

LCT 7: COASTAL FARMLAND

The *Coastal Farmland* LCT is an extensive area of lowland farmland forming an apron of land sweeping around the northern and eastern seaboard. It stretches from the boundary with Moray around to south of Peterhead. Occupying the hinterland behind the thin *Coast LCTs* and distinct from the rolling *Agricultural Heartlands* of more central areas. They have a subtle undulating landform and the influence of the sea is evidenced in their character. There is limited tree cover and all are open and exposed in character. Parts of the *1(viii) Formartine Lowlands* close to the *Coastal Strip* have some similar characteristics. Medium to large in scale, the type is large in extent and is the second most common landscape character type of the North East of Scotland.

This area has a simple pattern of large predominantly arable geometric fields. There are a number of hills that are distinctive and valuable local landmarks when viewed from the surrounding lower farmland. The area is divided into five LCAs which are all broadly similar but often have subtle differences in character, visibility and value and therefore sensitivity to wind energy.

7(i) EASTERN COASTAL AGRICULTURAL PLAIN

This area is characterised by its gently undulating landform, relatively large scale, extensive moorland and the influence of development including transmission masts, electricity transmission lines, the A90 & A953, the gas terminal at St Fergus. It is the backdrop to the larger coastal towns of Peterhead and Fraserburgh, although large areas of these towns do not have clear views of this LCA as they face out towards the North Sea. It is visually sensitive due to its proximity to roads. Mormond Hill is a distinctive local landmark hill.



7 (i) Large arable fields and post and wire fences define large parts of this area

7(ii) WESTERN COASTAL FARMLAND

This area is slightly more undulating, with infrequent rounded hills which form local landmarks, such as Durn Hill. South of the coastal town of Portsoy and Banff it lies on the boundary with Moray, although intervisibility with this neighbouring area is limited in most areas by landform. It has a larger area covered by woodland, mainly conifer plantations with the small settlements of Cornhill and Fordyce. The rolling landform, development pattern and irregular woodland cover gives it a higher sensitivity and value than 7(i) *Eastern Coastal Agricultural Plain*.

7(iii) NORTHEAST COASTAL FARMLAND

A transition area between the higher sandstone ridges of Troup and the 7(i) *Eastern Coastal Agricultural Plain* it forms the backdrop to Fraserburgh although the settlement itself is orientated towards the sea. Close to the coast are large arable fields but this gives way on higher ground to poorer quality moorland where blocks of coniferous woodland have eroded the character.



7 (iii) Mormond Hill is a distinctive local landmark. Areas of moss, semi-improved pasture and small blocks of conifer woodland create a fragmented landscape character,

7(iv) SANDSTONE RIDGES AND VALLEYS SOUTH OF TROUP

This area is a visually prominent backdrop to lowland and coastal areas especially above Pennan and Troup Head and the *Agricultural Heartlands* in the south. It is a locally rare example of moorland landscape close to the coast encircling the steep-sided wooded den of the Tore of Troup. Much of the area is designated for natural heritage and archaeology and therefore of higher value.



7(iv) The native woodland in the steep sided and sheltered Tore of Troup give it an increased sensitivity and value.

7(v) COASTAL FARMLAND EAST OF MACDUFF

An area with very large arable fields with almost no tree cover and few field boundaries gives a landscape pattern with few vertical features and when combined with the gently undulating landform creates a simple subtle pattern.

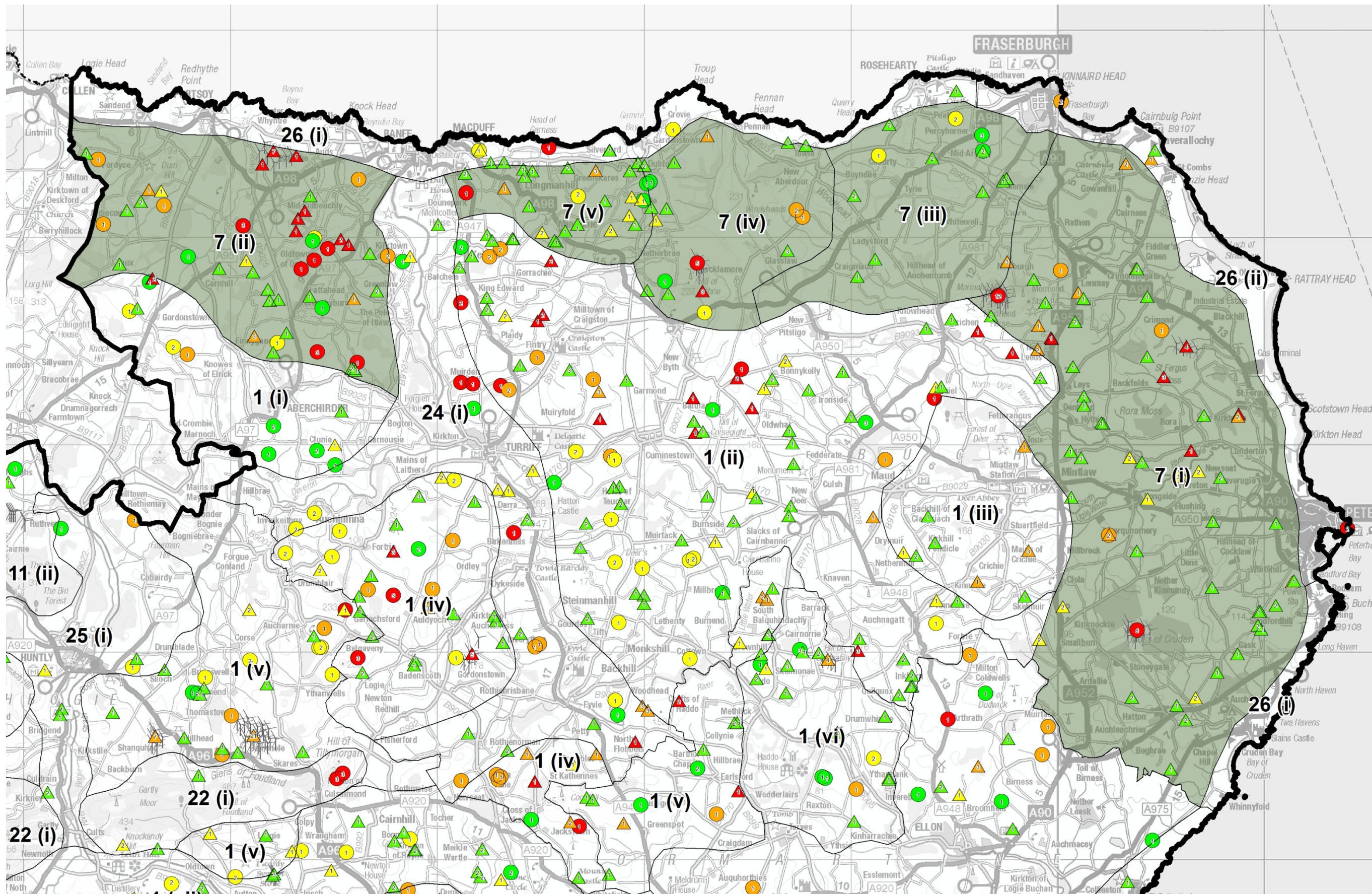


Table 6.1(c): Summary of Landscape Capacity, Cumulative Effects and Guidance for Future Wind Energy Development: Coastal Farmland

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 7. COASTAL FARMLAND																		
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		
7 (i) Landscape Character Area: Eastern Coastal Agricultural Plain																		
Low	Med/High	Med	Med/Low						Currently there are eleven large, eight medium-large, fifteen medium and forty-one small/medium single turbines.	<i>Coastal Farmland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Wind Turbines/ Wind Turbine Coastal Farmland</i>	<i>Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Wind Turbines</i>						Proposals are also for eight large turbines at Moss of Cruden and twelve large turbines on Mormond Hill. Four medium/large turbines.	<p>Landscape Analysis: This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to its medium to large scale, landform, broad extent, simple pattern of very large geometric fields and a generally open character. It could accommodate small clusters of either 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>Capacity for turbines is limited by proximity to sensitive locations such as Mormond Hill and the Coast.</p> <p>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: The areas around Mormond Hill and St Fergus Moss are already <i>Wind Turbine Landscapes</i> and over their underlying capacity. Current proposals for twelve large turbines on Mormond Hill would take it further over this threshold.</p> <p>There is very limited potential for wind energy development in areas in the south away from the over-capacity <i>Wind Turbine Landscapes</i>. Remaining capacity is predicated on following the approaches outlined in the detailed guidance.</p>
												1-3	1-5	1-5	1-5			
												2-4	3-5	5-10	5-10			

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 7. COASTAL FARMLAND																			
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			
7 (ii) Landscape Character Area: Western Coastal Farmland																			
Med	Med	Med	Med						Several large windfarms/ turbines currently consented within this LCA predominantly in the east. Nine large turbines at Boyndie plus five at Hill of Tipperty and three at Hill of Culburnie. Five medium-large turbines, two medium and twenty small/medium single turbines. Two large turbines are on the south-western boundary with the adjoining <i>Knockhill and Aberchirder LCA</i> .	Coastal Farmland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Wind Turbines/ Wind Turbine Coastal Farmland	Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Wind Turbines						Current proposals include two applications for groups of three large turbines and for four single large turbines. Many of these are in close proximity to consented development.	Landscape Analysis: This area has underlying capacity to accommodate wind energy due to medium 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 areas Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: The area southwest of Banff is already a <i>Wind Turbine Coastal Farmland</i> and is therefore above its underlying capacity. Proposals for turbines in this area would take these areas further over their underlying threshold. Capacity has been reached in the east and north. Further development of limited size groups would remain away from this area but subject to constraints outlined in the detailed guidance. There is very limited capacity left in this LCA.	
												Max. Numbers in Group	1-3	1-3	1				
												Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4	3-6	5-10				
7 (iii) Landscape Character Area: North-East Coastal Farmland																			
Med/ Low	Med/ High	Med	Low						Currently there are a group of three medium-large turbines, one medium and eight small/medium single turbines. A group of three large turbines are on the south-western boundary within the adjoining <i>Agricultural Heartland LCU</i> at Little Byth.	Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/with Wind Turbines	Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/with Wind Turbines						Current proposals include three medium and five medium/small turbines. A wind farm is proposed close to the border with twelve large turbines at Mormond Hill.	Landscape Analysis: This area is capable of accommodating wind energy due to medium to large scale, landform, simple pattern of large geometric fields and a generally open character. It would 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. Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: The area around Mormond Hill is already over its underlying capacity. There is potential for wind energy development in areas away from the over-capacity areas but 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			
7 (iv) Landscape Character Area: Sandstone Ridges and Valleys South of Troup																			

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 7. COASTAL FARMLAND																		
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/High	Med/High	Med/High	Med/High	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A group of three large turbines at Little Byth in the southern part of this area, one medium/large turbine in the north and twelve small/medium turbines mainly at the edges of this area.	Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines	Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Application for a wind farm at Hill of Fisherie (five large turbines) would exceed capacity.	<p>Landscape Analysis: The <i>Sandstone Ridges and Valleys South of Troup</i> LCA is a visually prominent backdrop to lowland and coastal areas especially in the north above Pennan and Troup Head and above the much lower <i>Agricultural Heartlands</i> in the south. It is a locally rare example of moorland landscape close to the coast, is designated for its natural heritage and archaeology and therefore of higher value. No turbines over 15m should be developed in this LCA due to its high quality, scale, visibility and high value. This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farms or tourist facilities.</p> <p>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: The Application for a wind farm at Hill of Fisherie (five large turbines) would exceed capacity. Existing development meets and in some areas exceeds the capacity of this LCA.</p>
7 (v) Landscape Character Area: Coastal Farmland East of Macduff																		
Med/Low	Med	Med/Low	Low	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	There is an even distribution of turbines currently consented within this small LCA. Four medium-large turbines, seven medium and seventeen small/medium single turbines. Two large turbines are on the south-western boundary within the adjoining <i>Agricultural Heartland LCU</i> .	Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines	Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Current proposals include one large, two medium and two medium/small turbines.	<p>Landscape Analysis: This area has underlying capacity for wind energy due to medium to large scale, landform, simple pattern of large geometric fields and a generally open character. However capacity has almost been reached in this area. Further development of extremely limited size would remain but subject to constraints.</p> <p>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: Current development takes up most of the capacity in most areas, Some proposals are in close proximity to consented development. If they were consented the landscape type in would turn into a <i>Wind Turbine Landscape</i>. There is limited capacity for small/med turbines in small groups.</p>
										Max. Numbers in Group	1-3							
										Min Group Separation Distances (km)	2-4							

GUIDANCE: 7. COASTAL FARMLAND

7(i) EASTERN COASTAL AGRICULTURAL PLAIN

Proposed Limits to Future Development: Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Occasional Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Wind Turbines

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

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

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

Detailed Guidance

Although the *Eastern Coastal Agricultural Plain* is larger in scale, and broader in extent than other parts of Aberdeenshire there are still reference features. 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.

The north of this area has a pattern of development of small groups of large turbines located on slightly higher ground such as St Fergus Moss and the slopes of Mormond Hill. These larger turbines and groups are closely interspersed with a mix of other turbines. It is the proximity to other turbines and mix of sizes that has resulted in existing development dominating the landscape and visually coalescing, creating *Wind Turbine Landscapes* which takes this area over its underlying capacity.

No further development should be permitted around Mormond Hill and St Fergus Moss in the north of this LCA. Remaining landscape capacity is limited to the south.

Preference should be given to larger sized turbines where this meets all other criteria. However 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 or occasional blocks of plantation woodland. Positioning in relation to electricity lines and masts should also be carefully considered to avoid cumulative clutter.

Clear separation between turbine groupings should ensure that proximity and intervisibility is moderated such that turbine groupings do not dominate the landscape or visually coalesce to create further areas of *Wind Turbine Landscape*. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes, separation distances and/or the intervention of landforms.

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.

Medium, medium/large and large turbines should be sited away from the boundary of the *Coast* to reduce their potential dominance in this sensitive LCA.



7 (i) These existing large turbines dominate the slopes of Mormond Hill; the amplitude of the slope is approximately just over double the height of the turbines from this aspect.

7 (ii) WESTERN COASTAL FARMLAND

Proposed Limits to Future Development: Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ Coastal Farmland with Wind Turbines

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

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

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

This area has underlying capacity for wind energy due to medium to large scale, landform, simple pattern of large geometric fields and a generally open character. The rolling landform, development pattern and irregular woodland cover give this a slightly higher sensitivity than 7(i).

The principal concern in this area is to avoid locating turbines close to visually sensitive areas including Duff House HGDL, Portsoy and Fordyce. Medium turbines should be sited away from the boundary of the *Coastal Strip* to reduce their potential dominance in this sensitive LCA. The upper-slopes of the valley landform of the *Deveron and Upper Ythan Valley* boundary (within this LCA), should be maintained free of turbines greater than 30m in height. This is to reflect the scale and amplitude of the slopes of the strath and avoid visually influencing the valley itself, which has no capacity for wind turbines.



Existing large turbines above the narrow Deveron and Upper Ythan Valley and Duff House HGDL on the valley floor strongly visually influence this sensitive LCA.

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.

Durn Hill is a distinctive local landmark from the surrounding flatter farmland. The summit area should be free of all turbines.

This area has a pattern of development of small groups of large turbines located on slightly higher ground such as Boyndie, Hill of Tipperty and Hill of Culburnie. These larger turbines and groups are closely spaced and visually coalescing, creating a *Wind Turbine Landscape* which is over its underlying capacity. Remaining landscape capacity is limited to the south-west of this area.

The medium turbines should primarily be located in central areas of the farmland. Proximity to residential properties may also limit opportunities for locating 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.

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 landform to screen views.

7 (iii) NORTH-EASTERN COASTAL FARMLAND

Proposed Limits to Future Development: Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ 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 medium to large scale, landform, simple pattern of large geometric fields, generally open character and low value. It would accommodate small clusters of small/medium, medium, medium/large or large turbines. However preference should be given to larger sized turbines where this meets all other criteria.

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.

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. The area around Mormond Hill already exceeds its underlying capacity. There is potential for wind energy development in areas away from the over-capacity areas but further capacity is predicated on following the approaches outlined in this guidance.

Medium, medium/large and large turbines should be sited away from the boundary of *The Coast* as they could easily visually dominate the smaller scale landscape. The largest size turbines (medium/large and large) would be most suitable in the largest scale areas and should primarily be

located in central areas of the farmland. 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, low ridges and larger farm buildings: group composition from key viewpoints and other environmental factors should guide positioning. Separation between turbine groupings should ensure that intervisibility is moderated and that turbine groupings do not dominate the landscape or visually coalesce to create a *Wind Turbine Landscapes*. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes, separation distances and/or the intervention of landforms and tree groups.



Positioning of the larger turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings.

7 (v) COASTAL FARMLAND EAST OF MACDUFF

Proposed Limits to Future Development: Coastal Farmland with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Wind Turbines/ with Wind Turbines

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

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

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

This area has underlying capacity for wind energy due to medium to large scale, landform, simple pattern of large geometric fields and a generally open character. However capacity has almost been reached in this area. Further development of extremely limited size would remain but subject to constraints such as effects on skyline seen from sensitive locations such as Duff House HGDL.

Some proposals are in close proximity to consented development. If they were consented the landscape would turn into a *Wind Turbine Landscape*. There is a limited amount of capacity for small turbines in small groups.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope and larger farm buildings. Separation between turbine groupings should be sufficient to ensure that the landscape is not dominated and that clear intervisibility is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes and separation distances. 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