

LCT 25: STRATHS AND RIVER VALLEYS

The *Straths and River Valleys* LCT are restricted to the western area of Aberdeenshire. They are the distinctive valley landforms formed by the rivers whose source is the Grampian Mountains in the west. Their principal characteristics are the river and valley. Medium to small in scale and enclosed, the type is relatively rare in distribution within north east of Scotland. They are often the traditional routes into the mountains and as a result have had roads or railways routed along them.

25 (i) DEVERON AND BOGIE STRATHS

Deveron and Bogie Strath is smaller in scale in the south and west and this part of the valley has a steep profile before it broadens out into a gentle strath north of Huntly. This valley is sandwiched between steeper surrounding moorland and there is a grand sense of scale. Land use is predominantly agriculture with a network of roads and settlements adding to the mosaic.



25(i) A view down the upper Deveron strath towards Huntly, showing the narrow profile and the higher moorland surrounding it.

25 (ii) DEESIDE

A medium to small scale landscape, *Deeside* is a deep, narrow valley around the River Dee. It has a strong pattern, thick broadleaved woodlands clothe the valley sides. It is a richly wooded landscape with pockets of open fields along the Water of Feugh. It is a well-settled landscape with towns and

villages such as Banchory and Kincardine O'Neil. It was the traditional transport route from Aberdeen into the heart of the Grampians. It is a highly scenic landscape of broadleaved woodland, numerous estates with fine buildings and grand gatehouses, together with long avenues of Beech trees. There are numerous HGDLs, castles, tourist routes and long distance footpaths.



25(ii) Deeside has a strong pattern and thick broadleaved woodlands clothe the valley sides.

25 (iii) DONSIDE

Donside is a mix of steep narrow gorges between upland areas, widening into gentle straths where contours are smooth and the terrain sinuous. In the schist gorges broadleaved woodlands clothe the valley sides and hide roads. In the wider sandstone valley fields are regular, smooth with few field boundaries and a regular pattern of farms. Forested moorland edges mark the transition to the surrounding higher ground. It is a high quality scenic area with the small village of Kildrummy, the A97 and a network of minor roads. It forms one of the access points for visitors to the Cairngorm National Park.



25(iii) Donside – In the wider sandstone valley fields are regular, smooth with few field boundaries and a regular pattern of farms

25 (iv) UPPER DEESIDE ESTATES

These are low rounded flat topped hills to the south of the River Dee. Expansive woodland covers the hills, predominantly conifer plantations but in the east there are small pastures enclosed by drystone dykes. Isolated cottages and farmhouses are dispersed through the area together with the settlement of Aboyne. It forms part of the traditional transport routes from Aberdeen into the Grampians.

25 (v) MUIR OF DINNET

This area covers the hills to the west of the Muir of Dinnet which is itself within the neighbouring Cairngorm National Park. A valley landform close to the River Spey, with low irregularly shaped hills separating it from the Howe of Cromar. Woodland extends up the low hills interspersed with a pattern of small fields which are laid to pasture.

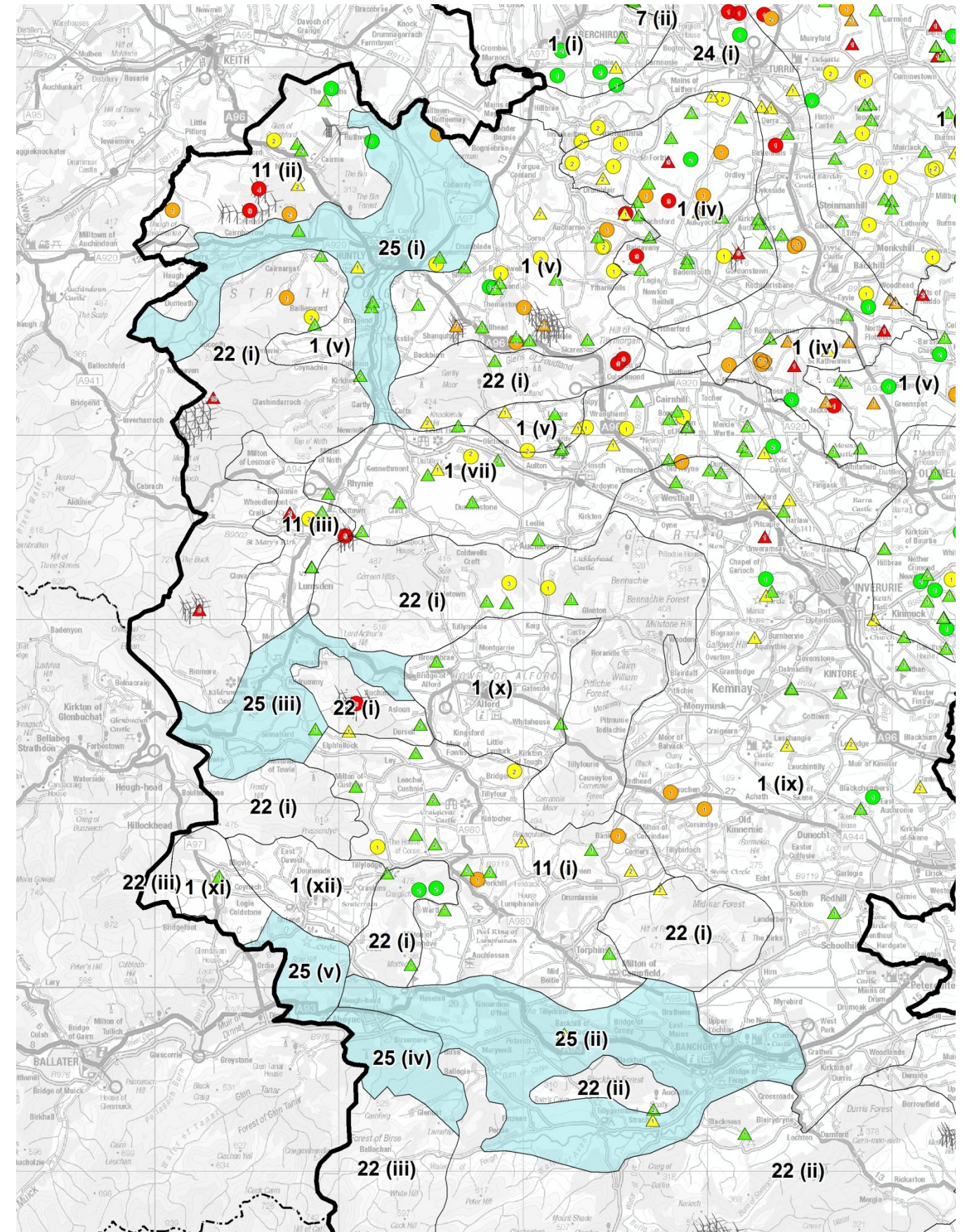


Table 6.1(k): Summary of Landscape Capacity, Cumulative Effects and Guidance for Future Wind Energy Development: Straths and River Valleys

| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 25. STRATHS AND VALLEYS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|---|--|--|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input type="radio"/> High Capacity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development) | | | | | CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT | | | PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development | | | | Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size) | | | | | Existing/ Consented Developments | Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s) | Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s) | Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size) | | | | | Current Applications | Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design) |
| Landscape Character Sensitivity | Visual Sensitivity | Landscape Sensitivity | Landscape Value | S/M | M | M/L | L | VL | | | | S/M | M | M/L | L | VL | | |
| 25 (i) Landscape Character Area: Deveron and Bogie Straths | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Med/High | Med/High | Med/High | Med | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Six small/medium turbines and one medium turbine. Adjacent wind farms at Dummuies (7 medium/large) and Glens of Foudland (21 medium/large) in adjoining LCA. | <i>Straths and River Valleys with Occasional Wind Turbines</i> | <i>Straths and River Valleys with Occasional Wind Turbines</i> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | One medium and one medium/large single turbine application. | Landscape Analysis: Due to its pattern, valley landform, medium to small scale and visual sensitivity there is only potential for very occasional small groups or single medium turbines. Due to their small scale only small/medium turbines should be sited in the upper Deveron and Bogie Straths. Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: The area around Huntly and to the south along the Bogie River, is at capacity because of the visual influence of the wind farms (Dummuies & Glens of Foudland) in the neighbouring <i>Northern Rolling Lowlands</i> . Proposals would exceed capacity in localised areas such as Huntly. Proximity of proposals for large turbines and medium/large in neighbouring areas (<i>Daugh of Cairnborrow, Grampian Outliers</i>) will exceed local capacity. Remaining capacity limited to the north of the LCA and predicated on the use of the detailed guidance. |
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LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: 25. STRATHS AND VALLEYS

Key: No Capacity Low Capacity Medium Capacity High Capacity Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+

| BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development) | | | | CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT | | PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development) | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|-----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|-----|---|----|----------------------|--|
| Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development | | Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size) | | Existing/ Consented Developments | Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s) | Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s) | Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size) | | | | | Current Applications | Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design) |
| Landscape Character Sensitivity | Visual Sensitivity | Landscape Sensitivity | Landscape Value | | | | S/M | M | M/L | L | VL | | |

25 (ii) Landscape Character Area: Deeside

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|------|------|------|------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| High | High | High | High | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Current development comprises ca. 1 small /medium turbines on edge of LCA and 2 single medium turbines in the centre of the strath. Three small/medium turbines have been constructed on the lower slopes of the Grampian Outliers on the boundary of this LCA. | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | No current proposals within or close to this LCA. | <p>Landscape Analysis: This area is nationally important gateway to Cairngorm National Park and part of the setting of the National Park. Its valley profile, high quality, value and visibility from highly sensitive receptors increases its sensitivity. No turbines over 15m should be developed. Turbines should be closely associated with buildings and/ or backclothed by higher ground/ trees. This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farms or tourist facilities.</p> <p>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: No turbines over 15m should be developed.</p> |
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25 (iii) Landscape Character Area: Donside

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|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| High | Med/ High | Med/ High | Med/ High | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Current development comprises ca. 1 small /medium turbine on edge of LCA. Kildrummy wind farm (8 large turbines) has been constructed on the upper slopes of the Grampian Outliers adjacent to this LCA. | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines/ with Occasional Turbines | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | No current proposals within or close to this LCA. | <p>Landscape Analysis: Area is nationally important gateway to Cairngorm National Park and part of the setting of the National Park. Its valley profile, high quality, value and visibility from highly sensitive receptors increases its sensitivity. No turbines over 15m should be developed. Turbines should be closely associated with buildings and/ or backclothed by higher ground/ trees. This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farms or tourist facilities.</p> <p>Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: No turbines over 15m should be developed.</p> |
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|--|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|---|---|---|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Key: <input type="radio"/> No Capacity <input type="radio"/> Low Capacity <input type="radio"/> Medium Capacity <input checked="" type="radio"/> High Capacity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Turbine Size: Small/Medium=15-<30m; Medium=30-<50m; Medium/Large=50-<80m; Large=80m+; Very Large=125m+ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BASE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY (ie. not taking account of current wind energy development) | | | | | CURRENT CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT | | | PROPOSED LIMITS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (ie. proposed acceptable level of wind energy development) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development | | | | Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size) | | | | | Existing/ Consented Developments | Current Wind Energy Landscape Type(s) | Future Wind Energy Landscape Type(s) | Remaining Landscape Capacity (Related to turbine size) | | | | | Current Applications | Analysis & Guidelines (Refer to Detailed Guidance for Further Information on Siting and Design) |
| Landscape Character Sensitivity | Visual Sensitivity | Landscape Sensitivity | Landscape Value | S/M | M | M/L | L | VL | | | | S/M | M | M/L | L | VL | | |
| 25 (iv) Landscape Character Area: Upper Deeside Estates | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Med/High | High | Med/High | High | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Currently no consented turbines in this area. | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | No current proposals within or close to this LCA. | Landscape Analysis: Area is nationally important gateway to Cairngorm National Park and part of the setting of the National Park. Its valley profile, high quality, value and visibility from highly sensitive receptors increase its sensitivity. No turbines over 15m should be developed. Turbines should be closely associated with buildings and/ or backclothed by higher ground/ trees. This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farms or tourist facilities. |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Max. Numbers in Group | | | | | | | Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: No turbines over 15m should be developed. |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Min Group Separation Distances (km) | | | | | | | |
| 25 (v) Landscape Character Area: Muir of Dinnet | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Med/High | Med/High | Med/High | High | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Currently no consented turbines in this area. | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines | Straths and River Valleys with No Wind Turbines | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | No current proposals within or close to this LCA. | Landscape Analysis: Area is nationally important gateway to Cairngorm National Park and part of the setting of the National Park. Its valley profile, high quality, value and visibility from highly sensitive receptors increase its sensitivity. No turbines over 15m should be developed. Turbines should be closely associated with buildings and/ or backclothed by higher ground/ trees. This area would be unsuitable for wind turbine development beyond a domestic scale associated with farms or tourist facilities. |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Max. Numbers in Group | | | | | | | Comments on Consented and Proposed Turbines: No turbines over 15m should be developed. |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Min Group Separation Distances (km) | | | | | | | |

GUIDANCE: LCT 25: STRATHS AND RIVER VALLEYS

25 (i) DEVERON AND BOGIE STRATHS

Proposed Limits to Future Development: Straths and River Valleys with Occasional Wind Turbines

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

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

Separation Distances: 4-6km (small/medium); 6-8km (medium);

Because of its pattern, valley landform, medium to small scale and visual sensitivity there is only potential in this LCA for very occasional small groups or single medium turbines. Due to their small scale only small/medium turbines should be sited in the upper *Deveron and Bogie Straths*. These should be sited in less prominent areas with landform/ tree backclothing. Discourage development of turbines on prominent ridge/hilltop locations. Allow adequate separation between turbines of different sizes. The hills and slopes adjacent to the LCA *Grampian Outliers* should be maintained free of turbines greater than 15m in height.

The area around Huntly and to the south along the Bogie River is at capacity because of the visual influence of the wind farms (Dummuies & Glens of Foudland) in the neighbouring *Northern Rolling Lowlands*. Proposals would exceed capacity in localised areas such as Huntly. Proximity of proposals for large turbines and medium/large in neighbouring areas (*Daugh of Cairnborrow, Grampian Outliers*) will exceed local capacity. Remaining capacity limited to the north of the LCA and predicated on the use of the detailed guidance.

Turbines should primarily be located in the farmland on lower slopes of the straths, avoiding skylines and reducing intervisibility between turbine groups. Proximity to residential properties or settlements may also limit opportunities for locating larger turbines and/or turbine groups.

Positioning of turbines should relate clearly to landscape features such as field boundaries, breaks in slope, such as next to the head dyke and larger farm buildings. Separation between turbine groupings should ensure that clear intervisibility is infrequent. This may be achieved through selecting appropriate turbine sizes, separation distances and/or the intervention of landforms and tree groups.



In this rolling wooded landscape turbines should be sited lower in the strath with backclothing of landform or trees.