

# 5 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

---

*THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK*

## 5 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) assesses the landscape and visual impact of the Proposed Development which seeks to develop a 33kV connection with the proposed Curraghinalt mine, currently under consideration by Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) under planning application LA10/2017/1249/F.

The Proposed Development is as described in Chapter 2 Project Description and Need of this ES.

### 5.2 Consultation

A formal EIA Screening Determination request was submitted on behalf of the applicant to Dfi Planning in January 2020, and a summary of the key issues raised within the response received in November 2020 are presented below in Table 5.1. In addition to the responses raised through the formal EIA Screening Determination, matters raised by NIEA as noted in Chapter 4 Scoping and Consultation (refer to Volume III, Appendix 1.2) and in the response from DAERA NIEA Countryside and Coast received on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021 have also been included, in Table 5.1 below.

**Table 5.1: Summary of key issues raised relevant to Landscape and Visual resources**

Date	Response Received	Issues raised	Response to issue raised and/or where considered in this chapter
July 2020	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs	A proportionately detailed 'Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment' should be carried out in all cases, using the GLVIA 3rd Edition methodology	This LVIA has been carried out in line with, and following guidance provided within Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition (GLVIA 3).
November 2020	Department for Infrastructure EIA Screening determination	The limited number of viewpoints (11 No) is unlikely to be fully representative of the viewpoints and visual effects of the development along its route.	An additional 8 viewpoints which are representative of the visual context of the Proposed Development have been included to further assess potential visual impacts and are assessed at Section 5.7 of this LVIA.
November 2020	Department for Infrastructure EIA Screening determination	The cumulative impacts of existing development including overhead lines, telecommunication masts, wind turbines and built form, where present within the landscape have been considered as part of the LVIA baseline and are noted in views where applicable. There is little reference in the baseline to these features and references to existing overhead lines are generalised as at 1.3.1.	Where appropriate within the LVIA additional text has been included with consideration to baseline conditions and visibility of existing elements (overhead lines, masts, built form and wind turbines).  A separate, cumulative impact assessment has been provided within this LVIA, in line with current best practice guidance.
November 2020	Department for Infrastructure EIA Screening determination	With outlook from neighbouring properties as one subset of assessing residential amenity the Department considers it	Where relevant to each of the viewpoints used as part of the LVIA, further text has been added in relation to existing

Date	Response Received	Issues raised	Response to issue raised and/or where considered in this chapter
		important that a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment is carried out to assess the views from properties and in particular where the significance of effect is judged to be minor/moderate or above. Without this it is not possible to conclude that there would not be likely significant effects on residential amenity.	residential properties and outlook. A separate Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) has been carried out in accordance with the Landscape Institutes Technical Guidance Note TGN-02-19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment and is included at Volume III, Appendix 5.1.
November December 2020	Department for Infrastructure EIA Screening determination	The Department finds material doubt in regard to the number of viewpoints, the visual impacts from the viewpoints, the extent that the viewpoints are characteristic of the entire route, cumulative impacts and the impacts on residential outlook.	An additional 8 representative viewpoints have been included for assessment within Section 5.7 of this LVIA. These additional viewpoints also allow for the assessment of potential cumulative impacts and potential impacts on residential outlook. A separate RVAA has been undertaken in accordance with the Landscape Institutes Technical Guidance Note TGN-02-19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment and is included at Volume III, Appendix 5.1.

## 5.3 Methodology

### 5.3.1 General Approach

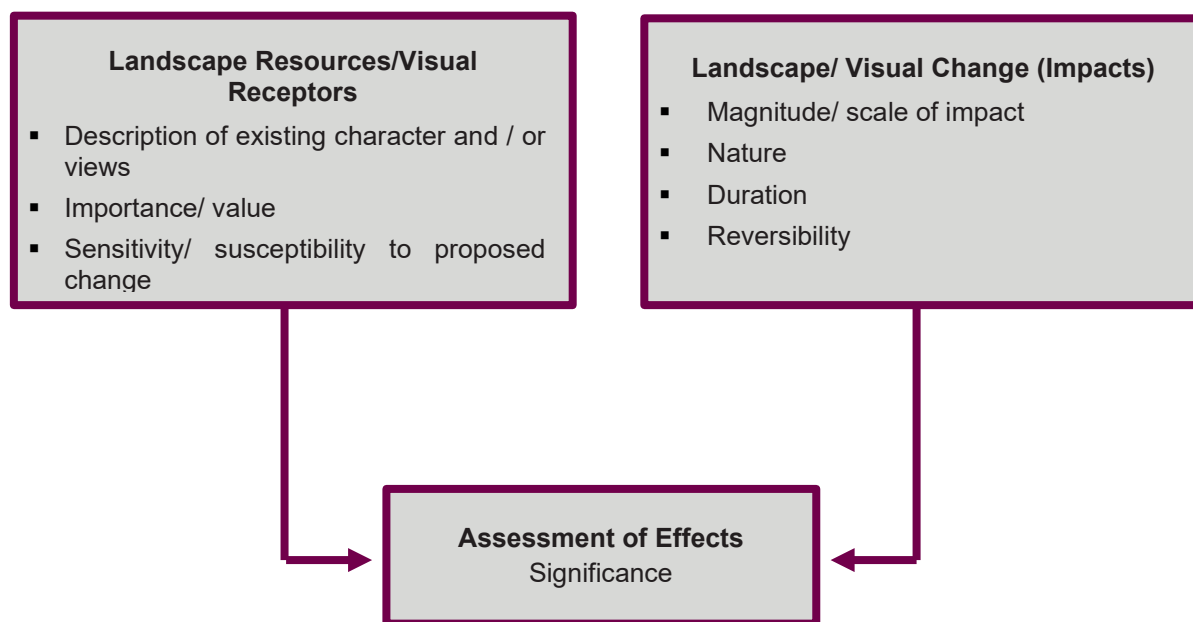
The methodology and approach to the assessment contained within this chapter has been developed from and carried out in accordance with best practice guidance described in the following documents;

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, 2013) (GLVIA3);
- Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (The Landscape Institute, 2019).
- Technical Guidance Note 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (The Landscape Institute, 2019)

GLVIA3 recommends that an LVIA “concentrates on principles and process’ and ‘does not provide a detailed or formulaic ‘recipe’ “ to assess effects, it being the “responsibility of the professional to ensure that the approach and methodology adopted are appropriate to the task in hand” (preface to the third edition).

The effects on the landscape resources and visual receptors (people) have been assessed by considering the proposed change in the baseline conditions (the impact of the development) against the type of landscape resource or visual receptor (including the importance and sensitivity of that resource or receptor). These factors are determined through a combination of quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) assessment using professional judgement. The assessment methodology is summarised in Figure 5.1 below.

**Figure 5.1: Assessment Methodology Summary**



The LVIA considers the potential effects of a project upon:

- Individual landscape features and elements;
- Landscape character; and
- Visual amenity and the people who view the landscape.

### 5.3.2 Identification of Baseline Conditions

Baseline conditions have been identified and assessed through analysis of:

- Up to date digital copies of Ordnance Survey Discovery Series raster and OS vector maps;
- Aerial photography;
- Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA);
- Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA);
- Area Development Plans;
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency - Register of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesne; and
- Drawings of the Proposed Development.

Site visits were undertaken to assess the existing environment, to establish the existing visual resource and to identify sensitive receptors, i.e. residential properties, scenic viewpoints. Site visits were also used to consider the potential effects on landscape character and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development.

### 5.3.3 Identifying Effects

Assessing the significance of an effect is a key component of the LVIA and is an evidence based process combining professional judgement on the nature of a landscape or visual receptor's sensitivity, their susceptibility or ability to accommodate change and the value attached to the receptor. It is important to note that judgements in this LVIA are impartial and based on professional experience and opinion informed by best practice guidance outlined in GLVIA 3:

- Very High: Areas of landscape acknowledged through designation such as AONB or other landscape based sensitive areas. These are of landscape significance within the wider region or nationally;
- High: Areas that have a very strong positive character with valued and consistent distinctive features that gives the landscape unity, richness and harmony. These are of landscape significance within the district;
- Medium: Areas that exhibit positive character, but which may have evidence of alteration/degradation or erosion of features resulting in a less distinctive landscape. These may be of some local landscape significance with some positive recognisable structure; and
- Low: Areas that are generally negative in character, degraded and in poor condition. No distinctive positive characteristics and with little or no structure. Scope for positive enhancement.

As previously discussed, landscape sensitivity is influenced by a number of factors including susceptibility to change, value and condition. In order to assist with bringing these factors together judgements regarding susceptibility and value, in accordance with best practice guidance outlined in GLVIA 3 have been used which define the landscape resource as being either, negligible, low, medium, high or very high. **Table 5.2** provides an outline of the definition and criteria that have guided the judgement as to the overall sensitivity of the Landscape Resource.

Assessments of susceptibility and value of a particular landscape resource may be different and professional judgement will always be used to conclude on the judgement of sensitivity. For example, value may be high and susceptibility may be low, and a professional judgement will be made to determine whether sensitivity is high, low or in between, supported by narrative explanation.

**Table 5.2: Landscape Sensitivity**

Definition		Sensitivity
Landscape resource susceptibility	Landscape resource value	
Exceptional landscape quality, no or limited potential for substitution. Key elements / features well known to the wider public. Little or no tolerance to change	Nationally / internationally designated/ valued landscape, or key elements or features of national/ internationally designated landscapes. Little or no tolerance to change	Very High
Strong/ distinctive landscape character; absence of landscape detractors. Low tolerance to change.	Regionally/ nationally designated/ valued countryside and landscape features. Low tolerance to change.	High
Some distinctive landscape characteristics; few landscape detractors. Medium tolerance to change.	Locally' regionally designated/ valued countryside and landscape features. Medium tolerance to change.	Medium
Absence of distinctive landscape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors. High tolerance to change	Undesignated countryside and landscape features. High tolerance to change	Low
Absence of positive landscape characteristics. Significant presence of landscape detractors. High tolerance to change	Undesignated countryside and landscape features. High tolerance to change	Negligible

### 5.3.4 Magnitude of Landscape Effect

The effect on landscape receptors and the overall judgement of the magnitude of landscape effect is based on combining judgements on “*size or scale, the geographic extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility*” (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.48),

Direct resource changes on the landscape character in the study area are brought about by the introduction of a proposed development and its impact on the key landscape characteristics.

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Magnitude of Impact</b>
Total loss or addition or/ very substantial loss or addition of key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and/ or introduction of dominant, uncharacteristic elements with the attributes of the receiving landscape	Large
Partial loss or addition of or moderate alteration to one or more key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and / or introduction of elements that may be prominent, but may not necessarily be substantially uncharacteristic with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Medium
Minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.	Small
Very minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape approximating to a 'no-change' situation.	Negligible
No loss, alteration or addition to the receiving landscape resource	No change

### 5.3.5 Visual Impact Assessment

As outlined in GLVIA 3 (Paragraph 6.1) “*An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity*”. The assessment of effects on views is an assessment of how the introduction of a proposed development will affect views within the study area. The Assessment of visual effects therefore needs to consider:

- Direct impacts of a proposed development upon views of the landscape through intrusion or obstruction;
- The reaction of viewers that may be affected, e. g. residents, walkers, road users; and
- The overall impact on visual amenity.

### 5.3.6 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

For visual receptors, judgements of susceptibility and value are closely interlinked. For example the most valued views are likely to be those which people go and visit because of the available view. The value attributed to visual receptors also relates to the value of the view – for example a National Trail is nationally valued for its access, not necessarily for its views.

Paragraph 6.32 of the GLVIA refers to the susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and states that susceptibility is mainly a function of “*the occupation or activity of different people experiencing the view at particular locations*” and “*the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.*”

Other factors affecting visual sensitivity, as outlined within best practice guidance (GLVIA 3) and which have been considered within this LVIA include:

- The location and context of the viewpoint;
- The expectations and occupation or activity of the receptor; and
- The importance of the view.

The definition and criteria for the overall visual sensitivity/ susceptibility are provided in **Table 5.3** below. The overall sensitivity of the visual resource is based on combining judgements on the sensitivity of the human receptor (for example resident, commuter, tourist, walker, recreationist or worker, and the numbers of viewers affected) and judgements on the visual resource value (for example views experienced from residential properties, workplace, leisure venue, local beauty spot, scenic viewpoint, commuter route, tourist route or walkers’ route).

**Table 5.3: Visual Resource Sensitivity**

Definition		Sensitivity
Visual resource Susceptibility	Visual resource value	
Views of remarkable scenic quality, of and within internationally designated landscapes or key features or elements of nationally designated landscapes that are well known to the wider public. Little or no tolerance to change.	Observers, drawn to a particular view, including those who have travelled to experience the views.  Little or no tolerance to change	Very High
Views from residential property. Public rights of way, National Trails, Long distance walking routes and nationally designated countryside/ landscape features with public access. Low tolerance to change.	Observers enjoying the countryside from their homes or pursuing quiet outdoor recreation are more sensitive to visual change.  Little tolerance to change	High
Views from local roads and routes crossing designated countryside / landscape features and 'access land' as well as promoted paths. Medium Tolerance to change.	Observers enjoying the countryside from vehicles on quiet/ promoted routes are moderately sensitive to visual change.  Medium tolerance to change	Medium
Views from work places, main roads and undesignated countryside / landscape features. High tolerance to change.	Observers in vehicles or people involved in frequent or infrequent repeated activities are less sensitive to visual change.  High tolerance to change	Low
Views from within and of undesignated landscapes with significant presence of landscape detractors. High tolerance to change.	Observers in vehicles or people involved in frequent or frequently repeated activities are less sensitive to visual change.  High tolerance to change	Negligible

### 5.3.7 Magnitude of Visual Effects

The magnitude of impact on the visual resource results from the scale of change in the view, with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view, and changes in the view composition. Important factors to be considered include: proportion of the view occupied by a proposed development, and distance and duration of the view affected by a proposed development. Other vertical elements and features in the landscape and within the backdrop to views of a proposed development will all influence the resource change. The definition and criteria of the magnitude of visual impact used within this LVIA are provided in **Table 5.4** below.

**Table 5.4: Magnitude of Visual Impact**

Definition	Magnitude
Complete or very substantial change in view dominant involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline, e.g., through removal of key elements.	Large
Moderate change in view: which may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline, i.e., pre-development view through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the view would alter. View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.	Medium



Definition	Magnitude
Minor change in baseline, i.e. pre-development view - change would be distinguishable from the surroundings whilst composition and character would be similar to the pre change circumstances.	Small
Very slight change in baseline, i.e. pre-development view - change barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered.	Negligible
No alteration to the existing view.	No change

### 5.3.8 Significance of Effects

The purpose of this LVIA is to determine, in a transparent way, the likely significant landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development. It is accepted that, due to the nature and scale of development, the Proposed Development could potentially give rise to

The CLVIA, in line with GLVIA 3, considers the additional landscape and visual effects arising from the Proposed Development in combination with other consented developments and proposed developments that are either approved but not yet constructed or are the subject of a valid planning application but have yet to be determined (GLVIA 3, Paragraph 7.13), which may give rise to cumulative landscape and visual effects. Other developments (refer to **Table 5.5**) have been identified from a Planning Application search undertaken on the Planning Northern Ireland portal and include those proposals which have either been granted planning approval, or are currently under consideration by the relevant Planning Authority.

A review of proposed developments has been undertaken to determine the likelihood for potential significant cumulative landscape and visual effects, taking consideration of the following criteria:

- Type and extent of identified proposal;
- The distance between the identified proposal and the Proposed Development;
- Likely visual influence of the identified proposal;
- Potential inter-visibility between the identified proposal and the Proposed Development;
- Potential for cumulative landscape effects on the physical fabric of the landscape or its scenic qualities (e.g. the Sperrin AONB); and
- The potential for combined, successive, and sequential visual effects in the context of the Proposed Development.

**Table 5.5**, below provides details of the other identified developments considered within the CLVIA that have been judged to have the potential to give rise to cumulative landscape and/ or visual effects. Other proposed developments were identified during the planning search, (Volume III, Appendix 1.5) however, they have not been included or assessed as part of the CLVIA as the potential for significant cumulative visual or landscape impacts are restricted by intervening topographical changes which limits interaction (refer to Volume III, Appendix 5.2 for the list of identified projects initially considered with commentary in respect of their relevance to the CLVIA).

**Table 5.5: Cumulative Developments Considered**

Application Nr.	Application Address	Development	Status	Potential for cumulative landscape and/or visual effect
LA11/2016/0721/F	Approximately 490 Metres South East of No.63 Curlyhill Road Strabane	Proposed 225kW wind turbine comprising of a V27 model with a 30M hub height and a 27M rotor diameter	Approved	Potential cumulative effects on Sperrin AONB and inter-visibility between developments.
LA11/2018/0966/F	Land approx. 500m East of 29 Landahussy Road Plumbridge Omagh BT79 8EQ	Free Range Poultry Shed with 2No. Feed Bins 2No. Storage Sheds a standby generator building and associated site works	Pending decision	Potential cumulative effects on Sperrin AONB and inter-visibility between developments.
LA11/2017/0993/F	Approx 110m west of 365 Lisnaragh Road Plumbridge BT79 8AP	Proposed free range poultry houses (layers) max 32 000 birds with 4 no meal bins and litter shed	Pending decision	Potential cumulative effects on Sperrin AONB and inter-visibility between developments.
LA10/2017/1249/F	Lands NW Of Greencastle E Of Rouskey N Of Crockanboy Rd W Of Mullydoo Road N And S Of Camcosy Rd Including Lands 165m W Of No. 45 Camcosy Road To The Junction Of Camcosy Rd And Crockanboy Rd And Lands 47m To The SE Of 73 Crockanboy Rd	Underground valuable minerals mining and exploration, surface level development including processing plant and other associated development and ancillary works, Greencastle, County Tyrone.	Pending decision	Potential cumulative effects on Sperrin AONB and inter-visibility between developments.
LA11/2018/0937/TBA	Momeen and Lettergull Lifford PO Co Donegal	6 no. wind turbines with an overall blade tip height of up to 135 metres and all associated foundations and hard standing areas, 1 no. borrow pit, 1 no. permanent anemometry mast up to a height of 100 metres, upgrade of existing and provision of new site access roads and associated drainage, 1 no. electrical substation compound, which will have 1 no. control building, associated electrical plant and equipment, and a waste water holding tank. 1 no. temporary construction compound and all associated underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the turbine to the proposed on site substation, as well as on site underground cabling to	Pending	Potential cumulative effects on Sperrin AONB and inter-visibility between developments.

Application Nr.	Application Address	Development	Status	Potential for cumulative landscape and/or visual effect
		facilitate electrical connection to the national grid, and all associated site development works, including amenity trails on wind farm roads, car parking, seating benches and signage.		

Where existing overhead lines, telecommunication masts, wind turbines and built form are present within the landscape they have been considered as part of the LVIA baseline and are noted in views where applicable.

## 5.4 Baseline Environment

### 5.4.1 General Overview

The Proposed Development and associated study area is located in County Tyrone, between Strabane, to the northwest, and the proposed Curraghinalt project, approximately 7.5km east of Gortin. The landscape is predominantly upland, rural in character and utilised for rough pasture grazing. Most fields are rectangular in shape and lined by stone walls, fences, or hedgerows with instances of broadleaved and coniferous shelterbelt woodland planting with scattered mixed broadleaved woodland along streams and rivers.

The landscape within the study area is primarily associated with the Sperrin Mountain range, which runs generally east to west between Newtownstewart and Carratogher. Many of the peaks within the Sperrins are over 500m, which are surrounded by broad rounded ridges. To the south of the Sperrins, more elevated land gives way to the Carrickmore Plateau, which is generally more even in elevation though still used primarily for rough pasture given its upland nature.

The north-western portion of the study area is the most urbanised, due to the proximity of Strabane. The settlement areas of Ballygamorry, Plumbridge and Rousky are near the Proposed Development. Outside of these settlement areas, scattered residential properties and farmsteads are often found near the local road networks. The local road network is generally well integrated into the surrounding landscape with views of the wider landscape often restricted by roadside vegetation.

Views from within the north-western portion of the study area contain visibility of the operational Owenreagh Windfarm which often forms a distinct feature above horizons. Additional visibility of wind turbines is provided by scattered single wind turbines, located within the undulating landscape and which often form strong visual draws within views. Telecommunication masts are found throughout the study area and often located on elevated valley sides and summits of hills, where they form distinct visual elements. Visibility of large-scale wind turbines associated with the operational turbines at Slieve Kirk and Eglish windfarms is afforded from within western portions of the study area, where they form distinct elements and features on distant horizons. The study area associated with the Proposed Development is traversed by a number of existing overhead lines carried by a variety of timber poles to varying heights, both adjacent to the local road network, near existing residential properties and as separate features which cross both open upland areas and more enclosed lower elevation agricultural landscapes. Large scale pylons are also visible within portions of the study area, particularly in the vicinity of the existing NIE Networks Strabane Main 110/33kV Substation. Whilst a variety of vertical infrastructure is a feature of the landscape character within the study area, it is Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, [www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/sperrin-aonb](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/sperrin-aonb)).

#### 5.4.1.1 Historic Parks and Gardens

Country houses, some of which are listed buildings, set in landscaped parkland or within demesnes, are an important part of the landscape. NIEA has identified a number of these parks, gardens and demesnes that it

considers represents a significant historic and landscape resource. Any development that is likely to have an adverse impact on the planned layout, including views in and out of quality or character of these areas will normally be refused planning permission.

There are two registered Historic Park and Gardens (HPG) located within proximity to the Proposed Development corridor (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.2);

- Holy Hill (Registered Site - Area Plan Strabane 10) - The southern boundary of the HPG is located approximately 600m north of the Proposed Development site corridor at Hollyhill Road. The name is also written as Holy Hill House and Holyhill. The demesne and house date from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century when it was home of the Sinclair family (listed HB 10/02/001). The house is set in a maintained ornamental garden with herbaceous borders and lawns. A water garden was added in the 1970s. There are mature trees beyond in what was described by Young in 1909 as a, "... richly wooded park." These form a shelter belt round this fine parkland, together with and stands of woodland. The walled garden is part cultivated and retains glasshouses.
- Beltrim Castle (Registered Site – Area Plan Omagh 11) – The northern boundary of the HPG is located approximately 2.3km south-west of the Proposed Development corridor at Meenadoo Road. The demesne dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. A long thin pond on the site could be the remains of a canal associated with the early house. The present house was built in 1820 (listed HB 11/16/13) and the landscape park in undulating land complements the house. There are mature shelter and woodland trees, the parkland trees are being reinforced with new planting. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were walks and rides through the woods. There is an ornamental garden at the house on the site of a once more complex Victorian formal garden.

#### 5.4.1.2 The Ulster Way

The Ulster Way is a nationally recognised long distance footpath that was designated under the Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983. The Ulster Way is protected and maintained by the relevant District Councils through which it passes and is promoted as a national walking route by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

The Gortin to Moneyneany (Quality Section) lies in close proximity to the Proposed Development where it follows the Meenadoo Road, approximately 2.9km northeast of Gortin (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.3). Way Marked Trails

There are a number of marked walking trails within the study area (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.3) which include; Craignamaddy Circuit, Vinegar Hill Loop and Rousky Walk.

The Craignamaddy Circuit is a circular route of approximately 12.8 miles, which follows a portion of the Gortin to Moneyneany Quality Section of the Ulster Way as previously described. This local walking route lies in close proximity to the Proposed Development where it follows the Meenadoo Road, approximately 2.9km northeast of Gortin.

The Vinegar Hill Loop is a circular route of approximately 7 miles, which follows a portion of the Gortin to Moneyneany Quality Section of the Ulster Way as previously described. This local walking route lies in close proximity to the Proposed Development, where it follows the Gorticashel Road, approximately 1.7km north of Rousky.

The Rousky Walk is a linear walk of approximately 1m, between the hamlet of Rousky and Lenagh Road to the south-west. This local walking route lies in close proximity to the Proposed Development at its starting point within Rousky.

#### 5.4.1.3 Cycling Trails

There are a number of promoted cycling trails within the study area which include; White Hare Cycle Route, Gold Cycle Route, Sawel Cycle Route, National Route 92 and National Route 95.

The White Hare Cycle Route, a 58km circular route starts and finishes in Carrickmore and passes through Greencastle, approximately 3.3km east of the Proposed Development.

The Gold Cycle Route, a 50km circular route starting and finishing in Gortin, utilises both the Gorticashel Road, Meenadoo Road and a short section of the B48 north-east of Gortin. The Proposed Development crosses the cycling trail as it utilises the Meenadoo Road and the Gorticashel Road.

The Sawel Cycle Route, a 48km circular route starts and finishes in Plumbridge and utilises local roads along the southern edge of Glenelly River, Glenelly Road (B47) and a short section of the B48. The Proposed Development crosses the cycling trail as it utilises these road networks.

National Route 92 links Ballinamallard to Londonderry via Omagh, Newtownstewart, and Strabane. There is an alternative loop which avoids Newtownstewart, instead utilising road networks to Plumbridge. The entire route is part of the longer Ballyshannon to Ballycastle route and is approximately 165km in length. The Proposed Development crosses this cycle route as it utilises the local road network to the east of Plumbridge.

National Route 95 goes north from Tynan, Co Armagh to the shore of Lough Neagh and then across to Pettigo via Newtownstewart via the Sperrin Mountains and is approximately 164km in length. The National Route utilises the Gorticashel Road on the approach to Gortin, which the Proposed Development crosses.

### **Scenic Driving Routes**

Four routes have been created in the Sperrins area; Central, South, East and North Sperrins Scenic Routes. Each route connects accommodation, visitor services, tourist attractions and scenic viewpoints and provides an opportunity to explore the Sperrin region.

Of the four identified routes the Central Sperrins Scenic Route is crossed by the Proposed Development, on the B47 approximately 0.8km east of Plumbridge. The Proposed Development is within proximity.

Overhead line is the preferred method of connecting 33kV due to ease of construction, operational maintenance and technical limitations associated with long undergrounded cable connections. It should be noted that fully undergrounding the Proposed Development was considered, however determined as not feasible due to technical limitations, such as charging current limitations, as set out and referred to in NIE Networks policy (Policy 10/019) (see further Chapter 3; Alternatives).

Undergrounding of cables is proposed along localised sections of the Proposed Development route; from the existing Strabane Main Substation to a terminal pole located in the field adjacent to Hollyhill Road; between terminal poles located in fields adjacent to the Meendamp Road; as it crosses the Glencoppagh Road; as it crosses the Landahussy Road to the south east of Plumbridge; along the Glenforan Road and Meenadoo Road; Gorticashel Road; and on the approach to the Curraghinalt project site on the Crockanboy Road.

## **5.5 Landscape Impacts**

The assessment of landscape impacts follows the methodology previously described in Section 5.3 and considers those effects which are predicted to occur during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

The assessment of construction phase effects relates to the following identified activities:

- Foundation excavation and erection of poles (double and single poles);
- Construction and excavation works associated with undergrounding cables;
- Delivery of materials to working areas;
- Erection of the line/ cable and fitting of ancillary equipment such as anti-climbing devices to poles; and
- Localised site clearance and reinstatement.

The construction phase of the Proposed Development will result in additional built elements being introduced into the landscape albeit similar to those that currently exist within the study area. The operational phase of the Proposed Development will result in vertical elements (timber poles), overhead lines and conductors being visible within the surrounding landscape.

An assessment of the significance of impact arising from the Proposed Development during the construction and operational phases on the identified NILCA 2000 character areas described previously in Section 5.3 is provided in the following tables (**Table 5.6 to Table 5.9** below).

**Table 5.6: Foyle Valley LCA (27); Predicted Impacts**

<b>Foyle Valley LCA (27)</b>	
Sensitivity	<p>The Proposed Development is partially contained within this LCA, with the majority of the Proposed Development to be undergrounded and 4Nr. new timber poles to be erected.</p> <p>Key characteristics which, together with field work, have informed an understanding of the susceptibility of this landscape, particularly at a local level, to the Proposed Development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gently undulating topography provides local enclosure.</li> <li>• Varied field pattern scale with field boundaries well defined by hedgerows and hedgerows with maturing trees.</li> <li>• Timber poles carrying overhead lines are a feature of the landscape, often visible on skylines and located along existing road networks.</li> <li>• Scattered copses of mixed species woodland add further screening and enclosure within the LCA.</li> <li>• Larger areas of woodland present within incised river valleys at Strabane Glen to the west and around Holly Hill House to the north-east of the LCA.</li> <li>• Local Road networks generally absorbed within the LCA through combination of screening by vegetation and localised topographical changes.</li> </ul> <p>Overall the character of the LCA within the study area associated with the Proposed Development is predominantly open in character, though field boundary hedgerows, mixed species woodland and more elevated, undulating lands provide a localised sense of enclosure. Timber poles carrying overhead lines are a noticeable feature within the LCA due to location, though do not form a dominant feature. Scattered farmsteads with barns and residential properties form prominent elements, particularly on more elevated slopes within the LCA.</p> <p>Taking account of the above characteristics and the influence of existing man made features within the study area, the susceptibility of the LCA to the type of development proposed is judged to be medium.</p> <p>Whilst the LCA does not form part of the adjacent Sperrins AONB, it does form an attractive backdrop and is often read in combination with the Sperrins AONB. Overall the value of the LCA is judged to be medium.</p> <p>Based on the susceptibility and value attached to this LCA, the overall sensitivity of the LCA is judged to be medium.</p>
Magnitude of Change	<p>Direct, temporary, adverse impacts on this LCA will arise from construction phase operations associated with the underground cabling works and construction operations associated with the installation of a small number of timber poles within existing pastoral agricultural lands. Construction phase impacts are judged to be localised in extent, limited to roadside verges and those portions of fields disturbed during the construction phase. Following completion of the construction phase operations, grassed verges and disturbed fields will be reinstated.</p> <p>During the operational phase the additional timber poles associated with the Proposed Development, located within the LCA, will be viewed as a minor addition locally, though will not be obvious within the wider context and will often be read in combination with existing timber poles and overhead lines within the LCA.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be localised and small during the construction phase.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be negligible during the operational phase.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Construction Phase	<p>Minor, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations associated with underground cabling and installation of timber poles.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Operational Phase.	<p>Negligible to minor, long duration, localised and not significant as predicted effects are limited to additional timber poles only, which are judged to be barely perceptible in the wider landscape and perceived locally as a minor addition to the overall character of the LCA.</p>

## Foyle Valley LCA (27)

Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.

**Table 5.7: Sperrin Mountains LCA (29); Predicted Impacts**

## Sperrin Mountains LCA (29)

Sensitivity	<p>The Proposed Development is contained within this LCA, with new timber poles and underground cable sections proposed along the route.</p> <p>Key characteristics which, together with field work, have informed an understanding of the susceptibility of this landscape, particularly at a local level, to the Proposed Development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad, rounded ridges with rocky outcrops leading to steep, often summits.</li> <li>• Deep, branching gullies and open, fast-flowing moorland streams.</li> <li>• Open moorland pasture and areas of damp grassland on flatter land and lower slopes.</li> <li>• Instances of derelict pasture land infested by scrub and rushes.</li> <li>• Broadleaf woodland concentrated within lower valleys; conifer plantation on mountain slopes.</li> <li>• Wind turbines and transmission masts located on elevated portions of the LCA including summits of hills</li> <li>• Timber poles carrying overhead lines often visible on skylines and located along existing road networks</li> </ul> <p>Taking account of the above characteristics and the influence of existing man made features within the study area, the susceptibility of the LCA to the type of development proposed is judged to be medium.</p> <p>The LCA within the study area forms a portion of the wider Sperrins AONB designation, a national designation, and the overall value of the LCA within the study area is judged to be high.</p> <p>Based on the susceptibility and value attached to this LCA, the overall sensitivity of the LCA is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change	<p>Direct impacts on this LCA will arise from construction phase operations associated with localised underground cabling works and construction operations associated with the installation of a timber poles within areas of moorland and upland rough pasture grazing land which will be disturbed during the construction phase. Construction phase impacts are judged to be localised in extent, limited to roadside verges and portions of disturbed land associated with the implementation of new timber poles during the construction phase. Following completion of the construction phase operations, grassed verges and disturbed ground will be reinstated.</p> <p>During the operational phase, timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will be perceived as a minor addition locally, though will be not be obvious within the wider context of the Sperrin Mountains LCA, as within short distances the Proposed Development is absorbed within the landscape and often viewed against existing topographical changes, which aids its integration.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be localised and small during the construction phase.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be negligible during the operational phase.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Construction Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations associated with underground cabling and installation of timber poles.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>

**Sperrin Mountains LCA (29)**

Significance of Landscape Effect during Operational Phase.	Minor, long duration, localised and not significant as predicted effects are limited in extent by topographical changes and are judged to be barely perceptible within the wider landscape, though perceived locally as a minor addition to the overall character of the LCA. Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.
--	--

**Table 5.8: Glenelly Valley LCA (28); Predicted Impacts**

**Glenelly Valley LCA (28)**

Sensitivity	<p>The Proposed Development traverses a small western portion of this LCA, with new timber poles proposed along the route.</p> <p>Key characteristics which, together with field work, have informed an understanding of the susceptibility of this landscape, particularly at a local level, to the Proposed Development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glenelly River banks well vegetated with mixed species deciduous trees.</li> <li>• Variable field pattern well defined by hedgerows, hedgerows with trees and scattered woodland blocks on lower elevation slopes.</li> <li>• Mixed arable and pastoral lands located on lower elevation slopes, gives way to more open moorland pastures on more elevated slopes and hill tops adjacent to the river valley.</li> <li>• Road networks generally absorbed within the LCA through combination of screening by vegetation and localised topographical changes.</li> <li>• Valley landscape is generally undulating in nature, with hedgerows and field boundary vegetation defining and emphasising the undulating landform.</li> <li>• Timber poles carrying overhead lines are a feature of the LCA, often located adjacent to local roads networks.</li> <li>• Sense of enclosure provided by valley sides and existing vegetation cover.</li> <li>• Scattered residential and farmstead properties are perceived, but often screened by vegetation, including woodland.</li> </ul> <p>The Proposed Development is located within the western extent of this LCA, east of Plumbridge. The Glenelly Valley is a relatively enclosed valley landscape with well-defined field boundary hedgerows, scattered broadleaved woodland and coniferous shelterbelt plantation on lower and higher elevation land. This LCA forms part of the eastern extent of the study area and contains timber poles carrying overhead lines, which form a minor element of the LCA.</p> <p>Taking account of the above characteristics and the influence of existing man made features within the study area, the susceptibility of the LCA to the type of development proposed is judged to be medium.</p> <p>The LCA within the study area forms a part of the wider Sperrins AONB designation, a national designation, and the overall value of the LCA within the study area is judged to be high.</p> <p>Based on the susceptibility and value attached to this LCA, the overall sensitivity of the LCA is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change	<p>Direct impacts on this LCA will arise from construction phase operations associated with the installation of a timber poles within areas of agricultural lands disturbed during the construction phase. Construction phase impacts are judged to be localised in extent, limited to portions of disturbed land associated with the implementation of new timber poles during the construction phase. Following completion of the construction phase operations disturbed ground will be reinstated.</p> <p>During the operational phase, timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will be perceived as a minor addition locally, though will not be obvious within the wider context of the LCA due to screening provided by existing vegetation cover and localised topographical changes. It is also noted that where visible locally, new timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will be read in combination with other overhead lines being supported by timber poles and will be read as a minor, imperceptible addition to the landscape resource.</p>



### Glenelly Valley LCA (28)

	<p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be localised and small during the construction phase.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be negligible during the operational phase.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Construction Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations associated with installation of timber poles.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Operational Phase.	<p>Minor, long duration, localised and not significant as predicted effects are limited in extent by topographical changes and screening by vegetation. Visible portions of the Proposed Development are judged to be perceived locally as a minor addition to the overall character though not easily perceived in the wider landscape.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>

**Table 5.9: South Sperrin LCA (24); Predicted Impacts**

### South Sperrin LCA (24)

Sensitivity	<p>The Proposed Development is contained within the south western extent of this LCA, east of Gortin, with new timber poles and underground cable sections proposed along the route.</p> <p>Key characteristics which, together with field work, have informed an understanding of the susceptibility of this landscape, particularly at a local level, to the Proposed Development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variable field pattern defined by hedgerows, hedgerows with trees on lower elevation slopes.</li> <li>• Mixed arable and pastoral lands located on lower elevation slopes, gives way to more open moorland pastures on more elevated slopes and hill tops adjacent to the river valley.</li> <li>• Road networks generally well absorbed within the LCA through combination of screening by roadside vegetation, localised topographical changes and field boundary vegetation.</li> <li>• Large areas of coniferous plantation to the north of Gortin and mixed woodland planting along streams, farmsteads and individual properties.</li> <li>• Timber poles carrying overhead lines are a feature of the LCA, located adjacent to local roads networks.</li> <li>• Operational wind turbines visible on more elevated upland slopes to the south east of the LCA.</li> <li>• Scattered residential and farmstead properties are perceived, but often screened by vegetation, including woodland particularly on lower and mid elevation slopes.</li> </ul> <p>The Proposed Development is located east of Gortin and will result in direct landscape impacts during both the construction and operational phases. The LCA, to the east of Gortin is a relatively enclosed landscape with well-defined field boundary hedgerows, scattered broadleaved woodland and coniferous shelterbelt plantation throughout.</p> <p>Taking account of the above characteristics and the influence of existing man made features within the study area, the susceptibility of the LCA to the type of development proposed is judged to be medium.</p> <p>The LCA within the study area forms a part of the wider Sperrins AONB designation, a national designation, and the overall value of the LCA within the study area is judged to be high.</p> <p>Based on the susceptibility and value attached to this LCA, the overall sensitivity of the LCA is judged to be high.</p>
-------------	---

**South Sperrin LCA (24)**

<p>Magnitude of Change</p>	<p>Direct impacts on this LCA will arise from construction phase operations associated with the installation of timber poles, which will have a localised, short term impact on areas of agricultural land that are disturbed during the construction phase. Construction phase associated with the underground cabling operations along Meenadoo Road, Crockanboy Road and the local road network accessing the proposed Curraghinalt project will have a localised short term impact as roadside verges and vegetation will be disturbed during the construction phase. Following completion of the construction phase operations disturbed ground will be reinstated.</p> <p>During the operational phase, additional timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will be perceived as a minor addition locally, though will not be obvious within the wider context of the LCA due to screening provided by existing vegetation cover and localised topographical changes. It is also noted that where visible, new poles associated with the Proposed Development will be read in combination with other overhead lines being supported by timber poles and will be read as a minor, addition to the existing landscape resource.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be localised and small during the construction phase. The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be negligible during the operational phase.</p>
<p>Significance of Landscape Effect during Construction Phase</p>	<p>Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations associated with installation of timber poles and following underground cable works.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>
<p>Significance of Landscape Effect during Operational Phase.</p>	<p>Minor, long duration, localised and not significant as predicted effects are limited in extent by topographical changes and screening by vegetation. Visible portions of the Proposed Development are judged to be perceived locally as a minor addition to the overall character though not easily read or perceived in the wider landscape.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>

**Table 5.10** below summarises the predicted significance of landscape effects for each of the previously assessed landscape character areas.

**Table 5.10: Summary of Predicted Landscape Effects**

Landscape Character / Designation	Predicted Construction Phase Landscape Effects	Predicted Operational Phase Landscape Effects
Foyle Valley LCA	Minor, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant	Negligible to minor, long duration, localised and not significant
Sperrin Mountains LCA	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant	Minor, long duration, localised and not significant
Glenelly Valley LCA	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant	Minor, long duration, localised and not significant
South Sperrin LCA	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant	Minor, long duration, localised and not significant

## 5.5.1 Landscape Designation Impacts

An assessment of the significance of impact arising from the Proposed Development during the construction and operational phases on the landscape designations identified and described in Section 5. 4 previously are provided in the following assessments.

**Table 5.11: Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Sperrins AONB; Predicted Impacts**

<b>Sperrins AONB</b>	
Sensitivity	<p>Unlike other AONBs within Northern Ireland, the Sperrins AONB has no documented description relating to the special qualities or key landscape characteristics afforded protection by the designation. In the absence of such documentation, the assessment of effects has been based upon the assessment of effects predicted previously for the relevant LCAs covered by the AONB.</p> <p>Key characteristics which, together with field work, have informed an understanding of the susceptibility of this landscape, particularly at a local level, to the Proposed Development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variable field pattern defined by hedgerows, hedgerows with trees on lower elevation slopes.</li> <li>• Mixed arable and pastoral lands located on lower elevation slopes, give way to more open moorland pastures on more elevated slopes and hill tops.</li> <li>• Road networks generally well absorbed within the AONB through combination of screening by roadside vegetation, topographical changes and field boundary vegetation.</li> <li>• Large areas of coniferous plantation on more elevated slopes throughout the AONB designation provide textural and colour variation.</li> <li>• Timber poles carrying overhead lines are a feature of the LCA, located adjacent to local roads networks.</li> <li>• Operational wind turbines visible on more elevated upland slopes to the south east of the LCA.</li> <li>• Scattered residential and farmstead properties form prominent features on upper slopes, though are generally well screened by vegetation on lower elevation slopes.</li> </ul> <p>The Proposed Development is primarily located on lands covered by the AONB designation and is judged to give rise to localised, direct landscape impacts during both the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. Taking account of the above characteristics and the influence of existing man made features within the study area, the susceptibility of the AONB to the type of development proposed is judged to be medium.</p> <p>The Sperrins AONB designation, a national designation, is judged to have an overall high value.</p> <p>Based on the susceptibility and value attached to this LCA, the overall sensitivity of the AONB is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change	<p>Construction phase operations associated with the installation of timber poles in agricultural fields and upland areas will have a localised, short term impact on the AONB as land is disturbed during the construction phase, though reinstated following completion of the construction works. Construction phase operations associated with the underground cabling operations along Meenadoo Road, Crockanboy Road and the local road network accessing the proposed Dalradian mine site will have a localised short term impact on the AONB as roadside verges are disturbed, then full reinstated during the construction phase.</p> <p>During the operational phase, timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will be perceived as a minor addition locally, though will not be obvious within the wider landscape due to screening provided by existing vegetation cover and topographical changes within both the local and wider context. It is also noted that were visible locally, new timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will often be read in combination with other overhead lines being supported by timber poles and will be read as a minor, imperceptible addition to the landscape resource.</p>

**Sperrins AONB**

	<p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be localised and small during the construction phase as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be negligible during the operational phase.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Construction Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant as disturbed ground associated with installation of timber poles and underground cabling operations will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the AONB outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Operational Phase.	<p>Minor, long duration, localised and not significant as predicted effects are limited in extent by topographical changes and screening by vegetation. Visible portions of the Proposed Development are judged to be perceived locally as a minor addition to the overall character though not easily read or perceived in the wider landscape context.</p> <p>Remaining portions of the LCA outside of the Proposed Development boundary are predicted to experience no significant indirect effects.</p>

**Table 5.12: Historic Parks and Gardens; Predicted Impacts**

**Historic Parks and Gardens**

Sensitivity	<p>As previously discussed at Section 5.4, NIEA has identified a number of these parks, gardens and demesnes that it considers represents a significant historic and landscape resource</p> <p>Key characteristics which, together with field work, have informed an understanding of the susceptibility of this landscape, particularly at a local level, to the Proposed Development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive woodland planting defining boundaries to Holyhill provide strong sense of enclosure to internal fields and parkland areas associated with the HPG.</li> <li>• The walled garden associated with Holyhill is part cultivated and retains glasshouses.</li> <li>• Extensive mature shelter belt planting and woodland trees define the boundaries of the Beltrim Castle and provide strong sense of enclosure to fields and parkland associated with the HPG.</li> </ul> <p>The Proposed Development is not located on lands covered by either of the above designations, with Holyhill located approximately 600m north of the Proposed Development where it occurs to the south of Hollyhill Road and Beltrim Castle located approximately 2.3km south-west of the Proposed Development corridor at Meenadoo Road.</p> <p>Taking account of the above characteristics and the influence of existing man made features within the study area, the susceptibility of the HPG designation to the type of development proposed is judged to be medium.</p> <p>The HPG designation, a national designation, is judged to have an overall high value. Based on the susceptibility and value attached to this designation, the overall sensitivity of the HPG designation is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change	<p>Construction phase operations associated with the installation of timber poles and undergrounding of cables along Holyhill Road to the south of the southern boundary of Holyhill HPG will have a localised, short term indirect impact though will not be readily visible due to screening by intervening vegetation. From within Holyhill HPG, construction phase operations will not be seen due to screening by boundary woodland planting.</p> <p>Construction phase operations associated with the installation of timber poles and undergrounding of cables on Drumalea Road, to the north east of Beltrim Castle will not be visible due to screening provided by intervening landform and vegetation.</p>

**Historic Parks and Gardens**

	<p>During the operational phase, timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will be perceived as a minor addition locally, though will not be obvious within the wider landscape context from southern boundaries of Holyhill HPG and will not be visible from within Holyhill HPG due to screening provided by woodland planting along southern and eastern boundaries.</p> <p>During the operational phase, timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will not be seen from northern boundaries of the Beltrim Castle HPG due to screening provided by intervening topographical changes and vegetation cover.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be localised and negligible during the construction phase for localised portions of the Holyhill HPG only.</p> <p>The predicted magnitude of change in the landscape resource is judged to be negligible during the operational phase for localised portions of the Holyhill HPG only.</p>
Significance of Landscape Effect during Construction Phase	Minor, temporary, short duration, localised and assessed as not significant.
Significance of Landscape Effect during Operational Phase.	Minor, long duration, localised and not significant as predicted effects are limited in extent by screening by intervening vegetation. Visible portions of the Proposed Development are judged to be perceived as a minor addition to the surrounding character though not easily read or perceived in the wider landscape context.

**Table 5.13: Summary of Predicted Landscape Designation Effects**

Landscape Character / Designation	Predicted Construction Phase Landscape Effects	Predicted Operational Phase Landscape Effects
Sperrins AONB	Minor to moderate, localised temporary adverse and not significant	Minor and not significant
HolyHill HPG	Minor, temporary, short duration localised and assessed as not significant.	Minor, long duration, localised and not significant
Beltrim Castle HPG	None	None

## 5.6 Visual Effects

A series of 11 viewpoints, reflective of the existing landscape and visual context along the Proposed Development route were originally submitted to DfI Planning as part of the EIA Screening Determination exercise undertaken in January 2020. Following receipt of comments in November 2020 from DfI Planning, a further 8 viewpoints were selected to provide further illustrative representation of the Proposed Development within the study area as an aid to the assessment of potential visual impacts on receptors and as an aid to assessment of potential visual impacts upon residential receptors in proximity to the Proposed Development.

Additional viewpoint locations to address issues raised by DfI Planning in relation to illustration of the Proposed Development within the study area were provided to DfI Planning for discussion and acceptance in January 2021. The emailed response from DAERA NIEA Countryside and Coast received on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021, stated that they “would not be in a position to give direction on where additional viewpoints should be taken but agreed that the additional spread of viewpoints along the route appeared to represent a proportionate approach to the concerns raised in the EIA screening determination”.

Therefore, a total of 19 viewpoint locations, located along the Proposed Development corridor have been carried forward and used to illustrate the existing visual context of the Proposed Development and as an aid to the visual

impact assessment. All viewpoints have been located on publicly accessible roads, footpaths, and verges (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.4).

Viewpoints selected as part of the visual assessment were selected to meet the following criteria;

- A balance of viewpoints from where the main direction of view is towards the Proposed Development;
- A range of views towards the Proposed Development from within the study area. Selected viewpoints are all located within the study area associated with the Proposed Development; and
- Locations of interest e.g. settlements.

Views available from each of the selected viewpoint locations are presented in Volume II; Figure 5.4 which should be read in conjunction with the following viewpoint assessments.

The assessment of the existing environment and the impact of the Proposed Development on visual receptors has established that there will be no protected views or scenic views significantly affected by the Proposed Development.

Further, there will be no important views from visitor amenity areas or tourist sites significantly affected by the Proposed Development due to intervening topography, vegetation, and distance of potential views.

To avoid repetition, an assessment of construction phase impacts and predicted operational phase impacts are included within each of the following viewpoint assessments.

**Table 5.14: Viewpoint 1 – Hollyhill Road**

<b>Viewpoint 1 – Hollyhill Road</b>			
<b>Grid Ref</b>	238016, 398535	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.5
<b>Direction of View</b>	South-east	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	120m
<b>Description of existing view and potential receptors</b>	<p>This viewpoint is located on the grassed verge adjacent to Hollyhill Road, north of the western extent of the overhead line section of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.5) is partially restricted in nature by mature shelterbelt planting to the left of the view, associated with a local farm steading. The immediate foreground and mid distance are comprised of improved pastureland, with field patterns defined by a mix of post and wire fencing and scattered field boundary hedgerows. More elevated land forming the horizon within the central portion of the view is associated with Craignagore, whilst northern slopes associated with Owenreagh Hill are partially visible beyond the intervening shelterbelt planting. A Meteorological mast is visible on the summit of Craignagore, whilst a single wind turbine is visible on the skyline to the right of the view. Scattered residential properties and farm dwellings are visible at mid-distance within the view. Timber poles carrying overhead lines, whilst visible, form a minor element within the view.</p> <p>The view is considered to be representative of oblique views experienced by road users traveling on Hollyhill Road and residential receptors in the immediate vicinity (Property identifiers 39, 40 and 43)</p>		
<b>Sensitivity</b>	<p>Residential receptors are judged to be of a high susceptibility to change in their views, whilst transient receptors on the local roads are judged to be of a medium susceptibility to change.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route. However, the views experienced are available to residential receptors in the vicinity, and the overall value of the view available is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>		
<b>Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase</b>	<p>Temporary construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at mid distance within the central portion of the view. Temporary ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development to the left of the view, will be screened by intervening topographical changes and shelterbelt planting and overall, the magnitude of change is judged to be small.</p>		

**Viewpoint 1 – Hollyhill Road**

Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	The relatively flat nature of the landscape within the immediate foreground permits localised views of a small number of timber poles, 1 double pole and 3 single poles, associated with the Proposed Development at this viewpoint. The presence of existing OHLs on wooden poles, meteorological mast, single wind turbine, scattered dwellings and scattered vegetation which form elements of the baseline visual resource, aid in offsetting the predicted visual impact with intervening topographical changes and intervening vegetation screening the Proposed Development beyond. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be negligible as the composition and character of the view is substantially unaltered and visible portions of the Proposed Development are viewed as a slight change.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short-term duration, localised and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor, localised and not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as additional timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will form a minor addition within the overall available view.

**Table 5.15: Viewpoint 2 – Curlyhill Road**

**Viewpoint 2 – Curlyhill Road**

<b>Grid Ref</b>	238685, 398060	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.6
<b>Direction of View</b>	North-west	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	140m

Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the grassed verge adjacent to Curlyhill Road, south of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.6) is generally open and expansive in nature, though distant horizons become partially screened by intervening topography, and vegetation on mid-distance horizons. Pasture lands are visible throughout the available view, with fields well defined by a strong enclosing framework of hedgerow and hedgerows with trees, which are often seen above existing horizons. Residential properties are visible throughout the view, becoming more prominent in more elevated lands and horizons at mid distance. Two operational turbines are visible to the right of the view, perceived below distant horizons, adding movement and interest to the view. Operational wind turbines associated with Slieve Kirk and Eglisish windfarms are visible on more distant horizons, forming distinct minor visual draws within the view. Timber poles carrying overhead lines, whilst visible, form a minor element within the view and are often seen above built form and perceived horizons formed by vegetation.</p> <p>The view is considered to be representative of oblique views experienced by road users traveling on Curlyhill Road and residential receptors in the immediate vicinity (Property identifiers 52 and 53).</p>
Sensitivity	<p>Residential receptors are judged to be of a high susceptibility to change in their views, whilst transient receptors on the local roads are judged to be of a medium susceptibility to change.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite its location within the Sperrin AONB. However, views are experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity and the value of the view experienced is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	Temporary construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at mid distance within the view, forming localised points of interest for a short

**Viewpoint 2 – Curlyhill Road**

	duration within existing fields. Construction phase operations for portions of the Proposed Development to the right of the view will be partially or fully screened by intervening vegetation and landform. Overall, the magnitude of change is judged to be localised and small.
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	Double poles and single timber poles associated with the Proposed Development will be visible, to varying degrees across the view, and at various elevations at mid-distance. Upper portions of timber poles visible due to screening by intervening field boundary vegetation. Whilst upper portions of timber poles and lines will be visible above horizons and will be perceived at mid distance, visible portions of the Proposed Development are judged to have minor impact on the overall character and nature of the view available to receptors from this location as vertical elements and associated overhead lines are soon absorbed into the view. The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be small as elements of the Proposed Development, whilst distinguishable, do not significantly alter the character of the view.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short-term duration, localised and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations. during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Moderate, localised and not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development will be read as a minor change to the visual baseline, whilst the character of the view remains largely unaltered.

**Table 5.16: Viewpoint 7 – Ballykeery Road**

<b>Viewpoint 7 – Ballykeery Road</b>			
<b>Grid Ref</b>	244554; 394936	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.11
<b>Direction of View</b>	South-east	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	240m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the Ballykeery Road, south-west of the Proposed Development as it crosses the Ballykeery Road. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling on Ballykeery Road within the Sperrins AONB.</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.11) is generally open and expansive in nature, though partially focused by localised changes in topography. The view is generally upland in nature with moorland and semi improved pasture forming immediate foreground and mid distance interest. Further points of interest within the view are provided by scattered coniferous shelterbelt planting below elevated summits of Cruckaclady and Sturraken, to the right of the view, and Crocknacree to the left of the view. Distant horizons are formed by more elevated land south of Glenelly Valley. Timber poles carrying OHLs are visible at a variety of distances within the view, though due to their location below existing horizons form a minor, imperceptible element within the overall expansive view.</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Receptors on this minor road are judged to be of medium susceptibility as they are transient receptors.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite its location within the Sperrin AONB. However, views are experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity and the value of the view experienced is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>		



**Viewpoint 7 – Ballykeery Road**

Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	Temporary construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at a variety of distances within the view, though generally such activities will be perceived below distant horizon lines and form temporary points of interest within the expansive view available. The magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is localised and small with predicted impacts occurring for a short duration.
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	The Proposed Development will be visible across a wide portion of the view available from this location. The Proposed Development will be perceived against the upland backdrop, aiding its integration and reducing its visual appearance in the view. A small portion of the Proposed Development will be visible above horizons at distance to the left of the view, where they will form a minor, imperceptible additional element to the view. The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be negligible as visible portions of the Proposed Development will be read as a slight change to the visual baseline, and the character and composition of the view is substantially unaltered.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as construction operations will form minor, temporary points of interest within the overall expansive view as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development will be read in combination with existing timber poles carrying overhead lines, whilst the character and composition of the view is similar to that experienced predevelopment.

**Table 5.17: Viewpoint 10 – Lisnaragh Road**

<b>Viewpoint 10 – Lisnaragh Road</b>			
<b>Grid Ref</b>	247983; 393420	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.14
<b>Direction of View</b>	North	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	75m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the grassed verge adjacent to the Lisnaragh Road (B48), to the south of the Proposed Development as it crosses the Lisnaragh Road (B48). The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling on the Lisnaragh Road (B48) within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptors in the immediate vicinity (Property identifiers 85 and 86).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.14) is generally open in nature, with elevated slopes associated with Crockrour and Balix Hill forming visual enclosure to the left of the view. The immediate foreground is comprised of mixed quality pasture, with fields generally defined by timber post and wire fences. Scattered coniferous shelterbelt planting, at various elevations, provides visual and textural interest, whilst scattered dwellings and farm steads form minor points of visual interest throughout the view. Timber poles carrying overhead lines are visible at a variety of distances within the view and form minor points of visual interest, particularly where they occur at close proximity, adjacent to the Lisnaragh Road (B48).</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Receptors on this road are judged to be of a medium susceptibility to change in views as they are transient receptors. However, a small number of residential properties are also represented by this viewpoint, which are considered to be of a high susceptibility to changes in their views.</p>		

**Viewpoint 10 – Lisnaragh Road**

	<p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite its location within the Sperrin AONB. However, views are experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity and the value of the view experienced is judged to be high.</p> <p>Considering the receptor susceptibility and the value of the view, the overall sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	<p>Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at a variety of distances within the available view, though ground level construction activities will generally be perceived below horizon lines and form minor, temporary points of interest. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase is localised and small.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	<p>The Proposed Development will be visible within the view, at a variety of distances, though visible in combination with existing timber poles adjacent to Lisnaragh Road (B48). The Proposed Development will be seen at lower elevation, set against a partially vegetated back drop which aids the integration of visible portions of the Proposed Development. Visible portions of the Proposed Development will be viewed as a minor addition to the overall view which become quickly absorbed by the landscape. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is localised and small.</p>
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.</p>
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, localised assessed as not significant, during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development will be read in combination with existing timber poles carrying overhead lines and do not substantially alter the overall character of the view.</p>

**Table 5.18: Viewpoint 11 – Glenelly Road**

**Viewpoint 11 – Glenelly Road**

<b>Grid Ref</b>	249301; 391509	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.15
<b>Direction of View</b>	West	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	90m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the grassed verge adjacent to the Glenelly Road, east of the Proposed Development where it crosses the Glenelly Road. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling on the Glenelly Road within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptor in the immediate vicinity (Property identifier 99).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.15) is generally open in nature, though partially screened by existing trees at mid distance across the centre and right of the view. The view is comprised of mixed pastoral fields defined by post and wire fencing, remnant hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees on a gently undulating landform. Mixed broadleaved and coniferous planting is visible throughout the view, partially screening more distant horizons. Scattered residential properties are visible within the view, forming minor interest within the view. Timber poles carrying OHLs are visible, adjacent to the Glenelly Road at close distance.</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Receptors on this minor road are judged to be of medium susceptibility as they are transient receptors, some of which may be cycling on the promoted route (Sawel Route). However, residential receptors are also represented by this viewpoint, which are judged to be of a high susceptibility to changes in their views.</p>		

**Viewpoint 11 – Glenelly Road**

	<p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite being located within the Sperrins AONB. Views are also experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the value of the view is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high</p>
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	<p>Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with erection of the single/double timber poles elements of the Proposed Development will be visible at close distance adjacent to the Glenelly Road. Construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be screened to the right of the view by a combination of intervening landform, vegetation and built form, such that they will not be read within the view. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	<p>The Proposed Development will be visible to the left of the view, in close proximity to and in combination with existing timber poles adjacent to the Glenelly Road. Portions of the Proposed Development to the right of the view are screened by intervening topographical changes, field boundary hedgerows and built form. Visible portions of the Proposed Development are readily absorbed by existing elements of the available view and will be viewed as a minor addition. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small as visibility of a single timber pole will be viewed as a small change to the visual baseline.</p>
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.</p>
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, localised and assessed as not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development will be read in combination with existing timber poles carrying overhead lines and do not substantially alter the overall character of the view.</p>

**Table 5.19: Viewpoint 12 – Landahussy Road**

<b>Viewpoint 12 – Landahussy Road</b>			
<b>Grid Ref</b>	249524; 391051	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.16
<b>Direction of View</b>	North-west	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	100m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the Landahussy Road, east of the Proposed Development where it crosses the Landahussy Road. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling on a local road within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptor in the immediate vicinity (Property identifier 106).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.16) is partially restricted in nature by roadside vegetation, though elevated lands form mid distance and distant horizons. Lower elevation land is generally comprised of improved arable pastoral lands, with fields well defined by a strong network of hedgerows, hedgerows with trees and scattered woodland. Coniferous shelterbelt planting is visible at distance, perceived on more elevated lands as a textural and colour change. Scattered residential properties are visible within the view, forming minor interest within the view. Timber poles carrying OHLs are visible, adjacent to the Landahussy Road at close distance.</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Receptors on this minor road are judged to be of medium susceptibility as they are transient receptors. However, residential receptors are also represented by this viewpoint, which are judged to be of a high susceptibility to changes in their views.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite being located within the Sperrins AONB. Views are also</p>		

**Viewpoint 12 – Landahussy Road**

	<p>experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the value of the view is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high</p>
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	<p>Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at a variety of distances within the available view, though ground level construction activities will be perceived below horizon lines and often well screened by existing vegetation. Where visible, construction phase activities will form minor, temporary points of interest. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase is localised and small.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	<p>The Proposed Development will be visible to the left of the view, in close proximity to and in combination with existing timber pole adjacent to the Landahussy Road. Portions of the Proposed Development to the right of the view are screened by intervening topographical changes, field boundary hedgerows and vegetation at lower levels within the valley. Visible portions of the Proposed Development are readily absorbed by existing elements of the available view and will be viewed as a minor addition. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small as additional timber poles will be viewed as a minor change to the overall visual baseline.</p>
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.</p>
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	<p>Minor to moderate, localised and assessed as not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development will be read in combination with existing timber poles carrying overhead lines and do not substantially alter the overall character of the view.</p>

**Table 5.20: Viewpoint 13 – Meenadoo Road**

<b>Viewpoint 13 – Meenadoo Road</b>			
<b>Grid Ref</b>	250983; 388277	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.17
<b>Direction of View</b>	North-west	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	340m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the Meenadoo Road, north of the Proposed Development as it crosses the Meenadoo Road. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling north on the Meenadoo Road within the Sperrins AONB.</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.17) is generally open and expansive in nature, with the summit of Slievemore forming the main visual draw within the centre of the view. The immediate foreground is comprised of improved pastureland, with more open moorland grazing visible at lower and higher elevations within the view. Scattered coniferous shelterbelt planting adds variety to the view and is seen punctuating the distant horizon. Scattered farm buildings are partially visible in the view at mid distance and form minor points of interest. Timber poles carrying OHLs are visible as minor elements within the view, however, are often obscured and screened by scattered vegetation on lower elevation slopes.</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Receptors on this minor road are judged to be of high susceptibility as they are transient receptors, some of which may be walking on the promoted route (Ulster Way).</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place; however, it does form part of a promoted walking route (Ulster Way) and a number of cycling routes (National Route 92 and Gold Cycle Route) and is located within the Sperrins AONB. Views are experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the overall value of the view is judged to be high.</p>		

**Viewpoint 13 – Meenadoo Road**

	Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at mid distance across southern facing slopes of Slievemore within the central portion of the view. Ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be viewed below the distant horizon and will be perceived as a minor, temporary addition to the view. Construction phase activities associated with elements of the Proposed Development on distant horizons will not generally be perceived in the view due to screening by intervening vegetation and attenuation by distance. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small.
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	The Proposed Development will be perceived across mid elevation slopes to the right of the view, with the majority of the Proposed Development set below horizons formed by Slievemore, which aids its integration in the view. Where the Proposed Development is visible at closer distance it is visible against either a strong backdrop of coniferous planting or an upland landscape which aids integration. Visible portions of the Proposed Development on more distant horizons within the central portion of the view, will form a minor addition to the view and will be partially screened by existing coniferous shelterbelt planting. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be negligible.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor, assessed as not significant, during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development do not alter the overall character of the view and appear below the existing horizon line, which aids integration and reduces perceptibility.

**Table 5.21: Viewpoint 14 – Glenforan Road**

<b>Viewpoint 14 – Glenforan Road</b>			
<b>Grid Ref</b>	252527; 387844	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.18
<b>Direction of View</b>	West	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	270m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the Glenforan Road, east of the Proposed Development. The view is considered to be representative of peripheral views experienced by road users on the Glenforan within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptors in the immediate vicinity (Property identifier 119 and 120).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.18a) is generally open in nature, though partially enclosed by existing vegetation, at mid distance, which is visible across the centre of the view. The immediate foreground is comprised of improved pastureland, with more elevated moorland forming distant horizons beyond. Intervening trees punctuate distant horizons and timber poles carrying overhead lines are not visible in the view.</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Receptors on this minor road are judged to be of medium susceptibility as they are transient receptors. However, residential receptors are also represented by this viewpoint, which are judged to be of a high susceptibility to changes in their views.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite being located within the Sperrins AONB. Views are also experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the value of the view is judged to be high.</p>		

**Viewpoint 14 – Glenforan Road**

Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at mid distance across the view, though will be perceived against a well vegetated backdrop, and well below existing horizons which lessens visual intrusion. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small.
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	The Proposed Development will be visible across the view, though visible portions will be seen against a well vegetated backdrop, and not often seen above perceived horizons formed by canopies. Visible portions of the Proposed Development will form a minor addition to the view though will often be difficult to perceive against the well vegetated backdrop. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be negligible.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor, assessed as not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development do not alter the overall character of the view and appear below the existing horizon line, which aids integration and reduces perceptibility.

**Table 5.22: Viewpoint 15 – Drumlea Road**

**Viewpoint 15 – Drumlea Road**

<b>Grid Ref</b>	253184; 387094	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.19
<b>Direction of View</b>	South-east	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	180m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the Drumlea Road, north of the Proposed Development as it crosses the Drumlea Road to the south of Owenkillew River. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling south on the Drumlea Road within the Sperrins AONB.</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.19) is generally expansive in nature, though partially restricted by existing vegetation associated with the Owenreagh River, to the right of the view. Distant, elevated horizons are formed by summits associated with Crockanamadan, Loughmacrory Hill and Bauck Hill form the main visual draw across the central portion of the view. The immediate foreground is comprised of improved pasture fields defined by post and wire fencing with remnant hedgerows. Scattered broadleaved trees and coniferous shelterbelt planting elevate foreground horizons. Scattered residential dwellings, whilst partially visible in the available view, form minor points of interest. Large scale farm buildings are visible at close distance within the central portion of the view, partially screened by intervening topographical changes and scattered vegetation, though silos form strong visual draws. Timber poles are visible within the view, though form minor elements due to screening effects of existing vegetation.</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Local road receptors are judged to be of a medium sensitivity/ susceptibility to change in their views.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite its location within the Sperrin AONB. The value of the view is judged to be medium as it is primarily experienced by local road receptors.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be medium.</p>		
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be partially screened by intervening vegetation as the Proposed Development crosses the Drumlea Road within the central portion of the view. Ground level construction phase activities associated with portions of the Proposed Development		

### Viewpoint 15 – Drumlea Road

	within the central portion and to the left of the view will form a minor, temporary addition to the view. Construction phase activities associated within the Proposed Development will require localised removal of existing vegetation, which would be perceived as a minor alteration to the overall character of the wider view. The magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small.
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	The Proposed Development will be visible at close distance within the central portion of the view either side of Drumlea Road. Remaining portions of the Proposed Development will be either partially screened by existing vegetation or set against a backdrop of vegetation which will aid integration. The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be negligible as the character and composition of the view remains substantially unaltered.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor, assessed as not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development do not alter the overall character of the view and are quickly absorbed.

**Table 5.23: Viewpoint 16 – Drumlea Road**

Viewpoint 16 – Drumlea Road			
<b>Grid Ref</b>	253335; 386586	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.20
<b>Direction of View</b>	North-east	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	190m
Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the Drumlea Road, south of the Proposed Development as it crosses more elevated land south of the Owenkillew River valley. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling south on the Drumlea Road within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptors in the immediate vicinity (Property identifier 134 and 133).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.20) is partially restricted by existing vegetation and topographical changes at mid distance. Pastoral lands are visible beyond intervening roadside vegetation and are bounded by a strong enclosing framework of hedgerows, garden boundary vegetation and hedgerows with mature trees. Distant, elevated horizons are well screened by intervening vegetation. Timber poles carrying overhead lines are visible in the view, adjacent to Drumlea Road and within a small central portion of the view where a single pole forms a strong visual draw. Residential property is visible to the left of the view, though is partially screened by intervening vegetation.</p>		
Sensitivity	<p>Local road receptors are judged to be of a medium sensitivity/ susceptibility to change in their views.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite its location within the Sperrin AONB. The view is also experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the value of the view is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>		
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be screened by intervening topographical changes within the central portion of the view. Where visible on or above the mid distance horizon, construction phase operations will form a minor, temporary addition to the view. The magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and negligible.		

**Viewpoint 16 – Drumlea Road**

Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	The Proposed Development will be visible within the central portion of the view above the mid distance horizon, above existing vegetation and in combination with a single, existing timber pole. Remaining portions of the Proposed Development will not be visible in the view due to screening by intervening vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be small as the character and composition of the view remains largely unaltered and visible elements of the Proposed Development are viewed as a minor addition.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor, localised, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor to moderate, localised, assessed as not significant, during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development do not alter the overall character of the view and are quickly absorbed.

**Table 5.24: Viewpoint 17 – Rousky Road**

**Viewpoint 17 – Rousky Road**

<b>Grid Ref</b>	255043; 385666	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.21
<b>Direction of View</b>	East	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	450m

Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the grass verge adjacent to Rousky Road, on the eastern fringe of Rousky south-west of the Proposed Development. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling east on the Rousky Road, within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptors in close proximity (Property identifier 152, 153 and 154).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.21) is partially restricted in nature by southern facing slopes associated with Mullydoo, to the left of the view and existing vegetation to the right of the view. The foreground is comprised of improved pastureland, which soon gives way to more upland pasture on more elevated slopes. Horizons forming the backdrop to the view are often punctuated by scattered trees, timber poles carrying OHLs and street lighting columns all of which are visible at a variety of distances.</p>
Sensitivity	<p>Road users on this minor road are judged to be of medium susceptibility as they are transient receptors. Recreational receptors on the Rousky Walk are judged to be of a high susceptibility. Residential receptors represented by this viewpoint, are also judged to be of a high susceptibility to changes in their views.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place, though does represent localised views available from a promoted walking route (Rousky Walk) and is located within the Sperrins AONB. Views are also experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the value of the view is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at distance across the central portion of the view as the Proposed Development crosses southern facing slopes. Ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development are predicted to be visible on or just below the distant horizon and will form minor, temporary points of interest within the view. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small.
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	The Proposed Development will be visible at distance within the central portion of the view, seen punctuating and above the horizon in combination with existing timber poles and street lighting columns. The Proposed Development will increase the visibility of vertical elements within the view however, visible portions are considered to have limited impact



**Viewpoint 17 – Rousky Road**

	on the overall character and nature of the view available to receptors. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be small.
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor to moderate, localised and assessed as not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development do not alter the overall character of the view.

**Table 5.25: Viewpoint 18 – Crockanaboy Road**

**Viewpoint 18 – Crockanaboy Road**

<b>Grid Ref</b>	255583; 384741	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.22
<b>Direction of View</b>	North-east	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	490m

Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the verge adjacent to Crockanaboy Road, south of the Proposed Development. The view is considered to be representative of glimpsed, peripheral views experienced by road users traveling on the Crockanaboy Road, within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptors in close proximity (Property identifier 163 and 164).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.22) is partially enclosed in nature by existing residential properties on mid elevation slopes, though views of more open, moorland elevated land is visible beyond. Southern facing slopes of Mulldoe form the horizon within the view. Coniferous plantation elevates the horizon above built form in the left of the view. Existing horizons are punctuated by two single wind turbines which form distinct visual draws beyond intervening built form. Timber poles carrying OHLs, whilst visible in the view, are difficult to perceive due to their location on lower elevation ground and well below horizons.</p>
Sensitivity	<p>Road users on this road are judged to be of medium susceptibility as they are transient receptors. Residential receptors represented by this viewpoint are judged to be of a high susceptibility to changes in their views.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite its location within the Sperrin AONB. Views are also experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the value of the view is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	<p>Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible across the central portion of the view, well below the horizon, as the Proposed Development crosses southern facing slopes. Ground level construction phase activities will be partially screened by intervening vegetation and built form and where visible will be difficult to perceive as they will be viewed against existing topography. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	<p>The Proposed Development will be visible across the view, at mid distance seen below the horizon in combination with existing vertical elements such as the operational wind turbines. The Proposed Development will generally be viewed against the backdrop formed by more elevated uplands, aiding integration with other elements in the view remaining the main visual draw. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be negligible.</p>

**Viewpoint 18 – Crockanaboy Road**

Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.
Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor and assessed as not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development do not alter the overall character of the view and appear below the existing horizon line, which aids integration and reduces perceptibility.

**Table 5.26: Viewpoint 19 – Crockanaboy Road**

**Viewpoint 19 – Crockanaboy Road**

<b>Grid Ref</b>	256289; 384126	<b>Existing View Figure Number</b>	Volume II; Figure 5.23
<b>Direction of View</b>	North-west	<b>Approx. Distance from Development</b>	250m

Description of existing view and potential receptors	<p>This viewpoint is located on the grass verge adjacent to Crockanaboy Road, south-west of the Proposed Development. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by road users traveling north on the Crockanaboy Road, within the Sperrins AONB and residential receptors in close proximity (Property identifier 170).</p> <p>The existing view available from this location (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.23) is partially restricted in nature by existing roadside vegetation and localised changes in topography. Southern facing slopes of Muldoo form the horizon within the view. Coniferous plantation elevates the horizon, which is also punctuated by the two single wind turbines and scattered broadleaved trees at lower and upper elevations. A residential property is partially visible to the left of the view and forms a strong focal point due to contrasting colouration. Timber poles carrying OHLs are not visible within this portion of the view, though do form an element of southern views from this location</p>
Sensitivity	<p>Road users on this road are judged to be of medium susceptibility as they are transient receptors. Residential receptors represented by this viewpoint are also judged to be of a high susceptibility to changes in their views.</p> <p>The viewpoint does not represent a recognised stopping place and does not form part of a recognised tourist route, despite its location within the Sperrin AONB. Views are also experienced by residential receptors in the vicinity; therefore, the value of the view is judged to be high.</p> <p>Overall, considering the receptor susceptibility/ sensitivity and the value of the view the sensitivity is judged to be high.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Construction Phase	<p>Temporary, ground level construction phase activities associated with the Proposed Development will be visible at distance across the central portion of the view, below the horizon, as the Proposed Development crosses southern facing slopes. Ground level construction phase activities will be partially screened by a combination of intervening topography and vegetation and will be difficult to perceive. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be localised and small.</p>
Magnitude of Change – Operational phase	<p>The Proposed Development will be visible at distance within a small, central portion of the view, seen below the horizon in combination with existing vertical elements such as wind turbines. The Proposed Development will generally be viewed against the backdrop formed by more elevated uplands, aiding integration with other elements in the view remaining the main visual draw. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is judged to be negligible.</p>
Significance of Visual Effect during Construction Phase	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant during the construction phase of the Proposed Development as disturbed ground visible in the view will be reinstated following completion of construction operations.

**Viewpoint 19 – Crockanaboy Road**

Significance of Visual Effect during Operational Phase	Minor and assessed as not significant during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as visible portions of the Proposed Development do not alter the overall character of the view and appear below the existing horizon line, which aids integration and reduces perceptibility.
--	--

Table 5.27 below summarises the predicted significance of visual effect for each of the previously assessed viewpoints.

**Table 5.27: Summary of Predicted Visual Effect**

Viewpoint		Predicted Construction Phase Visual Impacts	Predicted Operational Phase Visual Impacts
1	View from Hollyhill Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short-term duration, localised and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
2	View from Curlyhill Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short-term duration, localised and assessed as not significant	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant
3	View from Silverhill Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, short-term duration, localised and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
4	View from Holyhill Road	Minor, temporary adverse, short-term duration localised and not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
5	View from Glenmornan Road	Minor, temporary adverse, short-term duration localised and not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
6	View from Napple Road	Minor, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and not significant	Moderate, localised and not significant
7	View from Ballykeery Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
8	View from Meendamp Road	Minor, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
9	View from Glencoppagh Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant
10	View from Lisnaragh Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant
11	View from Glenelly Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant
12	View from Landahussy Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant
13	View from Meenadoo Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant

Viewpoint		Predicted Construction Phase Visual Impacts	Predicted Operational Phase Visual Impacts
14	View from Glenforan Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
15	View from Drumlea Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
16	View from Drumlea Road	Minor, localised, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and not significant	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant
17	View from Rousky Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor to moderate, localised and not significant
18	View from Crockanaboy Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant
19	View from Crockanaboy Road	Minor to moderate, temporary adverse, and short-term duration and assessed as not significant	Minor, localised and not significant

### 5.6.1.1 The Ulster Way

Site survey and assessment has established that the Proposed Development will not be visible for the majority of the Gortin to Moneyneany (Quality Section) of the Ulster Way. Where the Ulster Way utilises the Meenadoo Road for approximately 1.2km, construction phase operations associated with the Proposed Development will have a localised, temporary visual effect. To the north and south of this section the Proposed Development will be visible for a short duration during the operational phase, though visible elements of the Proposed Development, such as timber poles, are not an uncommon feature within the surrounding landscape.

Recreational receptors on the Ulster Way are of a high susceptibility and the value of views available from the Ulster Way is also judged to be high. Overall, considering the susceptibility and the value of the view, the sensitivity is judged to be high.

The magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase is judged to be localised and small, whilst the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be negligible. The predicted significance of visual effect for views from the Ulster Way during the construction phase is judged to be localised, minor to moderate, temporary adverse and assessed as not significant as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations. The predicted significance of visual effect on views from the Ulster Way during the operational phase is judged to be minor and not significant.

### 5.6.1.2 Way Marked Trails

As previously described, there are a number of marked walking trails within the study area which include; Craignamaddy Circuit, Vinegar Hill Loop and Rousky Walk.

Both the Craignamaddy Circuit and the Vinegar Hill Loop follow a short section of the Ulster Way (Gortin to Moneyneany Quality Section) as identified above. For both these sections predicted impacts will be similar to those described for the Ulster Way, such that these marked trails will not experience any significant visual impacts during the construction or operational phases of the Proposed Development.

The Rousky Walk is a linear walk of approximately 1km, between the hamlet of Rousky and Lenagh Road to the south-west through a relatively enclosed valley landscape, with hedgerows and trees defining field boundaries.

Recreational receptors on these trails are of a high susceptibility and the value of the views available from these trails is judged to be high. Overall, considering the susceptibility and the value of the view, the sensitivity is judged to be high.

The Magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase is judged to be localised and small, whilst the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be negligible. The predicted significance of visual effect for views from the Rousky Walk during the construction phase is judged to be localised, minor to moderate, temporary adverse, assessed as not significant. The predicted significance of visual effect on views during the operational phase is judged to be minor and not significant.

### 5.6.1.3 Cycling Trails

There are a number of promoted cycling trails within the study area which include White Hare Cycle Route, Gold Cycle Route, Sawel Cycle Route, National Route 92 and National Route 95. All of these routes are crossed by the Proposed Development at various locations, including the B48 north-east of Gortin, Meenadoo Road, Gorticashel Road and the Glenelly Road (B47) and it is considered that they will all experience, short-duration, visual impacts during both construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

Recreational receptors on cycling trails are of a medium susceptibility to change as attention will be primarily focused on the direction of travel as well as the wider landscape. The value of views available from these trails is judged to be high. Overall, considering the susceptibility and the value of the view, the sensitivity is judged to be high.

The magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase is judged to be localised and small, whilst the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be negligible. The predicted significance of visual effect for views from these cycle trails during the construction phase is judged to be localised, minor to moderate, temporary adverse and assessed as not significant as disturbed ground will be reinstated following completion of construction operations. The predicted significance of visual effect on views during the operational phase is judged to be minor and not significant as timber poles are readily absorbed within the wider landscape contained within available views.

### 5.6.1.4 Scenic Driving Routes

As previously described, of the 4 promoted scenic driving routes within the study area, only the Central Sperrins Route is considered to be affected by the Proposed Development as it crosses the B47 and lies in close proximity to the B46, east of Rousky.

Viewer sensitivity on the Central Sperrins Route is considered to be medium as views will be short term, transient in nature and experienced from the local road network associated with this driving route (refer to Table 5.3). The magnitude of visual impact during the construction phase is judged to be localised and small, whilst the magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase is judged to be negligible. The predicted significance of visual effect for views from the Scenic Route during the construction phase is judged to be localised, minor, temporary adverse and assessed as not significant. The predicted significance of visual effect on views during the operational phase is judged to be negligible to minor and not significant as timber poles will be readily absorbed within the wider landscape contained within transient, available views.

### 5.6.1.5 Residential Impact Assessment

As part of the visual effects assessment associated with the Proposed Development, a separate assessment of the predicted visual impacts on properties that occur in proximity to the Proposed Development has been undertaken and is included at Volume III; Appendix 5.1.

The purpose of a RVAA, as defined in Technical Guidance Note 2/19 provided by the Landscape Institute “*is to provide an informed, well-reasoned answer to the question: ‘is the effect of the development on Residential Visual Amenity of such nature and / or magnitude that it potentially affects ‘living conditions’ or Residential Amenity’.*”

The RVAA carried out as part of this LVIA has considered the potential visual effects on residential properties that lie within the study area associated with the Proposed Development, has further considered and assessed predicted effects of the Proposed Development on the residential visual amenity of properties within 500m of the Proposed Development and has provided a more detailed assessment of potential visual effects on those properties predicted to experience minor to moderate visual effects as a result of the Proposed Development, identified during the RVAA process.

Of the 213 individual properties and clusters of properties falling within 500m of the Proposed Development which have been assessed as part of the RVAA process, 21 properties are predicted to experience minor to moderate visual effects as a result of the Proposed Development. These properties have been further assessed as part of the RVAA process, and this further assessment, which considered the existing outlook from properties, existing amenity space and views of existing infrastructure has concluded that no significant effects are predicted for any of these properties assessed.

Whilst visible elements of the Proposed Development, such as timber poles, have the potential to give rise to additional visual effects in conjunction with other, existing infrastructure elements such as operational wind turbines, timber poles carrying overhead lines, large scale pylons or transmission masts, it is judged that visible elements of the Proposed Development will not significantly impact on existing residential amenity experienced from properties assessed within the RVAA.

## 5.7 Cumulative Impacts

As previously discussed, minor and not significant direct effects arising from the Proposed Development during the operational phase are predicted to occur within the Foyle Valley LCA, Sperrin Mountains LCA, Glenelly Valley LCA and South Sperrin LCA, though such effects are localised and limited in their extent by topographical changes and vegetation cover.

In relation to the permitted and proposed developments identified in Volume III, Appendix 5.2, the following developments have been assessed for cumulative impacts. It is noted, that where relevant, each of these proposed and approved developments have been subject to their own LVIA assessments.

### 5.7.1.1 Approved Wind Turbine Applications

With regards to the approved wind turbine (LA11/2016/0721/F), which is located approximately 1km east of the Proposed Development it is considered that there will be a direct effect upon localised portions of the Foyle Valley LCA directly affected by the approved development.

It is considered that the magnitude of cumulative impact associated with the Proposed Development in combination with this approved wind turbine will be direct and negligible, which in this case would give rise to a minor and not significant cumulative landscape effect on this high sensitivity LCA.

In regard to potential cumulative visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development in combination with the consented development located 1.2km south-west (approximately) it is judged that the Proposed Development would be visible in combination, and sequentially with the consented development, in localised south-western views when traveling local roads such as Hollyhill Road and Curlyhill Road. Despite the proximity of the consented development to the Proposed Development, significant additional or combined cumulative effects on views are unlikely to occur as the Proposed Development would be viewed below existing horizon lines, whilst the consented development would be more prominent above the existing topography. In summary, potential cumulative visual effects are judged to be negligible and not significant.

### 5.7.1.2 Proposed Wind farm application

With regards to the proposed wind farm application (LA11/2018/0937/TBA), which is located approximately 11km north-west of the Proposed Development in County Donegal it is considered that there will be an indirect effect only, upon localised western portions of the Foyle Valley LCA as the proposed turbines are located in County Donegal and will not directly affect elements or features associated with the Foyle Valley LCA.

It is considered that the magnitude of cumulative impact associated with the Proposed Development in combination with this proposed wind farm application will be indirect and negligible, which would give rise to a minor and not significant, indirect cumulative landscape effect on this high sensitivity LCA.

In regard to potential cumulative visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development in combination with this proposed wind farm located 11km north-west (approximately) it is judged that the Proposed Development would be visible in combination and sequentially with the proposed windfarm development, in localised north-western views only, when traveling local roads such as Hollyhill Road and Curlyhill Road. Despite the proximity of the Proposed Development, significant additional or combined cumulative effects on north-western views are unlikely to occur as the proposed application windfarm would be viewed at distance, above existing horizon lines,

whilst the Proposed Development would be below and against existing topographical changes and perceived as a minor addition to views locally. In summary, potential cumulative visual effects are judged to be negligible and not significant.

### 5.7.1.3 Proposed Poultry House Applications

With regards to the proposed free range poultry house (LA11/2018/0966/F), which is located approximately 1km east of the Proposed Development, it is considered that there will be a localised direct effect upon a minor portion of the Foyle Valley LCA, within the site boundary associated with the proposed poultry house application only.

It is considered that the magnitude of cumulative impact associated with the Proposed Development in combination with this proposed application will be direct and negligible, which would give rise to a minor and not significant cumulative landscape effect on this high sensitivity LCA.

In regard to potential cumulative visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development in combination with the proposed agricultural building it is judged that the Proposed Development would not be readily visible in combination, or sequentially with the proposed poultry house development, as western views are partially screened by roadside vegetation and topographical changes which restrict visibility of the Proposed Development when travelling on the Landahussy Road. Despite the proximity of the proposed poultry house building to the Proposed Development, significant additional or combined cumulative effects on existing views are unlikely to occur as the Proposed Development would often be viewed beyond existing horizon lines, whilst the proposed poultry house would be more prominent in views, located on elevated land at close proximity to the Landahussy Road. In summary, potential cumulative visual effects are judged to be negligible and not significant.

With regards to the proposed free range poultry house (LA11/2017/0993/F), which is located approximately 0.7km north of the Proposed Development in close proximity to the Lisnaragh Road, it is considered that there will be a localised direct effect upon a minor portion of the Sperrin Mountains LCA directly affected by the proposed poultry house application.

It is considered that the magnitude of cumulative impact associated with the Proposed Development in combination with this proposed application will be direct and negligible, which would give rise to a minor and not significant cumulative landscape effect on this high sensitivity LCA.

In regard to potential cumulative visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development in combination with the proposed poultry house building it is judged that the Proposed Development would not be readily visible in combination, or sequentially with the consented development, as southern views are partially screened by roadside vegetation, coniferous shelterbelt planting and topographical changes at close proximity which restrict visibility of the Proposed Development when travelling on the Lisnaragh Road. Despite the proximity of the proposed poultry building to the Proposed Development, significant additional or combined cumulative effects on existing views are unlikely to occur as the Proposed Development would often be viewed well below existing horizon lines, whilst the proposed poultry house building would be more prominent in views, though read as part of the existing farmstead buildings at this location. In summary, potential cumulative visual effects are judged to be negligible and not significant.

### 5.7.1.4 Proposed Curraghinalt project

With regards to the proposed Curraghinalt project (LA10/2017/1249/F), located immediately adjacent to the Proposed Development in the vicinity of Crockanboy Road, it is considered that there will be a direct effect upon those portions of the South Sperrin LCA affected by the proposed Curraghinalt project.

It is considered that the magnitude of cumulative impact associated with the Proposed Development in combination with the proposed Curraghinalt project will be direct and negligible, which in this case would give rise to a minor and not significant cumulative landscape effect on this high sensitivity LCA.

In regard to potential cumulative visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development in combination with the proposed Curraghinalt project, it is considered that the proposed Curraghinalt project would be visible, in combination with the Proposed Development along localised portions of the Crockanboy Road to the south-west of the proposed Curraghinalt project. Despite the proximity of the proposed Curraghinalt project to the Proposed Development, significant additional or combined cumulative effects on views from the Crockanboy Road are not predicted to occur as the south-eastern extent of the Proposed Development is to be undergrounded. In summary,

potential cumulative visual effects on views from the Crockanaboy Road are judged to be negligible and not significant.

The Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) considers the likely cumulative impacts arising from the Proposed Development alongside the likely impacts of the ‘other existing development and/or approved development’ in the vicinity of the Proposed Development, as listed in this chapter and the relevant appendices. The assessment also specifically considers the likely cumulative impacts arising due to the interactions between the Proposed Development and the overall mine project together with ‘other existing development and/or approved development’ as a whole.

In summary when considering the Proposed Development in combination with the other proposed and consented developments there will be no significant cumulative landscape or visual impact.

## 5.8 Transboundary Landscape and Visual Impacts

As noted previously in Section 1.2.8, the study area associated with the Proposed Development (refer Volume II; Figure 4) extends to areas beyond the international border, to the north of Strabane. However, during site survey and assessment works, it was assessed that the Proposed Development will not be apparent or readily perceived within in eastern views from County Donegal, due to screening effects provided by intervening topographical changes and vegetation. The northern portion of the Proposed Development is proposed to be undergrounded and the closest, above ground element (timber pole) of the Proposed Development is approximately 3.8km from the international boundary. Whilst the ZTV (refer to Volume II; Figure 5.4) indicates that the Proposed Development will be visible at distances over 3.8km, intervening vegetation, built form and topographical changes screen views and it is assessed that no significant transboundary landscape or visual effects will occur as a result of the Proposed Development

## 5.9 Conclusion

The Proposed Development traverses and is located within four landscape character areas identified as Foyle Valley, Sperrin Mountains, Glenelly Valley and South Sperrin LCAs. All of the identified LCAs have been assessed for both construction and operational phase effects as a consequence of the Proposed Development. All of the identified LCAs have been predicted to experience localised, temporary, but not significant landscape impacts during the construction phase. During the operational phase of the Proposed Development no significant landscape effects are predicted for any of the LCAs due to the nature of the elements of the Proposed Development and the open, expansive nature of the landscapes within which they have been placed.

The Proposed Development is also largely located within the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which *“encompasses a largely mountainous area of great geological complexity. Stretching from the Strule Valley in the west to the perimeter of the Lough Neagh lowlands in the east this area presents vast expanses of moorland penetrated by narrow glens and deep valleys”* (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs). No significant landscape effects have been predicted to occur within the AONB due to the nature of the elements of the Proposed Development and the nature of the landscapes within which they have been placed.

A total of 19 viewpoints have been assessed, for both construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. All of the viewpoints assessed have been predicted to experience temporary, but not significant visual impacts during the construction phase. During the operational phase, no significant visual impacts are predicted for any of the viewpoints assessed.

Of the 213 residential properties and property clusters assessed as part of the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment, 21nr. are predicted to experience a minor to moderate visual impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. Such impacts have been assessed as not significant as existing views from these properties are often expansive in nature and the Proposed Development is readily absorbed within the view or perceived as a minor addition within the view.

No significant visual impacts have been predicted to occur for Way marked trails such as the Ulster way, Vinegar Hill Loop or for scenic trails such as the Central Sperrins Scenic Route or for the numerous cycling trails that occur within the study area.



The assessment has considered cumulative effects, arising from the addition of the Proposed Development in combination with other proposed and potential developments within proximity. Predicted cumulative effects have been assessed as not significant.

The assessment has considered the potential for transboundary effects, arising from the Proposed Development and predicted landscape and visual effects have been assessed as not significant.

Overall, the surrounding landscape and its visual resource has the ability to accommodate the changes associated with this type of development.

## 5.10 References

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (2013) Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (referred to as GLVIA 3)

Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (The Landscape Institute, 2019).

Technical Guidance Note 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (The Landscape Institute, 2019).

Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (Northern Ireland Environment Agency, 2014 (referred to as NIRLCA).

Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000, Department of the Environment Northern Ireland, 1999 (referred to as NILCA) Northern Ireland Environment Agency - Register of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesne.