

Technical Appendix 4.5: Designations and Classifications Sensitivity Assessment

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1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Technical Appendix evaluates the sensitivity of designations and classifications within the Study Area and identifies which are included for further assessment.
- 1.1.2 The Proposed Development is a renewable energy development comprised of up to eight wind turbines, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure adjacent to Sullom Voe Oil Terminal (SVT) and the Shetland Gas Plant in Shetland, Scotland. The assessment is based on the Proposed Development as described in **Chapter 2: Proposed Development (EIAR Volume 2)**.
- 1.1.3 **Figure 4.10: Landscape Designations (NSA, LLA) and Wild Land Areas with Tip Height Bare Ground ZTV (EIAR Volume 3a)** illustrates the locations and extent of designated and classified landscape within the 45 km Study Area. **Table 4.5.1** lists the designations and classifications that have theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. Where designations and classifications are omitted from the assessment the reason is also noted in this table.
- 1.1.4 **Table 4.5.2** of this Technical Appendix provides a description of each designated/classified landscape included in the SLVIA and an appraisal of the sensitivity.
- 1.1.5 **Figure 4.11: Relative Wildness (EIAR Volume 3a)** has been used to inform the evaluation of sensitivity to the Proposed Development. The Relative Wildness is based on four principal attributes identified in NatureScot’s Wildness in Scotland’s Countryside policy statement¹, namely perceived naturalness of land cover, ruggedness, remoteness and the lack of built modern artefacts.
- 1.1.6 **Table 4.5.2** describes the evaluation of sensitivity for each designation/classification assessed in this SLVIA. The sensitivity and assessment of effects on Shetland National Scenic Area (NSA) is described in **Technical Appendix 4.6: Shetland National Scenic Area Special Landscape Qualities Assessment** and is not considered in **Technical Appendix 4.5: Designations and Classifications Sensitivity Assessment**.
- 1.1.7 The descriptions of the Local Landscape Areas (LLA) are based on the overall key characteristics described in the Shetland Local Development Plan (LDP)², and sensitivity of each of these LLAs is appraised in accordance with criteria presented within current SLVIA guidance³.
- 1.1.8 The assessment of value for the LLAs follows the methodology described in **Technical Appendix 4.1: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology (EIAR Volume 4)** which is informed by the Landscape Institute’s *Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations* (2021)⁴.
- 1.1.9 Gardens and Designed Landscape (GDL) are considered as components of the landscape in the evaluation of value and susceptibility of LLAs. **Chapter 5: Cultural Heritage (EIAR Volume 2)** describes an assessment of the residual effects of the Proposed Development on GDLs.
- 1.1.10 The SLVIA does not include an assessment of effects on Wild Land Area (WLA) 42 Ronas Hill and North Roe as the Proposed Development is located outwith the WLA. Policy 4g) of NPF4 advises that “*effects of development outwith wild land areas will not be a significant consideration*”. However, WLA 42 has been a consideration in the evaluation of sensitivity of Landscape Character Types (LCT) described in

Technical Appendix 4.2: Landscape Character Types Sensitivity Assessment (EIAR Volume 4).

Table 4.5.1: Designations and classifications within the 45 km Study Area			
Designation/Classification	Distance and Direction to Site	Assessed in SLVIA	Justification for Omission
National Scenic Areas (NSA)			
Shetland NSA	11 km north northwest	Yes	n/a
Local Landscape Areas (LLAs)			
Lunna Ness and Lunning	7.9 km south east	Yes	n/a
Ronas Hill	8.0 km north west	Yes	n/a
Nibon and Mangastar	8.0 km west	Yes	n/a
West Sandwick to Gloop Holm	9.1 km north	Yes	n/a
Vementry and West Burrafirth	18.7 km south west	No	Very limited visibility.
Weisdale	20.5 km south	No	Limited visibility confined to the hill of Mostoft and surrounding upper slopes. Distance to Site is over 20 km.
Gletness and Skellister	21.5 km south east	No	No visibility.
Wick of Tresta	22 km north east	No	Very limited visibility.
Papa Stour and Sandness	26 km south west	No	Intervening distance means significant effects are unlikely.
Gloop Voe and Bluermull Sound	26.6 km north east	No	Intervening distance means significant effects are unlikely.
Colvadale and Muness	30.6 km north east	No	Limited visibility confined to limited areas within the LLA, typically on the western and southern outer edge of uplands. Distance to Site is over 30 km.
Aith Ness and Noss	32 km south east	No	Intervening distance means significant effects are unlikely.
Walls and Vaila	32.3 km south west	No	Limited visibility. Distance to Site is over 32 km.
Culswick and Westerwick	33 km south west	No	Limited visibility. Distance to Site is 33 km and over.
Haroldswick and Skaw	40 km north east	No	Limited ZTV constrained to the upper slopes/summits of Hill of Clibberswick. Distance to Site is 40 km and over.
Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs)			
Lunna House	9.4 km south east	No	Considered in the evaluation of sensitivity of LCTs described in Technical Appendix 4.2: Landscape Character Types Sensitivity Assessment (EIAR Volume 4). Assessment of

1 NatureScot (2002). Wildness in Scotland’s Countryside - Policy Statement. [online]. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/archive/wildness-scotlands-countryside-policy-statement>. [Accessed 08/04/2026]

2 Shetland Islands Council, (n.d.), Local Landscape Areas, [online], Available at: <https://www.shetland.gov.uk/downloads/file/1593/local-landscape-areas> [Accessed 27 February 2026].

3 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013)

4 Landscape Institute, (2021), Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations, [online], Available at: <https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2021/05/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations.pdf> [Accessed 27 February 2026].

Table 4.5.1: Designations and classifications within the 45 km Study Area			
Designation/Classification	Distance and Direction to Site	Assessed in SLVIA	Justification for Omission
National Scenic Areas (NSA)			
Shetland NSA	11 km north northwest	Yes	n/a
Local Landscape Areas (LLAs)			
			effects described in Chapter 5: Cultural Heritage (EIAR Volume 2).
Brough Lodge	21.5 km north east	No	Considered in the evaluation of sensitivity of LCTs described in Technical Appendix 4.2 Landscape Character Types Sensitivity Assessment (EIAR Volume 4). Assessment of effects described in Chapter 5: Cultural Heritage (EIAR Volume 2).
Belmont House	26.9 km north east	No	Considered in the evaluation of sensitivity of LCTs described in Technical Appendix 4.2 Landscape Character Types Sensitivity Assessment (EIAR Volume 4). Assessment of effects described in Chapter 5: Cultural Heritage (EIAR Volume 2).
Wild Land Areas (WLAs)			
Ronas Hill & North Roe	8.8 km north west	No	Considered in the evaluation of sensitivity of LCTs. Refer to Technical Appendix 4.2 Landscape Character Types Sensitivity Assessment (EIAR Volume 4).

1.2 Description of Included Designations/Classifications

LLA 12: Lunna Ness and Lunning

- 1.2.1 This LLA is located 7.9 km southeast of the Proposed Development. The LLA is located along one of the northeast extremities of the Shetland Mainland, and includes the long, narrow, Lunna Ness peninsula, together with Vidlin Voe and the broader headland immediately to the south. The overall key characteristics of this LLA are described in Shetland LDP², and include:
 - Attractive settlements around Vidlin Voe, with a distinctive pattern and character;
 - Long, narrow and remote headland of Lunna Ness;
 - Rugged moorland hills around Lunning; and
 - Historic features and associations at Lunna, including the ancient kirk and the Shetland Bus.
- 1.2.2 The overall Sensitivity of the LLA is considered High/Medium, based on a Medium Susceptibility and a High/Medium Value.

LLA 2: Nibon and Mangaster
- 1.2.3 This LLA is located 8.0 km west of the Proposed Development. The area covers the southwestern part of the Northmavine peninsula, including Mavis Grind and Ness of Culsetter to the south. It lies between the Esha Ness and Muckle Roe Areas of Shetland National Scenic Area. The overall key characteristics of this LLA are described in the Shetland LDP², and include:
 - Rugged landscape of rocky coastal hills interspersed with numerous lochans;
 - Sequence of long views along voes and sudden opening of wide panoramas;
 - Intricate coastal edge with an array of features and colours; and
 - Panoramic views across St Magnus Bay.

- 1.2.4 The overall Sensitivity of the LLA is High/Medium, based on a Medium Susceptibility and High/Medium Value.

LLA 1: Ronas Hill

- 1.2.5 This LLA is located 8.0 km northwest of the Proposed Development. This area covers Ronas Hill in Northmavine, along with the long, curving Ronas Voe to the south. It includes the foothills of Ronas Hill stepping down to the sea to the west, and the rocky moorland to the north and east, as well as both sides of Ronas Voe. The overall key characteristics of this LLA are described in Shetland LDP², and include:
 - A Shetland landmark, the highest point of the islands;
 - Distinctive red granite geology is clearly expressed;
 - Largely empty, uninhabited hills and moors; and
 - Rocky plateau, steep cliffs, and other rugged features.
- 1.2.6 The overall Sensitivity of the LLA is considered High/Medium, based on a Medium Susceptibility and High/Medium Value. A Medium Susceptibility has been given, as the Proposed Development could influence a large extent of the eastern side of Ronas Hill, and also some sections south of Ronas Voe, although it would be seen alongside existing industrial development. It would have the potential only to affect part of the available of the panoramic views from the summit.

LLA 17: West Sandwick to Gloop Holm
- 1.2.7 This LLA is located 9.1 km north of the Proposed Development. This area encompasses the west coast of Yell, from the headland of Ness of West Sandwick to the small islands of The Clapper and Gloop Holm in the north. The inland boundary is formed by ridges which form the immediate viewshed from the coast. The overall key characteristics of this LLA are derived from the Shetland LDP², and include:
 - Highly isolated, long stretches of coastline increasing in exposure to the north;
 - Impressive wide views of great depth across Yell Sound to the rocky hills of Northmavine; and
 - An area of limited active settlement, with isolated pockets of historic settlement rich in cultural heritage.
- 1.2.8 The overall Sensitivity of the CCA is considered High/Medium, based on a Medium Susceptibility and High/Medium Value.

1.3 Sensitivity Appraisal

Table 4.5.2: LLA Lunna Ness and Lunning Sensitivity Appraisal		
Evaluation of Landscape Value		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Natural Heritage	The northern Lunna Ness area has an overlapping Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conversion (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) running along the full western coastline of the peninsula, with the SPA also wrapping around a section of the eastern peninsula coastline.	High
Cultural Heritage	At the narrow isthmus halfway along, the designed landscape of Lunna House provides an interesting and unusual attraction, and is associated with the wartime ‘Shetland Bus’ operation, as well as with the ancient church nearby.	High
Landscape Condition	The northern Lunna Ness area is intact with a sheltered, welcoming character. Around Vidlin Voe, the landscape is more altered with managed farming, a marina and associated developments, however these developments are very localised.	High/Medium
Distinctiveness	Vidlin Voe has a distinctive pattern of settlement. Houses at Gillsbreck and Kirkabister are located on the slopes above the voe, their croft lands running down to the shore, and moorland grazing behind.	High/Medium
Recreational	Some local recreational value associated with ferries, recreational fishing, kayaking, sailing, bird watching and core paths at the north end of Lunna Ness and south of Vidlin.	Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	Some panoramic views from the northern end of Lunna Ness of surrounding islands and sounds, overlooking both Yell and Whalsay. The northern area has visual appeal.	High/Medium
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	Rugged moorland around Lunning and sparsely inhabited Lunna Ness peninsula give sense of remoteness and wildness. Other areas are sheltered and contained but still give a sense of tranquillity.	High/medium
Overall evaluation of Value		High/Medium

Evaluation of Landscape Susceptibility		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Landscape Form and Scale	Medium scale landscape with a range of contrasting landscapes, from the low-lying sheltered bay of Vidlin Voe, to the rocky moorland around Lunning, and the long, irregular Lunna Ness peninsula. The Proposed Development would not affect these physical features of the coast. Intervening distance to the proposed turbines means that adverse scale comparisons with this medium scale landscape is unlikely to occur.	Medium
Existing Land Use and Context	Sheltered bays are more settled, including Vidlin Voe with a marina and associated developments. However outside of these bays, the LLA is sparsely populated, with only a few houses at Lunning. The Proposed Development could be visible for a large extent of the western coastlines of the LLA, and some of the summits and more elevated areas around Vidlin Voe but could not greatly influence land use and context. In areas less settled or influenced by development, such as Lunna Ness peninsula, views are typically panoramic, with key vistas looking towards Yell and Whalsay, away from the Site.	Medium/Low
Landcover Complexity/Simplicity	Simple landcover comprising of rugged moorland and managed grassland around the voes. The Proposed Development could not directly affect this characteristic.	Low
Nature of Visual Enclosure/Openness of Views	Views are often contained within this medium-scale landscape, but on occasion these open out to take in panoramic views of surrounding islands and sounds, particularly from the northern end of Lunna Ness. The Proposed Development is likely to be visible from these coastal and elevated areas within the LLA and has the potential to affect panoramic views.	High/Medium
Landmark Features or Presence	The LLA is visually appealing with a sheltered, welcoming character and setting, however these areas are likely to have less visibility of the Proposed Development. The Lunna Head Peninsula itself, with its range of low-lying and elevated summits, forms a notable backdrop and focal point. The Proposed Development is unlikely to be a competing focal point to distinctive and natural landmarks due to intervening distance.	Medium
Overall evaluation of susceptibility		Medium

Overall Sensitivity Appraisal
High/Medium sensitivity

Table 4.5.3: LLA Nibon and Mangaster Sensitivity Appraisal		
Evaluation of Landscape Value		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Natural Heritage	Granite Headlands with a complex coastal edge is manifested as a variety of headlands, geos, caves and islands.	Medium
Cultural Heritage	At the lower coastal fringes, small pockets of relict walls and stone buildings tell of past settlement along these voes, despite the inhospitable landscape. Otherwise, limited cultural features.	Low
Landscape Condition	Largely intact with some managed land and settlement around the voes.	High/Medium
Distinctiveness	Distinct outcrops of pink granite contrasting with the green moorland that tops the hills.	High/Medium
Recreational	Some tourist attractions along the eastern boundary beside the A970 at Mavis Grind and Burraland. Absence of core paths except in the south at Mavis Grind.	Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	These steep-sided, irregular voes divide the coast into a series of granite headlands, giving rise to a dramatic and highly scenic combination of sea, islands and rugged hills. Strong visual diversity and scenic quality with intricate coastal edge and its array of colours and features.	High
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	There is a sense of remoteness and wildness, particularly in the central part of the LLA, and a rich array of coastal features and colours where outcrops of pink granite contrast with the green moorland that tops the hills.	High/Medium
Overall evaluation of Value		High/Medium

Evaluation of Landscape Susceptibility		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Landscape Form and Scale	The highly complex coastal edge is manifested as a variety of headlands, geos, caves and islands. Intricate landform of the inland areas, interspersed with numerous lochans. The Proposed Development could not affect these physical features of the coast and inland areas. Intervening distance to the proposed turbines means that adverse scale comparisons with this landscape are unlikely to occur.	Low
Existing Land Use and Context	The A970 follows the eastern boundary to the LLA. Overall rugged, largely unsettled landscape. The ZTV indicates views of the Proposed Development would only be experienced from the ridges to the north and south. From these summits the Proposed Development could be seen in context with the A970, SVT, commercial piers alongside the Voe of Scatsta and Garths Voe. Existing development therefore has a characterising influence on the perceived context to the LLA.	Medium
Landcover Complexity/Simplicity	Rugged landscape of rocky coastal hills interspersed with numerous lochans. The Proposed Development would not be located in the immediate hinterland to the LLA but has the potential to contrast with the existing landcover.	Medium/Low
Nature of Visual Enclosure/Openness of Views	Sequence of enclosed, long views along voes and sudden opening of wide panoramas. Panoramic views across St Magnus Bay. These views, however, are orientated away from the Proposed Development, towards the west. Furthermore, the ridges to the north and south provide visual boundaries containing the views within the voes.	Medium
Landmark Features or Presence	Coastal views of the overlapping layers of headlands are available in some locations. Seaward views to the northwest are focused on the landmark feature of Hillswick lighthouse at Baa Taing. The Proposed Development is unlikely to be a competing focal point to natural landmarks due to intervening distance.	Low
Overall evaluation of susceptibility		Medium

Overall Sensitivity Appraisal
High/Medium sensitivity

Table 4.5.4: LLA Ronas Hill Sensitivity Appraisal		
Evaluation of Landscape Value		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Natural Heritage	Majority of the of the LLA overlaps with SSSI, SAC and an SPA. Expansive rocky plateau on Ronas Hill features unusual alpine plant communities. Geological features including pink and red granite cliffs.	High
Cultural Heritage	The chambered cairn at the summit makes for a destination, as well as speaking of the long-established human presence, even in the remotest parts of Shetland. Otherwise, limited cultural features.	Low

Table 4.5.4: LLA Ronas Hill Sensitivity Appraisal		
Evaluation of Landscape Value		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Landscape Condition	Largely intact with some managed land and settlement around the voes.	High/Medium
Distinctiveness	Distinctive red granite geology is clearly expressed. Ronas Hill is a Shetland landmark, distinctive as the highest point on the islands.	High
Recreational	Popular destination for hill-walkers visiting Shetland.	High/Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	Ronas Voe to the south is deep and broad, a dramatic fjord-like inlet with tall cliffs of pink granite and green grass on its northern shore. These colourful cliffs are at their most imposing from Heylor on the south shore. The plateau is covered with gravelly granite surface features and unusual alpine plant communities, which occur here at exceptionally low altitudes. The plateau falls away to the north, giving way to lochans and blanket bog. There are wide views across the whole of Shetland from Ronas Hill.	High
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	Largely empty, uninhabited hills and moors, one of the remotest parts of Shetland. Rugged features.	High
Overall Evaluation of Value		High/ Medium

Evaluation of Landscape Susceptibility		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Landscape Form and Scale	Ronas Hill is a notable dome shaped hill and its profile is recognisable from the wider area. The foothills of Ronas Hill step down to the sea to the west, and the rocky moorland to the north and east, as well as both sides of Ronas Voe. Intervening distance to the proposed turbines means that adverse scale comparisons with this landscape are unlikely to occur.	Low
Existing Land Use and Context	Largely empty, uninhabited hills and moor with limited human influence. The masts on Collafirth Hill and the A970, a minor road follows the south shore of the voe, giving access to a very few dwellings, are the limits of human influence within the LLA. Otherwise, human influence is limited to fish farms in the voe and associated landings on the coast. The Proposed Development has the potential to increase the influence of human activity introducing further development into the wider context to the LLA adjacent to the existing industrial context of SVT and the commercial piers around Graven. The Proposed Development could not affect the coastal context on the western side of Ronas Hill, as the Hill itself creates a visual boundary, screening the Proposed Development from views.	Medium
Landcover Complexity/Simplicity	Rugged landscape of rocky coastal hills interspersed with numerous lochans. The Proposed Development would not be located in the immediate hinterland to the LLA and could not readily influence the perceived landcover.	Medium/Low
Nature of Visual Enclosure/Openness of Views	There are wide views across the whole of Shetland from Ronas Hill. The Proposed Development has the potential to influence views from the summit and along the eastern hillside. It could alter the composition of part of the view which are panoramic and wide ranging. Other areas of the LLA, including the eastern side with key views orientated westward overlooking the coastline, would be unaffected by the Proposed Development as such areas would be screened by Ronas Hill.	High
Landmark Features or Presence	Ronas Hill is a Shetland landmark, distinctive as the highest point on the islands. The Proposed Development is unlikely to be a competing focal point to this natural landmark due to intervening distance, and Ronas Hill itself being of large scale.	Medium
Overall Evaluation of Susceptibility		Medium

Overall Sensitivity Appraisal
High/ Medium sensitivity

Table 4.5.5: LLA West Sandwick to Gloup Holm Sensitivity Appraisal		
Evaluation of Landscape Value		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Natural Heritage	Wide range of geology around coastline.	High
Cultural Heritage	Rich in cultural heritage. The area represents a rich cultural heritage that is visible in the landscape, including churches, vernacular stone buildings, standing stones and an iron age fort.	High
Landscape Condition	Largely intact and inaccessible. Isolated settlement of West Sandwick has a strong and intact rural pattern.	High/Medium

Table 4.5.5: LLA West Sandwick to Gloup Holm Sensitivity Appraisal		
Evaluation of Landscape Value		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Distinctiveness	The area to the north of Whale Firth is particularly rugged, with varied and distinctive coastal features, including Eigg, Ern Stack and Stuis.	Medium
Recreational	Limited accessibility, predominantly hill-walkers, and recreational boats. Absence of core paths.	Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	Long distance views across Yell Sound to the low, smooth coast backed by the rocky hills of Northmavine. Views along the sound take in an attractive seascape and layers of low, interlocking coastal hills rising to the rounded Ronas Hill behind.	High
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	This is a dramatic coastal landscape comprising the long, exposed and largely isolated western coast of Yell. The northern coast has a heightened sense of exposure, with views to the rugged headland of North Roe, the open sea and the jagged profile of the Ramna Stacks on the horizon. The area represents a highly remote coastal margin, much of which is inaccessible and can only be explored on foot or by boat.	High
Overall Evaluation of Value		High/Medium

Evaluation of Landscape Susceptibility		
Criterion	Description	Evaluation
Landscape Form and Scale	Complex coastal landform with a combination of steep banks, rock cliffs and of long, exposed and largely isolated western coast of Yell. Impressive wide views of great depth across Yell Sound to the low, smooth coast backed by the rocky hills of Northmavine. The exposed coastline of stacks and high cliffs is highly visible from the North Roe headland. Intervening distance to the proposed turbines means that adverse scale comparisons with this landscape are unlikely to occur.	Low
Existing Land Use and Context	Largely uninhabited and undeveloped moorland except in the south around the village of West Sandwick and in the far northeast at Gloup and Cullivoe. Distant industrial context of SVT and the active Toft to Ulsta ferry terminal.	Medium/Low
Landcover Complexity/Simplicity	Rocky hills and coastal margin. The Proposed Development would not be located in the immediate hinterland to the LLA.	Medium/Low
Nature of Visual Enclosure/Openness of Views	Wide, open across Yell Sound to the low, smooth coast backed by the rocky hills of Northmavine. The Proposed Development could only affect views from some headlands and the more elevated areas within the LLA. Westerly vistas out across the Yell Sound and northern vistas towards the wild northern sea are orientated away from the Site, further reducing the potential for the Proposed Development to influence available views.	High
Landmark features or presence	The sea cliffs on the western edge of the LLA and the backdrop of moorland are notable in views from North Roe area. On Yell the LLA appears as a relatively low-lying area of moorland that descends to the waters of Yell Sound.	Low
Overall Evaluation of Susceptibility		Medium

Overall Sensitivity Appraisal
High/Medium sensitivity (Medium/Low in the north)