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## APPENDIX 13-2

### LCA ASSESSMENT TABLES



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1.

# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA (LCA) ASSESSMENT TABLES

As part of the LVIA conducted in Chapter 13 Landscape and Visual of this EIAR, this appendix comprises the comprehensive impact assessment addressing potential effects of the proposed Gannow Renewable Energy Development, Co. Galway (the “Proposed Project”) on the landscape character of four designated LCAs identified from the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (GCDP) within the 15km LCA Study Area (refer to Section 1.4.2 in *Appendix 13-1: LVIA Methodology*):

- > G-LCU-5e: Northern River Clare Basin;
- > G-LCU-5f: North Loughrea;
- > G-LCU-6b: Southern River Clare Basin;
- > G-LCU-6e: South Loughrea.

These designated landscape areas are termed Landscape Character Units (LCUs) by the GCDP and were scoped in for assessment in Section 13.4.2.3 Preliminary Analysis of LCUs for Assessment in Chapter 13.

The impact assessment for each LCU is set out in individual tables below. In the tables, the discussion of theoretical visibility in each LCU refers to Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping as outlined in the LVIA Chapter 13, Section 13.3 Visibility of the Proposed Project. It is recommended that the impact assessments in this appendix are read in conjunction with the following figures in Chapter 13:

- > Figure 13-7: Designated LCAs Map;
- > Figure 13-8: Designated LCAs Map & ZTV.

The above maps illustrate the boundary of each LCU and shows the ZTV extending to 15km from the proposed turbines, marking the LCA Study Area for the assessment of effects on designated LCUs; the brief and full methodologies for determining the LCA Study Area boundary are provided respectively in Section 13.2.2 Scope and Definition of LVIA Study Area in Chapter 13 and in Section 1.4 of the same name in *Appendix 13-1*.

**‘Significance of Effect’ ratings in the tables below.** The classification definitions of the different ratings for the significance of effects are taken from the *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* published by the Environmental Protection Agency of Ireland (EPA)(2022); refer to *Appendix 13-1*, Section 1.7.5 Landscape Effects Assessment Matrix.

1.1

## County Galway

In the tables of this section, reference is made to the following policy documents and Chapter 13 figure which informed the assessment of LCUs:

- Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (GCDP);
- GCDP Appendix 1: Renewable Energy Strategy (a.k.a. Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy or LARES);
- GCDP Appendix 4: Landscape Character Assessment;
- Figure 13-6 in Chapter 13 showing the LARES wind energy strategy of selected relevant LCU areas.

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1.1.1

### LCU-5e: Northern River Clare Basin

| Galway LCU-5e: Northern River Clare Basin                     |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Map Ref.</b>   | G-LCU-5e   |
| <b>Distance from the Site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCA</b> | At its closest point, G-LCU-5e is located approx. 719m west of the proposed turbines (T01). The LCU contains 8.7km of the Proposed Grid Connection underground electrical cable route.   |
| <b>LCU Key Characteristics</b>                                | <p>From the GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i> (p.20):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>'Extensive, largely level plain with low enclosure;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>A long-settled working landscape of large regular stone-walled fields;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Extensive areas of bog in east;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Transition zone from bog areas to east'.</i></li> </ul> <p>LCU-5e is part of the broader LCT 'North Galway Complex Landscape' which has characteristics of (GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i>, p.11):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>'Agriculture, scattered forestry and associated field patterns are very mixed;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>It has a dense network of smaller settlements and roads, though at a lower density than the southern plains of the county;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Open areas around bogs produce extensive sky views and the area that are free from light pollution;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Principal Characteristic: Very large and abrupt changes of character over very short distances, especially around bogs;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Significance: Many areas have local sensitivities – often on account of local amenities or historic sites;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Sensitivities: Open countryside offers frequent extensive panoramic views from local highpoints'.</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>Wind Energy Strategy Classifications within LCU</b>        | <p>From the LARES (p.83-84); see Fig.13-6 in Chapter 13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Primarily 'Generally to be Discouraged';</li> <li>➤ Moderate areas of 'Open to Consideration';</li> <li>➤ Small areas of 'Not Normally Permissible'.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development</b>       | Sensitivity = Low.   |

| Galway LCU-5e: Northern River Clare Basin                     |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>Rationale: The entirety of LCU-5e falls within land area classified by the GCDP as Low landscape sensitivity. Of the land areas classified as unfavourable to wind energy development, most are located greater than 5km from the proposed turbines. On balance, the sensitivity of LCU-5e to wind energy development is deemed to be 'Low'.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 Sensitivity of Landscape Character Areas in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |
| <b>Visibility of the Proposed Project from within the LCU</b> | <p>Actual visibility is primarily full, with intermittent views screened by mature vegetation and built structures. Within 5km, there is one small patch of no visibility on the north-facing aspect of the slightly elevated hill called Knockaboy, 3.2km north of proposed turbine T03.</p> <p>From 5-20km, theoretical visibility is primarily full with scattered linear patches of partial theoretical and no visibility in the north and north-eastern parts of the LCU. This LCU contains 8.7km of the Proposed Grid Connection underground electrical cable route.</p> <p>Viewpoints VP03 and VP08 are located within this LCU.</p>  |
| <b>Cumulative Effects</b>                                     | <p>The Proposed Cooloo Wind Farm is located within this LCU at the farthest north edge of the LCA Study Area, consisting of 9 no. turbines located approximately 18.4km north of the Proposed Wind Farm site. There are very few locations within LCU-5e and the LCA Study Area where the proposed turbines and Proposed Cooloo Wind Farm are visible at the same time. In cases where both wind farms may be visible, each would be framed in the background of views, owing to the great distance between them.</p> <p>Considering the currently available data on cumulative wind farms in the study area, overall, no cumulative effects are expected to arise on the landscape character of LCU-5e.</p>   |
| <b>Magnitude of Change</b>                                    | <p><b>Magnitude = Slight</b></p> <p>Rationale: Changes to landscape features along the local road network will occur as a result of the Proposed Grid Connection; however, as the route is underground, the changes to landscape features will be short-term and localised to the low-trafficked road network. Panoramic views of the open countryside from the southern part of LCU-5e will be affected by its close proximity to the proposed turbines, though the number of proposed turbines is low and the long-term changes to views are considered reversible. On balance, the magnitude of change to LCU-5e is deemed to be 'Slight'.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, refer to Section 1.7.4 Magnitude of Landscape Change in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p> |
| <b>Significance of Effect</b>                                 | <p><b>Low × Slight = Minor/Negligible = 'Not Significant' (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p>For the definition of this initial rating, refer to Section 1.7.5 Landscape Effects Matrix in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>  |

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| Galway LCU-5e: Northern River Clare Basin |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Mitigation Factors</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Proposed Grid Connection is to be underground, thus changes to the physical fabric of the landscape will be short-term and localised along low-trafficked local road networks only during the construction phase;</li> <li>➤ In most areas of LCU-5e, the proposed turbines will be seen as a very small background feature, so the highest effects on landscape character (i.e. views of open countryside) will be localised to the southern part of the LCU in close proximity to the site (i.e. within 5km of proposed turbines);</li> <li>➤ Open areas around bogs with no light pollution will not be affected by the Proposed Project;</li> <li>➤ Key landscape characteristics of the LCU including views of its stone-walled fields are not affected by the Proposed Project;</li> <li>➤ Most of the local high points with potential panoramic views are in the northern part of the LCU, such that the proposed turbines will be seen as a very small background features from a distance of &gt;5km;</li> <li>➤ Local road networks within the LCU are heavily vegetated with mature forestry and tall scrub, such that open views are typically visually screened along trafficked roads, thereby minimising impact to the key sensitivity of the landscape;</li> <li>➤ Considering the currently available data on cumulative wind farms in the study area, no significant cumulative effects are deemed to arise on the landscape character of this LCU.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Residual Landscape Effect</b>          | <p><b>'Not Significant' (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p><i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.9 Determination of Residual Landscape and Visual Effects in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |

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1.1.2

## LCU-5f: North Loughrea

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| Galway LCU-5f: North Loughrea                                 |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Map Ref.</b>   | G-LCU-5f  |
| <b>Distance from the Site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCA</b> | G-LCU-5f contains all proposed turbines, located near its central western border.   |
| <b>LCU Key Characteristics</b>                                | <p>From the GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i> (p.20):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>‘Long-occupied working landscape with high levels of occupation and numerous smaller settlements as well as large road and rail corridors;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Extensive low-lying area with many turloughs and areas of scrub woodland, locally elevated elsewhere;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Large regular, often stone-walled fields;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Low enclosure except for localised areas of mature parkland trees’.</i></li> </ul> <p>LCU-5f is part of the broader LCT ‘North Galway Complex Landscape’ which has characteristics of (GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i>, p.11):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>‘Agriculture, scattered forestry and associated field patterns are very mixed;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>It has a dense network of smaller settlements and roads, though at a lower density than the southern plains of the county;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Open areas around bogs produce extensive sky views and the area that are free from light pollution;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Principal Characteristic: Very large and abrupt changes of character over very short distances, especially around bogs;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Significance: Many areas have local sensitivities – often on account of local amenities or historic sites;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Sensitivities: Open countryside offers frequent extensive panoramic views from local highpoints’.</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>Wind Energy Strategy Classifications within LCU</b>        | <p>From the LARES (p.83-84); see Fig.13-6 in Chapter 13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Primarily ‘Open to Consideration’;</li> <li>➤ Small areas of ‘Acceptable in Principle’;</li> <li>➤ Smallest areas of ‘Generally to be Discouraged’.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development</b>       | <p><b>Sensitivity = Low.</b></p> <p>Rationale: The entirety of LCU-5f falls within land area classified by the GCDP as Low landscape sensitivity. Most of the land area of this LCU is classified as open or acceptable to wind energy development, including the portion of the Proposed Wind Farm site containing all proposed turbines. On balance, the sensitivity of LCU-5f to wind energy development is deemed to be ‘Low’.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 Sensitivity of Landscape Character Areas in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |

| Galway LCU-5f: North Loughrea                                 |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Visibility of the Proposed Project from within the LCU</b> | <p>Primarily full theoretical visibility with very few small patches of no visibility at the eastern end of the LCU.</p> <p>Viewpoints VP01, VP02, VP04, VP09, VP10, VP11, VP12, VP13 and photowire viewpoints PW-A, PW-D and PW-G are located within this LCU.</p>   |
| <b>Cumulative Effects</b>                                     | <p>There are no other existing, permitted or proposed wind energy developments located within this LCU.</p>   |
| <b>Magnitude of Change</b>                                    | <p><b>Magnitude = Moderate.</b></p> <p>Rationale: Physical changes to the fabric of the landscape as a result of the Proposed Project will be confined mainly to cutover bogs, with 5 no. proposed turbines located in agricultural and commercial forestry lands, all of which are human modified. Panoramic views of the open countryside within this LCU will be affected by the proposed turbines within close proximity; however, owing to the flat nature of the landscape these views diminish rapidly with distance. In addition, the number of proposed turbines is low and the long-term changes to views are considered reversible. On balance, the magnitude of change to LCU-5f is deemed to be 'Moderate'.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, refer to Section 1.7.4 Magnitude of Landscape Change in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |
| <b>Significance of Effect</b>                                 | <p><b>Low × Moderate = Minor = 'Slight' (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p>For the definition of this initial rating, refer to Section 1.7.5 Landscape Effects Matrix in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |
| <b>Mitigation Factors</b>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The proposed turbines are located within an area designated as Low sensitivity within the GDCP 2022-28;</li> <li>➤ The Proposed Wind Farm site is located within a large area of LCU-5f comprising mostly cutover bog, with smaller areas of agricultural fields and commercial forestry, thereby providing separation from sensitive landscape features (e.g. Raforde River Bog to the east of the Proposed Wind Farm site);</li> <li>➤ The Proposed Wind Farm site is located primarily in cutover bogland, in the west of this LCU which is noted to have extensive areas of bog to the east. In the overall LCU, the areas of cutover bogland are the least sensitive parts of the LCU in relation to wind farm development, thus the Proposed Wind Farm is sited within the least sensitive part of the overall LCU;</li> <li>➤ Key landscape characteristics of the LCU including open areas around bogs with no light pollution will not be affected by the Proposed Project;</li> <li>➤ Most of the local high points with potential panoramic views are in the northern part of the LCU, such that the proposed turbines will be seen as a very small background feature from a distance of &gt;5km;</li> <li>➤ Local road networks within this LCU are heavily vegetated with mature forestry and tall scrub, such that open views are typically visually</li> </ul> |

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| Galway LCU-5f: North Loughrea    |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
|                                  | <p>screened along trafficked roads, thereby minimising impact to the key sensitivity of the landscape;</p> <p>➤ All proposed turbines are located with an area designated as 'Open to Consideration' within the GDCP 2022-28.</p>  |
| <b>Residual Landscape Effect</b> | <p><b>'Slight' (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p><i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.9 Determination of Residual Landscape and Visual Effects in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p> |

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## LCU-6b: Southern River Clare Basin

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| Galway LCU-6b: Southern River Clare Basin                     |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Map Ref.</b>   | G-LCU-6b  |
| <b>Distance from the Site to Nearest/Furthest Area of LCA</b> | At its closest point, G-LCU-6b is located approx. 7.3km west of the proposed turbines (T01). The LCU contains 6.9km of the Proposed Grid Connection underground electrical cable route.   |
| <b>LCU Key Characteristics</b>                                | <p>From the GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i> (p.21):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <i>‘Undulating long-occupied working landscape with high levels of settlement;</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>Large regular fields and numerous parkland remnants;</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>Extensive wetland areas near Lough Corrib;</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>Low enclosure except for localised areas of mature parkland trees’.</i></li> </ul> <p>LCU-6b is part of the broader LCT ‘Central Galway Complex Landscape’ which has characteristics of (GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i>, p.12):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <i>‘An extensive plain of grasslands comprising of medium-to-large fields with low enclosures and many areas of low stone walls used for field boundaries.</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>It also includes distinctive features, including locally elevated features, such as [...] the complex of lakes and foothills between Gort and Loughrea in the south.</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>This area contains the majority of the county’s population with associated high levels of urban generated rural housing, roads and settlements. These range from large to small settlements with associated infrastructure, services and commercial activity.</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>The western and southern parts of these landscapes are underlain by karst limestone which results in many unusual hydrological features - such as turloughs and large springs.</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>The more productive soils of this area have resulted in long histories of more intensive historic settlement and associated higher concentrations of [...] archaeological, architectural and cultural remains.</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>Principal Characteristic: Level plain of productive grassland contain many settlements and dwellings;</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>Significance: Many areas have local sensitivities – often on account of local amenities or historic sites;</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>Sensitivities: Open countryside offers frequent extensive panoramic views from local highpoints’.</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>Wind Energy Strategy Classifications within LCU</b>        | <p>From the LARES (p.83-84); see Fig.13-6 in Chapter 13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Primarily ‘Generally to be Discouraged’;</li> <li>&gt; Moderate areas of ‘Open to Consideration’;</li> <li>&gt; Also contains Athenry Urban Environ, which is ‘Not Normally Permissible’.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development</b>       | <p><b>Sensitivity = Low.</b></p> <p>Rationale: The entirety of this LCU falls within land area classified by the GCDP as Low landscape sensitivity. Of the land areas classified as</p>   |

| Galway LCU-6b: Southern River Clare Basin                     |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>unfavourable to wind energy development, most are located greater than 10km from the proposed turbines. On balance, the sensitivity of LCU-6b to wind energy development is deemed to be 'Low'.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 Sensitivity of Landscape Character Areas in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>  |
| <b>Visibility of the Proposed Project from within the LCU</b> | <p>The LCU is orientated linearly N-S at the western edge of the LCA Study area, primarily between 15-20km from the Proposed Wind Farm site. Actual visibility in this part of the LCU is none to full, with intermittent visibility screened by mature vegetation and the nature of the flat topography.</p> <p>Theoretical visibility is primarily mixed in the northern half of the LCU, with full visibility on the east-facing aspects of the Knockroe peaks area at the northern tip, with no visibility in the corresponding pockets behind peaks.</p> <p>Theoretical visibility is primarily full in the southern half of the LCU, with small patches of no visibility behind corresponding elevated, undulating hills throughout the landscape.</p> <p>Viewpoint VP07 is located in this LCU.</p> |
| <b>Cumulative Effects</b>                                     | <p>There are no other existing, permitted or proposed wind energy developments located within this LCU.</p>  |
| <b>Magnitude of Change</b>                                    | <p><b>Magnitude = Negligible.</b></p> <p>Rationale: Changes to landscape features along the local road network will occur as a result of the Proposed Grid Connection; however, as the route is underground, the changes to landscape features will be short-term and localised to the low-trafficked road network. No key characteristics of the landscape will be affected. On balance, the magnitude of change to LCU-6b is deemed to be 'Negligible'.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, refer to Section 1.7.4 Magnitude of Landscape Change in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |
| <b>Significance of Effect</b>                                 | <p><b>Low × Negligible = Negligible = 'Imperceptible' (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p>For the definition of this initial rating, refer to Section 1.7.5 Landscape Effects Matrix in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>  |
| <b>Mitigation Factors</b>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Most areas within this LCU have no actual visibility of the proposed turbines owing to visual screening by mature vegetation and the nature of the flat topography;</li> <li>➤ Considering the distance of the majority of this LCU from the Proposed Wind Farm site, the proposed turbines will be seen as small, background features within views where visible;</li> <li>➤ The Proposed Grid Connection is to be underground, thus changes to the physical fabric of the landscape will be short-term and localised along low-trafficked local road networks only during the construction phase.</li> </ul>  |

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| Galway LCU-6b: Southern River Clare Basin |  |
|---|--|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Most open areas with potential panoramic views are &gt;10km from the proposed turbines, such that the proposed turbines will be seen as a very small background features where visible at all, thus effects on the key characteristic of the landscape are minimised;</li> <li>➤ No cumulative effects are deemed to arise on the landscape character of this LCU.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Residual Landscape Effect</b>          | <p><b>‘Imperceptible’ (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p><i>‘An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.9 Determination of Residual Landscape and Visual Effects in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>  |

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## LCU-6e: South Loughrea

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| Galway LCU-6e: South Loughrea                                  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Map Ref.</b>  | G-LCU-6e   |
| <b>Distance from the Site to Nearest/ Furthest Area of LCA</b> | At its closest point, G-LCU-6e is located approx. 2.3km south of the proposed turbines (T08).  |
| <b>LCU Key Characteristics</b>                                 | <p>From the GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i> (p.21):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>‘Long-occupied working landscape with elevated concentrations of settlements and infrastructure;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>‘Larger areas of bog and forestry’.</i></li> </ul> <p>LCU-6e is part of the broader LCT ‘Central Galway Complex Landscape’ which has characteristics of (GCDP <i>Appendix 4</i>, p.12):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>‘An extensive plain of grasslands comprising of medium-to-large fields with low enclosures and many areas of low stone walls used for field boundaries.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>It also includes distinctive features, including locally elevated features, such as [...] the complex of lakes and foothills between Gort and Loughrea in the south.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>This area contains the majority of the county’s population with associated high levels of urban generated rural housing, roads and settlements. These range from large to small settlements with associated infrastructure, services and commercial activity.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>The western and southern parts of these landscapes are underlain by karst limestone which results in many unusual hydrological features - such as turloughs and large springs.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>The more productive soils of this area have resulted in long histories of more intensive historic settlement and associated higher concentrations of [...] archaeological, architectural and cultural remains.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Principal Characteristic: Level plain of productive grassland contain many settlements and dwellings;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Significance: Many areas have local sensitivities – often on account of local amenities or historic sites;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Sensitivities: Open countryside offers frequent extensive panoramic views from local highpoints’.</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>Wind Energy Strategy Classifications within LCU</b>         | <p>From the LARES (p.83-84); see Fig.13-6 in Chapter 13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Primarily ‘Generally to be Discouraged’;</li> <li>➤ Moderate areas of ‘Open to Consideration’;</li> <li>➤ Small areas of ‘Acceptable in Principle’;</li> <li>➤ Also contains Loughrea Urban Environ, which is ‘Not Normally Permissible’.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development</b>        | <p><b>Sensitivity = Low.</b></p> <p>Rationale: The entirety of this LCU falls within land area classified by the GCDP as Low landscape sensitivity. Of the land areas classified as unfavourable to wind energy development, most are located greater than</p>   |

| Galway LCU-6e: South Loughrea                                 |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>5km from the proposed turbines. Areas classified as more favourable to wind energy development are concentrated in the east of the LCU near the hills of Doonaree; these areas are located 5-10km from the proposed turbines. On balance, the sensitivity of LCU-6e to wind energy development is deemed to be 'Low'.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 Sensitivity of Landscape Character Areas in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |
| <b>Visibility of the Proposed Project from within the LCU</b> | <p>Actual visibility ranges from full views in the close-in areas of the LCU which are intermittent along roadways, to no visibility in the distant parts of the LCU, with visual screening primarily owing to the nature of the flat topography.</p> <p>Minimal small pockets of no visibility occur across the middle of the LCU in a slightly crescent-shaped pattern, approximately 15km from the Proposed Wind Farm site, owing to localised small hilly areas.</p> <p>Photowire viewpoint PW-F is located within this LCU.</p>  |
| <b>Cumulative Effects</b>                                     | <p>No other existing, permitted or proposed wind energy developments are located within this LCU.</p>   |
| <b>Magnitude of Change</b>                                    | <p><b>Magnitude = Negligible.</b></p> <p>Rationale: The areas of greatest magnitude of landscape change are limited to the north of the LCU within 5km of the proposed turbines, and to the south of the LCU in the elevated hills around Lough Rea, where the proposed turbines will be visible from open countryside with panoramic views. In the north of the LCU, the flat nature of the landscape minimises the visual impact of the proposed turbines, while in the south of the LCU, the proposed turbines will be seen as very small background features at a distance of &gt;15km. The physical fabric of the LCU will not be affected. On balance, the magnitude of change to LCU-6e is deemed to be 'Negligible'.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, refer to Section 1.7.4 Magnitude of Landscape Change in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p> |
| <b>Significance of Effect</b>                                 | <p><b>Low × Negligible = Negligible = 'Imperceptible' (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p>For the definition of this initial rating, refer to Section 1.7.5 Landscape Effects Matrix in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p>   |
| <b>Mitigation Factors</b>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The physical fabric of the LCU will not be affected by the Proposed Wind Farm;</li> <li>➤ The greatest magnitude of change is limited to small areas in the north and south of the LCU, with low actual visibility and therefore minimised effect on the key landscape characteristics;</li> <li>➤ Most areas within this LCU have no actual visibility of the proposed turbines owing to visual screening by mature vegetation and the nature of the flat topography;</li> <li>➤ Most open areas with potential panoramic views are &gt;5-10km from the Proposed Wind Farm site, such that proposed turbines will be seen as</li> </ul>   |

| Galway LCU-6e: South Loughrea    |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
|                                  | a very small background features where visible at all, thus effects on the key characteristics of the landscape are minimised.  |
| <b>Residual Landscape Effect</b> | <p><b>‘Imperceptible’ (EPA, 2022)</b></p> <p><i>‘An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.9 Determination of Residual Landscape and Visual Effects in <i>Appendix 13-1 LVIA Methodology</i>.</p> |

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