
Appendix 12.1 – Viewpoint Assessment

Appraisal of Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Assessment of Visual Impacts at Viewshed Reference Points

VP No.	Existing View	VP Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	Significance / Quality / Duration of Impact	Significant/not Significant
VP1	<p>Meelick Harbour</p> <p>This designated scenic view, experienced by visitors to the Harbour, presents a wide view across a still, harbour water body in the foreground. In the middle distance, the harbour's edge is defined by a continuous belt of mature vegetation, with a dwelling visible in the view surrounded by vegetation.</p>	High-medium	<p>The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.</p>	Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term	Not Significant
VP2	<p>L80082 at Ballyegan</p> <p>This view is experienced by the local community and road users and presents as a typical rural landscape. The foreground features open agricultural land, bordered by low-cut hedgerows defining field boundaries and extending into the middle ground. To the west, a belt of mature vegetation, forms a visual barrier, limiting views beyond. Several dwellings are present in the vicinity of the viewpoint. Occasional mature trees are scattered throughout the view.</p>	Medium-low	<p>Despite the wireframe image indicating that the majority of turbines will be visible from here at a modest distance, the photomontage view shows less than half of the turbines as being visible due to intervening screening elements. It is acknowledged that different sections of this road may afford a view of more of the nearer westerly turbines and this is accounted for in the assessment below.</p> <p>Around half of the proposed turbines will rise intermittently above and between intervening vegetation throughout the south-westerly quarters revealing partial blade sets. They are seen at a prominent but not overbearing scale with considerable gaps between, aiding visual permeability. There is little sense of order to the layout and the blade sets rotating on (rather than fully above) the vegetated skyline can be visually irritating. Nonetheless, these factors are based on the degree of screening afforded, which reduces the overall visual exposure of the proposed wind farm.</p> <p>There will be an increase in the scale, intensity and diversity of built development within this scene, which is currently characterised by low levels of development. However, the turbines do not appear out of place in this broad and productive rural setting.</p>	Moderate-slight / Negative / Long-term	Not Significant

			Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium and of a Negative quality.		
VP3	<p>Local road at Moynure</p> <p>This view is experienced by the local community and road users and presents as a broad expanse of gently sloping agricultural land extending from the foreground into the middle ground, bordered by a low-cut hedgerow defining the field boundary. The background features a more undulating topography containing a block of woodland, and agricultural fields. Several dwellings are present in the vicinity of the view, surrounded by occasional mature vegetation.</p>	Medium-low	<p>Seven of the proposed turbines will be seen to extend to the north (right) of intervening terrain and vegetation in the near-middle ground. They are seen at a modest scale from this distance and within a broad horizon. The full blade sets will rotate just above the intervening vegetated skyline in an unambiguous manner, but with some visual clutter generated by overlapping turbines. There will be a minor increase in the intensity and diversity of built development within the scene but as a background element of a productive rural landscape.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and Negative.</p>	Slight/ Negative/ Long-term	Not Significant
VP4	<p>Local Road at Clonlee</p> <p>This designated scenic view is experienced by road users and local residents. The middle ground features a gently undulating agricultural landscape, characterised by a patchwork of fields enclosed by hedgerows and occasional mature trees. Scattered farmsteads and dwellings are visible throughout the view. The background features a more pronounced rolling landform, with a mix of agricultural land and woodland blocks visible in the distance.</p>	High-medium	<p>All of the proposed turbines will be visible from here in a well-spaced sequence rising to the same degree (blade sets only) just above a low ridge in the middle distance. They have a reasonably broad lateral extent, but this reduces the intensity of the layout and is comfortably absorbed within the vast context of this vista.</p> <p>There will be a minor increase in the intensity and diversity of built development within the scene but as a background element of a productive rural landscape.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and Negative.</p>	Slight/ Negative/ Long-term	Not Significant
VP5	<p>R440 at Ballinree</p> <p>This designated scenic view is experienced by regional road users and residents residing in the dwellings that border this section of road. The foreground features open, gently undulating agricultural grassland, bisected by the Camcor River. The background presents a more elevated and undulating landform, with a mix of agricultural fields and blocks of woodland</p>	High-medium	<p>Around six of the westernmost turbines will be visible from here rising with partial blade sets just above a low vegetated skyline in the middle distance. They have a reasonably even spacing albeit with one instance of overlap generating a degree of visual clutter that is also contributed to by rotation amongst intervening trees and utility poles.</p>	Slight/ Negative/ Long-term	Not Significant

	visible in the distance. Overhead power lines and poles are also notable vertical elements present throughout the view.		<p>There will be a minor increase in the intensity and diversity of built development within the scene but as a background element of a productive rural landscape.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and Negative.</p>		
VP6	<p>Birr Rugby Club</p> <p>This view, experienced by players and visitors of the Birr Rugby Club, encompasses the club's sports fields in the foreground punctuated by vertical light poles and goalposts. Beyond the sports field, the middle ground features a mix of mid to low rise residential development interspersed with mature trees and vegetation which partially screen some of the structures.</p>	Medium low	<p>The partial blade sets of two of the proposed turbines will be visible from here rising above the intervening dwellings and vegetation in the middle distance. The turbine components will be seen at a modest scale in the most likely to be noticeable due to the movement on the skyline. There may be a minor degree of visual clutter and ambiguity associated with the partial view of the turbines, but this is balanced by the high degree of screening and complexity of the scene.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low-negligible and the quality that affect, Neutral-Negative.</p>	Slight-imperceptible/ Neutral-Negative/ Long-term	Not Significant
VP7	<p>L1074 at Aglish</p> <p>This view, experienced by local road users and the residents residing in the vicinity features a tight clipped foreground hedgerow that limits immediate ground-level views. Beyond this, can be seen a dispersed rural community of dwellings amongst small domestic scale fields. Dense hedgerow planting contains much of the view to the southeast at relatively close quarters.</p>	Medium-low	<p>The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.</p>	Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term	Not Significant
VP8	<p>R489 at junction with L5052</p> <p>This extensive designated scenic view is experienced by regional road users travelling along the road to Birr that runs through the foreground, bordered by a low-clipped hedgerows on either side. Agricultural fields, enclosed by fences and hedgerows extend throughout the middle</p>	High-medium	<p>All of the proposed turbines will be visible from here rising just above the low vegetated section of the distant horizon. The partial blades sets of the turbines are revealed just about the vegetated skyline and the turbines are seen at a relatively small-scale from this distance. This is a relatively unambiguous view of the proposed turbines arising out of a productive rural landscape flanked by the Slieve Bloom Mountains to the</p>	Slight/ Negative/ Long-term	Not Significant

	ground. Scattered rural dwellings and farm buildings are also present. In the background, a mix of agricultural land and woodland forms the lower part of the horizon while the Slieve Bloom Mountains rise gently to the east and the Silvermines Mountains to the south.		left and the Silvermines mountains to the right. The proposed turbines will add to the intensity and the diversity of built development within the scene, but only in the context of its distant background. For the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low in the quality of the effect will be Negative.		
VP9	L1092 at junction with N52 This view is experienced by road users at the N52 junction with this local road. On both sides of the road, gently sloping open agricultural fields extends into the middle ground. Scattered mature trees and hedgerows line field boundaries which restrict views beyond. Overhead power lines and supporting poles are notable vertical elements in the view.	Medium low	The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.	Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term	Not Significant
VP10	R445 at Limerick Road Roundabout The view, just on the southwestern outskirts of Roscrea, is experienced by surrounding residents and regional road users. It features an undulating agricultural landscape in the foreground with low dense vegetation defining the field boundaries. The middle ground is characterised by a mix of agricultural fields, delineated by hedgerows and scattered mature trees. A farm shed is visible in the near middle ground. In the background, a series of rolling hills are visible.	Medium low	The proposed turbines will be seen at a reasonable distance within a broad rural context, such that they present as small scale background features. They are seen amongst intervening power lines and above the foreground shed, which tends to absorb them within a comparatively busy section of an otherwise simple view. It also generates some visual clutter in combination with the turbines overlapping with each other in several instances. The turbines add marginally to the intensity and diversity of built development within the view but are well accommodated in terms of scale and theme within this broad and productive rural context. For the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and the quality of effect, Negative.	Slight-imperceptible / Negative / Long-term	Not Significant
VP11	Local road at Rathnaveoge at M7 overpass Although this elevated view is above the M7 motorway it represents far greater visibility than is afforded from the motorway beneath, which is in-cut and flanked by vegetation for this section. The	Medium	The proposed turbines are seen in a clear and legible manner rising out of the stacked plinth of vegetation in the distance. They are seen at a small scale and within a compact group from this distance and yet there is little clutter from overlapping. The turbines are a distinct form of built development within this scene, which is	Slight / Negative / Long-term	Not Significant

	view from this local road overpass is a vast one taking in fields, hedgerows and woodlands that get more densely stacked with distance forming a vegetation band beyond the middle ground. Occasional rural dwellings are visible amongst the vegetation. In the background, a distinct series of hills forms the backdrop.		otherwise characterised by a low degree of built development. However, they are not out of place in the productive rural scene. For the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and the quality of effect, Negative.		
VP12	Moneygall GAA Club This view is experienced by users of the GAA club and encompasses the club grounds, with a well-maintained pitch in the lower foreground. Adjacent to the playing field is a two-storey community centre building. Mature trees and hedgerows extend into the middle ground, offering partial screening of residential dwellings located beyond the club grounds. In the background, gently undulating agricultural land is visible, featuring dense mature vegetation.	Medium-low	Only the blade set of one turbine and the blade tip of another will be visible from here within a low section of the vegetated skyline. These turbine components are seen at a very small scale from this distance of over 15km and will have no material bearing on visual amenity from this receptor. Consequently, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible.	Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term	Not Significant
VP13	Toomevara Road at Brickanagh This view is experienced by local road users and features agricultural fields interspersed with scrub and mature vegetation in the foreground. Beyond this, the middle ground features a dense belt of mature woodland, extending across the view and creating a sense of enclosure, limiting views beyond.	Medium-low	The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.	Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term	Not Significant
VP14	Local road at Borrisokane GAA Club This view is experienced by local road users and GAA club users and encompasses a flat agricultural landscape, with agricultural fields defining the foreground. A belt of mature trees and hedgerows, punctuated by occasional gaps, is present in the middle	Medium-low	The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.	Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term	Not Significant

	ground, enclosing the fields, and limiting views beyond.				
VP15	Knockshewowna GAA Club This view experienced by the GAA Club users features a sports pitch in the foreground. Beyond the pitch, the middle ground features sloping agricultural fields with scattered mature trees and hedgerows defining boundaries, enclosing the view and providing a vegetated backdrop.	Medium-low	The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.	Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term	Not Significant
VP16	L4019 at Kilcomin The view is experienced by the local road users and surrounding residents. This view encompasses a gently undulating rural landscape. The foreground features open pasture defined by grassed ditches, hedgerows and mature trees, with a cluster of farm buildings and a dwelling visible in the middle ground. In the background, a more elevated tree lined ridgeline is visible.	Medium-low	The partial blade sets of six of the proposed turbines will be visible from here rising just above the vegetated skyline ridge in a comparatively complex part of the vista where they are visually absorbed and compete for the viewers' attention with other intervening built features. They are seen at a modest scale from this distance and add to the intensity and diversity of built structures in this section of the view. Otherwise, the turbines appear well accommodated within this productive rural scene in terms of scale and function. For the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and the quality of effect, Negative.	Slight / Negative / Long-term	Not Significant
VP17	L8079 outside Ettagh This elevated and expansive view to the northwest is experienced by local road users and local residents. It is framed in the foreground by a stone wall and field gateway. Beyond this, a sloping agricultural field descends into the middle ground, bordered by a mature treeline which partially obscures views beyond. In the background, opposing slopes covered with woodland patches and agricultural fields can be seen. Lining the distant ridge are eight wind turbines from the Lacka Wind Farm.	Medium	The nearest pair of turbines are openly visible on the opposing slopes across the valley, where they are seen to the fore of the existing turbines on the ridge beyond. They are seen at a noticeable scale from this distance but are slightly peripheral to the main downhill views. Only the partial blades sets of three of the other proposed turbines can be seen in a separate cluster that rises above the intervening treeline. These are more tightly spaced and generate a degree of visual clutter from overlapping with each other and rotating amongst intervening treetops. There is some degree of scale conflict between the proposed turbines and the existing turbines on the ridge. Because the smaller existing turbines lie beyond the larger proposed turbines the perspective generated	Moderate-slight / Negative / Long-term	Not Significant

			<p>accentuates the sense of space and distance between them and across the view generally. This is preferable to the opposite scenario which can be more visually confusing. The proposed turbines represent the addition of familiar features within the view where the effect is increased scale and intensity of wind energy development.</p> <p>On balance of the factors outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium-low and the quality of the effect, Negative.</p>		
VP18	<p>L4006 at Coolderry - This view is experienced by local road users and residents of Coolderry. Although it is slightly elevated, it is a relatively contained and framed view due to mature foreground trees. The view slopes down towards the village where the church and several dwellings can be seen amongst tree tops. Beyond is gently undulating agricultural land and woodlands with wind turbines from the Lacka Wind Farm rising above the distant skyline ridge in silhouette.</p>	Medium-low	<p>The partial blade sets of six of the proposed turbines can be seen rising in silhouette above the middle ground ridge to the fore of the existing turbines which occupy the more distant skyline ridge. Aside from one instance of turbine overlap, the proposed turbines are relatively well spaced and they do not unduly overlap with the more distant existing turbines. There is no potential for the two wind farm developments to be considered as a single entity as the distance between them is strongly accentuated by the scale difference between the larger proposed turbines and their smaller existing counterparts. The proposed turbines will add to the intensity of wind energy development in the view, but without introducing a new form of development.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and the quality of effect, Negative.</p>	Slight / Negative / Long-term	Not Significant
VP19	<p>L4007 at Castletown This broad view is experienced by local road users and local residents in the vicinity. It features gently undulating agricultural fields in the foreground defined by hedgerows and scattered mature trees. A dwelling is visible in the near middle distance to the foreground at the roadside. The middle ground transitions into a stacked hedgerow and</p>	Medium-low	<p>The blades of all of the proposed turbines will be visible from here rotating just above the middle distance skyline ridge to the southwest. Whilst they are likely to catch the eye due to their movement, they are not prominent or distinctive features at his distance and with this level of screening. Aesthetically, there may be some ambiguity associated with the nature of the development and the landscape context in which its sites which is not fully apparent from here.</p>	Slight-imperceptible / Neutral-Negative / Long-term	Not Significant

	woodland vegetation that forms a dense band below the low skyline ridge.		For the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low-negligible and the quality of effect, marginally Negative.		
VP20	<p>L1071 at Doughkill</p> <p>This view is experienced by local road users and local residents and features open agricultural fields extending into the middle ground, which are defined by hedgerows and mature trees. A forest plantation then forms a flat vegetated skyline to the southeast. A cluster of farm buildings and a dwelling are glimpsed through gaps in the vegetation. In the background, a gentle hill covered with wooded patches and agricultural fields is visible.</p>	Medium-low	<p>This is a close view of the proposed wind farm from 1km away looking along the long axis of the array. The upper profile of the structures within the proposed substation and the associated lightening rods can also be seen rising above the treeline in the near middle distance. The turbines are seen at a dominant but not overbearing scale in this broad rural context. Indeed, they are seen in a clear and legible manner with a strong sense of perspective generated between the nearest and furthest turbines due to the scale differential between them. This emphasises the depth of the array and the provides a sense of space and distance to reinforce the extent of receiving context. There is a marked increase in the scale and intensity of built development within this visual setting, but it is a broad and productive rural context that can accommodate the wind farm in terms of scale and function.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be High and the quality of effect, Negative.</p>	Substantial-moderate/ Negative/ Long-term	Not Significant
VP21	<p>R492 at Sharavogue</p> <p>Experienced by regional road users and the local community, the view from this field gateway features large open fields of crops extending into the middle ground. A dense belt of mature vegetation marks the boundary of these fields and contains much of the view beyond. In the background, a small hill covered with a mix of woodland and agricultural fields is visible and this also hosts turbines from the Lacka Wind Farm.</p>	Medium-low	<p>The proposed turbines and met mast are seen at a prominent scale from this distance, but most are substantially screened by the intervening treeline such that two turbines are fully visible and only the partial blade sets of the remainder can be seen above and between trees. Even though there is some ambiguity and clutter associated with those more distant turbines that rotate amongst the intervening treeline, the nearer, more legible and prominent turbines tend to counter balance such aesthetic effects. This is a broad rural context that can absorb this scale and nature of this development, but that does not negate the fact that the development introduces tall moving structures into this otherwise typical rural scene.</p> <p>On balance, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be High-medium and the quality of effect is Negative.</p>	Moderate/ Negative/ Long-term	Not Significant

<p>VP22</p>	<p>L1072 at Ballinamoe Experienced by local road users and local residents, the foreground features gently undulating agricultural fields extending beyond a low stonewall. Clumps of mature trees and hedgerows in the middle ground, mark the field boundaries. In the background, rolling hills covered with an agricultural fields and wooded land are visible.</p>	<p>Medium-low</p>	<p>Similar to VP20 and VP21, this close view of the proposed wind farm presents the four nearest turbines at a prominent, but not overbearing scale rising with full blades sets exposed above the foreground terrain. The remaining turbines trail beyond at a smaller scale and with a higher degree of screening by the intervening terrain and vegetation. This is a clear and unambiguous view of the wind farm within a broad and productive rural setting that accommodates the scale and function of the development. However, the proposed turbines introduce a much larger scale and intensity of built development than currently occurs within this scene.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be High-medium and the quality of effect is Negative.</p>	<p>Moderate/ Negative/ Long-term</p>	<p>Not Significant</p>
<p>VP23</p>	<p>L80283 at Rath Beg Experienced by local road users and the local community, this view features a wooden post and rail fence in the foreground, beyond which the ground opens up to gently down-sloping agricultural fields interspersed with mature trees and hedgerows. Several dwellings and farmsteads are visible, integrated within the broad undulating landscape. In the middle distance, a low farmed ridge hosts a line of wind turbines from the Lacka Wind Farm which present in silhouette against the sky. A line of distant mountains can be seen in the far distance.</p>	<p>Medium-low</p>	<p>Six of the proposed turbines to the southwest will rise at a prominent scale from the farmland plateau in the middle ground. They are fully visible in a legible manner with generous and relatively even spacing. The four remaining turbines to the west are substantially screened by foreground vegetation revealing partial blades sets rotating against the intervening vegetation. This is more ambiguous in an aesthetic sense but counterbalanced by the legible view of their openly visible counterparts. There will be a considerable increase in the scale and intensity of kinetic built development in view, but without them being an introduction of an unfamiliar feature. They are well accommodated in terms of scale and function within this productive rural landscape that already contains turbines. The scale of the proposed turbines somewhat dwarfs those that exist on the skyline beyond, but rather than causing scale confusion it tends to emphasise or even overemphasise the separation distance between them.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be High-medium and of a Negative quality.</p>	<p>Moderate/ Negative/ Long-term</p>	<p>Not Significant</p>

<p>VP24</p>	<p>R489 at Riverstown Experienced by regional road users and residents residing in the vicinity, this view features a small grassy area in the foreground. Scattered mature trees are present across the foreground landscape. Beyond this, the middle ground is characterised by a grassy ditch with a mature treeline present in the middle ground, substantially screening the views beyond. A number of residential dwellings are present to the rear of the viewer and are afforded a similar view.</p>	<p>Medium-low</p>	<p>Only the blades of two of the proposed turbines will be visible from here above the intervening, middle ground treeline. The turbine blades have a noticeable scale at this distance and there will be some visual ambiguity associated with the blades rotation amongst the tree tops. However, these factors are strongly diluted by the degree of screening.</p> <p>For the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low and of a Negative quality.</p>	<p>Slight / Negative/ Long-term</p>	<p>Not Significant</p>
<p>VP25</p>	<p>N62 at Boolinarrig This pleasant view is experienced by the N62 users. The N62 extends into the distance with the agricultural fields on both sides of the road, interspersed with mature trees and hedgerows. Occasional rural dwellings are visible amongst the vegetation. In the background, a continuous belt of mature woodland is visible.</p>	<p>Medium-low</p>	<p>The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.</p>	<p>Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term</p>	<p>Not Significant</p>
<p>VP26</p>	<p>Birr Castle Demesne Experienced by visitors of Birr Castle, the foreground of this view features a parkland setting with areas of meadow, interspersed with a diverse range of large mature specimen trees.</p>	<p>High-medium</p>	<p>The proposed turbines will not be visible from here due to screening by intervening terrain and vegetation. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is negligible by default.</p>	<p>Imperceptible / Neutral / Long-term</p>	<p>Not Significant</p>
<p>VP27</p>	<p>L3013 at Banagher Experienced by local road users and people residing in the vicinity, this vast panoramic view presents a rural landscape where the foreground features large, gently undulating agricultural fields extending to the middle ground, interspersed with mature trees and hedgerows that define field boundaries. There are also patches of</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>At a distance of nearly 15km, the proposed turbines rise at a small scale out of the undulating rural landscape in the distance. They are fully visible above the ground plane and present partially against the sky and partially against the upland terrain beyond and have a low degree of contrast against both. There is some minor visual clutter generated by turbines overlapping with each other, but this effect is strongly diluted by the viewing distance and otherwise it is a legible view of the wind</p>	<p>Slight / Neutral-Negative/ Long-term</p>	<p>Not Significant</p>

	<p>woodland and conifer plantations. A large industrial building and silos is visible in the middle distance, creating a distinct feature in this rural setting.</p>		<p>farm. The turbines will marginally increase the intensity and diversity of built development within this scene but do not appear out of place in this productive rural context.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low-negligible and marginally negative.</p>		
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