Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Teindland Wind Farm

Volume 1

Chapter 8: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

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8 ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the potentially significant environmental effects of the proposed Teindland Wind Farm (the Development) on land owned by Forestry and Land Scotland approximately 3 km north of Rothes, Moray, (the Site) on cultural heritage (historic environment sites and features, archaeology and built heritage); hereafter referred to as 'heritage assets.' The Development is described in Chapter 4.

The chapter details the results of a desk-based assessment and a targeted field survey of the Site undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA), using information provided by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and by Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS), archaeological advisors to Moray Council.

This Chapter of the EIAR is supported by the following figures provided in Volume 2a: Figures:

- Figure 8.1: Cultural Heritage – Inner Study Area;
- Figure 8.2: Cultural Heritage – Abnormal Load Delivery Route;
- Figure 8.3: Cultural Heritage – Outer Study Ara with ZTV without Screening; and
- Figure 8.4: Cultural Heritage – Outer Study Ara with ZTV with Screening.

This Chapter is also supported by the following visualisations provided in Volume 2b: Visualisations:

- Figure 8.5: Viewpoint CH1: Church of Dundurcas-old parish church (SM 5621);
- Figure 8.6: Viewpoint CH2: Bogton-stone circle 250 m northwest of (SM 1215);
- Figure 8.7: Viewpoint CH3: Gordon Castle (LB 1595) and Gordon Castle Tower (LB 1596);
- Figure 8.8: Viewpoint CH4: Rothes Castle (SM 2455); and
- Figure 8.9: Viewpoint CH5: Innes House (LB 14862) and GDL (GDL 221).

This Chapter of the EIAR is supported by the following Technical Appendix (TA) documents provided in Volume 3 Technical Appendices:

- TA A8.1: Heritage Assets within the Inner Study Area;
- TA A8.2: Heritage Assets within the Outer Study Area and within 5 km of the Development; and
- TA A8.3: Heritage Assets within the Outer Study Area and within 5 km – 10 km of the Development.

The Cultural Heritage Assessment was prepared by Oliver Rusk MA(Cantab) MLitt ACIfA of CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA), a Registered Organisation (RO) of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), based in Musselburgh, East Lothian. Mr Rusk is a Consultant with CFA with eight years post-graduate experience as an archaeologist and is an Associate of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ACIfA).

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- Identify the cultural heritage baseline within and in the vicinity of the Site;
- Assess the Site in terms of its archaeological potential;
- Consider the effects of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Development on heritage assets, within the context of the relevant legislation and planning guidance; and
- Consider the cumulative effects of the Development in combination with other existing or proposed developments, upon cultural heritage assets.

The assessment evaluates the effects of the Development on:

- Scheduled Monuments and other archaeological features;
- Listed Buildings and other buildings of historic or architectural significance;
- Conservation Areas; and
- Inventory Garden and Designed Landscapes.

It assesses the potential construction effects on assets within the Site and the effect of the Development on the settings of heritage assets in the wider landscape.

8.2 CONSULTATION

Table 8.1 provides details of consultations undertaken with relevant regulatory bodies, together with action undertaken by the Applicant in response to consultation comments.

Table 8.1: Consultation Responses

Consultee	Consultation Type	Consultee Comments	Response/Action Taken
Moray Council 23 August 2022	Scoping Opinion	Content that the proposed methodology and scope of the assessment are sufficient and that the proposed study areas are adequate. Requested that assessment include for potential direct impacts along the off-site transportation route.	Noted. The scope and methodology of the assessment including study areas adopted, are detailed in **Section 8.4**. The cultural heritage baseline along the off-site transport route is included in **Section 8.6**.
HES 12 September 2022	Scoping Opinion	Content that the proposed methodology and scope of the assessment are sufficient and that the proposed study areas are adequate. Requested that wireline visualisations be provided for Church of Dundurcas (SM 5621), Rothes Castle (SM 2455) and Bogton, stone circle (SM 1215).	Noted. The scope and methodology of the assessment including study areas adopted, are detailed in **Section 8.4**. A list of visualisations provided for the assessment is included in **Table 8.5**.
ACAS 30 July 2024	Viewpoint and Visualisations Consultation	Content that proposed viewpoint locations are acceptable and no additional assets require visualisations.	Noted. A list of visualisations provided for the assessment is included in **Table 8.5**.
HES 20 August 2024	Viewpoint and Visualisations Consultation	Content that proposed viewpoint locations are acceptable and no additional assets require visualisations. Photomontages should be considered if any potential impacts raise significant concerns.	Noted. A list of visualisations provided for the assessment is included in **Table 8.5**. A draft suite of wirelines was provided to HES for further comment.
HES 19 November 2024	Follow-on Visualisation Consultation	Content with the draft wirelines provided and no photomontages are required.	Noted.

8.3 LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the advice and guidance in the following documents:

8.3.1 Legislation

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (HM Government, 1979);
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011) (Scottish Government, 1997);
- Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (Scottish Government, 2013); and
- Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

8.3.2 Planning Policies

This assessment is required in order to provide the information required to inform an assessment of compliance of the Development with the following planning policies (the

assessment of compliance is set out in the Planning Statement that accompanies the application):

- National Planning Framework for Scotland 4 (NPF4) (2024), policy 7 (Historic Assets and Places);
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) (Historic Environment Scotland (HES) 2019a); and
- Moray Local Development Plan (Moray Council 2020) policies DP9 (Renewable Energy), EP8 (Historic Environment), EP10 (Listed Buildings) and EP11 (Battlefields, Gardens and Designed Landscapes).

8.3.3 Guidance

- Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook (Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and HES 2018);
- Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014, updated 2020);
- Standard and Guidance for Commissioning Work or Providing Consultancy Advice on Archaeology and the Historic Environment (CIfA 2014, updated 2020);
- Code of Conduct: professional ethics in archaeology (CIFA 2014, revised October 2022);
- Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK (IEMA, IHBC & CIfA 2021);
- Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (HES 2019b);
- Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (HES 2016);
- Planning Advice Note 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology (PAN2/2011);
- UK Forestry Standard: The Governments Approach to Sustainable Forestry (Forestry Commission 2017);
- UK Forestry Standard Guidelines: Forests and the Historic Environment (Forestry Commission Scotland 2011);
- Forests and Historic Environment: Information and Advice (Forestry Commission Scotland 2016); and
- Scotland's Woodlands and the Historic Environment (Forestry Commission Scotland 2008).

8.4 METHODOLOGY

8.4.1 Study Area

Two study areas were used for the assessment:

- The Inner Study Area (**Figure 8.1** and **8.2**):
  - The Development Site: the Development red line boundary (the Site) forms the study area for the identification of heritage assets that could receive direct impacts arising from the construction of the Development. The current land-use of this area is as commercial forestry. **Figure 8.1** shows the Site boundary, the Development layout and the locations of heritage assets identified and described in the gazetteer (**TA A8.1**); and
  - The Abnormal Load Delivery Route: Where the abnormal load delivery route is predicted to overrun the current road corridor within rural areas a 100 m buffer around the overrun area forms the study area for the identification of heritage assets that could receive direct effects arising from road construction works. **Figure 8.2** shows the areas of overrun considered and the locations of heritage assets identified and described in the gazetteer (**TA A8.1**).
- The Outer Study Area (**Figure 8.3 and 8.4**):
  - A 10 km study area, extending from the outermost turbines of the Development, was used for the identification of cultural heritage assets whose settings may be affected by the Development (including cumulative effects). **Figure 8.3** shows the Development, together with the blade tip height Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and the location of heritage assets within the Outer Study Area. Lists of these heritage assets are provided in **TAs A8.2** and **A8.3**, which also provide tabulated

summary assessments of the predicted effect on their settings on a case-by-case. The wider ZTV was also assessed to identify any designated assets beyond 10 km that have settings that may be especially sensitive to the Development.

An assessment of cumulative effects on the settings of heritage assets has also been undertaken, employing the 10 km study area. **Figure 8.3**, as described above, also shows the locations of other wind energy development within 10 km. **Figure 8.4** shows the Development in its wider landscape context, together with the screening tip height ZTV, which takes into account screening by buildings and woodland. The cumulative schemes included in the assessment reflect those listed in **Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual**.

8.4.2 Desk Study

The following information sources were consulted as part of the desk-based assessment work:

- Moray Council Historic Environment Record (HER): for a digital database extract for all assets within the Inner Study Area;
- The National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) (HES 2025a): for any information additional to that contained in the HER;
- HES Spatial Data Warehouse (HES 2025b): for up-to-date data on the locations and extents of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Inventory Garden and Designed Landscapes and Inventory Historic Battlefields;
- Historic Land-Use Assessment Data for Scotland (HLAMap) (HES 2025c): for information on the historic land use character of the Site and the surrounding area;
- National Library of Scotland Map Library: for Ordnance Survey maps (principally 1st and 2nd editions) and other historical map resources;
- Modern aerial photographic imagery available online via Google Earth, Bing Maps and ESRI World Imagery;
- Scottish Remote Sensing Portal (Scottish Government 2025): for 1 m DTM[1] Lidar data (where available) covering the Inner Study Area; and
- Relevant bibliographic references and on-line historic resources were consulted to provide background and historic information.

Outer Study Area

Up-to-date information was obtained from HES on statutory and non-statutory designated heritage assets within the Outer Study Area. The blade tip height ZTVs generated for the Development were utilised to identify those designated heritage assets in the Outer Study Area that would have theoretical visibility of the Development.

8.4.3 Field Survey

A targeted field survey was carried out within the Inner Study Area concentrating on those heritage assets identified through the desk-based assessment to lie within the micrositing allowance for the Development (i.e., those closest to proposed access tracks, turbine locations, borrow pits and laydown/compound areas, etc.).

The field survey was undertaken between 28 October to 1 November 2024, with the following aims:

- Assess the baseline condition of the known heritage assets identified through the desk-based assessment;
- Identify any further features of cultural heritage interest not detected through the desk-based assessment that could be affected by the Development; and
- Identify areas with the potential to contain currently unrecorded buried archaeological remains.

No intrusive archaeological interventions have been carried out as part of this assessment.

All data were captured electronically using a Trimble TDC600 Handheld GNSS with sub-metre accuracy. The baseline condition of identified assets was recorded on pro-forma monument recording sheets and by digital photography.

[1] Digital Terrain Model

A site visit was undertaken on 31 October 2024 to assess the character and sensitivity of the settings of heritage assets in the Outer study area. The site visit focused on those heritage assets most likely to receive significant effects on their setting (i.e. those closest to the Development and those considered, on preliminary analysis, to potentially be the most sensitive to change within their setting).

8.5 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The effects of the Development on heritage assets were assessed on the basis of their type (direct effects, indirect effects, and effects on setting (including cumulative effects)) and nature (adverse or beneficial). Effects can be permanent (lasting for a long time or forever), temporary (not lasting for very long) and/or reversible (can be changed back to what it was before). The assessment takes into account the value/sensitivity of the heritage asset and its setting and the magnitude of the predicted impact, following the approach advised in the SNH/HES (2018) EIA Guidance. Impacts are described as:

- Direct physical construction impacts: occur where the physical fabric of the asset is removed or damaged, or where it is preserved or conserved, as a direct result of the proposal. Such impacts are most likely to occur during the construction phase and are most likely to be permanent;
- Indirect physical construction impacts: occur where the fabric of an asset, or buried archaeological remains, is removed or damaged, or where it is preserved or conserved, as an indirect result of the proposal even though the asset may lie some distance from the proposal. Such impacts are most likely to occur during the construction phase and are most likely to be permanent;
- Setting impacts: these are generally direct and result from the proposal causing change within the setting of a heritage asset that affects its cultural significance or the way in which it is understood, appreciated, and experienced. Such impacts are generally, but not exclusively, visual, occurring directly as a result of the appearance of the proposal in the surroundings of the asset. However, they may relate to other senses or factors, such as noise, odour or emissions, or historical relationships that do not relate entirely to intervisibility, such as historic patterns of land-use and related historic features. Such impacts may occur at any stage of a proposal's lifespan and may be permanent, reversible, or temporary;
- Cumulative impacts: can relate to the physical fabric or setting of assets. They may arise as a result of impact interactions, either of different impacts of the proposal itself, or additive impacts resulting from incremental changes caused by the proposal together with other projects already in the planning system or allocated in a Local Development Plan;
- Adverse effects are those that detract from or reduce cultural significance or special interest of heritage assets; and
- Beneficial effects are those that preserve, enhance, or better reveal the cultural significance or special interest of heritage assets.

8.5.1 Assigning Sensitivity to Heritage Assets

Cultural heritage assets are assigned value/importance through the designation process. Designation ensures that sites and places are recognised and protected by law through the planning system and other regulatory processes. The level of protection and how a site or place is managed varies depending on the type of designation and the laws and policies that apply to it (HES 2019b).

Table 8.2 summarises the relative sensitivity of heritage assets (including their settings) relevant to the Development, based on the guidance set out in the SNH/HES EIA Handbook (version 5; 2018).

Table 8.2: Sensitivity of Heritage Assets

Sensitivity of Asset	Definition / Criteria
High	Assets valued at an international or national level, including: • Scheduled Monuments; • Category A Listed Buildings; • Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes; • Inventory Historic Battlefields; and • Non-designated assets that meet the relevant criteria for designation (including sites recorded in HERs as NSR sites of presumed national importance).
Medium	Assets valued at a regional level, including: • Archaeological sites and areas that have regional value (contributing to the aims of regional research frameworks); • Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (ASA) (where these are identified in Local Authority records); • Non-Inventory Designed Landscapes (NIDL) (where these are identified in Local Authority records); • Category B Listed Buildings; and • Conservation Areas.
Low	Assets valued at a local level, including: • Archaeological sites that have local heritage value; • Category C listed buildings; and • Unlisted historic buildings and townscapes with local (vernacular) characteristics.
Negligible	Assets of little or no intrinsic heritage value, including: • Artefact find-spots (where the artefacts are no longer in situ and where their provenance is uncertain); and • Poorly preserved examples of particular types of features (e.g. quarries and gravel pits, dilapidated sheepfolds, etc).

8.5.2 Criteria for Assessing the Magnitude of Impact

The magnitude of impact (adverse or beneficial) has been assessed in the categories, high, medium, low, and negligible and described in **Table 8.3**.

Table 8.3: Magnitude of Impact

Magnitude of Impact	Definition / Criteria	
	Adverse	**Beneficial**
High	Changes to the fabric or setting of a heritage asset resulting in the complete or near complete loss of the asset's cultural significance, such that it may no longer be considered a heritage asset.	Preservation of a heritage asset in situ where it would otherwise be completely lost or almost completely lost in the do-nothing scenario.
Medium	Changes to the elements of the fabric or setting of a heritage asset that contribute to its cultural significance such that this substantially altered.	Changes to key elements of a heritage asset's fabric or setting, resulting in its cultural significance being preserved where this would otherwise be lost, or restored.
Low	Changes to the elements of the fabric or setting of a heritage asset that contribute to its cultural significance such that this quality is slightly altered.	Changes that result in elements of a heritage asset's fabric or setting that detract from its cultural significance being removed.
Negligible	Changes to fabric or setting of a heritage asset that leave its cultural significance unchanged.	

8.5.3 Assessment of Effects on Setting

The SNH/HES EIA Handbook (2018) Appendix 1, paragraph 42 advises that:

"In the context of cultural heritage impact assessment, the receptors are the heritage assets and impacts will be considered in terms of the change in their cultural significance".

Historic Environment Scotland's guidance document, 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting' (HES 2016), notes that:

"Setting can be important to the way in which historic structures or places are understood, appreciated and experienced. It can often be integral to a historic asset's cultural significance."

"Setting often extends beyond the property boundary or 'curtilage' of an individual historic asset into a broader landscape context".

The guidance also advises that:

"If proposed development is likely to affect the setting of a key historic asset, an objective written assessment should be prepared by the applicant to inform the decision-making process. The conclusions should take into account the significance of the asset and its setting and attempt to quantify the extent of any impact. The methodology and level of information should be tailored to the circumstances of each case".

The guidance recommends that there are three stages in assessing the impact of a development on the setting of a historic asset or place:

- Stage 1: identify the historic assets that might be affected by the proposed development;
- Stage 2: define and analyse the setting by establishing how the surroundings contribute to the ways in which the historic asset or place is understood, appreciated and experienced; and,
- Stage 3: evaluate the potential impact of the proposed changes on the setting, and the extent to which any negative impacts can be mitigated.

The SNH/HES EIA Handbook (2018) Appendix 1, paragraph 43 advises that:

"When considering setting impacts, visual change should not be equated directly with adverse impact. Rather the impact should be assessed with reference to the degree that the proposal affects those aspects of setting that contribute to the asset's cultural significance".

Following these recommendations, the turbine blade tip height ZTV and wirelines for the Development were used to identify those heritage assets from which there would be theoretical visibility of one or more of the proposed wind turbines, and the degree of theoretical visibility:

- Scheduled Monuments, Category A and B Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes and Inventory Historic Battlefields, where present within 10 km of the outermost turbines, are included in the assessment. These assets are included in the tabulated assessments in Technical **TAs A8.2** and **A8.3**, using the parameters set out in **Table 8.2**, and they are shown on **Figure 8.3: Cultural Heritage: Outer Study Area and ZTV without Screening and Figure 8.4: Cultural Heritage: Outer Study Area and ZTV with Screening**;
- Category C Listed buildings within 5 km of the outermost turbines will be included in the assessment. These assets are included in the tabulated assessments in **TA A8.2,** using the parameters set out in **Table 8.2**, and they are shown on **Figure 8.3: and Figure 8.4**;
- Consideration was given to designated heritage assets beyond 10 km where long-distance views and intervisibility between monuments are considered to be an important aspect of their settings. None were identified, in consultation with HES, that have settings that could be adversely affected by the Development; and
- Consideration was also given to designated heritage assets where there is no predicted visibility from the asset but where views of or across the asset are important factors contributing to its cultural significance. In such cases, consideration was given to whether the Development could appear in the background to those views.

8.5.4 Assessing the Significance of Effects

The sensitivity of the asset (**Table 8.2**) and the magnitude of the predicted impact (**Table 8.3**) are used to inform an assessment of the significance of the effect (direct effect or effect on setting), summarised using the formula set out in the matrix in **Table 8.4**. The matrix employs a graduated scale of significance (from **negligible** to **major** effects) and where two outcomes are possible through application of the matrix, professional judgment supported by reasoned justification, will be used to determine the level of significance.

Table 8.4: Significance of Effects

Magnitude of Impact	Sensitivity of Asset			
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
High	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor/Negligible
Medium	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor/Negligible
Low	Moderate/Minor	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor/Negligible	Minor/Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Major and **moderate** effects are considered to be 'significant' in the context of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations). Minor and negligible effects are considered to be 'not significant'.

Where a significant effect on the setting of an asset is predicted as a result of change within its surroundings using the approach outlined above, an assessment has been made as to whether that effect would result in a significant adverse effect on the integrity of its setting (NPF4 Policy 7). For the purposes of the assessment, the integrity of the setting of an asset is considered to be maintained if the settings' contribution to the cultural significance of the asset would not be compromised by the Development, either alone or cumulatively.

8.5.5 Assessment of Cumulative Effects

The assessment of cumulative effects on heritage assets is based upon consideration of the effects of the Development on the settings of assets with statutory and non-statutory designations within the Outer Study Area, in addition to the likely effects of cumulative developments. **Figure 8.3** shows the Development along with other cumulative developments listed in **Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual**.

For assessment of the potential cumulative effects on heritage assets, cumulative developments with footprints situated within the 10 km Outer Study Area of the Development are considered. No designated heritage assets within the Outer Study Area have been identified as having settings sensitive to adverse effects from the Development, in combination with any cumulative developments more than 10 km from the Site.

Operational and under construction developments are considered as part of the baseline and taken to be such for the assessment of effects on the settings of heritage assets.

Other cumulative developments which are consented, at the application stage or are reasonably foreseeable are considered as being potential additions to the baseline and considered in the cumulative impact assessment. Those energy developments that are at the scoping stage are excluded because there is insufficient information of the size and scale of the development proposed and uncertainty over whether they would be progressed to a formal application.

The assessment takes into account the nature and relative scales of the various developments, their distance from the affected assets, and the potential degree of visibility from the assets of the various developments.

8.5.6 Limitations to Assessment

The desk-based assessment draws on the records in the HER, provided in a digital geographic information system (GIS) dataset acquired in June 2024. Designated heritage assets within the Outer Study Area (**Figure 8.2**) have been identified from the HES database downloaded from the HES website in February 2025. All data is assumed to have been current and up to date at the time of acquisition.

The field survey was restricted to those heritage assets identified through the desk-based assessment, no walkover survey was carried out of areas of dense commercial forestry or wind fell due to health and safety concerns.

8.6 BASELINE CONDITIONS

8.6.1 Heritage Assets within the Inner Study Area

See **Figures 8.1** and **8.2** and **TA A8.1**. Numbers in brackets in the following text refer to heritage asset numbers depicted on **Figure 8.1** and **8.2** and listed and described in **TA A8.1**.

8.6.1.1 Development Site

Prehistoric

The remains of a probable burial cairn (**NJ35NW0198**), situated within commercial forestry to the west of Bogincur are recorded in the HER. Field survey recorded the cairn in poor condition, measuring 13 m in diameter and 1.5 m high. As a surviving funerary monument of probable prehistoric date, the cairn is assessed to have heritage value at the regional level and to be of medium sensitivity.

A rotary quern-stone (**NJ35SW0078**) was recovered during forestry works near Bell View in 2015. The artefact has since been removed and no further information is recorded in the HER. The findspot retains little residual heritage value and is considered to be of negligible sensitivity.

Medieval/Post-medieval: Settlement and Agriculture

The remains of four farmsteads (**NJ25SE0017, NJ25SE0018, NJ25SE0019** and **NJ25NE0067)** lie within the commercial forestry plantations of Teindland Wood. They are first depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1874), at Lesliefield (**NJ25SE0017**), Woodside (**NJ25SE0018**), Findlayseat (**NJ25SE0019**), with a fourth, unoccupied farmstead (**NJ25NE0067**) shown within a clearing to the west of Inchberry. Only the named farmsteads (**NJ25SE0017, NJ25SE0018, NJ25SE0019)** are depicted on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map (1905), though the buildings at Woodside and Findlayseat are unoccupied by that time.

The farmstead remains represent constituent elements of a former historic farming landscape across Teindland Hill, and they are likely to retain archaeological evidence of domestic life and farming practices in the 18th and 19th centuries. Any surviving remains related to their occupation are assessed as being of heritage value at a local level and to be of low sensitivity.

Three irregular, unclosed field systems (**1-3**) depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, associated with the historic farmsteads ((**NJ25SE0017, NJ25SE0018, NJ25SE0019** and **NJ25NE0067)** and improved by linear drainage, are situated within commercial forestry and have been heavily impacted by planting operations. Field survey recorded that the linear ditches (**1**) to the northwest of Lesliefield (**NJ25SE0017**) have been incorporated into the modern plantation and remain in use. No other features or cultivation remains associated with the field systems were identified and the ground surface has generally been transformed through forestry ploughing. As such, the field systems retain little residual heritage value and are of negligible sensitivity.

Medieval/Post-medieval: Field Boundaries and Enclosures

The remains of three possible enclosures at Altonside (**NJ25NE0095** and **NJ25NE0096**) and Wood of Orton (**NJ35SW0079**), are recorded in the HER from previous Forestry Commission surveys and appear to have been impacted by later planting operations. Field survey encountered no distinct remnants of the enclosures within commercial forestry at Altonside and no remains are detectable in lidar imagery within Wood of Orton. A fourth enclosure (**4**) and a rectangular sheepfold (**NJ25SE0027**) are depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1874) along the western boundary of the Site. No surviving remains of the enclosure (**4**) were identified during field survey, while the sheepfold (**NJ25SE0027**) has been almost entirely removed by planting operations.

As minor elements of the historic farming landscape that are poorly preserved or no longer extant, the enclosures and sheepfold are considered to be of little residual heritage value and of negligible sensitivity.

The remains of several boundary banks and ditches, previously recorded in the HER and depicted on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps (1874; 1905), were identified during field survey at Sheriffmuir (**NJ35SW0084** and **NJ35SW0085**), Teindland Hill (**NJ25SE0063**) and Feith Wood (**NJ25SE0064**). The banks typically measure 1.5 m to 4 m wide and up to 0.7 m high, occasionally incorporating natural ridges (**NJ25SE0064**), though commonly impacted by forestry ploughing. Planting and felling operations were observed to have removed remains of boundary banks at Wood of Orton (**NJ35SW0080**) and Altonside (**NJ25NE0092**), although intermittent remnants may survive within dense plantations, such as those detectable in lidar imagery at Bell View (**NJ35SW0087**). Where surviving extents of the historic boundaries are present, they are assessed as having heritage value at a local level and to be of low sensitivity.

Medieval/Post-medieval: Miscellaneous

Seven individual and groups of boundary stones (**NJ25SE0011** to **NJ25SE0016** and **NJ25NE0026**) are recorded in the HER aligned along parish or estate boundaries, are recorded in the HER and depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1874) to the northeast and southwest of Findlay's Seat. Their locations lie within dense commercial forestry plantations and it is likely that the majority have been removed or otherwise impacted by planting operations. Of the four individual locations accessible during field survey (**NJ25SE0012, NJ25SE0014, NJ25SE0015**and **NJ25NE0026**), only one boundary stone (**NJ25SE0015**) was observed to remain upstanding, surviving 10 m to the west of a forestry road.

Three mill lades (**NJ35SW0081, NJ35SW0082** and **NJ35SW0088**) are depicted on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, serving farmsteads at Lintpots (**NJ35SW0081**), Barnyards (**30**) and Carraburn (**NJ35SW0088**). Field survey identified two (**NJ35SW0081** and **NJ35SW0088**) of the lades surviving within commercial forestry as slightly infilled ditches up to 4 m wide, though forestry ploughing has truncated these features along their extents. A ditch (**NJ35SW0088**) up to 3 m wide is detectable in lidar imagery at Barnyards on the border of a plantation. A weir and sluice (**NJ25NE0093**) were recorded within the burn at Altonside, though they appear of relatively recent construction.

As relict features of historic land management, any surviving boundary stones, lades and the weir are assessed as having heritage value at a local level and to be of low sensitivity.

A stone bridge (**NJ25SE0039**) to the northwest of Lesliefield was recorded in fair condition during field survey, spanning the Sauchenbush Burn and surviving to 3 m in height. The locations of two rectangular structures (**8** and **9**) depicted on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, respectively, could not be accessed during field survey and have likely been impacted by forestry operations. As minor structures of post-medieval date, they are considered to be of heritage value at a local level and of low sensitivity.

Several features and structures recorded in the HER, or in Canmore entries, no longer survive, or have been previously affected by commercial forestry. As minor relict or former features, they are assessed as having little to no heritage value and to be of at most negligible sensitivity. They include:

- Six wells (**5-7, NJ35NW0062**, **NJ25SE0024** and **NJ25SE0025**), depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map that lie within dense commercial forestry throughout the Site;
- Two gravel pits (**NJ35SW0046** and **NJ35SW0047**), depicted on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map to the north and south of Darnet Hillocks, that survive as quarry scoops detectable in lidar imagery;
- Two trackways (**NJ35SW0086** and **NJ35NW0199**) previously recorded at Wood of Orton and Upper Inchbrae of which no traces are detectable; and
- A possible drainage channel (**NJ25NE0094**) recorded during a Forestry Commission survey at Altonside, that appears to be a natural feature.

8.6.1.2 Abnormal Load Delivery Overrun Sections

Prehistoric

The HER records two areas of possible ring ditches (**NJ25NE0010** and **NJ25NE0025**) recorded as cropmarks from aerial photographs. As the remains of possible prehistoric settlements, the ring ditches are assessed to have heritage value at the regional level and to be of medium sensitivity.

The HER records the site of a stone circle (**NJ25NE0011**) comprised of five standing stones which was destroyed during the road construction. While it is possible that nothing remains of this stone circle, it is possible that the footings of the stones survive subsurface containing evidence of this prehistoric ritual sites. The possible remains of this stone circle are assessed to have heritage value at the local level and to be of low sensitivity.

Medieval/Modern: Settlement and Agriculture

One Category B Listed Building, Loch Na Bo Croft (**LB 8437**) sits within the abnormal load delivery 100 m buffer. This is an early to mid-19th century thatched cottage which is still in use as a residential property. As a Category B Listed Building this is an asset of heritage value at a regional level and of medium sensitivity.

The HER records one farmstead (**NJ35NW0193**) and a cottage (**NJ25NE0056**); both are probable 19th century buildings which remain in use today as residential properties. As surviving buildings of the local historic landscape they are considered to be assets of heritage value at a local value and of low sensitivity.

8.6.2 Archaeological Potential

The Inner Study Area (Main Development Area) is exclusively covered with commercial forestry plantation most of which was planted in the late 20th century, though landuse for forestry and managed woodland dates from at least the mid 19th century, within Teindland Forest and Wood of Orton. The ground has been deep ploughed to provide drainage for the forestry, with only marginal areas left unplanted and it is in these areas that the surviving archaeological remains are preserved; most notably the farmstead remains at Lesliefield (**NJ25SE0017**) and Woodside (**NJ25SE0018**). Intermittent or poorly preserved features survive within the forestry plantation compartments, including a prehistoric cairn (**NJ35NW0198**) and features associated with historic farming activities.

Historic Ordnance Survey maps from the 1st edition (1874) to the 1950s all show the Site as mostly managed woodland plantation with isolated enclosures and fields, with the exception of semi-improved grazing to the west of Teindland Hill. Settlement appears to have been concentrated in particular locations: within patterns of improved fields around farmsteads that persist to the modern day, such as Maryhill and Whiteriggs.

Away from the areas of preserved archaeological remains, surviving along watercourses or rides, the potential for further archaeological discoveries within the Site is assessed as being low or negligible. In those areas where archaeological features have been preserved, the potential for further archaeological discoveries is high, and in these areas any new discoveries have the potential to reveal, through archaeological investigation, traces of the lives of the people who formerly inhabited the landscape.

The Inner Study Area (Abnormal Load Delivery Overrun Sections) largely passes through areas of arable fields. Given the density of prehistoric to post medieval assets in the wider surrounding area it is considered that this area is of medium for previously unrecorded archaeological features to survive subsurface. The exception to this are the areas disturbed by the existing roads where any archaeological remains are likely to have been removed during construction.

8.6.3 Heritage Assets within 10 km of the Development

See **Figure 8.3** and **8.4** and **TAs A8.1** and **A8.3**. Within 10 km of the outermost turbines, there are:

- Eleven Scheduled Monuments, of heritage value at national level and of high sensitivity;
- 31 Category A Listed Buildings, of heritage value at national level and of high sensitivity;

- 148 Category B Listed Buildings, of heritage value at regional level and of medium sensitivity;
- Three Inventory Garden and Designed Landscapes, of heritage value at national level and of high sensitivity; and
- Three Conservation Areas, of heritage value at regional level and of medium sensitivity.

In addition, there are eleven Category C Listed Buildings, of value at a local level and of low sensitivity, within 5 km of the outermost turbines, ten of which have predicted theoretical visibility of the Development.

8.6.4 Future Baseline

If the Development was not to proceed, there would likely be little or no change to the baseline condition of the various heritage assets and features that presently survive within the Site. The current intensive use of the land as commercial forestry would likely continue and those heritage assets that already exist within the forestry would continue to be preserved through normal forest management practices in line with standard forestry practices in respect of conservation of the cultural heritage (Forestry Commission 2011 & 2017). There is some possibility that some degradation of the surviving archaeological remains could occur as a consequence of self-seeding of the coniferous trees that make up the commercial forestry. Continuation of commercial forestry on a cyclical felling and replanting basis could result in new heritage assets being brought to light and added to the archaeological record.

8.7 EMBEDDED MITIGATION

Archaeological constraints were provided prior to design enabling direct physical construction impacts to be avoided through the design process.

Setting effects were considered through the design process. Alternative turbine layouts did not give rise to materially different effects on the setting of heritage assets.

As a result of this embedded mitigation effects on cultural heritage assets have been avoided where possible and minimised where practicable.

8.8 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

8.8.1 Construction Effects

Any ground-breaking activities associated with the construction of the Development (such as those required for turbine bases and crane hardstandings, access tracks, cable routes, battery energy storage system, construction compound and substation) have the potential to disturb or destroy heritage assets. Other construction activities, such as vehicle movements, soil and overburden storage and landscaping also have the potential to cause direct, permanent, and irreversible impacts on heritage assets.

The Development (as shown on **Figure 8.1**)has been designed to avoid impacts on heritage assets as far as possible, however one heritage asset could be directly affected by construction works associated with the Development:

- A field bank (**NJ25SE0064**) enclosing Feith Wood, of low sensitivity, lies within 5 m to the east and west of the existing forestry track to the proposed substation. Any widening or upgrading of the existing track could disturb small sections of the field bank, at locations where it has been previously truncated. It is assessed that, without mitigation, the predicted effect, on an asset of low sensitivity, would be of negligible magnitude resulting in an adverse effect of **negligible** significance (not significant in EIA terms). No mitigation is proposed.

Two further assets are recorded within the micrositing allowance (50 m) that could be affected by any deviation from the proposed layout:

- Field system (**2**) – c. 50 m from the proposed crane pad for turbine T11, potential impact of low magnitude on an asset of negligible sensitivity, resulting in an effect of **negligible** significance (not significant in EIA terms). No mitigation is proposed; and
- A boundary stone (**NJ25SE0015**) was not found during the field survey, where it was previously recorded within the micrositing allowance for turbine T9. In all probability,

the boundary stone was removed during forestry activities in the 1980s. It is assessed that the Development would result in no direct impact on this asset.

In each case, it is unlikely that micrositing would be required to the extent that the Development would impinge on recorded remains, which have been heavily impacted by forestry activities. No mitigation measures are recommended with regard to the predicted effects.

The archaeological potential of the Main Development Site, entirely within commercial forestry, is assessed as being low or negligible outwith the few areas where archaeological remains have been preserved through avoidance during the forestry design and planting. Taking into account that the proposed access tracks would largely utilise existing forestry haul roads and the limited development footprint away from the existing road network, the likelihood of construction works encountering archaeological remains where the Development passes through areas covered by forestry trees is assessed as negligible.

The Development construction works would all take place in areas that are currently commercial forestry plantations; areas that have been substantially disturbed by forestry operations, including deep ploughing. Felling would be limited to 'keyhole felling' at turbine locations, the construction compound, substation, BESS and narrow corridors through the woodland to facilitate new access tracks, with more extensive felling in management areas for mitigation against windthrow (see **TA A4.1: Forestry**).

It is considered that there is potential for a direct effect to occur on heritage assets, with known or potential physical remains of no more than low sensitivity, within proposed forestry felling areas (keyholing/felling management areas). Heritage assets have been recorded in potential windthrow areas and any surviving remains could be disturbed or damaged as a result of windthrow. Given that any remains within commercial forestry are unlikely to be undisturbed by forestry activities, any effects arising from felling in windthrow areas are unlikely to be of more than moderate magnitude, resulting in effects of **minor** significance (not significant in EIA terms).

The Abnormal Load Delivery Overruns will not impact on any of the heritage assets recorded within the 100m buffer of the overrun sections. The archaeological potential of the overrun areas not disturbed by the construction of the existing road is assessed as being medium. There is potential for the Abnormal Load Delivery Overruns to have a direct impact on any archaeological remains that may survive as buried features or deposits

A mitigation strategy is proposed in **Section 8.10** that would be sufficient to offset any predicted construction impacts.

8.8.2 Operational Effects

The Development could result in adverse effects on the setting of cultural heritage assets within the Outer Study Area. No assets beyond 10 km have been identified by HES and or by ACAS as requiring consideration for potential effects on their settings and none have been identified from appraisal of the wider ZTV as having settings that could be adversely affected by the Development.

The assessment of operational effects on the settings of heritage assets has been carried out with reference to the layout of the Development and the locations of the heritage assets shown on **Figure 8.3**. The criteria detailed in **Tables 8.3** and **8.4** have been used to assess the nature and magnitude of the effects which are set out in tabulated summary form in **TAs A8.2** and **A8.3**.

The tabulated assessment (**TAs A8.2** and **A8.3**) has resulted in the identification of no significant effects on the setting on heritage assets in the Outer Study Area.

At the request of HES and ACAS, visualisations that inform the assessment are provided for selected assets within 10 km of the outermost turbines of the Development as listed in **Table 8.5**. Reference to these supporting wireframe visualisations is provided in the final column of **TAs A8.2** and **A8.3**. Where it is deemed helpful to further inform the potential effects on the settings of heritage assets, cross reference to relevant LVIA Viewpoints is also provided.

Table 8.5: Cultural Heritage Visualisations

Figure Ref.	Figure Title - Asset Name	Status
8.5 (CH VP 1)	Church of Dundurcas, old parish church (SM 5621)	Scheduled Monument
8.6 (CH VP 2)	Bogton, stone circle 250 m northwest of (SM 1215)	Scheduled Monument
8.7 (CH VP 3)	Gordon Castle (LB 1595) and Gordon Castle Tower (LB 1596)	Category A Listed Building
8.8 (CH VP 4)	Rothes Castle (SM 2455)	Scheduled Monument
8.9 (CH VP 5)	Innes House (LB 14862) and GDL (GDL 221)	Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape and Category A Listed Building
LVIA VP 17	Gordon Castle Walled Garden (LB 1626) and GDL (GDL 198)	Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape and Category B Listed Building

The assets requested to be considered in the assessment by consultees that are represented by visualisations, and which are representative of the effect on the settings of heritage assets in the Outer Study Area, are discussed below.

8.8.21 Church of Dundurcas, old parish church (SM 5621) (Figure 8.5)

The monument consists of the remains of an 18th century church which are likely to overlie the remains of an earlier church. The parish of Dundurcas dates to the early 12th century and is recorded as a 'vicarage' in 1274. The church is rectangular in plan, rubble-built, with a bellcote on the west gable. The church is a Scheduled Monument, an asset of heritage value at a national level and of high sensitivity.

The church is situated on a knoll within the floodplain of the west bank of the River Spey, with an open aspect overlooking arable fields and the river to the southeast. Rising topography to the west and northwest screens views in those directions. Views to contemporary monuments and settlements, namely west to Aikenway Castle and northeast to the medieval river crossing at Boat o' Brig, are obscured by trees in the foreground and the managed woodland along the River Spey.

The with-screening ZTV (**Figure 8.4**) indicates that there would be no visibility of the Development if the intervening forestry was maintained and there would be no impact on the setting of the church.

The bare-earth ZTV (**Figure 8.3**) indicates that if the intervening forestry was felled, five turbines of the Development would be visible from the monument, situated more than 2.1 km to the northwest. The wireline visualisation (**Figure 8.5**) shows that there would be limited visibility of four turbines to tip height and one to hub height, largely screened by the rising topography to the northwest. Views of and along the River Spey, from the monument and when travelling along minor roads, would not be adversely affected. In views towards the monument, such as those attainable from the west bank of the River Spey or from the slopes of Ben Aigan to the southeast, the Development would be seen obliquely and separated from the enclosed riverside setting of the monument.

If the intervening forestry was felled, the Development would not detract from views towards the monument or appreciably diminish the prominence of the church within its setting. Where visible from the monument, the Development would not obstruct or alter key views along the river valley. It would remain possible to understand, experience and appreciate the siting of this asset and the key characteristics of the setting of relevance to the church; as such the integrity of these key aspects of the monument's setting would be retained.

Overall, as a result of the slight change to its wider surroundings, the Development would have an impact of negligible magnitude on the setting of Church of Dundurcas, old parish church (**SM 5621**) an asset of high sensitivity. In the context of the NPF4 Policy 7h ii) test it is considered that the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the siting of this scheduled monument and the key aspects of the setting of relevance to the church would be retained such that the integrity of its setting would not be significantly adversely affected. Overall, it is assessed that this would result in an effect that is of **negligible** adverse significance and not significant in EIA terms.

8.8.22 Bogton, stone circle 250 m northwest of (SM 1215) (Figure 8.6)

The remains of a prehistoric stone circle survives as two upright stones, about 1.7m high and approximately 20 m apart. The rest of the stones of the circle were removed in 1810, though sub-surface remains of the circle and associated features are likely to survive. The stone circle is a Scheduled Monument, an asset of heritage value at a national level and of high sensitivity.

The stone circle is located in an arable field to the south of the A96 road. The low elevation of the stone circle and the surrounding undulating topography limits long-distance views from the monument. Views to the east and north are obstructed by rising ground and the built environment of Lhanbryde. Views to the west and southwest, filtered through sparse trees, take in the hills that fringe the Moray coastal plain. An occupied residence and woodland in the foreground to the south, screens views in this direction. The monument is low-lying and does not occupy a prominent position in the landscape, being backdropped by farmland where visible from the immediate surroundings. Intervening topography precludes intervisibility with the stone circle to the north of Urquhart (**SM 1221**) 3.6 km away.

The with-screening ZTV (**Figure 8.3**) indicates that there would be no visibility of the Development if the intervening woodland was maintained and there would be no impact on the setting of the stone circle.

The bare-earth ZTV (**Figure 8.2**) indicates that without screening from trees and buildings there would be visibility of 12 turbines of the Development in the view to the south from the monument. The wireline visualisation (**Figure 8.5**) demonstrates that five turbines will be visible to hub height and a further seven to tip height beyond the skyline, at distances greater than 5.6 km. The intervening built environment of residences immediately to the south of the monument would further screen the proposed turbines from view. The Development would not obstruct or interrupt visibility of the low coastal plain and would not alter views in other directions. The proposed turbines would not be visible in the backdrop of views towards the monument.

In the absence of existing screening, the Development would introduce wind turbines in a narrow arc of the view to the south, beyond the skyline of the hills bordering the coastal plain. This would constitute an alteration of the skyline in the distant view from the monument. However, visibility of the proposed turbines would not interrupt or detract from open views along and across the surrounding lowlands. The proposed turbines would not appreciably adversely affect the character of views from the stone circle. The low-lying setting of the monument as an upstanding landmark within the arable fields would be undiminished and it would remain possible to understand, appreciate and experience the setting of the stone circle, such that the integrity of its setting would be retained.

Overall, as a result of the slight change to its wider surroundings, the Development would have an impact of negligible magnitude on the setting of Bogton, stone circle (**SM 1215**), an asset of high sensitivity. In the context of the NPF4 Policy 7h ii) test it is considered that the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the siting of this scheduled monument and the key aspects of the setting of relevance to the stone circle would be retained such that the integrity of its setting would not be significantly adversely affected. Overall, it is assessed that this would result in an effect that is of **negligible** adverse significance and not significant in EIA terms.

8.8.23 Gordon Castle (LB 1595), Gordon Castle Tower (LB 1596), Walled Gardens (LB 1626) and GDL (GDL 198) (Figure 8.7)

The occupied residence at Gordon Castle consists of an 18th century mansion (**LB 1595**) with later modifications, situated to the east of a 16th century rubble tower (**LB 1596**) six storeys high, associated with the remains of the medieval castle. Originally a defensive stronghold of the Earls and Marquises of Gordon, the tower now stands at the core of an extensive designed landscape of woodland policies and formal gardens (**GDL 198**). The GDL is an asset of heritage value at a national level and of high sensitivity and forms the setting for twenty Listed Buildings, nine of which, including the Castle and Tower, are Category A and of high sensitivity.

The estate policies extend along the east bank of the River Spey to the north of Fochabers, an estate town associated with the 18th and 19th century residence. Principal views from within the GDL are enclosed by screening vegetation and are largely introspective between the constituent, built elements. Distant external views are limited by the low elevation of the

coastal plain. Views of and across the GDL are most readily informed by the immediate association with the town of Fochabers. In the absence of screening woodland, Gordon Castle Tower may have formed a prominent landmark when travelling north along the River Spey.

The with-screening ZTV (**Figure 8.4**) indicates that there would be large areas of the GDL with no visibility of the Development in the south of the GDL due to the intervening woodland and buildings, this includes no visibility from Gordon Castle Tower (LB 1596).

The bare-earth ZTV (**Figure 8.3**) indicates that all 12 turbines of the Development would be visible from across the majority of the GDL, including from the listed buildings. The wireline visualisations from Gordon Castle and Gordon Castle Tower (**Figure 8.7**) and from the Category B listed Walled Gardens (**LB 1626**), show that all 12 turbines would be visible at hub height, on the skyline to the southwest, 6.9 km from the assets. The proposed turbines would be seen in a narrow arc of this view, beyond the townscape of Fochabers and low on the skyline in relation to the broader range of low hills to the south. Woodland screening and the built environment would greatly reduce their visibility and prominence in views from within and outwith the GDL.

In the absence of the existing woodland screening, the Development would introduce 12 turbines to the view to the southwest from the GDL, altering the character of a portion of the view beyond the town of Fochabers. However, the proposed turbines would not interrupt any visibility of the estate town (Fochabers) or principal historic and defensive vistas along the River Spey routeway towards the coast. Significant screening inherent to the characteristics of the secluded policies and gardens would further reduce the prominence of the turbines in the immediate setting on the coastal plain. Views in other directions, including along the River Spey and towards the GDL from the town, would be unaltered. The proposed turbines would not detract from the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the character of the designed landscape and the visual links between its elements or with the associated estate town to the south.

Overall, as a result of the slight change to its wider surroundings (in the absence of the existing screening), the Development would have an impact of low magnitude on the setting of Gordon Castle GDL and the Category A Listed Buildings; Gordon Castle (LB 1595), Gordon Castle Tower (**LB 1596**), Walled Gardens (**LB 1626**) each assets of high sensitivity. In the context of the NPF4 Policy 7i) and 7c) tests it is considered that the Development has been located so as to protect and preserve the cultural significance, character and integrity of Gordon Castle GDL and will not significantly impact on any of the key views to, from and within the site, or its setting. It is also considered that the Development will preserve the character, and the special architectural and historic interest of Gordon Castle (LB 1595), Gordon Castle Tower (**LB 1596**), Walled Gardens (**LB 1626**) Category A Listed Buildings. Overall, it is assessed that this would result in an effect that is of **minor** adverse significance and not significant in EIA terms.

8.8.2.4 Rothes Castle (SM 2455) (Figure 8.8)

The ruined remains of a curtain wall for the 13th century castle, isolated by a dry moat to the south-west, are situated on the southwestern edge of Rothes. This single surviving fragment is all that remains of the curtain wall that once surrounded a keep, several storeys in height. Much of the remaining building material has been robbed and used in the construction of the 18th century village. The Castle is a Scheduled Monument, an asset of heritage value at a national level and of high sensitivity.

The site holds a commanding view to the west, overlooking the valley of the Burn of Rothes, allowing it to control this important medieval route. To the north-east, the site of Aikenway Castle, on the banks of a loop in the River Spey, would likely have been visible from Rothes Castle. Aikenway Castle served as a residence for the brother of Earl Leslie when the family had their seat at Rothes Castle. The remains of Rothes Castle are now largely encircled by a belt of trees that screen views of the monument from the wider landscape and also screen views of its surroundings from the monument the exception to this is the open views to and from the east and south-east which are not screened by trees.

Both the bare-earth ZTV (**Figure 8.3**) and with-screening ZTV (**Figure 8.4**) indicate that there would be theoretical visibility of 10 turbines of the Development in the view to the north from the monument. The wireline visualisation (**Figure 8.8**) demonstrates that 10 of the turbines would be visible at hub height, at least six of which would be seen above the hills to

the north of Rothes. The remainder would be sited low on the skyline and largely screened by the intervening topography, including one turbine tip almost entirely screened from view. The Development would be seen above and in the backdrop of views overlooking the built environment of Rothes and would not interrupt reciprocal views of the town. The proposed turbines would be offset in the views along the River Spey to the north-northeast, set back from the valley and would not obstruct visibility through the valley. The Development would not appear dominant in the backdrop of key views towards the Castle, such as are attainable on approach to and through the town of Rothes from the north.

The Development would be visible on the skyline beyond Rothes in the view to the north from the monument. However, visibility of the proposed turbines from the monument would not significantly detract from the commanding views of the surrounding valley floor or obscure the association with Rothes town. Intervening topography would provide a sense of separation of the proposed turbines from the River Spey valley, such that the Development would not appreciably diminish the integrity of the Castle's defensive setting. Views from the monument in other directions and views towards the Castle would be unaltered, such that it would remain possible to understand, appreciate and experience the Castle in its strategic position within the valley.

Overall, as a result of the slight change to its wider surroundings, the Development would have an impact of low magnitude on the setting of Rothes Castle (**SM 2455**), an asset of high sensitivity. In the context of the NPF4 Policy 7h ii) test it is considered that the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the siting of this scheduled monument and the key aspects of the setting of relevance to the Castle would be retained such that the integrity of its setting would not be significantly adversely affected. Overall, it is assessed that this would result in an effect that is of **minor** adverse significance and not significant in EIA terms.

8.8.25 Innes House (LB 14862) and GDL (GDL 221) (Figure 8.9)

Innes House (**LB 14862**) is a large L-plan tower house dating from the 17th century with later additions. The House has been altered in the 20th century with a north-facing entrance and has since been converted into flats. It is situated within its GDL which dates from the second half of the 18th century and has been substantially remodelled since 1910, the GDL is largely compromised of woodland planting with areas of formal gardens and parkland. The Category A Listed Building Innes House and its GDL are assets of heritage value at a national level and of high sensitivity. The GDL also forms the setting for one Scheduled Monument and six further Listed Buildings.

Innes House and GDL are situated on the flat coastal plain of Morayshire, 4.5 km to the northeast of Elgin. The low-lying coastal landscape and the surrounding woodland planting results in the majority of views within the designed landscape being internal and views from the House are frequently screened by intervening shelterbelt woodland in all directions. The exception to this is the open aspect to the south along a designed historic approach avenue to the House, which aligns with Ben Rinnes on skyline and overlooks the Category B listed Home Farm (LB 18187). Innes House does not occupy a prominent position in the landscape and views from outside the GDL are generally screened by the enclosing woodlands.

The with-screening ZTV (**Figure 8.4**) indicates that there will be no visibility of the Development from ground level at Innes House and there will be large areas within the GDL that have no visibility of the Development as a result of the woodland planting within the GDL.

The bare-earth ZTV (**Figure 8.3**) indicates that there would be visibility of all 12 turbines of the Development in the view to the south from the monument. The wireline visualisation (**Figure 8.9**) demonstrates that the proposed turbines would be visible at hub height, above the skyline at distances greater than 9.7 km. The Development would occupy a narrow arc of the skyline in this view and would not obstruct visibility of key topographical feature, Ben Rinnes. Views in other directions would be unaltered and open vistas across the immediate coastal plain would not be adversely affected.

In the absence of the existing woodland screening, the Development would introduce a cluster of turbines in a narrow arc of the view to the south from within the GDL, slightly altering the distant skyline beyond the coastal plain. However, the proposed turbines would not obstruct or detract from visibility of key topographical elements, including Ben Rinnes to

the south. The character and openness of distant views overlooking the low-lying farmland would be unaltered. The presence of mature woodland screening would further reduce the visual impact of the proposed turbines in views throughout the GDL and reciprocal views between the constituent elements of the GDL would not be adversely affected. It would remain possible to understand, appreciate and experience the designed views to the south which inform the placement of the Country House. As such, the Development would not appreciably diminish the integrity of the secluded woodland setting.

Overall, it is assessed that the change to the baseline setting would have an impact of negligible magnitude on the setting of the Category A Listed Building and the GDL, both assets of high sensitivity, and give rise to effects assessed as being of **negligible** significance (not significant in EIA terms). As such, in the context of the NPF4 Policy 7i) and 7c) tests it is considered that the character and cultural significance and integrity of the GDL and listed buildings would not be significantly adversely affected. It is assessed that this would result in an effect that is of **negligible** adverse significance and not significant in EIA terms.

8.8.3 Decommissioning Effects

Direct Effects

As decommissioning works will be carried out within the construction footprint, utilising the as-built access tracks and associated infrastructure, no direct impacts on cultural heritage assets during the decommissioning phase are predicted.

Setting Effects

Decommissioning of the Development would remove the operational effects (impact on their setting) on heritage assets.

8.9 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

8.9.1 Construction Effects

Construction of the Development would not give rise to any cumulative direct effects on cultural heritage assets.

8.9.2 Operational Effects

The Development could, in combination with other energy developments in the area that are operational, consented but not yet built, or are the subject of valid planning applications, result in adverse cumulative effects on the setting of cultural heritage assets. Operational and under construction developments are considered as part of the baseline and are taken to be such for the assessment of effects on the settings of heritage assets described above. Developments that are consented but not yet under construction and those that are the subject of valid planning applications are considered as being potential additions to the baseline and are considered in the cumulative impact assessment. Those energy developments that are at the scoping stage, are excluded because there is insufficient information of the size and scale of the development proposed and uncertainty over whether they would be progressed to a formal application.

Based on the list of cumulative developments (Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment), those developments that are either consented but not yet under construction or are in planning or scoping and most likely in combination with the Development to give rise to cumulative effects on heritage assets are:

- Kellas Drum Wind Farm – planning stage (8 turbines, 175 to 185 m to tip); and
- Aultmore Wind Farm – planning stage (16 turbines, 200 m to tip).

These wind farms are shown and labelled on **Figures 8.2** and **8.3**.

Where visible from the designated heritage assets described above (**Table 8.5**), the two cumulative developments listed above are shown on the wireframes provided to support the assessment (**Figures 8.4 - 8.8**). Those cumulative developments further afield, but which do not have the potential for an adverse cumulative effect on the settings of cultural heritage assets affected by the Development, are also shown on the wireframes.

Cumulative impacts are assessed for the designated assets Rothes Castle (SM 2455) and Gordon Castle (LB 1595), Gordon Castle Tower (LB 1596), Walled Gardens (LB 1626) and GDL (GDL 198) which have been assessed in detail above where the predicted operational impact of the Development on its own is of greater than negligible significance. It is considered that the remaining assets within the Outer Study Area have no potential to be subject to significant cumulative operational impacts as a result of the Development in combination with any of the three cumulative developments considered and they are therefore not considered further.

8.9.21 Gordon Castle (LB 1595), Gordon Castle Tower (LB 1596), Walled Gardens (LB 1626) and GDL (GDL 198) (Figure 8.7)

The wireline (**Figure 8.7**) shows that in the absence of screening 5 tips of the Aultmore Wind Farm would be visible beyond the hills to the southeast of Gordon Castle. The wireline suggests that the Kellas Drum Wind Farm would not be visible from the Castle.

Given the limited visibility and separate view direction of the Aultmore Wind Farm and the lack of visibility of the Kellas Drum Wind Farm from Gordon Castle it is assessed that there is no potential for a significant cumulative impact on the setting of Gordon Castle as a result of these developments in combination with the Development.

8.9.22 Rothes Castle (SM 2455, Figure 8.8)

The wireline (**Figure 8.8**) shows that in the absence of screening the Aultmore Wind Farm would be visible to the northeast of Rothes Castles at a distance of 15.8km. The wireline suggests that the Kellas Drum Wind Farm would not be visible from the Castle.

Given the distance and separate view direction of the Aultmore Wind Farm and the lack of visibility of the Kellas Drum Wind Farm from Rothes Castle it is assessed that there is no potential for a significant cumulative impact on the setting of Rothes Castle as a result of these developments in combination with the Development.

8.9.3 Decommissioning Effects

Decommissioning of the Development would not give rise to any cumulative direct effects on cultural heritage assets. Any cumulative effects in the operational phase would be removed, with the removal of the turbines.

8.10 MITIGATION MEASURES

8.10.1 Construction Phase

NPF4 (2023) provides a mitigation hierarchy: avoid, minimise, restore and offset. Avoidance and minimisation measures can be achieved through design (See Section 8.7: Embedded Mitigation), whilst compensatory measures offset effects that have not been avoided or minimised.

Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) requires the recognition, care and sustainable management of the historic environment and the emphasis in Planning Advice Note (PAN) 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology (PAN2) is for the preservation of important remains in situ where practicable and by record where preservation is not possible. The mitigation measures presented below take this policy advice and planning guidance into account and provides various options for protection or recording ensuring ensure that, where practical, surviving assets are preserved intact to retain the present historic elements of the landscape.

With respect to heritage assets within management felling areas, Forest Design Plans have been produced (as provided in TA A4.1) to address the forestry management measures required. The forestry land-use regime will be subject to the normal requirements of UK Forestry Standards, including archaeological mitigation measures, as necessary, consistent with normal forestry operations and guidance.

All mitigation works presented in the following paragraphs would take place prior to, or, where appropriate, during, the construction of the Development. The scope of works would be detailed in one or more Written Scheme(s) of Investigation (WSI) developed in consultation with ACAS (as archaeological advisors to Moray Council).

The Development includes for a 50 m micrositing allowance for all infrastructure, which allows for the possibility of slight shifts in the locations of turbines and associated infrastructure to avoid any environmental constraints (including heritage assets) that may lie close to proposed construction working areas.

Evaluation / Watching Brief / Excavation

Taking account of the avoidance through the design of identified cultural heritage baseline within the Site, and the mitigation set out above in relation to preservation in situ, it is assessed that there are no locations where a watching brief could be expected to encounter buried archaeological remains of currently known heritage assets. Based on the results of the desk-based study and the field survey, there are no specific areas where construction works within the Main Development Site could be expected to encounter buried archaeological remains.

Within the areas of the Abnormal Load Delivery Overruns that extend beyond the ground disturbed by the construction of the existing roads it is assessed there is medium archaeological potential. A watching brief would be carried out in these areas where appropriate. The Applicant will seek to agree the scope of the archaeological watching brief with ACAS in advance of development works. The scope of the agreed works will be confirmed in a WSI to be signed-off prior to the commencement of the construction works.

Any further mitigation during the construction works, such as archaeological monitoring, required by ACAS will be agreed through consultation with the Council in advance of development works commencing and will be set out in a WSI. The preferred mitigation of any archaeological site uncovered during monitoring works would be preservation in situ: this could be achieved by recording the locations and extents of any features identified and retaining them unexcavated beneath a geotextile membrane placed on the subsoil surface and beneath the track make up layer. Where disturbance of the remains is unavoidable allowance will be made for the excavation of the features to a scheme to be agreed with the Council under the terms of the WSI.

If significant discoveries are made during any archaeological monitoring works which are carried out, and it is not possible to preserve the discovered site or features in situ, provision will be made for the excavation where necessary, of any archaeological remains encountered. The provision will include the consequent production of written reports, on the findings, with post-excavation analysis conservation of finds and publication of the results of the works, where appropriate.

Construction Guidelines

Written guidelines, in the form of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), an outline of which is included in TA A4.2 , will be issued for use by all construction contractors. This will outlining the need to avoid causing unnecessary damage to unknown heritage assets. The CEMP will set out arrangements for calling upon retained professional support in the event that buried archaeological remains of potential archaeological interest (such as building remains, human remains, artefacts, etc.) should be discovered during construction works.

The CEMP will make clear the legal responsibilities placed upon those who disturb artefacts or human remains.

8.10.2 Operational Phase

As the as-built infrastructure would be used to facilitate maintenance, repair and replacement activities, no mitigation is required within the Site in relation to cultural heritage during the operational lifetime of the Development. There is no potential for mitigating effects on settings of off-site heritage assets beyond that applied in the design stage (Section 8.7: Embedded Mitigation).

8.10.3 Decommissioning Phase

As the as-built infrastructure would be used to facilitate decommissioning, no mitigation within the Site is required in relation to cultural heritage.

8.11 RESIDUAL EFFECTS

8.11.1 Construction Effects

For heritage assets within the Inner Study Area, completion of the programme of archaeological mitigation works set out in Section 8.10 Mitigation Measures (above) would avoid, minimise, or offset the loss of any archaeological remains that may occur from construction of the Development. Taking the proposed mitigation into account, any residual effect arising from construction of the Development in relation to direct effects on the cultural heritage resource within the Site (including on any new archaeological discoveries, which will be mitigated through preservation by record) will be of no more than **negligible** significance (not significant in EIA terms).

8.11.2 Operational Effects

During its operational lifetime, the residual impacts of the Development on the settings of heritage assets in the Outer Study Area would be the same as the predicted effects. See **TAs A8.2 and A8.3** for a tabulated assessment of the predicted operational effects.

All predicted impacts affecting the settings of heritage assets in the Outer Study Area would give rise to residual effects from **minor** to **negligible** significance (not significant in EIA terms).

8.11.3 Decommissioning Effects

There would be no residual direct effects arising from decommissioning of the Development.

Decommissioning the Development would remove the operational effects (impacts on their setting) on heritage assets, resulting in no residual effects.

8.12 SUMMARY OF EFFECTS

A desk-based assessment and field survey, informed by information provided by HES and ACAS, have been carried out for the Development.

Forty-six assets were identified within the Inner Study Area (Main Development Site): one (**1**) is assessed as being of value at the regional level and of medium sensitivity; 24 others are of value at the local level and low sensitivity. Twenty-one assets are assessed to be of little or no heritage value and of negligible sensitivity.

Six assets were identified within the Inner Study Area (Abnormal Load Delivery Route): three assets the Category B Listed cottage (**LB 8437**) and two areas of ring ditch cropmarks (**NJ25NE0010** and **NJ25NE0025**) are assessed as being of value at the regional level and of medium sensitivity.

An assessment of the identified heritage assets, and consideration of the current and past land use, within the Inner Study Area, suggests that there is a low likelihood of hitherto unidentified archaeological remains of prehistoric or medieval/post-medieval date being present in the Site. Given the limited land taken required by the separate elements of the Development, it is considered that the potential for further archaeological discoveries is negligible.

Following a design process that sought to avoid direct effects on archaeology, one potential direct impact on heritage assets has been identified, arising from the construction of the Development. In addition, one other heritage asset lies within the 50 m micrositing allowance and could be affected by any micrositing of the proposed layout. Both impacts are both assessed as being of negligible significance, not significant in EIA terms.

Mitigation measures have been set out that would avoid, reduce, or offset the predicted effects and residual effects of no more than **negligible** significance (not significant in EIA terms) have been identified.

Within 10 km from the outermost turbines there are ten Scheduled Monuments, 31 Category A Listed Buildings, 148 Category B Listed Buildings, three Conservation Areas, and three Inventory Garden and Designed Landscapes.

Within 5 km from the outermost turbines there are 11 Category C Listed Buildings.

There are no predicted significant effects on heritage assets within the Outer Study Area.

The potential effect of the Development, both individually and cumulatively, in combination with other wind farm developments in the locality has been considered. No significant residual cumulative effects on the setting of any heritage assets would arise from addition of the Development to a baseline including consented and proposed developments.

8.13 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This Chapter has assessed the likely significance of effects of the Development on archaeology and cultural heritage. The Development has been assessed as having the potential to result in effects of negligible significance.

Given that only effects of moderate significance or greater are considered significant in terms of the EIA Regulations, the potential effects on archaeology and cultural heritage are considered to be not significant.