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## **APPENDIX 11.1**

### **11.1a Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

### **11.1b Magnitude of Visual Impacts at Representative Viewpoint Locations**

**11.1a Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

Visual sensitivity is a two-sided analysis of receptor susceptibility (people or groups of people) versus the value of the view on offer at a particular location. To assess the susceptibility of viewers and the amenity value of views, the assessor uses a range of criteria and provides a four point weighting scale to indicate how strongly the viewer/view is associated with each of the criterion identified in **Section 11.2.6.1** of Chapter 11.

**Table A11.1: Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

Scale of Value for each criterion

Strong association	Moderate association	Mild association	Negligible association

**N** = Negligible; **L** = low sensitivity; **ML** = medium-low sensitivity **M** = medium sensitivity; **HM** = High-medium sensitivity; **H** = high sensitivity; **VH** = very high sensitivity

Values associated with the view	VP1	VP2	VP3	VP4	VP5	VP6	VP7	VP8	VP9	VP10
Susceptibility of viewers to changes in views										
Recognised scenic value of the view										
Views from within highly sensitive landscape areas										
Primary views from residences										
Intensity of use, popularity (number of viewers)										
Viewer connection with the landscape										
Provision of vast, elevated panoramic views										
Sense of remoteness / tranquillity at the viewing location										
Degree of perceived naturalness										
Presence of striking or noteworthy features										
Sense of Historical, cultural and / or spiritual significance										
Rarity or uniqueness of the view										
Integrity of the landscape character within the view										
Sense of place at the viewing location										
Sense of awe										
<b>Overall sensitivity assessment</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>

**Table 0.1: Analysis of Visual Receptor Sensitivity at Viewshed Reference Points 1 – 10**

**N** = Negligible; **L** = low sensitivity; **ML** = medium-low sensitivity **M** = medium sensitivity; **HM** = High-medium sensitivity; **H** = high sensitivity; **VH** = very high sensitivity

Values associated with the view	VP11	VP12	VP13	VP14	VP15	VP16	VP17	VP18	VP19	VP20
Susceptibility of viewers to changes in views										
Recognised scenic value of the view										
Views from within highly sensitive landscape areas										
Primary views from residences										
Intensity of use, popularity (number of viewers)										
Viewer connection with the landscape										
Provision of vast, elevated panoramic views										
Sense of remoteness / tranquillity at the viewing location										
Degree of perceived naturalness										
Presence of striking or noteworthy features										
Sense of Historical, cultural and / or spiritual significance										
Rarity or uniqueness of the view										
Integrity of the landscape character within the view										
Sense of place at the viewing location										
Sense of awe										
<b>Overall sensitivity assessment</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>ML</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>HM</b>

**Table 0.2: Analysis of Visual Receptor Sensitivity at Viewshed Reference Points 11 – 20**

Values associated with the view	VP21	VP22	VP23	VP24	VP25	VP26	VP27	VP28	VP29
Susceptibility of viewers to changes in views									
Recognised scenic value of the view									
Views from within highly sensitive landscape areas									
Primary views from residences									
Intensity of use, popularity (number of viewers)									
Viewer connection with the landscape									
Provision of vast, elevated panoramic views									
Sense of remoteness / tranquillity at the viewing location									
Degree of perceived naturalness									
Presence of striking or noteworthy features									
Sense of Historical, cultural and / or spiritual significance									
Rarity or uniqueness of the view									
Integrity of the landscape character within the view									
Sense of place at the viewing location									
Sense of awe									
<b>Overall sensitivity assessment</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>H</b>

**Table 0.3: Analysis of Visual Receptor Sensitivity at Viewshed Reference Points 21 – 29**

### 11.1b Magnitude of Visual Effects at Viewshed Reference Points

The assessment of visual impacts at each of the selected viewpoints is aided by spatially accurate wireframe images and photomontages that have been produced in accordance with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Visual representation of wind farms: Best Practice Guidelines (version 2.2 - 2017). The presented images for each viewpoint include;

1. Existing View (Contextual 90° included angle)
2. Wireframe view - proposed and cumulative turbines (Contextual 90° included angle)
3. Wireframe view (53.5° included angle)
4. Montage View (53.5° included angle)

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View	Distance to nearest visible turbine:								
VP1	Local Road at Gortnagross	SW	3.5 km								
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community Views</li> </ul>										
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>Medium</b>										
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This is a broad and elevated views across the landscape of the central study area where such open views are not frequent. It takes in a rugged landscape of rolling hills covered in a grainy texture of marginal farmland, reverting scrub, commercial forestry and patches of woodland. Rising above the complex skyline ridge in the middle distance are the turbines from the Derragh and Cleanrath wind farms to the south and southwest and more distant turbines to the west. There are very few dwellings in view and a general sense of rural tranquillity.</p>										
<b>Visual Impact of proposed Wind Farm</b>	<p>The proposed turbines will rise from a middle distance spur ridge to the southwest to the fore and to the right of the Derragh turbines, compared to which, they are considerably larger. The turbine array has a reasonable, but consolidated lateral extent and there is also some intensity to the cluster highlighted by the overlapping in perspective of at least half of the 15 turbines, all of which are clearly visible from here. The visual presence of the proposed development in the context of this broad vista is deemed to co-dominant.</p> <p>Aesthetically, there is some visual clutter associated with the frequent overlapping of turbine blade sets. However, this is also balanced by a general legibility of the development with all turbines clearly visible, nearly all blade sets rotating above the skyline ridge and an appreciation of where the turbines are anchored within the landscape of the site. Although, the overlapping turbines generality an intensity of tall moving structures, their spatial separation across the site is apparent.</p> <p>In terms of context the proposed turbines will appear in a rugged and productive upland setting that is already characterised, in part, by the presence of wind turbines. The turbine array does not appear over-scaled relative to the broad underlying landform and landcover context.</p> <p>In combination with the Derragh turbines, there is a sense that it could be a single more extensive development that trails off across a more distant ridgeline. However, with the smaller existing turbines to the rear there is a legibility to the relationship that accentuates the sense of perspective and with it, the sense of space and distance across / between the two developments – whereas smaller turbines to the fore can cause a sense of scale confusion and a perceptual condensing of the vista.</p> <p>On balance of the reasons outlined above the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium.</p>										
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined in section 12.2.5 the significance of visual impact is summarised below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Visual Receptor Sensitivity</th> <th>Visual Magnitude</th> <th>Impact</th> <th>Significance of Visual Impact</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Medium</td> <td>Medium</td> <td></td> <td>Moderate</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Magnitude	Impact	Significance of Visual Impact	Medium	Medium		Moderate
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Magnitude	Impact	Significance of Visual Impact								
Medium	Medium		Moderate								

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP1	R336 at Breenaun, Maam Valley	11km	SE
Representative of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> <li>• Major Routes</li> </ul>		
Receptor Sensitivity	High		
Existing View	<p>This view is a typically dramatic view through the Maam Valley, with the level valley floor framed by sweeping steep upland slopes. These upland areas are sparsely vegetated, with stone walls along the base and lower slopes. The valley floor features evenly dispersed trees throughout the midground of the view across the width of the level pastoral landscape. The character of the landscape is highly interrelated to the consistency of this vegetation cover and the absence of significant built form. Although there are residences and buildings throughout the wider view, these are scattered and nestled amongst corresponding increases in vegetation and defined field sizes – adding rather than detracting to the remote, rural scenic character of this landscape. The site of the proposal is located at the head of the valley in line with the framed centre of the vista. The topography overlaps and layers across the view, with the proposal site the most distant point visible outside of the valley, and defining the distant horizon, which is a key point within the scenic route designation which corresponds to the viewpoint - <i>'The landscapes are very large and expansive – drawing the eye to distant horizons and to the ever-changing sky'</i>.</p>		
Visual Impact of proposed wind farm	<p>The turbines will generally be faintly visible in the south-eastern distance along the valley alignment where they will have a low degree of contrast against a backdrop of sky. The proposal will introduce a new land use, and element of modernity to the landscape context of this view. In its current state, although there are modern elements in the details of the built form and practices of the valley, the overall effect is one of timeless rural Ireland. The turbines will not intrude upon or detract from views across the fore-to-middle ground valley context, which is the core of the scenic amenity experienced here. Instead, they are seen in a clear and legible manner with a modest scale and extent and the profile follows that of underlying landform. The perception is that they form part of a discrete landscape context that lies just beyond the Maam Valley and Connemara Mountains setting.</p> <p>On balance, the magnitude of impact is deemed to be <b>Low</b>.</p>		
Summary	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	Significance of Visual Impact
	High	Low	Moderate-slight

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Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP2	R345 at Carrowgarriff	5.1km	S/SE
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> <li>• Major Routes; and</li> <li>• Amenity and heritage features;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is located on the north-western arm of Lough Corrib, on the north-eastern shore, at a bend in the R345 which runs along the landform, resulting in direct, elevated views down the lake towards the site. There is a high proportion of farmland and lakeside vegetation across the low, rolling landform throughout the midground of the view. The view is framed across into Maam Cross and the direction of the Galway wind Park, which can be seen across the distant horizon. The left (northwest) side of the view is more developed, with walls, hedgerows and residences across pasture, while the right/far (southwest) side of the lough is sparsely vegetated and unpopulated, with dramatic topography and views of the water surface in the foreground. Across the open water of the Lough, Caisleán na Circe (Castle Kirk) can be seen isolated in the Lough. The dip in topography to the south (centre) of the view results in a division between the developed (left) side of the lough/view and the far, undeveloped shore. This disguises the bend in the lough, and results in the upland areas which the site is located appearing to be an extension of the landform which the viewer is located.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>The turbines are seen at a modest, but noticeable scale above the middle distance horizon, on the most elevated hill at the 'end' of the lough. Two are substantially revealed and the others have blade sets cutting against the skyline in perspective. They lie above the open, variable shoreline of the lough and this results in the turbines connecting more with the modified landscapes in the left of the view, and reducing the relationship or impact on the right and wider landscape of the Lough and beginning of the Maumturks. Indeed, this vast elevated view illustrates a strong connection between the landscape context of the proposed turbines and that of the rugged hill country hosting the Galway Wind Park beyond it to the southeast. Consequently, it also highlights the variation between the site context and Lakelands and Mountains occupying the nearer aspects of the view. Whilst the proposed wind farm does notably increase the intensity and scale of built development within this scene, it does not unduly detract from the discrete context of its more naturalistic foreground features and appears compatible with its more robust south-easterly backdrop.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium-low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Medium-low	<b>Moderate</b>

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Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP3	R345 at Claggan	3.8km	S
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High-medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is located on the north-western arm of Lough Corrib, on the north-eastern shore, which extends towards the site as the Hill of Doon. The R345 runs along the landform, elevated above the lakeshore, giving views across the lake and the farmland between the road and the shoreline. The high degree of vegetation along this section of landform results in the visibility out from the R345 being intermittent. However, where there are views, they are scenic, with the far (southwest) side of the lough being sparsely vegetated and largely unpopulated, with dramatic topography and views of the water surface in the foreground. From this location, the section of landform which the proposal is located is partially screened by vegetation and intervening landform. The dip in topography to the south (centre) of the view does however result in a division between the developed (left) side of the lough/view and the far, undeveloped shore. This disguises the bend in the lough, and results in the upland areas upon which the site is located appearing to be an uninterrupted extension of the fore-to-middle ground landform.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>Two of the turbines are set well above the skyline ridge with only the blade tips of others discernible. The turbines are framed between the upland areas to the left of the viewer, above the extent of built form and associated infrastructure servicing the residences, and framed to the right by the varied vegetation along this section of the scenic route. As noted above, the contrast between the left and right of the view, results in the turbines appearing located on the 'developed' side of the lough. However, the degree to which this reads as such will vary along the scenic route based on angles and elevation. The landcover and landform of the site serves to separate the proposal from the adjacent residences and viewer setting, as the consistent bog vegetation contrasts with the varied woodland, pasture and conifer mix across the foreground. Based on the impacts outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is Low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Low	<b>Slight</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP4	Local road at Teeranea	6km	S
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Population</li> <li>• Transport link</li> <li>• Scenic Route</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High-medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is located on the section of the scenic route which crosses the landform between Lough Mask and Lough Corrib to run along the northern border between Cloghbrack and Clonbur to form a loop. The location of the view is between the two (smaller) upland areas which form the band of topography between the eastern extents of the two lakes. Therefore, the view is relatively enclosed relative to the previous views. There is little visibility of the surrounding lakes and mountains, however Lough Corrib is present (albeit generally screened) across the centre of the vista. The view is a highly vegetated rural scene, with layers of different scales and types of land use. In the foreground there are paddocks and rural structures, which gives way to deciduous vegetation and then conifer forestry, varying across the rolling lakeshore and islands. Finally, the upland topography upon which the site is located forms the backdrop to the above. The general impression is of increasing naturalness in landcover and degree of development, the further away from the viewing location. Despite the presence of multiple roads and residences across the intervening landscape, these are not evident through the screening provided by the vegetation and rolling topography – this serves to enhance the isolated and semi-naturalistic character of the receiving landscape.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>There are two clearly identifiable turbines over the intervening landform, with other instances of partial blades or blade tips visible over the ridgeline. These are contained over a section of landform and vegetation which do not have a strong relationship with the lake and wider slope of the landform in the immediate context. Whilst the proposed turbines will add to the scale, intensity and diversity of built form in this semi-naturalistic scene the are something of a background feature viewed in silhouette above a modest scale skyline ridge. The arrangement is legible, but with some aesthetic issues of blades rotating on the skyline.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium-low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section</b> Error! Reference source not found. the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Medium-low	<b>Moderate-slight</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP5	Local road at Dooros	4.8km	SW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural Population</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High - Medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is located on the peninsula which leads to Inishdoorus, this is a relatively long, narrow and low-lying landform which extend out into Lough Corrib towards the southeast. The gradual slope of the landform results in the majority of the lake between the viewer and the site being screened from view, with the foreground defined by the open naturalistic grassland and scattered scrub which further serves to break up views of the lake. This viewpoint, however, is generally representative of the residences which are located on the peninsula, and will certainly be oriented to take advantage of the views across the water. Finally, the far shore of the lake rises up in the distance, relatively clear of development and with a clear ridgeline of consistent vegetation forming the broad skyline. This leads into the hill of Doon, a highly forested knoll, and the small section of the Maumturks visible to the right, with further visibility restricted by the conifers scattered across Inishdoorus.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>A clear view of a single turbine rising above the skyline ridge is afforded, along with the much lesser view of four blade tips. Aside from a small selection of residential buildings across the far lakeshore, there is limited built form across the view. Therefore, the inclusion of the single, fully visible turbine and the other partially visible turbine blades along the ridgeline will introduce a contrasting degree of visible modernity and built form to a relatively timeless and 'traditional' landscape setting. The single clearly visible turbine is relatively well located in that it is nestled in a dip across the horizon, reducing the overall height relative to the surrounding landform, while allowing a clear view of the proportions between the tower and blades. The clear and legible view of the most prominent turbine also diminishes the presence of the skyline blade tips, which might otherwise draw from visual amenity to a greater degree. Based on the impacts outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is Medium-low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High - Medium	Medium-low	<b>Moderate-slight</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP6</b>	R345 Picnic Area at Carrick East	6.4km	S
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> <li>• Major Routes; and</li> <li>• Amenity and heritage features;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is from a picnic area/ scenic viewing location located along the R345 at Lough Corrib. There is a parking area, flagpoles, picnic tables, and information panel outlining the surrounding landscape. The focus of the benches and the landscaped areas are directly down the lake, to the islands and in the general direction of Oughterard. The landform rises gradually from this direction (Oughterard), layered behind the long shallow peninsula of Inishdoorus and lined by the turbines of the Galway Wind Park. The progressive elevation gain eventually blends into the vegetation lining the lake shoreline, to the right (west) of the view. The site is located within this area, where the view is busier, cluttered with vegetation, landform, and man-made structures.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>As noted above, the view is generally more complex to the right, small islands in the lough layer with the vegetation along the shoreline, and where Inishdoorus partially obscures the distant, more dramatic topography. The ridgeline of the site is just visible over the foreground vegetation, and features two clearly visible turbines framing the rolling crest of the topography. As shown in the wireframes, there will be instances where up to four other blade tips will cut over the ridgeline to varied degrees. The magnitude of visual impact from this location is mitigated by the location of the turbines relative to the focus of the scenic view – i.e. peripheral to the main view. Although they lie in a transitional landscape into the wider, more scenic Connemara and Maumturks to the west, these mountains are not a notable influence on this scene and the proposed turbines appear as a characteristic addition to the landscape that does not unduly draw from the visual amenity of the scenic view.</p> <p>On balance of the above factors, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Low	<b>Moderate-slight</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP7	R345 at Turnneenaun	7.9km	SW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Population</li> <li>• Transport link</li> <li>• Scenic Route</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is regional road section of the scenic route which (as the local road to the left of the view) runs along the periphery of the lake from the viewpoint, towards Cong and the associated attractions/historic features. The scenic designation also branches off and continues up the topography to the north. Views of the lake and surrounding landscape are a key part of the viewer experience, and there will be views which are more enclosed than the one represented here, depending on vegetation, which in this view is seen along the water's edge rather than the road corridor. This open view is across lower lying intervening fields lined with relatively intact stone walls. The overall focus of the view is the lake and midground islands/peninsula, but the foreground includes numerous anthropogenic features such as the road and a selection of walls running perpendicular to the contour, and the road itself. While the foreground is not vegetated, the riparian vegetation along the shoreline defines the transition to the water and distant landform, which is also hemmed by vegetation along the water's edge. There is a long undulating ridgeline contained in moorland and forestry, which contains this view across Lough Corrib. There is a distinctive dip in the horizon to the west of this ridge, where the northern arm of the lough has created an opportunity for viewing through to the Maumturk Mountains. In the opposite direction along the same skyline ridge can be seen turbines from the extensive Galway Wind Park as the landform generally diminishes in scale.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>All of the proposed turbines will be visible from here to above the opposing skyline ridge to varying degrees. This includes two substantially visible turbines, one partial blade set and three blade tips. Whilst this complexity of visibility compromises the aesthetics of the layout and results in most turbines blades rotating on the skyline ridge, this is ameliorated by the clearer view of the two more prominent turbines and the undulating profile, which is akin to that of the underlying ridge. In terms of the composition of the view, the proposed turbines are located in a section of transition where modest hill country of commercial forest and turbines meets Lakeland to the fore and mountains to the northwest. Although the proposed turbines draw wind energy development further into the sensitive aspects of this view, it remains within the general Galway Wind Park setting in terms of viewing direction and landscape character.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Low	<b>Moderate-slight</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP8</b>	Local road near R345 at Dooroy	9.7km	SW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Population</li> <li>• Transport link</li> <li>• Scenic Route</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is immediately adjacent (100m east) of the section of R345 scenic route which runs along the periphery of the Lough Corrib to Clonbur. Views of the lake and surrounding landscape are a key part of the viewer experience. This viewpoint was selected to represent an elevated, open views adjacent to residences and the accommodation on the intersection of the R345 and local road. This view is similar in context to the previous VP7, but more elevated and the stonewall field pattern on the near shore of Lough Corrib is more visually striking. Again, the far shore of the lough rises quickly as slopes of farmland forestry and moorland to form a long ridgeline that contains the south-westerly view. This ridge is more undulating at its western end where it serves as a transition to the more dramatic Maumturk Mountains. The eastern end of the same ridge is more modest in elevation and hosts numerous turbines from the Galway Wind Park.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>As with VP7, the proposed turbines are visible to varying degrees above the western end of the skyline ridge with two full blades sets, two partial blade sets and two blade tips rising in silhouette. There is some ambiguity associated with the partial view of blades rotating on the skyline, but this is offset by the clearer view of the more exposed pair. The undulating profile of the turbines is consistent with the profile of the underlying ridge and it is clear that this is the north-westerly extent of the modest hill country that hosts the Galway Wind Park. This is the case even though there is some sense of overlap between the Lakeland setting to the fore and the mountains to the west.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Low	<b>Moderate-slight</b>

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Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP9</b>	Ard Na Gaoithe, Forest Recreational Park	11.8km	W/SW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Population</li> <li>• Recreational area</li> <li>• Scenic view</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is the start of the trail access to Ard Na Gaoithe (Forest Recreational Park) which runs northeast along the lakeshore from the viewpoint, towards Cong and the associated attractions/historic features. Views of the lake and surrounding landscape are a key part of the use experience. The view is dominated by lake and foreground islands, the majority of which are forested, reinforcing a sense of the naturalistic. On the far side of the Lough is a broad ridgeline that contains the distant view and host turbines from the Galway Wind Par at its southern end. The ridge increases in scale and undulating form from south to north where it eventually dips in reverence to the more dramatic Connemara Mountains, which then rise abruptly to the northwest.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>Three of the proposed turbines are clearly visible above the western, more undulating end of the distant skyline ridge, albeit the blade sets of two of them will overlap slightly against the landform below. There are also two blade tips that may be discerned. The scale and extent of the visible turbines is modest and in keeping with that of the underlying landform. Turbines are a familiar feature of this view, but not at the same distance / scale and within a more modest section of terrain further from the Connemara Mountains. Nonetheless, the proposed turbines are not deemed to encroach unduly on the mountainscape because of the distinctive, low gap at the head of Lough Corrib which serves to define the transition from lakeland, mountains and the forested hill country of the proposed wind farm / Galway Wind Park.</p> <p>For the reasons outlined above the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Low	<b>Moderate-slight</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP10</b>	Western Way on R336 at Maunwee Lough	4.7km	E
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Population</li> <li>• Scenic Route</li> <li>• Western Way</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view looks across the transitional landscape between the upland and the bog landscapes to the west and north of the site. The view is of consistent low bogland vegetation. The view is almost entirely open, aside from the midground of the left, which is contained by the lower sloped of Lackavrea (396m), which divides the viewpoint from Lough Corrib. To the fore of Lackavrea is the open area of Maunwee Lough. All of the view is blanketed in the same low vegetation, aside from a small clump of trees on the water's edge, and the conifers visible in the distance to the right. The right features lower landform which the curve of the road follows as it curves around the lough to the right. The site itself is visible across the lough, between a small hillock in the foreground, and the base of Lackavrea. The western way runs along the R336 (the viewpoint), and skirts the base of Maunwee Lough across the view, leading through the dip in topography and towards the site/Lough Corrib.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>The proposal is clearly visible through the landform over the lough, arranged approximately symmetrically. The nearest, clearly visible turbine is viewed in its entirety, while the others, to either side, are progressively screened by the landform. The topography of the view results in screening of the lowland, more varied landuse and vegetation between the site and viewer, therefore there is no division or introduction of more anthropogenic landscape features / patterns across the view. The site reads as the same landscape context as the viewer location. As a part of this, there are also no visible structures surrounding the site or the viewer, increasing the contrast between the existing and proposed views, and the corresponding increase of built form and modification of the landscape. On a particularly clear day, as shown by the wireframe imagery, there would be distant views of the existing windfarms of Galway Wind Park to the south, however these are substantially screened and far from prominent. Aside from the proposed development introducing moving man-made structures into the this relatively naturalistic scene, the turbines are seen in a legible manner at a reasonable remove from the foreground setting of the lough and southern end of the Maum Turk Mountains. The layout is compact, yet well-spaced appears nestled into the landscape setting rather than placed upon it.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! R</b> reference source not found. the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Medium	<b>Substantial-moderate</b>

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Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP11	Local Road at Drumsnauv and Lough Corrib	1.9km	S/SW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Residences</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High – medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is from the closest point of the northern side of Lough Corrib to the site, accessed by a quiet local road off the R345 and loops over the higher sections of the Hill of Doon, to access the residences and farmland on the small peninsula. Views are often highly contained due to the dense woodland across the upper slopes; however, the foreground of this viewpoint is open pasture. This pasture transitions to scrub and woodland along the shoreline (as is consistent across the study area), however the descending topography ensures this results in little screening of the lough or opposing landform. This is cloaked from the shore to the mid/upper slopes in conifers across the centre of the view. The uppermost slopes and the lower east (left) slopes are more open, with low, moorland vegetation.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>The near full blade set of one of the turbines and the blades of two others will be seen rising in silhouette above the skyline ridge on the opposite side of the lough. This partial visibility results in some ambiguity as to the extent and layout of the overall development, but still represents only a minor portion of it. The visible turbines are seen at a prominent scale and will be co-dominant to sub-dominant within this view. They also intrude an increase in scale and intensity of built development.</p> <p>In terms of context the turbines appear above a rugged but modest scale ridge that has an apron of commercial forestry and aside from foreground farmland, is the only portion of the wider view that has a productive rural character. In this regard, the proposed development does not unduly intrude on either views of the lough or the southern end of the Connemara mountains further to the west.</p> <p>For the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Medium	<b>Moderate</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP12	Hill of Doon Viewpoint	1.8km	SW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Amenity and heritage features;</li> <li>Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High-medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view represents multiple scenic and recreation features (in terms of use, rather than physical attributes). These include the Western way, as it loops around the headland and across into Connemara. The location is also a designated scenic view (View 20 within Galway CDP. It is identified within the OSI maps and various other tourism sites as a viewing point also, focused on the Hill of Doon and Lough Corrib. The focus of the view is northward across the lough, the Hill of Doon, and the variety of structures associated with the lough – such as the stone jetty at the shoreline below the viewpoint. The views along the lake to the southwest allow views along the north-western arm of the lough, across to the relatively undeveloped shoreline at the base of Capanalaurabaun hill. The landform falls away to the gap between the elevated landform of the site/ Capanalaurabaun and Lackavrea (screened by the Hill of Doon), where the Owenwee River enters Lough Corrib. The northeast shore is a slightly more developed shoreline – although screened by the woodland cloaking the hill of Doon. The landform immediately to the left of the viewer (and below the site) along the face of Capanalaurabaun is more varied, with a mix of scrub and conifers, blending across fields lined by stone walls and a small number of scattered residential properties on the lower slopes.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>Only one of the proposed turbines is visible in this location, nestled in a dip of the near ridgeline to the southwest. The turbine is fully revealed in an unambiguous manner other than for the fact that it appears to be on its own. It will be a prominent feature and adds to the scale and intensity of built development within this quiet rural area. However, in terms of context it will appear in one of the more robust portions of the view offset from the key amenity features of the lough and Connemara Mountains further to the west and north. It also appears above slopes cloaked in commercial conifer plantations and will not unduly draw form visual amenity.</p> <p>On balance of the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium-low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Medium-low	<b>Moderate</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP13	Glann Road/The Western Way at Gortnashingaun	4.5km	W
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Amenity and heritage features;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>Medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>The key representative feature of this view is the Western Way (which follows this local road) as well as local residences who enjoy views across Lough Corrib. The focus of the view is the lough, islands, and far shoreline to the north and east. The location of the site (to the west) is screened by both topography and vegetation, as well as being outside of the main amenity aspect of the location (the elevated open views across the lough). The landform and landcover immediately to the left of the viewer is varied, with a mix of scrub and conifers, blending across fields lined by stone walls.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>Only one turbine is potentially visible in this location, and only within the wireframe view. In the photomontage, the turbine is screened by existing vegetation and there are few sections of this road with such open views upslope to the west as this one. The magnitude of visual impact is Negligible by default.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	Medium	Negligible	<b>imperceptible</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP14	Shanbally Marina	15.7km	W
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Amenity and heritage features;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High – Medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This is a relatively open view across Lough Corrib, from next to The Lake Bar and Greenfield Lodge. The expanse of open water is interrupted across the midground by the island of Inishquin, and the vegetation cloaking the island screens the northern section of the lake. The gap in the marina wall and the end of Inishquin leads the eye to the far side of the lough where the topography forms a subtly undulating skyline. The landform along the far side of the lough is relatively uniform across the centre of the view, however at either end, there are points of difference. To the north, the northern arm of Lough Corrib and the</p>		

	Hill of Doon create a view through to the more complex upland topography of the Connemara Mountains, while to the south – starting in line with the entrance to the marina – is the visible extent of the Galway Wind Park and a wide series of turbines visible to the southern extent of the view, before visibility is lost around the buildings and vegetation bordering the marina.		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>There is only partial visibility of one turbine blade from this view above the distant ridgeline to the north of the view and over Inishquin towards to the Maumturks and upper Lough Corrib. The complexity of the foreground setting adds activity and focus to the foreground of the view, as does the framing of the view towards Galway Wind Park and the open lough, rather than the upland areas to the north. The turbine blade, will have a low degree of contrast against the sky in the far distance and will be barely discernible as a result. However, if it is noticed, it will give the impression that wind energy development extends further north along the same ridge as the Galway Wind Park in the direction, but not quite the same landscape context, as the further distant Connemara mountains.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low-negligible.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Low-negligible	<b>Slight-imperceptible</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP15</b>	N59 at Bunscanniff and Lough Oorid	8.6km	E
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>Major Routes</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>Medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view looks across the transitional landscape between the dramatic upland landscape to the north and the expansive coastal bog landscape to the west. The view is of consistent low bogland vegetation. It is no coincidence that the road hugs the lower transitional slopes between these two areas as a 'path of least resistance'. The curve of the road follows the lough and passes through clumps of scrub and conifers towards heading east. The only visible structures across the view are light vertical structures, with power infrastructure to the left, and timber post and rail fences to the right. Two turbines from the Galway Wind Park are visible in the far distance to the south.</p>		

<p><b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b></p>	<p>All six of the proposed turbines are visible from this location in the middle distance beyond a low spur ridge where they are sandwiched to the fore of a more distant ridgeline. One of them is fully visible above the distant skyline with only the partial blade sets of the others penetrating above it. They are seen at a modest scale in a more complex section of the view between the main aspects of visual amenity north and south. Despite the partial visibility and some clutter with foreground utility poles. The turbines are seen with a good degree of legibility in three pairs that cascade down from higher to lower slopes that are partly cloaked in conifer plantation.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low.</p>		
<p><b>Summary</b></p>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	<p>Visual Receptor Sensitivity</p>	<p>Visual Impact Magnitude</p>	<p><b>Significance of Visual Impact</b></p>
	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p><b>Slight</b></p>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<p><b>VP16</b></p>	<p>N59 between Ardderry Lough and Lough Shindilla</p>	<p>5.3km</p>	<p>E</p>
<p><b>Representative of:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>Major Routes</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Receptor Sensitivity</b></p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>		
<p><b>Existing View</b></p>	<p>This view is similar to VP16 in that it is along the N59 within the transitional landscape between the upland landscapes to the north of the study area and the bog landscapes to the west of the site. The key difference to the above is that the left of the view is not as contained by the upland areas, and there is visible built form (the landmark building of Peacocks Hotel) in the central middle ground of the view. The view is of low bogland vegetation occasionally interrupted by conifers and other scrub (gorse, birch etc). Across the foreground is the N59 crossing between Ardderry Lough and Lough Shindilla, which increases the scenic amenity of the view.</p>		
<p><b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b></p>	<p>All six of the turbines are visible from this location at a modest but notable scale, in a relatively clear and legible manner, as they appear paired-off down the hill. The spacing between the pairs is consistent and reads clearly in response to the receiving topography. The gap to distant upland areas west of the proposal aids in perceptually separating it from the more sensitive and scenic landscapes to the west (left) of the view, particularly given the progression of the turbines away from the viewer to the east. There are some instances of clutter with the various structures across the fore-to-middle ground, in particular the powerlines and Peacocks hotel. However, this changes quickly or road users moving through the landscape. The turbines will</p>		

	<p>increase the scale, extent and intensity of built development within the view, but in a section of it already characterised by productive land use rather than naturalistic character.</p> <p>It is not considered that the proposed turbines unduly draw from the visual amenity of this scene and instead serve to reinforce the eastward transition into a working landscape from a dramatic and naturalistic one that is more associated with iconic Connemara. The magnitude of visual impact is considered to be Medium-low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section</b> Error! Reference source not found. the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	Medium	Medium - Low	<b>Moderate - Slight</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP17</b>	N59 between Lorgan Lough and Ardderry Lough	2.8km	NE
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>Major Routes</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High - Medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This is a broad open view, which emphasises the scale of the landscape in relation to the smaller man-made structures within the view (power lines and fences). There are sections of the Connemara mountains visible to the west separated from the immediate landscape by a border of conifers along the shelf of the topography to the left (west) of the view above Lorgan Lough. Nearer to the viewer, across the centre of the view, the topography is gently undulating for some distance before abruptly transitioning into a relatively steep upland area which extends to the east of the view before being screened behind a stand of conifers. The area of upland topography nearest to the viewer is relatively uniform in terms of slope and land cover, however the topography to the east is more varied and features swathes of conifers.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>All six of the turbines are visible from this location, in a very clear and legible manner as a sequence of three pair that condense closer together from west to east aiding the sense of perspective. The spacing between the pairs is consistent and reads clearly in response to the receiving topography. The gap to distant upland areas to the west of the proposal aids in perceptually separating it from the more sensitive and scenic landscapes to the west (left) of the view, particularly given the progression of the turbines down the landform to the east.</p>		

	<p>The turbines appear appropriately scaled in relation to the underlying land form and land use patterns. They also appear as an appropriate addition to this transitional working landscape, well away from the more naturalistic and scenic landscape settings of the Connemara mountains and coastal bog further to the north and west.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High - Medium	Medium	<b>Moderate</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP18</b>	Local road L35266 at Tawnaghbeg/Tullaghmore	850m	NE
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>XX</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is representative of the residences in closest proximity to the site to the southwest, albeit their main views are away from the site over the more scenic lower lying landscape to the south. As such, the view looking directly up the landform is generally secondary to that looking across the wider landform. There is clear demarcation of the landcover type looking upslope. The foreground is covered, particularly to the right (southeast) by deciduous woodland and scrub. The midground features green pasture hemmed by stone walls cloaking a secondary ridge and plateaux, before the landform and cover change to steeper upland character, covered by bog vegetation and rocky outcrops. To the north (left) of the view, the topography falls towards the upper extents of Lough Corrib, and a small valley within which there are multiple residences. These are typically framed by pasture and scattered clusters of vegetation rather than hedgerows.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>Five of the turbines are substantially visible from this location, four of which are located on the slopes of the landform facing the viewer. The furthest turbine is partially screened at the base by the intervening ridgeline, but generally the view is clear and legible. The turbines are well spaced, with one small instance of overlap that is ameliorated by the clear comprehension of distance between the subject turbines. Whilst the turbines are large prominent features from this near distance, the varied landcover up the landform does serve to create a differentiation between the landuse (and associated scales/structures), with the residences, trees and walls located below the border of defined pasture and stone wall into the naturalistic moorland vegetation. The spatial relationship between the array and the receiving landform is more balanced. The array overlays the sweeping landform in a manner which, from this</p>		

	<p>viewpoint appears appropriate, nestled across the slight dip in the ridgeline, in particular as the blades are generally held above the ridgeline.</p> <p>Overall, the proposed wind farm will substantially increase the intensity and scale of built development within this quiet rural setting, but is not an inappropriate addition to this working hill country landscape and does not intrude on the main amenity views enjoyed by local residents which tend to be away from the upland slopes. On balance of these reasons, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be High-medium.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section</b> Error! Reference source not found. the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	Medium-low	High-medium	<b>Moderate</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP19</b>	N59 at Bunnakill	1.4km	NE
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>Major Routes;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>Medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is representative of the N9 corridor and residences to the south west of the site, viewed from a local access intersection onto the national road. The landform and landcover between the viewer and the site is dominated by bog vegetation and scrub, with pockets of green pasture hemmed by stone walls – generally surrounding residences. There is a variety of tree species and arrangements throughout the view, with mixed deciduous woodland and scrub across the fore and midground. These areas feature a low percentage of conifers amongst them. In the distance, the landform and cover change to steeper upland character, covered by moorland vegetation and rocky outcrops. To the north (left) of the view, the topography falls towards the upper extents of Lough Corrib, and allows views into the Connemara Mountains. To the southeast (right) of the view, the landform continues at a similar elevation and grade to the site, however is covered in conifer forestry. The foreground of the view features a rural residence and associated ancillary structures, yards, driveway and lawn. This is not a particularly scenic section of the N59, despite the scenic route designation, with variable degrees of enclosure and a relatively high level of visible structures, cutaway bog and surrounding conifer plantations.</p>		

<p><b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b></p>	<p>All six of the proposed turbines are visible at a prominent scale from this location, five of which are fully visible, either located on the slopes of the landform facing the viewer or just beyond a spur ridge. The turbines are well spaced, with a small degree of overlap that does not generate clutter in this close context. It is a clear and legible view of the turbines where they do not appear over-scaled or out of place in this broad landform and marginally productive land cover context. However they do impart a substantially greater intensity and scale of development on this rural scene.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium.</p>		
<p><b>Summary</b></p>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	<p>Visual Receptor Sensitivity</p>	<p>Visual Impact Magnitude</p>	<p><b>Significance of Visual Impact</b></p>
	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<p><b>VP20</b></p>	<p>N59 at Letterfore</p>	<p>1.9km</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>Representative of:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Community views;</li> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Major Routes;</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Receptor Sensitivity</b></p>	<p><b>High - Medium</b></p>		
<p><b>Existing View</b></p>	<p>The landform and landcover between the viewer and the site is dominated by bog vegetation and scrub, with occasional patches of trees. There are a variety of tree species and arrangements throughout the view, with mixed conifers and deciduous species in the foreground, and large areas of conifers to the east (right). In the distance, the landform and land cover change to steeper upland character, covered by moorland vegetation and rocky outcrops. To the west (left) of the view, the topography falls slightly before rising steeply to form the eastern end of the Connemara Mountains. To the east (right) of the view, the landform continues at a similar elevation and grade to the site, however is covered in a higher proportion of commercial conifer forestry.</p>		
<p><b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b></p>	<p>Five of the proposed turbines are visible from here at a prominent, but not spatially dominant scale with the westernmost turbines substantially screened behind foreground vegetation. The turbines present in a clear and legible manner where they nestle into a discrete section of landform and marginally productive land use pattern on the modest slopes that rise above the road. There is a clear distinction between the rugged and hilly site context and the smooth and more dramatic dome forms of the Maum Turk mountains that rise further to the east and this is reinforced by the dip in topography between them.</p>		

	<p>Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed turbines draw from the key aspects of visual amenity at this location.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High - medium	Medium	<b>Moderate</b>

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Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP21</b>	Leam W Road at Leam West	2.7km	N
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High-medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is representative of the residences which line the south/southwest shore of Lough Bofin, and as such, face the site. Views across to the proposed site are clear, as the lough fills the majority of the foreground and therefore prevents landform, vegetation or structures from providing screening. There is a small band of scrub and grass between the local road and the lake edge. This area features some localised hillocks and vegetation that occasionally screens the lough itself, but do little to screen the wider landscape. Additionally, the residences are generally sited the base of the surrounding landform and therefore will have further elevated/clear views. There is a division in landscape character across the northwest (left) and southeast (right) of the view. To the right, the dramatic upland areas at the periphery of Connemara (Lackavrea and the Maumturks) define the skyline, with a small window to the east allowing views through to Connemara Mountains (Lugnabrick tops). This window of visibility is contained to the right by the landform on which the site will be located, which continues, rising and falling across the view. The righthand side of the view features large areas of conifer forestry, down to the level areas surrounding the N59 in the far side of the lough. The conifers skirt around the base of the site, but the site itself is covered in moorland vegetation consistent with the upland areas in the background of the view. This emphasises the transition into/division between the two landscape types and degrees of scenic amenity.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>All six of the proposed turbines are fully revealed from here at a distinctive scale that makes them co-dominant in terms of visual presence within the wider context of the view. Aside from two instances of turbine overlap, the wind farm is seen in a highly legible manner where the depth of the layout is apparent and the profile of the turbines reflects the underlying terrain. There will be a distinct increase in the scale, extent and intensity of built development, but this</p>		

	<p>is of a form that is familiar in the wider study area to the south and transitional marginal landscapes like this throughout the country.</p> <p>In terms of context, the turbines serve to reinforce and book-end the transition from the settled managed landscape to the east into the wild and windswept Connemara landscape of mountains and coastal bog to the west. Furthermore, they do this with encroaching on the key amenity views further west. Whilst they are in direct alignment with views across Lough Bofin, they are a background of such views.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section</b> Error! Reference source not found. the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Medium	<b>Moderate</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP22</b>	N59 at Derryerglinna	3.2km	N
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>Major Routes;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High-medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is broad view divided across the midground by a band of conifer forestry which restricts views to the landscape between the viewer and the dramatic upland landform visible in the distance (Lackavrea and the Maumturks). There is a view to the south west over Lough Bofin and to the northeast of the road is a modest slope of moorland and forestry leading up to a low ridge. In general, the left of the view has higher scenic amenity than the right, due to the openness of view, and natural features (lough and mountains). The uphill side of the view is more varied and features higher degree of land management and built form. The upland area within which the site is located is an extension of that to the right of the viewer and covered across the midground by the aforementioned conifers.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>The turbines are equally split on either side of the small peak of the site, arranged in two groups of three. They are visually separated from the more scenic landscapes by the alignment of the road and associated structures. There is a sense that the proposed wind farm is contained within the near robust landscape context and discrete from the highly scenic and naturalistic context beyond the middle ground conifer slopes. While this is a scenic route, the attraction of the landscape is on the side of the road opposite to that of the proposal, further reducing the impact the proposal would have on the more</p>		

	sensitive aspects of this viewpoint (the scenic values). Therefore the magnitude of visual impact for this viewpoint is Medium-low.		
<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section</b> Error! Reference source not found. the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Medium - low	<b>Moderate</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP23</b>	Quiet Man Bridge	4.5km	N/NW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key Views (from features of national or international importance);</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> <li>• Amenity and heritage features;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This iconic view is framed towards the Maumturk Mountains and upland areas in the north of the study area. Used within the 1950's movie 'The Quiet Man', the bridge and backdrop view is frequently visited and has a dedicated car park along the side of the narrow local road that approaches it. The view is aligned along Lough Bofin, with trees on either side serving to frame the view and screen the wider midground landscape except for the immediate shoreline. This also results in screening of a high degree of the immediate landscape. The near forested slopes to the right emerge from behind foreground riparian woodland and descend towards the far end of Lough Bofin. To the left there are glimpses of houses along the lake, however these are substantially screened and fit the local vernacular, therefore they do not detract from the quality of the view.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>The partial blade sets of three of the proposed turbines will rise just above the descending middle ground ridge at the right hand side of the framed view. They are seen at a noticeable, but not prominent scale though they are a distinctive built feature within the channelled view . They are also a departure from the naturalistic and timeless features of the view, which makes them all the more conspicuous. Two of the turbines overlap with each other and all of their blade sets will rotate against the intervening skyline ridge causing a degree of visual clutter / ambiguity.</p> <p>In terms of this specific and iconic scene, the turbines are peripheral to the main features being Lough Bofin and the Connemara Mountains beyond. However, they do represent some intrusion on that view and an introduction of new built features into a scene presenting only a modest scale and intensity of human intervention.</p>		

	Despite this being a relatively limited view of the overall development, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium.		
<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Medium	<b>Substantial-moderate</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP24</b>	Local road near Quiet Man Bridge at Derryerglinna	4.4km	N/NW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> <li>• Amenity and heritage features;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High-medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is the designated Scenic View 21 from the Galway CDP. Although the direction of the scenic view is towards the southwest. The designated viewpoint is positioned to view the bridge and info panel and bridge from the parking and seating area. Therefore, this view is generally an extension of VP23, as visitors who are intending to visit VP23/the Quiet Man Bridge, will likely park and experience this view as their initial experience. However this view is of lower sensitivity/priority due to not being the 'iconic' backdrop shot from the Quiet Man movie. The View is contained by the upland areas above the national road to the northeast, and the vegetation surrounding the bridge and road to the west. There are views through to the mountains and across Lough Boffin, interrupted only by a single power pole as the vegetation across the fore and midground is limited to pasture and lakeside scrub.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>The partial blade sets of three turbines and the blade tips of two others will penetrate just above the intervening skyline ridge within the marginally productive middle ground context, peripheral to the right of the main aspect of the view along Lough Bofin towards the distant Connemara Mountains. In this regard they read as more a part of the robust for-to-middle ground context than the more naturalist and dramatic background context. As with VP 23, the values of the view are tied to the nostalgic sense of 'old Ireland' presented by 'The Quiet Man' movie, however, this is not the specific view and instead serves to introduce the turbines to the viewer in a less sensitive pre-emptive context. Nonetheless, the introduction of modern moving structure slightly undermines the values associated with this locale by bringing a sense of modernity and reducing the extent of the view which meets the character expected by visitors.</p> <p>On balance of the factors outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Medium-low.</p>		

<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Medium-low	<b>Moderate</b>

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Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP25</b>	Oughterard Pier	10.4km	NW
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community views;</li> <li>Amenity and heritage features;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High-medium</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	<p>This view is a wide and open view across Lough Corrib from Oughterard Pier and launching ramp. This is the destination of a variety of recreational activities, and features picnic and parking areas for this reason. The location allows views across Lough Corrib and islands to the northeast; however, the captured view is focused along its western shoreline for the purpose of this assessment. The foreground features the pier structure, before the middle of the view transitions to open water. The pier itself is the immediate focus of the view followed by the open waters of the lough and then a modest elongated ridge, which substantially contains the view to the northwest. The top of the rolling landform is blanketed by conifer forestry, which when combined with the visible built form and varied landuse up the lakeshore, serves to define the surroundings as a populated and managed landscape. By contrast the Connemara mountains can be seen in the far distance to the north.</p>		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>The only aspect of the proposed development which is visible from this location is the upper section of the blades of a single turbine. The blade will be seen at a very small-scale and with a low degree of contrast against the sky from this considerable distance. Indeed it will be barely noticeable in this broad context which is focussed on the intervening lough. Thus, the magnitude of impact is deemed to be Negligible.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Negligible	<b>Imperceptible</b>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP26	Oughterard Graveyard on N59	10.9km	NW
Representative of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population centre</li> </ul>		
Receptor Sensitivity	Medium		
Existing View	<p>This view is located within Oughterard graveyard, and is a relatively enclosed view due to structures and vegetation. The foreground is defined by the graveyard itself, lined at the far side by scrubby vegetation and with the ruins of a church in the intervening ground. Even from this elevated location within the context of Oughterard, views towards the site are limited, and there is only a couple of small sections of distant upland landform visible. In the wider context there were views across Lough Corrib, however these are out of field of view when looking in the direction of the site.</p>		
Visual Impact of proposed wind farm	<p>The proposed turbines are not visible in this location due to being screened by a combination of vegetation and the ruin in the foreground. At most, as seen in the wireframe there will be one blade tip visible at a long distance. Therefore, the magnitude of visual impact is rated Negligible.</p>		
Summary	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	Significance of Visual Impact
	Medium	Negligible	Imperceptible

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
VP27	R336 south of Lough Aughawoolia	7.6km	NE
Representative of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> </ul>		
Receptor Sensitivity	High-medium		
Existing View	<p>This view is located along the R336 as it crosses the wild rolling topography of the Connemara coastal bog, which is interspersed by lakes, rocky outcrops and sparse vegetation. Running across the view just beyond Lough Aughawoolia is a line of high voltage pylons to the fore of rugged moorland slopes. In a broad saddle can be seen the partly forested slopes of another ridge in the far distance.</p>		

<p><b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b></p>	<p>All of the proposed turbines will be visible through the intervening saddle to the northeast, but only one sit atop the distant ridgeline. The others present as partial blade sets above the intervening ridge backed by both sky and terrain in the distant setting. Whilst this complexity of visibility diminishes the visual presence of the proposed turbines, the view is slightly ambiguous and this is added to by overlapping in perspective with a foreground electricity pylon. Aside from some distant visual clutter and the introduction of a new form of built development within this semi-naturalistic scene, the proposed turbines only make a modest contribution to the overall view without unduly detracting from the surrounding setting.</p> <p>On balance of the factors outlined above, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low</p>		
<p><b>Summary</b></p>	<p>Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.</p>		
	<p>Visual Receptor Sensitivity</p>	<p>Visual Impact Magnitude</p>	<p><b>Significance of Visual Impact</b></p>
	<p>High-medium</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p><b>Slight</b></p>

Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<p><b>VP28</b></p>	<p>Wild Atlantic Way/R340 at Lough Ahalia South</p>	<p>11.2km</p>	<p>NE</p>
<p><b>Representative of:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Receptor Sensitivity</b></p>	<p><b>High - medium</b></p>		
<p><b>Existing View</b></p>	<p>This view is a part of the Wild Atlantic Way as it traces the coastline between Clifden and Galway. It has a similar context and orientation to VP27, but is further away from the site and there is also a line of high-voltage electricity pylons crossing the foreground.</p>		
<p><b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b></p>	<p>As with VP27, the proposed turbines can be seen though a low section of intervening topography and are slightly more exposed in that all of the blade sets are fully visible. Most of the blade sets will be seen with a low degree of contrast against a backdrop of sky but some sections will present with greater contrast against terrain. The turbines are a distinctive feature even at this considerable distance, but they appear in a robust section of the view away from distinctive upland areas and the river that focusses attention in the foreground to the west of the depicted view.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low.</p>		

<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High-medium	Low	<b>Slight</b>

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Viewshed Reference Point		Viewing distance	Direction of View
<b>VP29</b>	R300 at Kilbride, Lough Mask	11.1km	N
<b>Representative of:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Routes and Views;</li> <li>• Local Community views;</li> </ul>		
<b>Receptor Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>		
<b>Existing View</b>	This is a broad panoramic vista across the western arm of Lough Mask just inside the County Mayo border. The foreground consists of marginal farmland contained within dry stone walls leading gently down to the waters edge. Beyond the middle-ground lough is opposing shores of patchwork farmland leading up to more naturalistic moorland on upland hills that frame a snippet of longer distance visibility of forested terrain rising just above a low saddle between the aforementioned hills.		
<b>Visual Impact of proposed wind farm</b>	<p>One of the proposed turbines is fully revealed along with the partial blade sets of two others and blade tips of two more. They can be seen through the framed saddle view atop the distance ridge with a low degree of contrast against the sky. They are seen amongst dwellings and agricultural buildings that line the intervening saddle and although this generates a minor degree of clutter is also a developed portion of the semi-naturalistic view. The turbines are noticeable, but only as a distant background feature that does not unduly draw from the amenity of this lakeside vista.</p> <p>Overall, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be Low.</p>		
<b>Summary</b>	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b> the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.		
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	<b>Significance of Visual Impact</b>
	High	Low	<b>Moderate-slight</b>