Technical Appendix 5.6: Wild Land Area Impact Assessment

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5.6.1 Introduction

5.6.1.1 The Proposed Development would be located 1.5 km to the southeast of Wild Land Area (WLA) 29 Rhiddoroch – Beinn Dearg – Ben Wyvis which is the closest WLA. National Planning Framework 4 Policy 4 Natural Places, paragraph g) advises that development proposals in WLA *"...must be accompanied by a wild land impact assessment which sets out how design, siting, or other mitigation measures have been and will be used to minimise significant impacts on the qualities of the wild land..."* Policy 4 g) also states that *"...buffer zones around wild land will not be applied, and effects of development outwith wild land areas will not be a significant consideration."*

5.6.1.2 NatureScot has acknowledged that the Proposed Development would not be located in a WLA but has "encouraged" the Applicant to include a Wild Land Impact Assessment for WL 29 given the overlapping Ben Wyvis Special Landscape Area (SLA) and the sensitivity of receptors that may be present in the WLA and SLA.

5.6.1.3 Notwithstanding the policy position and the consequent reduced weight given to effects resulting from developments outwith WLA, a high level Wild Land Impact Assessment (WLIA) has been prepared for WLA 29: Rhiddoroch-Beinn Dearg-Ben Wyvis to inform the overall assessment of effects on landscape and visual resources as described in Chapter 5 Landscape and Visual Amenity (EIAR Volume 2). Impacts on Ben Wyvis SLA are assessed separately in Technical Appendix 5.4 (EIAR Volume 4) and impacts on LCT are assessed in Technical Appendix 5.2 (EIAR Volume 4).

5.6.2 WLIA Methodology

Introduction

5.6.2.1 The methodology used for the WLIA follows NatureScot's Wild Land Assessment Guidance (hereafter referred to as 'the Guidance'). The methodology follows the approach to assessment described below:

- Step 1 – Definition of the Study Area and scope of the assessment. This comprises the identification of a Study Area that is appropriate to the scale of the Proposed Development and the geographical extent of likely significant effects on the WLA. The entirety of the WLA was considered in this assessment;
- Step 2 – Verification of the WLA, and confirmation of the wild land qualities (WLQs) relevant to the Study Area to identify any changes that have occurred since the WLA description was prepared, and the nature of their contribution to the WLA. The assessment will also identify any qualities that could be susceptible to degradation from the Proposed Development;
- Step 3 – Assessment of the sensitivity of the wild land qualities of the WLA within the Study Area, assuming a high value. The Wild Land Qualities of the WLA, including the physical attributes and perceptual responses that contribute to those qualities, are identified in terms of their sensitivity to the type and scale of change proposed;
- Step 4 – Assess and describe the magnitude of change considering the size or scale, extent, and duration of the Proposed Development, and the effects on specific valued qualities and/or combination of qualities. This evaluates which physical attributes and perceptual responses may be affected and to what degree, and the potential for mitigation; and
- Step 5 – Judgement of the significance of effect i.e., the overall significance of residual effect, considering mitigation, if applicable.

Step 2: Establishing the Baseline

5.6.2.2 The baseline appraisal:

- Establishes and describes the baseline status of the physical and perceptual attributes that are present in the WLA; and
- Describes the character, sensitivity, and overall condition of the area affected and its contribution to the perception of wildness in the WLA as a whole.

5.6.2.3 The primary sources of information used in the assessment included NatureScot's Wild Land mapping and the published Wild Land Description for WLA 29. The findings of these publications were verified using OS data/mapping, aerial and site photography, and by field survey. Where any relevant or additional information was identified that affected the wild land qualities this was added to the baseline description.

5.6.2.4 NatureScot's advice to the Scottish Government in 2014 accepted that the perception of wildness is a subjective matter. People respond differently according to their own individual experiences and expectations. There is sufficient commonality in aspects that are appreciated as features of 'wildness' to set a series of attributes and criteria that can be assessed in a systematic, and transparent way to provide a consistency of approach.

5.6.2.5 NatureScot Guidance states that WLAs have the following physical attributes:

- "A high degree of perceived naturalness;
- A lack of modern human artefacts or structures;
- Little evidence of contemporary land uses;
- Landform which is rugged or otherwise physically challenging; and
- Remoteness and/ or inaccessibility."

5.6.2.6 Perceptual responses to these physical attributes include:

- "A sense of sanctuary or solitude;
- Risk, or for some visitors, a sense of awe or anxiety;
- Perceptions that the landscape has arresting or inspiring qualities; and
- Personal fulfilment from the physical challenge required penetrate into these places."

5.6.2.7 The degree to which these physical and perceptual attributes are present and the degree to which they may have been affected by changes to the landscape and visual baseline since 2014 are described in Table 5.6.1.

Step 3: Sensitivity of WLA Qualities

5.6.2.8 WLAs are assumed to have a high value, but their susceptibility to different types of development can vary according to the specific wild land qualities and to what extent they are intact, and the scale and likely impact of the development proposed.

5.6.2.9 The sensitivity of WLA qualities was informed by the NatureScot's WLA description and fieldwork to capture assessment photography for Viewpoints 1, 2, 16, 22, and 23 (refer to Figures 5.26a-g,

5.27a-g, 5.41a-i, 5.47a-g, and 5.48a-g, EIA Report Volume 3b) in WLA 29 during 2024 and 2025. Sensitivity is evaluated in Table 5.6.1.

Step 4: Magnitude of Change on WLQ and WLA

5.6.2.10 The magnitude of change is evaluated as follows:

- Substantial: Total loss or considerable alteration to key attributes, assessed on a site-specific case-by-case basis;
- Moderate: Partial loss or partial alteration to attributes;
- Slight: Minor or modest loss or alteration to baseline key attributes;
- Negligible: Very minor loss or very minor alteration to baseline attributes; and
- None: No discernible loss or no discernible alteration to baseline key attributes.

Step 5: Judging Significance of Effects

5.6.2.11 Professional judgement has been applied to the findings of the baseline appraisal and predicted effects arising from the Proposed Development using the criteria set out, to assess whether the identified effects on the physical attributes and perceived qualities of the WLA would be significant. As described in Chapter 5 (EIA Report Volume 2), residual effects are determined by means of a comparison of sensitivity and magnitude of impact, as indicated in Table 5.6.2.

5.6.2.12 The judgement of the level of effect considers the embedded mitigation presented in Chapter 5 (EIA Report Volume 2) and the overall effect of the Proposed Development on the wild land qualities of the WLA. The matrix was not applied prescriptively or arithmetically, but rather as a starting point from where professional judgement was brought to bear.

5.6.3 Illustrative Materials

5.6.3.1 Figure 5.9 of Chapter 5 (EIA Report Volume 2) shows a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for the Proposed Development and the location and geographical extent of WLA 29. Figure 5.11 (EIA Report Volume 2) shows a more detail map of WLA 29 and 'relative wildness' as derived from NatureScot data. Figure 5.12 (EIA Report Volume 2) shows a detailed map of WLA 29 with a blade tip height ZTV.

5.6.3.2 This Technical Appendix is supported by Figures 5.6.1 to 5.6.5. These show a map of comparative wildness and four maps showing the degree to which the four physical attributes of wild land are present as follows:

- Figure 5.6.2: Lack of Modern Human Artefacts or Structures;
- Figure 5.6.3: Perceived Naturalness;
- Figure 5.6.4: Rugged or Challenging Terrain; and
- Figure 5.6.5: Remoteness from Roads.

5.6.3.3 Assessment viewpoint photography in Figures 5.26, 5.27, 5.41, 5.47 and 5.48 (EIA Report Volume 3b) has been used to inform the assessment. It should be noted that these viewpoints represent a 'worst case' in respect of visibility and the likely residual effects and are not representative of the general effects on views from the WLA. Visibility would in fact be limited and restricted to areas on the margins of the classification. This was confirmed during field reconnaissance.

5.6.4 Wild Land Baseline Qualities

5.6.4.1 The description for WLA: 29 sets out four Wild Land Qualities as follows:

- WLQ1 – "A range of awe-inspiring, massive, high rounded hills and plateaux, as well as steep rocky peaks and ridges, offering elevated panoramas";
- WLQ2 – "Long and deep penetrating glens with steep, arresting side slopes that limit views, some containing access routes and clearly influenced by estate management";
- WLQ3 – "A very large interior with a strong sense of remoteness and sanctuary that seems even more extensive where appearing to continue into neighbouring wild land areas"; and
- WLQ4 – "Rocky hills, cnocan and peatland slopes that appear simple and awe inspiring at a broad scale, but harbour intricate features at a local level, as well as a strong sense of sanctuary and solitude".

5.6.4.2 The site assessment for the WLA description was carried out in May and June 2014, and the landscape and the land use has evolved. The strength of the attributes and their contribution to WLQs has changed and wind farm development is now an established land use in the areas adjoining the WLA to the southeast and south.

5.6.4.3 As the Proposed Development is located outwith WLA 29 it would not affect any physical attributes but could influence views to and from the WLA and perceived remoteness, sanctuary and solitude. Five assessment viewpoints (1, 2, 16, 22, and 23) are located in WLA 29, refer to Figures 5.26a-g, 5.27a-g, 5.41a-i, 5.47a-g, and 5.48a-g (EIA Report Volume 3b). The visual baseline and predicted effects for each viewpoint is described in Technical Appendix 5.3 (EIA Report Volume 4). The sensitivity of and assessment of effects on LCT and SLA that coincide with WLA 29 is described in Technical Appendix 5.2 and 5.4 respectively.

5.6.4.4 The potential for these four WLQs to be influenced by the Proposed Development is described in Table 5.6.1.

5.6.5 Assessment of Effects

5.6.5.1 The assessment of effects on the WLQ of WLA 29 is described in Tables 5.6.1 and 5.6.2. Section 1.6 describes the overall effects on WLA 29.

Table 5.6.1: Confirmation of Baseline and Assessment of Sensitivity of WLA 29 Rhiddoroch – Beinn Dearg – Ben Wyvis

Step 2 – Baseline Description of WLA 29, underlying Landscape Character and Potential Visibility of the Proposed Development.

Description

WLA 29 covers an area of 905 km^2. It is described by NatureScot as being one of the most extensive nationally extending between Ullapool in the northwest and Ben Wyvis in the southeast. The description of WLA 29 describes the landscape and scenic qualities of WLA 29 as follows: "*The landscape and scenic qualities of the WLA are recognised by the inclusion of its central part within the Fannichs, Beinn Dearg and Glencalvie Special Landscape Area (SLA) and its southern end within the Ben Wyvis SLA. The descriptions for these areas note '…a powerful sense of isolation and wildness amidst physically challenging terrain…' and '…series of quiet, uninhabited glens … where solitude and isolation are key characteristics'.*"

The NatureScot description also states that:

"*The area is used mainly for deer stalking, fishing and hydro-electric generation and is largely uninhabited, although there are some isolated estate buildings and stock grazing within some of the glens, as well as forestry activity within a number of large conifer plantations outside the edge. The WLA is enjoyed by many people who view it from outside its edge, for example along the A835 in the south and west, the A837 in the north, and across the Black Isle. Where seen from outside the area, the outward slopes form a fairly simple visual backdrop, but the interior mountains and plateaux are less easy to see due to screening by the intervening landform.*"

The description identifies that seven Munros and five Corbetts are situated in the WLA with Ben Wyvis being particularly popular. In referring to the popularity of Ben Wyvis the NatureScot description cites The Story of Ben Wyvis National Nature Reserve[1] which was published by SNH. The date of publication is not shown on the document, but it contains map data with a copyright date of 2008. The document mentions that the NNR receives 4,000 visitors a year which is based on a pressure activated counter pad at the reserve entrance. This indicates that potentially 4,000 people each year access the NNR and a proportion of those may ascend Ben Wyvis and reach the summit.

Underpinning Landscape Character

The main underpinning LCT in the 35 km LVIA Study are:

- LCT135 Rounded Hills – Caithness and Sutherland;
- LCT139 Rugged Mountain Massif – Caithness and Sutherland;
- LCT328 Rugged Mountain Massif – Ross and Cromarty;
- LCT329 Rounded Mountain Massif; and
- LCT330 Rounded Hills and Moorland Slopes – Ross and Cromarty

Potential Visibility of the Proposed Development

The ZTV shown on Figure 5.12 (EIAR Volume 3a) and Figures 5.6.1 to 5.6.5 indicate that the Proposed Development would be visible mainly from the southeastern part of the WLA within 10 km of the nearest proposed turbines. There would be visibility from Upper Glen Glass but mainly from more elevated land and east and south facing slopes of valleys and hills. Within 10-20 km theoretical visibility would become more disparate and fragmented coinciding mainly with elevated areas of land. Within 20-30 km the dispersed pattern of visibility continues with visibility from elevated plateau areas, summits and ridges. Beyond 30 km the only notable area of theoretical visibility is at Meall an Fhuarain (578 m AOD) approximately 37 km to the northwest of the nearest proposed turbine.

Step 3 – Evaluation of Sensitivity and Identification of WLQ that could be affected by the Proposed Development

WLQ	Sensitivity of the WLQ to the Proposed Development	Potential for the WLQ to be affected by the Proposed Development
WLQ1: A range of awe-inspiring and massive, high rounded hills and plateaux, as well as steep rocky peaks and ridges, offering elevated panoramas. *"This WLA contains a stunning variety of mountains, comprising both massive and rounded landforms, as well as rockier peaks and ridges. All the hills are high, open, and physically challenging to ascend or traverse, with a resulting perception of risk and exposure. The large size of the WLA and the need for lengthy access to reach some parts of the interior, also mean that many of the hills are very remote. Away from the more popular Munro and Corbett peaks, there are few visitors and thus a strong sense of sanctuary and solitude.* *The simple form and massive scale of the rounded hills and plateaux appears awe-inspiring. Their convex slopes can be very steep and physically challenging to ascend but, once climbed, offer wide open gentle slopes and plateau tops that offer a feeling of being 'on top of the world', with panoramic views in all directions.* *The rounded hill and plateaux tops are mostly covered by a short mat of vegetation and/or exposed rock which emphasises the underlying shape of the landform and promotes open movement. As a result, there are few*	The Proposed Development could not affect the physically challenging or rugged terrain or the physical remoteness of this WLQ. Novar 1 and Novar 2 were operational when the survey work for the WLA was undertaken by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) in 2014. Novar 1 and potentially Novar 2 would also have been operational when visitor numbers to Ben Wyvis NNR were recorded at about 4,000 per year as referenced in The Story of Ben Wyvis National Nature Reserve. The Ben Wyvis part of the WLA is therefore well visited and easily accessible. The Proposed Development is unlikely to affect *"…views of a series of retreating, rolling horizons"* as such views are mainly to the north through to southwest where the main mountain areas are located. The Proposed Development does not have the potential to affect the sense of risk or the arresting or distinctive localised landform features. The "elemental quality" and perceived naturalness of the WLA could be affected due to visibility of the Proposed Development.	The Proposed Development would affect panoramic views from elevated peaks and would affect to a degree the sense of sanctuary and solitude that may be experienced from the more remote peaks such as Beinn Dearg. Visibility of lights on the proposed turbines may also affect the sense of remoteness acknowledging that very limited numbers of people are likely to be on the peaks during hours of darkness. There is the potential for significant effects on this WLQ, and it is assessed further in Steps 4 and 5a.

[1] Scottish Natural Heritage. (Undated) The Story of Ben Wyvis National Nature Reserve.

Table 5.6.1: Confirmation of Baseline and Assessment of Sensitivity of WLA 29 Rhiddoroch – Beinn Dearg – Ben Wyvis		
Step 2 – Baseline Description of WLA 29, underlying Landscape Character and Potential Visibility of the Proposed Development.		
worn paths (except on Ben Wyvis) as evidence of human activity and thus a greater sense of solitude. *The convex landform makes it difficult to see the hill and plateau tops from below; but, equally, adjacent glens or low-lying areas are mostly hidden from the tops. This results in the screening of human artefacts and contemporary land use within adjacent low-lying areas, reducing the effects of these and increasing the sense of remoteness. It also means that the eye tends to be drawn from one top to the other, so there is less appreciation of the vertical dimension of the landform and a stronger emphasis of the horizontal, albeit elevated, aspect. Views of a series of retreating rolling horizons also appear awe-inspiring in their vast scale, openness and 'wide skies'.* *The simplicity of the rounded hills and plateaux often make it difficult to distinguish between individual tops and hard to orientate and estimate scale, increasing the sense of risk. Nonetheless, there are some cliffs and corries carved into the hill sides that aid navigation locally as well as appearing arresting as distinct features.* *The WLA also contains some rugged, angular and rocky hills that are more variable individually. These are massive in scale too, but tend to have steeper peaks that appear very imposing from below, contributing to a sense of awe.* *The crags, cliffs, corries, lochans and waterfalls within these hills seem jumbled together in a chaotic way which, combined with a predominance of exposed rock and geological features, give the landscape an 'elemental' quality that contributes to the perception of naturalness."*	The Proposed Development has greater potential to affect the sense of sanctuary and solitude which could be influenced by visibility of the proposed turbines and distraction through movement of the rotors. The Proposed Development would potentially affect some but not all aspects of WLQ1. Susceptibility to change is therefore evaluated as High/Medium. Sensitivity of this WLQ is evaluated as High.	
WLQ2: Long and deep penetrating glens with steep, arresting side slopes that limit views, some containing access routes and clearly influenced by estate management *"Several deep glens cut through the hills, creating semi-enclosed corridors within the wider, open and larger scale landform. Most of these glens have very steep sides which seem arresting and imposing from below, for example Gleann Mòr and Gleann Beag. These towering slopes can seem almost impenetrable, which contributes to a strong sense of sanctuary, especially within the more remote upper glens.* *The exposed rock, cliffs and scree on the steepest glen slopes, as well as dynamic rivers and waterfalls, contribute to the sense of naturalness. Within some glens, this attribute can be diminished, however, with river engineering and hydro-electric structures.* *The glens contain the majority of access routes within the WLA. Some are through-routes, which tend to result in a lower sense of sanctuary, as there is through traffic and their grade does not typically reduce with increased remoteness.* *Estate activity and management within the WLA is focused within the glens and some contain a range of human artefacts and evidence of contemporary land use such as tracks, fences and isolated buildings. The activity of people and vehicles is also apparent through some glens, although typically intermittent, as well as evidence of management practises such as muirburn. Where isolated, small in scale, and low-key in siting and character, these elements tend to have localised effects; but where more extensive or numerous and resulting in cumulative effects, they may diminish the sense of remoteness and sanctuary. The extent of effects is also limited where elements appear contained within the glen floors, but appear more imposing where extending up side slopes and onto surrounding hills, and they are more prominent when of contrasting colour or form."*	The Proposed Development has the potential to affect Glen Glass but is unlikely to affect most of the glens in the WLA due to visibility being mainly from elevated areas on the margins of the classification. Views out from the glens is restricted by landform and although there is the potential for Glen Glass to be affected there is no potential for effects on the wider WLA. The Proposed Development would potentially affect some but not all aspects of WLQ2. Susceptibility to change is therefore evaluated as High/Medium. Sensitivity of this WLQ is evaluated as High.	The Proposed Development would affect the upper parts of Glen Glass. Glen Glass already contains human influences in its lower stretches around Loch Glass and at the head of the loch outside the WLA. An estate track heads west from Glen Glass into the WLA where the glen becomes narrower and outward views are constrained by landform. However, the Proposed Development would not be visible from most of the glens in the WLA as shown in Figures 5.6.1 to 5.6.5. As only the upper part of Glen Glass in the WLA would be affected with most of the glens unaffected, significant effects on WLQ2 are unlikely and has not been assessed further.

Table 5.6.1: Confirmation of Baseline and Assessment of Sensitivity of WLA 29 Rhiddoroch – Beinn Dearg – Ben Wyvis		
Step 2 – Baseline Description of WLA 29, underlying Landscape Character and Potential Visibility of the Proposed Development.		
WLQ3: A very large interior with a strong sense of remoteness and sanctuary that seems even more extensive where appearing to continue into neighbouring wild land areas. *"The interior of this WLA is very large and, from its elevated ground, there are open views across a series of landform horizons that seem to continue far into the distance, influencing its perceived extent as well as the sense of remoteness. This is influenced by views extending into neighbouring hill areas, where intervening human elements just outside the WLA cannot be seen, including to the Fisherfield – Letterewe – Fannichs WLA (28) to the west, the Inverpolly – Glencanisp WLA (30) to the north west and the Reay – Cassley WLA (32) to the north east.* *In contrast, from the WLA margins (including the outer 'lobes' of the area in the south east), extensive areas of human elements and contemporary land use can be seen around the outside edge of the WLA in all directions except to the north west, including main roads, hydro-electric development and conifer plantations. These elements indicate the edge of the area, but their effects on wild land qualities within the WLA itself are limited where they appear concentrated within neighbouring low-lying strath floors.* *Conversely, elements that extend up onto elevated slopes or tops are more prominent and can appear to encroach more directly upon the experience of the WLA where intervening development within the straths is screened. This may be the case even if the elements themselves lie outside the WLA; for example wind farms, masts, conifer plantations and fences. If cumulative effects occur, these may also appear more encroaching, especially if they seem to collectively encircle part of the wild land area."*	The Proposed Development could affect the perceived sense of remoteness from the interior of the WLA to a degree. This would be mitigated by intervening distance to the Proposed Development and the recessive nature of longer distance views. The description mentions that 'human elements' such as wind farms on elevated slopes or tops outwith the WLA can seem to encroach on the experience of the WLA. The Proposed Development could change the perceived influence of 'human elements' on the southeastern part of the WLA which is already affected by Novar 1 and Novar 2 wind farms which were operational prior to the WLA boundary being established. Susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development is evaluated as medium. Sensitivity is evaluated as High/Medium.	The 'interior' of the WLA is considered to be the areas of land coinciding with the main mountain areas between Diebedale Ridge and Loch Vaich, between Beinn Dearg and Seana Bhraigh and between Seana Bhraigh and Meall an Fhuarain in the north of the WLA. The area at Ben Wyvis does exhibit a degree of remoteness but is well used for recreation and influenced by human elements such as Novar 1 and 2 wind farms and adjacent forestry plantation. The Proposed Development would be visible from the 'interior' as evidenced by Viewpoint 1: Beinn Dearg (Figure 5.26a-g (EIAR Volume 3b)) and Viewpoint 23: Diebidale Ridge (Figure 5.48a-g (EIAR Volume 3b)). These distant viewpoints are assessed in Technical Appendix 5.3 (EIAR Volume 4) and inform the assessment of WLQ3. The Proposed Development would comprise of larger turbines than those in the current baseline at the Site and would potentially have a greater influence on the perceived sense of remoteness. There is the potential for significant effects on this WLQ, and it is assessed further in Steps 4 and 5a.
WLQ4: Rocky hills, cnocan and peatland slopes that appear simple and awe-inspiring at a broad scale, but harbour intricate features at a local level, as well as a strong sense of sanctuary and solitude *"There are extensive areas of rocky hills, cnocan and peatland across parts of this WLA. These do not possess the massive form, vertical imposition or focal qualities of the mountains, but they are awe-inspiring in their openness and simplicity at a broad level, as well as their perceived 'emptiness', sanctuary and solitude within the interior due to few human artefacts or visitors. The variable landform at a local level also contains rivers and waterfalls and harbours some native woodland, which all contribute to the sense of naturalness.* *The irregular landform at a local level also means these areas are physically challenging to access. Within the cnocan, this is mainly because of the very rugged and convoluted slopes with rock outcrops; whilst it is peat hags and bogs that prove more difficult to traverse upon the simpler peatland. Throughout, the sense of remoteness and risk is amplified by the consistent land cover which makes it more difficult to navigate, apart from where landmark mountains can be seen rising up above the distant horizon.* *It is also difficult to perceive distance within most of the interior, where there is an absence of human artefacts to provide scale indicators. This means that these areas often appear more extensive than their actual dimensions."*	The Proposed Development could potentially be seen in views across the rocky hills, cnocan and peatland landscapes. However, the openness and simplicity of these landscapes could not be affected nor could the contribution of waterfalls and woodland to the sense of naturalness. While the Proposed Development could be visible from areas of rocky hills, cnocan and peatland landscapes it could not affect the physical challenge of access or the sense of remoteness and risk. The Proposed Development could potentially increase the influence of human artefacts and affect perceived distance. Therefore, the Proposed Development has the potential to affect one aspect of WLQ4. Susceptibility to change from the Proposed Development is evaluated as Medium/Low. Sensitivity is evaluated as Medium.	The Proposed Development would introduce larger wind turbines into an area close to the southeastern part of the WLA where wind farm development is a characteristic feature of the landscape and views. This would result in an increase in the perceived influence of human artefacts introducing scale indicators into an adjacent landscape and a reference point by which distance may be measured. However, the influence of the Proposed Development on these aspects of WLQ4 is unlikely to result in significant effects and would decrease markedly with distance. Significant effects on WLQ4 are unlikely and has not been assessed further.

Table 5.6.2: Assessment of Effects on WLA 29		
Steps 4 and 5a - Assessment of Magnitude of Change and Significance of Effects on WLQ		
WLQ	Description of Predicted Effects on WLQ	Significance of Effects of the Proposed Development on WLQ
WLQ1: A range of awe-inspiring massive, high rounded hills and plateaux, as well as steep rocky peaks and ridges, offering elevated panoramas.	Viewpoint 1 (Beinn Dearg), Viewpoint 22 (Tom ban Mor) and Viewpoint 23 (Diebidale Ridge) are situated on elevated peaks at distances of 14.5 km or greater. There are views all around from these locations, and the experience is of being in a vast area of mountains that stretch into the distance in all directions. The main influence on views is the landform of the mountains, the moorland landcover and the openness of the landscape. The elevated location means views are expansive and influenced by the sky, changing light conditions and shadows of clouds across the ground. Viewpoint 2 (Carn Salachaidh) and Viewpoint 16 (Ben Wyvis) are situated within 14.2 km of the Proposed Development. Views from Ben Wyvis are influenced by operational Novar 1 and Novar 2 Wind Farms and by views of the well settled and farmed lowlands around the Cromarty and Moray Firths and the Black Isle. These human elements and influences reduce the sense of solitude and sanctuary from Ben Wyvis. Views from Carn Salachaidh are influenced to a degree by operational Coire Na Cloiche and Beinn Tharsuinn wind farms which are visible to the south in the direction of the Proposed Development. These human elements influence the sense of solitude and sanctuary to a degree. Viewpoints 1, 22, and 23 indicate that the Proposed Development would be seen as a distant feature viewed across a large expanse of mountains and perceived as separate from the remote interior. At Viewpoint 2 (Carn Salachaidh) the Proposed Development would be more noticeable in part of the view influenced by wind farm development and, more distantly, other human influences such as settlement and farmland. At Viewpoint 16 (Ben Wyvis) the Proposed Development would be a notable addition to views and would have a stronger influence on views out from this southern part of the WLA in an area already influenced by wind farm development, settlement, farmland and forestry. The magnitude of change on WLQ1 would be Moderate/Slight within 12 km of the Proposed Development. Beyond 12 km the influence of the Proposed Development would reduce, and the main influence would be the mountainous landscape, and the experience of elevation, the perception of solitude and sanctuary would be diminished only slightly. The magnitude of change on WLQ1 would reduce to Slight within 12-20 km. Beyond 20 km the magnitude of change would reduce to Slight/Negligible at most.	The Proposed Development would have a greater influence on the way in which WLQ1 is experienced within 12 km of the proposed turbines. These effects would be mitigated to a degree in the Ben Wyvis area by the presence of operational Novar 1 and Novar 2 Wind Farms, the influence of settled and farmed areas visible from Ben Wyvis and the higher visitor numbers this area receives. The sensitivity of WLQ1 is High and the magnitude of change is considered Moderate/Slight resulting in a Major/Moderate and Significant residual effect within 8-12 km. However, the magnitude of change would begin to reduce to Slight beyond about 8 km. At 12-20 km the influence of the Proposed Development would reduce further, and the montane landscapes would be the dominant influence. While the Proposed Development would be visible it would be a minor distraction in a small part of the view with a limited influence on the way in which WLQ1 would be experienced. The magnitude of change is considered Slight which would result in a Moderate and not significant residual effect within 12-20 km. Beyond 20 km the influence of the Proposed Development on WLQ1 would be very limited and the residual effects would be Minor and not significant.
WLQ3: A very large interior with a strong sense of remoteness and sanctuary that seems even more extensive where appearing to continue into neighbouring wild land areas.	The influence of human elements in the large interior and the extent of areas remote from roads contrasts with the lobes or margins of WLA as shown on Figures 5.6.2 and 5.6.5. The wildness composite map shown on Figure 5.6.1 indicates a larger extent of land where physical characteristics of wildness are more strongly expressed in the interior compared to the Ben Wyvis area and the eastern edges of the WLA. The ZTV shown on Figure 5.6.1 shows that visibility from the interior is more fragmented beyond 12 km than at the edges of the WLA. Viewpoint 1 (Beinn Dearg) and Viewpoint 23 (Diebidale Ridge) are situated in interior areas and show that the Proposed Development would be a relatively minor feature viewed across open and expansive moorland. Views in other directions across the WLA would not be affected by the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development would increase the influence of human elements on the WLA and the sense of remoteness, solitude and sanctuary could be diminished to a degree. However, the WLA covers a very large area and gaining access to the interior requires careful planning due to its distance from roads and experience of navigating and travelling in complex and challenging terrain. These physical aspects of WLQ3 are integral to the way in which it is experienced and would not be diminished by visibility of the Proposed Development. At the eastern edge of the WLA the attributes of WLQ3 are not as strongly evident as the extensive areas at Diebidale Ridge and Beinn Dearg. Ben Wyvis area coincides with a southeastern ‘lobe’ of the WLA where the influence of visitors and existing wind farm development and transport routes are more apparent. The eastern edge is also influenced by forestry plantation and the backdrop of the settled and agricultural landscape of the Cromarty and Moray Firths and the Black Isle. The magnitude of change on WLQ3 would be Moderate/Slight within 12 km of the Proposed Development. Beyond 12 km the influence of the Proposed Development would reduce, and the main influence would be the mountainous interior and notable separation from human influence. The magnitude of change on WLQ3 would reduce to Slight within 12-20 km. Beyond 20 km the magnitude of change would reduce to Slight/Negligible at most.	The Proposed Development would have a greater influence on the way in which WLQ3 is experienced within 8-12 km of the proposed turbines. However, in eastern parts of the WLA including the Ben Wyvis ‘lobe’, the sense of remoteness, solitude and sanctuary is experienced in a different way to the vast and remote interior of the WLA. Human influences at the eastern edges and lobes reduce the intensity of the experience of WLQ3. The Proposed Development would increase the degree of human influence and although this would be noticeable it would not be so great a degree of change as to be considered significant in the context of the key qualities of WLQ3. The sensitivity of WLQ3 is High/Medium and the magnitude of change is considered Moderate/Slight within 8-12 km resulting in a Moderate and not significant residual effect. At 12-20 km the influence of the Proposed Development would reduce further, and the montane landscapes would be the dominant influence and the experience of being in the interior of a large area of mountains would be more evident. While the Proposed Development would be visible it would be a minor distraction in a small part of the view with a limited influence on the way in which WLQ3 would be experienced. The magnitude of change is considered Slight resulting in a Moderate/Minor and not significant residual effect within 12-20 km. Beyond 20 km the influence of the Proposed Development on WLQ1 would be very limited and the residual effects would be Minor and not significant.

5.6.6 Step 5b: Overall Significance of Effects on WLA 29

5.6.6.1 The assessment on WLQ described in Tables 5.6.1 and 5.6.2 indicates that two of the four WLQ are considered to have the potential to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development due to the susceptibility of the attributes to change from the Proposed Development and the likely extent of effects as indicated by the ZTVs shown on Figures 5.6.1 to 5.6.5. Significant effects are considered more likely on WLQ1 than WLQ3.

5.6.6.2 The assessment of WLQ1 and WLQ3 described in Table 5.6.2 indicates that the Proposed Development would have a greater influence on these two WLQ within 8 km of the nearest proposed turbine. The panoramic views intrinsic to the experience of WLQ1 would be affected. Effects would be mitigated to a degree at the eastern edge of the WLA and at Ben Wyvis by the presence of operational wind farm development at Novar 1 and Novar 2 and views of Strathrory Wind Farm and the settled and farmed lowlands of the Moray Firth area and the Black Isle. However, the Proposed Development would be a notable change to the baseline due primarily to the large size of the proposed turbines.

5.6.6.3 WLQ4 would also be affected to a greater degree within 8-12 km of the Proposed Development. However, effects would not be significant within 8-12 km due to the key attributes of this WLQ being less evident in the eastern edge of the WLA and in the 'lobes' such as Ben Wyvis where existing development is an influence. The Proposed Development would have a very limited influence on the larger interior areas further to the northwest.

5.6.6.4 WLQ2 is not assessed in detail as the Proposed Development has the potential to affect only the upper parts of Glen Glass that coincide with the WLA. Most of the glens in the WLA would not be affected by the Proposed Development due to screening by intervening landform.

5.6.6.5 WLQ4 is not assessed in detail as the physical attributes of this WLQ would not be affected. The physical aspects of rocky hills, cnocan and peatland evoke a sense of remoteness, sanctuary and solitude. The Proposed Development would affect these perceived aspects to a degree, but it is also the physical remoteness and challenging terrain associated with reaching these landscapes that evokes the perceptions of remoteness, sanctuary and solitude. Therefore, distant visibility of the proposed turbines would not diminish the experience.

5.6.6.6 It is evident from the above analysis that WLA 29 would be affected mainly in the southeast of the area. In this area the contrast between the WLA and the surrounding landscape is somewhat reduced by existing human elements and influences such as Novar 1 and Novar 2 wind farms, forestry plantation, recreational activity at Ben Wyvis, estate activities and infrastructure in Glen Glass and visibility of Strathrory Wind Farm, Coire na Cloiche Wind Farm and the farmed and settled lowlands of the Moray Firth and Black Isle.

5.6.6.7 Visibility of the Proposed Development as shown on Figures 5.6.1 to 5.6.5 would be mainly within 12 km of the Proposed Development. Beyond 12 km visibility would reduce considerably and be restricted to upper slopes and isolated peaks. This would also be the case beyond 20 km where intervening distance would further reduce the influence of the Proposed Development as indicated by Viewpoint 1: Beinn Dearg (Figure 5.26a-g (EIAR Volume 3b)) and Viewpoint 22: Tom Ban Mor (Figures 5.47a-g (EIAR Volume 3b)) in EIAR Volume 3b.

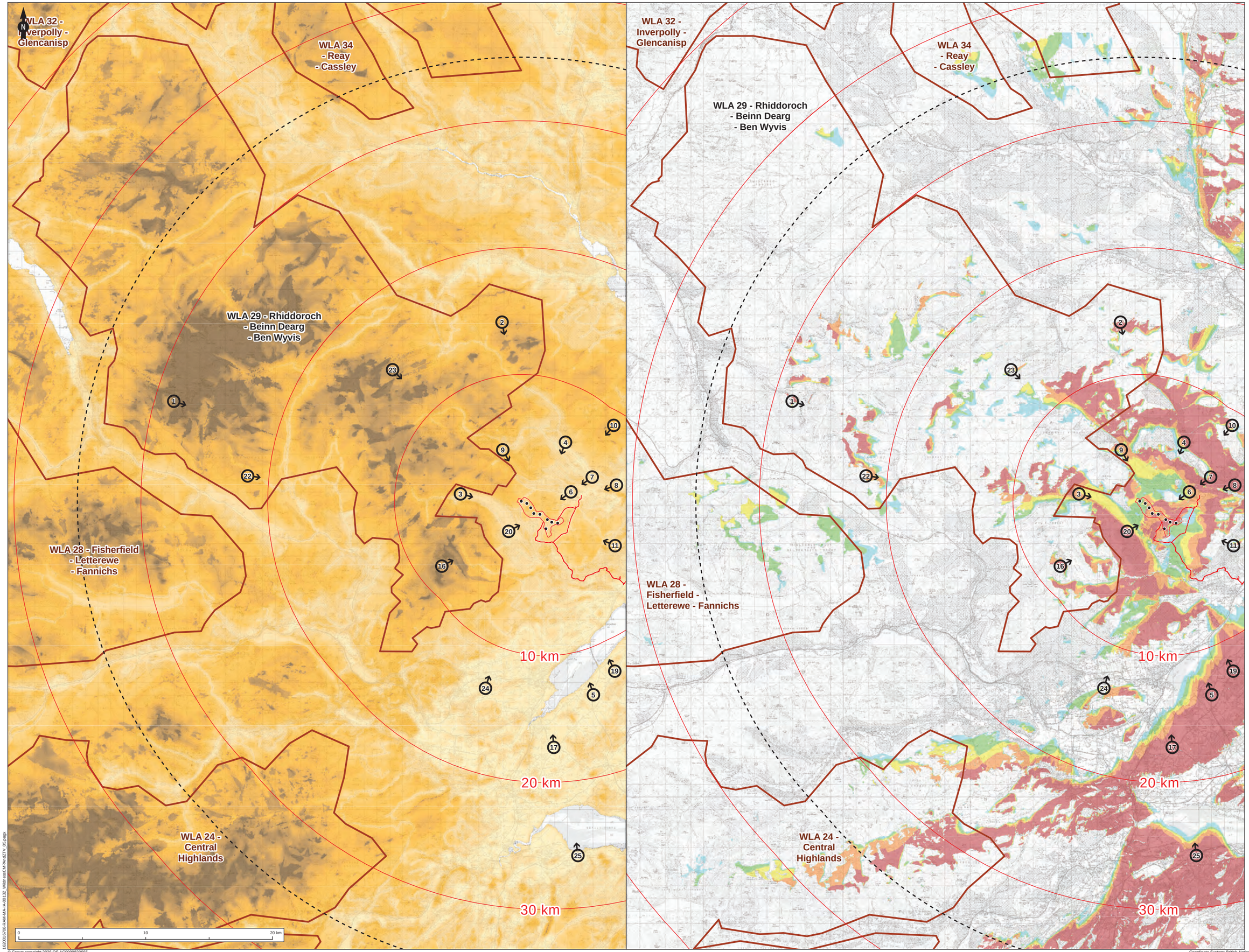
5.6.6.8 Beyond 30 km from the Proposed Development there would be almost no visibility of the proposed turbines from WLA 29.

5.6.6.9 The main area of WLA affected by the Proposed Development would be the eastern fringes and southeastern 'lobes' that coincide with Ben Wyvis, Meall Beag between Glen Glass and Loch Morie and Carn Salachaidh. Wildness is less evident in these areas although it increases with increasing distance from the eastern fringes and 'lobes' in the larger interior areas. There is reasonable separation by landform from WLA 29, and the Proposed Development would be present in an area where wind farm development was established prior to the boundary of WLA being published.

5.6.6.10 While there would be significant effects on WLQ1 within 8-12 km of the Proposed Development effects on WLQ2, 3 and 4 would be not significant. All four of the WLQ may be experienced to differing degrees in WLA 29. The analysis of sensitivity in Table 5.6.1 and the assessment of effects described in Table 5.6.2 indicates that the interaction of the Proposed Development with the four WLQ would also differ and the degree of change would be influenced to a degree by the presence of activity in the WLA or development in land adjacent to it.

5.6.6.11 Taking account of the analysis described above the overall effects on WLA 29 would be not significant due to the limited extent of significant effects on one of the four WLQ.

Figures



Legend

- Application Boundary
- Design Freeze layout
- 10 Km Radii from Outer Turbines
- Study Area (35 km from Outer Turbines)
- Viewpoint
- Wild Land Areas 2014 (WLA)

No of Turbines Theoretically Visible at Blade Tip Level (180m)

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 4
- 5 - 6
- 7 - 8
- 9

Relative Wildness Composite

- High
- Low

Note

The base map used is Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Scale Raster. This product does not cover the full extent of the figure. Where gaps exist (open water), Ordnance Survey 1:250,000 Scale Raster has been included. The cartographic variation between datasets has not affected any analytical outputs or assessment findings.

DISCLAIMER :

1. The ZTV analysis does not take into account the screening effect of vegetation, buildings and other surface features.
2. Predicted visibility based on a viewer eye height 2 m above ground.
3. Visibility calculated using Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 DTM on a 5 m Grid.
4. Effect of earth curvature and light refraction is included.

Figure Title: Relative Wildness Composite with Tip Height Bare Ground ZTV		
Project Name: Novar 1 Wind Farm Repowering		
Project No./Filery ID: 1620016706 / REH2023N04156		
Date: September 2026	Figure No.: TA 5.6.1	Revision: 1.0
Prepared By: RD	Scale: 1:130,000 @A1	NTS
Client: nadara		

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1620016706-RAM-MA-IA-00132_WildnessCMPNoZTV_05.pagx

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Coordinate System: British National Grid. Projection: Transverse Mercator. Datum: OSGB 1936.

WLA 32 - Inverpolly - Glencanisp

WLA 34 - Reay - Cassley

WLA 29 - Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis

WLA 28 - Fisherfield - Letterewe - Fannichs

WLA 24 - Central Highlands

10 km

20 km

30 km

0 10 20 km

Legend

- Application Boundary
- Design Freeze layout
- 10 Km Radii from Outer Turbines
- Study Area (35 km from Outer Turbines)
- Viewpoint
- Wild Land Areas 2014 (WLA)

No of Turbines Theoretically Visible at Blade Tip Level (180m)

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 4
- 5 - 6
- 7 - 8
- 9

Absence of Modern Artefacts

- Low Presence of Modern Artefact
- High Presence of Modern Artefact

Note

The base map used is Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Scale Raster. This product does not cover the full extent of the figure. Where gaps exist (open water), Ordnance Survey 1:250,000 Scale Raster has been included. The cartographic variation between datasets has not affected any analytical outputs or assessment findings.

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3. Visibility calculated using Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 DTM on a 5 m Grid.
4. Effect of earth curvature and light refraction is included.

Figure Title
Lack of Built Artefacts with Tip Height Bare Ground ZTV

Project Name
Novar 1 Wind Farm Repowering

Project No./Filery ID
1620016706 / REH2023N04156

Date	Figure No.	Revision
September 2026	TA 5.6.2	1.0

Prepared By	Scale
RD	1:130,000 @A1

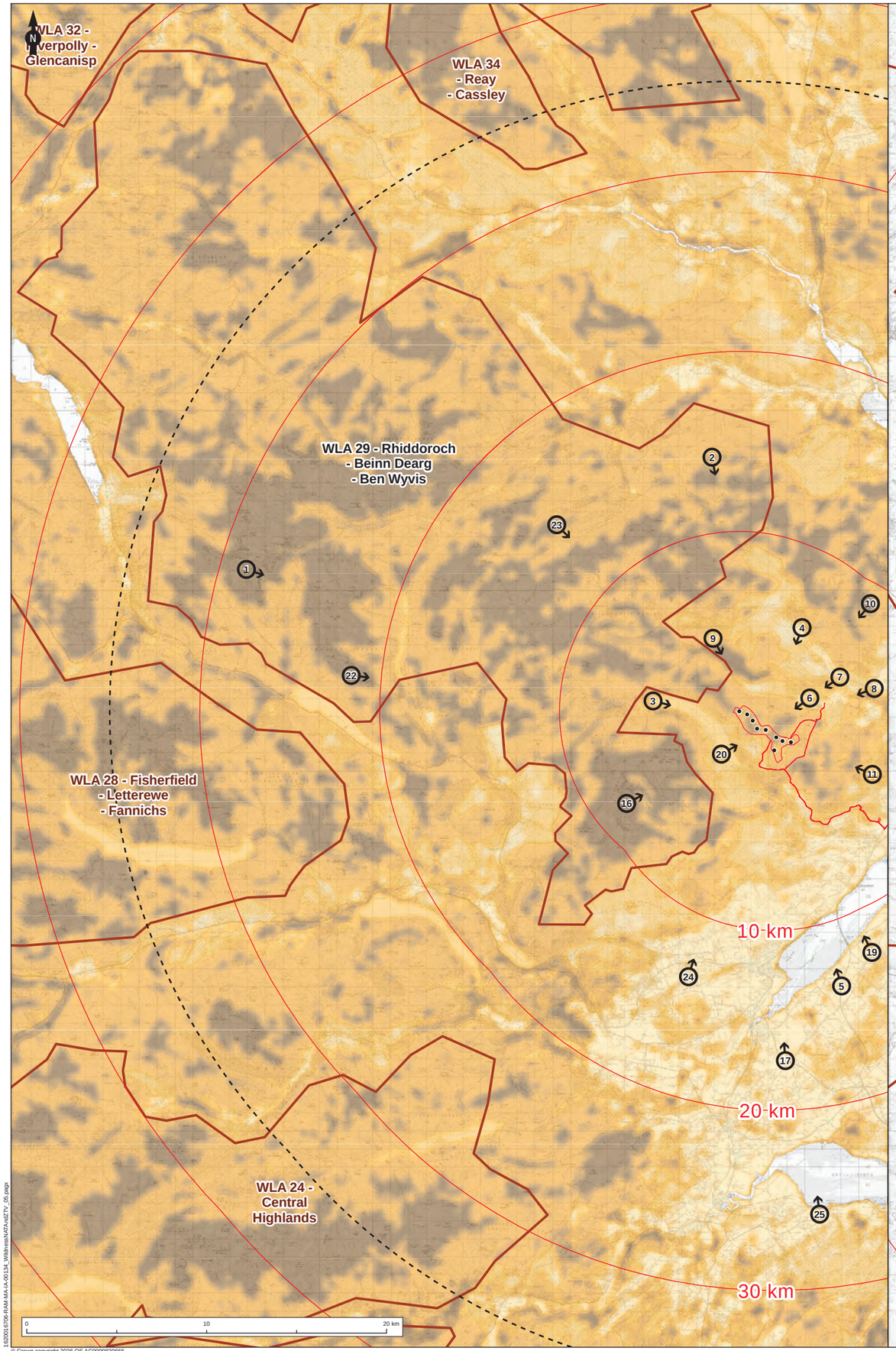
Client
nadara

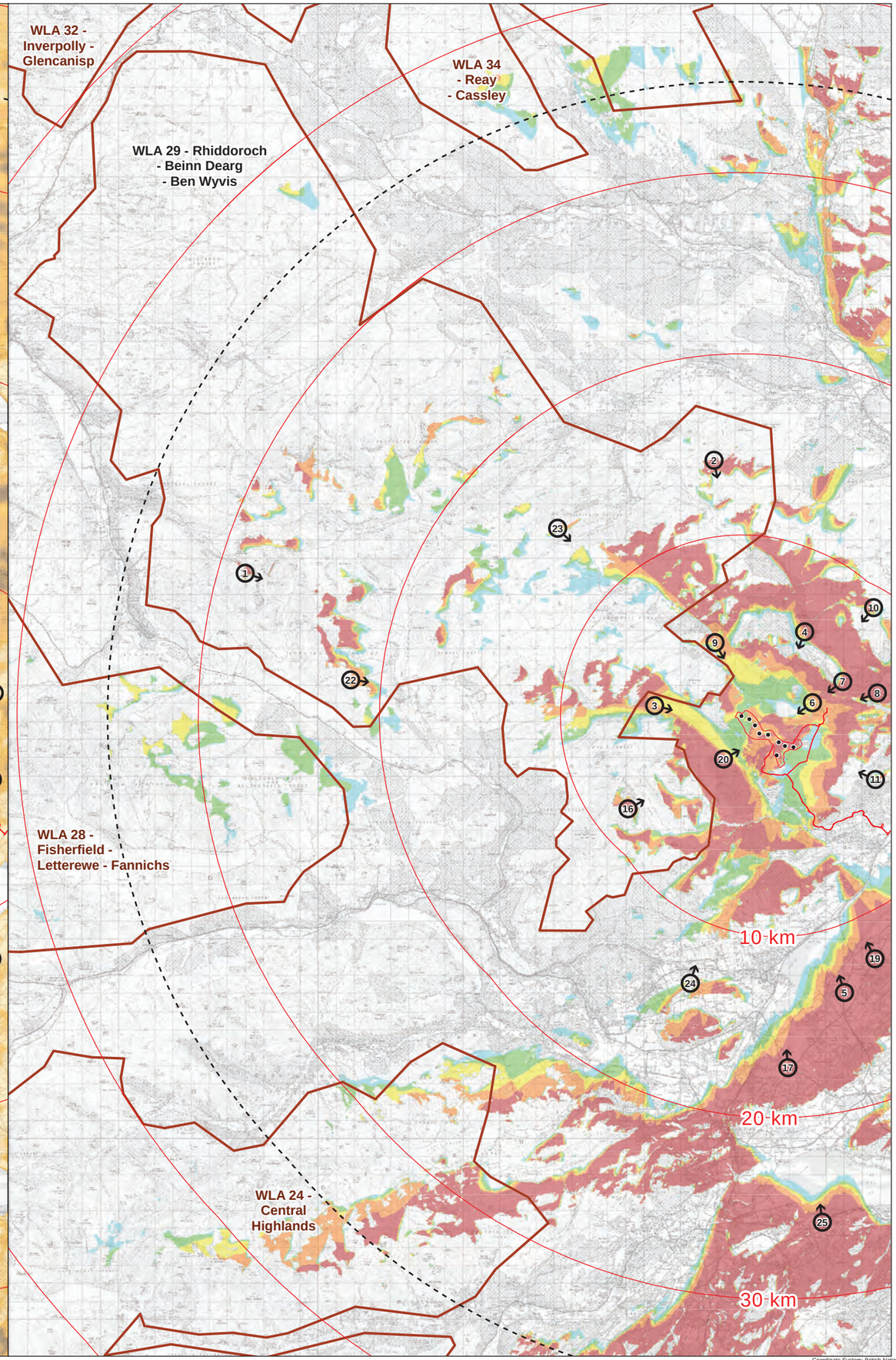
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1620016706-RAM-MA-IA-00133_WildernessArtefactZTV_05.mapx

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Legend

- Application Boundary
- Design Freeze layout
- 10 Km Radii from Outer Turbines
- Study Area (35 km from Outer Turbines)
- Viewpoint
- Wild Land Areas 2014 (WLA)

No of Turbines Theoretically Visible at Blade Tip Level (180m)

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 4
- 5 - 6
- 7 - 8
- 9

Perceived Naturalness

- Completely Natural
- Far From Nature

Note

The base map used is Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Scale Raster. This product does not cover the full extent of the figure. Where gaps exist (open water), Ordnance Survey 1:250,000 Scale Raster has been included. The cartographic variation between datasets has not affected any analytical outputs or assessment findings.

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2. Predicted visibility based on a viewer eye height 2 m above ground.
3. Visibility calculated using Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 DTM on a 5 m Grid.
4. Effect of earth curvature and light refraction is included.

Figure Title	Perceived Naturalness with Tip Height Bare Ground ZTV
Project Name	Novar 1 Wind Farm Repowering
Project No./Filery ID	1620016706 / REH2023N04156
Date	September 2026
Figure No.	TA 5.6.3
Revision	1.0
Prepared By	RD
Scale	1:130,000 @A1
	NTS
Client	nadara

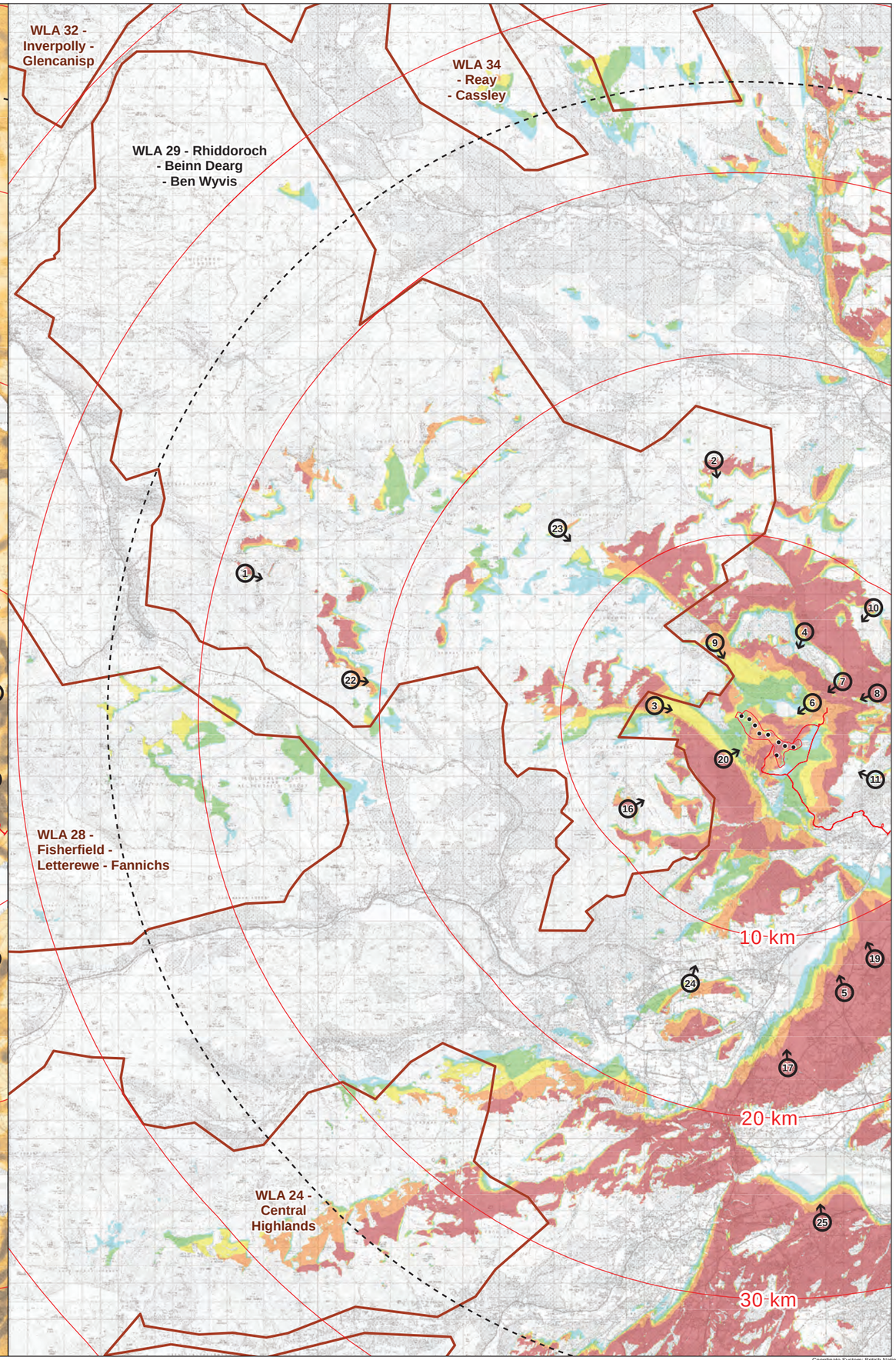
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1620016706-RAM-MA-A-00134_WilkinsonNATArch2TV_05.pdpx

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Legend

- Application Boundary
- Design Freeze layout
- 10 Km Radii from Outer Turbines
- Study Area (35 km from Outer Turbines)
- Viewpoint
- Wild Land Areas 2014 (WLA)

No of Turbines Theoretically Visible at Blade Tip Level (180m)

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 4
- 5 - 6
- 7 - 8
- 9

Rugged or Challenging Terrain

- Veru Rugged
- Smooth Terrain

Note

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DISCLAIMER :

1. The ZTV analysis does not take into account the screening effect of vegetation, buildings and other surface features.
2. Predicted visibility based on a viewer eye height 2 m above ground.
3. Visibility calculated using Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 DTM on a 5 m Grid.
4. Effect of earth curvature and light refraction is included.

Figure Title: Rugged or Challenging Terrain with Tip Height Bare Ground ZTV		
Project Name: Novar 1 Wind Farm Repowering		
Project No./Filery ID: 1620016706 / REH2023N04156		
Date: September 2026	Figure No.: TA 5.6.4	Revision: 1.0
Prepared By: RD	Scale: 1:130,000 @A1	NTS
Client: nadara		

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WLA 32 - Inverpolly - Glencanisp

WLA 34 - Reay - Cassley

WLA 29 - Rhiddoroch - Beinn Dearg - Ben Wyvis

WLA 28 - Fisherfield - Letterewe - Fannichs

WLA 24 - Central Highlands

10-km

20-km

30-km

0 10 20 km

Legend

- Application Boundary
- Design Freeze layout
- 10 Km Radii from Outer Turbines
- Study Area (35 km from Outer Turbines)
- Viewpoint
- Wild Land Areas 2014 (WLA)

No of Turbines Theoretically Visible at Blade Tip Level (180m)

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 4
- 5 - 6
- 7 - 8
- 9

Remoteness from Roads and Ferries

- Remote, Isolated
- Easily Accessible

Note

The base map used is Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Scale Raster. This product does not cover the full extent of the figure. Where gaps exist (open water), Ordnance Survey 1:250,000 Scale Raster has been included. The cartographic variation between datasets has not affected any analytical outputs or assessment findings.

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3. Visibility calculated using Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 DTM on a 5 m Grid.
4. Effect of earth curvature and light refraction is included.

Figure Title
Remoteness from Roads with Tip Height Bare Ground ZTV

Project Name
Novar 1 Wind Farm Repowering

Project No./Filery ID
1620016706 / REH2023N04156

Date	Figure No.	Revision
September 2026	TA 5.6.5	1.0

Prepared By	Scale
RD	1:130,000 @A1

Client
nadara

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1620016706-RAM-MA-IA-A01-136_WildnessRemAndZTV_05.jpgx

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