



Offshore Wind Power Limited

West of Orkney Windfarm EIA Report

Volume 2, Supporting
Study 16: Viewpoint
Assessment

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18 VIEWPOINT ASSESSMENT

18.1 Introduction

This Supporting Study sets out the findings of the viewpoints assessment, undertaken as part of the SLVIA for the offshore Project. These findings are used to inform the overall assessment of effects as presented within Chapter 18: Seascape, landscape and visual of the Offshore EIA Report.

Viewpoint assessment has been carried out in line with the SLVIA methodology in Chapter 18: Seascape, landscape and visual, section 18.5, which provides assessment criteria including magnitude and sensitivity. The sensitivity of visual receptors is based on the value of the view and the susceptibility to change. Visual receptors are all considered to be high-medium, high or very high sensitivity to this type of development. The approach involves viewpoint analysis to predict the magnitude of change at each of the representative viewpoints based on fieldwork observations, computer modelling, measurement of parameters and professional judgement. This is then correlated with the sensitivity of the visual receptor to give an overall impact and enable consideration of whether the impact is likely to be significant or not.

The viewpoints were selected to reflect a range of receptor locations at different distances and directions, and elevations from the offshore Project. The selected viewpoints were intended to represent the perception that visual receptors would experience at recognised vantage points, within coastal and landscape character types, landscape designations, settlements, transport and recreational routes, and visitor attractions.

The detailed viewpoints' assessment is presented in section 18.3 in tabulated format for each of the 28 viewpoints (Table 18-3 – Table 18-30), presenting the following:

- The diagram of the HFOV / distance from the closest and furthest turbines from the Viewpoint;
- The type of visual receptor;
- The sensitivity of visual receptors and at the viewpoint;
- The landscape and coastal character type and landscape designation at the viewpoint;
- The description of the viewpoint location;
- The existing view from each location;
- The description of the existing cumulative context with other operational and consented developments;
- The description of the magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project in addition to the other operational and consented developments;
- The level of effect (significance of effect) attributable to the offshore Project in addition to the other operational and consented developments;
- The nature of effects;
- The description of the future cumulative context and the magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project in addition to the other operational, consented and application developments;
- The level of effect (significance of effect) attributable to the offshore Project in addition to the other operational, consented and application developments.

The 28 viewpoints were agreed with THC and NS in September 2022 and their locations are shown in the Baseline Figures and ZTVs in Supporting Study 19 (SS19): SLVIA Figures.



Visualisations for each of the viewpoints are illustrated in Figures 18.VP1 – 18.VP28 in Supporting Study 20 (SS20): SLVIA visualisations. These images have been created in accordance with current THC and NS guidance and contain details of the location, elevation, bearing and distance of the proposed development from the nearest proposed development turbine. The methodology of the visualisations production, which was agreed with THC and NS is provided in Supporting Study 17 (SS17): SLVIA Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Visualisations Methodologies.

A diagram has been produced for most of the viewpoints showing the distance of the closest and furthest turbines to the viewpoint alongside the HFoV occupied by the WTGs. The HFoV (see Chapter 18: Seascape, landscape and visual, section 18.6.2.1) measures the angle in between WTGs, which are located at a distance up to 36.9 km from the viewpoint. These closest turbines up to 36.9 km are marked in red on the diagram.

The viewpoint assessment has been carried out based on the worst case scenario for the operation and maintenance stage of the Project. The effects arising as a result of the construction of the offshore Project are assessed as being of the same or lesser magnitude and significance on all seascape / coastal character receptors as those arising due to their operation and maintenance, due to the short-term and temporary nature. The main difference in nature from the operational effects are due to the influence of the various construction vessels in the seascape during the construction phase that will not be present or result in effects during the operational phase. However, the worst case scenario remains the maximum WTG size and the assumed number of WTGs, and maximum number and size of the offshore substations that would potentially affect seascape, landscape and visual receptors, which is associated with the operation and maintenance stage. Therefore, effects during the construction phase are appropriately represented.

18.2 Summary of effects

This section provides a summary of the viewpoint assessment findings in section 18.3 (Table 18-3 – Table 18-30). The information set out in Table 18-1 provides a summary of the viewpoint assessment of the effects of the offshore Project in addition to operational, under construction and consented wind farms. Table 18-2 provides a summary of the viewpoint assessment of the effects of the offshore Project in addition to operational, under construction, consented and other application wind farms.

The viewpoint assessment indicates that significant visual effects could potentially occur around 34 km from the offshore Project, as indicated by the following ten viewpoints:

- Caithness and Sutherland viewpoints:
 - Viewpoint 1: Faraid Head;
 - Viewpoint 4: Achininiver Beach;
 - Viewpoint 5: Torrisdale Bay;
 - Viewpoint 6: Strathy Point;
 - Viewpoint 7: Melvich Beach;
 - Viewpoint 10: Crosskirk, St Mary's Chapel; and
 - Viewpoint 19: A836 Dounreay.
- Orkney Viewpoints:
 - Viewpoint 20: Scrabster – Stromness Ferry;
 - Viewpoint 21: Rackwick Bay; and



- Viewpoint 22: Path to Old Man of Hoy.

18.2.1 Summary of Visual Effects with operational, consented and under construction wind farms

Table 18-1 Summary of Visual Effects with operational, consented and under construction wind farms (significant effects are highlighted in brackets)

VP REF	VIEWPOINT LOCATION	DISTANCE/DIRECTION TO THE OFFSHORE PROJECT	HFOV OCCUPIED	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Sutherland & Caithness Viewpoints						
1	Faraid Head	26.7 km NE	20	High	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
2	Ben Hope	41.8 km N	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low	Moderate / minor
3	A838 A'Moine	31.2 km N	6	High to Medium	Low-negligible	Minor
4	Achiniver beach	26.4 km N	40	High	High-medium	Major / moderate (significant)
5	Torrisdale Bay	29 km N	44	High	High-medium	Major / moderate (significant)
6	Strathy Point	24.3 km NW	54	High	High-medium	Major / moderate (significant)
7	Melvich Beach	30.5 km N	44	High	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
8	Beinn Ratha	36.9 km NW	12	High	Low	Moderate
9	A836, Reay Kirk, Sandside Bay	34.6 km NW	22	High	Medium-low	Moderate



VP REF	VIEWPOINT LOCATION	DISTANCE/DIRECTION TO THE OFFSHORE PROJECT	HFOV OCCUPIED	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
10	Crosskirk, St Mary's Chapel	33.7 km NW	32	High	Medium-low	Moderate (significant)
11	Ben Griam Beg Hillfort	50.9 km N	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Negligible	Negligible
12	Dunnet Bay - at Caravan Park	44.5 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
13	Dunnet Head	39.5 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low	Moderate
14	Castle of Mey LB & GDL	47.8 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
15	St John's Point	49.1 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
16	Beinn Freiceadain Hillfort	47.1 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
17	Kyle of Tongue - A838 causeway	32.6 km N	n/a (distance >36km)	(Very) High	Low-negligible	Minor
18	A836 Between Thurso and Castletown	43.2 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
19	A836 Dounreay	34.3 km NW	30	High	Medium-low	Moderate (significant)



VP REF	VIEWPOINT LOCATION	DISTANCE/ DIRECTION TO THE OFFSHORE PROJECT	HFOV OCCUPIED	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Orkney Viewpoints						
20	Scrabster-Stromness Ferry	26 km W	28	High-medium	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
21	Rackwick Bay at Bothy bench	30.8 km W	8	High	Medium-low	Moderate (significant)
22	Path to Old Man of Hoy	28.9 km W	26	High	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
23	Tor Ness, Hoy	37.6 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
24	Warebeth - on Warebeth Road to beach	34.8 km W	15	High	Low	Moderate
25	Yesnaby - Brough of Bigging	33.2 km W	20	High	Low	Moderate
26	Bay of Skail	35.7 km W / SW	3	High	Low	Moderate
27	Marwick Head Kitchener Memorial	36.9 km W / SW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low	Moderate
28	Earl's Palace Birsay	40 km SW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Negligible	Minor



18.2.2 Summary of Visual Effects with operational, consented, under construction and other application wind farms

Table 18-2 Summary of Visual Effects with operational, consented, under construction and other application wind farms

VP REF	VIEWPOINT LOCATION	DISTANCE/DIRECTION TO THE WOO	HFOV OCCUPIED	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Sutherland & Caithness Viewpoints						
1	Faraid Head	26.7 km NE	20	High	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
2	Ben Hope	41.8 km N	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low	Moderate / minor
3	A838 A'Moine	31.2 km N	6	High to Medium	Low-negligible	Minor
4	Achiniver beach	26.4 km N	40	High	High-medium	Major / moderate (significant)
5	Torrisdale Bay	29 km N	44	High	High-medium	Major / moderate (significant)
6	Strathy Point	24.3 km NW	54	High	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
7	Melvich Beach	30.5 km N	44	High	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
8	Beinn Ratha	36.9 km NW	12	High	Low	Moderate
9	A836, Reay Kirk, Sandside Bay	34.6 km NW	22	High	Low	Moderate / minor
10	Crosskirk, St Mary's Chapel	33.7 km NW	32	High	Medium-low	Moderate (significant)



VP REF	VIEWPOINT LOCATION	DISTANCE/ DIRECTION TO THE WOO	HFOV OCCUPIED	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
11	Ben Griam Beg Hillfort	50.9 km N	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Negligible	Negligible
12	Dunnet Bay - at Caravan Park	44.5 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
13	Dunnet Head	39.5 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low	Moderate
14	Castle of Mey LB & GDL	47.8 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
15	St John's Point	49.1 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
16	Beinn Freiceadain Hillfort	47.1 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Negligible	Minor / negligible
17	Kyle of Tongue - A838 causeway	32.6 km N	n/a (distance >36km)	(Very) High	Low-negligible	Minor
18	A836 Between Thurso and Castletown	43.2 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
19	A836 Dounreay	34.3 km NW	30	High	Medium-low	Moderate (significant)
Orkney Viewpoints						



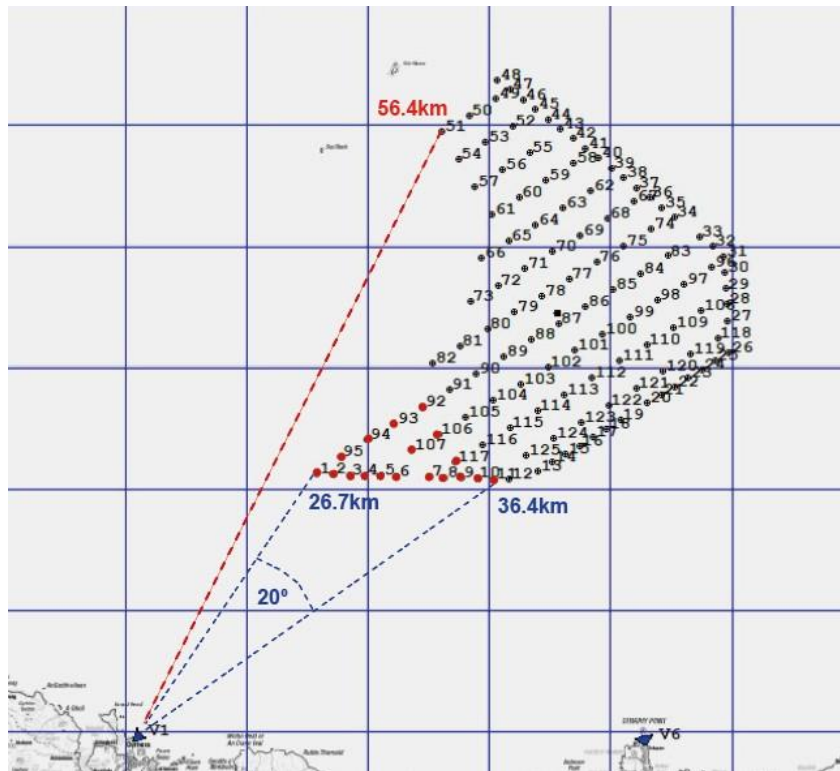
VP REF	VIEWPOINT LOCATION	DISTANCE/ DIRECTION TO THE WOO	HFOV OCCUPIED	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
20	Scrabster-Stromness Ferry	26 km W	28	High-medium	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
21	Rackwick Bay at Bothy bench	30.8 km W	8	High	Medium-low	Moderate (significant)
22	Path to Old Man of Hoy	28.9 km W	26	High	Medium	Major / moderate (significant)
23	Tor Ness, Hoy	37.6 km NW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low-negligible	Minor
24	Warebeth - on Warebeth Road to beach	34.8 km W	15	High	Low	Moderate
25	Yesnaby - Brough of Bigging	33.2 km W	20	High	Low	Moderate
26	Bay of Skail	35.7km W / SW	3	High	Low	Moderate
27	Marwick Head Kitchener Memorial	36.9km W / SW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Low	Moderate
28	Earl's Palace Birsay	40km SW	n/a (distance >36km)	High	Negligible	Minor



18.3 Viewpoints assessment

18.3.1 Viewpoint 1 Faraid Head

Table 18-3 Viewpoint 1 Faraid Head (Figure 18.VP1, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type: Visitors of Faraid Head (recreational, scenic value)

(susceptibility /value of view): High-medium / High

Visual receptor's sensitivity: High

Coastal character type: Type 1: Remote High Cliffs

Landscape character type: High Cliffs and Sheltered Bays LCT

Landscape Designation: Oldshoremore, Cape Wrath and Durness SLA

Viewpoint location: Viewpoint is located to the north of the offshore Project of the Seanachaisteal promontory fort on Faraid Head, approx. 1.5 km to the north of Durness village.

Existing view: The location provides an elevated 360-degree open panorama, comprising open sea to the northeast, towards the offshore Project. The distinctive landform of Whiten Head An Ceann Geal is to the east where the landform of



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Strathy Point is distinguishable at a distance of 40 km. The entrance of Loch Eriboll and its west facing side is in the view towards the south-east. The Rugged Mountain Massif forms a dramatic skyline in views to the south over a narrow, settled, and farmed fringe. Cape Wrath extends to the west and Faraid Head to the north.

Existing cumulative context: None

Magnitude of change Medium

Surrounding various landscape types create a complex visual composition within the available 360-degree view. The open sea horizon comprises approximately 120 degrees within which the offshore Project would appear. The closest row of turbines (T1 to T10), is sited at a distance of up to 35km from the viewpoint, occupying 18 degrees of the HFOV. The turbines in the background gradually become less visible with distance.

The offshore Project would not intervene in views of the distinctive coastal landforms. Effects attributable to the offshore Project would be pronounced due to its appearance as a new element within the view rather than due to its scale..

Significance of Effects: Major / moderate and significant.

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

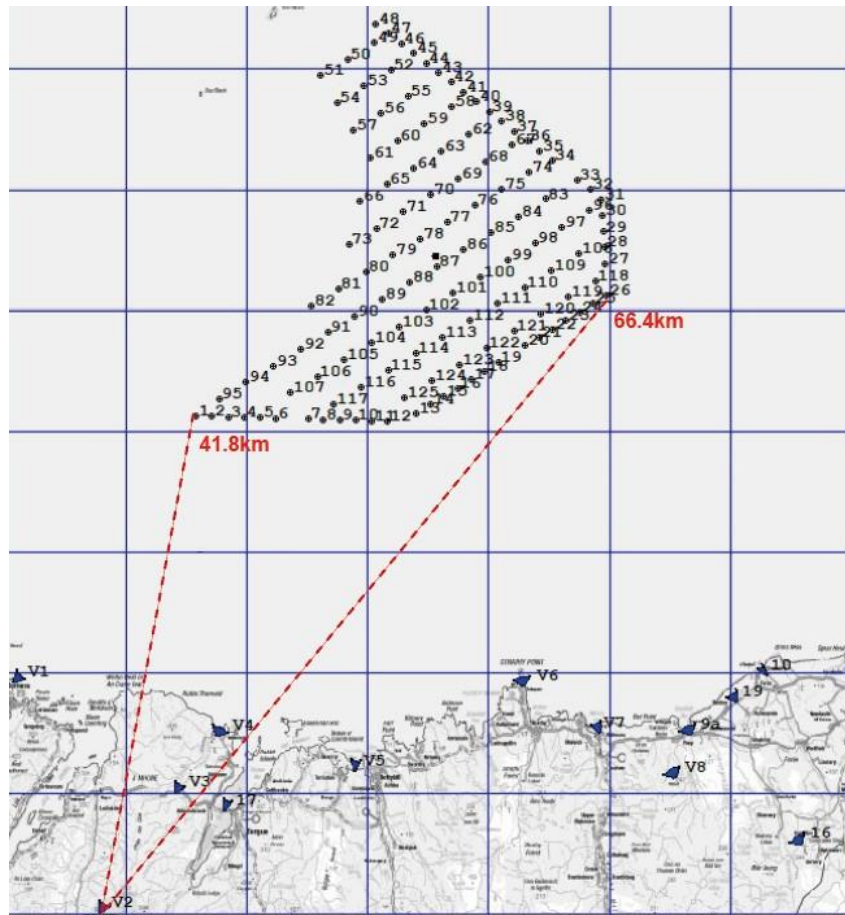
Future cumulative context: Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be barely perceptible at a distance of 50 km to the east.
The magnitude of change attributable to the additional effects created by the offshore Project would remain Medium.

Cumulative Effects: Major / moderate and significant.



18.3.2 Viewpoint 2 Ben Hope

Table 18-4 Viewpoint 2 Ben Hope (Figure 18.VP2, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type Hill hikers (recreational)

(susceptibility /value of view): High-medium / High

Visual receptor's sensitivity: High

Coastal character type: None

Landscape character type: Lone Mountains

Landscape Designation: Kyle of Tongue NSA / Ben Hope - Ben Loyal WLA

Viewpoint location: Viewpoint is from the summit of Ben Hope at an elevated position of 922 m AOD

Existing view: offering 360-degree extensive panoramic views across Caithness and Sutherland, including the impressive mountain massif of Foinaven and the distinctive watery landscapes of the Flows.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Extensive elevated views follow the coastline up to Dunnet Head and visibility up to the coast of West Orkney Mainland and Hoy at a distance of 100 km in very clear conditions. The view towards the offshore Project is across the Whiten Head An Ceann Geal landform, which is flanked by Loch Eriboll to the west and the Kyle of Tongue to the east.

Existing cumulative context: In views eastwards, two Bettyhill turbines and Strathy North Wind Farm are visible on the backdrop of the landform at distances of 28 km and 32 km respectively. Strathy South Wind Farm is located at a distance of 29.7 km alongside the Strathy Wood Wind Farm which will extend the area occupied by turbines closer to the distinctive hill ranges (Rounded Hills - Caithness & Sutherland) in views to the east. The rest of the wind farms, which are beyond 56 km do not contribute to the cumulative visibility, being no more than negligible in scale.

Magnitude of change Low

The coastal edge of Whiten Head is at a distance of 19 km. The closest WTG (T1) is at a distance of 42 km. The elevated coastal edge (landform of Ben Hutig (408m AOD)) brings the offshore Project visually closer to the coast in this view. The WTGs would appear as a distant features, low down in the seascape.

The offshore Project would not intervene in the view over the Kyle of Tongue NSA towards Hoy. Effects attributable to the offshore Project would be pronounced due to being perceived as a new feature within the sea context rather than due to its scale.

Significance of Effects: Moderate / minor and not significant.

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context: Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be barely perceptible at a distance of 58 km to the east.

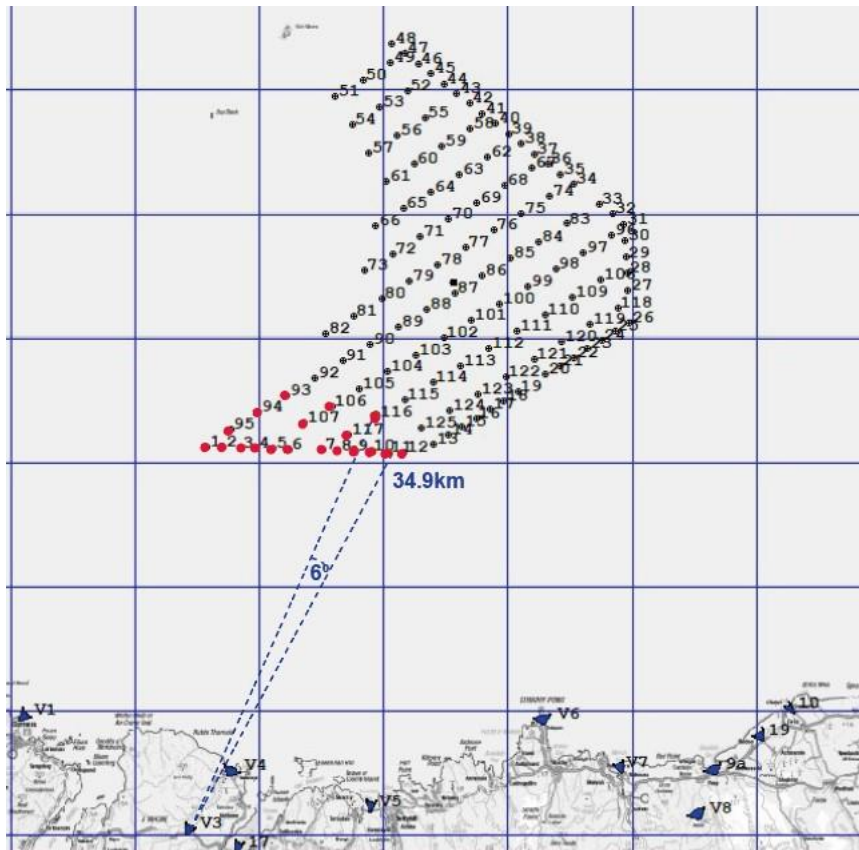
The magnitude of change attributable to the additional effects created by the offshore Project would remain Low.

Cumulative Effects: Moderate / minor and not significant.



18.3.3 Viewpoint 3 A838 A'Moine peninsula

Table 18-5 Viewpoint 3 A838 A'Moine peninsula (Figure 18.VP3, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Users of North Coast 500 (A838)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High to Medium / High
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High to Medium (dependent on type of road user)
Coastal character type:	None
Landscape character type:	Sweeping Moorland and Flows
Landscape Designation:	No designations
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is from a layby off the A838 which forms a part of the North Coast 500 on the A'Moine peninsula, extending to the west of Kyle of Tongue.
Existing view:	The view is principally characterised by the gently sloping and low-lying moorland of A'Mhoine with dramatic views of the distant mountains (Lone Mountains and Rugged Mountain Massif) to the south-east and south. A glimpse of the sea



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

appears in the view to the north-east where a coastal rock formation catches the eye at the entrance to the Kyle of Tongue.

A glimpse of the sea towards the offshore Project is discernible through the depression which lies in between the shallow landforms.

Existing cumulative context: None

Magnitude of change Low-negligible

The wireline view shows a group of WTGs on the sea, which appears through the depression in between shallow landforms. Several blades appear above the slopes, which frame the visible part of the sea. The actual view would differ from the wireline view to a degree however, with only T10 and T11 from the closest row potentially discernible at a distance of 34.9 km, with the remaining WTGs located beyond this distance. The view towards the offshore Project would be less prominent than views in other directions towards the distinct mountains. Views from the road are transient and the offshore Project would not be in line with the west-east orientation of the road.

Significance of Effects: Minor and not significant.

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.

Future Cumulative context: A few blades of Armadale Wind Farm at a distance of 23 km would be visible above intervening landform to the east. The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be barely perceptible at a distance of 48 km to the east.

The Space Hub Sutherland would be located to the north of the Viewpoint, potentially screening the view of the offshore Project.

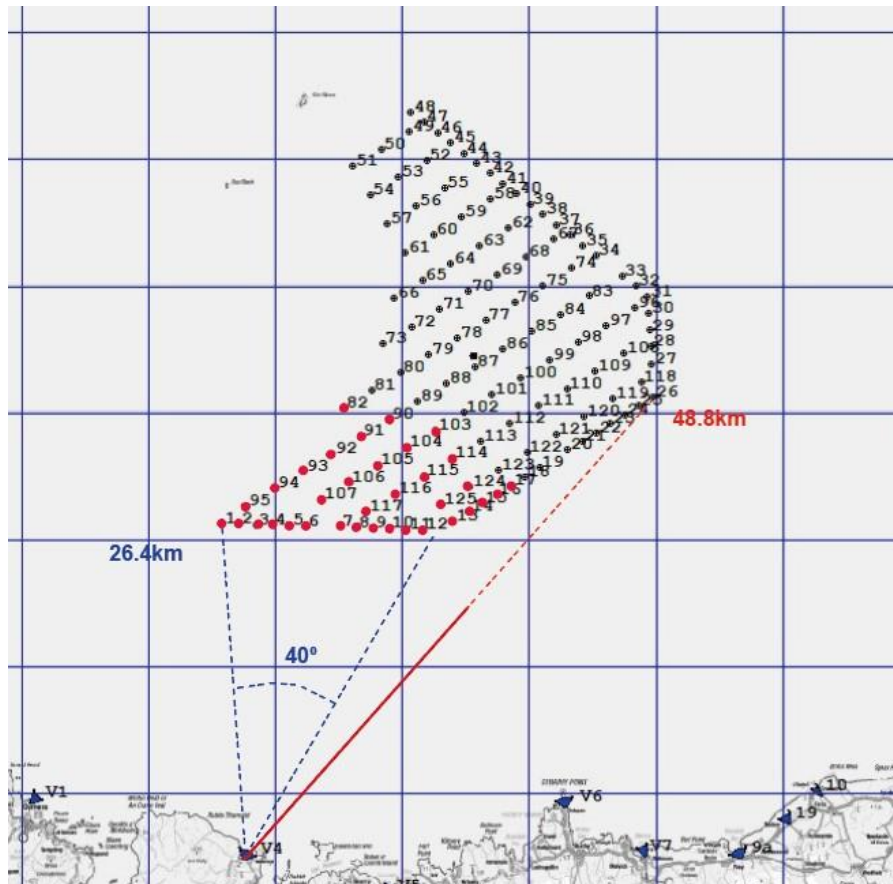
The magnitude of change attributable to the additional effects created by the offshore Project would remain Low-negligible.

Cumulative Effects: Minor and not significant.



18.3.4 Viewpoint 4 Strath Melness road for Achininiver beach

Table 18-6 Viewpoint 4 Strath Melness road for Achininiver beach (Figure 18.VP4, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors / Local residents (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	Type 1: Remote High Cliffs / Type 7: Kyles and Sea Lochs
Landscape character type:	Coastal Crofts & Small Farms High Cliffs
Landscape Designation:	Eriboll East and Whiten Head SLA
Viewpoint location:	The viewpoint is located at a layby next to the road, which features a footpath providing access to the beach and runs further to the south through Strath Melness. The layby is backed by a steep slope, which provides enclosure and forms the eastern side of the strath.
Existing view:	



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Although the location is slightly elevated in relation to the beach, the view towards the sea is framed by the rising coastal landforms on either side. The width of the entrance to the bay, or the distance in between these coastal landforms, is 200 m. The bowl-shaped bay is small, and its sands are split by the inlet of Strath Melness.

Existing cumulative context: None

Magnitude of change High-medium

The first row of the WTGS (T1 to T12), which is closest to the viewpoint, would appear at a distance of 26.4 km to 29.4 km in a framed view from Achininiver beach. Although distant, the WTGs would appear across the open aspect of the small bay, which is formed by the sea horizon. The WTGs would not compete with the scale of the coastal landform in the view; however, several blades would be seen above the low rocky coastal landform which forms the eastern side of the entrance to the bay.

Significance of Effects: Major / moderate and significant

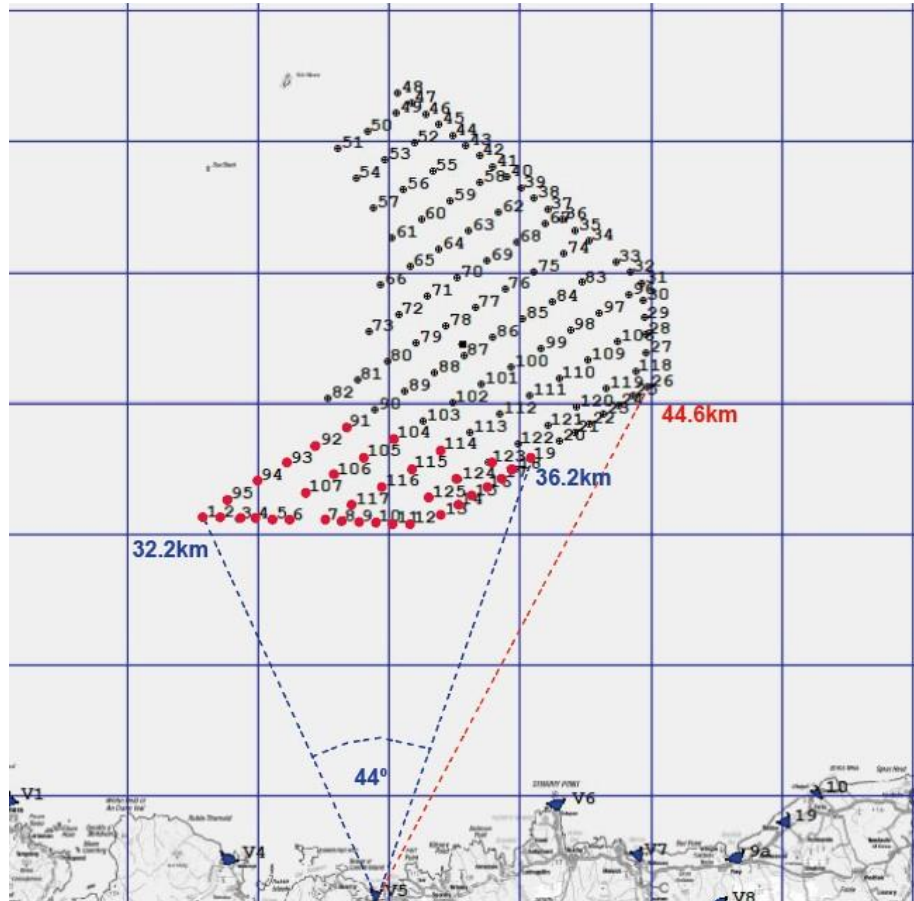
Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context: None



18.3.5 Viewpoint 5 Torrisdale Bay

Table 18-7 Viewpoint 5 Torrisdale Bay (Figure 18.VP5, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors / Local residents (recreational, scenic value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	Type 1: Remote High Cliffs
Landscape character type:	Sandy Beaches and Dunes
Landscape Designation:	Kyle of Tongue NSA
Viewpoint location:	The viewpoint is located at the centre of Torrisdale Beach, which extends over the mouth of the River Naver, between the historic village of Bettyhill and Torrisdale. Rivers at either end of the beach; River Borgie and the River Naver prevent direct
Existing view:	



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access from either settlement. The beach is accessible via a 1.6 km walk from the nearest road.

The beach is backed by the rocky hillock of Druim Chuibhe to the south. The 1.2 km wide bay is framed by the rocky coastal landforms of Air Torrisdale to the west and Ard Mor to the east.

Existing cumulative context: None

Although shown in the wireline view, the blade tips of the Bettyhill turbines at a distance of 5 km are screened by the intervening dunes.

Magnitude of change Medium

The closest WTG to the Viewpoint is T10 at a distance of 29 km. The HFoV occupied by turbines comprises T1 to T19, (from 29 km to 36 km) comprising 44 degrees out of the 60 degrees of the visible sea horizon. Although the WTGs would be seen as a distant feature and also as small-scale elements, in comparison to the scale of the coastal landform, they would be discernible across the open sea horizon. In comparison with Achininiver beach, Torrisdale Bay has a larger scale, and the distance from the offshore Project is greater by 5 km, which would slightly decrease the magnitude of change.

Significance of Effects: Major / moderate and significant

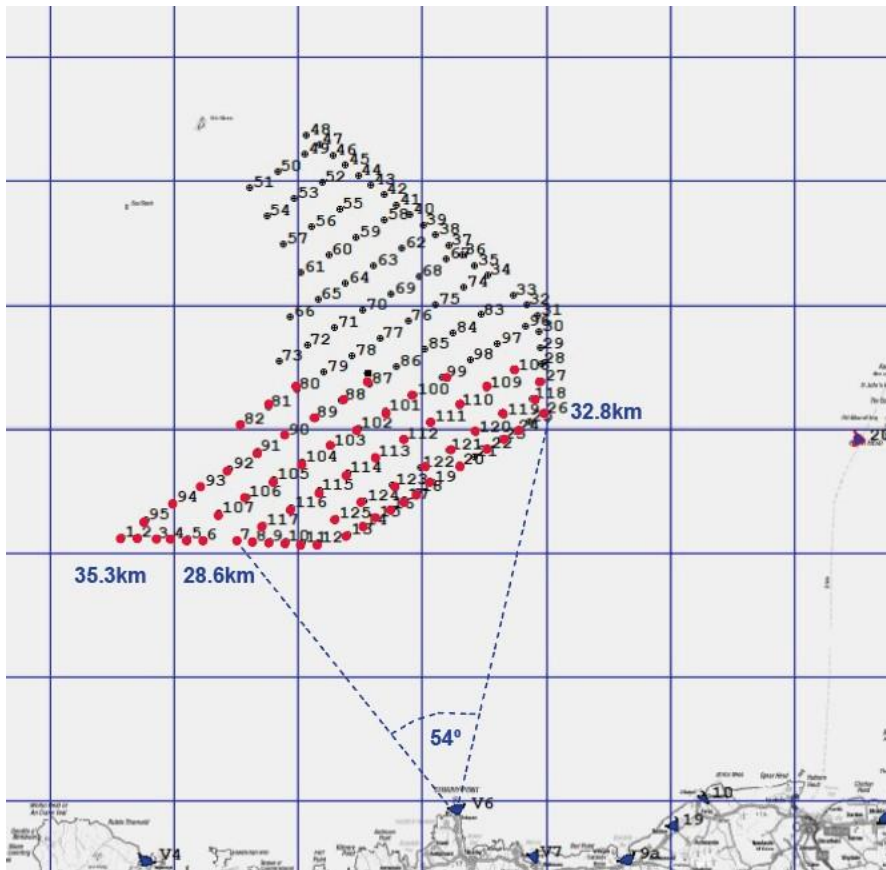
Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context: None



18.3.6 Viewpoint 6 Strathy Point

Table 18-8 Viewpoint 6 Strathy Point (Figure 18.VP6, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors (recreational value)
(susceptibility / value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
<hr/>	
Coastal character type:	Type 1: Remote High Cliffs
Landscape character type:	High Cliffs and Sheltered Bays
Landscape Designation:	Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra SLA
<hr/>	
Viewpoint location:	The viewpoint is located at the end of the public road, approximately 1.6 km to the south of Strathy Point Lighthouse.
Existing view:	Strathy Point extends out into the North Atlantic. The cliff top offers open, elevated views, yet views of the adjacent inland areas are restricted due to the intervening landform of convex slopes and sheer cliffs. Views are directed along



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the coast to the east and west and out to sea. Offshore foci is formed by the distinctive shape of Hoy at a distance of 46 km. The shapes of West Orkney Mainland at a distance of 58 km is barely perceptible. The location provides views of the coastline up to Dunnet Head at a distance of 36 km to the east. To the west are the headlands of the northern coastline of Sutherland including Whiten Head An Ceann Geal at a distance of 26 km and Cape Wrath at a distance of 48 km.

Existing cumulative context: The blades of Limeklin Wind Farm would be visible above the landform at a distance of 16 km. The Forss turbines and Dounreay NPDE appear on the backcloth of the coastal landform and the Baillie turbines at a distance of 19 km are visible on top of the landform above the Dounreay NPDE.

Magnitude of change: High-medium

The Viewpoint is closest to the offshore Project (24.2 km) and positioned in line with the south-eastern corner of the offshore Project, thereby capturing both southern (T1 to T12) and south-eastern (T13 to T26) rows of the array in the view. The view therefore illustrates the widest HFoV occupied by WTGs (T7 to T26) of the offshore Project. However, the WTGs would appear within a wide (at least 180 degrees) open sea context, which accommodates offshore traffic and the Lighthouse at the end of the headland. Although the offshore Project would appear as a new offshore feature in the view, WTGs are already established onshore along the coast to the east. The Pentland Firth forms the foci of the view to the east and the offshore Project would not intervene in views in this direction.

Significance of Effects: Major / moderate and significant

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

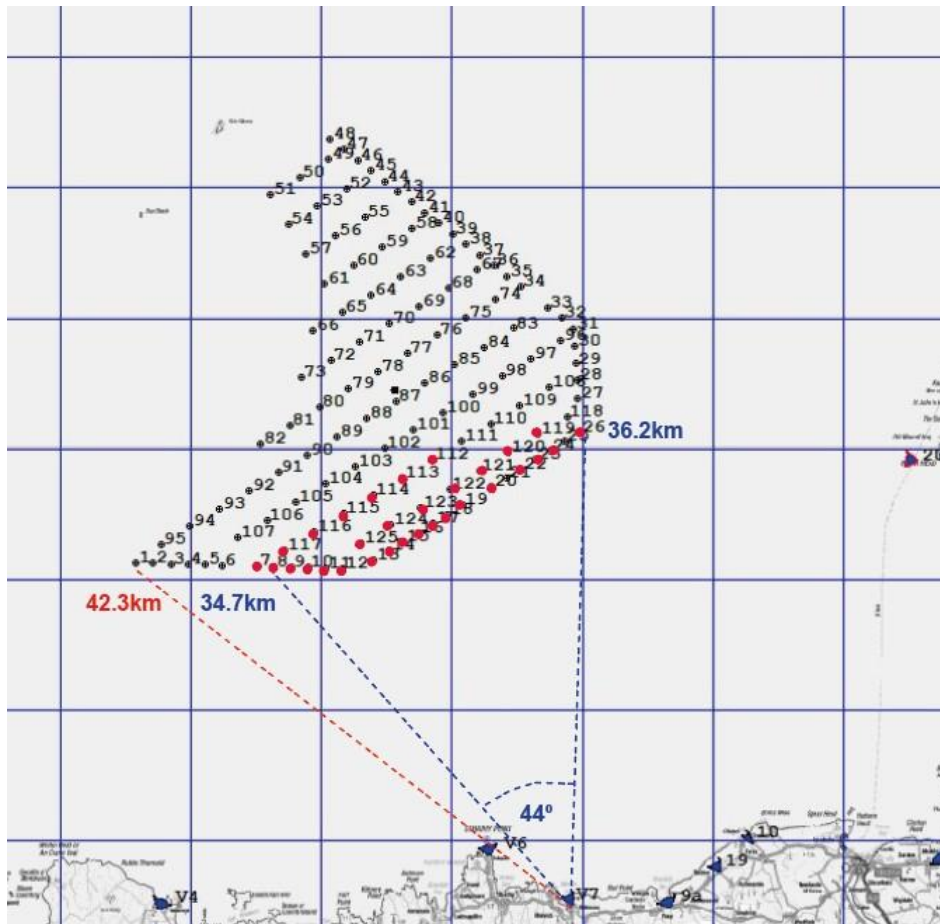
Future Cumulative context: The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would appear prominently against the distinct shape of Hoy in the Pentland Firth at a distance of 18 km. Two Forss turbines would appear in the context of the existing Forss I & II, whereas Cairnmore would occupy an elevated coastal position at a distance of 22.7 km. The magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project in addition to the potential future cumulative context, is considered to reduce to Medium, however the cumulative effect would remain the same.

Cumulative Effects: Major / moderate and significant



18.3.7 Viewpoint 7 Melvich Beach

Table 18-9 Viewpoint 7 Melvich Beach (Figure 18.VP7, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors / Local Residents (recreational value)						
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high						
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High						
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;">Coastal character type:</td> <td style="padding-bottom: 10px;">Portskerra</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;">Landscape character type:</td> <td style="padding-bottom: 10px;">Sandy Beaches and Dunes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;">Landscape Designation:</td> <td style="padding-bottom: 10px;">Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra SLA</td> </tr> </table>		Coastal character type:	Portskerra	Landscape character type:	Sandy Beaches and Dunes	Landscape Designation:	Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra SLA
Coastal character type:	Portskerra						
Landscape character type:	Sandy Beaches and Dunes						
Landscape Designation:	Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra SLA						
Viewpoint location:	The viewpoint is located on a grassy dune above the beach. Bounded to the east by River Halladale and to the west by rocky outcrops, the beach can be reached by a short 100 m walk through the dunes.						



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Existing view:

The approximately 1 km wide bay is framed by the rocky coastal landforms of Sgeir Ruadh to the west and by Rubha an Tuir to the east.

Existing cumulative context:

None

Magnitude of change

Medium

The Viewpoint is positioned in line with the south-eastern corner of the offshore Project with T13 being the closest WTG visible at 30.5 km distance. Therefore, the focus on the development is close to the western side of the bay and the other WTGs on both sides of the T13 would gradually fade away from the view due to increased distance. The tower of T8 which is closest to the rocky coastal landform of Sgeir Ruadh, is almost equal in height with a 20 m high cliff. T26 which is closest to the eastern side of the bay, would be visible at 36.2 km distance. The row of WTGs (T7 to T13) is sited at a distance of up to 36 km from the viewpoint and occupies 44 degrees of the HFoV. The WTGs in the background gradually become less visible with increased distance.

Although the increased distance would affect visibility, in clear weather conditions, the offshore Project would appear noticeable as a new feature across the open sea horizon in an enclosed view.

Significance of Effects:

Major / moderate and significant

Nature of Effects:

Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

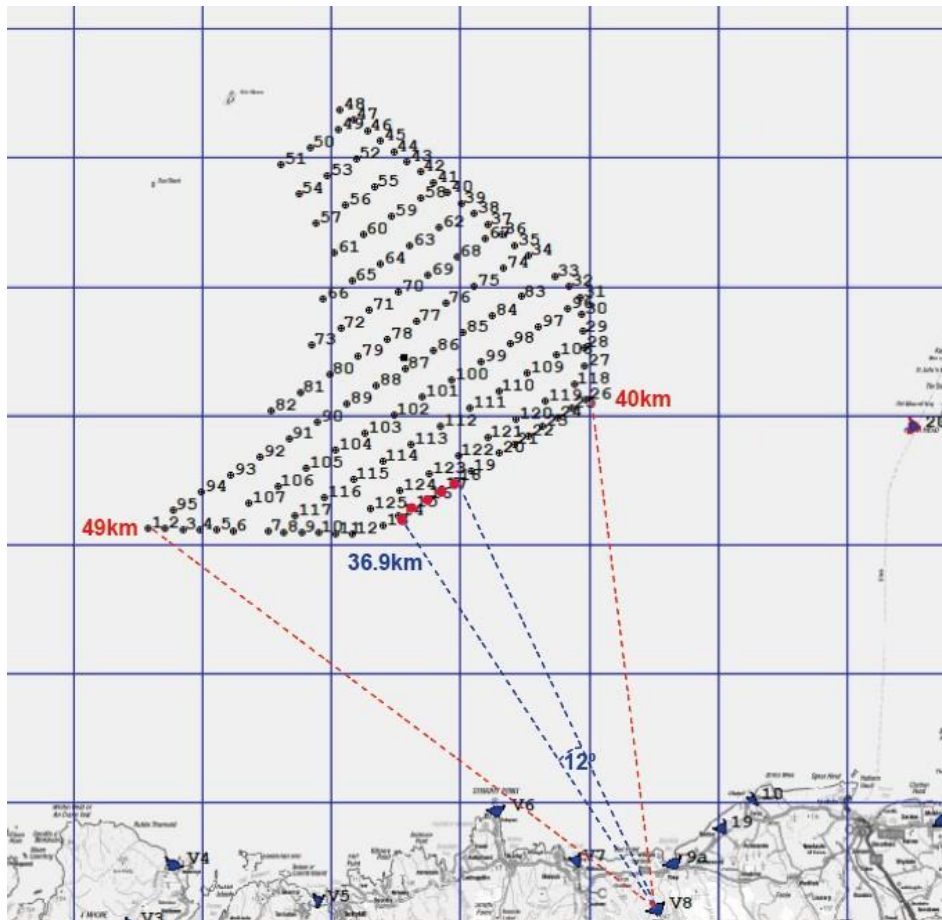
Future Cumulative context:

None



18.3.8 Viewpoint 8 Beinn Ratha

Table 18-10 Viewpoint 8 Beinn Ratha (Figure 18.VP8, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Hill walkers (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High
<hr/>	
Coastal character type:	None
Landscape character type:	Sweeping Moorland and Flows
Landscape Designation:	East Halladale Flows WLA
<hr/>	
Viewpoint location:	The Viewpoint is located at the summit of Beinn Ratha at an elevated position of 236 m AOD. The location offers 360-degree panoramic views across the moorland and lowland plain and to the landscapes and seascapes beyond.
Existing view:	The view towards the offshore Project is across sweeping moorland, where electricity



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pylons are seen at a distance of 1.5 km. It is approximately 4.7 km from the coastal edge.

Existing cumulative context: The Forss I & II turbines and Dounreay NPDE appear on the low coastal plain at a distance of 10 km. The Baillie turbines are visible beyond the forested area on the backcloth of the distant hills at a distance of 7.4 km. To the south-east several developments appear beyond the landmass of Ben Dorrery (recognisable by its mast). The consented Limeklin Wind Farm in the immediate proximity abuts with the north eastern boundary of the East Halladale Flows WLA, within which the viewpoint is located.

Magnitude of change Low

The closest row of WTGs (T13 to T18) is sited at a distance of up to 37 km from the viewpoint, with WTGs receding on both sides. T1 on the left end of the array is sited 49 km from the viewpoint. The offshore Project would not intervene in views of the distinctive landform of Hoy. Effects attributable to the offshore Project would be pronounced due to its appearance as a new and distant feature within the sea in panoramic views, rather than due to its scale.

Significance of Effects: Moderate and not significant

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context: Kirkton Wind Farm at a distance of 7.3 km would contribute to effects resulting from Strathy Wood and Strathy South wind farms, all affecting views of the distinctive mountain ranges of Foinaven to the west. In views to the east the additional turbines of Forss and Cairnmore Hill would be visible, fitting into the established baseline. The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm, being close to the coast, would form a foci in views of an undeveloped sea context.

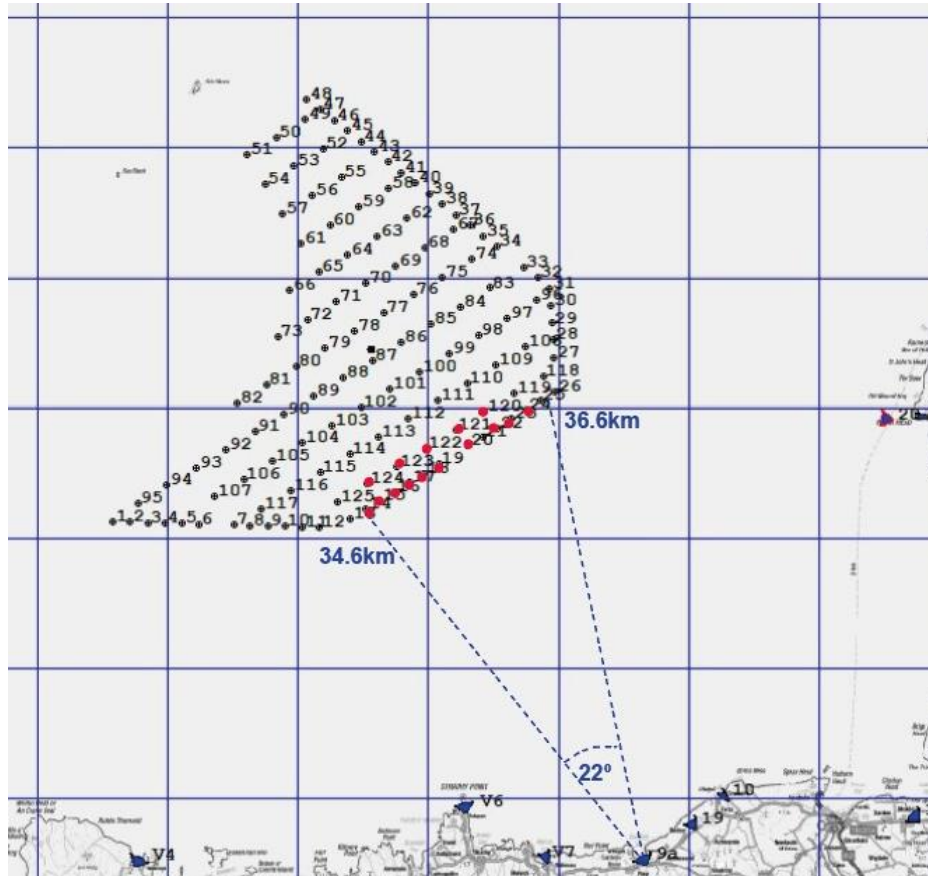
The offshore Project would appear as a distant element within the context of a vast sea plain, far beyond the Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm WTGs. The magnitude of change attributable to the additional effects created by the offshore Projects would remain Low.

Cumulative Effects: Moderate and not significant



18.3.9 Viewpoint 9 A836, Reay Kirk, Sandside Bay

Table 18-11 Viewpoint 9 A836, Reay Kirk, Sandside Bay (Figure 18.VP9, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Local Residents / Visitors / Golfers (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high-medium
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	Brims Ness
Landscape character type:	Farmed Lowland Plain abutting with Sandy Beaches and Dunes LCT
Landscape Designation:	No Designations
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located next to the Kirk of Reay just off the A836. The location allows for wide open 360-degree views around the busy landscape of the Farmed Lowland Plain, which features turbines, pylons, poles, and farm buildings alongside heritage features, and is overlooked by the distinctive landform of Beinn Ratha.



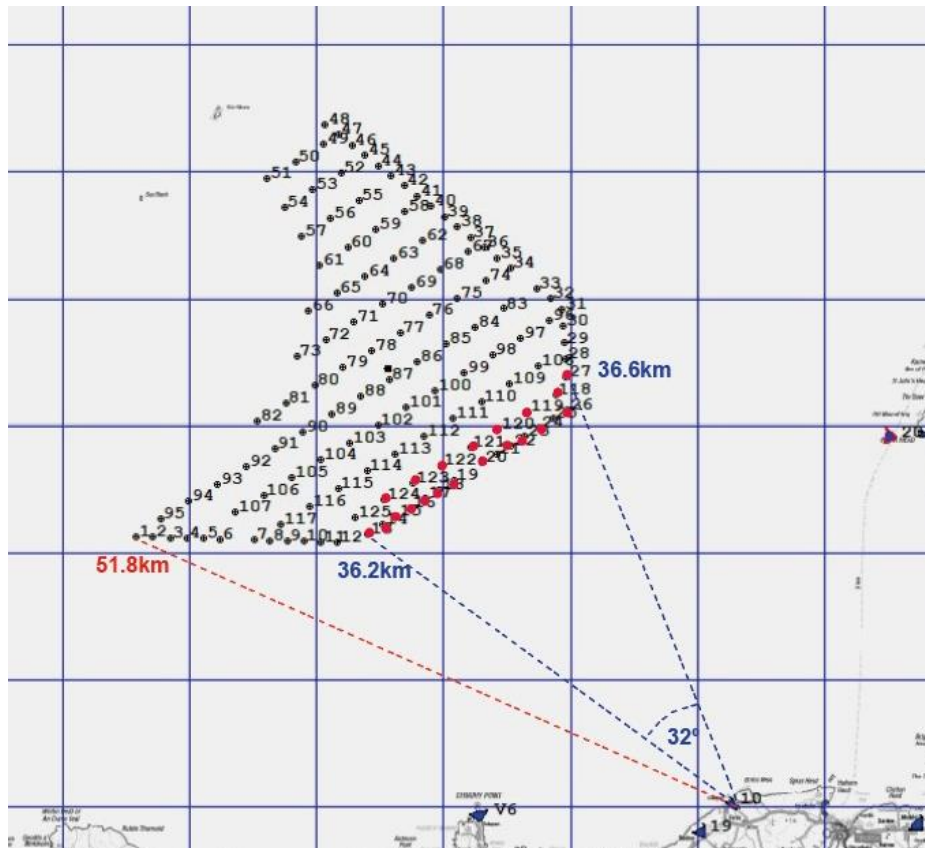
DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing view:	View towards the offshore Project is across the Reay Golf Club and Sandside Bay, to the north-west.
Existing cumulative context:	The blades and upper hubs of Forss and Baillie turbines, which are located at a distance of around 6 km are visible above the intervening landform to the north-east.
Magnitude of change	<p>Medium-low</p> <p>The closest WTGs to the viewpoint, T13 to T21 which would be most visible, occupy around 22 degrees of the HFoV with WTGs beyond fading with increased distance. The WTGs fill almost two-thirds of the HFoV from Sandside Bay. Effects attributable to the offshore Project would be pronounced due to its appearance as a distant feature within the sea in panoramic views. The effect would not be significant due to foreground and mid-ground intervening features making the offshore Project less noticeable.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Moderate and not significant
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.
Future Cumulative context:	<p>The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would appear as a prominent feature on the skyline in views across Sandside Bay.</p> <p>Additional effects attributable to the offshore Project would slightly reduce the magnitude of change to Low as it would appear as a distant feature, subsidiary to the Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm.</p>
Cumulative Effects:	Moderate / minor and not significant



18.3.10 Viewpoint 10 Crosskirk, St Mary's Chapel

Table 18-12 Viewpoint 10 Crosskirk, St Mary's Chapel (Figure 18.VP10, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Local Residents / Visitors (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	Brims Ness
Landscape character type:	Farmed Lowland Plain LCT
Landscape Designation:	No Designations
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located next to a signpost on the access track to St Mary's Chapel, which is located approximately 800 m to the north-west, on the north facing slope of the coastal landform forming the western side of Crosskirk Bay. The Forss Business & Technology Park buildings are located on the upper slope a few hundred metres from the Chapel.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing view:	Views towards the offshore Project are across Crosskirk Bay. The Forss River valley flows into the bay and its valley sides contain views of the hinterland. Therefore, the open aspect of the view is provided by the sea horizon, which appears above the coastal edge in the view.
Existing cumulative context:	A number of wind farms are located nearby including Forss I & II and Hill of Lybster along with the Forss Business & Technology Park. The upper hubs and blades of Baillie Wind Farm are visible above the valley side at a distance of 3.6 km to the south.
Magnitude of change	<p>Medium-low</p> <p>The closest WTGs to the viewpoint, T13 to T26, on the offshore Project’s south-eastern perimeter, occupy around 32 degrees of the HFoV. Therefore, the centre part of the offshore Project is more visible. Turbines, which are in a line behind T22, create a stacking effect and, due to the density, it would be more visible in this view.</p> <p>Although the offshore Project would appear as a distant feature, it would appear within the undeveloped context of the sea, towards which the eye turns after skimming through the existing onshore turbines and make it noticeable given it’s wider HFoV.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Moderate and significant
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.
Future Cumulative context:	The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be visible and prominent above the coastal edge adjacent to St Mary’s Chapel. The additional effects attributable to the offshore Project would reduce to Low. The most visible part of the offshore Project (the closest WTGs) would appear, next to the Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm, as distant and small features within the established context of WTGs of different sizes. The magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project in addition to the potential future cumulative context, is considered to reduce to Low.
Cumulative Effects:	Moderate / minor and not significant



18.3.11 Viewpoint 11 Ben Griam Beg Hillfort

Table 18-13 Viewpoint 11 Ben Griam Beg Hillfort (Figure 18.VP11, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)

DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT	
Visual receptors type	Walkers (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	None
Landscape character type:	Lone Mountains
Landscape Designation:	Ben Griam and Loch nan Clar NSA
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located at the summit Ben Griam Beg Hill Fort at an elevated position of 581.5 m AOD offering 360-degree extensive panoramic views across Caithness and Sutherland. Ben Griam Beg rises steeply from the Flow Country and is the site of the highest ancient hillfort in Scotland.
Existing view:	Wireline only
Existing cumulative context:	In views to the east, a number of onshore cumulative wind farms are visible beyond a distance of 30 km within the undulating Farmed Lowland Plain. In the northward views towards the coast the Strathy South Wind Farm would appear prominent at a distance of 8 km with Strathy Wood further to the east at a distance of 13 km and Strathy North beyond these at a distance of 15 km.
Magnitude of change	Negligible The coastal edge of Strathy Point is at a distance of 27.6 km. The closest WTG of the offshore Project (T12) is at a distance of 51 km. The offshore Project would be visible in the far distance, low down in the seascape and above intervening onshore developments in the foreground and mid-ground. However, given the long intervening distance of over 51 km, the offshore Project would be barely perceptible and only visible in very clear conditions.
Significance of Effects:	Negligible and not significant.
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and neutral.
Future Cumulative context:	In views to the north-east, behind the Kirkton turbines at a distance of 18 km, the Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be visible at a distance of 33.5 km. The magnitude of change attributable to the additional effects created by the offshore Project would remain Negligible.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

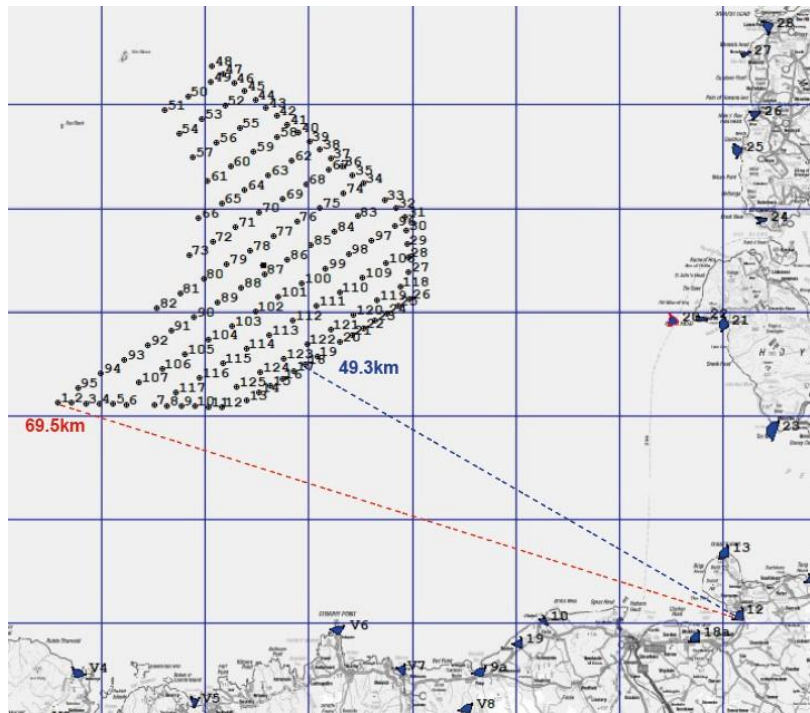
Cumulative Effects:

Negligible and not significant



18.3.12 Viewpoint 12 Dunnet Bay - at Caravan Park

Table 18-14 Viewpoint 12 Dunnet Bay - at Caravan Park (Figure 18.VP12, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type Visitors (recreational value)

(susceptibility /value of view): High / high

Visual receptor's sensitivity: High

Coastal character type Dunnet Bay and Thurso Bay

Landscape character type: Sandy Beaches and Dunes

Landscape Designation: Dunnet Head SLA

Viewpoint location: Viewpoint is located at the northern part of the beach. Parking is available at small car park off the A836 with a pedestrian access through the dunes to the beach.

Existing view: Within the view, the long sandy beach of Dunnet Bay has a simple visual composition of sky, expansive sea and beach and a relatively narrow band of dunes backed by well-managed agricultural land. Views are focused along the beach to rocky headland of Dunnet Head and more distant Holborn Head. The length of the bay between the headlands is approximately 2.8 km.



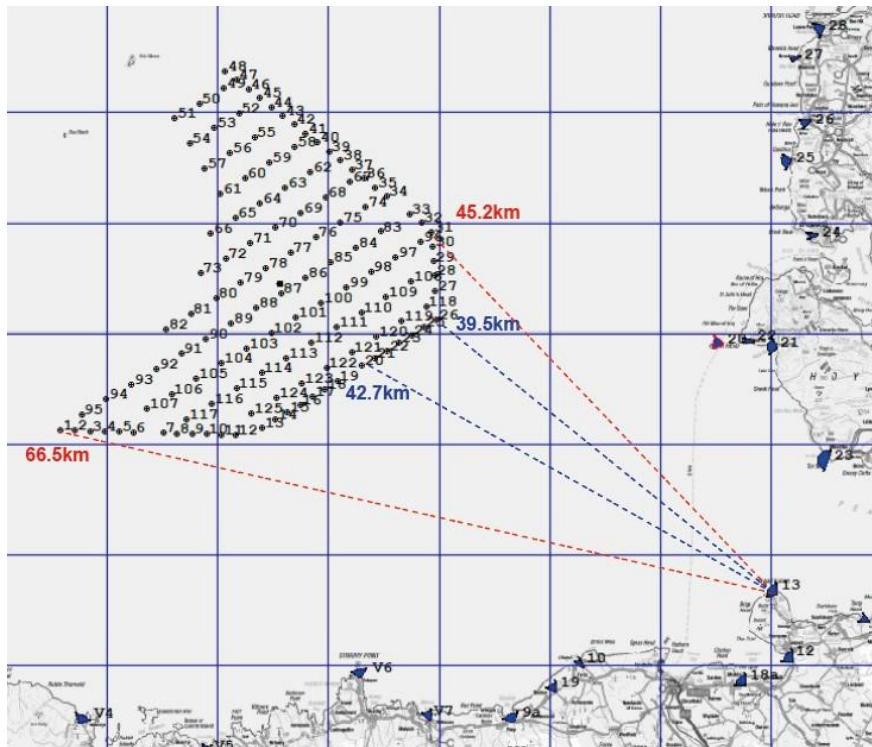
DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing cumulative context:	The Baillie turbines are clearly visible above the landform at a distance of 19 km, whereas Limeklin blades are barely perceptible at a distance of 23 km.
Magnitude of change	<p>Low-negligible</p> <p>The closest WTG (T26) of the offshore Project is at a distance of 44.5 km. Much of the offshore Project is obscured by the prominent intervening headland. The visible WTGs associated with the headland are located further away and the closest to the view is WTG (T17) at a distance of 49.3 km. Due to the lower elevation of the viewpoint and the long intervening distance, in sea views at a distance of 49.3 km, the lower parts of the WTGs due to the curvature of the Earth resulting in hubs and blades visible on the horizon which would only be perceptible in very clear conditions.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Minor and not significant.
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.
Future Cumulative context:	Cairnmore Hill turbines would be clearly visible at a distance of 15 km on top of the smooth ridgeline. The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be visible next to Holborn Head at a distance of 24.4 km. The addition of the offshore Project to the cumulative context would remain Low-negligible.
Cumulative Effects:	Minor and not significant



18.3.13 Viewpoint 13 Dunnet Head

Table 18-15 Viewpoint 13 Dunnet Head (Figure 18.VP13, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High
<hr/>	
Coastal character type:	Scarfskerry and Dunnet Head
Landscape character type:	High Cliffs and Sheltered Bays
Landscape Designation:	Dunnet Head SLA
<hr/>	
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located at the promoted viewpoint on top of Dunnet Head, the most northerly point of mainland Scotland. Dunnet Head has a viewing platform where visitors can look out at the panoramic views.
Existing view:	Views are focused to the north-west and north-east across the Pentland Firth and towards Hoy, West Orkney Mainland, and the Scottish Mainland. Views towards the offshore Project is north-west across the vast horizontal plain of the North Atlantic across the outbuildings and lighthouse in the foreground.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing cumulative context:	Hoy Community turbines would be visible on the landform at a distance of 18.6 km, and Hesta Head turbines would be discernible in clear conditions at a distance of 27.5 km.
Magnitude of change	<p>Low</p> <p>Surrounding various landscape types create a contrasting visual composition within the 360-degree view. The open sea horizon comprises approximately 110 degrees of the view within which the offshore Project would sit and be visible over 39.5 km distance. The closest row of WTGs (T21 to T26), is sited at a distance of up to 42.7 km from the viewpoint, with the remaining WTGs receding with increased distance. The proposed development would not intervene in views of the distinctive coastal landforms. Effects attributable to the offshore Project would be pronounced due to being perceived as a new feature within the sea context rather than due to its scale.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Moderate and not significant.
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.
Future Cumulative context:	The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would appear at a distance of 22 km against the skyline in westward views towards Cape Wrath. The additional magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project would remain Low.
Cumulative Effects:	Moderate and not significant



18.3.14 Viewpoint 14 Castle of Mey LB & GDL

Table 18-16 Viewpoint 14 Castle of Mey LB & GDL (Figure 18.VP14, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)

DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT	
Visual receptors type	Visitors / local residents (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	Scarfskerry and Dunnet Head
Landscape character type:	Farmed Lowland Plain
Landscape Designation:	Castle of Mey (Barrogill Castle)
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located from the road which passes the castle grounds to the west. The road is orientated towards the coast providing views of Hoy across the Pentland Firth in a direct view to the north / north-east. Views along the coast are focused on the rocky headland of Dunnet Head, which appears at a distance of 9 km to the north-west. Houses associated with the settlement of Scarfskerry are evident in the middle distance along with telegraph poles towards the west.
Existing view:	
Existing cumulative context:	The Hoy Community turbines would be just visible at a distance of 19 km, whereas the Limeklin blades would be barely perceptible due to their long distance.
Magnitude of change	Low-negligible The closest WTG (T26) is located at a distance of 47.8 km. The western part of the offshore Project is obscured by Dunnet Head. The WTGs which appear visually associated with the headland are located more than 56 km away. Due to the curvature of the Earth and the long intervening distance, the lower parts of the WTGs are obscured by the horizon resulting in hubs and blades visible on the horizon which would only be perceptible in very clear conditions.
Significance of Effects:	Minor and not significant.
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.
Future Cumulative context:	Cairnmore Hill turbines would be barely perceptible at a distance of 22.5 km above the landform. The additional magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project would remain Low-negligible.
Cumulative Effects:	Minor and not significant



18.3.15 Viewpoint 15 St John’s Point

Table 18-17 Viewpoint 15 St John’s Point (Figure 18.VP15, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)

DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT	
Visual receptors type	Visitors (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	Scarfskerry and Dunnet Head
Landscape character type:	Farmed Lowland Plain
Landscape Designation:	No designations
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located from the footpath to St John’s Point.
Existing view:	In direct views to the north, the profile of Hoy is evident in the distance along with the island of Stroma visible in the Pentland Firth. Views along the coast to the west are contained and also focused on the rocky headland of Dunnet Head. To the east / south-east, small islands divide the Firth and the coastline up to Duncansby Head.
Existing cumulative context:	The Hoy Community turbines would be visible at a distance of 19 km, as will the Tormsdale turbines in the view towards Duncansby Head.
Magnitude of change	<p>Low-negligible</p> <p>The closest WTG (T26) is at a distance of 49.1 km with WTGs on either side receding with increased distance. Due to the curvature of the Earth and the long intervening distance, the lower parts of the WTGs are obscured by the horizon resulting in hubs and blades visible on the horizon which would only be perceptible in very clear conditions.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Minor and not significant.
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.
Future Cumulative context:	Cairnmore Hill turbines would be barely perceptible at a distance of 25 km on top of the landform to the west. The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm blade tips would be just visible above the Dunnet Head. The additional magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project would remain Low-negligible.
Cumulative Effects:	Minor and not significant



18.3.16 Viewpoint 16 Beinn Freiceadain Hillfort

Table 18-18 Viewpoint 16 Beinn Freiceadain Hillfort (Figure 18.VP16, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)

DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT	
Visual receptors type	Walkers (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	None
Landscape character type:	Sweeping Moorland and Flows
Landscape Designation:	No designations
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located at the summit of Beinn Freiceadain at an elevated position of 239.5 m AOD offering 360-degree panoramic views across Caithness and Sutherland. A large Iron-Age hillfort is located at the summit. Together with the slightly higher twin summit of Ben Dorrery, it is one of the highest hills in Caithness and a local landmark.
Existing view:	
Existing cumulative context:	In views to the north-east, a few distant clusters of different developments are visible on the undulating lowland plain, including Stroupster / Slickly at a distance of 27 km. To the south-east several developments appear as one large wind farm at a distance of 12 km on the backdrop of the Lowland Plain. In views to the north-west towards the coast, the Limekiln, Baillie and Forss developments appear at distances of 7 km to 14 km.
Magnitude of change	<p>Low-negligible</p> <p>The coastal edge of Forss is located at a distance of 15 km. The closest WTG (T17) of the offshore Project is located at a distance of 47.1 km and the rest of the WTGs recede away on both sides with increased distance. The offshore Project would partially appear behind the intervening onshore wind farms on the sea horizon in the far distance and would only be visible in very clear conditions due to the long intervening distance.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Minor and not significant.
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.
Future Cumulative context:	The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be visible to the fore of the offshore Project and between existing onshore wind farms at a distance of 22.4 km. The addition of the offshore Project would reduce the magnitude of change to Negligible.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

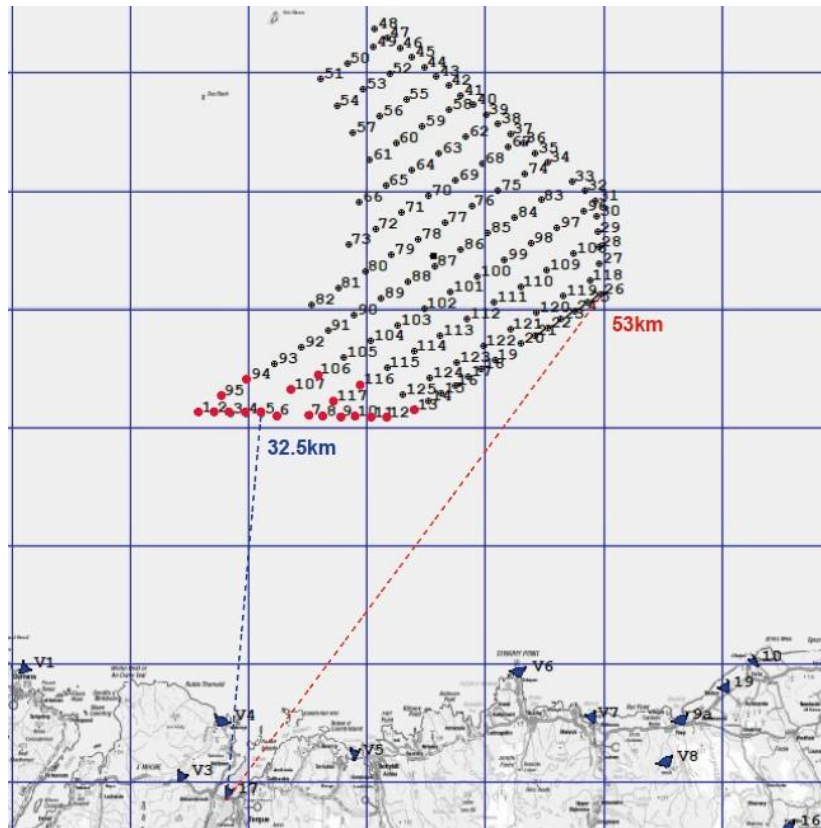
Cumulative Effects:

Minor / negligible and not significant



18.3.17 Viewpoint 17 Kyle of Tongue - A838 causeway

Table 18-19 Viewpoint 17 Kyle of Tongue - A838 causeway (Figure 18.VP17, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type Users of North Coast 500 (A838) (recreational value)

(susceptibility /value of view): High / high

Visual receptor’s sensitivity: High to high – medium (depending on the type of road user)

Coastal character type: Type 7: Kyles and Sea Lochs

Landscape character type: Coastal Crofts & Small Farms

Landscape Designation: Kyle of Tongue NSA

Viewpoint location: Viewpoint is located at a layby on the Kyle of Tongue causeway, which crosses a shallow sea loch featuring a rocky coastline. Its mouth is formed at Tongue Bay. The causeway is 3.8 km long and it crosses a natural island, Tongue Island.

Existing view: Views to the north are largely contained by the Kyle on either side of the view with the Rabbit Islands visible in the distance which prevent open views of the



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

North Atlantic. Ben Tongue is visible to the north-east whilst the settlement of Midtown and Skinnet Beach are visible to the north-west.

Existing cumulative context: None

Magnitude of change

Low-negligible

The closest WTG (T5) is at a distance of 32.5 km. The majority of the offshore Project is obscured by intervening landform, and therefore the visibility would be limited to blades and blade tips above Ard Skinid and the Rabbit Islands.

The blade tips which appear on the photomontage and wireline view above the Ard Skinid (T14, T15), Rabbit Island (T19-T23) and Eilean Nan Ron belong to the turbines which line the OAA's south eastern perimeter. These turbines are located further away: T14 and T15 at a distance of 37.6km and 38.7km and T19-T23 at a distance of more than 43.4km.

It is expected that at these distances it would be difficult to detect any blade motion.

Significance of Effects:

Minor and not significant.

Nature of Effects:

Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.

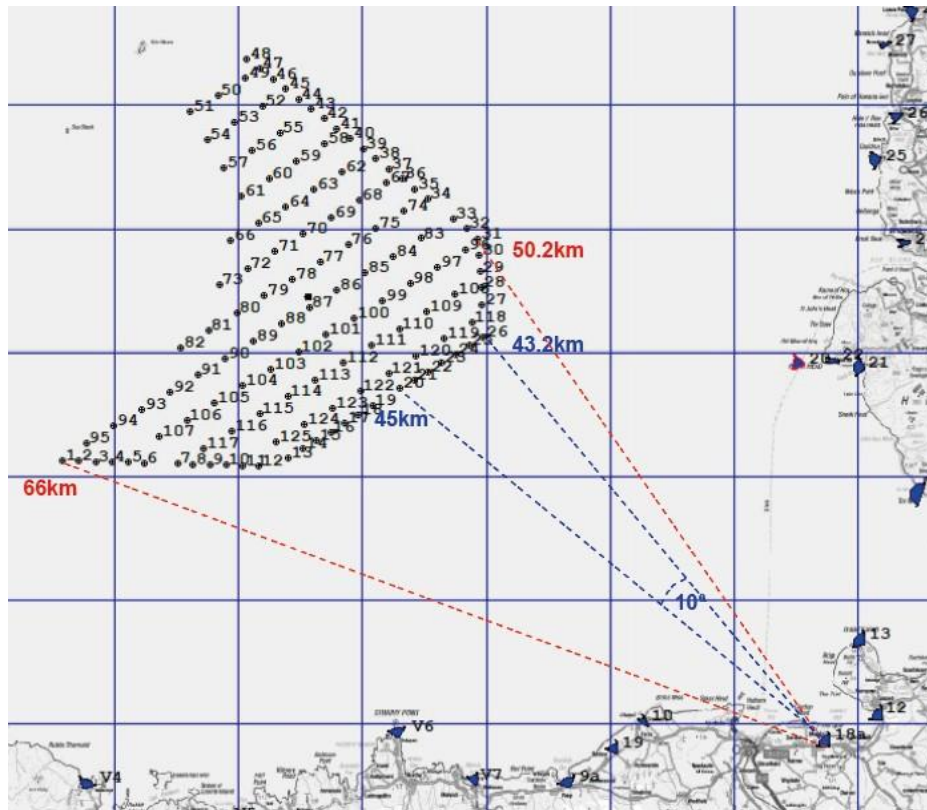
Future Cumulative context:

None



18.3.18 Viewpoint 18 A836 Between Thurso and Castletown

Table 18-20 Viewpoint 18 A836 Between Thurso and Castletown (Figure 18.VP18, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Users of North Coast 500 (A838) (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High-medium / High-medium
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High to Medium (depending on road user type)
Coastal character type	Dunnet Bay and Thurso Bay
Landscape character type:	Farmed Lowland Plain LCT
Landscape Designation:	No Designations
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located on the A838 between Thurso Bay and Dunnet Bay.
Existing view:	Views to the north are expansive across an open coastal farmland and the open sea is readily visible from this elevated coastline, as are views inland across Dunnet Bay to the east. To the north-east, Dunnet Head is visible in the middle distance with Hoy just visible in the far distance beyond Dunnet Head. A number



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

of man-made elements are visible in the foreground and mid-ground including scattered houses, telegraph poles, fencing and stone walls.

Existing cumulative context: Lochend turbines at a distance of 10 km are visible to the east. Upper hubs and blades of Baillie turbines are visible at a distance of 14 km to the west. Other WTGs would be barely perceptible due to the long intervening distance.

Magnitude of change Low-negligible
 The closest WTGs to the viewpoint, T20 to T26 are located at a distance of up to 45 km, occupying around 10 degrees of the HFoV with the remaining WTGs receding with increased distance. The WTGs would be discernible only in very clear conditions at over 48 km distance on the sea horizon in the context of a farmed foreground.

Significance of Effects: Minor and not significant.

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.

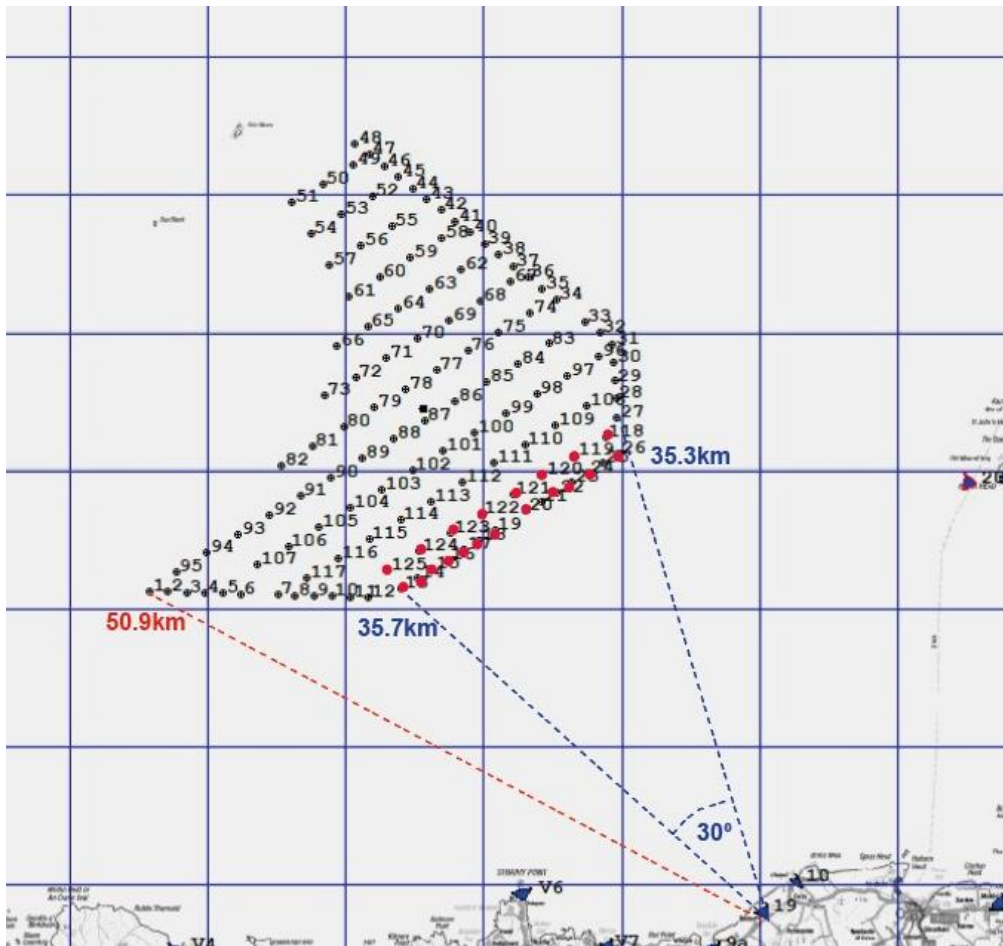
Future Cumulative context: A blade tip of Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be barely perceptible above the coastal landform at a distance of 21 km. Cairnmore Hill turbines occupy a prominent elevated position on top of the coastal landform and would appear to the west at a distance of 10.7 km. Hollandmey would be visible to the east at a distance of 10.8 km. The additional magnitude of change of the offshore Project would remain Low-negligible.

Cumulative Effects: Minor and not significant



18.3.19 Viewpoint 19 A836 Dounreay

Table 18-21 Viewpoint 19 A836 Dounreay (Figure 18.VP19, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Users of North Coast 500 (A838) (recreational value)						
(susceptibility /value of view):	Medium / High-medium						
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High to Medium (depending on road user type)						
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;">Coastal character type:</td> <td>Portskerra</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;">Landscape character type:</td> <td>Farmed Lowland Plain LCT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;">Landscape Designation:</td> <td>No Designations</td> </tr> </table>		Coastal character type:	Portskerra	Landscape character type:	Farmed Lowland Plain LCT	Landscape Designation:	No Designations
Coastal character type:	Portskerra						
Landscape character type:	Farmed Lowland Plain LCT						
Landscape Designation:	No Designations						
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located on the A838 between Dounreay Nuclear Power Development Establishment (NPDE) and Forss Business and Technology Park. Both are focal points in views along the coast.						



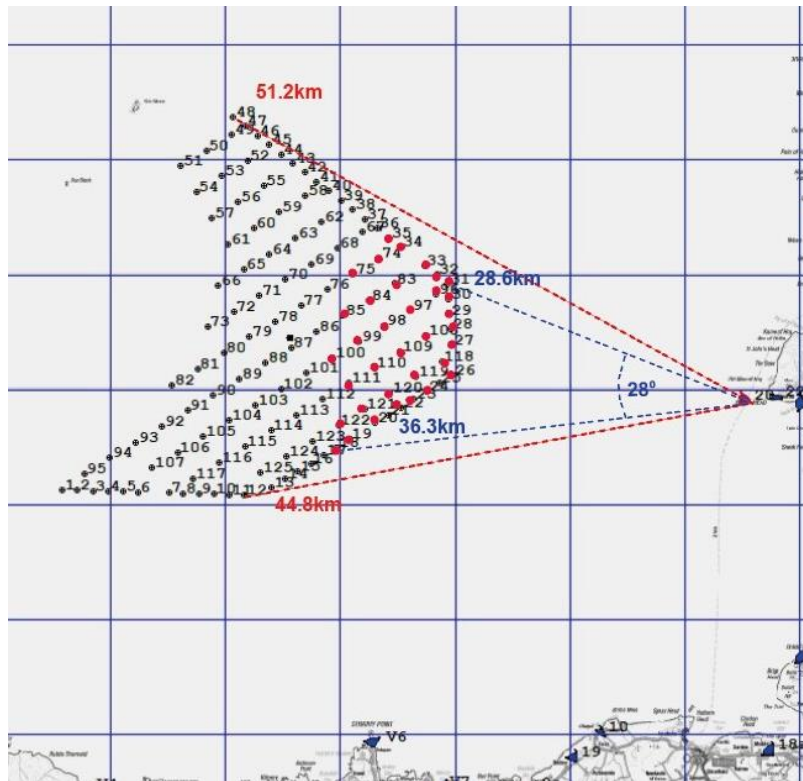
DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing view:	Views are expansive across this coastal farmland with an approximately 140-degree extent of open sea horizon is readily visible from this elevated coastal road, and the exposed coastal cliff face as far as Strathy Point in the west to Hoy in the north-east. The landform rising from the road to the south-east accommodates the Baillie Wind Farm and restricts inland views.
Existing cumulative context:	Forss I & II (including Lybster single turbine) turbines appear in the view to the east at a distance of 2.4 km on the backdrop of the profile of Hoy.
Magnitude of change	<p>Medium-low</p> <p>The open sea horizon comprises approximately 140 degrees within which the offshore Project would be visible. The closest WTGs to the viewpoint, T13 to T26 are located at a distance of up to 35.7 km, occupying approximately 30 degrees of the HFoV with the turbines beyond receding with increased distance. The turbines, which are in a line behind T20 create stacking effect and would be more visible in this view. Although the offshore Project would appear as a distant feature, it would appear within the undeveloped context of the sea and make it noticeable given it's wider HFoV.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Moderate and significant.
Nature of Effects:	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.
Future Cumulative context:	The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be visible prominently, being close to the coast at a distance of 10.5 km. Cairnmore Hill turbines would occupy an elevated position at a distance of 5.1 km opposite the Forss group on the other side of the road. The additional magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project would remain Medium-low.
Cumulative Effects:	Moderate and significant



18.3.20 Viewpoint 20 Scrabster-Stromness Ferry

Table 18-22 Viewpoint 20 Scrabster-Stromness Ferry (Figure 18.VP20, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type Users of the ferry (recreational value)

(susceptibility /value of view): Medium / High-medium

Visual receptor's sensitivity: High-medium

Coastal character type: None

Landscape character type: None

Landscape Designation: None

Viewpoint location: The viewpoint is located on the Scrabster to Stromness ferry, approximately 800m from the Hoy and West Mainland NSA. For the purpose of this assessment, the viewpoint is located along the route from Sneuk Head to Rora Head, off the west cliffs of Hoy

Existing view: To the east, the view is of the cliffs of Hoy, including the Old Man of Hoy. The coast of the mainland is visible to the north-east, and the coast of Caithness is



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

visible to the south and south-west. To the west, the views are open and expansive towards the sea.

Existing cumulative context: In views to the south and south-west, the closest coastal wind farms, including Forss and Baillie at a distance of around 30 km, are barely perceptible within this expansive seascape.

Magnitude of change Medium

The offshore Project would appear as a new feature across the vast sea horizon to the west. The visual foci along the ferry route is the distinctive cliff faces of Hoy to the east, including the Old Man of Hoy with the offshore Project appearing in the opposite direction. The closest row of WTGs (T19 to T39) would be at a distance of up to 35 km, affecting approximately 28 degrees of the HFoV with the remaining turbines receding with increased distance.

The offshore Project would not intervene in views of the distinctive coastal landforms of Hoy. Effects attributable to the offshore Project would be pronounced due to its appearance as a new feature within the view rather than due to its scale.

Significance of Effects: Major / moderate and significant.

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

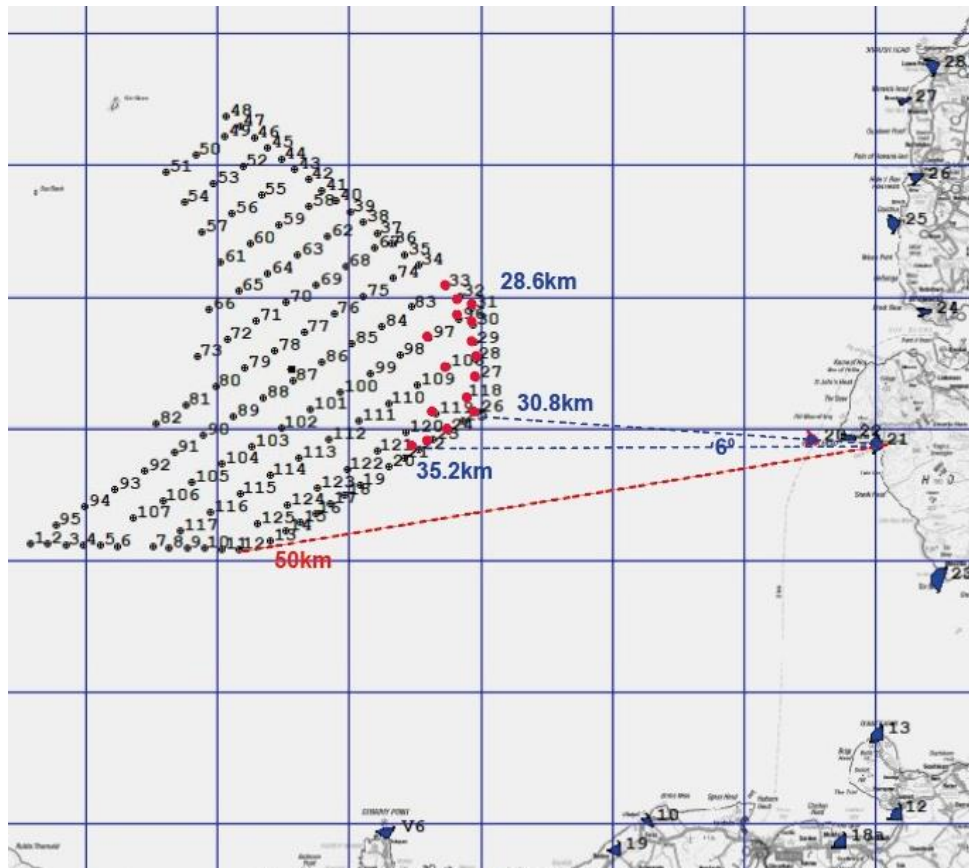
Future Cumulative context: Cairnmore Hill turbines would be just perceivable at a distance of 30 km due to their elevated coastal position. The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be seen at a distance of 33 km on the backdrop of the distinctive silhouette of the Foinaven mountains. The magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project in addition to the future cumulative context, is considered to remain Medium.

Cumulative Effects: Major / moderate and significant.



18.3.21 Viewpoint 21 Rackwick Bay - at Rackwick Bothy bench

Table 18-23 Viewpoint 21 Rackwick Bay - at Rackwick Bothy bench (Figure 18.VP21, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type Visitors / Local Residents (recreational value)

(susceptibility /value of view): High / high

Visual receptor’s sensitivity: High

Coastal character type: West Hoy Cliffs/ Cliffs – Orkney

Landscape character type: Enclosed Bays

Landscape Designation: Hoy and West Mainland NSA

Viewpoint location: The viewpoint is located adjacent to the Burnmouth Bothy on Rackwick Beach, on Hoy. Rackwick is a boulder beach which is backed by a broad valley. The walk to the Old Man of Hoy starts from the nearby car park.

Existing view:



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

The bay of Rackwick forms the foreground to scenic views southwards along the coast, as well as west to Rora Head which is a notable landmark visible from most of this area.¹

The beach offers a wide-open sea horizon of approximately 100-degree HFoV. The view is framed by the high cliffs of Craig Gate to the left and the rocky lower slopes of Moor Fea to the right.

Existing cumulative context: The existing coastal cumulative context, across the sea, at a distance of 30 km, is barely perceptible, due to the relatively low coastal location of Forss I & II and Baillie wind farms.

Magnitude of change Medium-low

The proposed WTGs would be visible beyond the high rocky landform of Too of the Head to the west. The closest and visible WTGs (T21-T25) would be located between 30.8 km and 35.2 km with the remaining WTGs receding with increased distance. The northern half of the offshore Project would be screened by intervening landform of Roara Head.

The visible remaining WTGs appear to one side of a framed view from this sheltered bay with much of the horizon appearing empty.

Due to the distance, the south-west orientation of the bay and the relatively small HFoV of approximately six degrees occupied by the closest WTGs, the magnitude of change is judged Medium-low.

Significance of Effects: Moderate and significant.

Nature of Effects: Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context Cairnmore Hill turbines would be discernible at a distance of 33 km due to their elevated coastal position. The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be barely perceptible due its long distance. The magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project, in addition to the future cumulative context would remain Medium-low.

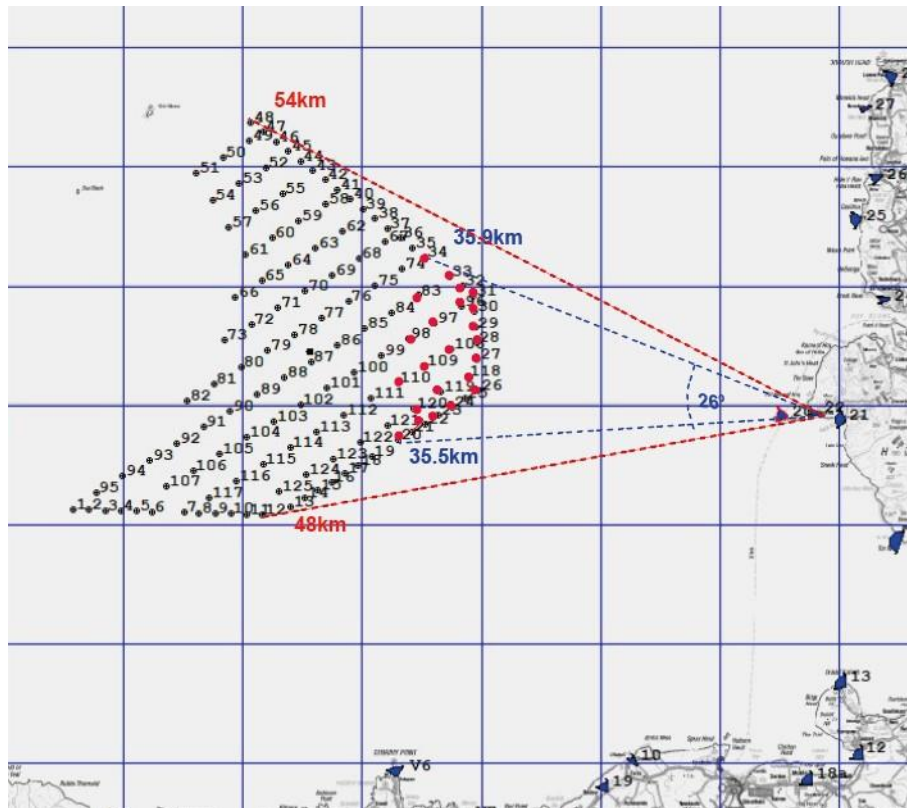
Cumulative Effects: Moderate and significant

¹ Coastal Character Assessment – Orkney and North Caithness (5.251 CCA)



18.3.22 Viewpoint 22 Path to Old Man of Hoy

Table 18-24 Viewpoint 22 Path to Old Man of Hoy (Figure 18.VP22, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type: Walkers (recreational value)

(susceptibility /value of view): High / high

Visual receptor's sensitivity: High

Coastal character type: Rora Head and St John's Head/ Cliffs – Orkney

Landscape character type: Cliffs – Orkney / Rugged Hills

Landscape Designation: Hoy and West Mainland NSA

Viewpoint location: The viewpoint is located on a Core Path to the Old Man of Hoy from the top of Lang Geo 138.5 m AOD, which is backed by the shoulder of Moor Fea.

It is to be noted that the offshore Project would be partially screened by the Old Man of Hoy at the end of the Core Path opposite the Old Man of Hoy. Therefore, the viewpoint location was microsituated to the current view as illustrated in Figure 18.VP22 (SS20: SLVIA Visualisations).



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing view:

The elevated location allows for 180-degree expansive views of the Atlantic Ocean. The Old Man of Hoy is visible to the right of the view. Looking south, there are views across Rackwick and its beach, the sheer, blocky cliffs can be seen, as far as Sneuk Head, with The Berry in the distance and Dunnet Head beyond. The Caithness and Sutherland hills can be seen in the far distance on very clear conditions.

Existing cumulative context:

The existing coastal cumulative context, across the sea, beyond a distance of 30 km, is barely perceptible.

Magnitude of change

Medium

The offshore Project would appear as a new and distant feature across the vast sea horizon to the west. The row of WTGs (T20 to T34), located at a distance of 36 km, occupies 26 degrees of the HFOV with the remaining WTGs receding with increased distance.

The offshore Project would not intervene in views of the distinctive coastal landforms of Hoy. Effects attributable to the offshore Project would be pronounced due to its appearance as a new, prominent feature within the sea rather than due to its scale.

Significance of Effects:

Major / moderate and significant

Nature of Effects:

Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context:

The Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm would be visible in clear conditions at a distance of 29 km on the backdrop of the distinctive silhouette of the Foinaven mountains. The onshore wind farms would be barely perceptible due to the long distance. The magnitude of change attributable to the offshore Project, in addition to the future cumulative context, is considered to remain Medium-low.

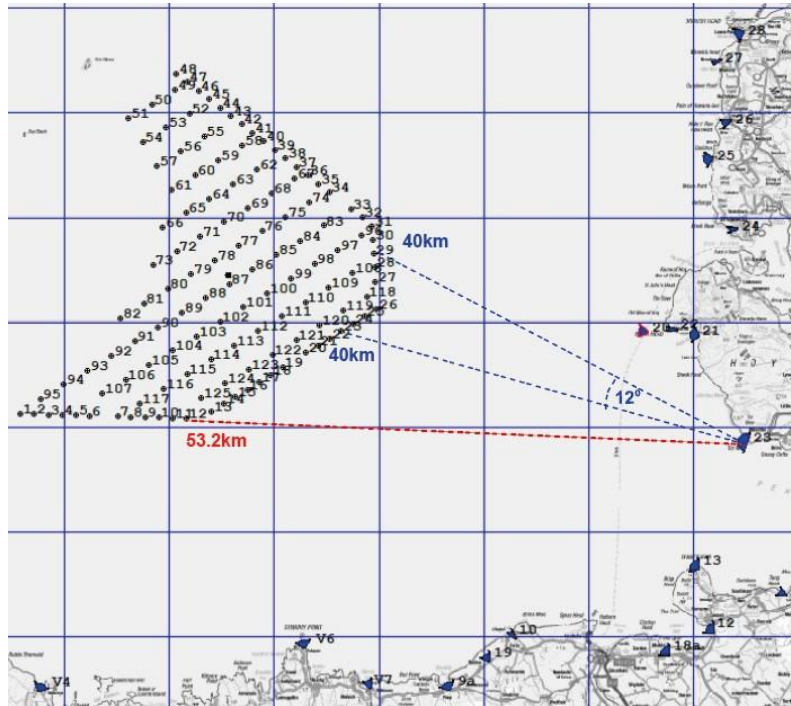
Cumulative Effects:

Major / moderate and significant



18.3.23 Viewpoint 23 Tor Ness

Table 18-25 Viewpoint 23 Tor Ness (Figure 18.VP23, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type: Core Path users and visitors to the lighthouse (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view): High / High-medium
Visual receptor’s sensitivity: High

Coastal character type: South Walls and Brims Ness / Cliffs – Orkney
Landscape character type: Moorland Hills - Orkney
Landscape Designation: No designations

Viewpoint location: Viewpoint is located on Core Path H8, adjacent to Tor Ness Lighthouse, which connects with the B9047, 1.9km to the north-east.

Existing view: This south-west facing coast is lower-lying and less rugged. Views are orientated towards the open and busy Pentland Firth. Extensive uninterrupted views around, in which the sea occupies approximately 180 degrees of the HFoV. A complex of irregular wave-cut coastal cliffs along the west coast of Hoy provides visual interest in views to the north-west. The landform of Rora Head is visible beyond these cliffs at a distance of 13.3 km. On clear days the coast of Caithness and Sutherland is visible and there are views over to Stroma and Swona, with Duncansby Head forming the backdrop.



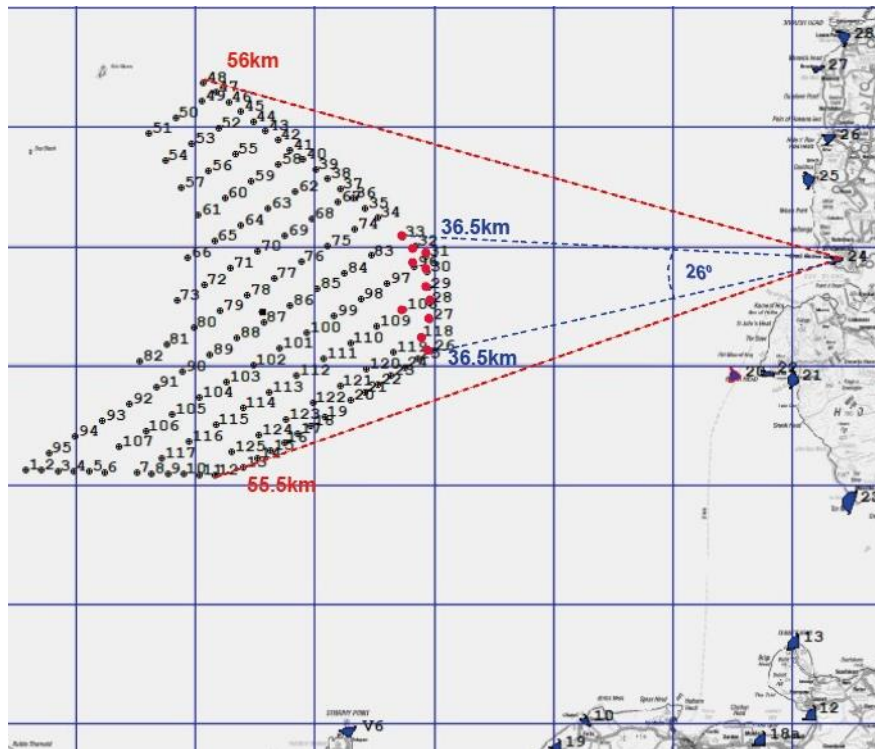
DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing cumulative context:	The existing coastal cumulative context, across the sea, at a distance of beyond 30 km is barely perceptible.
Magnitude of change	<p>Low-negligible</p> <p>The offshore Project would appear as a new and distant feature across the vast sea horizon to the north-west. The closest WTG to the viewpoint is T26 at a distance of 37.6 km. The HFoV occupied by WTGs at a distance of 40 km would only be approximately 12 degrees. Due to the curvature of the Earth and the long intervening distance, the lower parts of the WTGs are obscured by the horizon resulting in hubs and blades visible on the horizon which would only be perceptible in very clear conditions. The offshore Project would not intervene in views of the distinctive coastal landforms at Hoy. Turbines, which are in a line behind T12 at the far left, create a stacking effect and, due to the density, it would be more visible in this view.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Minor and not significant.
Nature of Effects	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.
Future Cumulative context:	None of the cumulative wind farms would be perceptible due to the long intervening distances. The cumulative magnitude of change would therefore remain Low-negligible.
Cumulative Effects:	Minor and not significant



18.3.24 Viewpoint 24 Warebeth - on Warebeth Road to beach

Table 18-26 Viewpoint 24 Warebeth - on Warebeth Road to beach (Figure 18.VP24, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors / Local Residents (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
Coastal character type:	Breckness and Row Head
Landscape character type:	Inclined Coastal Pasture
Landscape Designation:	Hoy and West Mainland NSA
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located on Warebeth Road, to the west of Stromness. The road descends along the smooth south-west facing slope of Sandy Hill towards the shoreline. There are a series of low hills between Black Craig and Stromness with scattered farmsteads which tend to be south facing.
Existing view:	Views south are across the Hoy Sound with the rounded hills of Hoy providing a focal point in the view with the open Atlantic visible to the west. The foreground is largely farmland with scattered farms throughout the view.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing cumulative context: The single turbine of West Hill would be barely perceptible at a distance of 18.7 km to the south-east on Flotta island.

Magnitude of change Low

The nearest WTGs to the viewpoint are those along the eastern boundary of the OAA (T25 to T33) at a distance of up to 36.5 km with the remaining WTGs receding with increased distance. Therefore, the HFoV occupied by WTGs would only be approximately 16 degrees. The offshore Project would appear as a distant feature on the vast sea horizon in the west and would not intervene in views of Hoy and Hoy Sound and the Stromness – Scrabster ferry would be seen daily through Hoy Sound in the south.

Significance of Effects: Moderate and not significant

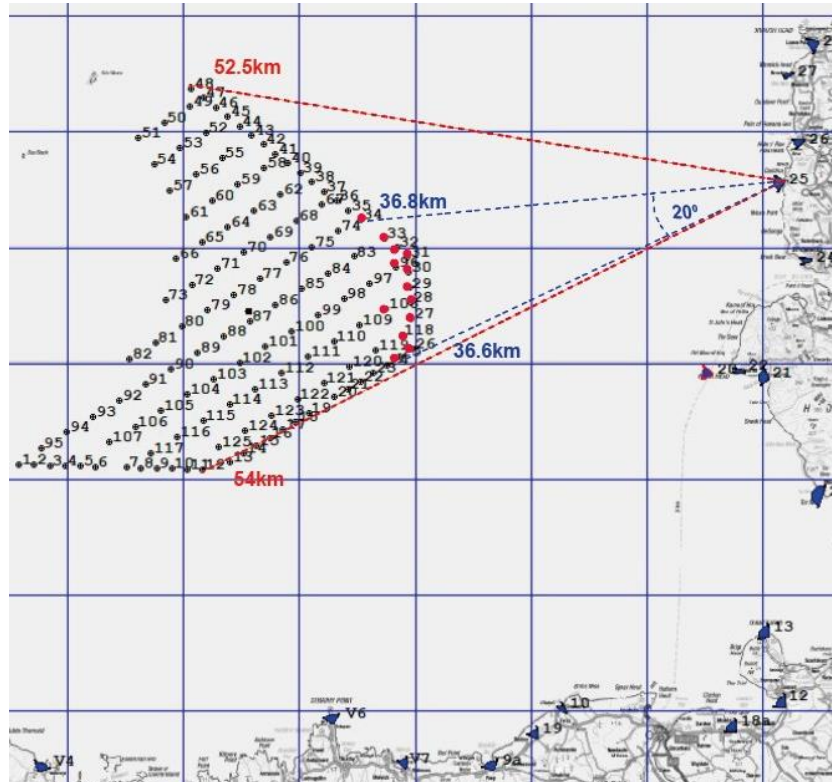
Nature of Effects Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context: None



18.3.25 Viewpoint 25 Yesnaby - Brough of Bigging

Table 18-27 Viewpoint 25 Yesnaby - Brough of Bigging (Figure 18.VP25, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors (recreational value)
(susceptibility /value of view):	High / high
Visual receptor's sensitivity:	High
<hr/>	
Coastal character type:	Breckness and Row Head
Landscape character type:	Cliffs – Orkney
Landscape Designation:	Hoy and West Mainland NSA
<hr/>	
Viewpoint location:	Viewpoint is located at the cairn on top of the cliff edge of Brough of Bigging in Yesnaby. A car park, coastal trail and an interpretation board are available for visitors.
Existing view:	The cliffs are particularly indented around Yesnaby, with distinctive geological features such as the Yesnaby Castle sea stacks, blowholes, caves, and geos.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Elevated views to the west look out towards the open and uninterrupted Atlantic Ocean with the West Hoy Cliffs and southern mainland in southern views.

Existing cumulative context: None of the cumulative wind farms would be perceptible due to the long intervening distances.

Magnitude of change Low

The nearest WTGs to the viewpoint are those along the eastern boundary of the OAA (T24 to T34) at a distance of up to 36.6 km. WTGs beyond and along the OAA's north-eastern and south-eastern perimeter would recede with increased distance. Therefore, the HFoV occupied by WTGs would only be approximately 20 degrees. The offshore Project would appear as a distant feature on the vast sea horizon in the west and would not intervene in views of Hoy and other features such as the Yesnaby Castle sea stacks. Due to the curvature of the Earth and the long intervening distance, the lower parts of the rear WTGs are obscured by the horizon resulting in hubs and blades visible on the horizon which would only be perceptible in very clear conditions.

Significance of Effects: Moderate and not significant

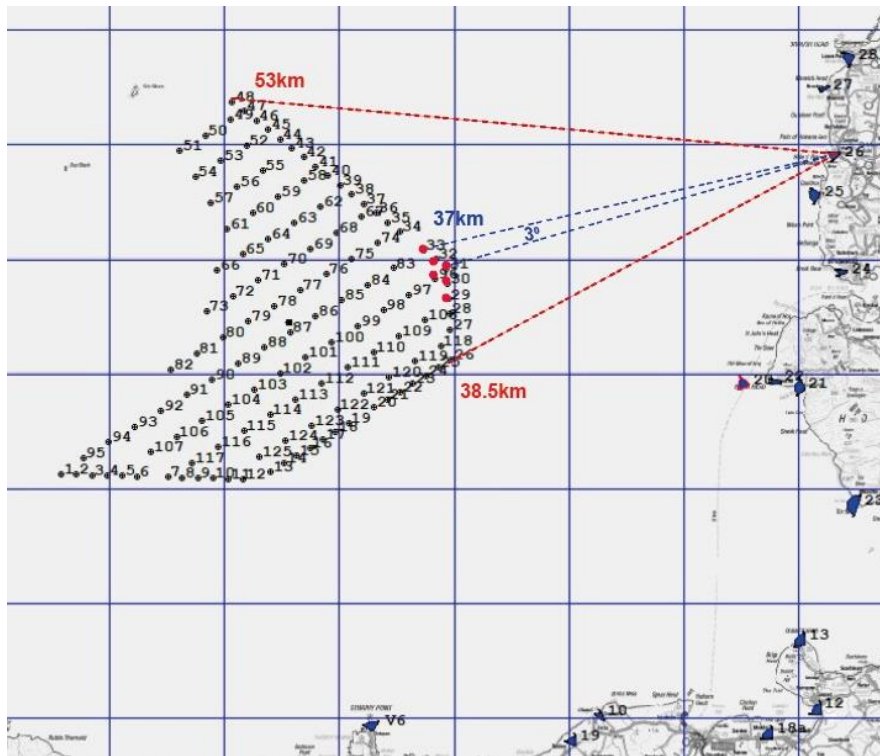
Nature of Effects Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

Future Cumulative context: None of the cumulative wind farms would be perceptible due to the long intervening distances.



18.3.26 Viewpoint 26 Bay of Skail

Table 18-28 Viewpoint 26 Bay of Skail (Figure 18.VP26, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type	Visitors / Local Residents / cyclists of Sustrans Cycle Route 1 / road users
(susceptibility /value of view):	High-medium / high
Visual receptor’s sensitivity:	High
<hr/>	
Coastal character type:	Marwick Head and Bay of Skail
Landscape character type:	Bay of Skail / Enclosed Bays
Landscape Designation:	None
<hr/>	
Viewpoint location:	The viewpoint is located on the edge of the beach at the Bay of Skail with views west out to the open Atlantic.
Existing view:	The bay is enclosed on both sides by rocky cliffs and outcrops with the Hole o’Rowe, to the south and Knowe of Verron to the north. Views out to sea are framed by these low cliffs. Skara Brae is visible to the south, however, there would be no visibility of the offshore Project from this location due to intervening landform. To the south, scattered houses, telegraph poles and fencing are visible in the foreground and mid-ground.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing cumulative context: None

Magnitude of change

Low

The closest WTG (T31) is located at a distance of 35.7 km which is screened. by the landform of Hole o'Rowe. The next closest WTGs in the view are T32 and T33 at a distance of 36.4 km and 37 km respectively. WTG T34 further to the right is located at a distance of 39 km. The offshore Project would appear to one side of the bay beyond the Hole o'Rowe cliff, continuing to allow for the open, uninterrupted views out to sea. Due to the curvature of the Earth and the long intervening distance, the lower parts of most of the WTGs are obscured by the horizon resulting in hubs and blades visible on the horizon which would only be perceptible in very clear conditions.

Significance of Effects:

Moderate and not significant

Nature of Effects

Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.

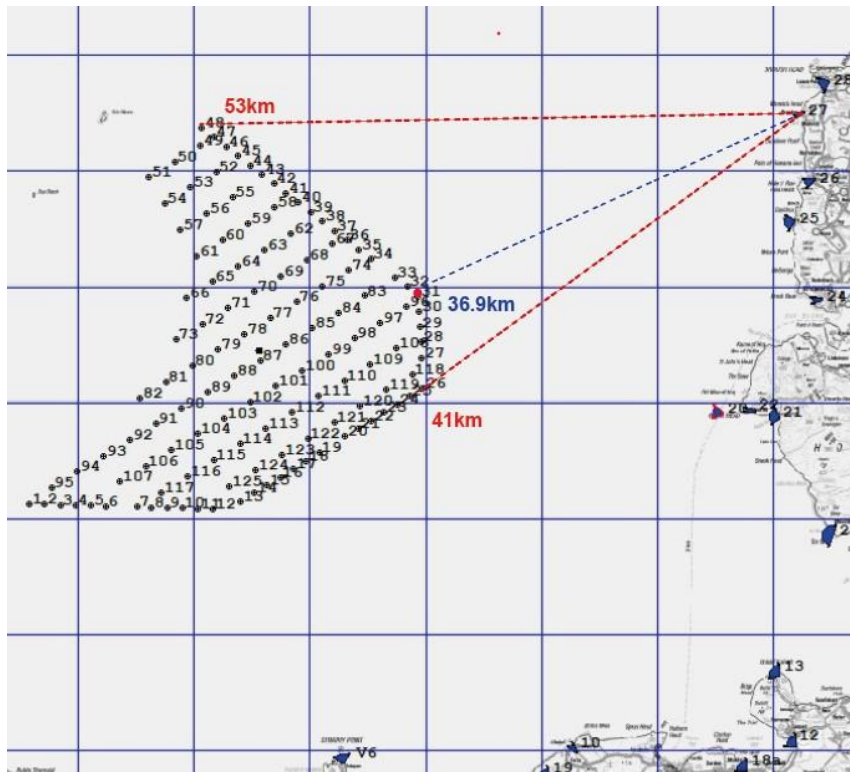
Future Cumulative context:

None



18.3.27 Viewpoint 27 Marwick Head Kitchener Memorial

Table 18-29 Viewpoint 27 Marwick Head Kitchener Memorial (Figure 18.VP27, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type: Visitors (recreational value)

(susceptibility /value of view): High / high

Visual receptor's sensitivity: High

Coastal character type: Marwick Head and Bay of Skail

Landscape character type: Coastal Hills and Heath

Landscape Designation: None

Viewpoint location: The viewpoint is located at the top of Marwick Head next to the Kitchener Memorial on the west coast of the Orkney Mainland

Existing view: The open and uninterrupted views of the Atlantic are the main focus of the views to the west from this elevated coast whilst the views to the south comprise the low-lying coast including Marwick Bay and scattered houses. Views to the north look towards the high cliffs of Marwick head and the Brough of Birsay at a distance of 3.4 km. The Loch of Isbister is seen in views to the hinterland at a distance of 2.9 km.



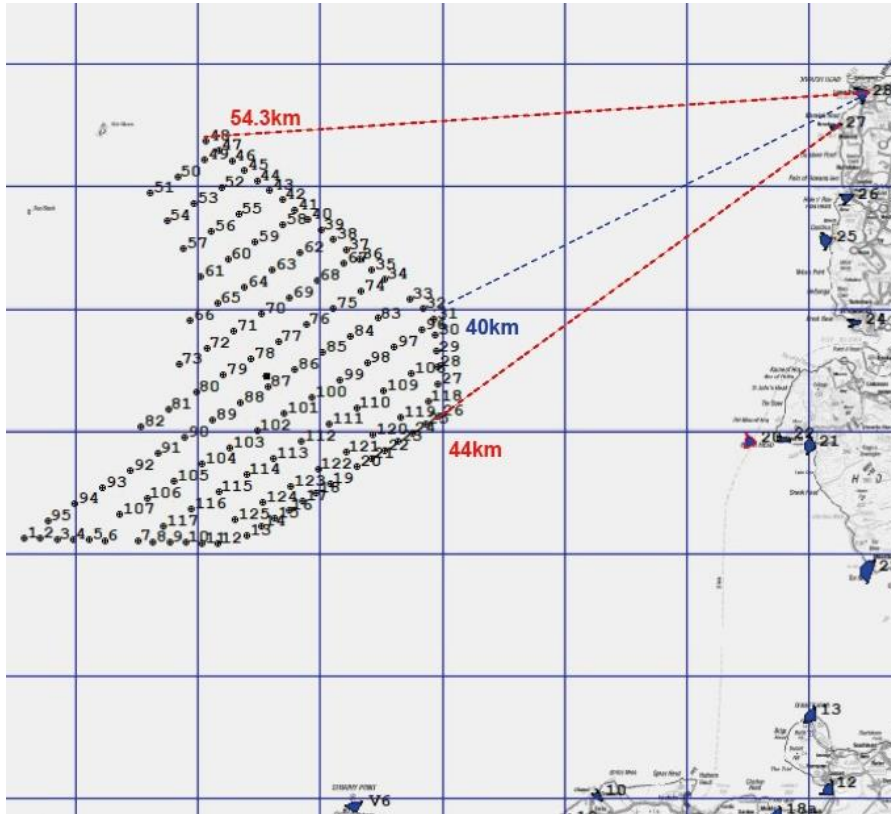
DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing cumulative context:	None of the cumulative wind farms would be perceptible due to the long intervening distance.
Magnitude of change	<p>Low</p> <p>The closest WTG (T31) is located at a distance of 36.9 km. The closest WTGs (T26-T33) along the eastern boundary of the OAA are at a distance of between 36.9 km and 41 km. WTGs beyond line up in north-east / south-west orientation adding to the density of WTGs. However, the offshore Project would appear as a distant feature on the vast sea horizon in the west, visible only in clear conditions and would not intervene in views with any of the mainland features.</p>
Significance of Effects:	Moderate not significant
Nature of Effects	Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse.
Future Cumulative context:	None of the cumulative wind farms would be perceptible due to the long intervening distance.
Cumulative Effects:	Moderate and not significant



18.3.28 Viewpoint 28 Earl's Palace Birsay Bay

Table 18-30 Viewpoint 28 Earl's Palace Birsay Bay (Figure 18.VP28, SS20: SLVIA Visualisations)



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Visual receptors type Visitors / local residents (recreational value)

(susceptibility /value of view): High / high

Visual receptor's sensitivity: High

Coastal character type: Marwick Head and Bay of Skail

Landscape character type: Coastal Hills and Heath

Landscape Designation: None

Viewpoint location: The viewpoint is located on the beach close to Earl's Palace on Birsay Bay.

Existing view: The view towards the offshore Project is across the Bay of Birsay, which extends for approximately 2 km in between Brough Head to the north and the sheer cliffs of Marwick Head to the south.



DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Existing cumulative context: None

Magnitude of change Negligible

The closest WTG (T31) is located at a distance of 40 km. Due to the curvature of the Earth and the long intervening distance; the lower parts of the WTGs are obscured by the horizon resulting in hubs and blades visible on the horizon which would only be perceptible in very clear conditions.

Significance of Effects: Minor and not significant

Nature of Effects Direct, cumulative, long-term (reversible) and adverse to neutral.

Future Cumulative context: None