

Appendix 6.2

Landscape Character Baseline and Impact Assessment

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A6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Impact Assessment

A6.2.1 Introduction

1. This appendix provides greater detail on the landscape character of the route corridor and the identified study area.
2. For each receptor existing baseline information is provided, followed by details of the landscape value, susceptibility and sensitivity to the proposed development. The magnitude of change and overall level of effects is then provided for each receptor.
3. The landscape baseline forms the basis for the identification and description of the landscape changes that may result from the proposed development. It establishes the character of the area, based on reference to published characterisation studies, such as the NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)) 'Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland'. Designated landscapes (national and local) and other sensitive landscape receptors are identified via GIS datasets and other desk-based research.
4. Potential landscape receptors are identified through a review of the baseline studies, responses from key consultees such as South Lanarkshire Council and NatureScot and through site survey to verify the extent of potential effects.
5. **Figures 6.2-6.5** illustrate the landscape character, designations and constraints within the study area referenced in this appendix.

A6.2.2 Existing Landscape Baseline and Overview of the Route Corridor

6. This section outlines the broad landscape of the route corridor commencing at the Kennoxhead connection point and finishing at Coalburn Substation.
7. The initial 3.3 km of the proposed development is an underground cable which runs north and then north-east through an area of commercial forestry to the north-west of Kennox Water. The underground cable exits the forestry and the proposed development continues as an overhead line (OHL), overhead pole no. 1 is located in the valley moorland separating the forestry from Kennox Water along the valley floor.
8. From the location of overhead pole no. 1 and heading broadly north-east the route corridor follows the valley moorland landscape located between Kennox Water and an area of commercial forestry, with limited publicly accessible visual receptors. The route corridor then crosses an area of degraded land, the legacy of opencast workings. As the route corridor reaches and passes Carmacoup and the A70 it would be in the vicinity of a small number of residential properties. The route corridor continues broadly north-east and enters the Douglas Water valley with the village of Glespin and the A70 to the south, both of which host receptors from where the OHL may be visible on the moorland of the valley slopes.
9. As the route corridor continues north-east through the Douglas Valley, it would pass through the Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA), and to the north-west of the village of Douglas. Within the SLA the tree cover associated with the former designed landscape around the village of Douglas increases and the overall landscape becomes more aesthetically pleasing. Within the SLA there are a number of Core Paths, from which the OHL would be likely to be visible. To the north-west of Douglas, the route corridor passes Douglas Substation, where there are a number of existing OHL.
10. At this section the route of the OHL is to the east of the newly built Douglas West Wind Farm and west of the existing woodland. Approximately 2.15 km north-north-east of Douglas Substation the route corridor changes direction, as it loops round the windfarm, and heads north-west and exits the SLA. The route corridor continues north-west across a landscape comprising moorland and large opencast mining areas (including Dalquhandy opencast coal site). To the immediate west of the Douglas West Wind Farm is Dalquhandy Wind Farm for which construction work has commenced. The route corridor continues and passes in between Dalquhandy Wind Farm (to the south) and Coalburn (to the north) and loops around the south-west of the village of Coalburn. Intervening woodland provides some separation of the landscape between the route

corridor and the periphery of the village. To the west of Coalburn the route corridor briefly runs through a transitional landscape between upland and lowland landscapes.

11. The final northern section of the route corridor runs through a simple moorland landscape, with signs of former and current opencast mine working visible within the landscape. The route corridor runs to the east of Hollandbush Golf Club and then in relatively close proximity to individual properties such as Glaikhead and Johnshill Farm. In this location the relatively level/ slightly undulating lowland landscape is host to roadside, garden and other vegetation which provides a visual filter between likely receptors, including users of the golf course and local residents, and the route corridor.

A6.2.3 Landscape Character

12. The landscape character of Scotland was classified in the NatureScot July 2019 mapping of landscape character types within Scotland. The landscape is classified in terms of broad character types referred to as Landscape Character Types (LCT). There are three different LCT within the study area, all of which are crossed by the route corridor, as presented on **Figure 6.3**:
 - LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley;
 - LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley; and
 - LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.
13. Starting at the 'Kennoxhead Windfarm Point of Connection' the route corridor is within LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley for approximately 5.9 km, comprising 3.2 km of underground cable and then the initial 2.7 km of OHL pole nos. 1 to 27. For the full length of the OHL in this section the route corridor would run parallel to LCT207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley, being directly adjacent to the neighbouring LCT for 610 m between pole nos. 17 and 23.
14. In between pole nos. 27 and 28 the route corridor would enter LCT207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley and continue north-east for 3.85 km comprising OHL pole nos. 28 to 65. For 1.86 km, between pole nos. 47 and 65 the route corridor runs parallel to LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.
15. At pole no. 66 the route corridor re-enters LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley and the route corridor continues for 5.4 km in this LCT between OHL pole nos. 66 and 119. The route corridor continues broadly north-east for 2.9 km before changing direction at pole no. 94 heading briefly northwards and then north-west towards Coalburn. For approximately 400 m between pole nos. 91 and 95 the central alignment of the route corridor briefly crosses the boundary into the adjacent LCT207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley. At pole no. 113 the route corridor turns west and runs directly adjacent to LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley for 650 m between pole nos. 113 and 119, at which point the route corridor turns north-west and exits the LCT.
16. The final 5.1 km of the route corridor, comprising OHL pole nos. 120 to 169 and Coalburn Substation, would be within LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.
17. For the purposes of the landscape assessment the effects on the landscape character of LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley have been separated into two assessments. The first assessment covers the LCT hosting, and adjacent to, the underground cable and OHL pole nos. 1 to 27 section of the route corridor. This section is referenced in the remainder of this report as LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (South). The second assessment covers the area of LCT hosting, and adjacent to, pole nos. 66 to 119 around the foot of the uplands to the west and north-west of Douglas valley. This section is referenced in the remainder of this report as LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central).
18. A small section of LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley is located within the north-west of the study area but is not host to the route corridor, there would not be any landscape effects on this section of the LCT and it is not assessed further within this report. There are no further LCT within the study area.
19. The South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (Adopted April 2021) (SLLDP2) states the South Lanarkshire Landscape Character Assessment (SLLCA) 2010 provides guidance on local landscapes and should be taken into account in the consideration of development proposals. The boundaries of the identified landscape areas in the SLLCA are the same as those identified in the 2019 NatureScot classification programme and accordingly both local landscape character types/areas are not assessed individually, however the assessment of the 2019 LCT is considered interchangeable with the SLLCA character areas, as per the Table A6.2.1 below:

NatureScot July 2019 LCT	South Lanarkshire 2010 LCA
LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley	LCA 7 Rolling Moorland
LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley	LCA 6 Upland River Valley
LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley	LCA 5 Plateau Farmland

Table A6.2.1: NatureScot and South Lanarkshire Local Landscape Types/Areas

20. Further information on the LCT within the study area and as assessment of the landscape effects is provided below.

LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (South)

21. As described in the NatureScot classification this area of Plateau Moorland is characterised by individually defined hills, dissected by drainage lines rather than forming a continuous flat plateau. The hills are neatly rounded or have gently sloping ridges – often named ‘rigs’ – extending from them. The landscape is often covered in blanket bog, heather and grass moorland, with extensive conifer plantations, although areas of these have been felled to accommodate wind farm development.
22. Within the LCT as a whole wind farms have reduced the perception of undeveloped character although there are still pockets of landscape which feel remote. Where forestry permits, views tend to be relatively open across the surrounding valleys and adjacent hill groups. There are a number of man-made features visible, particularly road corridors and electrical infrastructure, though few visual foci are present.
23. Within the study area the landscape in this LCT is focused around Kennox Water and the individual rounded hills typical of this landscape to its north and west, including Parishholm Hill, Chapel Hill, Urit Hill, Weddle Hill, Douglas Rig, Dryrigs Hill, Belt Knowe, Brack Hill, Wee Hill, Little Cairn Table, Cairn Table and Grindstone Rig. The hills generally range in height between 360 m AOD and 480 m AOD and the summits and south-eastern facing slopes of those closest to Kennox Water (and the route corridor) are covered in commercial forestry. The highest point in the landscape is Cairn Table, which reaches 593 m AOD.
24. To the south and east of Kennox Water the individual rounded hills typical of this landscape continue, albeit at a slightly smaller scale to the landform to the west, as the landscape moves away from the higher ground of the Ayrshire Rim to the west. The peaks include Auchendaff Hill, Kennox Hill, Hartwood Hill, Pinkstone Rig, Slimmingford Rig, White Rig, Brown Rig, Bain’s Knowe and the highest peak in this area, Cairn Kinney at 493 m AOD. To the south and east of Kennox Water the landcover is predominantly moorland although a single area of commercial forestry occupies the south-east of the study area.
25. In addition to the commercial forestry, which dominates this area of the LCT within the study area, and moorland around Kennox Water the LCT is also host to a small area of former opencast mining which has detrimentally impacted the landscape. There is only a single residential property within the study area and this area of the LCT.
26. The key characteristics of the LCT which are listed in the July 2019 NatureScot assessment and also relevant to the landscape in the study area are:
- Large scale landform;
 - Undulating hills and sloping ridges in the western areas;
 - Distinctive upland character created by the combination of elevation, exposure, smooth plateau landform, moorland vegetation;
 - Predominant lack of modern development;
 - Extensive wind turbine development (*the proposed development is linked to the development of a wind farm at Kennoxhead*); and
 - Sense of apparent naturalness and remoteness which contrasts with the farmed and settled lowlands.

Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity

27. There are no landscape designations within this area and the landscape, whilst scenically pleasing, is relatively commonplace and unremarkable. It is generally in a good condition but is dominated by commercial forestry, and evidence of opencast mining is visible within the landscape which impacts its condition. There are no core paths across this area and the landscape has limited recreational value, poor accessibility and few visitors. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.1** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the landscape of this LCT within the study area is considered to have a ‘medium’ value.
28. The route corridor is located along the lowest ground within the LCT, with the proposed cable route running through commercial forestry and then the OHL pole nos. 1 to 27 running adjacent, and on lower ground, to an area of commercial forestry and across landscape degraded by opencast mining. As such it is not considered that any of the key characteristics of the LCT detailed above would be impacted by the introduction of the proposed development. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.2** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** it is considered that this landscape has a high ability to accommodate the proposed development and change arising from the proposed development, and therefore a ‘low’ susceptibility to the proposed development.
29. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.3** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the overall sensitivity of LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (South) to the proposed development is assessed as ‘low’.

Assessment of Construction Effects

30. Direct effects arising during construction of the proposed development will be focussed on a localised area to the immediate south and west of Kennox Water. There would be some disturbance to the moorland landcover and minor felling activity of commercial forestry to accommodate the underground cable. The OHL would not require any tree felling and would be located adjacent to an existing track across an area of mainly degraded landscape (the legacy of previous mine workings) and adjacent to the commercial forestry. The existing access track would be used during the construction of the proposed development with some additional construction access tracks following the route of the OHL. Minor disturbance would occur with the creation of one 50 m x 50 m temporary hardstanding laydown area in the vicinity of OHL pole no. 1. Just before exiting the LCT a short stretch of an existing 11kV OHL would be undergrounded where the route corridor crosses the existing line immediately north of pole no. 27. The local topography, existing forestry and lack of publicly accessible areas would limit perceptibility of construction works from elsewhere within the LCT, helping to reduce the scale of the change.
31. The construction works would be temporary and the scale of change is judged to be small and the geographical extent of the construction works within the LCT is also judged to be small. The temporary nature of the construction works together with the minimal loss/alteration of the landscape baseline mean, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, that the overall magnitude of landscape change during construction is assessed as ‘low’, resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (South).

Assessment of Operational Effects

32. The proposed development is quite different in appearance to the main components of the landscape, although it would only occupy a small portion of the landscape and would not be readily noticeable (either being underground or screened/backdropped by the adjacent commercial forestry). There would either be no or only minor alteration to the key characteristics of the LCT with limited impact on the landscape baseline. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as ‘low’, resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (South).

LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley

33. Within Scotland this LCT covers five separate areas of landscape which are found where tributaries of the Clyde have cut shallow valleys into the plateau moorland and farmland between the Clyde Basin and the Ayrshire Basin. The LCT which hosts the route corridor is specifically related to the valley landscape around Douglas Water.
34. The valley landscape is orientated south-west to north-east and cuts through the coal measures of the Southern Upland Fault. As described in the NatureScot classification the landscape around Douglas Water, *‘is tightly enclosed between the steeply*

rising slopes leading to high ground to the north and south. Below Douglas, the river valley broadens, but remains predominantly upland in character until its confluence with the River Clyde to the south of Lanark. In its upper section, the valley is narrow, almost V-shaped with little or no floodplain. The valley slopes comprise rough moorland. Below its confluence with the Glespin Burn the valley widens a little and the Douglas Water swings in a series of meanders across a narrow floodplain. The valley slopes comprise a mixture of improved pasture and coniferous woodland. A considerable amount of woodland is associated with the designed landscape to the east of Douglas. The valley's historic role as a communication corridor is reflected in the presence of castles and mottes. A dismantled railway runs along the north side of the valley, running alongside the existing A70 where it passes through the narrow, twisting part of the valley approaching the Ayrshire border. There are extensive areas of former opencast coal working on the Plateau Moorland around Douglas and Glespin, within the valley to the east of the M74. More evident are the wind farm cluster on the hills to the west of Douglas and the motorway where it crosses the valley'.

35. The route corridor enters the south-west of the LCT to the south-west of Glespin and crosses an agricultural low-lying landscape for approximately 500 m before crossing Douglas Water and the major A70 communication route which follows the path of the valley floor. The route corridor almost immediately moves onto rising ground on the lower slopes of Longhouse Hill and the foothills of the Plateau Moorland. The route corridor runs to the north-west of Glespin and then parallel with the path of a dismantled railway for approximately 3.3 km across the foothills of the Plateau Moorland above the Douglas Water valley, with the very western edge of the LCT adjacent to LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central).

36. The Douglas Valley SLA occupies the majority of this LCT around Douglas Water, with the exception of the landscape at the south-west of the LCT which has been impacted by opencast mining and the village of Douglas itself. The route corridor runs through the SLA within this LCT for 2.5 km. Impacts on the SLA itself are considered separately within this appendix. The Douglas Conservation Area is focused on the north of the village of Douglas around Main Street.

37. Settlement within the LCT is focused around Douglas, the small village of Glespin and occasional scattered properties along the valley floor and the A70. The LCT is already host to existing overhead electricity transmission lines which follow the broad south-west to north-east orientation of the valley floor and communication networks.

38. The key characteristics of the LCT which are listed in the July 2019 NatureScot assessment and also relevant to the landscape in the study area are:

- A series of valleys formed along faultlines through the Plateau Moorlands and paired with valleys to the south and west in Ayrshire;
- South-west to north-east orientation of the valleys;
- Strong contrast between the wooded and settled character of the valleys and the exposed enclosing uplands; and
- Transition from the exposed upper reaches to more sheltered lowland areas.

Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity

39. Much of this LCT is a well-preserved and attractive landscape. The LCT provides a contrasting landscape to the larger scale Plateau Moorland which surrounds it, and which provides a sense of enclosure around the village of Douglas and within the sheltered valley of Douglas Water. The LCT is host to a locally designated SLA and Conservation Area and is in a generally good condition although there are some detracting features including areas of opencast mining, the M74 and the A70. In addition, there are views out of the LCT into adjacent landscapes which host wind farms. There are several Core Paths across this area, including some in close proximity to the route corridor. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.1 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the landscape of this LCT within the study area is considered to have a 'high' value.

40. Within this LCT the route corridor is initially located along low ground impacted by opencast mining before reaching Douglas Water (OHL pole nos. 28 to 33). The OHL then runs exclusively across moorland at the foothills of the higher ground to the west and on slightly higher ground to the valley to the east (OHL pole nos. 34 to 65) within the western periphery of the LCT. To the north-west of the Douglas Water valley the route corridor briefly re-enters the LCT for approximately 400 m between pole nos. 91 and 95.

41. Whilst sections of the OHL are likely to be visible from several receptors within the LCT (including users of Core Paths, users of the A70 and residents of Glespin) it is unlikely to be perceptible from large areas of the LCT (including Douglas) due to distance from the route corridor and intervening woodland belts and/ or landform. When perceptible the route corridor would

be adjacent to existing wood pole lines for much of its path through this LCT. It is not considered that any of the key characteristics of the LCT detailed above would be changed by the introduction of the proposed development. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.2 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** it is considered that this landscape has a medium ability to accommodate the proposed development and change arising from the proposed development, and therefore a 'medium' susceptibility to the proposed development.

42. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.3 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the overall sensitivity of LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley to the proposed development is assessed as 'medium'.

Assessment of Construction Effects

43. Direct effects arising during construction of the proposed development will be focussed on a localised area in between Carmacoup and Glespin where the route corridor crosses Douglas Water and on the transitional landscape between the uplands and lower lying areas. There would be some disturbance to the moorland landcover and minor felling at the location of pole no. 32 only. Construction work on the lower ground of the moorland above Glespin would be visible to nearby receptors. Temporary scaffolding would be required where the route corridor crosses Douglas Water and the A70; and where the OHL crosses an access track between OHL pole nos. 50 and 51. Within this LCT, as well as crossing Douglas Water the OHL would also cross Windrow Burn and Robshill Burn, scaffolding would not be required for either crossing.

44. The temporary construction access track would follow the route of the OHL when feasible. Minor disturbances would occur with the creation of one 100 m x 100 m temporary hardstanding laydown area adjacent to the A70 west of Glespin, in the vicinity of OHL pole nos. 34 and 35; and one 50 m x 50 m temporary hardstanding laydown area on moorland adjacent to OHL pole no. 53. Between OHL pole nos. 45 and 46 a short stretch of an existing 11kV OHL would be undergrounded where the route corridor crosses the existing line.

45. The construction works would be temporary and the scale of change is judged to be small and the geographical extent of the construction works within the LCT is also judged to be small. The temporary nature of the construction works together with the minimal loss/alteration of the landscape baseline mean, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, that the overall magnitude of landscape change during construction is assessed as 'low', resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.

Assessment of Operational Effects

46. The proposed development is different in appearance to the main components of the landscape, however for approximately 400 m it would be adjacent to an existing lower voltage woodpole overhead line and for a further 1.4 km it would be adjacent to two existing lower voltage woodpole overhead lines. This means that the proposed development would not be a new and incongruous feature within the landscape, however the proposed development would increase the wireline features within the transitional landscape between the uplands and lower lying areas. The proposed development would only occupy a small portion of the landscape and would not be readily noticeable, due to intervening landform, vegetation or distance from large areas within the LCT. There would either be no or only minor alteration to the key characteristics of the LCT with limited impact on the landscape baseline. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as 'low', resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.

LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central)

47. As described in the NatureScot classification, this area of Plateau Moorland is characterised by individually defined hills, dissected by drainage lines rather than forming a continuous flat plateau. The hills are neatly rounded or have gently sloping ridges – often named 'rigs' – extending from them. The landscape is often covered in blanket bog, heather and grass moorland, with extensive conifer plantations, although areas of these have been felled to accommodate wind farm development.

48. Within the study area and the LCT, Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm is located on the higher ground to the west of the route corridor; and Douglas West Wind Farm and Dalquhandy Wind Farm are located on the slightly lower ground than Hagshaw Wind Farm to the west of the route corridor. Where forestry permits, views tend to be relatively open across the surrounding valleys and

adjacent hill groups. In addition to the windfarms there are a number of man-made features visible within the landscape, particularly road corridors and electrical infrastructure.

49. The route corridor is within the very eastern edge of this LCT along the lower lying eastern and northern slopes of Common Hill, Hagshaw Hill and the commercial forestry covered Henry's Hill. There is no residential settlement within this area of the LCT and whilst there is limited access via a small number of Core Paths, the potential views east over Douglas Valley are screened from the paths by intervening forestry, with the more open views across the valley only possible from higher ground.

50. Douglas Substation is located within the eastern edge of this LCT and is the centre of several existing electricity transmission lines which inevitably form a feature of the LCT in this area.

51. The western section of the Douglas Valley SLA overlaps with the eastern end of this LCT, including the area occupied by Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm.

52. The landscape at the north-eastern edge of this LCT has been adversely impacted by opencast mining.

53. The key characteristics of the LCT which are listed in the July 2019 NatureScot assessment and also relevant to the landscape in the study area are:

- Large scale landform;
- Undulating hills and sloping ridges in the western areas;
- Distinctive upland character created by the combination of elevation, exposure, smooth plateau landform, moorland vegetation;
- Extensive wind turbine development; and
- Sense of apparent naturalness and remoteness which contrasts with the farmed and settled lowlands, although this has been reduced in places by wind energy development.

Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity

54. The LCT within this area is partially host to Douglas Valley SLA, however the landscape is relatively commonplace and unremarkable. It is dominated by commercial forestry, Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm and Douglas West Wind Farm. Within the vicinity of the route corridor the landscape is impacted by Douglas Substation and existing electricity transmission infrastructure. Evidence of opencast mining is visible within the landscape which affects its condition and quality. Although there are core paths within this area the landscape has limited recreational value and few visitors; with visitors to the wider area instead focussed within Douglas Valley to the east of this LCT. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.1** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the landscape of this LCT within the study area is considered to have a 'medium' value.

55. For approximately 2.9 km between OHL pole nos. 66 and 96 (the indicative location of pole nos. 91-95 just cross the boundary into the adjacent LCT) the route corridor is located across moorland on sloping landform to the immediate west of forestry separating this LCT from the village of Douglas and the valley of Douglas Water to the east. To the west of the route corridor the landform rises quickly and hosts Douglas West Wind Farm, towards Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm and a further large area of commercial forestry. At OHL pole no. 95 the route corridor turns broadly north-west and then west, as it loops around the north-eastern boundary of Douglas West Wind Farm, and crosses a landscape degraded by former opencast mining works. It is not considered that any of the key characteristics of the LCT detailed above would be changed by the introduction of the proposed development. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.2** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, it is considered that this landscape has a high ability to accommodate the proposed development and change arising from the proposed development, and therefore a 'low' susceptibility to the proposed development.

56. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.3** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the overall sensitivity of LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central) to the proposed development is assessed as 'low'.

Assessment of Construction Effects

57. Direct effects arising during construction of the proposed development will be focussed on a localised area around the foothills of the eastern and northern slopes of Hagshaw Hill, Common Hill and Henry's Hill. There would be some disturbance to the

moorland landcover, however no tree felling would be required within this section of the proposed development, located adjacent to an existing track across an area of mainly degraded (historic mining) landscape and adjacent to the commercial forestry. Temporary scaffolding would be required where the route corridor crosses access tracks between OHL pole nos. 67 and 68; 110 and 111; and 113 and 114; and where the route corridor crosses Broadlea Burn between OHL pole nos. 73 and 74.

58. Temporary unbound construction access tracks would follow the route corridor wherever feasible. Minor disturbance would occur with the creation of three 50 m x 50 m temporary hardstanding laydown area on moorland adjacent to Broadlea Burn between OHL pole nos. 73 and 74; on moorland between OHL pole nos. 90 and 91; and on moorland between OHL pole nos. 113 and 114. In addition, a larger site compound (1 ha) would be located on an existing area of hardstanding at the Douglas Power Station building close to OHL pole no. 96.

59. Douglas Substation is located to the east of OHL pole no. 71 and several lower voltage OHL which connect the substation to the north-west and north would be either undergrounded or diverted where the route corridor crosses the existing infrastructure. Between OHL pole nos. 73 and 74, adjacent to Broadlea Burn, a short stretch of an existing 33kV OHL would be undergrounded where the route corridor crosses the existing line; and at OHL pole no. 76 a further section of 33kV OHL would be undergrounded. The landscape to the north of the substation is host to two 33kV OHL and three 11kV OHL, all of which would be realigned to the south for an approximate stretch of 1.6 km between OHL pole nos. 78 and 96. This realignment work would be to the immediate north-west of existing forestry and generally not perceptible from the wider landscape.

60. The local topography, existing forestry and lack of publicly accessible areas would limit perceptibility of construction works from elsewhere within the LCT, helping to reduce the scale of the change.

61. The construction works would be temporary and the scale of change is judged to be small and the geographical extent of the construction works within the LCT is also judged to be small. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during construction is assessed as 'low', resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central).

Assessment of Operational Effects

62. For 2 km the proposed development would cross moorland adjacent to commercial forestry along the same orientation as existing lower voltage electricity transmission lines, before turning north-west and cross a landscape impacted by opencast mining for approximately 2.6 km. Forestry on the higher ground west of the route corridor and on lower ground east of the route corridor, would help backcloth/screen views of the OHL and limit its perceptibility from within the LCT. The route corridor's location on lower ground on the eastern extents of a largely upland LCT will also limit the proposed development's perceptibility from the wider study area. The proposed development is similar in appearance to other existing features within the vicinity of the route corridor, would only occupy a small portion of the landscape and would not be readily noticeable (either being underground or screened/ backdropped by the adjacent commercial forestry). The proposed development would be limited in scale in comparison to the existing wind farm infrastructure in the LCT. There would either be no or only minor alteration to the key characteristics of the LCT with limited impact on the landscape baseline. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as low, resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central).

LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley

63. This LCT occupies a large area occurring on the lower slopes of all the Plateau Moorland areas encircling Glasgow and the conurbation. The section within the study area is located at the very southern end of what is a large LCT. The landscape in this LCT is characterised by its transitional location between the sheltered landscapes of the valleys and lowlands, and exposed uplands and moorlands. The area appears in the foreground when seen in views from or towards adjacent moorland and hills. The edges of this landscape are visible from within the Clyde Valley, forming the backdrop to the valley lowlands.

64. The landform is predominantly flat affording wide views across this open, transitional LCT. Generally there are few visual foci within this LCT, however within the study area a large slagheap, associated with the former mining works, to the north of Coalburn is a prominent visible landmark across the LCT. The LCT as a whole is of a rural, agricultural character, however

within the study area the landscape to the south, west and immediate north of Coalburn is largely degraded by previous mining works and is in the process of regenerating as grassland and scrub vegetation. Approximately 1.5 km at the end of the route corridor crosses agricultural land.

65. Whilst tree cover is generally limited there are areas of new tree growth associated with the regenerating landscape to the west of Coalburn, around the periphery of Coalburn and the slagheap to the north of Coalburn. In addition, in the north of the study area there are tree belts associated with Hollandbush Golf Club and occasional tree-lined field boundaries.
66. Settlement within the LCT and study area is limited to the small settlement of Coalburn and scattered properties associated with Coalburn Road to the north of Coalburn. Within the LCT and study area there are a small number of Core Paths focussed around Coalburn. Existing electricity infrastructure, associated with Coalburn Substation, is visible within this LCT and study area.
67. The key characteristics of the LCT which are listed in the July 2019 NatureScot assessment and also relevant to the landscape in the study area are:
- Extensive, open, flat or gently undulating landform;
 - Dominance of pastoral farming, but with some mosses surviving;
 - Limited and declining tree cover;
 - Visually prominent settlements and activities such as mineral working; and
 - Rural character of the Plateau Farmland has reduced as tree cover has declined and the visual influence of settlements, transport infrastructure and mineral working has increased.

Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity

68. There are no landscape designations within this area and the landscape within the study area is often degraded and in a poor condition. The landscape is not scenically pleasing, has detracting features and is of limited recreational value and is unremarkable. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.1 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the landscape of this LCT within the study area is considered to have a 'low' value.
69. The route corridor is located in a local landscape degraded by opencast mining works for approximately 4 km from where it enters the LCT prior to OHL pole no. 120 and loops around the south, west and north of Coalburn to approximately OHL pole no. 160. The northern 900 m of the OHL crosses agricultural landscape. The relatively flat and open landscape within this area mean that there would be fairly wide perceptibility of the OHL from within the study area. It is not considered that any of the key characteristics of the LCT detailed above would be impacted by the introduction of the proposed development. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.2 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, it is considered that this landscape has a high ability to accommodate the proposed development and change arising from the proposed development, and therefore a 'low' susceptibility to the proposed development.
70. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.3 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall sensitivity of LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley to the proposed development is assessed as 'low'.

Assessment of Construction Effects

71. Direct effects arising during construction of the proposed development will be focussed on a localised area around the settlement of Coalburn and the landscape between Coalburn and Coalburn Substation. There would be some disturbance to the regenerating grassland landcover around Coalburn and a small area of agricultural land use to the south-west of Coalburn Substation. There would be minor tree felling required along short sections of the OHL (between OHL pole nos. 124 and 125; OHL pole no. 142; OHL pole nos. 151 – 154 and OHL pole no. 164), which would be kept to a minimum by micro-siting of the pole locations. Temporary scaffolding would be required where the route corridor crosses an existing track/minor road between OHL pole nos. 121 and 122 and OHL pole nos. 125 and 126; between OHL pole nos. 141 and 142 where the route corridor crosses Shoulderigg Road; and between OHL pole nos. 150 and 151 where the route corridor crosses Coalburn Road.
72. Temporary unbound construction access tracks would follow the route corridor and be constructed from ## wherever feasible. A temporary stone access track would be constructed connecting the route corridor at OHL pole no. 132 to an existing access

track to the west of the route corridor. Minor disturbance would occur with the creation of four 50 m x 50 m temporary hardstanding laydown areas on grassland between OHL pole nos. 122 and 123; between OHL pole nos. 140 and 141; between OHL pole nos. 152 and 153, and adjacent to OHL pole no. 165.

73. To the south of Coalburn a short stretch of an existing 33kV OHL would be undergrounded where the route corridor crosses the existing line between OHL pole nos. 121 and 122; and to the south of Johnshill Farm a short stretch of an existing 11kV OHL would be undergrounded between OHL pole nos. 159 and 160.
74. The flat landform would make the construction work perceptible, especially from Core Paths and/or residential properties close to the route corridor, however the construction work in any one location would be short-term and temporary.
75. The construction works would be temporary and the scale of change is judged to be small and the geographical extent of the construction works within the LCT is also judged to be small. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during construction is assessed as 'low', resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.

Assessment of Operational Effects

76. The proposed development would be introduced across a predominantly degraded landscape of low quality plus a shorter stretch of agricultural land. Whilst the relatively level landform within the LCT would make the development visible from certain locations, the existing vegetation around the south and west of Coalburn and to the south-west of Coalburn Substation would filter the proposed development from key receptors within the LCT. Existing electricity transmission lines, including steel pylons, within the LCT mean that the proposed development would not be a new and incongruous feature within the LCT. The proposed development would only occupy a small portion of the landscape. There would either be no or only minor alteration to the key characteristics of the LCT, with limited impact on the landscape baseline. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as 'low', resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect for LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.

A6.2.4 Landscape Designations

77. There are no designated landscapes of international or national importance within the study area. There is a single locally designated landscape – Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) within the study area.

Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA)

78. The central section of the route corridor runs through the west of the Douglas Valley SLA for 4.6 km, entering the SLA to the north of Glespin between the OHL pole nos. 40 and 41; and exiting the SLA to the north-west of Douglas just prior to OHL pole no. 86. Throughout the SLA the route corridor is located on moorland at the foot of the upland plateau to the west of Douglas Water valley.
79. Policy 14 of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (SLLDP2) affords SLA a Category 3 (Local) level of protection, it states '*in Category 3 areas, development which would have a significant adverse impact following the implementation of mitigation measures will only be permitted where the effects are outweighed by significant social or economic benefits*'.
80. Information on SLA in South Lanarkshire is set out in the 'Validating Local Landscape Designations' document published by South Lanarkshire Council in November 2010.
81. Douglas Valley SLA is described in the designations document as follows: '*The Douglas Valley is a sheltered valley containing a well preserved designed landscape with significant mature woodland planting. It is centred around the historic village of Douglas and provides an accessible, contained and tranquil landscape in contrast to the open and expansive rolling moorland to both the south and north of the valley*'.
82. Whilst the presence of Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm and opencast mining are noted, the designation states that the '*developments are relatively limited or transient features that will not effect the key landscape characteristics*.' In addition to these features the

SLA is also host to electricity transmission infrastructure, including a 400 kV steel lattice tower OHL, Douglas Substation and sections of the M74 and A70.

83. Within the SLA document the significance of Douglas Valley is stated in relation to a combination of scenic and cultural features:

- Scenic compositional qualities of a meandering upland river passing through a sheltered, mature pastoral landscape enclosed by moorland hills;
- Cultural features include the designed landscape of Douglas Castle and the historic village of Douglas together and their historic associations with the Douglas family, the Cameronians regiment and literary associations with Sir Walter Scott;
- A network of mature policy woodlands and shelterbelts and a high quality water environment; and
- Frequently visited, as the M74 passes through the eastern end of the designated area and intersects with the main east-west route of the A70 which passes along the valley. The village and castle are visitor destinations with well maintained footpaths through the designed landscape.

84. The boundary of the SLA is partly based around the visual envelope focussed on the village of Douglas.

Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity

85. The SLA is host to an attractive landscape, although there are detracting features. The SLA is also host to a designed landscape, has cultural heritage interest and valued cultural associations. The village of Douglas, Douglas Castle and the surrounding Core Paths have high recreational value and are host to numerous visitors to the area. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.1** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the landscape of the SLA is considered to have a 'high' value.

86. Within the SLA the route corridor is located away from the main characteristics which contribute to the significance of the SLA. In addition, the route corridor is located close to existing electricity infrastructure and to the west of existing forestry along the western slopes of Douglas Valley, which would screen the proposed development from much of the SLA. As such it is not considered that any of the main characteristics of the SLA detailed above would be impacted by the introduction of the proposed development. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.2** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, it is considered that this landscape has a high ability to accommodate the proposed development and change arising from the proposed development, and therefore a 'low' susceptibility to the proposed development.

87. As per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.3** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall sensitivity of the Douglas Valley SLA to the proposed development is assessed as 'medium'.

Assessment of Construction Effects

88. Direct effects arising during construction of the proposed development will be focussed on a localised area on the transitional landscape between the uplands and lower lying areas. There would be some disturbance to the moorland landcover to the west of Douglas Water Valley and forestry on the western slopes of the valley. No tree felling would be required within the SLA. Construction work would be visible from the Core Paths located on the western slopes above the valley which would host the route corridor, but would generally be imperceptible from the village of Douglas and the wider SLA. Temporary scaffolding would be required where the OHL crosses access tracks between OHL pole nos. 50 and 51; and between OHL pole nos. 67 and 68; and where the route corridor crosses Broadlea Burn between OHL pole nos. 73 and 74.

89. The temporary construction access track would follow the route corridor through the SLA and would be constructed from unbound gravel and stone. Minor disturbances would occur with the creation of two 50 m x 50 m temporary hardstanding laydown areas on moorland adjacent to OHL pole no. 53; and on moorland adjacent to Broadlea Burn between OHL pole nos. 73 and 74..

90. Douglas Substation is located to the east of OHL pole no. 71 and several lower voltage OHL which connect the substation to the north-west and north would be either undergrounded or diverted where the route corridor crosses the existing infrastructure. Between OHL pole nos. 73 and 74, adjacent to Broadlea Burn, a short stretch of an existing 33kV OHL would be undergrounded where the route corridor crosses the existing line; and at OHL pole no. 76 a further section of 33kV OHL would be undergrounded. The landscape to the north of the substation is host to two 33kV OHL and three 11kV OHL, all of which would be realigned, within the SLA, for an approximate stretch of 900 m between OHL pole nos. 77 and 86. This

realignment work would be to the immediate north-west of existing forestry and generally not perceptible from the wider landscape. In addition, a short stretch of an existing 11kV OHL would be undergrounded where the route corridor crosses the existing line between OHL pole nos. 45 and 46.

91. The construction works would be temporary and the scale of change is judged to be small and the geographical extent of the construction works within the SLA is also judged to be small. The temporary nature of the construction works, together with the minimal loss/ alteration of the landscape baseline and the lack of impact on the important characteristics which contribute to the SLA status, mean that as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology** the overall magnitude of landscape change during construction is assessed as 'low'. This results in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect upon the Douglas Valley SLA.

Assessment of Operational Effects

92. Within the SLA the proposed development would be adjacent to existing lower voltage woodpole overhead lines and would not be a new and incongruous feature within the landscape, however the proposed development would increase the wireline features within the transitional landscape between the uplands and lower lying areas of the SLA. The proposed development would only occupy a small portion of the SLA and would not be readily noticeable, due to intervening landform, vegetation or distance from large areas within the SLA. There would be no alteration to the main characteristics of the SLA and only limited impact on the landscape baseline. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4** in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as low resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect upon the Douglas Valley SLA.

Douglas Conservation Area (CA)

93. The proposed route passes approximately 1.4 km north-west of the Douglas CA, which is afforded Category 3 (Local) level of protection by Policy 14 of the SLLDP2. The Douglas CA is focused on the north of the village of Douglas around Main Street.

94. Whilst the Douglas CA helps inform the landscape character of the study area, any effects upon its setting and value are assessed in **Chapter 10 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**, if deemed necessary by the relevant consultant

A6.2.5 Landscape Elements

95. The route corridor would pass through a generally open moorland landscape, however in addition to the moorland the route corridor would also need to cross water courses and pass-through areas of forestry and scrub vegetation. The proposed route corridor has been designed to minimise the impact on these landscape features and avoid, wherever possible, the loss of mature vegetation. Unfortunately some loss of vegetation is unavoidable.

96. The key landscape elements impacted by the proposed development have been identified as:

- Broadleaved woodland near Carmacoup Farm between poles 30 and 33;
- Scrub near derelict building at pole 125, conifer plantation to the west of Coalburn comprising Japanese larch with Sitka spruce, of variable quality owing to old opencast workings;
- Young amenity planting adjacent to the west of Coalburn Road between poles 149 and 150;
- Naturally regenerated scrub on the old mine working site between poles 151 and 154;
- Young broadleaved plantation leading to Coalburn Substation between poles 160 and 163; and
- Amenity planting adjacent to the south and west of Coalburn Substation at pole 169 and along the buried 132 kV cable, which provides screening of the substation.
- .

97. The loss of the forest resource in Carmacoup Forest (between overhead pole nos. 15-21) is within a commercial forestry plantation and away from identified visual receptors e.g. Core Paths. The loss of this forestry would not have an impact on landscape character or visual amenity beyond its existing use and purpose as commercial forestry within a plantation destined to be felled, and is not considered further in the assessment.

98. The long-term loss of landscape elements, i.e. areas of tree planting, in this respect is considered during the assessment of operational effects only.

99. **Broadleaved woodland near Carmacoup Farm between poles 30 and 33** This woodland planting is not a key characteristic of the landscape in this location. Located close to Carmacoup Farm the route corridor would pass through the eastern edge of broadleaved woodland associated with the farm. The felling would be noticeable, but only have a small effect on woodland in the area and a limited effect on the landscape character of the area and limited effect on the quality of the woodland. Compensatory tree planting is proposed for all the trees felled, although this may not be on site. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as low resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect upon landscape character and the small broadleaved woodland at Carmacoup Farm.

Scrub near derelict building at pole 125, conifer plantation to the west of Coalburn comprising Japanese larch with Sitka spruce, of variable quality owing to old opencast working

100. There would be limited felling of Sitka spruce and Japanese larch trees, of varying quality at the very edge of the plantation (between overhead pole nos. 128-135), due to the existing condition and spacing within the woodland this felling would have a limited effect on the landscape character of the area and limited effect on the quality of the woodland. Compensatory tree planting is proposed for all the trees felled, although this may not be on site. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as low resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect upon landscape character and the forestry plantation west of Coalburn.

101. **Young amenity planting adjacent to the west of Coalburn Road between poles 149 and 150; Naturally regenerated scrub on the old mine working site between poles 151 and 154; Young broadleaved plantation leading to Coalburn Substation between poles 160 and 163; and Amenity planting adjacent to the south and west of Coalburn Substation at pole 169 and along the buried 132 kV cable, which provides screening of the substation** This amenity tree planting is not a key characteristic of the landscape in this location. There would be limited felling of young amenity planting which would have a limited effect on the landscape character of the area and limited effect on the numbers and quality of the woodland between Coalburn and Lesmahagow. Compensatory tree planting is proposed for all the trees felled, although this may not be on site. Therefore, as per the criteria set out in **Table A6.1.4 in Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**, the overall magnitude of landscape change during operation is assessed as low resulting in a minor adverse and **not significant** effect upon areas of amenity tree planting to the north of Coalburn.

A6.2.6 Cumulative Effects on Landscape Character

102. Only one scheme is considered relevant for inclusion within the cumulative landscape effects assessment – the consented Wind Farm at Broken Cross to the east of the M74 within the north-east of the study area.

Broken Cross Wind Farm is located on a landscape degraded by open cast mining in LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley. The western boundary of the Broken Cross Wind Farm site is 1 km east of Coalburn substation and the nearest turbine to the closest wood pole structure (OHL pole no. 169) would be approximately 2 km to the east. The route corridor and Broken Cross Wind Farm site are separated by the M74 and B7078 and would not impact the same localised landscape area. Increased impacts from the proposed development in-combination with Broken Cross Wind Farm on LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley would be negligible.

A6.2.7 Summary

103. No significant effects have been identified on any landscape receptors during either construction or operation of the proposed development.

A6.2.8 References

Validating Local Landscape Designations: South Lanarkshire Council: November 2010.

NatureScot (formerly SNH) 'Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland' accessed at <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/scottish-landscape-character-types-map-and-descriptions>