Character Type 1: Steep Ridgeland and Mountains

Introduction
The Steep Ridgeland and Mountains character type occurs in the Cowal area and at the head of Loch Fyne. The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park borders this part of Argyll and Bute and the special qualities of the National Park have also been considered in the sensitivity assessment that follows.

The detailed sensitivity assessment considers larger development typologies with smaller typologies considered within the summary and guidance section of the assessment only.

Operational and consented wind farm development
The existing Cruach Mhor wind farm is located east of Glendaruel within this character type. This development comprises 38 turbines, 71 metres high to blade tip. The Clachan Flats wind farm is also located within this character type, at the head of Loch Fyne, and comprises 9 turbines of 93 metres high to blade tip.

A number of existing wind farms lie over 20km to the south-east of the nearest point of this character type. These include the developments of Kelburn (consented), Dalry and Ardrossan (operational) within North Ayrshire which are seen across the Firth of Clyde from the coastal areas and higher peaks of this character type but at distances generally greater than 20km.

Summary of sensitivity
This upland landscape comprises steep-sided, craggy topped mountains and sharp ridges deeply cut by the long, narrow sea lochs of Cowal. While the larger wind turbine typologies could relate to the scale of this character type, the often complex landform and the distinctive backdrop these hills provide to settled glens and coastal edges, the head of Loch Fyne (where it is seen in conjunction with the High Tops (2) character type) and the wider Firth of Clyde increase sensitivity. There is an overall High landscape sensitivity to both the large and medium typologies.

The outer edges of this character type are highly visible from roads, settlement and from the Firth of Clyde, the narrow Clyde sea lochs and from Inverclyde. The Strone Peninsula is particularly important in providing a wider backdrop to the Kyles of Bute NSA and is highly visible from the NSA and from Bute. The steep-sided mountains of this character type are also prominent at the head of Loch Fyne. While there are some relatively limited parts of the interior of these mountains where a degree of containment may be offered by higher landform, elevated views will be possible from popularly accessed mountains within Argyll and Bute and the adjacent Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. Visual sensitivity is judged to be High to both the large and medium typologies.

The south-western part of this character type is designated as an APQ. The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and the Kyles of Bute NSA also abut this landscape and this increases sensitivity. Overall landscape values are judged to be High-medium for both the large and medium typologies.

Smaller typologies
Demand for smaller typologies within this sparsely settled upland area is likely to be limited. Smaller typologies would appear trivial in relation to the predominantly large scale of these
uplands and could introduce built clutter to more remote and less developed areas. They would also have similar effects on complex landform, key views from the Firth of Clyde, Loch Fyne and Bute and on the special qualities of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and the Kyles of Bute NSA if poorly sited. Opportunities for smaller turbines exist however at the transition of this landscape with the Loch Fyne Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (6a) and on lower slacker hill slopes within broader valleys and coastal edges away from the more prominent peninsula tips.

**Cumulative issues**

There are two existing wind farms within this character type. Both are sited in areas where the landform is less complex. The Cruach Mhor windfarm is particularly well-sited within a slacker basin contained by higher hills with limited visibility from roads and settlement. The Clachan Flats wind farm is more visible from parts of upper Loch Fyne and from the close-by popular mountain summits of the ‘High Tops’ (2) character type. Key landscape and visual cumulative issues likely to arise are:

- Additional wind farm developments sited in this character type could affect the setting and views from the popularly accessed Munros, Corbetts and other notable hills within the ‘High Tops’ (2) character type and the adjacent Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. The area around the head of Loch Fyne would be particularly sensitive in this respect.
- The steep and rugged mountainous terrain of Cowal and its intricate pattern of deep sea lochs strongly contrast with the simpler, lower plateau-like uplands of Clyde Muirshiel and with the more developed character of the coastal edge of Inverclyde and North Ayrshire which feature the Inverkip power station chimney (200m high), electricity transmission lines, extensive settlement and industry within Inverclyde and wind farms and the Hunterston power station(s) along the more distant North Ayrshire coast.
- The introduction of wind farms and larger turbines seen on the skyline of the Steep Ridgel and Mountains (1) or against the most prominent coastal edge and promontories of this character type from the wider Firth of Clyde basin would adversely affect the strong sense of Cowal forming the threshold to the ‘Highlands’ and the point where the Glasgow conurbation is left (heightened by the ferry crossing to Dunoon). The present contrast of the landscapes of Cowal with the more developed Inverclyde and North Ayrshire coast could be diminished.

**Constraints**

- Rugged and often highly complex mountains and narrow ridges with slopes rising steeply from sea lochs and glens and patterned with craggy outcrops.
- The high visibility of the southern Cowal peninsulas in views from the well-settled Firth of Clyde basin and Bute, long views up the Fjord of Loch Striven from Bute and the sea, and the steep-sided mountains at the head of Loch Fyne.
- The close proximity of the Loch Lomond National Park and the Kyles of Bute NSA where wind farm development could affect some of the special qualities of these designated landscapes and key views to and from them.
- Elevated and close views from the hills within Cowal and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park which are popular with walkers.
- Skyline ridges which contain settled glens such as Glendaruel.
Opportunities

- Gentler hill slopes within broader valleys and against coastal edges (away from the more prominent peninsula tips) where some scope exists for well-sited smaller turbines.
- Commercial forestry on lower slopes which offer established access tracks and some screening from close views from roads and settlement.

Guidance on development

There is no scope to accommodate larger typologies within this landscape without significant effects occurring on a number of key sensitivity criteria.

Smaller turbines are most likely to be proposed in locations closer to settlement. Turbines > 35m high would be likely to dominate the small scale and more diversely patterned settled valleys and coastal edges of this character type. Turbines <35m high could be sited on smoother lower hill slopes where they would benefit from a backdrop of rising ground. Darker coloured turbines may reduce visibility where seen predominantly against a backdrop of forestry or moorland. Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in Section 7 of the Main Report.
Character Type 2: High Tops

Introduction
The High Tops character type is found in the north and north-east of Argyll and Bute and on the islands of Mull and Jura. Within the mainland area this character type comprises an extensive mountainous area which extends into the neighbouring Highland Region and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. This assessment considers the area of the High Tops lying on the mainland of Argyll and Bute only.

All of the High Tops character type on Jura lies within the Jura NSA. A small part of this character type on Mull lies within the Loch na Keal NSA. Both these areas of this character type are considered in the separate assessments on the special qualities of these respective NSAs. An area of the High Tops character type extends beyond the boundary of the NSA on Mull and a separate sensitivity assessment has been undertaken for this area (2a) due to its different character and context to the mainland area of the High Tops, but also because the study brief requires only turbines below 50m height to be considered on islands.

Due to the very sparsely populated nature of this upland landscape, demand for smaller scale typologies is likely to be very limited and smaller scale typologies are therefore considered within the summary and guidance section of the assessment only.

Operational and consented wind farm development
There are no operational wind farms sited within this character type. Operational wind farms sited in surrounding landscape character types are clearly visible from the summits and ridges of the High Tops. These include the developments of Clachan Flats, An Suidhe, Cruach Mhor and Beinn Glias. The consented wind farms of A’Chruach and Carraig Gheal will also be visible from key summits such as Beinn Cruachan.

Summary of sensitivity
The dramatic craggy mountainous scenery of the High Tops forms a highly scenic backdrop to many of the lower more settled loch shores and coastal landscapes of Argyll and Bute. While the scale of this character type could relate to larger wind farm typologies their important scenic contribution to the wider landscape context, their complex rugged landform and the strong wildland qualities experienced within these mountains are key constraints. The landscape of the High Tops has an overall High sensitivity to larger typologies of wind farm development.

This landscape type is highly visible and features a number of ‘Munro’ and ‘Corbett’ mountains which increases visual sensitivity. There would be a High visual sensitivity to larger development typologies.

The presence of the Ben Nevis and Glencoe NSA, and the APQ designation which covers all of this character type, increases sensitivity in terms of landscape values. There would be High sensitivity in terms of landscape values.

Smaller typologies
There is unlikely to be a demand for smaller typologies within this largely uninhabited upland area. Smaller typologies would appear out of scale in relation to the predominantly large scale of these uplands. They would also have similar effects on particularly complex mountainous landform and on the appreciation of wildland character as larger typologies.
Opportunities may exist on the fringes of this character type, on smoother less complex lower hill slopes at the transition with more settled glens and loch shores where smaller turbines could relate to these more developed areas, providing they did not significantly intrude on key views to the high mountains.

**Cumulative issues**
Although there are no wind farms within this character type, a number of existing wind farms are clearly visible from within 5km of some key mountains. Development sited in adjacent character types and close to these mountains could affect their wider landscape setting by intruding on key views to and from the mountains and diminish the sense of wildness associated with this character type.

**Constraints**
- Rugged, highly complex mountains with recognisable individual peaks, steep craggy slopes and multiple ridges. Exposed rock, scree, small lochs and numerous burns pattern this mountainous area.
- The strong perceptual qualities of remoteness and naturalness which can be experienced in these uplands.
- The high visibility of these mountains where they form a backdrop to more settled lowland areas and make a strong contribution to the richly scenic composition of Argyll and Bute’s landscape.
- The popularly accessed ‘Munros’, ‘Corbetts’ and other hills within this character type which increases visual sensitivity.
- The presence of the Ben Nevis and Glencoe NSA in the north of this area, the Loch Lomond and Trossach National Park to the east and the APQ designation which extends across the rest of the character type.

**Opportunities**
- Smoother lower hill slopes on the fringes of this character type at the transition with the settled ‘Mountain Glens’ (4), ‘Rocky Mosaic’ (20) and ‘Lowland Ridges and Moss’ (18).

**Guidance on development**
There is no scope for larger typologies to be sited within this character type without incurring significant impacts on a number of key characteristics.

Smaller turbines could potentially be sited on less complex, gentler lower hill slopes at the transition with the ‘Lowland Ridges and Moss’ (18), ‘Rocky Mosaic’ (20) and ‘Mountain Glens’ (4) where they could be visually associated with more settled and developed landscapes and back-dropped by rising ground. They should be sited to avoid intrusion on key views to the mountains. The small typology would be likely to have less of an impact on these adjacent smaller scale landscapes and on key views to the mountains. Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in section 7 of this report.

Extensions to existing wind farms or new wind farm development in Argyll and Bute should avoid significantly impacting on key views to and from these uplands from roads and settlement. Wind farm development in adjoining character types should be sited sufficiently far away to avoid visual prominence in views from key mountain summits and also to avoid concentrations of multiple wind farms in close views.
Character Type 2a: Mull High Tops

Introduction
The High Tops character type is found in the north and north-east of Argyll and Bute and on the islands of Mull and Jura. Within the mainland area this character type comprises an extensive mountainous area which extends into the neighbouring Highland Region and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. The High Tops lying within Jura are covered by a NSA designation and are therefore considered separately in the assessment for the Jura NSA. This assessment considers the area of the High Tops on Mull and lying beyond the boundary of the Loch na Keal NSA, which is assessed separately in this study.

The study brief requested that only turbines under 50m height be considered on the islands of Argyll and Bute.

Operational and consented wind farm development
There are no operational wind farms within this character type.

Existing wind farms on the Argyll and Bute mainland may be visible from this character type but at distances of over 30km.

Summary of sensitivity
The dramatic rugged mountainous scenery of the Mull High Tops forms a highly scenic backdrop to many of the lower more settled coastal fringes of Mull. The massive scale, often complex landform of steep rocky slopes and defined summits and ridges and the strong wildland qualities particularly associated with the core area of higher mountains are key constraints to all typologies of wind turbine development. The landscape of the High Tops has a High landscape sensitivity to the small-medium typology. There would be a slightly reduced landscape sensitivity of High-medium in relation to the small typology reflecting very limited scope for small turbines to be associated with settlement lying on the outer fringes of this mountainous landscape.

This landscape type is highly visible and features a number of popularly accessed mountain peaks. There would be a High visual sensitivity to the small-medium typology and a High-medium sensitivity to the small typology.

An APQ designation covers the majority of this landscape and the Loch na Keal NSA abuts it to the west. There would be a High-medium sensitivity in terms of landscape values for the small-medium and a Medium sensitivity to the small typology. Sensitivity would be Low within the undesignated hill slopes above the Sound of Mull.

Potential cumulative issues
There are no cumulative issues associated with this landscape.

Constraints
- Rugged, complex mountains with recognisable individual peaks, steep craggy slopes and multiple ridges. Exposed rock, sheer scree slopes and numerous burns pattern this mountainous area.
- The strong perceptual qualities of remoteness and naturalness which can be experienced in the more difficult to access and less developed core of these mountains.
• The high visibility of these mountains where they form a backdrop to more settled coastal fringes and make a strong contribution to the richly scenic composition of Mull.
• The popularly accessed mountain peaks within this character type which increases visual sensitivity.
• The APQ designation which extends across much of this landscape and the proximity to the Loch na Keal NSA.

Opportunities
• Smoother lower hill slopes on the fringes of this character type at the transition with the ‘Mull Basalt Lowlands’ (17).

Guidance on development
There is no scope to accommodate the small-medium typology in this landscape character sub-type.

There are limited opportunities for the small typology to be accommodated on the outer fringes of this character type, on smoother less complex lower hill slopes and undulating moorland at the transition with the more settled glens and loch shores of the ‘Mull Basalt Lowland’ (17). Many of these areas are extensively forested and may thus provide opportunities for utilising and screening access tracks. Turbines should be sited to avoid intrusion on key views to the more dramatic mountains from roads and on the approach by ferry to Craignure. They should also avoid impacting on the setting of settlements and the designed landscape of Torosay. Smaller turbines should be associated with more settled areas at the transition with adjacent character types.

Detailed siting of smaller turbines should accord with the guidance set out in section 7 of this report.
Character Types 3 and 4: Hidden and Mountain Glens

Introduction

These character types have been combined for the purposes of the sensitivity assessment because of the similarity of their key characteristics in terms of scale, strong containment by adjacent upland character types and the consistent presence of farmland and wooded policies. The Argyll and Firth of Clyde landscape assessment principally defines the glen floor and lower glen sides as these character types and it should be noted that the visual extent of the glen includes the ridges seen on the skyline which lie within the adjacent upland character types.

The following glens are defined as these character types in the Argyll and Firth of Clyde landscape assessment:

- Glen Creran
- Taynuit/Inverawe
- Strath of Orchy
- Glen Fyne
- Glen Shira
- Skipness
- Carradale
- Saddell Glen
- Holy Loch

The Skipness area has been reclassified as character type ‘Rocky Mosaic’ (20) for the purposes of the study due to its more open coastal character.

The sensitivity assessment which follows considers the character type as a whole and focuses on smaller typologies due to the technical constraints likely to be associated with accommodating larger turbines in these confined glens. Key landscape and visual constraints relating to larger typologies are, however, briefly described in the summary and guidance section.

Operational and consented wind farm development

There are no operational or consented wind farm developments sited in these character types.

The operational Beinn an Tuirc wind farm, sited within the adjacent ‘Upland Forest Moor Mosaic’ (6), is visible from parts of the Carradale area and from Glen Saddell on Kintyre. The Beinn Ghlas wind farm is also visible from parts of the Inverawe/Taynuit ‘Mountain Glen’ (4).

Summary of sensitivity

The Hidden and Mountain Glens are enclosed and often narrow, contained by steep sides which rise to form irregular ridgelines. The narrowness and enclosure of these glens create a contained and often small scale landscape, which is accentuated by the presence of small buildings, trees and field enclosure pattern, and this severely limits scope for larger turbines. These glens have a High landscape sensitivity to the small-medium typology and a High-medium sensitivity to the small typology.
Visual sensitivity would be **High** for the small/medium typology as turbines of this size could easily impact on key views to the heads of glens and adjacent ‘High Tops’ (2) and **High-medium** for the small typology, as they may be some limited opportunities in some broader glens to site turbines towards the lower height band of this typology in areas where they would not interrupt key views.

All of the ‘Mountain Glens’ (4) are designated as APQ although only the eastern coastal areas of the ‘Hidden Glens’ (3) are similarly designated. Landscape values would be **High-medium** for the small/medium typologies and **Medium** for the small typology taking into account the likely effect on the setting, views and contrast with the adjacent ‘High Tops’ (2) from the ‘Mountain Glens’ (4). Sensitivity would be low in terms of landscape value in undesignated parts of the ‘Hidden Glens’ (3).

**Cumulative issues**
The existing Beinn a Tuirc wind farm is visible on the rim of hills forming the skyline seen from Carradale in Kintyre. Significant adverse cumulative visual effects could arise if the extent of development visible on this prominent skyline ridge is extended or if any further wind farm development is visible at the head of the adjacent Saddell Glen (and seen sequentially from the B842).

Cumulative effects could arise in conjunction with the Beinn Ghlas wind farm and any turbine development located in the Taynuilt/Inverawe area. Smaller turbines would be likely to have less of an effect as there would be clear size differential between the two (especially as the Beinn Ghlas turbines are relatively small).

If more than one, or small groups, of small turbines appear within these glens, including along the hill slopes and adjacent ridgelines, the relationship between proposals for this typology should be monitored closely in terms of potential cumulative effects. Cumulative impacts could include increased visual clutter, detraction from the rhythm of existing settlement and diminishing the sense of anticipation of travelling into more sparsely settled, less developed and often dramatic upper glens.

**Constraints**
- The narrowness and strong containment of these glens which would be dominated by taller turbines.
- The dramatic forms of steep-sided hill flanks and ridges and often complex rugged lower slopes of the ‘Mountain Glens’ (4).
- The containing slopes and ridges seen from the floor of these glens (usually defined as the adjacent upland character type) which are visually prominent against the sky.
- The heads of the glens, which are often the focal point in views and dramatic views across some of these glens to the ‘High Tops’ (2).
- The well-settled character of these glens and presence of historic buildings and archaeological features
- Policy woodlands and often well-managed strongly enclosed pastures on the flat glen floor which contrast with the often rugged forested or rugged glen sides.

**Opportunities**
- Broader glens with less steeply rising lower slopes where containment is less strong and a more subtle transition occurs with adjacent character types, for example the
‘Upland Forest Moor Mosaic’ (6) or the ‘Craggy Upland with Settled Glens’ (7a) character type.

- The lower side slopes, where small terraces and other landforms, the pattern of settlement and small side valleys or tributary watercourses offer opportunities for small turbines to be sited where they can be associated with these other features in the landscape.

**Guidance on development**

There is no scope for the small-medium typology to be accommodated within this character type without significant adverse impacts occurring on key landscape and visual sensitivities.

There is some **very limited** scope for the small typology to be located in wider glens, where the perceived scale of the glen is seen as being broader, and at the transition with more gently rising slopes within the adjacent ‘Upland Forest Moor Mosaic’ (6) or the ‘Craggy Upland with Settled Glens’ (7a). Areas of more complex landform should be avoided and particularly more prominent knolls which occur on lower slopes. Turbines should be located where they can reinforce the pattern of existing development, associated with farms located at the edge of the glen floor or lower side slopes above the existing built development. They should avoid intruding on policy landscapes, historic buildings, archaeology and the setting of settlements.

Turbines should avoid intrusion on views to the often dramatic heads of the glens and to key views of the mountains within the adjacent ‘High Tops’ (2) from major roads and settlements.

Any wind farm development turbine development in the adjacent High Tops (2), Upland Forest Moor Mosaic, Craggy Upland (7) and (7a) and the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains (1) character types should also be sited away from prominent ridge lines visible from the floor of these glens.

Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in Section 7 of this report.
Landscape Character Type 5: Open Ridgeland

**Introduction**
This character type occurs in four separate areas within Argyll and Bute. This sensitivity assessment considers the two mainland areas of this character type, located on the Rosneath Peninsula and to the north-east of Helensburgh. The two areas of this character type found on Bute are assessed separately and called ‘Bute Open Ridgeland’ (5a) due to their different context (particularly in relation to the Kyles of Bute NSA) and because the study brief only requires turbines below 50m height to be considered on the islands of Argyll and Bute.

Both larger and smaller typologies are considered in the sensitivity assessment that follows.

**Operational and consented wind farm development**
There are no operational wind farms within this character type.

The operational wind farms of Ardrossan and Dalry located in North Ayrshire are visible from parts of this character sub-type but are generally seen at distances over 20km. The consented Kelburn wind farm, located close to these existing developments, will also be visible from parts of this character type.

**Summary of sensitivity**
The ‘Open Ridgeland’ character type covers the Rosneath Peninsula and the band of hills behind Helensburgh and Cardross, below the ridge which forms the boundary to the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. This landscape generally comprises gentle hill slopes and smooth ridges with a simple land cover pattern of semi-improved grazing, moorland and coniferous plantations, although some steeper slopes occur along the Gare Loch. While these characteristics theoretically offer opportunities for wind turbine development, sensitivity to larger typologies is increased because of the limited extent of the character type and the low relief of the hills within the Rosneath Peninsula. This landscape also lies adjacent to the more sensitive smaller scale ‘Rolling Farmland with Estates’ (13) and the ‘Steep Ridgeland and Mountains’ (1) character types and, in combination with these landscapes, contrasts with the more developed urban areas of Glasgow and Inverclyde to the east and south, thus increasing sensitivity in relation to wider landscape context. Landscape sensitivity is judged to be **High** for the large typologies, **High-medium** for the medium typology, **Medium** for the small-medium typology and **Medium-low** for the small typology.

These landscapes are visually prominent from the well-settled Firth of Clyde area. Visual sensitivity would be **High** for the larger typologies, **High-medium** for the small-medium typology and **Medium** for the small typology.

Although this landscape is not covered by any designations, it lies adjacent to the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and the Inventory listed Rosneath designed landscape. Sensitivity in relation to landscape values was judged to be **High-medium** for larger typologies in locations where turbines of this size could significantly impact on views from the National Park and **Medium** for the smaller typologies where it was considered that intrusion on key views would be reduced.
**Cumulative issues**
Existing wind farm development is visible in North Ayrshire and contributes to the more developed character of the landscape found on the southern and eastern coast of the Firth of Clyde. Introducing larger typologies to this landscape would diminish the contrast the Open Ridgeland (and also the Steep Ridgeland and Mountains (1)) provide to the more developed coastal areas of Inverclyde, North Ayrshire and the urban area of Glasgow.

**Constraints:**
- The importance of this landscape in terms of the contrast it provides with the more developed coastal areas of Inverclyde, North Ayrshire and the urban area of Glasgow.
- The relatively low relief of the Rosneath Peninsula and the presence of fringing settlement which reduces scale.
- The high visual prominence of the ‘Open Ridgeland’ in views from roads, recreational areas and settlement in the wider Firth of Clyde area and where the Rosneath Peninsula and steep-sided ridge to the north-west of Helensburgh form a low foreground to the dramatic craggy peaks of the ‘Steep Ridgeland and Mountains’ (1)
- The adjacent Inventory listed designed landscape of Rosneath and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

**Opportunities:**
- Broader, gentler hill slopes away from key views to the high peaks of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

**Guidance on development**
There is no scope for the larger typologies to be located within this landscape type without incurring significant impacts on a number of sensitivity criteria.

There is some limited scope for the small-medium turbines to be accommodated in this landscape. Turbines should be sited away from pronounced hill tops and ridges, particularly those above Glen Fruin and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. They should be located on lower hill slopes and within natural dips or shelves where rising ground would provide a degree of backdrop able to minimise visual impact.

There is increased scope to accommodate the small typology and turbines <20m high providing these are sited so they avoid intrusion on key views to the mountains. Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in section 7 of this report.
Landscape Character Type 5a: Bute Open Ridgeland

Introduction
This character type occurs in two areas on Bute and also on the Rosneath Peninsula and near Cardross on the mainland. The two areas of Open Ridgeland on the mainland are considered separately to the Bute areas of this character type, principally because of their different context.

This sensitivity assessment considers the two areas on the Isle of Bute only. Turbines below 50m height are considered only within the sensitivity assessment that follows in accordance with the requirements of the study brief.

A small area of the ‘Craggy Upland’ character type defined in the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Assessment to the south of the Kyles of Bute NSA has been reclassified as the ‘Bute Open Ridgeland’ for the purposes of this study.

Operational and consented wind farm development
There are no operational wind farm developments sited within this character type.

The existing wind farms of Ardrossan, Kelburn and Dalry are visible in North Ayrshire, approximately 19km distance from the nearest point to this character type on Bute.

Summary of sensitivity
This character type features steep-sided and defined hills in the north and lower rounded hills and undulating upland plateaux in the south. The higher ground of this character type is open and features rough pasture and moorland while small farms and enclosed pastures fringe lower hill slopes. These relatively low but open ridges and small hills are important in the contribution they make to the overall diversity of landscape found on the Isle of Bute. The north-eastern hills also provide a wider scenic backdrop to the Kyles of Bute NSA. There would be a High-medium sensitivity to the small-medium typology and a Medium sensitivity to the small typology.

These landscapes are visually prominent from Bute but also from the Cowal area. Visual sensitivity would be High-medium for the small-medium typology and Medium for the small typology.

This landscape is covered by an APQ designation. It also abuts the Kyles of Bute NSA to the north. Sensitivity in terms of landscape values would be High-medium for the small-medium typology and Medium for the small typology, reflecting greater opportunities for siting smaller turbines to avoid impacts on key special qualities.

Cumulative issues
There could be cumulative landscape and visual impacts with the operational and consented Ardrossan and Kelburn wind farms located close to the North Ayrshire coast.

There could be cumulative visual impacts on views from Great Cumbrae and the Firth of Clyde with the larger turbines of the small-medium typology sited in this landscape being more likely to incur potential impacts. Cumulative landscape impacts could be associated with larger scale turbine development being sited on the Isle of Bute which appears largely undeveloped in comparison with the highly modified mainland coastal area to the east.
Smaller turbines would be likely to have less of an effect, being clearly different in terms of scale with commercial developments sited on the mainland and also less visually intrusive provided they were well-sited.

**Constraints**
- The relatively low elevation of the southern hills, and the presence of nearby small buildings, which could be dominated by larger turbines
- The prominence of higher hill tops seen in views from roads and settlement within Bute and also from the wider Firth of Clyde including the three peaks seen on the ridge between Barone and Kilmory Hills seen from the Ardlamont peninsula and the higher northern hills seen from key viewpoints within the Kyles of Bute NSA.
- The presence of extensive broadleaved woodlands and the setting this landscape provides to Ettrick Bay, Lochs Fad and Quien and the designed landscape of Kames Castle in the adjacent ‘Bute Rolling Farmland and with Estates’ character type (13a).
- The setting of archaeological features found particularly within the southern hills.

**Opportunities**
- Gentler hill slopes with a less diverse vegetation pattern which provide opportunities particularly for smaller typologies

**Guidance on development**
There is likely to be very limited scope for the small-medium typology to be located within this landscape type. Turbines should not be sited on prominent hill tops or steep slopes instead favouring gentler lower slopes and plateau-like areas where impact on sensitive skylines could be avoided. They should be set back from settlement to minimise potential conflicts of scale and principally relate to landform features. There are likely to be restricted opportunities for multiple turbines of this size to be accommodated in this landscape with groups of turbines likely to be limited to <5 to fit with the scale of more gentle hill slopes and undulating plateau areas.

There is some scope for the small typology to be accommodated in this landscape. Turbines of this size should also avoid prominent hill tops, being sited on gentler lower hill slopes and natural dips or shelves where rising ground would provide a degree of backdrop able to minimise visual impact. There are increased opportunities for turbines below 20m height to be associated with farms and other buildings on the settled hill slopes of this character type.

All development typologies should avoid significant impact on the broadleaved woodlands and steep scarp slopes above Loch Fad, the prominent ‘three peaks’ on the ridge between Barone and Kilmory Hills, the steep hill sides which provide the backdrop to Kames Castle designed landscape and the higher northern hills and slopes which border the Kyles of Bute and provide the wider setting to the NSA. The setting of archaeological features would also be sensitive to development.

Turbines should be sited in accordance with the detailed guidance set out in section 7 of this report.