

## LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

*Agricultural Heartland* is the predominant lowland landscape type within Aberdeenshire, comprising the rolling farmland that surrounds Aberdeen and slopes down from the higher ground in the west towards the coastal strip. It stretches from Banff and Buchan in the north, the sheltered farmland in amongst the higher moorland in the west, to Strathmore in the south. The *Agricultural Heartland* is the largest LCT in extent (50% of Aberdeenshire). The intensively managed agricultural heartlands are a vast rolling plain of mixed agriculture containing most of the towns and villages in Aberdeenshire, together with the main transport routes and a network of smaller roads. Fields are medium to large in size with post and wire fences.

Tree cover varies with scattered broadleaved shelterbelts running along hill ridges and around farms and some areas such as the *Central Wooded Estates*, *Wooded Estates around Old Deer* and *Ythan Strath Farmland* with a large number of old estate policy woodlands. The *Agricultural Heartland* LCT contains the majority of Aberdeenshire's inventory Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes (HGDLs) with a total of eighteen out of the twenty-eight in the study area, the *Central Wooded Estates* LCA alone contains eight HGDLs.

This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its scale, landform, and productive land use with simple geometric field patterns, open character and low value. The capacity varies according to proximity to more sensitive LCTs, tree cover and sensitive landscapes such as HGDL and Country Parks. The area is divided into fifteen LCAs which are all broadly similar but often show subtle differences in character, visibility and value which results in a more nuanced capacity assessment and guidance. The most northerly *Agricultural Heartland* LCAs in the north of the county are described below.

### 1(i) KNOCKHILL AND ABERCHIRDER

Low rolling hills and long ridges create a smooth undulating landform. Knock Hill dominates the west of the area and it is a regional landmark. It influences land use with moorland predominating in the west. Elsewhere it is generally well-managed farmland, with large arable fields with post and wire fences or gorse hedges. Clumps of trees frame settlements and long avenues of trees run along roads and fields in the west of the region. There are infrequent scattered farms and the planned village of Aberchirder together with some telecommunication masts, wind turbines and a network of minor roads.

### 1(ii) AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

This LCA is characterised by a gently rolling landform, but with steeper ground in some places mainly along river valleys, it forms a broad plain with open views. It has large arable fields, with post and wire fences and scattered broadleaved shelterbelts running along ridges and around farms. Moorland occurs in pockets around New Pitsligo and large conifer plantations in the north of the area. There are no large towns but there are a number of villages such as New Deer, Cuminestown and Strichen.

### 1(iii) WOODED ESTATES AROUND OLD DEER

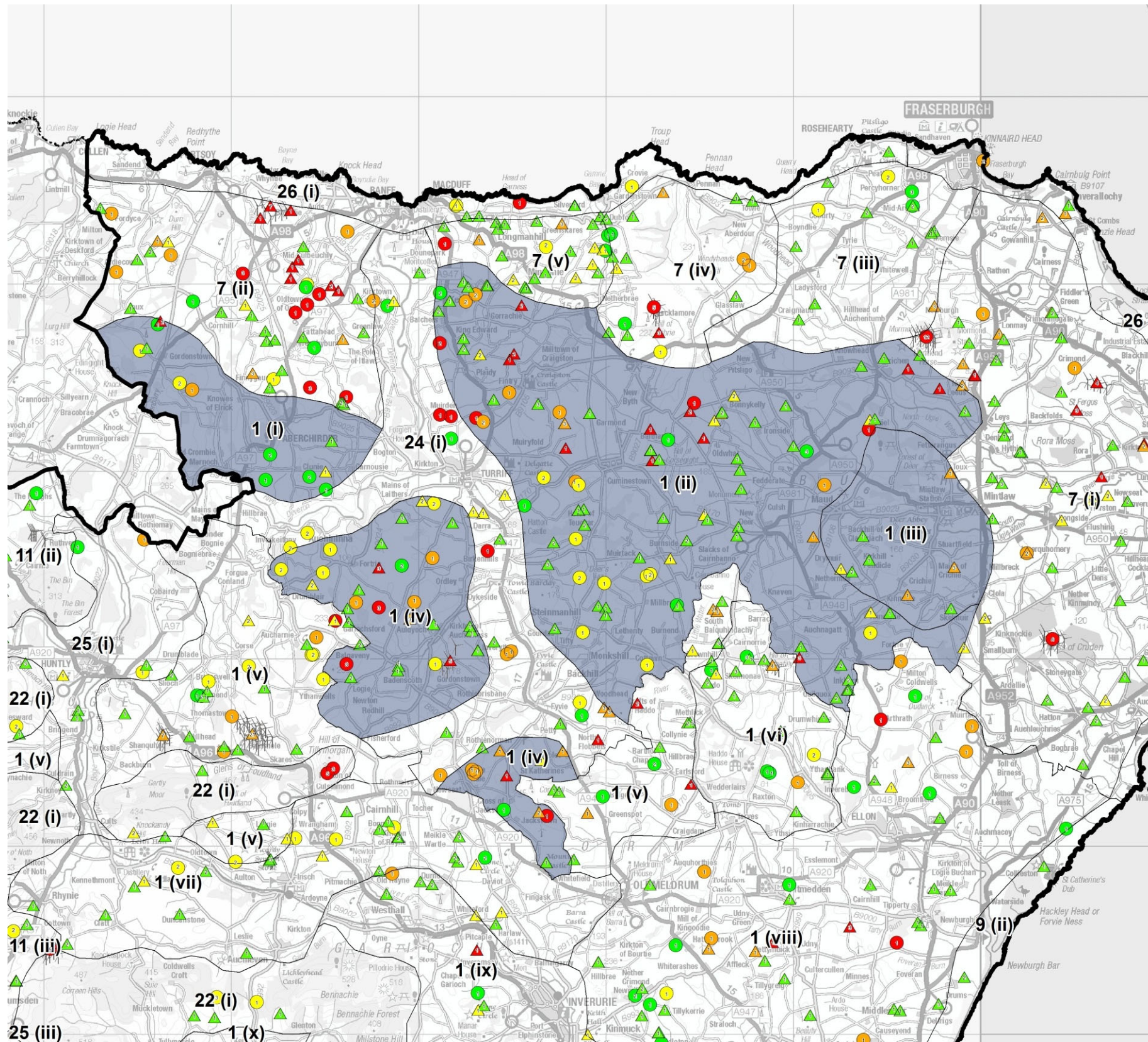
The river valley of the South Ugie Water lies at its centre but the river is not more than a stream and is visually insignificant. Woodland is unusually for this part of the district the dominant feature. The old policy woodlands around the estates of Aden and Pitfour create an enclosed sheltered character, with coniferous and broadleaves woodland well laid out along ridge lines, valley bottoms and slopes. It is a well-settled area with a number of planned villages such as Mintlaw, numerous farmsteads and Manses. Well managed it has high integrity in places and provides a setting for Deer Abbey and a Country Park.

### 1(iv) UPLAND RIDGES SOUTH OF DEVERON

This area comprises the convex slopes and broad ridges above the river valleys of the Deveron, Ythan and their tributaries. The rounded hills are all of a similar height, divided by occasional, insignificant streams. There are medium-large scale fields with sparse tree cover, but occasional broadleaved trees running along skylines and around farms.



1 (i) The view from the summit of Knock Hill looking north-east, this hill dominates the west of this landscape character area and it is a regional landmark. It influences land use with moorland predominating in the west. Sited away from the sensitive hill itself, these large turbines fit within the medium- large scale pattern.



1(iii) Remnants of the old estates remain in the Wooded Estates Around Old Deer and increase the sensitivity of this landscape



1(i) The area around Aberchirder is generally well-managed farmland with post and wire fences.

**Table 6.1(d): Summary of Landscape Capacity, Cumulative Effects and Guidance for Future Wind Energy Development: Agricultural Heartland**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity      Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (i) Landscape Character Area: Knockhill and Aberchirder;</b>																		
Med	Med	Med	Med/Low	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently there are two large, one medium and two small/medium turbines.	<i>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines</i>	<i>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</i>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Proposals for one medium/large, three medium and seven medium/small turbines.	<p><b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This area has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to its medium scale, landform, open character and lower value. Knock Hill is a distinctive local landmark from the surrounding flatter farmland. The hill should be kept free of all turbines.</p> <p>Preference should be given to larger sized turbines where this meets all other criteria in the detailed guidance. Capacity for turbines is limited by proximity to sensitive locations.</p> <p><b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> Current consented development remains well within capacity.</p>
												1-5	1-3	1-3				
												2-4	3-6	5-10				

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity																		
Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (ii) Landscape Character Area: Agricultural Heartland</b>																		
Med	Med	Med	Med/Low	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently there are sixteen large, four medium-large, ten medium and sixty-one small/medium turbines.	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines/ Wind Turbine Agricultural Heartland</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Proposals for five large, ten medium/large, thirteen medium and eight medium/small turbines.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This area has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern, open character and low value. It could accommodate small clusters of small/medium, medium, medium/large or large turbines. However preference should be given to larger sized turbines where this complies with the detailed guidance. Capacity for turbines is limited by proximity to sensitive locations.  <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> The areas around Mormond Hill, east of Cuminestown and the Braes of Gight are already <i>wind turbine landscapes</i> and over their underlying capacity.  There is potential for wind energy development in areas away from the over-capacity <i>wind turbine landscapes</i> further capacity is predicated on following the approaches outlined in the detailed guidance.
												Max. Numbers in Group	1-5	1-3	1-3	1-3		
												Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4	3-6	5-10	5-10		
<b>1 (iii) Landscape Character Area: Wooded Estates around Old Deer;</b>																		
Med/High	Med/High	Med/High	Med/High	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Five medium/large, one medium and five small/medium turbines have been consented	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently no applications for turbines in this area.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b> The old estate woodlands are of high quality and integrity. The area also has a high value with a Country Park at Old Deer.  <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> The southern part of this LCA is over its underlying capacity and is a <i>Landscape with Wind Turbines</i> so there is only very limited capacity in the north of this LCA.
												Max. Numbers in Group	1-3					
												Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4					
<b>1 (iv) Landscape Character Area: Upland Ridges South of Deveron;</b>																		

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
Med	Med	Med	Med/Low	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently there are nine large, seven medium-large, five medium and seventeen small/medium turbines.	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines/ Wind Turbine Agricultural Heartland</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Proposals for five large, ten medium/large, thirteen medium and eight medium/small turbines.	<p><b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This area has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern, open character and low value. It could accommodate small clusters of small/medium, medium, medium/large or large turbines. However preference should be given to larger sized turbines where this complies with the detailed guidance.</p> <p><b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> The areas north and south of Rothienorman are already <i>wind turbine landscapes</i> and over their underlying capacity.</p> <p>There is potential for wind energy development in areas away from the over-capacity <i>Wind Turbine Landscapes</i> further capacity is predicated on following the approaches outlined in the detailed guidance.</p>
											Max. Numbers in Group	1-5	1-3	1-3	1-3			
											Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4	3-6	5-10	5-10			

## GUIDANCE: LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

### 1(i) KNOCKHILL AND ABERCHIRDER

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium); 50-<80m (medium/large);

Group Sizes: 1-5 (small/medium); 1-3 (medium and medium/large);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium); 3-6km (medium); 5-10km (medium/large).

This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its medium scale, landform, open character and low value. Preference should be given to larger sized turbines where this meets all other criteria. Knock Hill is a distinctive local landmark from the surrounding lower farmland it should be free of all turbines.

Proposals for medium/large and medium turbines adjacent to *Deveron and Upper Ythan Valley* would also exceed the landscape capacity of this more sensitive LCA. The upper-slopes of the valley landform, should be maintained free of turbines greater than 30m in height as they could easily visually dominate the smaller scale landscape.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the rolling landform to screen views.

The larger turbines should primarily be located in central areas of the farmland and should be located away from the smaller scale hills and hill slopes to avoid diminishing the apparent scale of the slopes or breaking the skyline. Proximity to residential properties may also limit opportunities for locating larger turbines and/or turbine groups. Where there are applications for small extensions to existing groups of the same size and design, exploit opportunities for expanding existing small groups/creating groups in preference to further new groups.

### 1(ii) AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium); 50-<80m (medium/large); 80m+ (large);

Group Sizes: 1-5 (small/medium); 1-3 (medium; medium/large and large);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium); 3-6km (medium); 5-10km (medium/large and large).

It should be noted that the areas around Mormond Hill, east of Cuminstown and the Braes of Gight are already over their underlying capacity and are '*Wind Turbine Agricultural Heartlands*' they should not have any further development.

Where the landscape is currently an *Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines* there is opportunity for extensions to existing development only if the new turbines match the design and height of the originals and are sited adjacent to them with the same pattern and spacing.

In areas where it is an *Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines* there is very low capacity left. Clear separation distances should be maintained, in particular preventing the infilling of existing gaps with multiple single turbine developments. Preference should be given to larger sized turbines where this meets all other criteria.

The larger turbines should primarily be located in central areas of the farmland and should be located away from the smaller scale hills and hill slopes to avoid diminishing the apparent scale of the slopes or breaking the skyline. Proximity to residential properties may also limit opportunities for locating larger turbines and/or turbine groups.

Mormond Hill is a distinctive local landmark from the surrounding lower farmland. It is important in terms of screening and preventing visual/physical coalescence of wind energy developments. The summit area should be free of all turbines. The area surrounding it should reflect the amplitude and scale of the hill, with the slopes and surrounding area maintained free of turbines greater than 30m.

Proposals for large, medium/large and medium turbines adjacent to *Deveron and Upper Ythan Valley* would also exceed the landscape capacity of this more sensitive LCA. The upper-slopes of the valley landform, should be maintained free of turbines greater than 30m in height as they could easily visually dominate the smaller scale landscape.

### 1(iii) WOODED ESTATES AROUND OLD DEER

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium);

Group Sizes: 1-3 (small/medium);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium).

The old estate woodlands are of high quality and integrity. The area also has a high value with a Country Park at Old Deer. There is potential for very occasional small groups or single small/medium turbines sited in less prominent areas with landform/ tree backclothing away from the summits of small hills. In this LCA consideration should be given to the setting of and views from Old Deer, the Country Park and village.

The southern part of this LCA is over its underlying capacity and is a *Landscape with Wind Turbines* so there is only very limited capacity in the north of this LCA.

## 1(iv) UPLAND RIDGES SOUTH OF DEVERON

### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium); 50-<80m (medium/large); 80m+ (large);

Group Sizes: 1-5 (small/medium); 1-3 (medium, medium/large, large);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium); 3-6km (medium); 5-10km (medium/large, large).

This area has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern, open character and low value. It could accommodate small clusters of medium/large or large turbines.

Proposals for large, medium/large and medium turbines adjacent to *Deveron and Upper Ythan Valley* would also exceed the landscape capacity of this more sensitive LCA. The upper-slopes of the valley landform, should be maintained free of turbines greater than 30m in height as they could easily visually dominate the smaller scale landscape.

The areas north and south of Rothienorman are already *Wind Turbine Landscapes* and exceed their underlying capacity. There is potential for wind energy development in areas away from the over-capacity *Wind Turbine Landscapes*.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks. Positioning in relation to electricity transmission lines and telecommunication masts should also be carefully considered to avoid cumulative clutter.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the rolling landform to screen views.

The larger turbines should primarily be located in central areas of the farmland and should be located away from the smaller scale hills and hill slopes to avoid diminishing the apparent scale of the slopes or breaking the skyline. Proximity to residential properties may also limit opportunities for locating larger turbines and/or turbine groups. Where there are applications for small extensions to existing groups of the same size and design, exploit opportunities for expanding existing small groups/creating groups in preference to further new groups.





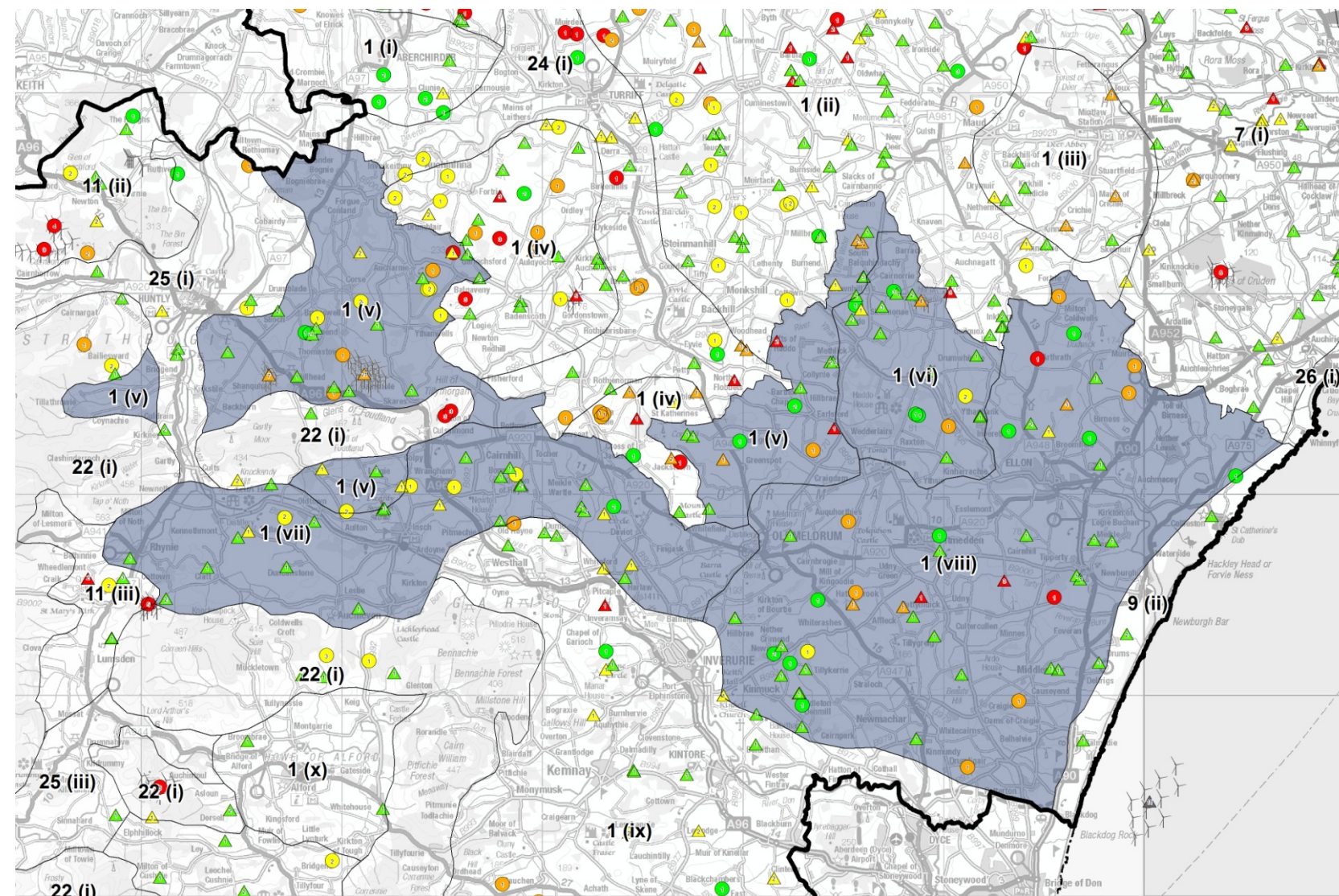
# LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

## 1(v) NORTHERN ROLLING LOWLANDS

This area comprises an area of simple, smooth, rounded hills forming a rolling landform. There is a simple land cover pattern of large geometric fields, thick woodlands and shelterbelts. There is development along the A96 corridor and there are telecommunication masts and lines of pylons. This area forms part of the setting for Huntly, Insch and Oldmeldrum. The farmland is well-managed with pockets of poorer quality.

## 1(vi) YTHAN STRATH FARMLAND

Lowland undulating landform centred around the shallow strath of the River Ythan, rocky outcrops are a feature. There are open hills, with sheltered boggy hollows and pockets of intensively managed farmland. Small to medium scale with a traditional unimproved field pattern. A diverse vegetation pattern, with gorse and broom field boundaries and birch scrub. Drystone dykes, rocky outcrops and stone cottages create an upland character contrasting with the extensive policies surrounding Haddo House. Haddo House is also the largest HGDL in the Inventory and also contains a Country Park.



## 1(vii) INSCH BASIN

Sandwiched between the much higher ground of the surrounding Grampian Outliers of the Hill of Foudland and Bennachie this is an area of rolling farmland, with a chain of small conical hills extending across its centre, some of which have distinctive hill forts on their summits (Dunnydeer). It is a well-developed landscape with the settlements of Rhynie, Insch and Oldmeldrum. Farms are studded evenly across the area. There are large geometric fields, forming a colourful patchwork of arable and pastureland, enhanced by small broadleaved copses.

## 1(viii) FORMARTINE LOWLANDS

A gently undulating lowland plateau; there are low-lying hollows which rise gradually to higher ground in the west. It has many similarities to the *Coastal Farmland* LCAs with open expansive views over large-scale geometric fields with post and wire fencing. There are large farms, some policy woodland around estates and prominent lines of trees. There are a high number of large farms with modern sheds together with highly visible lines of pylons, main roads and the A90. The influence of the sea is clear in the east on the boundary with the *Coastal Strip*.



1(vii) View across the Insch Basin showing the line of conical hills crossing its centre and Dunnydeer Hill fort. Bennachie is visible as a backdrop. It is important that turbines do not dominate these small hills.

Table 6.1(e): Summary of Landscape Capacity, Cumulative Effects and Guidance for Future Wind Energy Development: Agricultural Heartland

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key:  No Capacity  Low Capacity  Medium Capacity  High Capacity																		
Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (v) Landscape Character Area: Northern Rolling Lowlands</b>																		
Med/Low	Med	Med/Low	Med/Low						Currently there are three large, thirty-two medium-large (Glens of Foudland and Dummuies), five medium and twenty-six small/medium single turbines.	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines/ Wind Turbine Agricultural Heartland</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</b>						Proposals are for one large, four medium/large, eight medium and six small/medum turbines	<p><b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern, generally open character and relatively low value. It had capacity to accommodate small clusters of medium/large or large turbines. Capacity for turbines is limited by proximity to sensitive locations.</p> <p><b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> The areas immediately around Glens of Foudland and above the Braes of Gight are already <i>Wind Turbine Agricultural Heartland</i> and are therefore above their underlying capacity. Proposals for further turbines in these areas and in the neighbouring <i>Grampian Outliers</i>, and edge of the <i>Upland Riidges South of the Deveron</i> would take these areas well over their underlying threshold.  There is very limited capacity left in this LCA.</p>
												1-3	1-3	1				
												2-4	3-6	5-10				

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT				PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)									
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (vi) Landscape Character Area: Ythan Strath Farmland;</b>																		
Med/High	Med	Med/High	Med/High	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Four medium/large (Hill of Skilmafilly), one medium and fifteen small/medium turbines consented.  Large and medium/large turbines on the boundary with Northern Rolling Lowlands and Agricultural Heartland LCAs have a visual influence on this LCA	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Proposals for one medium/large, two medium and six small/medium turbines.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b>  This area has very limited capacity for wind energy due to its higher quality and distinctive smaller scale pattern. This area also mainly comprises the largest HGDL in the inventory around Haddo House. This is also a Country Park so is a landscape with a high value.  In this LCA consideration should be given to the setting of and views from Haddo House and HGDL by not siting turbines over 15m in these areas.  There was potential for very occasional small groups or single small/medium turbines in the north, however operational and consented wind turbine development, within and close to the boundaries means that this LCA has reached capacity and is over its underlying capacity of <i>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</i> .  <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b>  Current development takes up most of the capacity in most areas.  The north of the LCA is already a <i>Landscape with Wind Turbines</i> and over its underlying capacity.  There is a small amount of capacity for small turbines in small groups but this is limited to the south of this LCA.
											Max. Numbers in Group	1-3						
											Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4						

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity      Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
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Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (vii) Landscape Character Area: <i>Insch Basin</i>;</b>																		
Med	Med/High	Med	Med/High	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Four medium and twenty five small/medium turbines have been consented.  On the boundary with the neighbouring LCA, the <i>Lumsden Valley</i> three large turbines (Cairnmore) have been built and these are contiguous with the <i>Insch Basin</i> landscape and influence its western edge.	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines /Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbine/ Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines /Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Five medium and two small/medium turbines are proposed. Five further large turbines are proposed at Cairnmore in adjacent LCA <i>Lumsden Valley</i> .	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b>  An area of gently rolling farmland between the twin ridges of Bennachie and the Ridge of Foudland. Flatter in the east, with a central area of distinctive conical hills spanning the basin between the surrounding high ground. The area has some small settlements and numerous farms. SAMs including hillforts such as Dunnideer and several HGDL give it a relatively high value. Visible from the surrounding higher ground, which is highly valued and popular for recreation, this area is only suitable for turbines below 50m.  <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b>  Existing development across the boundary in the adjacent LCA <i>Lumsden Valley</i> has resulted in parts of the western basin around Rhynie being over their underlying capacity <i>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</i> . The area is currently <i>Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbine</i> . No further turbines can be accommodated in this area.  Five further large turbines are proposed at Cairnmore in the adjacent <i>Lumsden Valley</i> LCA and this will result in an <i>Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines</i> , which will take the western part of the <i>Insch Basin</i> well over its underlying capacity. The central area north of <i>Insch</i> is above its underlying capacity with the landscape to the east already at its underlying capacity as <i>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</i> . Therefore there is very limited capacity left, in the north and far east of the Basin for a few small clusters of turbines.
											Max. Numbers in Group	1-3	1					
											Min Group Separation Distances (km)	4-6	6-8					

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key:  No Capacity  Low Capacity  Medium Capacity  High Capacity Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT				PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)									
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
1 (viii) Landscape Character Area: <i>Formartine Lowlands</i>																		
Low	Med/High	Med	Med						Four large turbines currently consented within this LCA predominantly in the central area. Five medium-large turbines, two medium and twenty seven small/medium single turbines.  The European Offshore Wind Development Centre (EOWDC) a proposal of 11 very large (195m) turbines, is sited 2.4km offshore from this LCA.	<i>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</i>	<i>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</i>						There are proposals for two large turbines, seven single medium/large and one medium turbine.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to large scale, landform, simple pattern of large geometric fields and a generally open character. The capacity however varies according to proximity to the neighbouring sensitive LCA <i>Coastal Strip</i> .  <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> The EOWDC takes up all the capacity along the eastern boundary and across the eastern parts of this area. Current consented development in other areas remains well within capacity
										Max. Numbers in Group	1-5	1-3	1-3	1-3				
										Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4	3-6	5-10	5-10				

## GUIDANCE: LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

### 1(v) NORTHERN ROLLING LOWLANDS

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium); 50-<80m (medium/large);

Group Sizes: 1-3 (small/medium); 1-3 (medium); 1 (medium/large);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium); 3-6km (medium); 5-10km (medium/large).

This area has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern, generally open character and relatively low value. It has capacity to accommodate small clusters of medium/large turbines but this is limited by proximity to sensitive locations.



1(v) The rolling landform and large scale give an underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy

Proposals for large, medium/large and medium turbines adjacent to *Deveron and Upper Ythan Valley* would also exceed the landscape capacity of this more sensitive LCA. The upper-slopes of the valley landform, should be maintained free of turbines greater than 30m in height as they could easily visually

dominate the smaller scale landscape. The areas close to the *Grampian Outliers* should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height to reflect the low capacity of these areas and avoid the visual domination of large turbines on lower hill slopes.

The setting of Haddo House HGDL (in the neighbouring LCA but with views out) should remain free of turbines greater than 15m. The area around the Braes of Gight should be maintained free of medium/large and medium turbines. The areas immediately around Glens of Foudland and above the Braes of Gight are already *Wind Turbine Agricultural Heartland* and are therefore above their underlying capacity. Proposals for further turbines in these areas and in the neighbouring *Grampian Outliers*, and edge of the Upland Ridges South of the Deveron would take these areas well over their underlying threshold.

#### There is very limited capacity left in this LCA.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings and bold woodland blocks. Positioning in relation to electricity transmission lines and telecommunication masts should also be carefully considered to avoid cumulative clutter.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the extensive areas of forestry to screen views. It will be possible to use tree belts to discretely accommodate small/medium turbines in this area along with medium turbines.

Where there are applications for small extensions to existing groups of the same size and design, exploit opportunities for expanding existing small groups/creating groups in preference to further new groups.

### 1(vi) YTHAN STRATH FARMLAND

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium);

Group Sizes: 1-3 (small/medium);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium).

This area has very limited capacity for wind energy due to its higher quality and distinctive smaller scale pattern. This area also mainly comprises the largest HGDL in the inventory around Haddo House. This is also a Country Park so is a landscape with a high value. In this LCA consideration should be given to the setting of and views from Haddo House and HGDL by not siting turbines over 15m in these areas as the principal concern is to avoid dominating its sensitive landscape setting.

There was potential for very occasional small groups or single small/medium turbines, however operational and consented wind turbine development, within and close to the boundaries means that this LCA has reached capacity and is over its underlying capacity of *Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines* in the north. Current development takes up most of the capacity in most areas. There is a small amount of capacity for small turbines in small groups but this is limited to the south of this LCA.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the rolling landform to screen views.

### 1(vii) INSCH BASIN

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines /Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium);

Group Sizes: 1-3 (small/medium); 1 (medium);

Separation Distances: 4-6km (small/medium); 6-8km (medium).

An area of gently rolling farmland between the twin ridges of Bennachie and the Ridge of Foudland. Flatter in the east, with a central area of distinctive conical hills spanning the basin between the surrounding high ground. The area has some small settlements and numerous farms. SAMs including hillforts such as Dunnydeer and several HGDL give it a relatively high value. Visible from the surrounding higher ground, which is highly valued and popular for recreation, this area is only suitable for turbines below 50m.

Avoid siting on hilltops. No turbines in the more sensitive settings and view sheds of the hillforts or HGDL. Potential for very occasional small groups or single medium turbines sited in less prominent areas with landform/ tree backclothing.

The areas surrounding the Grampian Outliers should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height. This is to reflect the low capacity and high visibility of these landmarks.

The central area of the Inch basin in particular the chain of small conical hills extending across it centre is of a higher sensitivity and lower capacity than the eastern part of the LCA so should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height. Care should be taken not to site turbines on the summits of these small hills turbines should be closely associated with buildings and/ or backclothed by higher ground/ trees.

Existing development across the boundary in the adjacent LCA *Lumsden Valley* has resulted in parts of the western basin around Rhynie being over their underlying capacity *Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines*. The area is currently *Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbine*. No further turbines can be accommodated in this area.

Five further large turbines are proposed at Cairnmore in the adjacent *Lumsden Valley* LCA and this will result in an *Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines*, which will take the western part of the Inch Basin well over its underlying capacity.

The central area north of Inch is above its underlying capacity with the landscape to the east already at its underlying capacity as *Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines*. Therefore there is very limited capacity left, in the north and far east of the Basin for a few small clusters of turbines.



1(vii) The Inch Basin an area of rolling farmland and small conical hills. Existing small/medium turbines sited with tree backclothing.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks. Positioning in relation to electricity transmission lines and telecommunication masts should also be carefully considered to avoid cumulative clutter.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that clear intervisibility is infrequent. This can be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting landforms and areas of trees and forestry to screen views. Where there are two or three closely located applications for single turbines of the same size, exploit opportunities for clustering as a group in preference to separation.

### 1(viii) FORMARTINE LOWLANDS

### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium); 50-<80m (medium/large); 80m+ (large);

Group Sizes: 1-5 (small/medium); 1-3 (medium, medium/large, large);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium); 3-6km (medium); 5-10km (medium/large, large).

This area has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern, generally open character and relatively low value. It has capacity to accommodate small clusters of medium/large turbines but this is limited by proximity to sensitive locations. The capacity however varies according to proximity to the neighbouring sensitive LCAs. Medium, medium/large and large turbines should be sited away from the boundary of the *Coastal Strip* and away from the Ythan river valley to reduce their potential dominance in these sensitive areas. Consideration should be given to limit the scale of development close to the city of Aberdeen within its greenbelt, as this LCA is part of its wider setting.

It should be noted that the EOWDC takes up all the capacity along the eastern boundary and across the eastern parts of this areas. Current consented development in other areas remains well within capacity

The principal concern in this area is to avoid dominating smaller scale and/or sensitive landscape such as the HGDL at Pitmedden, Straloch and Keith Hall, settlements and the valley landform around the river Ythan. The larger turbines should primarily be located in central areas of the farmland and should be located away from the smaller scale hills and hill slopes to avoid diminishing the apparent scale of the slopes. Proximity to residential properties may also limit opportunities for locating larger turbines and/or turbine groups.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks. Positioning in relation to electricity transmission lines and telecommunication masts should also be carefully considered to avoid cumulative clutter.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the rolling landform to screen views.



1(vii) A mix of three large and two small/medium turbines running across the boundary between the *Insch Bain* and neighbouring *Lumsden Valley*. These turbines are sited within 1km of each other and this has led to adverse visual and scale effects and odd perspectives when seen from certain viewpoints.



# LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

## 1(ix) CENTRAL WOODED ESTATES

This LCA is characterised as a rolling landform with low hills and wide valleys. There are pockets of small-scale relief and open views in some areas. Dense woodland is a consistent feature; the strong woodland structure is associated with numerous estate policies. There are other features such as dressed stonewalls, formal gateways and avenues of Beech trees. It is a well-settled landscape spreading out from around the city of Aberdeen. There are the larger towns of Inverurie and Kintore, together with the smaller villages of Monymusk and Kenmay. It is crossed by the A96 and the main Inverness to Aberdeen railway. There are eight HGDL and numerous large houses. It rises up in the west to the large distinctive bulk of Bennachie.

## 1(x) HOWE OF ALFORD

An expansive basin, flat at its centre next to the River Don, sloping gently upwards to a imposing amphitheatre of dark moorland ridges. It is a patchwork of large intensively farmed open fields, interspersed with sparse lines of broadleaved trees and hedges. Policy woodland around Castle Forbes together with avenues of mature Beech trees and broadleaved shelterbelts add to the

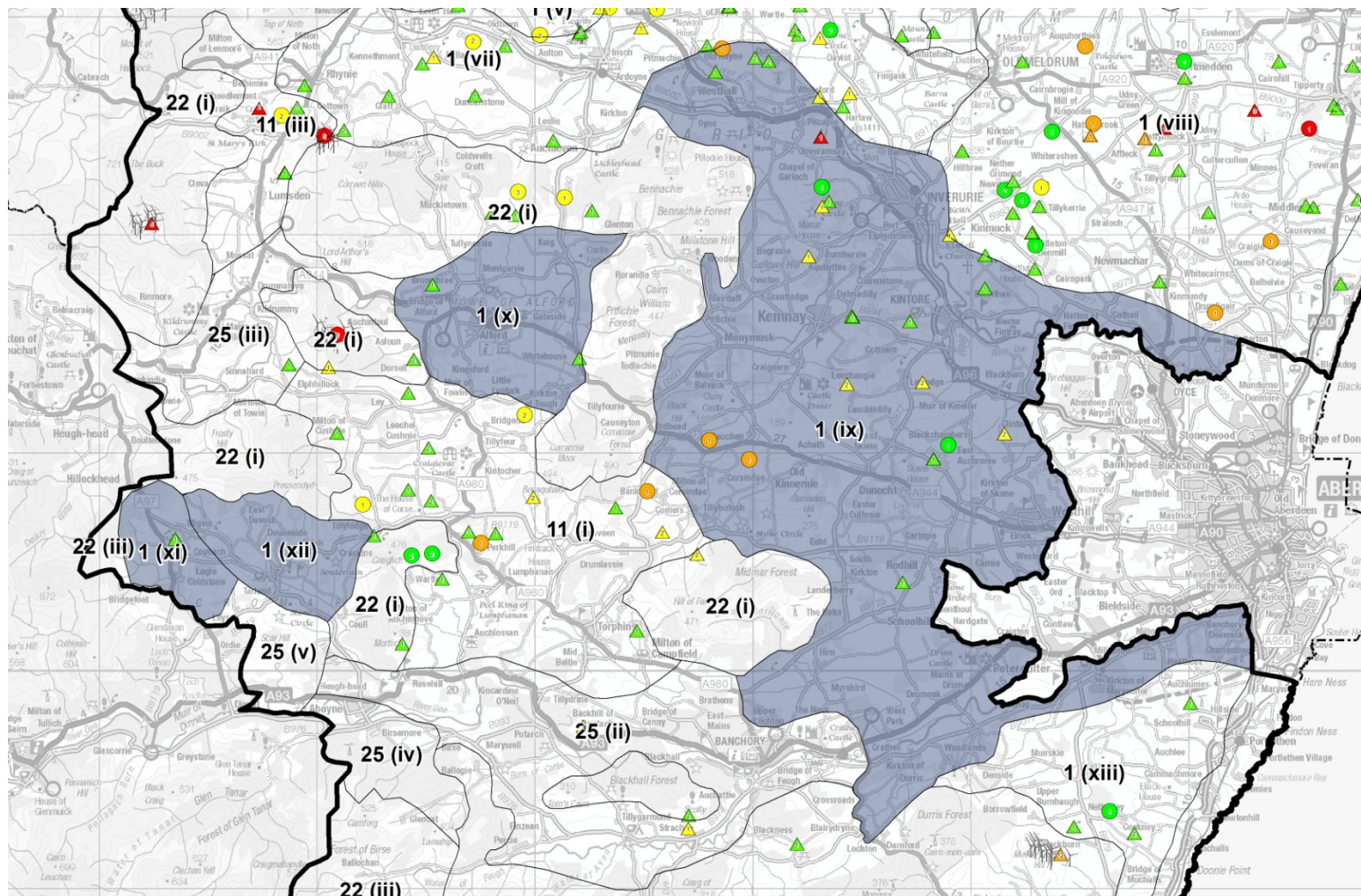
patchwork. The small village of Alford lies at the centre; there are scattered houses and steadings together with a network of small roads. It is generally well-managed farmland with open views up to the surrounding higher ground.

## 1(xi) CROMAR FARMLANDS

Low lying hills and broad undulating valleys on the long lower slopes of Morven. Glacial mounds interrupt gentle undulations and an imposing backdrop of high mountains encircles the area. It is predominantly pastoral with large areas of improved pasture emphasised by shelterbelts and conifer plantations. Birch woodland extends down the lower slopes of Morven and along the burns that run down its lower slopes.

## 1(xii) HOWE OF CROMAR

A wide sweeping basin it's rising slopes contrast with the flat to gently rolling relief at the heart of the area. Encircled by an imposing backdrop of moorland and ridges. It has a large-scale patchwork of rectilinear fields emboldened by crop patterns, thick shelterbelts and conifer plantations creating a robust pattern. There is a small village at Tarland and a network of minor roads. The Cairngorms rise up in the distance and these and the Howe are the focus for the iconic 'Queens View'.



1(x) The Howe of Alford - An expansive basin, flat at its centre next to the River Don, sloping gently upwards to a imposing amphitheatre of dark moorland ridges

**Table 6.1(f): Summary of Landscape Capacity, Cumulative Effects and Guidance for Future Wind Energy Development: Agricultural Heartland**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity      Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (ix) Landscape Character Area: Central Wooded Estates</b>																		
Med	Med/High	Med/High	Med/High	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	One large, ten medium and twelve small/medium turbines have been consented	<i>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</i>	<i>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Proposals are also for three medium/large turbines.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b> Due to its pattern, extensive woodland cover, higher quality and value there is only potential for very occasional small groups or single medium turbines sited in less prominent areas with landform/ tree backclothing. The areas surrounding the <i>Grampian Outliers</i> and in particular <i>Bennachie</i> , should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height. This is to reflect the visibility and importance of these highly sensitive landmarks. Consideration should be given to limit the scale of development close to the city of Aberdeen within its greenbelt as this LCA is part of its wider setting.
											<i>Max. Numbers in Group</i>	1-3	1					<b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b>
											<i>Min Group Separation Distances (km)</i>	4-6	6-8					

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity      Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																		
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (x) Landscape Character Area: Howe of Alford;</b>																		
Med/ Low	Med/ High	Med	Med/ High	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Two small/medium turbines have been consented	<i>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines</i>	<i>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines</i>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	No turbines are proposed within this LCA. A wind farm of six large turbines is proposed at Tibberchindy and three medium/small turbines in adjoining <i>Grampian Outliers</i> LCA.	<p><b>Landscape Analysis:</b> Uniformly flat at its centre. The contrast between the Howe and the steeper surrounding moorland plateaux gives the area its distinct identity and increases its sensitivity.</p> <p>This area is capable of accommodating limited amounts of wind energy due to its scale, flat landform and simple pattern. However its open character, value and visual sensitivity significantly reduce both the size and numbers of turbines that can be accommodated. The capacity also varies according to proximity to the neighbouring sensitive LCAs <i>the Grampian Outliers</i>.</p> <p><b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> There is capacity left for small numbers of medium/small turbines although there is the opportunity for limited expansion of existing turbine groups as long as they mirror the type, design, pattern and spacing of the existing turbines.</p>
												1-5	1-3					
												4-6	6-8					

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input checked="" type="radio"/> High Capacity					Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+													
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
<b>1 (xi) Landscape Character Area: Cromar Farmlands;</b>																		
Med	High	Med/ High	Med/ High	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently one turbine consented and one visible in an adjoining LCA (both small/medium)	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently no applications for turbines in this area.	<p><b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This type is not suitable for wind turbine development above 15m in height due to its quality, visibility from the Cairngorm National Park and high value as part of the 'Queens View'. This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farm buildings or tourist facilities. Turbines should be closely associated with buildings and/ or backclothed by higher ground/ trees.</p> <p><b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> <b>This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farm buildings or tourist facilities.</b></p>
<b>1 (xii) Landscape Character Area: Howe of Cromar;</b>																		
Med	High	Med/ High	Med/ High	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently one turbine consented and one visible in an adjoining LCA (both small/medium)	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Currently no applications for turbines in this area.	<p><b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This type is not suitable for wind turbine development over 15m in height, due to its rarity, quality, visibility from the Cairngorm National Park and high value as part of the 'Queens View'. This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farm buildings or tourist facilities. Turbines should be closely associated with buildings and/ or backclothed by higher ground/ trees.</p> <p><b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farm buildings or tourist facilities. Turbines should not be approved in close proximity to the Queens View.</p>

## GUIDANCE: LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

### 1(ix) CENTRAL WOODED ESTATES

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium);

Group Sizes: 1-3 (small/medium); 1 (medium);

Separation Distances: 4-6km (small/medium); 6-8km (medium).

This area is characterised by its rolling landform, extensive woodland cover and large number of HGDL (eight) which contribute to the area's high value. It is the backdrop to Aberdeen and foreground to the distinctive landmark hill of Bennachie. Due to its strong pattern, extensive woodland cover, higher quality and value there is only potential for very occasional small groups or single medium turbines sited in less prominent areas with landform/ tree backclothing.

The areas surrounding the *Grampian Outliers* and in particular Bennachie, should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height. This is to reflect the visibility and importance of these highly sensitive landmarks. Consideration should be given to limit the scale of development close to the city of Aberdeen within its greenbelt as this LCA is part of its wider setting.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings and woodland. Positioning in relation to electricity transmission lines and telecommunication masts should also be carefully considered to avoid cumulative clutter.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the extensive areas of trees and forestry to screen views. It will be possible to use tree belts to discretely accommodate small/medium turbines in this area along with medium turbines. Where there are applications for small extensions to existing groups of the same size and design, exploit opportunities for expanding existing small groups/creating groups in preference to further new groups.



1(ix) Use the extensive tree belts to discretely accommodate small/medium turbines in this area along with medium turbines.

### 1(x) HOWE OF ALFORD

#### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium);

Group Sizes: 1-5 (small/medium); 1-3 (medium);

Separation Distances: 4-6km (small/medium); 6-8km (medium).

The contrast between the Howe and the steeper surrounding moorland plateaux gives the area its distinct identity and increases its sensitivity.

This area is capable of accommodating limited amounts of wind energy due to its scale, landform and simple pattern. However its open character, value and visual sensitivity significantly reduce both the size and numbers of turbines that can be accommodated. The capacity also varies according to proximity to the neighbouring sensitive LCAs the *Grampian Outliers*. The lower hills that rise up to the *Moorland Plateaux* should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height.

There is capacity left for small numbers of small and small/medium turbines although there is the opportunity for limited expansion of existing turbine groups as long as they mirror the type, design, pattern and spacing of the existing turbines.



## LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

### 1(xiii) KINCARDINE PLATEAU

This LCA is undulating, falling gently towards the coast, with some long distance views and the influence of the sea on the eastern edge. It is the transition landscape between the moorland at the termination of the great Highland Boundary (*The Mounth*) and the *Coastal Strip*. It is mainly marginal farmland, with rocky outcrops and regenerating Birch woodland. Its proximity to Aberdeen is clear in the development of scattered modern steadings and renovated farmhouses.

### 1(xiv) GARVOCK AND GLENBERVIE

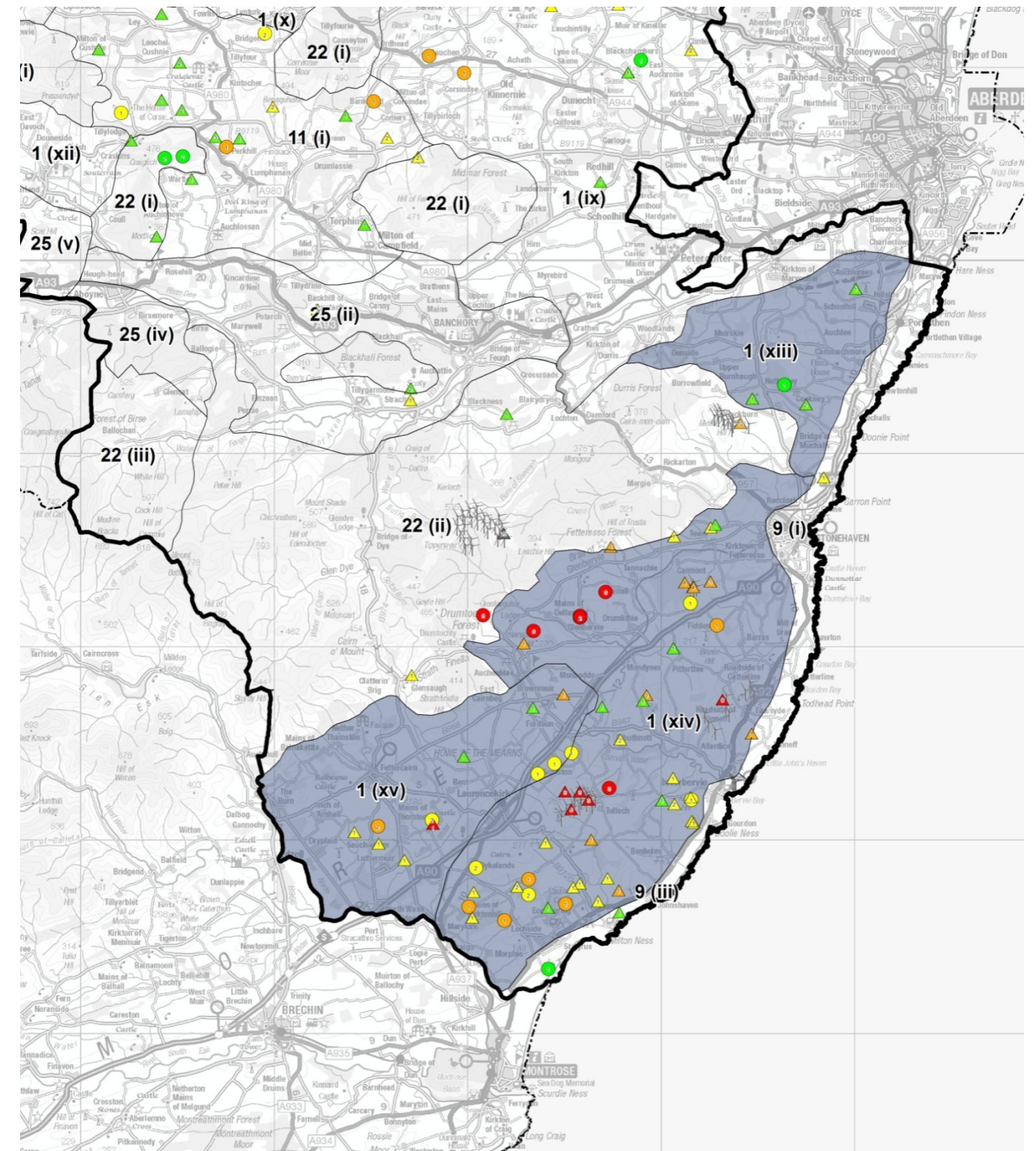
A smooth sweeping, rolling landform that draws the eye, there are areas of higher ground at Hill of Garvock and at the base of *The Mounth* at Glenbervie. It has a bold geometric pattern of large intensively farmed open fields, in an array of colours. There are few field boundaries and the few coniferous plantations located on hilltops are a minor element. Broadleaved woodlands enhance the pattern in particular along the Bervie Water. It is a well settled landscape, villages such as Glenbervie and Arbuthnott, numerous farms and large modern farm buildings. There is a network of minor roads, electricity pylons and the A90. It provides the setting for numerous coastal towns such as Stonehaven, Inverbervie, Gourdon, Johnshaven and Montrose and is the backdrop to Laurencekirk.

### 1(xv) HOWE OF MEARNS

This is the northeastern extent of Strathmore that runs from Perth & Kinross through Angus and terminates here. It is an expansive flat basin sloping up to the dramatic steep moorland slopes of the *Mounth*, this change in slope is the distinctive line of the Highland Boundary Fault. There is a patchwork of large intensively farmed open fields in an array of colours, interspersed with small coniferous plantations, policy woodlands at the base of slopes and pockets of scrubby Birch along watercourses. There are avenues of Beech trees and dressed stonewalls associated with estates. Small villages such as Edzel Woods and Fettercairn and numerous farms with modern large-scale sheds dot the countryside,



1(xv) The northeastern extent of Strathmore viewed from the Hill of Garvock, with the Mounth as backdrop.



**Table 6.1(g): Summary of Landscape Capacity, Cumulative Effects and Guidance for Future Wind Energy Development: Agricultural Heartland**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																			
Key:  No Capacity  Low Capacity  Medium Capacity  High Capacity																			
Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+																			
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)											
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)	
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL			
<b>1 (xiii) Landscape Character Area: Kincardine Plateau;</b>																			
Med	Med/High	Med/High	Med/Low						Currently there are four small/medium single turbines.  In the adjacent area of the Mounth Meikle Carewe (twelve medium/large turbines) have been consented and this although clearly separate on the end of the Highland Boundary Fault has some influence on the plateau.	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines</b>						Proposals for one small/medium turbine.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b>  This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its large scale, flat landform, simple pattern and a generally open character. It could accommodate small clusters of medium/large turbines but not the largest turbines due to the landscape pattern of small, fields and drystone dykes that make up large parts of the plateau. Preference should be given to medium/large sized turbines where this meets all other criteria  Proximity to sensitive locations (neighbouring more sensitive LCAs) and as part of the setting of the city of Aberdeen.  <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b>  Current consented development remains well within capacity  The area immediately to the north of the wind farm at Meikle Carewe is visually influenced by this development, although it is on higher ground and in another LCA ( <i>The Mounth</i> ). Care should be taken to ensure that any developments in the Kincardine Plateau follow the separation distances.	



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																			
Key:  No Capacity  Low Capacity  Medium Capacity  High Capacity										Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+									
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT					PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)									
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)	
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL			
<b>1 (xiv) Landscape Character Area: Garvock and Glenbervie</b>																			
Med	Med/High	Med	Med							The areas have thirty three large turbines consented. These are mainly in wind farms (seventeen at Tullo Hill at Hill of Garvock, seven at Cloch-na Hill and nine at St John's). There are also nine medium/large, nineteen medium and five small/medium turbines.  In Angus there are twenty turbines consented between Brechin and the boundary with Aberdeenshire.	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Wind Turbine Agricultural Heartland</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines</b>						Proposals are also for three groups of three large turbines close to the boundary with the Mounth LCA and these would exceed capacity in this area. Five medium/large and seven medium/small turbines.  Proposals for one turbine in Angus close to the A90.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b> This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern and a generally open character. The capacity however varies according to proximity to the neighbouring sensitive LCA.  <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> Current development takes up most of the capacity in most areas,  The areas around Hill of Garvock is already a <i>Wind Turbine Landscape</i> and over its underlying capacity.  There are potential cross boundary cumulative effects with Angus at the southern boundary of this LCA  There is a limited amount of capacity for small/medium and medium turbines in small groups but this will be restricted by the proximity of existing turbines.
													Max. Numbers in Group	1-5	1-3				
													Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4	3-6				
<b>1 (xv) Landscape Character Area: Howe of Mearns;</b>																			
Med	Med/High	Med/High	Med							The area has one large turbine consented. There are also one medium/large, three medium and two small/medium turbines.  The developments of wind farms in the neighbouring LCA <i>Garvock and Glenbervie</i> (seventeen at Tullo Hill at Hill of Garvock and seven at Cloch-na Hill) are visible and have some	<b>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Agricultural Heartland with Wind Turbines</b>	<b>Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines</b>						Proposals are also for two medium/large and four medium/small turbines.	<b>Landscape Analysis:</b> Howe means <i>fertile hollow</i> and this is the defining characteristic of this landscape. Uniformly flat the Howe is the north-eastern extent of the broad vale of Strathmore. The contrast between the flat carse of the Howe and the steep flank of the Highland Boundary Fault gives the area its distinct identity and increases its sensitivity.  This area is capable of accommodating limited amounts of wind energy due to its scale, flat landform and simple pattern. However its open character and visual sensitivity significantly reduce both the size and numbers of turbines that can be accommodated. The capacity also varies according to proximity to the
													Max. Numbers in Group	1-3					
													Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4					

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 1. AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND																		
Key:  No Capacity  Low Capacity  Medium Capacity  High Capacity					Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+													
BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development)					CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT			PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development)										
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development				Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Existing/ Consented Developments	Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s)	Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size)					Current Applications	Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design)
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	S/M	M	M/L	L	VL				S/M	M	M/L	L	VL		
									influence on the Howe, however they are clearly located on separate landforms from Mearns.								neighbouring sensitive LCA <i>The Mounth</i> . <b>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines:</b> The landscapes to either side ( <i>The Mounth and Garvock and Glenbervie</i> ) of this LCA are already over their underlying capacity. Current development takes up nearly all of the capacity within this LCA. There is only very limited capacity left for small numbers of medium/small turbines although there is the opportunity for limited expansion of existing turbine groups as long as they mirror both the type, design, pattern and spacing of the existing turbines.	

# GUIDANCE: LCT 1: AGRICULTURAL HEARTLAND

## 1 (xiii) KINCARDINE PLATEAU

### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium); 50-<80m (medium/large);

Group Sizes: 1-5 (small/medium); 1-5 (medium, medium/large);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium); 3-6km (medium); 5-10km (medium/large).

This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its large scale, flat landform, simple pattern and a generally open character. It could accommodate small clusters of medium/large turbines but not the largest turbines due to the landscape pattern of small, fields and drystone dykes that make up large parts of the plateau. Preference should be given to medium/large sized turbines where this meets all other criteria

This will be limited by proximity to sensitive locations (neighbouring more sensitive LCAs) and as part of the setting of the city of Aberdeen. Medium and medium/large large turbines should be sited away from the boundary of the *Coastal Strip* to reduce their potential dominance in this sensitive LCA. The hills that are adjacent to the eastern end of *The Mounth* should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height. This is to reflect the visibility and importance of this highly sensitive landmark.

Current consented development remains well within capacity. The area immediately to the north of the wind farm at Meikle Carewe is visually influenced by this development, although it is on higher ground and in another LCA (*The Mounth*). Care should be taken to ensure that any developments in the Kincardine Plateau follow the separation distances.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the rolling landform to screen views.

## 1 (xiv) GARVOCK AND GLENBERVIE

### Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium); 30-<50m (medium);

Group Sizes: 1-3 (small/medium); 1-5 (medium);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium); 3-6km (medium).

This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its scale, landform, simple pattern and a generally open character. The capacity however varies according to proximity to the neighbouring sensitive LCA. The hills that are adjacent to the *Mounth* and which are integral to the Highland Boundary Fault should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height. This is to reflect the visibility and importance of this highly sensitive landmark.

The area close to the *Coastal Strip* should be maintained free of any further turbines greater than 30m in height. This is to reflect the scale and complexity of the landform and limit the influence on the sensitive LCA.

**Current development takes up most of the capacity in most areas.** The area around Hill of Garvock is already a *Wind Turbine Landscape* and over its underlying capacity. There are cross boundary cumulative effects with Angus at the southern boundary of this LCA, so no further development should be consented in this area.

**There is limited residual capacity for small turbines in small groups but only in the northern parts of this area.**

The principal concern in this area is to avoid dominating smaller scale and/or sensitive landscapes such as the HGDL at Arbutnott and Glenbervie, the conservation area at Catterline and the smaller settlements such as St. Cyrus.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks. Positioning in relation to electricity transmission lines and telecommunication masts should also be carefully considered to avoid cumulative clutter.

Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the rolling landform to screen views.

## 1 (xv) HOWE OF MEARNS



1(xv) The extensive landform of the Mearns extending onwards into Angus

**Proposed Limits to Future Development: Agricultural Heartland with Occasional Wind Turbines**

Turbine Sizes: 15-<30m (small/medium);

Group Sizes: 1-3 (small/medium);

Separation Distances: 2-4km (small/medium).

Uniformly flat the Howe is the northeastern extent of Strathmore. The contrast between the level landform of the Howe and the steep flank of the Highland Boundary Fault gives the area its distinct identity and increases its sensitivity.

This area is capable of accommodating limited amounts of wind energy due to its scale, flat landform and simple pattern. However its open character and visual sensitivity significantly reduce both the size and numbers of turbines that can be accommodated. The capacity also varies according to proximity to the neighbouring sensitive LCA *The Mounth*.

The hills that are adjacent to the *Mounth* and which are integral to the Highland Boundary Fault should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height. This is to reflect the visibility and importance of this highly sensitive landmark.

The landscapes to either side (*The Mounth* and *Garvock and Glenbervie*) of this LCA are already over their underlying capacity. Current development takes up nearly all of the capacity within this LCA. There is only very limited capacity left for small numbers of medium/small turbines although there is the opportunity for limited expansion of existing turbine groups as long as they mirror both the type, design, pattern and spacing of the existing turbines.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries and larger farm buildings and woodland blocks. Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility between turbine groupings is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances and through exploiting the rolling landform to screen views.