the length of life that the proposed development has been in effect.

There would be no negative post operational effects to the setting of any assets within 10km as the landscape would return to its original setting at the time of the proposals.

There would be no direct effects on assets on the assumption that no new ground disturbance would take place through decommissioning.

## 7.7 Assessment of Cumulative Effects

As per the aforementioned guidance and methodology in Section 7.4.1.4, cumulative assessment should only take place where adverse direct, indirect, or settings effects arise on assets. As such, cumulative impacts would only be assessed when a heritage asset was predicted to receive an above Slight effect from the proposed development.

As no above Slight effects have been identified, it is evaluated that a cumulative assessment is not warranted in this instance.

## 7.8 Summary

This assessment has considered data from a diverse range of sources in order to determine the presence of heritage assets which may be affected by the proposed development. The potential direct, indirect, and settings effects of the proposed development on the identified assets, mitigation measures for protecting known assets during construction or recording of currently unknown features which could be lost due to groundworks during construction, and the residual effects of the proposed development have also been assessed.

Mitigation through design has been embedded throughout the design process as outlined in **Chapter 3: Site Selected and Design Evolution**. Most notably, consultation with regards to impacts on the setting of Letterfourie House (LB5541) undertaken and the resulting conclusions were embedded in the design.

The assessment has considered the potential direct, indirect and settings impacts on the heritage assets outlined in **Table 7-9**, which provides a summary of the identified significance of effect upon them.

**Table 7-9: Summary of Residual Effects**

| Asset | Likely Significance of Effect | Mitigation Measures | Means of Implementation | Residual Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Various post medieval assets | Slight | Watching brief (to be agreed) | Condition | Slight |
| Letterfourie House (LB5541) | Slight | N/A | N/A | Slight |
| Davie's Castle (SM11042) | Very Slight | N/A | N/A | Very Slight |

| Asset | Likely Significance of Effect | Mitigation Measures | Means of Implementation | Residual Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inaltry Castle (SM11178) | Very Slight | N/A | N/A | Very Slight |
| Ha' Hillock, Motte (SM11046) | Very Slight | N/A | N/A | Very Slight |
| Durn Hill (SM13748) | Very Slight | N/A | N/A | Very Slight |
| Gordon Castle and its Associated Buildings (Bog of Gight) (LB1595/ GDL00189) | | N/A | N/A | |
| St John's Church and Tower of Deskford (SM90095/LB2209) | Very Slight | N/A | N/A | Very Slight |
| Cullen House and Designed Landscape (LB2219/GDL00121 | Very Slight | N/A | N/A | Very Slight |
| Berryhillock Conservation Area | Negligible | N/A | N/A | Negligible |
| Tor Sliasg (NJ45NW0001, SLR07 | Very Slight | Mitigation through Design | Embedded measures | Very Slight |
| Meiklehill (NJ46SW0001, SLR03) | Nil | Mitigation through Design | Embedded measures | Nil |

No assets have presented with a Moderate or above Significance of Effect, nor to a degree that would reduce the ability to understand or appreciate those assets or that the integrity of their setting be so adversely impacted. As such the development would be in line with Policy 7h of NPF4 (2023).

## 7.9 References

### 7.9.1 Legislation

- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979;
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997;
- Scottish Statutory Instrument No. 101 The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017; and
- The Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011 (this includes amendments to the above).

### 7.9.2 Policy

- National Planning Framework 4 (Scottish Government 2023);
- Our Past, Our Future: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (Scottish Government, 2023);
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS 2019); and
- Historic Environment Circular 1, HES 2019.

### 7.9.3 Guidance

- Planning Advice Note Planning and Archaeology PAN 2/2011;
- HES's Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (HES 2020);
- HES's Designation, Policy and Selection Guidance (HES 2019);
- Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook (SNH (Naturescot) and HES 2019)
- CIfA's Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (CIfA 2014a), which gives best practice for the execution of desk based assessments; and
- CIfA's Code of Conduct (CIfA 2014b).