



# Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign

Technical Appendix 6.4: Effects Lower Than Moderate

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## Appendix 6.4 Effects lower than Moderate

### A.1 Introduction

Effects which are Moderate or greater (i.e. those which are significant and those just below the threshold of significance) are reported in Chapter 6. Where effects on receptors are judged to be of Moderate/minor or lower they are described below.

#### A.1.1 Effects on Landscape Character

##### 2 Coastal Farmland (4.7km, north)

This LCT forms lower lying farmland between the previous three character types and the coast. The LCT is described within the MWELSS as follows:

*“This landscape forms an extensive low-lying plain which is gently undulating to flat but also features pockets of more rolling landform and occasional small but prominent ridges and hills. This fertile plain is intensively farmed with large fields of arable crops and some pasture interspersed with small conifer blocks. It is a well-settled landscape which accommodates a number of large settlements and major roads. Views are long distance and tend to focus on the uplands of Moray to the south but with views to the sea often screened by forest or landform from lower-lying areas. ... farms and residential buildings ... are dispersed fairly evenly across this landscape ... larger industrial buildings ... are occasional features.”*

Applying the approach set out at section 6.4.2.3 of the LVIA chapter, landscape susceptibility criteria for this character area are as set out within Table A6.4.1 below. The MWELSS does not provide consideration of sensitivity to turbines of over 150m for this landscape and the ratings for turbines of 100-150m are used as a guide given that this is not the host landscape so turbine size is less relevant:

**Table A6.4.1: Susceptibility – LCT 2**

Criteria	Rating from MWELSS	Comment (quotes are from MWELSS / MWELCS)
Scale	High	<i>“open and expansive coastal plain but with more rolling landform, occasional outcrop hills and woodlands providing containment in some areas. A lower lying linear shallow basin extending south/west to north/east is larger in scale and particularly open. This landscape is well settled ... providing ready scale references..”</i>
Landform	Medium	<i>“generally simple gently undulating to flat landform” with some “prominent hills and ridges and small areas of more complex rolling landform.”</i>
Land cover	Medium	<i>“simple land cover pattern of large arable fields interspersed with small blocks of conifers. Some larger coniferous plantations occur close to the coast and the Spey Valley. Small pockets of more diverse land cover”.</i>
Built Environment (from MWELCS)	High-medium	Mix of small and larger settlements, dispersed farms, occasional industrial buildings, airfields, quarries, roads and transmission lines.
Landscape Context	N/A	This criterion is not relevant for non-host landscapes as set out at section 6.4.2.3 of Chapter 6.
Visual Amenity	High	<i>“This landscape can be very open in places with extensive and unimpeded views....Some inter-visibility between the coast and this landscape occurs east of the Spey”. Inland areas to the south have “open and elevated views across this landscape and over the Moray Firth.</i>



Taking account of the criteria above, susceptibility of this LCT is judged to be High/medium. The LCT is largely undesignated, except for small areas within the Spey valley and to the west of Cullen and is judged to be of Community value and High/medium sensitivity.

As indicated by Figure 6.6, there will be limited visibility of the turbines from the eastern end of the LCT between Cullen and Buckie where nearby forestry will limit views to either no visibility (near Cullen) or just the western group of turbines at distances of 6.5km or greater. In this part of the LCT there will be no changes to character. More open views of the proposed development will arise in the area between Buckie and the Spey Valley as illustrated by Figure 6.6 and viewpoints 8, 10, 11, 13 and 19. In this area, as set out at section 6.6.2.1 of the LVIA chapter **Error! Reference source not found.**, effects will be Medium/small in the Limited extent of the LCT within 5km near Broadley, reducing to Small scale in a Localised extent of the LCT along the corridor of the A98 between the edge of the LCT and the coastal settlements of Portgordon and Buckie to the north and between the two large areas of forestry to the south-east of Buckie and the south-west of Portgordon. The magnitude of change will be Slight and effects will be Moderate/minor, Adverse and not significant.

## A.1.2 Effects on Visual Receptors

### Visual Receptor Groups

**Mosstodloch and rural area to the south-west (7.7km, west)** – This group encompasses the village and the rural area extending south-west to the B9013. The eastern edge of this group, where the ZTVs indicate limited visibility, falls just within the Spey Valley and Lower Spey and Gordon Castle Policies SLAs although the majority of this group is not encompassed within designated areas. Residents and visitors to this area will have a High susceptibility to changes in view which, for the most part, would be of Community value. Considering these factors together, sensitivity is judged to be High/medium.

Figures 6.2 and 6.3 indicate that, aside from the closest parts of this group where the forested hills east of Fochabers provide a greater degree of screening, there will be visibility of most of the proposed turbines from the more open rural areas and routes that pass through them. In reality, as illustrated by viewpoint 21, visibility will be markedly less. Although the blade tips of turbines in the eastern group are theoretically visible, they will be low on the skyline and will generally be screened by forestry or other intervening vegetation in the majority of views from this area. Similarly, although more openly visible, the turbines in the closer western group will also be partly screened by landform and/or vegetation in many views. Views from within Mosstodloch will largely be screened by the close spacing of buildings and localised vegetation within the settlement. The proposed development will give rise to no greater than Small scale changes to views over an Intermediate extent of this receptor group. This will result in Slight magnitude of change and effects will be Moderate/minor, Adverse and not significant.

**Findochty and Portknockie (8.3km, north)** – This group encompasses the two villages and the rural areas extending between the coast and the Bauds of Cullen and residents and visitors to the area will have a High susceptibility to changes in views. The coastal strip, including the settlements, falls within the Portgordon to Cullen Coast SLA indicating views of Regional value while the rural area inland is undesignated and views here are of Community value. Considering these factors together, sensitivity is judged to be High/medium.

The ZTVs on Figures 6.2 and 6.3 indicate relatively limited and largely blade tip visibility will occur across the open rural area in the south-west part of the group while there will be no notable visibility from within the two settlements. Rising ground to the southeast of Findochty and the series of low hills around Bin of Cullen to the south of this will largely obscure views of the closer eastern group of turbines (as shown by illustrative viewpoint B). The smaller and more distant western group of turbines will be more openly visible from this area and would be seen as fairly distant, skyline features that will be peripheral to the expansive views looking along the coastline and out to sea. The proposed development will result in no greater than Small scale changes to views in the closer parts of the group although these will tend more towards Negligible scale further east where the western group of turbines becomes increasingly screened by intervening terrain. These would occur over a



Localised extent of the group, outside of the settlements, resulting in a Slight magnitude of change and effects that will be Moderate/minor, Adverse and not significant.

**Rural area between Banff, Portsoy, Gordonstown and Aberchirder (9km, east)** – This group includes the village of Boyndie and the local roads and dispersed properties between the three main settlements. Residents and visitors to this area have a High susceptibility to changes to views which, given that almost all of the local roads and homes lie to the south of the coastal SLA, are of Community value. Considering these factors together, sensitivity is judged to be High/medium.

As shown by Figure 6.2, there will be patchy visibility of the proposed development across this area, mainly from the group of hills which extend southwards from Hills of Boyndie, via Hill of Culbirnie and Hill of Maulderlea (viewpoint 17) to Blacklaw and Cornhill. As indicated by the analysis at section **Error! Reference source not found.** of the LVIA chapter, and illustrated by viewpoint 16 and 17, changes to views will be Negligible scale beyond 10km. Views of up to 5 blade tips at distances of 7-10km to the southwest of Cornhill would give rise to Negligible changes to views given intervening turbines at Lurg Hill. The magnitude of change will be Negligible and effects will be Minor, adverse and not significant.

**Fordyce (9.1km, north-east)** – This group includes the village which is located within a valley, and the local roads within approximately 2km. Residents and visitors to this area will have a High susceptibility to changes to views which are of Community value. Considering these factors together, sensitivity is judged to be High/medium.

As shown by Figure 6.2, there will be very limited visibility from the village itself due to its low lying position. Visibility will be further reduced by trees within the village and alongside the burn which are not included in the ZTV modelling; such that the visibility will consist of glimpsed views of blade tips through vegetation in winter. More open views will be available from the local roads which radiate from the village, particularly the road to the north-east which descends from Durn Hill as illustrated by viewpoint 15. Changes to views will be Small scale for a Localised extent and the magnitude of change will be Slight/negligible. Effects will be Minor, Adverse and not significant.

## Key Routes

**A96 (3.5km, south-west)** - This route runs north-west to south-east through the study area via Elgin, Fochabers, Keith and Huntly. Road users on this route would primarily be undertaking longer journeys and have a Low susceptibility to changes to views which are mostly of Community value indicating Low sensitivity.

As shown by Figure 6.2, the first views for northbound travellers will be a Limited extent of visibility near viewpoint 20 to the south of Keith, where changes to views will be Negligible scale. On leaving Keith the western turbine group will be briefly visible to the right at distances of around 3.5-5.5km (similar to, but more distant than nearby viewpoint 4), giving rise to a Localised extent of Medium scale changes to views. Beyond this, the turbines would be behind the direction of travel.

For southbound travellers, the first views of the turbines would arise between Elgin and Fochabers where the turbines will be seen ahead of the direction of travel at distances of 10-17km, giving rise to Negligible changes to views. The main area of visibility would arise approaching Keith, as discussed above, beyond which the turbines would pass behind the direction of travel.

Considering these effects together, the magnitude of change will be Moderate/slight and effects will be Minor, Adverse and not significant.

**A98 (4.7km, north-west)** - This route runs west to east through the study area via Fochabers, Cullen and Banff. Road users on this route would primarily be undertaking longer journeys and have a Low susceptibility to changes to views which are of Community value - as shown by Figure 6.2, the route marks the SLA boundary through Aberdeenshire, but the inland views towards the site look away from the SLA.

As shown by Figure 6.2, the main area of visibility for eastbound travellers will be from the route south of Buckie, where the turbines will be seen along the wooded skyline at distances of approximately 5-6km as illustrated by viewpoint 10. In this Localised stretch of the route, changes to views will be Medium/small scale. A further Limited extent of Small scale changes to views will arise



as the route leaves Cullen before it turns to the east and the turbines are behind the direction of travel. For westbound travellers, the first notable views will be as the route approaches Cullen, with the main effects in the stretch south of Buckie as discussed above.

Considering these effects together, the magnitude of change will be Slight and effects will be Minor, Adverse and not significant.

**A95 (5.8km, south)** – This route runs south-west to north-east through the study area via Charlestown of Aberlour, Keith and Banff. Road users on this route would primarily be undertaking longer journeys and have a Low susceptibility to changes to views which are mostly of Community value in the areas of visibility indicating Low sensitivity. Part of the route in the Spey valley lies within an SLA, but as shown by Figure 6.2 changes to views will be Limited in extent and Negligible in scale for this stretch of the road.

As shown by Figure 6.2 visibility for north-bound travellers will arise initially as a brief view of the turbines in the direction of travel as the road descends towards Mulben, where the turbines will be seen adjacent to and partly screened by Hill of Muderie at distances of 9-10km, giving rise to a Limited extent of Small scale changes to views. The main area of visibility will arise after leaving Keith where there will be occasional views of the turbines to the left at distances of 6-7km – similar to nearby viewpoint 9 - until reaching Farnton, after which there will be no further views of the turbines before they pass behind the direction of travel. This will give rise to Medium scale changes to views for a Localised extent of the route.

For southbound travellers there will be distant (10-13km) views of the turbines beyond those at Lurg Hill from near Cornhill, giving rise to Negligible scale changes to views, and views of the turbines to the right between Farnton and Keith as discussed for northbound travellers.

Considering these effects together, the magnitude of change will be Moderate/slight and effects will be Minor, Adverse and not significant.

**Rail line between Aberdeen and Inverness (5.2km, south)** – This route runs via Huntly, Keith and Elgin through the study area, frequently within valleys. Rail passengers often enjoy the views from windows but are also travelling at speed and have Medium susceptibility. The railway largely passes through undesignated areas and views are of Community value indicating Medium sensitivity.

Rail travellers have their views directed to either side of the route by the orientation of seating and windows and the main areas of visibility will be to the east of Keith and to a lesser degree the west of Keith (a Localised extent of the route), at distances of 5.2-7km where changes to views will be Medium/small scale. This judgement takes account of the fact that in the closest views, visibility will be from lower lying areas and more constrained than the nearby elevated location of viewpoint 9. There will also be visibility from the route southwest of Fochabers at distances of around 11km, where changes to views will be Negligible scale. The magnitude of change will be Moderate/slight and effects will be Moderate/minor, Adverse and not significant.

## Recreational Receptors

**Moray Coastal cycle route and National Cycle Route 1 (7km, north)** – As shown by Figure 6.7, this route runs along the coast and partly inland to the north of the site. It is part of two longer distance routes which extend beyond the study area. Cyclists have Medium susceptibility to changes to views given their focus on the road and the route lies largely outside of designation areas where views are of Community value, indicating Medium sensitivity.

As shown by Figure 6.2, the main views of the proposed development for eastbound cyclists will be when approaching Garmouth at distances of more than 10km, where changes to views will be Negligible and between Garmouth and Portgordon where there will be Small scale changes to views. For westbound cyclists the main effects will be from between Portsoy and Cullen (see viewpoints 15 and 16) where the changes to views in the patches of visibility between Fordyce and Cullen will be Small scale, and between Findochty and Buckie where there will also be a short stretch of visibility giving rise to small scale changes to views. Considering these effects together, they will occur across a Localised extent of the route and the magnitude of change will be Slight/negligible. Effects will be Minor, Adverse and not significant.



**North East 250 (7km, north)** – As shown by Figure 6.7, this route runs along the Spey Valley to the west of the site and then eastwards along the coast. It is part of a longer 250 mile circular route and travellers using it will be tourists, partly looking to experience the views, but also driving between visitor destinations. They have a Medium susceptibility to changes to views which are of Regional value given that much of the route runs through SLAs. Sensitivity is judged to be Medium.

The main areas of visibility for drivers heading north and east will be from south of Fochabers (see viewpoint 21) and between Spey Bay and Portgordon (see viewpoints 13 and 19); and for those heading east and south will be from near Portsoy (see viewpoint 16). These distant views will give rise to Small scale changes to views for a very Limited extent of the route. The magnitude of change will be Negligible and effects will be Minor/negligible, adverse and not significant.

**Isla Way (5.7km, south)** – As shown by Figure 6.7, this route runs between Keith and Dufftown along Strath Isla. Walkers using the route would have a High susceptibility to changes to views which are of Community value, indicating High/medium sensitivity. Given the orientation of the route, effects will primarily arise for walkers heading towards Keith. Figure 6.2 indicates visibility between Auchindachy and Keith at distances of approximately 7-9 km, where changes to views will be Small scale within this Limited extent of the route. Walkers would have recently passed both Hill of Towie and Edintore wind farms before reaching this point in their walk. The magnitude of change will be Negligible and effects will be Minor/negligible, adverse and not significant.

**Speyside Way (7.4km, north-west)** – As shown by Figure 6.7 this long distance footpath runs west along the coast from Buckie to Spey Bay and southwards from these along the Spey Valley. The route largely passes through SLAs and walkers would be expecting to enjoy the coastal and river views indicating Regional value, High susceptibility and High/medium sensitivity.

As shown by Figure 6.2, there will be very limited visibility of the turbines from the route except for eastbound walkers between Garmouth and Portgordon, where there will be short stretches of the route where the turbines would be seen beyond the wooded skyline, giving rise to Small scale changes to views for this very Limited extent of the route as illustrated by viewpoints 13 and 19. The magnitude of change will be Negligible and effects will be Minor/negligible, adverse and not significant.

**Moray Coastal Trail (7.4km, north)** – As shown by Figure 6.7 this long distance footpath runs west from Cullen. It mostly follows the coastline, moving slightly inland between Portgordon and Spey Bay and as it crosses the River Spey. The route largely passes through SLAs and walkers would be expecting to enjoy coastal views indicating Regional value, High susceptibility and High/medium sensitivity.

As shown by Figure 6.2, there will be intermittent visibility of the proposed development seen slightly to the right of the direction of travel for eastbound walkers between Lossiemouth and Garmouth. These will be distant views and the scale of change would be Negligible. Between Garmouth and Portgordon, there will be short stretches of the route where the turbines would be seen beyond the wooded skyline, giving rise to Medium/small scale changes to views as illustrated by viewpoints 13 and 19. East of Portgordon there will be no visibility and/or the turbines will be behind the direction of travel except for very short stretches where the route turns southwards at Craig Head and east of Portknockie, where effects will also be Small scale. For westbound walkers the main area of visibility would be around Findochty where the turbines will be seen to the left of the route (see illustrative viewpoint B), giving rise to Small scale changes to views. Considering these effects together, there will be Medium/small scale changes to views for a very Limited extent and Small scale changes to views for a Limited extent of the route and the magnitude of change will be Slight/negligible. Effects will be Minor, adverse and not significant.

**Gordon Castle Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL) (4.6km, northwest)** – This landscape consists of the wider policies which surround the castle including woodland, farmland and parkland as well as the formal walled gardens. This landscape is of National value and visitors will be expecting to enjoy the landscape and views and will have High susceptibility and High sensitivity.

As illustrated by Figure 6.2 and viewpoint 22 (wireline), there is theoretical visibility of the blades of the western group of turbines from some of the parkland and farmland at the western edge of the designated area. On site it can be seen that the woodland is typically taller than the 15m modelled in



the ZTV study, and visibility is further reduced by parkland trees, such that noticeable views of the turbine blades are unlikely to arise except from areas of the farmland where there are fewer parkland trees. Viewpoint 22 from the walled garden indicates that views of the turbines will be screened by trees such that there may (at most) only be glimpses of blade tips between the trees. Changes to views will be Small scale and taking account that they will arise across a small area of the farmland, will affect a Limited extent of the GDL. The magnitude of change will be Negligible and effects will be Minor, Adverse and not significant.

### A.1.3 Effects on Designated Areas

#### Spey Valley SLA (4.3km, west)

As shown by Figure 6.2, this SLA is located to the west of the site and runs along the wooded Spey valley broadly south to north across the study area. Terrain and vegetation will restrict visibility of the proposed development to open areas of the western valley sides south-west of Fochabers (viewpoint 21 is nearby but has more open visibility than will be available within the SLA) where only the western group of turbines will be seen; Ben Aigan – see viewpoint 18; and areas near Rothes at distances of over 12km.

Table A6.4.2 considers effects on each of the special qualities of the SLA, which as a local designation is considered to be of Regional value.

**Table A6.4.2: Effects on special qualities of Spey Valley SLA**

Special Quality	Susceptibility	Scale of effect
Diverse and scenic landscape - broad gently weaving river within floodplain farmland	High – views of the turbines may detract from the appreciation of scenic qualities.	Small scale for a Limited extent – Where the turbines are visible they will be a minor feature seen in the distance beyond the wooded valley sides.
Broad gently weaving river	Medium – views of the turbines may affect key views of the river.	Negligible – The main area of visibility of the proposed development is not near the river and has limited visibility of the river.
Wooded valley sides	Medium – views of the turbines above woodland may detract from the sense of enclosure by woodland.	Small scale for a Limited extent – In views from the western valley sides near Fochabers, the western group of turbines will be seen beyond the wooded skyline at distances of 8-10km.
Distinctive settlements	High - views of turbines could affect the landscape setting and character of settlements.	Negligible – There may be some limited and distant visibility of the turbines from Rothes where localised screening by vegetation permits, but these will not affect perceptions of the settlement character.
Cultural associations with whisky distilling	Low – views of wind turbines are unlikely to affect this association	Negligible – The turbines will be seen in some views along with distillery warehouses but this will not affect the cultural association.

Considering these effects together, there will be a Negligible magnitude of change to special qualities of High and Medium susceptibility and High/medium sensitivity. Effects will be Minor, Adverse and not significant.

#### Lower Spey and Gordon Castle Policies SLA (4.6km, north-west)

As shown by Figure 6.2, this SLA is located to the north-west of the site and encompasses the Gordon Castle GDL and a short stretch of the wooded Spey valley between Gordon castle and Garmouth. Terrain and vegetation will restrict visibility of the proposed development to open fields within the Gordon Castle GDL where only the western group of turbines will be visible, and narrow bands of visibility of both turbine groups along both upper valley sides between Mosstodloch and Garmouth, as represented by viewpoint 19.



Table A6.4.3 considers effects on each of the special qualities of the SLA, which as a local designation is considered to be of Regional value.

**Table A6.4.3: Effects on special qualities of Lower Spey and Gordon Castle Policies SLA**

Special Quality	Susceptibility	Scale of effect
Contrast between lower Spey valley and Gordon Castle policies	Medium – views of turbines may affect the appreciation of this contrast.	Small scale for a Limited extent – this quality will be affected by views of the turbines from the area north of Mosstodloch where there are views looking across the Spey to the east.
Richness of the Spey for wildlife	Low	Negligible – the proposed development will not affect the value of the SLA in respect of biodiversity
Richness of the SLA for recreation	Medium – views of turbines may affect the enjoyment of recreational opportunities	Small scale for a Limited extent – there will be no visibility from the key visitor destination of the walled garden at Gordon Castle, and distant visibility (at approximately 8km) only from a short stretch of the long distance footpath.
Relationship of Gordon Castle policies to Fochabers and its value in providing an attractive setting to the town	Medium – views of turbines may affect the way in which this relationship is perceived.	Negligible – there will be very limited visibility of the turbines from the areas around Fochabers within the SLA.

Considering these effects together, there will be a Negligible magnitude of change to special qualities of Medium susceptibility and Medium sensitivity. Effects will be Minor/negligible, Adverse and not significant.

### Lossiemouth to Portgordon Coast SLA (7.2km, north-west)

As shown by Figure 6.2, this SLA is located to the north-west of the site and runs along the coast, crossing the Spey between the two coastal settlements. Much of the central area of the SLA is forested and visibility areas of visibility will be focussed close to Lossiemouth at distances of more than 20km; west of the Spey near Garmouth at distances of just over 10km, and in patches to the south of Spey Bay and west of Portgordon at distances of 7.5km to 10km, as represented by viewpoints 13 and 19.

Table A6.4.4 considers effects on each of the special qualities of the SLA, which as a local designation is considered to be of Regional value.

**Table A6.4.4: Effects on special qualities of Lossiemouth to Portgordon Coast SLA**

Special Quality	Susceptibility	Scale of effect
Braided mouth of the Spey and ridged cobble beaches	Medium - views of turbines may detract from appreciation of these features.	Negligible – this part of the SLA is more than 10km from the turbines and changes to both views and character will be negligible scale.
Areas designated for their geomorphological and nature conservation importance	Low	Negligible – the proposed development will not affect the SLA in respect of the designation status of these areas.
Well-used for recreation	Medium – views of turbines may affect the enjoyment of recreational opportunities.	Medium/small scale for a Limited extent – there would be some views of the turbines at distances of 8-10km from the areas south of Spey Bay and west of Port Gordon including from the long distance footpath and beach.



Special Quality	Susceptibility	Scale of effect
Sense of seclusion ... in the more remote middle sections of the coast where scheduled WWII defences have a particularly evocative quality	High – views of turbines may reduce the sense of seclusion and distract from appreciation of the WWII defences.	Negligible – the turbines will not be visible within this central section of the SLA.

Considering these effects together, there will be a Slight/negligible magnitude of change to special qualities of Medium susceptibility and Medium sensitivity. Effects will be Minor/negligible, Adverse and not significant.

### North Aberdeenshire Coast SLA (8.1km, north-east)

As shown by Figure 6.2, this SLA is located to the north-east of the site and runs along the coast, between Cullen and Macduff within the study area, and continues beyond to the east. There are areas of higher ground inland associated with the headlands and points and there would be visibility from these areas to either side of Sandend Bay; from east of Portsoy; near Boyndie Airfield and areas around the edges of Banff and Macduff. Given the presence of the wind farm at Boyndie Airfield, no effects on special qualities would arise within the areas of visibility near Boyndie Airfield, Banff and Macduff.

Table A6.4.5 considers effects on each of the special qualities of the SLA, which as a local designation is considered to be of Regional value.

**Table A6.4.5: Effects on special qualities of North Aberdeenshire Coast SLA**

Special Quality	Susceptibility	Scale of effect
Abrupt land/sea coastal edge with relatively long stretches of cliffs. Rugged coastal cliffs and headlands, forming an intricate coast of inlets and rocky bays with important outcrops of rocks and fossils.	Low – these physical qualities would not be affected, though views of turbines may distract from appreciation of them.	Negligible – visibility from the coastal edge would be very limited within 10km, and changes to character and views beyond this area would be of negligible scale as set out at section <b>Error! Reference source not found..</b>
Wild sense of place including exposure, wildness, remoteness and drama associated with rugged cliffs.	High - views of turbines may affects this perception.	Negligible – coastal parts of the SLA lie beyond 9km and the scale of change to their character would be negligible as set out at section <b>Error! Reference source not found..</b>
Pristine beaches	Low – these physical qualities would not be affected, though views of turbines may distract from appreciation of them.	Negligible – there would be no visibility of the turbines from Sandend Bay which is the only beach within 15km.
Distinctive settlements	High - views of turbines could affect the landscape setting and character of settlements	Negligible – the nearest settlements within the SLA are Portsoy and Sandend and changes to views from areas close to these settlements would be negligible scale.
Historic trade and fishing harbours such as Portsoy, Banff, and Macduff with larger settlements retaining characteristic links to maritime industry.	Low – this association would be unlikely to be affected by views of a wind farm	Negligible – the proposed development would not affect this quality.



Special Quality	Susceptibility	Scale of effect
Coastal dens - a deep-wooded ravines with a distinct, tranquil character	High – turbines would affect the sense of enclosure if seen from these locations.	Negligible – the nearest of these to the site is near Boyne Bay where the location is affected by large scale quarrying and there will be no visibility of the turbines.
Nature conservation interest	Low	Negligible – the proposed development will not affect the SLA in respect of the designation status of these areas.
Fortified historic sites, ancient and historic structures.	High – views of turbines could detract from the appreciation of these features.	Small scale for a Limited extent – there will be views of the turbines from near Findlater Castle to the east of Cullen.
A recreational coast with beaches, coastal paths and more formal recreation.	Medium – views of turbines may affect the enjoyment of recreational opportunities.	Small scale for a Limited extent – there would be some views of the turbines at distances of 8-10km between Cullen and Sandend.

Considering these effects together, there will be a Negligible magnitude of change to special qualities of High and Medium susceptibility and Medium sensitivity. Effects will be Minor, Adverse and **not significant**.

