Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study

Appendix Report – Detailed Sensitivity Assessments

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Contents

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2. Detailed sensitivity assessment for landscape character types
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1 Introduction to the sensitivity assessment

1.1 Sensitivity assessments have been undertaken for each character type and any sub-types defined and for the National Scenic Areas (NSA) as explained in Section 4 of the Main Study Report.

1.2 The sensitivity assessment considers sensitivity of each character type or NSA to four different wind farm/turbine typologies. An introduction to each character type is set out in the sensitivity assessments that follow. This clarifies the approach to assessment in terms of whether the whole landscape character type or sub-divisions of that type have been assessed. It also describes where any changes have been made to the boundaries or classification of character types set out in the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Assessment. Operational and consented wind farm developments, whether located within the landscape type/unit or in the surrounding area (and clearly visible from the character type being assessed), are described. A similar approach is taken for the NSA assessments although the introduction principally focuses on the description of the designated landscape and its special qualities.

1.3 This Appendix Report contains the detailed sensitivity assessment tables for landscape character types and NSAs (a summary of these only being included in the Main Study Report). The sensitivity scores outlined in the summary of sensitivity are made on the basis of a five point scale; High, High-medium, Medium, Medium-low and Low. These assessments consider landscape sensitivity, visual sensitivity and the value placed on the landscape in terms of designations and other recognised interests, considering key landscape and visual characteristics. A different approach has been adopted for the NSAs where the assessment focuses on the identified special qualities of these designated landscapes. Further detail on methodology is contained in section 2 and annex C and D within the Main Study Report.

1.4 Cumulative issues and key constraints and opportunities are set out for each landscape character type and NSA. The sensitivity assessment concludes with guidance on the siting of wind farm or wind turbine development. Key maps show the location of each landscape character type and NSA and their immediate context.
Detailed sensitivity assessment of landscape character types
Detailed sensitivity assessment of National Scenic Areas
Knapdale NSA sensitivity assessment

Introduction
The Knapdale NSA is located to the west of Lochgilphead. This NSA encompasses the narrow sea lochs of Loch Sween and Loch Caolisport, the craggy linear ridges which separate them and the flat plain of Moine Mhor and Loch Crinan to the north.

The following landscape character types defined in the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Assessment (1996) occur within this NSA:

- Upland Parallel Ridges (10)
- Coastal Parallel Ridges (22)
- Flat Moss and Mudflats (23)

The ‘Upland Parallel Ridges’ (22) landscape character type extends slightly beyond the eastern boundary of the NSA and this small outlying area of this character type has been incorporated into the adjacent ‘Knapdale Upland Forest Moor Mosaic’ (6b) for the purposes of this assessment.

Scotland’s Scenic Heritage (1978) describes this NSA thus:

*The strongly grained topography of Knapdale with long parallel ridges and glens aligned on a north-west south-east axis, presents a miniature ‘Appalachian’ type landscape. Heavily wooded now, the glacially overdeepened glens either have narrow ribbon lakes in their bottoms or else have been invaded by the sea. Loch Sween is a complex series of parallel channels intruding long narrow fingers of sea into the coniferous forests of Knapdale.*

*This ever present combination of fresh and sea water with their different plant life, small waterside meadows, and heavily wooded ridges makes up a series of narrow enclosed landscapes gradually opening out to the lower, more open, and mixed land uses of the wider topography at the mouth of Loch Sween, from where there are fine views to the Paps of Jura. By contrast, Loch Caolisport is a wide sea loch. It is contained by sufficient amplitude of relief to frame the views of Jura, and in this more open loch basin there is a pleasing mixture of forestry and well kept farmland, with moorland on the high land, and some deciduous woodlands on the hillsides.*

*To the north the flat moss, meadow and arable land of the Moine Mhor, the finely curving meanders of the River Add, and the abruptly upstanding heights of Dunadd and Cnoc na Moine, the former rocky and bare, the latter heavily mantled in oakwoods, provide a sharp contrast to the tightly grained and forested hills of Knapdale. Loch Crinan, with its wide expanse of flats, continues this character seawards, and is enclosed on its north side by a series of miniature glens and hills, echoing the scale of Knapdale to the south, but offering a gentle, open, cultivated contrast to the forest. The historic and cultural interest of this landscape adds a further dimension to the scene.*

The special qualities of the Knapdale NSA are defined by SNH as comprising:

- Distinctive ridges and loch-filled trenches
- A landscape of skylines
- A clothing of oak woodland over the ridges and hollows
A profoundly evocative, ancient place
Ever-changing patterns of colour, sound and smell
In the north, dramatic juxtaposition of ridges and volcanic plugs arising from the flat expanse of Moine Mhor bog
A centre of parallel ridges and secret lochans
Long, slow journeys to the sea
Dramatic sea views in the south
The Crinan Canal

The special qualities ‘Ever-changing patterns of colour, sound and smell’ and ‘Long, slow journeys to the sea’ have not been considered in the sensitivity assessment that follows. The assessment also considers an additional sensitivity criterion relating to the pattern, scale and setting of settlement (a key characteristic not defined in the NSA special qualities study but of relevance to wind turbine development). The study brief requested that only smaller turbines <50m high should be considered in the sensitivity assessment for the NSAs.

Operational and consented wind farm development
No operational or consented wind farms are located in this NSA. The existing An Suidhe and Cruach Mhor wind farms are visible from higher hill tops and ridges within the NSA and the consented wind farm of A’ Chruach will also be visible from similar locations within the NSA. The consented Allt Dearg wind farm, located in the adjacent ‘Knapdale Upland Forest Moor Mosiac’ (6b) character type, will be visible from the southern part of this NSA.
**Knapdale NSA – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSA Special Qualities</th>
<th>Small-medium typology assessment (35-50m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
<th>Small typology assessment (20-35m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinctive ridges and loch-filled trenches</strong></td>
<td>This typology would dominate the small scale and detract from the distinctive landform of the complex linear pattern of narrow ridges, deep valleys and lochs but also the fragmented coastal edge and islands particularly prevalent west and north-east of Loch Sween.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>While the smaller turbines of this typology would be less dominant in terms of the scale of higher ridges, they would still detract from the complex landform of distinctive ridges and loch-filled trenches particularly prevalent west and north-east of Loch Sween.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A landscape of skylines</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size would detract from distinctive skylines formed by the narrow parallel ridges seen from Moine Mhor and glimpsed from roads and settlement within the middle area of the NSA. This typology would also be intrusive if sited on lower ridges and the coastal edge of Loch Caolisport which frame views to Jura.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Turbines of this size would detract from distinctive skylines formed by the narrow parallel ridges seen from Moine Mhor and glimpsed from roads and settlement within the middle area of the NSA. This typology would also be intrusive if sited on lower ridges and the coastal edge of Loch Caolisport which frame views to Jura.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A clothing of oak woodland over the ridges and hollows</strong></td>
<td>While this woodland has potential to limit views of development, turbines of this size would significantly extend above the tree canopy, detracting from the appreciation of its extent, integrity and naturalness.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size would also extend above the woodland canopy and would detract from the appreciation of its extent, integrity and naturalness, although there is increased scope for screening smaller turbines.</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A profoundly evocative, ancient place</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size would affect the setting of archaeological features and the rich sense of history associated with this landscape.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>This typology could also affect the setting of archaeological features and the rich sense of history associated with this landscape although their smaller size means that there may be more scope for development closer to the feature without intruding on the setting.</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dramatic juxtaposition of ridge and volcanic plugs arising from the flat expanse of Moine Mhor bog</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size sited in the Moine Mhor area would overwhelm the scale of volcanic plugs and knolls and would detract from their prominence (and from the appreciation of the form of Crinan Bay). Turbines sited on the parallel ridges visible from this area would also appear large in relation to the vertical scale of the hills and would detract from the dramatic juxtaposition with the flat expanse of Moine Mhor.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size sited in the Moine Mhor area would appear large in relation to the size of volcanic plugs and knolls and would detract from their prominence (and from the appreciation of the form of Crinan Bay). Turbines sited on the parallel ridges visible from this area would also appear large in relation to the vertical scale of the hills and would detract from the dramatic juxtaposition with the flat expanse of Moine Mhor.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A centre of parallel ridges and secret lochans</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size sited close to these lochans would affect the sense of seclusion and tranquillity experienced and would detract from</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size sited close to these lochans would affect the sense of seclusion and tranquillity experienced and would detract from</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ridges’ and ‘oak woodlands’ assessed above. The secret lochans set within dense forest and woodlands occur within the strongly contained parallel ridges found at the head of Loch Sween.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dramatic sea views in the south</th>
<th>The Crinan Canal</th>
<th>Settlement pattern, scale and setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jura is a focus in views from the more open peninsula tips and along the linear Loch Caolisport.</td>
<td>The Crinan Canal occupies a narrow corridor, contained by the steep wooded slopes of the parallel ridges to the south and vegetation to the north. Small scale settlement aligns the canal basin.</td>
<td>Farms dot the flat open plain of Moine Mhor. The densely wooded middle part of the NSA is sparsely settled although the small settlements of Crinan and Tayvallich are sited on the coastal edge of this area and are contained by wooded ridges. Dispersed farms and cottages are generally smaller within the more open Keills Peninsula and are set down off low ridges. The coastal fringes of Loch Caolisport feature many estate buildings and large houses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic sea views from the open southern peninsulas and Loch Caolisport to the Paps of Jura would be affected by inappropriately sited turbines.</td>
<td>Turbines of this size sited close to the canal would dominate the small scale of the basin and settlement associated with it. Turbines sited on adjacent parallel ridges and Moine Mhor would affect its setting and occasional glimpsed views from the canal.</td>
<td>Turbines of this size would appear very large in relation to small buildings – this would be particularly obvious where the landscape is more open and buildings form visually prominent point features – for example on Moine Mhor and the more open low Keills Peninsula. The setting of small settlements such as Crinan and Tayvallich would be sensitive especially if turbines were sited so seen against the skyline of low containing ridges and along the shoreline interrupting views across bays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
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</table>
**Summary of sensitivity**

This NSA covers a relatively large area with a diverse character ranging from the flat open moss of Moine Mhor to the north, intricate linear small scale linear ridges and valleys in the core of the NSA; these extending to form more open coastal peninsulas and sea lochs to the south and backed by higher more expansive uplands to the east. Key sensitivities include the small scale and complex landform of narrow ridges and deep valleys and the prominent skylines created by these and other ridges which form the backdrop to the NSA. The Moine Mhor area, while having a more open and expansive character in places, is constrained by the presence of small outcrop knolls, small scale settlement and a rich archaeology which would be affected by wind turbines. The more open coastal peninsulas would also be sensitive to wind turbine development due to their likely effect on key views to Jura. The overall sensitivity assessment takes into account the prevalence of key special qualities across this diverse NSA, with a **High** sensitivity to the small-medium typology and a **High-medium** sensitivity to the small typology concluded, reflecting some very limited opportunities to locate smaller turbines on less complex hill slopes which form a backdrop on the eastern edge of the NSA.

**Cumulative issues**

The consented wind farm of Allt Dearg located in the adjacent landscape character type ‘Kintyre/Knapdale Upland Forest Moor Mosaic’ (6) would be visible from the settled north-western shore and hill slopes above Loch Caolisport. Visibility is likely to be restricted within the remainder of the NSA with the exception of higher hills such as Cnoc Reamhar (265m) above Crinan. The consented wind farm of A’Chruach situated to the north-west of Loch Fyne will be visible from higher hill tops and ridges within the NSA and seen at around 10km distance. The existing An Suidhe and Cruach Mhor wind farm is also visible from similar elevated parts of the NSA (see figures 5-8).

Potential cumulative landscape and visual issues include:

- Increases in the number of larger wind farm developments located so clearly visible from the NSA (determined by height of turbines, distance and specific location) and potential cumulative effects on the wider landscape setting of the NSA
- Cumulative visual effects on views from popularly accessed hill tops such as Dunardy within the NSA

**Constraints:**

- The very open character of the southern tips of the peninsulas either side of Loch Sween where dramatic views across the sea to Jura are a feature and where even small turbines would be highly prominent and intrude on these views.
- The backdrop and contrast provided by higher hills between Loch Sween and Loch Caolisport and on the eastern boundary of the NSA and seen from roads, settlement and also from the lochs.
- The intimate scale of long, narrow parallel ridges and valleys occurring in the core of the NSA which is accentuated by dense woodland cover where even small turbines would dominate their relatively low relief.
- Potential conflicts of scale between small buildings and taller turbines and impacts on the setting of small settlements.
- A distinctive landform with deeply folded slopes and rocky outcrops which is particularly complex within the small scale parallel ridges and valleys at the core of...
the NSA but is also diverse and craggy within the higher hills on the south-eastern boundary of the NSA.
- The dramatic juxtaposition of small volcanic plugs and ridges with the flat plain of the Moine Mhor in the northern part of the NSA where even small turbines would dominate the scale of these features and detract from the overall scenic composition.
- A rich archaeology evident in the many well known inter-related archaeological features set within the Kilmichael and Moine Mhor area but also on the southern peninsula tips and coastal areas and the shores of Loch Caolisport.
- The strong wildland character experienced within the unsettled and little modified western coastal edge of this NSA and also within the extensive oak woodlands of the Tayvallich Peninsula which have a distinctly natural character.

**Opportunities:**
- Smoother, lower hill slopes and flatter breaks in slope within the broader scale peninsula separating Loch Sween and Loch Caolisport and the lower slopes above the eastern shore of Loch Caolisport where smaller typologies could be accommodated.

**Guidance on development**

There is no scope to site the small-medium typology within the Knapdale NSA due to the significant adverse impacts that would be likely to occur on a wide range of landscape and visual sensitivities.

There is some **very limited** scope for single and small groups (<3) of the small typology to be located on less complex lower hill slopes of the broader, higher peninsula east of Loch Sween and on the lower hill slopes to the south-east of Loch Caolisport. Turbines should be sited to avoid intrusion on prominent skylines, particularly those which form the backdrop to Loch Sween, and should also avoid significant intrusion on key views down Loch Caolisport to Jura. The setting of archaeological features would be sensitive even to these small turbines and care should be taken to avoid intrusion. Turbines of this size would be easier to accommodate if sited on subtle rises or where there are breaks in slope and rising ground forms a backcloth able to reduce their prominence.

There would be greater scope for turbines below 20m to be accommodated in this landscape and sited where they should be visually associated with small dispersed farms and other buildings. Turbines should be sited away from the more inaccessible western coast which has a distinct sense of wildness and the very open southern tips of the long peninsulas which extend into the open sea where they would be visually prominent and would potentially affect the setting of archaeological features and views to Jura. They should also avoid the fragmented coast and islands of Loch Sween and should be sited on the ‘up’ side of narrow public roads in order to avoid cluttering views across the loch. The Moine Mhor area of the NSA would still be sensitive to turbines of this size in many areas because of potential effects on archaeology and on the small outcrop hills which punctuate this open plain. Turbines of this size could however be sited close to buildings well away from outcrop hills and on the lower hills slopes at the transition with the ‘Upland Parallel Ridges’ (10) but would need to avoid impacting on the setting of the many archaeological features in these areas.
It will be important to limit the number of turbines and the ranges of turbine designs in this highly sensitive landscape to avoid it becoming cluttered with built development.

Guidance on the siting of smaller typologies is set out in section 7 of the Main Study Report.
Densely wooded parallel ridges dramatically juxtaposed with flat moss – skylines are highly sensitive.

The volcanic plug of Dunadd rising abruptly from the flat moss of Moine Mhor.

Crinan Bay with its tidal sands backed by rugged low ridges.

Sea lochs and parallel rocky ridges alternate and together with woodland, wetland and small pockets of pasture, produce a richly diverse landscape.

The southern tips of the long parallel peninsulas are very open and feature views over the sea with the Paps of Jura forming a key focus.

Long narrow wooded ridges create strong containment and an intimate scale.

Knapdale NSA
Lynn of Lorn NSA sensitivity assessment

**Introduction**

This NSA lies to the north of Oban and includes the island of Lismore and the coastal peninsulas and smaller islands which bound the narrow sea channel of the Lynn of Lorn. The whole of the NSA is defined as the ‘Lowland Ridges and Moss’ (18) landscape character type in the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Assessment.

Scotland’s Scenic Heritage (1978) describes this NSA thus:

*The Lynn of Lorn is an island-studded waterway at the confluence of the Sound of Mull with Loch Etive and Loch Linnhe, from which it is separated by the island of Lismore. The Lynn follows the north-westerly alignment of the prevailing relief in the area, which, set in the wider context of sea lochs and mountains, is a small scale region of parallel limestone ridges. It is these ridges, whether submerged, so that only their tops form islets, or whether raised in succession, with the waters of the Lynn, Loch Creran and Loch Laich lapping in between them, that give the area its distinctive character. Made of limestone they support a rich vegetation, either green, lush meadows in the intervening glens and on the surrounding raised beaches, or thick luxuriant oakwoods, at times extended by new coniferous plantations, covering their slopes. It is a small scale, secluded landscape with constantly changing views as the pattern of ridges and valleys, islands and inlets, is traversed. Lismore translates as ‘Great Garden’, a name which is not at variance with the character of the whole area, and which is realised in the fine policies of the big houses of the area – Lochnell, Eriska, Airds and Appin, to which Castle Stalker on its diminutive island offers a complete contrast.*

The special qualities of the Lynn of Lorn NSA are defined by SNH as comprising:

- A long-inhabited, green oasis
- A small scale, low-lying landscape within a vast highland backdrop
- A landscape strongly orientated northeast-southwest
- The coastline of great variety and diversity
- A strategic location, rich in history
- A place of retreat and seclusion
- Castle Stalker, one of Scotland’s iconic romantic images

All the special qualities identified are considered in the sensitivity assessment that follows. Our review of the special qualities of the Lynn of Lorn NSA has not identified any further key landscape and visual characteristics that need to be considered in relation to wind turbine development. The study brief requested that only smaller turbines <50m high should be considered in the sensitivity assessment for the NSAs.

**Operational and consented wind farm development**

No operational or consented wind farms are sited in this NSA. The operational wind farm of Beinn Ghlas is visible from the eastern side of Lismore and the higher mainland ridges. The consented Carraig Gheal wind farm will be visible from a similar area on Lismore on from the southern peninsula tips west of Ardmucknish Bay.
### Lynn of Lorn NSA – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special quality</th>
<th>Small-medium typology assessment (35-50m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
<th>Small typology assessment (20-35m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A long-inhabited green oasis</strong>&lt;br&gt;Small wooded ridges, sheltered meadows and policy landscapes occur on the mainland areas of Appin and Benderloch. Lismore and Shuna are ‘fertile green oases of limestone’.</td>
<td>This typology would detract from the composition of policy landscapes and the intricate interlocking land cover pattern of wetland, pasture and woodland which is particularly characteristic of the mainland area of the NSA and in more sheltered parts of Lismore.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>This typology would also detract from policy landscapes and small wooded ridges although the smaller turbines of this typology would be likely to have less of an effect on the scale of meadows and small pastures found in parts of Lismore and the mainland areas of the NSA.</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small scale low-lying landscape with a vast highland backdrop</strong>&lt;br&gt;Small scale pattern of land cover and complex patterning of ‘hill and crag’. Lismore an island of small knolls and uneven limestone crags. Glimpses to large scale mountainous landscapes which backdrop the low-lying landscape of the NSA.</td>
<td>This typology would dominate the scale of low ridges, small knolly hills and complex strongly contained landform. Views to the backdrop of mountains could be affected by this typology and this is addressed below.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>This typology would dominate the scale of low ridges, small knolly hills and complex strongly contained landform. Views to the backdrop of mountains could be affected by this typology and this is addressed below.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A landscape strongly orientated north-east-south-west</strong>&lt;br&gt;The pattern of ridges and valleys, of crags and slopes, of islands and promontories is particularly distinctive.</td>
<td>Turbines of this size could detract from the distinctive orientation of ridges particularly if multiple developments were to occur. They could however be sited to relate to the linear pattern.</td>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
<td>While turbines towards the upper height band of this typology could detract from the distinctive orientation of ridges, smaller turbines would be less prominent provided they were carefully sited to relate to the linear pattern.</td>
<td><strong>Medium-low</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The coastline of great variety and diversity</strong>&lt;br&gt;The coastline is complex and broken coastal features are diverse and include small islands and islets, horseshoe bays, linear tiers of cliffs from post glacial raised beaches – most notable on Lismore – and the</td>
<td>The coast would be highly sensitive to this typology as turbines would detract from the diversity, small scale and focus of the many geological features.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>The coast edge would be highly sensitive even to this smaller typology as turbines would detract from the diversity, small scale and focus of the many geological features.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clach Tholl rock arch.

| **A strategic location, rich in history**  
| Numerous historic remains are found throughout the area. Archaeological and historical built features often form distinctive landmarks in this landscape. | Turbines of this size could affect the setting and appreciation of archaeological features. | High | This typology could affect the setting and appreciation of archaeological features although their smaller size means that there may be more scope for development closer to the feature without intruding on the setting. | High-med |

| **A place of retreat and seclusion**  
| This special quality repeats some of the historical dimension noted above but also refers to aspects of seclusion. A distinct sense of seclusion can be experienced on parts of Lismore (heightened by it being an island) and on less accessible parts of the coast in the Lochmell area. | This typology would introduce large structures into a landscape which could compromise the sense of seclusion experienced in some areas. | Medium | The smaller turbines of this typology would be likely to have less of an effect on the sense of seclusion experienced due to its greater ability to be screened by landform and woodland and to fit better with the scale of existing settlement. | Med-low |

| **Castle Stalker, one of Scotland’s iconic romantic images**  
| Castle Stalker forms a focus in foreground of dramatic views south from A828 drawn down the length of the Lynn to the intricate pattern of islands along the coast and across Lismore to the mountains of Morvern and Mull. | This iconic view would be highly sensitive to the intrusion of moving turbines of this size, whether sited on the coastal edge of the Lynn of Lorn or on prominent skylines such as the hills of the Appin peninsula and higher ridgelines and hills of Lismore. | High | This iconic view would be highly sensitive to the intrusion of moving turbines of this size, whether sited on the coastal edge of the Lynn of Lorn or on prominent skylines such as the hills of the Appin peninsula and higher ridgelines and hills of Lismore. | High |
**Summary of sensitivity**

This NSA covers the island of Lismore and the low parallel ridges and islands on the eastern side of the long narrow sound of the Lynn of Lorn. Key sensitivities include the smaller scale narrow ridges, valleys and intricate coastal edge which would be dominated by the typologies considered in the assessment. The rich archaeology characteristic of this landscape and the presence of designed landscape features is also a constraint to development. Turbines visible on containing skylines and the coastal edge could detract from key views southwards down the long length the Lynn of Lorn and from landmark features such as Castle Stalker seen in these views. The overall sensitivity assessment takes account the prevalence of special qualities across the NSA with a **High** sensitivity being concluded for the small-medium typology and a **High-medium** sensitivity concluded for the small typology, reflecting opportunities for smaller turbines to be associated with broader basins and hill slopes provided significant intrusion on more sensitive coastal areas and key views was avoided.

**Constraints:**

- The intimate scale of this landscape where the strong containment provided by low parallel ridges is accentuated by dense woodland and the presence of small buildings.
- The complexity of landform including low, knolly and often very narrow parallel ridges and a ‘coastline of great variety and diversity’ with numerous islands and featuring a distinctive north-east/south-west alignment. The coast has a diverse geology including raised beaches and cliffs and has a particularly rugged character on the western shores of Lismore.
- A rich archaeology evident in the many duns, cairns, castles and early religious settlements.
- A diverse pattern of small enclosed pastures, scrubby woodlands and wetland found within Lismore, *small glens of meadows and mossland* on the mainland coastal edge.
- Policy landscapes located on the sheltered coastal fringes and featuring mixed woodlands, parkland and gardens associated with the estates of Lochnell, Eriska, Ardtur and Druimneil.
- Landmark features such as the Eilean Musdile lighthouse on the southern tip of Lismore seen from the Mull ferry and Castle Stalker ‘*one of Scotland’s iconic romantic images*’ sited on a diminutive island within Loch Laich.
- Long elevated views from the A828 and from the promoted viewpoint near The Knap looking south-west down the length of the Lynn of Lorn and taking in the diverse coastal edge of Lismore and Appin with the mountains of Movern and Mull forming a rugged backdrop.
- The setting of small scale settlements such as Port Appin and small houses tucked within woodlands and small bays on the mainland and set down between the parallel ridges of Lismore

**Opportunities:**

- Gentler hill slopes and dips below pronounced narrow ridges across Lismore and the broader, higher ridges in the southern part of the island
- More open and less complex lower hill slopes backing settlement on the shores of Loch Creran.
**Guidance on development**

There is no scope to accommodate the small-medium typology within this NSA. This is because this size of turbine would dominate the scale of low, narrow ridges which generally rise to less than 50m height on the lower peninsulas and small islands. While relief increases within the Appin peninsula and parts of Lismore, turbines of this size would be likely to be prominent in key views south down the Lynn of Lorn and would detract from the contrast that occurs between the sea, the fragmented coastline and islands and strongly rhythmic pattern of cliffs and craggy parallel ridges that contribute to the highly scenic composition of this seascape.

There are **limited** opportunities to locate single and small groups of turbines (<3) of the small typology on broader, less craggy ridges, gentler hill slopes and flatter areas found in parts of Lismore. Turbines should be sited to avoid impacting on the setting of the Eilean Musdile lighthouse and views to this and to the rugged unsettled south-west facing coast of Lismore seen from the Mull ferry. They should also be sited well back from the south-east facing coast and kept off prominent skylines within Appin and Lismore where they could detract from iconic views southwards down the Lynn of Lorn. Turbines of this size could not be easily accommodated in the lower mainland peninsulas and smaller islands as they would dominate the scale of low ridges and buildings. However, there may be some very limited opportunities for turbines towards the lower height band of this typology (<25m) to be sited in association with existing buildings and larger scale development in the Loch Creran area provided they are sited away from designed landscapes and from sensitive coastal edges which feature in key views from roads (especially the A828), settlement and promoted viewpoints. Turbines should not be sited on hill tops but on lower, gentler slopes in order to reduce their visual prominence. The higher ground found in the Appin peninsula would help reduce visual prominence of any turbines sited on lower slopes by providing a backdrop of rising ground.

There are greater opportunities to locate turbines below 20m high in this landscape provided they are clearly associated with existing buildings. Even these small turbines could introduce clutter to highly sensitive views and they should be sited to avoid intrusion on the foreground of key elevated and panoramic views southwards down the Lynn of Lorn and on views from the narrow roads which wind around the mainland peninsulas and offer changing panoramas across outer Loch Creran and the Lynn of Lorn.

All turbine development should be sited to avoid intrusion on archaeological features including Dun Chruban, Port Kilcheran, the broch of Tirefour castle and the Achnacroish monument on Lismore (as well as other lesser known archaeological features). They should also be sited well away from the more diverse coastlines featuring bands of cliffs, promontories, bays and the Clach Tholl arch and should avoid intrusion on the setting of mansion houses and their designed landscapes.

It will be important to limit the number of small turbines (20-35m high) and multiple developments of single or small groups of turbines located in this NSA due to potential effects on dramatic views to the mountains of Movern and Mull and also views to Lismore from the Oban area and from the sea.

Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in section 7 of the Main Study Report.
The Eilean Musdile lighthouse on the southern tip of Lismore and the rugged west coast of the island, seen from the Mull ferry.

Lismore has a diverse land cover of walled pastures, scrubby woodlands and wetland.

The characteristic parallel ridges of this NSA are generally low and narrow and contribute to the small scale of the landscape.

Higher ground in the southern part of Lismore has a more open character and increased scale although it is also important in forming the skyline in key views.

The ‘High Tops’ at the head of Loch Creran form a dramatic backdrop in view from the NSA.

The romantic Castle Stalker and the renowned view down the Lynn of Lorn with Lismore to the right.

Lynn of Lorn NSA
Kyles of Bute NSA sensitivity assessment

Introduction
This NSA covers the northern tip of Bute and the narrow sea lochs of the Kyles of Bute. The majority of this NSA is defined as the ‘Craggy Upland’ (7) character type within the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Assessment with small areas of the ‘Steep Ridgeland and Mountains’ (1) and the ‘Bute Open Ridgeland’ (5a) also included. A small area of the ‘Craggy Upland’ (7) extends beyond the southern boundary of the NSA on Bute. For the purposes of this assessment, this area of the ‘Craggy Upland’ has been reclassified as the adjacent ‘Bute Open Ridgeland’ (5a) with which it shares key characteristics and a similar landscape context.

Scotland’s Scenic Heritage (1978) describes this NSA thus:

_The juxtaposition of the island of Bute to mainland Cowal at the mouth of Loch Ruel gives rise to a deeply enclosed passage of the sea through an area of broken and well wooded hill country, the whole combining to form a scene of great variety and interest. Loch Ruel is markedly tidal with extensive mud flats at its head. The loch shore is mantled with mixed woodland and the hillsides are roughly undulating with rock outcropping frequently. There are views to northern Bute, which has an undeveloped moorland character, with bluffs containing the Kyles. The mainland hills overhang the Kyles steeply, and afford striking views of the three arms of water. The rich verdure of the banks and the high degree of enclosure confer an appearance of peaceful calm on these narrow waters, which underlines their physical beauty._

The special qualities of the Kyles of Bute NSA are defined by SNH as comprising:

- The drama of the Kyles
- Verdant woodland on the enclosing hills
- Rocky outcrops punctuating the wooded slopes
- Small fields between the water and the woods
- The juxtaposition of human settlement and a wider undeveloped landscape of sea and hills
- A peaceful landscape of constant movement
- The ever-changing vistas
- The gradual transition from land to sea in Loch Ruel

The special qualities of ‘a peaceful landscape of constant movement’ and ‘The gradual transition from land to sea in Loch Ruel’ have not been considered in the sensitivity assessment that follows as these qualities would be unlikely to be affected by wind turbine development. The study brief requested that only smaller turbines <50m high should be considered in the sensitivity assessment for the NSAs. The sensitivity assessment considers all the special qualities excepting ‘A peaceful landscape of constant movement’.

Operational and consented wind farm development
No operational or consented wind farms are sited within this NSA. The operational Cruach Mhor wind farm is sited within the adjacent ‘Steep Ridgeland and Mountains’ (1) character type approximately 6km from the north-eastern boundary of the NSA. There is visibility of this development within the NSA from the northern hills of Bute, the waters of the western Kyle of Bute, the steep hillsides which enclose the Kyles of Bute to the east and west and
intermittently from the A8003. Theoretical visibility is also shown in Figure 5 from the A886 although dense woodland is likely to severely restrict views from this route. Existing wind farms sited in North Ayrshire may be visible from elevated locations in this NSA.
**Kyles of Bute NSA – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special quality</th>
<th>Small-medium typology assessment (35-50m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
<th>Small typology assessment (20-35m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The drama of the Kyles  These narrow sea channels snake around the northern end of Bute, hemmed in by steep hill slopes on Bute and the long Cowal peninsulas. The sea is the focus of this NSA holding the eye with the varied drama of straits, islands, promontories, bluffs, coves, flats and bays.</td>
<td>Turbines sited close to the shore and on steep containing slopes would detract from the irregular coastal edge and from the focus provided by the Kyles. Turbines of this size would appear large in relation to the narrow width of the Kyles.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Turbines sited close to the shore and on particularly steep and rugged slopes containing the Kyles would detract although there may be some limited scope to site turbines towards the lower height band of this typology on smoother, gentler containing slopes away from more complex irregular promontories, bluffs and islands.</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verdant woodland on the enclosing hills  Extensive areas of mature, mixed woodland cover the hillsides which contain the Kyles, these often reaching the water’s edge. There are many large individual trees and these spread their boughs across small pastures....</td>
<td>Turbines of this size would be significantly taller than trees and would detract from the notably extensive broadleaved woodland cover characteristic of this NSA. There are few areas of open ground where larger turbines (and groups of turbines) could be accommodated.</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
<td>There is some increased scope to site the smaller turbines of this typology in less wooded areas.</td>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky outcrops punctuating the wooded slopes  The hills containing the Kyles are steep-sided, particularly the mainland hills which overhang the Kyles steeply with towering rocky buttresses occurring above the A8003.</td>
<td>This typology would detract from the predominant complexity and steepness of the topography. Smoother hill slopes occur on the lower slopes either side of the eastern Kyle although these are still steep and there would be limited opportunities for multiple turbines of this size.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>This typology would also detract from the predominant complexity and steepness of the topography although there may be increased opportunities to accommodate smaller turbines either side of the eastern Kyle and in rare areas where landform is less complex.</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small fields between the water and the woods  These fields exist on the only significant areas of level ground between the shore and the foot of steep wooded slopes. They are rare</td>
<td>Turbines of this size would dominate the scale of small fields if sited within or nearby them. Larger fields and areas of more extensive grazing occur on the lower slopes of</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
<td>Turbines of this size would dominate the scale of small fields if sited within or nearby them. Larger fields and areas of more extensive grazing occur on the lower slopes of</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
features and provide a valuable contrast with extensive woodlands, water and rocky hill slopes providing pockets of open space and contributing to the intimate scale experienced along the shores of the Kyles.

The juxtaposition of human settlement and a wider undeveloped landscape of sea and hills settlement is sparse and confined to the coastal fringes. Settlements are well integrated into the landform and although easily accessible by road and sea, the whole area has a relatively remote and undeveloped character.

Ever-changing vistas This NSA is small and the majority of the area can be seen in relative proximity from elevated viewpoints on the B003, which provide spectacular panoramic views over the Kyles to the undeveloped moorland of northern Bute and beyond. The frequent change in direction and altitude of the A8003 and A886 (both on the mainland and on Bute) give a wide range of vistas in terms of scale and there are long views down the Kyles to Arran and the North Ayrshire coast. The Kyles are well-used by watercraft and views from the sea are also important.
Summary of sensitivity
This is a small NSA with much of the designated area visible from key viewpoints along roads and within settlement. Key sensitivities include the complex rugged landform and intricate coastal features including buildings, small pastures and woodlands which would be adversely affected by wind turbines. Turbines could also detract from highly scenic views over the Kyles and north Bute from the A8003 and the sea and this limits scope for development. Overall sensitivity would be High for both the small and small-medium typologies.

Cumulative issues
The operational Cruach Mhor wind farm is located relatively close to this NSA and visible from some limited areas. Any extension to this development could increase the extent of visibility and potential intrusion on the NSA. Cumulative effects could occur if additional large scale developments were sited in the uplands which provide the wider setting to the NSA (both on the mainland of Argyll and Bute, on Bute or on the hills of the distant Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park which backdrop key views south down the eastern Kyle from the A8003).

Constraints:
- The often intimate scale of this landscape where the narrow channels of the Kyles of Bute and Loch Ruel are strongly contained by steep-sided hill slopes and accentuated by the occasional small buildings which fringe the shore.
- An irregular complex landform of rocky indented shoreline of promontories, coves and islands backed by craggy hill slopes which form sheer-sided buttresses particularly pronounced in the area where the Kyles merge with Loch Ruel.
- Small enclosed pastures, extensive broadleaved and policy mixed woodlands and tidal wetlands which combine to produce a richly diverse landscape cover.
- The small extent of this NSA and its high visibility from roads and the sea – the majority of the area can be seen from key viewpoints and there are very few less visible areas.
- Scenic views from the A8003 over and funnelled down the long sea channels of the Kyles, framed by steep containing hill slopes including the rugged undeveloped hill ground of north Bute, which is highly visible in these views.

Opportunities:
- Gentler hill slopes close to settlement and set back from the shoreline and therefore less intrusive in key views down the Kyles.

Guidance on development
There is no scope to accommodate the small-medium typology within this NSA. This is because this size of turbine would be more likely to impact on the predominantly complex, craggy landform, on the small scale of the more strongly contained parts of this landscape and on the notably extensive cover of broadleaved woodland. Turbines of this size would also be likely to be prominent in key views south down the Kyles of Bute and would detract from the highly scenic composition of this NSA.

There may be some very limited opportunities to locate turbines towards the lower height band of the small typology and especially turbines below 20m high in this landscape
provided they are clearly associated with existing farms and settlement. Even these small turbines could introduce clutter to highly sensitive views and they should be sited to avoid significant intrusion on the foreground of key elevated and panoramic views southwards down the Kyles of Bute, particularly avoiding the more sensitive shoreline area. The less complex lower hill slopes either side of the eastern Kyle offer more scope to accommodate turbines on the edge of larger pastures close to settlement.

The NSA is also sensitive to development sited within the adjacent character types of the ‘Steep Ridgeland and Mountains’ (1) and the higher northern hills of the ‘Bute Open Ridgeland’ (5a) which are visible as a backdrop in key views, from the A8003 for example.

Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in section 7 of the Main Study Report.
The landscape of this NSA has an intimate scale close to the narrow and strongly enclosed Kyles.

Coastal fringes feature a mix of woodland and small pastures.

Craggy hill slopes form sheer-sided buttresses which are particularly dramatic backing Loch Ruel.

Policy woodland and small areas of parkland within the more sheltered Loch Ruel area add to the rich land cover of this NSA.

The tidal wetlands at the head of Loch Ruel.

Scenic views over Bute and down the Kyles from the A8003.

*Kyles of Bute NSA*
Loch na Keal, Isle of Mull NSA sensitivity assessment

Introduction
The Loch na Keal NSA comprises an extensive seascape covering the western coast of Mull and a number of smaller islands. The majority of this NSA is defined as the ‘High Stepped Basalt’ (12) character type within the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Assessment with small areas of the ‘Basalt Lowlands’ (17) and the ‘High Tops’ (2) also included. These character types extend beyond the boundary of the Loch na Keal NSA on Mull and separate sensitivity assessments have been undertaken for the undesignated areas of each of these character types. Where relevant, the potential effect of wind turbines on the adjacent NSA is considered in these sensitivity assessments.

Scotland’s Scenic Heritage (1978) describes this NSA thus:

Loch na Keal is the principal sea loch on the Atlantic shore of Mull. The outer loch is divided into two by the island group of Ulva and Gometra, and the northern water forms Loch Tuath. Although the whole forms one island-studded seascape, the component parts of Loch Tuath, inner Loch na Keal and outer Loch na Keal have distinctive but complementary characters.

The shoreline of the inner loch is of low relief, the bayhead beach backed by meadow and woodland, above which the south slopes sweep uniformly up to the shapely peak of Ben More. Eorsa is a green island of the same smooth appearance, but it is the innermost of a group of islands in the outer loch of astonishing variety of shape and form. The outer loch has a bold and dynamic coastline of cliffs rising in landslipped tiers, unmasked by tree growth, but studded with huge boulders. The north shore has a more intimate character which develops in Loch Tuath where the shoreline is indented by a number of small bays, into which hazel, rowan and alder-lined burns tumble swiftly and sometimes, like Eas Forss, fall over small precipices which echo the larger cliffs of the south shore.

The hillsides of Loch Tuath have a mixture of rough grazing and semi-natural woodland which contributes to its more intimate and gentle character. Although Loch Tuath has a sense of enclosure that contrasts with the bold rugged and wild character of outer Loch na Keal, they share views of the same groups of islands, whether the dramatic profiles of the basaltic Staffa and Treshnish Isles, or the greener, shelved islands of Ulva, Gometra and Little Colonsay, or the innumerable skerries that pepper the whole bight with eyecatching shapes.

The special qualities of the Loch na Keal NSA are defined by SNH as comprising:

- **Highly distinctive seaways and shores**
- A voyage from enclosed sea loch to the open Atlantic
- Dramatic coast of basalt terraces and cliffs
- Views of an island-studded sea
- Islands and islet groups of astonishingly varied character
- A vast natural world, dwarfing human settlement
- World famous Staffa and Fingal’s Cave
- The horizontal Treshnish Isles
- The instantly recognisable Dutchman’s Cap
Following review in the field, we have considered the special qualities relating to the offshore islands, namely ‘The horizontal Treshnish Isles’, ‘World famous Staffa and Fingal’s Cave’ and ‘The instantly recognisable Dutchman’s Cap’ within the ‘Islands and islet groups of astonishingly varied character’ special quality to avoid any potential double-counting in the sensitivity assessment for the NSA. The special quality ‘A voyage from enclosed sea loch to the open Atlantic’ has been omitted in the sensitivity assessment, as turbine development would be unlikely to impact on this quality. The experience of remoteness touched upon in this special quality is however addressed by a fuller consideration of perceptual qualities as an additional sensitivity criterion.

The study brief requested that only smaller turbines <50m high should be considered in the sensitivity assessment for the NSAs.

**Operational and consented wind farm development**

No operational or consented wind farms are sited in this NSA. Operational and consented wind farms located on the mainland of Argyll and Bute lie beyond the 30km threshold set for the ZTV mapping shown in Figures 5 -8 in the Main Study Report.
**Loch na Keal NSA – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special quality</th>
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<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
<th>Small typology assessment (20-35m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NSA special qualities</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highly distinctive seaways and shores</strong> These include the wide, outer loch divided in two by Ulva and Gometra and the narrow inner loch of Loch na Keal. Inner Loch na Keal is strongly contained by hill slopes rising to a ridge of between 300-400m to the north and the steep slopes of Ben More and other mountains to the south-east. The southern part of the outer loch is contained by the dramatic sheer cliffs of the Ardmeanach Peninsula on Mull and the fragmented southern coast of Ulva.</td>
<td>Turbines of this size sited on steep slopes and on the skyline of containing ridges (in both the NSA and in adjacent landscapes) would detract from the setting of the inner Loch an Keal and Loch Tuath and key views across and along these relatively narrow stretches of water which allow close views of opposite shores. The southern part of the outer loch is more expansive and open to the sea. While turbines of this size would appear small in relation to the increased scale of this seascape they would be likely to disrupt its characteristic openness. Skylines are similarly sensitive in this part of the outer loch (the landform of the islands is considered separately below).</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Small turbines sited on prominent ridgelines would have similar effects on the setting of the inner Loch na Keal and Loch Tuath. Lower hill slopes away from key views across Loch na Keal to distant islands (see assessment below) and associated with settlement would be less sensitive provided skylines were not breached and more fragmented shorelines were avoided.</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dramatic coast of basalt terraces and cliffs</strong> Ancient lava flows give a horizontal emphasis to the area and... Geometric strongly stepped profiles lead up and back from a rocky, steeply edged coastline to flat-topped summits. These ‘stepped profiles’ are most dramatic on the peninsula of Ardmeanach and</td>
<td>The landform of much of this NSA is complex and distinctive. This typology would detract from more fragmented coastlines present on the eastern and southern coasts of Ulva, the vertiginous cliffs and stepped profiles of Ardmeanach and steep-sided mountainous terrain of Ben More. Less complex</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
<td>The small typology would also detract from more fragmented coastlines present on the eastern and southern coasts of Ulva, the vertiginous cliffs and stepped profiles of Ardmeanach and steep-sided mountainous terrain of Ben More. Less complex landform occurs on lower hill slopes to the north and east of inner Loch na Keal</td>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
culminate in the sheer cliffs of ‘The Wilderness’. The absence of tree cover reveals the geological bones of this landscape. The *shapely cone of Ben More* is seen with other steep-sided mountains on the south side of Loch na Keal, creating a fine skyline and backdrop.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Views of an island-studded sea</strong></th>
<th><strong>Islands and islet groups of astonishingly varied character</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An abundance of islands of different shapes, sizes and character, although all reflect the horizontality of the lava flows from which they are derived. The islands include Staffa, Eorsa, Ulva, Little Colonsay, Inch Kenneth and the Treshnish Isles and they are seen from many vantage points including the narrow coast roads around Loch na Keal and Loch Tuath and from Ben More, Iona and the Ross of Mull as well as from each other. Boat trips to Staffa and the Treshnish Isles are popular.</td>
<td>Eorsa is a compact green island with smooth rounded slopes and cliffs on the west coast – it lies in the centre of Loch na Keal. Low-lying Inch Kenneth with its ‘toothed’ islets, reefs and skerries, is rich in archaeology. Ulva forms the largest island and is green and lush in the east with a mix of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbines could intrude on key views to and from the islands especially if located between the B8035 and the B8073 and the shoreline which is predominantly open, allowing unimpeded sea views. Turbines of this size located on the smaller islands would be likely to be prominent as little screening would be provided by landform. Lower hill slopes inland from the coastal roads and set back from key footpaths on the mainland (for example the footpath in the area of Treshnish Point) would be less sensitive. There would also be greater scope to minimise intrusion on views if sited on larger islands such as Ulva where a degree of screening and backdrop by higher ground could be utilised.</td>
<td>This typology could significantly impact on the individual and complex landform character of the islands – especially where the islands are small but especially distinctive in their form – for example the Dutchman’s Cap on the Treshnish Isles. These taller turbines could detract from the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-med</td>
<td>High-med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even small turbines could intrude on key views from coastal roads and turbines towards the upper height band of this typology would be prominent if sited on smaller islands. There is however increased scope to site this typology, and especially turbines toward the lower height band &lt;25m, away from sensitive coastal edges and on lower hill slopes to benefit from a back drop of rising ground thus minimising visual intrusion on key views to the islands.</td>
<td>There is increased scope to site smaller turbines to avoid significant effects on more complex and distinctive landform features within some of the larger islands with a less iconic form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pasture and policy woodlands. Little Colonsay and Gometra both have distinctly shelved coastlines. The Treshnish Isles a striking chain of small basalt islands which form landmark features, particularly the Dutchman’s Cap. Staffa is isolated and renowned.

| Appreciation of more complex landform features, such as pronounced stepped profiles and fragmented coastal edges patterned with myriad islets and skerries and would appear large in relation to the scale of small hills on the smaller islands. Landform is variable however and sensitivity would be reduced where flatter terraces and more even slopes occur on some of the larger islands. |
| A vast natural world, dwarfing human settlement |
| While this typology would not dominate the scale of this vast natural world, turbines of this size would appear large in relation to the small houses fringing the loch shore. |
| This typology would also not dominate the scale of this vast natural world. Turbines towards the lower height band of this typology would be less likely to dominate the size of small houses. |
| Medium |
| Medium-low |

**A vast natural world, dwarfing human settlement**
This landscape is sparsely settled. Where houses do occur, they are dwarfed by the mountainous and sea-dominant scene. Settlement is confined to the northern coastal fringes of Loch na Keal and Loch Tuath and the eastern end of Ulva.

**Other key characteristics**

**Perceptual qualities** The islands of Staffa and the Treshnish Isles are remote and uninhabited (although a popular destination for summer boat trips). Other islands such as Ulva are very sparsely settled. The difficulties of access, the ruggedness of the terrain and absence of development results in a strong sense of wilderness being associated with these islands. The northern coasts of Loch na Keal and Loch Tuath are less remote being sparsely settled and coniferous forestry also diminishes the

| This typology would significantly diminish the strong sense of wilderness associated with remote, inhabited islands and coastal areas. Sensitivity would be reduced where turbines could be visually associated with settlement on the larger inhabited islands and mainland coastal areas although taller turbines are more likely to be perceived as ‘industrial’ in character. |
| This typology would also significantly diminish the strong sense of wilderness associated with remote, inhabited islands and coastal areas. Sensitivity would be reduced where turbines could be visually associated with settlement on the larger inhabited islands and mainland coastal areas. These smaller turbines are less likely to be perceived as industrial in character provided they are closely associated with existing settlement. |
| High |
| High-med |
perception of naturalness. Although the southern shores of Loch na Keal are sparsely settled and accessed by the B8035, the Ardmeanach Peninsula is remote with no road access and has a strong sense of wildness heightened by dramatic massive cliffs. Ben More gives elevated views into the remote mountainous core of the ‘Mull High Tops’ (2a).
Loch na Keal NSA

**Summary of sensitivity**
The Loch na Keal NSA comprises an expansive seascape where turbines up to 50m in height would appear as relatively small features in relation to the scale of big and bold landforms. However, while taller wind turbines could relate to the scale of this landscape, the highly distinctive landform of coastal features and islands and the strong sense of wilderness associated with many parts of this NSA are key constraints to development. The larger turbines of the small-medium typology would also be likely to be more visually intrusive in this very open landscape, introducing built clutter into a little developed landscape and detracting from views to islands and coastal features on the mainland. Overall sensitivity is judged to be High for the small-medium typology and High-medium for the small typology, reflecting some limited scope to accommodate smaller turbines in association with more settled coastal fringes and hill slopes with a less complex landform.

**Constraints:**
- The distinctive basalt landform of massive coastal cliffs, mountains and islands which gives spectacular complexity and diversity in much of the NSA.
- Views to iconic islands such as Staffa and the Treshnish Islands from coastal roads, footpaths and mountain tops around Loch na Keal but also from the Ross of Mull and Iona and inter-visibility between islands, mainland and the sea.
- The narrower extent of the inner Loch na Keal and Loch Tuath where the opposite shore is seen in relative proximity and where the skyline of ridges containing these lochs is prominent in views.
- The small size of houses, these principally sited on the northern shores of Loch na Keal and Loch Tuath and the sheltered eastern end of Ulva.
- The openness of this seascape which limits scope for screening by landform or vegetation.
- A strong sense of wilderness experienced in the remote, uninhabited islands and coast of the Ardmeanach Peninsula.

**Opportunities:**
- Less complex, gentler lower hill slopes on the north side of Loch Tuath and inner Loch na Keal and eastern Ulva which are visually associated with settlement.

**Guidance on development**
There is no scope to accommodate the small-medium typology within this NSA.

There are **very limited** opportunities to locate single and small groups of turbines (<3) of the small typology on less complex lower hill slopes and small areas of flatter ground and terraces next to settlement and on the upper edge of fields. Turbines should be sited away from the coastal edge, particularly where it is very fragmented, to avoid intrusion on open views to islands from coastal roads and paths. They should be sited to avoid intrusion on more complex landform features such as rocky stepped slopes, cliffs and prominent craggy hill tops and they should not break the skyline of containing ridges in key views.

There are increased opportunities to locate turbines below 20m high in this landscape provided they were closely associated with settlement.
Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in section 7 of the Main Study Report.
Distinctive 'stepped' basalt landform on Ulva seen from Little Colonsay

The seascape of this NSA features a diverse range of islands of different size and form

The conical form of Ben More rising steeply from Loch na Keal

The spectacular coastal scenery of sheer cliffs on the Ardmearnach Peninsula seen across Loch na Keal

Character Type: Loch na Keal NSA
Jura NSA sensitivity assessment

Introduction
The Jura NSA occupies the southern end of the Island of Jura. This NSA encompasses the iconic Paps of Jura, their setting and key viewpoints, the coastline of the southern end of Jura and the setting of Loch Tarbert which forms the northern boundary.

The following landscape character types defined in the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Assessment (1996) occur within this NSA:

- Moorland Plateau (8)
- Coastal Parallel Ridges (22)
- Marginal Farmland Mosaic (16)

Both the Moorland Plateau (8) and the ‘Upland Parallel Ridges’ (22) landscape character types extend northwards across the remainder of the island, where they lie within an Area of Panoramic Quality.

Scotland’s Scenic Heritage (1978) describes this NSA thus:

*Jura forms the western visual limit of a large-scale coastal tract which encompasses Mid Argyll, but it is the southern part of the island which has outstanding scenic interest. The island is made up of quartzite, which usually results in remarkable upland landforms and Jura is no exception. The Paps of Jura, all three between 700 and 800 metres in height, are dominant in views from the mainland and Islay. Their shapely cones rise abruptly from rolling moorland, and their summits shimmer with quartzite screes. ‘In the opinion of the well known Scottish writer Alisdair Alpin McGregor, their steepsided elegance can be compared only with the famous Cuillins of Skye’ (Whittow, 1977). The coastal fringe has dramatic raised beaches and cliff lines on the west side of the island, and indented bays and islets on the east shore, with some woodland, both semi-natural and planted.*

The special qualities of the Jura NSA are defined by SNH as comprising:

- The distinctive Paps of Jura
- Human settlement on the margins of a vast moorland terrain
- A continually varying coast
- Large tracts of wild land
- The raised beaches of the west coast
- An island of deer
- An island close yet remote
- The inaccessible Loch Tarbert

The special qualities ‘An island of deer’ and ‘An island close yet remote’ have not been considered in the sensitivity assessment that follows. The assessment also considers an additional sensitivity criterion relating to the pattern, scale and setting of settlement (a key characteristic not defined in the NSA special qualities study but of relevance to wind turbine development).

The study brief requested that only smaller turbines <50m high should be considered in the sensitivity assessment for the NSAs.
Operational and consented wind farm development
No operational or consented wind farms are located in this NSA. The consented Allt Dearg wind farm located on the mainland is theoretically visible at distances of between 25-30km from the eastern coast and higher ground of this NSA.
### Jura NSA – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSA Special Qualities</th>
<th>Small-medium typology assessment (35-50m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
<th>Small typology assessment (20-35m)</th>
<th>Sensitivity rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The distinctive Paps of Jura</strong>&lt;br&gt;Steep cones…and summits of silvery rock…rise out of surrounding moorland…their distinctive profiles make them readily identifiable landmarks.&lt;br&gt;The Paps are highly visible and readily recognisable from neighbouring Islay, vast stretches of the west coast mainland, other islands, and the sea, including major ferry routes. They are seen and recognised from all angles.&lt;br&gt;The NSA encompasses the visual setting of the Paps, including views from the sea. Fine views to Jura are mentioned in other NSA citations, for example the Knapdale NSA.</td>
<td>This typology could easily disrupt the distinctive and recognisable profile of the Paps, or distract from their visual focus which is the key element of the NSA.&lt;br&gt;This typology could readily intrude into key views or the setting of the Paps, and diminish the visual drama of the way the hills rise out of the plateau.&lt;br&gt;In addition, the Paps appear taller than they really are, and turbines of this height could diminish their perceived scale.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>While the smaller turbines of this typology would be potentially less prominent, at least from a distance, this typology could still intrude into key views, diminish the visual drama of the way the hills rise out of the plateau and distract from the visual focus of the hills and could also diminish the perceived scale of the Paps.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human settlement on the edges of a vast moorland</strong>&lt;br&gt;The ‘wild trackless interior’ contrasts with the ‘inhabited green coastal strip’.&lt;br&gt;Human settlement occupies a relatively thin sliver of accessible and more fertile coast. By contrast the moorland interior is characterised by its lack of human intervention and relative remoteness.</td>
<td>Turbines located away from the inhabited coastal strip would extend structures into the relatively remote interior and blur the boundary between the inhabited and settled coast and the more remote and uninhabited moorland.&lt;br&gt;This typology could also be highly visible in the open moorland and likely to have a wide visual presence.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Turbines located away from the inhabited coastal strip would extend structures into the relatively remote interior and blur the boundary between the inhabited and settled coast and the more remote and uninhabited moorland.&lt;br&gt;Although smaller than the small-medium typology, this typology could still be easily visible in the open moorland.</td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A continually varying coast</strong>&lt;br&gt;The variety of the coast extends</td>
<td>Turbines located on the coast may distract from smaller scale features</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
<td>Turbines located on the coast may distract from smaller scale features</td>
<td><strong>High-med</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
from...bays, beaches and headlands, settled and cultivated coastlines along the east and south, to the uninhabited and inaccessible west coast with its spectacular raised beaches and caves...and Loch Tarbert.

The drama of the coastline is in part due to its variety of features and varied sense of remoteness, but also due to the spectacular seascape setting, from the wide openness to the south and the enclosed straights of Islay. A number of visitor attractions, including Jura House and the Singing Sands, have a coastal setting.

A number of visitor attractions, including Jura House and the Singing Sands, have a coastal setting. such as small bays and islands and impact on the relative remoteness of less inhabited stretches of coastline, although some stretches of coastline may be more self contained and also less remote.

- **Large tracts of wild land**
  - Away from the coastal settlements of the south and east, there is little obvious sign of human impact...the combination of remoteness and naturalness imbues...the NSA...with a great sense of wildness. As noted in the special qualities above, the more remote coast and rugged, difficult terrain of the moorland are both characterised by a sense of wildness which contrasts with more settled areas.

  | Turbines located away from the inhabited coastal strip would extend structures into the relatively remote interior and impact on the sense of naturalness characteristic of these areas. In addition, turbines and their associated infrastructure would significantly diminish the more remote character of the less accessible west coast. This typology could also be highly visible in the open moorland and likely to have a wide visual presence. |
  | High |

  - Although smaller than the small-medium typology, this typology could still be easily visible in the open moorland.

- **The raised beaches of the west coast**
  - The raised beaches of the west coast are amongst the finest in Scotland...there is...an impressive array of...features, relics from a

  | Turbines located on the west coast would impact on the setting of key features and the visual drama of this coast. |
  | High |

  - Turbines located on the west coast would impact on the setting of key features and the visual drama of this coast.
higher sea level, including ancient caves and cliffs. The variety of the coastline is enhanced by these dramatic and ancient features.

**The inaccessible Loch Tarbert**
...a sea loch with a complex, rock-bound shoreline...surrounded by moorland...largely inaccessible, except by boat or long walks across boggy terrain...a lonely and remote place.
Although the eastern end of this loch is accessible by a track, much of the coastline is difficult to access. The indented coastline and numerous islands create small scale features which contrast with the open sweep of the plateau and the simple form and drama of the Paps.

The contrast between the small scale indented coastline and the more simple, expansive moorland could be diminished by the presence of this typology. The remote qualities of this loch, and its relative inaccessibility, would be diminished by the presence of turbines and associated infrastructure. This typology could also be highly visible in the open landscape and is likely to have a wide visual presence.

**Other key characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement pattern, scale and setting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The settlement pattern is characterised by the pattern of clustered townships or scattered crofts. There is a clear relationship between settlement and sheltered locations overlooking the sea. Some of the older settlements are characterised by low buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbines of this size would appear very large in relation to small buildings. The setting of small settlements would be sensitive especially if turbines were sited on the skyline of low containing ridges and along the shoreline interrupting views across bays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The contrast between the small scale indented coastline and the more simple, expansive moorland could be diminished by the presence of this typology. The remote qualities of this loch, and its relative inaccessibility, would be diminished by the presence of turbines and associated infrastructure. Although smaller than the small-medium typology, this typology could still be easily visible in the open landscape.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Turbines of this size could have a better scale relationship to buildings although small buildings in more open areas would be more sensitive to turbines towards the upper height band of this typology. The setting of settlements is still sensitive although there is increased scope to accommodate turbines towards the lower height band to minimise impact, or to locate this typology in areas which do not directly impinge upon the setting of the settlements.

Medium
Summary of sensitivity
The Jura NSA is fairly extensive and features coastal and upland landscapes. The more remote west coast and moorland interior of this landscape has a strong wildland character (defined as a search area for wildland by SNH) and this is a key constraint to all turbine development typologies. The Paps of Jura form landmark features seen across both the NSA and the wider seascape and even smaller turbines could detract from key views to these hills and affect their character. Overall sensitivity would be **High** for the small typology and **High-medium** for the small-medium typology.

Cumulative issues
There are no consented wind farms in this NSA, and no constructed turbines were seen during the site visits.

Potential cumulative landscape and visual issues include:

- Variations in the type and size of single and small groups of small/less than 20m high turbines proposed within the NSA

Constraints:
- The visual drama of the widely visible and easily recognisable cone-like forms of the Paps of Jura rising from the relatively level plateau and their wider seascape setting when seen from across the island of Jura, from Islay, the sea and more distant views from the west coast mainland and other islands. Even small turbines could detract from the overall scenic composition.
- The perceived size of the Paps, which are smaller in relief than they appear, and which could be diminished if their scale is related to the height of a turbine.
- The contrasts in scale between the open and extensive undulating, moorland plateau, the upright forms of the Paps and the small scale indentations and islands along the coast where even small turbines could detract from the overall scenic composition.
- The blurring between the more remote and rugged moorland interior and the clearly defined settled and farmed coastal strip.
- The wild land qualities of inaccessibility, remoteness, naturalness of the relatively exposed and isolated west coast and moorland interior.
- Potential conflicts of scale between small buildings and taller turbines and impacts on the setting of small settlements.
- Prominent skylines and ridges which contain settlements or are highly visible in views along the coast.
- The setting and juxtaposition of the wide variety of coastal features, including raised beaches, caves, bays, headlands, and islands.
- The setting of individual features, including Loch Tarbert and its wider scenic context, and smaller features such as Jura House and specific beaches.

Opportunities:
- Smoother, lower hill slopes and flatter breaks in slope closely associated with the settled areas.
**Guidance on development**

There is no scope to site the small-medium typology within the Jura NSA due to the significant adverse impacts that would be likely to occur on a wide range of landscape and visual sensitivities.

There is some **very limited** scope for single turbines at the smaller end of the size range of this typology to be located on less complex lower hill slopes close to main settlements. Turbines should be sited to avoid intrusion on prominent skylines, particularly those which form the backdrop to the settlements and along the coast and should also avoid the immediate coastal edge where they would be visually prominent. Turbines should avoid significant intrusion on key views to the Paps. The setting of coastal features would be sensitive even to these small turbines and care should be taken to avoid intrusion. They should therefore be sited on the ‘hinterland’ side of public roads where possible to avoid cluttering views of the coast. Turbines of this size would be easier to accommodate if sited where there are breaks in slope and rising ground forms a backcloth able to reduce their prominence.

There would be greater scope for turbines below 20m to be accommodated in this landscape and sited where they would be visually associated with croft clusters and other buildings. Turbines below 20m height should be sited close to settlement and avoid intrusion on the coast and significant views to the Paps of Jura as recommended for the small typology above. The rugged and relatively remote interior, Loch Tarbert and western coast of the Jura NSA would still be sensitive to turbines of this size.

It will be important to limit the number of turbines and the ranges of turbine designs in this highly sensitive landscape to avoid it becoming cluttered with built development. Smaller turbines should be sited in accordance with the guidance set out in section 7 of the Main Study Report.
The striking conical profiles of the Paps of Jura seen from above Port Askaig on Islay

The Paps appear over the surrounding lower-lying moorland

Jura NSA