

Appendix 14-2 Landscape Character Area Assessment Tables

Proposed Glenora Wind Farm





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1.1

1. LANDSCAPE CHARCTER ASSESSMENT TABLES

Note: The cumulative effects on landscape character associated with other existing, permitted and proposed wind farms located within the LVIA Study Area and the Proposed Development are included in the Residual Effect determination given for each LCU. These wind farms are categorised according to three scenarios (Existing, Do-Nothing Scenario, and Proposed) that are more fully outlined in Section 13.6 of the EIAR. However, it is noted that all cumulative effects on landscape character are incorporated in the residual effect determined for each LCU assessed below.

County Mayo

LCU E – North Mayo I	Mountain Moorland
Distance from site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCU	18 No. proposed turbines are located within this LCU.
LCU Key Characteristics	Description: This area is the mountainous spine of northern Mayo and can be characterised as a barren montaine, moorland with steep flowing slopes. This mountain range is a focal point for northern Mayo, which makes up the primary boundary determinant for this LCU. Land Uses: The main agricultural activity in the area is livestock production. Although peat bogs cover most of the area, agricultural and pasture lands, together with conifer and broad-leafed forests, are significant land uses in the region.
	**Steep Slopes: Steeply sloping land provides both a potentially increased elevation and an immediate back drop for development, intensifying its visual prominence over greater distances, therefore is sensitive to development that might impact on that character. **Prominent Ridge Lines: These occur as either primary ridgelines (visible only against the sky from any prospect) or secondary ridgelines (visible at least from some prospects below a distant primary ridge line). Ridge lines perform the important roles of providing an area with its identity, acting as dominant landscape focal points, and defining the extent of visual catchments. As with other natural linear features such as shorelines it is important that development does not interrupt the integrity of primary ridgelines. **Smooth Terrain: Smooth terrain, as is characteristic of this unit, allows vistas over long distances against a planar surface without breaking up fore and middle ground. In such terrain, distances can appear shorter and development closer or larger. As a result, development can have a disproportionate visual impact in such terrain, due to an inherent inability to be absorbed, physically or
	visually. Low Vegetation: Predominantly low vegetation as represented in this unit by Moorland grasses, therefore allowing long distance



	visibility. This inability to absorb development identifies low
	vegetation as a critical landscape factor."
Visibility within LCU	The ZTV indicates that there is full and partial theoretical visibility within this LCU within 5km of the Proposed Development Site. There is mainly no theoretical visibility outside of 5km although there are some small patches of full theoretical visibility throughout. Viewpoint 4 is located within this LCU.
Cumulative Context	Existing: There are 2 no. turbines of the existing Oweninny 2 wind farm located within this LCU. All existing Oweninny 1 turbines are visible from locations within this LCU.
	Do-Nothing Scenario: The permitted ABO Sheskin wind farm will be visible from locations within this LCU.
	Proposed: The proposed Sheskin South turbines are located within this LCU, located approximately 8.8km southwest of the nearest proposed turbine located within this LCU. The proposed Oweninny 3 wind turbines from LCU F (east of this LCU) will also be visible from locations within this LCU.
	The proposed Glenora turbines are located approximately 9km to the northeast of these other wind farms, with substantial surrounding topography that limits areas where the Proposed Development will be seen within the same viewshed as the other wind farms located within or adjacent to this LCU.
Cumulative Landscape Status	2. Landscape character area with occasional wind turbines in it and/or intervisible in another landscape character area/s. While there are turbines visible from locations within LCU E, primarily to LCU F to the east and
(Do-Nothing Scenario)	south, these are well screened by the surrounding topography. LCU E is large and there are vast areas without turbines or where no turbines are visible. Turbines are not a defining characteristic of the landscape. It is noted that the proposed Sheskin South development is also located within this LCU, which, if permitted would mean that the baseline status of this LCU would be '3. Landscape character area with wind turbines'.
Cumulative Landscape Effects	The Proposed Development will change the status identified above to '3. Landscape character area with wind turbines.' However, it is noted that the topography surrounding the site provides screening of the proposed turbines from much of the LCU. The ZTV and on-site appraisal indicate that visibility is primarily limited to within 5km of the proposed turbines, with the remainder of this large LCU having no theoretical visibility. This area in close proximity to the Proposed Development is also remote therefore has few receptors. As a whole, the addition of the proposed Glenora turbines will not substantially add to the cumulative impact on the key landscape characteristics of this LCU, given the restricted visibility of the Proposed Development and the overall size and character of the LCU.
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Farm Development	This LCU contains a scenic route to the south as well as several Visually Vulnerable Areas. The area is of high scenic quality due to the visual attractiveness of the landscape and prominent ridgelines which occupy the area.
	Areas within this LCU are designated within the WES as areas of 'Open to Consideration' and 'Tier 1 Preferred (Large Wind Farms)'. Open to



	Consideration is described in the MCDP as "areas which may be considered for wind farms or small clusters of wind turbines but where the visual impact on sensitive or vulnerable landscapes, listed highly scenic routes, scenic routes, scenic viewing points and scenic routes will be principal consideration". Areas of Tier 1 Preferred (Large Wind Farms) is described as "areas in which the potential for large wind farms is greatest". Therefore, there is clearly some level of wind energy development deemed acceptable in this LCU. Overall, the sensitivity assigned to this area is considered Medium for wind farm development.
Magnitude of Change	"Moderate - A more limited loss of or change to landscape features over a medium extent which will result in some change to landscape features and aesthetics. Could include the addition of some new uncharacteristic features or elements that would lead to the potential for change in landscape character in a localised area or part of a landscape character area. Would include moderate effects on the overall landscape character that do not affect key characteristics. The effects could be long to medium term and/or partially reversible." (Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology)
Significance of Effect	Medium x Moderate = Moderate/Minor = Moderate (EPA, 2022) An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
Mitigation Factors	 Siting and design were developed for Mountain Moorland landscape character types which this LCU is generally comprised of. Therefore, the layout of the wind farm is considered aligned with the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006, DoEHLG) in relation to the predominant landscape type of the LCU. The topography of the site and surrounds will screen the majority of the turbines from locations within this LCU, with full theoretical visibility restricted to locations within close proximity to the site, and large areas of the LCU having no theoretical visibility.
Residual Effect (incl. mitigating factors)	Moderate (EPA, 2022) An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.

5



LCU F - North Mayo Inland Bog Basin		
Distance from site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCU	4 No. proposed turbines are located within this LCU.	
LCU Key Characteristics	Description: This is a large bog area of some 300 square kilometres surrounded to the north, west and south by mountains giving it the appearance of a lowland basin. Wind farms occupy the northern vista. Land Uses: The area is mainly covered by peat bog. However, agricultural lands with significant areas of natural vegetation, conifer forests and pasturelands are the land uses in the unit. Some natural grassland areas remain unaltered. Critical Landscape Factors (Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo):	
	 "Smooth Terrain: Smooth terrain, as is characteristic of this unit, allows vistas over long distances against a planar surface without breaking up fore and middle ground. In such terrain, distances can appear shorter and development closer or larger. As a result, development can have a disproportionate visual impact in such terrain, due to an inherent inability to be absorbed, physically or visually. Low Vegetation: Predominantly low vegetation as represented in this unit by Moorland grasses, therefore allowing long distance visibility. This inability to absorb development identifies low vegetation as a critical landscape factor." 	
Visibility within LCU	Predominantly widespread full visibility to the west and south with larger areas of partial visibility to the northeast. Viewpoints 10, 5, 6, and 8 are located within this LCU. On site visibility closely matches the theoretical visibility in this LCU given the lack of tall features (trees, built infrastructure) within the LCU. In general, low lying land cover and the flat topography allows for long-ranging views throughout this LCU.	
Cumulative Context	This LCU contains large areas designated as <i>'Consented'</i> , <i>'Tier 1 – Preferred'</i> and <i>'Tier 2 – Open to Consideration'</i> in the Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo (RES), more so than any other LCU within Co. Mayo. As a result, there are 6 No. existing, permitted or proposed wind farms within this LCU. All other wind farms are located to the south and southwest of the proposed turbines, with the closest turbine, from the ABO Sheskin Wind Farm located approximately 7km away. Existing: The existing Bellacorrick, Oweninny 1, and Oweninny 2 wind farms are located within this LCU. Do-Nothing Scenario: The permitted ABO Sheskin wind farm will be located within this LCU in a Do-Nothing Scenario, 7.5km southwest of the proposed Glenora turbines. Proposed: the proposed Oweninny 3 wind farm and the proposed Sheskin South wind farm are also located within this LCU.	



Cumulative Landscape Status	4. Wind turbine landscape
(Do-Nothing Scenario)	
Cumulative Landscape Effects	The Proposed Development will slightly add to the cumulative landscape effects and extend the area of wind farm development to the north, but will not change the status identified above. There are already a large number of existing and permitted wind farms within this LCU and the addition of the proposed Glenora turbines will not change the cumulative landscape status given that there are large areas of the LCU to the south where there are no turbines.
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Farm Development	This LCU includes several Visually Vulnerable Areas-waterways located throughout. This LCU contains large areas designated as <i>'Consented'</i> , <i>'Tier 1 – Preferred'</i> and <i>'Tier 2 – Open to Consideration'</i> in the Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo 2011-2020 (RES), more so than any other LCU within Co. Mayo. Several large wind farms occupy the northern vista, therefore this LCU is assigned a Low landscape sensitivity.
Magnitude of Change	"Slight: The loss of or change to landscape features of limited extent, or changes to landscape character in smaller areas. Changes would not affect key characteristics. The addition of any new features or elements to the landscape would only result in low-level changes to the overall aesthetics of the landscapes. Changes to the landscape are more evident at a local level and not over a wide geographical area. The effects could potentially be medium to short term and/or reversible." (Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology)
Significance of Effect	Low x Slight = Minor/Negligible = Not Significant (EPA, 2022) An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
Mitigation Factors	 Siting and design were developed for Mountain Moorland landscape character types which this LCU is generally comprised of. Therefore, the layout of the Proposed Development is considered aligned with the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006, DoEHLG) in relation to the predominant landscape type of the LCU. The Do-Nothing Scenario for this LCU contains a large number of other wind farm developments, which appear more visually prominent than the Proposed Development from most locations within this LCU, therefore reducing the relative impact on the landscape character that the proposed Glenora turbines will have. Although, it is noted that the addition of the Proposed Development does increase the area of wind farm development to the northern parts of the LCU, with overlap of turbine components and visual stacking occurring here. The level of elevation of the proposed turbines is relatively lower than the surrounding topography which reduces the extent to which the turbines are visible, and the extent to which they interfere with views with visually vulnerable ridgelines, a key characteristic of this LCU.

7



Residual Effect (incl.	Not Significant (EPA, 2022)
mitigating factors)	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the
	environment but without significant consequences.

LCU D - North Coast Plateaux		
Distance from site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCU	This LCU is approximately 2.6 kilometres away from the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point, and 21 kilometres at its furthest.	
LCU Key Characteristics	Description: This is a thin strip of often steeply sloping terrain, which has a combination of pasture and moorland on its planar seaward slopes above sea cliffs and abrupt gullies. The unit and coastline runs east-west and provides vistas of the sea to the north. Land Uses: Peat bogs and small patches of natural grassland dominate this area. The agricultural potential of the area is revealed by occasional pasturelands but with significant areas of natural vegetation. Critical Landscape Factors (Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo): "Smooth Terrain: Smooth terrain, as is characteristic of this unit, allows vistas over long distances against a planar surface without breaking up fore and middle ground. In such terrain, distances can appear shorter and development closer or larger. As a result, development can have a disproportionate visual impact in such terrain, due to an inherent inability to be absorbed, physically or visually. Low Vegetation: Predominantly low vegetation as represented in this unit by Moorland grasses, therefore allowing long distance visibility. This inability to absorb development identifies low vegetation as a critical landscape factor. Elevated Coastal Vistas: Due to the uncomplicated straight arrangement of this coast, and the elevated road level, stunning vistas of a considerable distance along the coastline are available. The main concern for natural linear features such as coastlines and ridgelines is to avoid penetration by development that will interrupt and reduce the integrity of such elements."	
Visibility within LCU	Mainly partial to no theoretical visibility, with an area of full theoretical visibility indicated in the eastern part of this LCA near Downpatrick Head. Viewpoints 1, 3, 11 and 7 are located within this LCU.	
Cumulative Context	There are no existing, permitted or proposed wind farms within this LCU and wind turbines outside this LCU, if visible will be at considerable distances.	
Cumulative Landscape Status	1. Landscape character area with no wind turbines.	



(Do-Nothing Scenario)	
Cumulative Landscape Effects	The Proposed Development will slightly add to the cumulative landscape effects and change the status of the LCU to '2. Landscape character area with occasional wind turbines in it and/or intervisible in another landscape character area/s'. However, turbines will only be seen in some long-range views of turbines and this will only occur in a small part of this LCU.
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Farm Development	This LCU contains two designated scenic routes and views as well as Visually Vulnerable Areas, including the scenic coastline of north Mayo. Therefore, the LCU is assigned a High landscape sensitivity to wind farm development.
Magnitude of Change	"Slight - The loss of or change to landscape features of limited extent, or changes to landscape character in smaller areas. Changes would not affect key characteristics. The addition of any new features or elements to the landscape would only result in low-level changes to the overall aesthetics of the landscapes. Changes to the landscape are more evident at a local level and not over a wide geographical area. The effects could potentially be medium to short term and/or reversible." (Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology)
Significance of Effect	High x Slight = Minor = Moderate (EPA, 2022) An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
Mitigation Factors	 There is no theoretical visibility from the majority of this LCU, including from the Ceide Fields, a highly sensitive visual receptor within the LCU. Vegetation, such as mature treelines and hedgerows limits visibility in many places. The intervening distance between the proposed turbines and areas where theoretical visibility occurs will reduce the visual prominence of the turbines in terms of their horizontal and vertical extent in any views, turbines will only be seen in some long-range views of turbines and this will only occur in a small part of this LCU.
Residual Effect (incl. mitigating factors)	Moderate (EPA, 2022) An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.



LCU G – North Mayo	Drumlins
Distance from site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCU	This LCU is approximately 3.6 kilometres away from the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point, and 31.5 kilometres at its furthest.
LCU Key Characteristics	Description: This area of drumlin topography contains mild low lying lakeland drumlins at the southern end merging into similar coastal topography in the north-east surrounding Killala Bay. Steeper elevations occur in the north-west and east at Ox Mountains to the east. Land Uses: The main agricultural activity in this area is livestock production. The unit is dominated by extensive pasturelands and some pockets of peat bog. The region contains the urban settlement of Ballina. Critical Landscape Factors (Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo): "Undulating Topography: Mildly undulating topography as represented in this character unit by glacial drumlins has the ability to both shelter and absorbs the visual impact of development. Firstly, the physical shielding of a built form within the lee of hill where it does not break the skyline renders it visually unobtrusive and reflective of landscape scale. Secondly, the dynamic and complex nature of undulating country provides fore, middle, and distant ground to a vista that helps to provide a realistic scale and visual containment not available in open country. Shelter Vegetation: Shelter vegetation has a shielding and absorbing quality in landscape terms. It can provide a natural visual barrier and also adds to the complexity of a vista, breaking it up to provide scale and containment for built forms. Prominent Ridge Lines: These occur as either primary ridgelines (visible only against the sky from any prospect) or secondary ridgelines (visible at least from some prospects below a distant primary ridge line). In this area both primary and significant secondary ridgelines are located to the east as part of the Ox Mountains. Ridge lines perform the important roles of providing an area with its identity, acting as dominant landscape focal points, and defining the extent of visual catchments. Localised Lake Vistas: This character unit envelops a large part of Lough Conn, around the shores of which, several major roads pass. Due to the low-lying nature of lakeland env
Visibility within LCU	Mostly full theoretical visibility in this LCU, with sections of partial or no visibility in the north and southwest. Viewpoint 9 is located within this LCU and viewpoints 5 and 6 are located close to the western border of the LCU.
Cumulative Baseline	Existing: The existing Killala turbines are located within the north-eastern part of this LCU. There is also visibility of the existing Oweninny 1 and Oweninny 2 wind farms in the background of views from within parts of this LCU, particularly the northwest.



Cumulative Landscape Status (Do-Nothing	Do Nothing Scenario: The permitted ABO Sheskin turbines are also potentially visible in the background of views from within parts of this LCU, particularly the northwest. Proposed: The Sheskin South wind turbines and the proposed Oweninny 3 turbines, are also potentially visible in the background of views from within parts of this LCU, particularly the northwest. 2. Landscape character area with occasional wind turbines in it and/or intervisible in another landscape character area/s.
Scenario)	
Cumulative Landscape Effects	The Proposed Development will slightly add to the cumulative landscape effects, but not change the status identified above, given that the proposed turbines are located a substantial distance, from the existing turbines within this LCU.
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Farm Development	This LCU contains several Visually Vulnerable Areas - waterways and designated scenic routes and views in the south around Lough Conn. This LCU is located within the WES areas of 'Open to Consideration' and 'Tier 1 Preferred (Large Wind Farms)'. Open to Consideration is identified in the MCDP as "areas which may be considered for wind farms or small clusters of wind turbines but where the visual impact on sensitive or vulnerable landscapes, listed highly scenic routes, scenic routes, scenic viewing points and scenic routes will be principal consideration". Areas of Tier 1 Preferred (Large Wind Farms) is described as "areas in which the potential for large wind farms is greatest". Therefore, the LCU is assigned a Medium landscape sensitivity to wind farm development.
Magnitude of Change	"Slight - The loss of or change to landscape features of limited extent, or changes to landscape character in smaller areas. Changes would not affect key characteristics. The addition of any new features or elements to the landscape would only result in low-level changes to the overall aesthetics of the landscapes. Changes to the landscape are more evident at a local level and not over a wide geographical area. The effects could potentially be medium to short term and/or reversible." (Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology)
Significance of Effect	Medium x Slight = Minor = Slight (EPA, 2022) An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities
Mitigation Factors	 The intervening distance between the proposed turbines and areas where theoretical visibility occurs will reduce the visual prominence of the turbines in terms of their horizontal and vertical extent in any views. The shelter vegetation described above in the critical landscape factors will provide additional screening of the proposed turbines from large parts of this LCU, particularly given the distance of the turbines from large parts of this LCU.



Residual Effect (incl.	Slight (EPA, 2022)
mitigating factors)	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the
	environment without affecting its sensitivities



LCU C - North-West Coastal Bog	
Distance from site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCU	This LCU is approximately 4.2 kilometres away from the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point, and 35.5 kilometres at its furthest.
LCU Key Characteristics	Description : This area is the low-lying bog strip located between the western coastline and the Beg Range to the east. It has a homogenous, exposed, moorland appearance throughout.
	Land Uses: Although peat bogs cover most of the area to the north-west of the County, the land is mainly used for pasture, i.e. livestock production. Natural grasslands and transitional woodland scrub patches occur throughout the major land cover types.
	Critical Landscape Factors (Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo):
	 "Smooth Terrain: Smooth terrain, as is characteristic of this unit, allows vistas over long distances against a planar surface without breaking up fore and middle ground. In such terrain, distances can appear shorter and development closer or larger. As a result, development can have a disproportionate visual impact in such terrain, due to an inherent inability to be absorbed, physically or visually. Low Vegetation: Predominantly low vegetation as represented in this unit by Moorland grasses, therefore allowing long distance visibility. This inability to absorb development identifies low vegetation as a critical landscape factor."
Visibility within LCU	Mainly partial to no theoretical visibility, with an area of full theoretical visibility indicated in the central part of this LCU. Viewpoint 2 is located within close proximity to the border of this LCU. Visibility of the Proposed Development is somewhat constrained from this LCU given the intervening distance from the Proposed Development and the presence of commercial forestry and other vegetational elements along the roadside.
Cumulative Context	There are no existing, permitted or proposed wind farms within the LVIA Study Area within this LCU and wind turbines outside this LCU, if visible will be at considerable distances.
	Existing: The existing Oweninny 1 and Oweninny 2 wind turbines can be seen between 8-15km away from parts of this LCU.
	Do Nothing: The permitted ABO Sheskin wind farm will likely be visible adjacent to the Oweninny 2 wind farm.
	Proposed: The proposed Sheskin South wind farm will also likely be similar visible alongside the Oweninny 1 and Oweninny 2 wind farms, although, again in the background of views.
Cumulative Landscape Status	2. Landscape character area with occasional wind turbines in it and/or intervisible in another landscape character area/s
(Do-Nothing Scenario)	



Cumulative	The Proposed Development will slightly add to the cumulative landscape
Landscape Effects	The Proposed Development will slightly add to the cumulative landscape effects, but not change the status identified above.
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Farm Development	This LCU contains some designated scenic routes and views to the southwest and northeast and Visually Vulnerable Areas throughout. Carrowmore Lake is a scenic landscape setting and is located in the southern boundary of this LCU. This LCU is located within the WES areas of 'Open to Consideration' and 'Tier 1 Preferred (Large Wind Farms)'. Open to Consideration is identified in the MCDP as "areas which may be considered for wind farms or small clusters of wind turbines but where the visual impact on sensitive or vulnerable landscapes, listed highly scenic routes, scenic routes, scenic viewing points and scenic routes will be principal consideration". Areas of Tier 1 Preferred (Large Wind Farms) is described as "areas in which the potential for large wind farms is greatest". Therefore, the LCU is assigned a Medium landscape sensitivity to wind farm development.
Magnitude of Change	"Slight - The loss of or change to landscape features of limited extent, or changes to landscape character in smaller areas. Changes would not affect key characteristics. The addition of any new features or elements to the landscape would only result in low-level changes to the overall aesthetics of the landscapes. Changes to the landscape are more evident at a local level and not over a wide geographical area. The effects could potentially be medium to short term and/or reversible." (Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology)
Significance of Effect	Medium x Slight = Minor = Slight (EPA, 2022) An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities
Mitigation Factors	 There is only partial theoretical visibility indicated from the majority of the areas with theoretical visibility within this LCU, with relatively small areas where there is full theoretical visibility. In addition, large areas of the LCU have no theoretical visibility. The intervening distance between the proposed turbines and areas where theoretical visibility occurs will reduce the visual prominence of the turbines in terms of their horizontal and vertical extent in any views.
Residual Effect (incl. mitigating factors)	Slight (EPA, 2022) An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities

14