

# Appendix 5.1 Special Landscape Qualities Assessment – Shetland National Scenic areas

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# Appendix 5.1 Special Landscape Qualities Assessment – Assessment of Effects on the Shetland National Scenic Area

## **Introduction**

This detailed assessment of effects on the Special Landscape Qualities of the Shetland National Scenic Area follows on from amendments made to the Proposed Development in the context of SNH's objection letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019. The objection stated *"we consider that the current proposal would have significant adverse effects on the special qualities of the Shetland National Scenic Area such that the objectives of the designation and overall integrity of the area would be compromised."* Whilst the 2019 EIA Report did not find significant effects on the constituent landscape character units within the NSA, the revision to the Proposed Development through the deletion of six turbines and the dropping in height of nine turbines from 200 m to 180 m, is intended to reduce the indirect influence of the Proposed Development on the affected sub units of the NSA.

The assessment set out below is based on emerging guidance prepared by SNH on assessing how special landscape qualities may be affected by development proposals.

## **Policy Context**

National Scenic Area (NSA) is a conservation designation used in Scotland and administered by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). The designation's purpose is to identify areas of exceptional scenery and to protect them from inappropriate development. NSAs were first established in 1980, under planning legislation, by order of the Secretary of State. Part 10 of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 gave NSAs a statutory basis. The Town and Country Planning (National Scenic Areas) (Scotland) Designation Directions 2010 then brought this into force. In December 2010, NSAs were designated under this new legislation.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) is a statement of Scottish Government policy on how nationally important land use planning matters should be addressed. With regard to National Designations, SPP states that:

*"Development that affects a National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest or a National Nature Reserve should only be permitted where:*

- *the objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or*
- *any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance."*

*(paragraph 212, emphasis added).*

## **Methodology**

The assessment is based on the following draft SNH methodology which was provided to the consultant team by SNH in the autumn of 2019: *Working Draft 11 – Guidance for Assessing the Effects on Special Landscape Qualities (November 2018)*, including the parameters for levels of effect.

The guidance advocates a narrative approach, to provide transparency when drawing conclusions and making judgements of effect on experiential and perceptual qualities, taking four steps as summarised in the following bullets.

- Step 1 The Proposal – Gain as full an understanding of the proposal as possible.
- Step 2 Define the Study Area and Scope of the Assessment identifying the area likely to be affected.
- Step 3 The Analysis of Impacts and Effects on SLQs.
- Step 4 Summary of Impacts on the SLQs, implications for the NSA/NP and possible future effects on SLQs and recommendations for mitigation.

The aim of the assessment is to understand the effects of proposed development on the NSA’s defined special landscape qualities and to determine whether these effects will compromise the overall integrity of the National Scenic Area, or undermine the objectives of designation.

## ***Shetland NSA – Identification of Relevant Special Landscape Qualities***

The following text, reproduced in part from paragraphs 5.6.34 – 5.6.42 of Chapter 5 of the 2019 EIA Report, sets out the overall special landscape qualities of the Shetland NSA and those special landscape qualities identified for the relevant constituent sub units, which will be indirectly influenced by the Proposed Development.

The Shetland NSA includes seven separate small areas of coastal landscape, which have been identified as being of outstanding scenic interest. Of these, the Fethaland and Hermaness sub-areas fall into the zone of theoretical visibility within 20 km of the Proposed Development. These two areas, situated in the north of North Roe and north Unst, respectively, are the focus of the assessment.

The overall special qualities of the Shetland NSA are described within *The Special Qualities of the National Scenic Areas*, SNH commissioned report, 2010, as:

- *“The stunning variety of the extensive coastline;*
- *Coastal views both close and distant;*
- *Coastal settlement and fertility within a large hinterland of unsettled moorland and coast;*
- *The hidden coasts;*
- *The effects and co-existence of wind and shelter;*
- *A sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity;*
- *The notable and memorable coastal stacks, promontories and cliffs;*
- *The distinctive cultural landmarks; and*
- *Northern light.”*

Some special qualities are generic to all the identified NSA areas, whereas others are specific to sub areas within the NSA. For the Fethaland sub area of the NSA *“the stunning variety of the extensive coastline”* special quality is highlighted, and within the Hermaness sub area of the NSA *“a sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity”* special quality is highlighted, as discussed below.

### **North Roe sub area of the Shetland NSA**

The North Roe sub area of the Shetland NSA includes the following further description with reference to the *“the stunning variety of the extensive coastline”* special quality:

- *“The North Roe peninsula further exhibits a range of skerries, stacks, islets, geos, caves, headlands and natural arches. Its complex geology lends the area distinctive variations in coastal landform and colour between Fugla Ness, Uyea Isle, Fethaland and the Ramna Stacks.”*

Figures 5.2.1 to 5.2.8 illustrate the extent of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development, indicating visibility over distances greater than 12.5 km from north east facing slopes and hills along the northern coast of North Roe. Viewpoint 16, Point of Fethaland, Figure 5.3.16 and Viewpoint 17, Loch of Houllsquey, Figure 5.3.17, illustrate the nature of views from the headland and north east facing slopes within the NSA.

Parts of the following landscape and seascape character areas, which coincide with the NSA, fall within the visual influence of the Proposed Development: LCA C2 North Roe Undulating Moorland with Lochs, LCA E3 Coastal Crofting and Grazing Lands, LCA G1 Coastal Edge LCA, CCA 24 North Roe Coast, and CCA 27 Yell Sound.

#### **Hermaness sub area of the Shetland NSA**

The Hermaness sub area of the Shetland NSA includes the following specific special qualities, which are described within the SNH report:

- *“At Hermaness on Unst, the coastal topography varies from the 175m high cliffs at the Neap, to the sandy beach and machair at the head of the narrow Burrafirth.*
- *Cultural landmarks include the western edge of the Hermaness area which contains the northerly military installations in the British Isles at Saxa Vord.”*

Figures 5.2.1 to 5.2.8 illustrate the extent of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development, indicating visibility over distances greater than 16.5 km from the headland at Tonga and over c.18 km from Hermaness Hill, with limited areas of intermittent visibility between. Viewpoint 18, Hermaness Hill, Figure 5.3.18 illustrates the nature of views from the headland within the NSA.

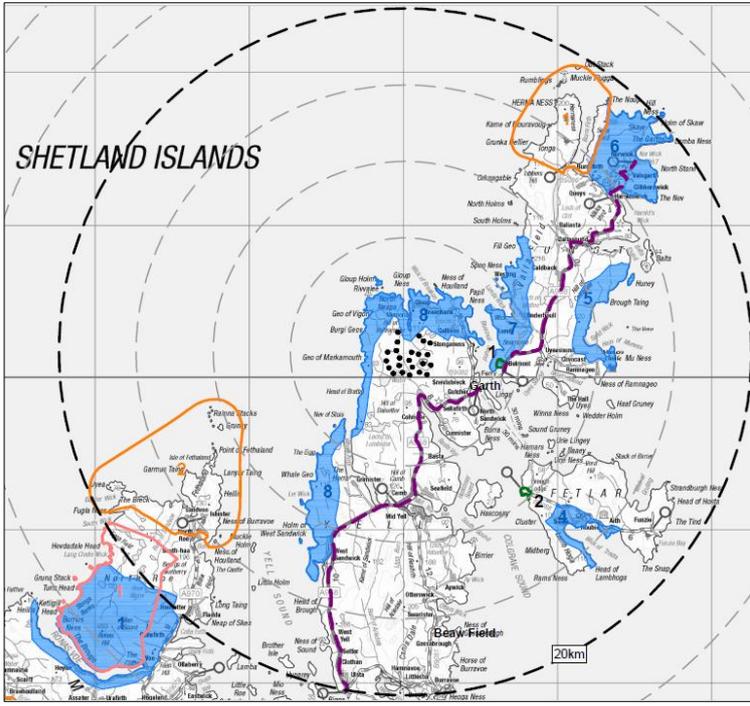
Parts of the following landscape and seascape character areas, which coincide with the NSA, fall within the visual influence of the Proposed Development: LCA A4 Unst Uplands; LCA G1 Coastal Edge LCA; CCA 19 Hermaness; and CCA 13 Burrafirth.

### ***Assessment of Effects on the Shetland National Scenic Area***

The following staged assessment follows the draft SNH guidance set out in the following document: *Working Draft 11 – Guidance for Assessing the Effects on Special Landscape Qualities (November 2018)*.

## Step 1: The Proposal

**Table 5.1.1 – Assessment of Effects on the Shetland National Scenic Area – Step 1: The Proposal**

The Proposed Development	
<p>The Proposed Development is a proposal for 23 wind turbines; 14 at 200 m high to blade tip, (with indicative towers of 120 m and indicative 160 m rotor diameter); and 9 turbines at 180 m high to blade tip, (with indicative towers of 100 m and indicative 160m rotor diameter). A detailed description of the Proposed Development is set out in Chapter 3: Project Description and the accompanying figures. The site is located within the northern part of the island of Yell, set into the moorland interior. The Shetland NSA includes seven designated areas. Of these the Fethaland and Hermaness sub-areas fall into the zone of theoretical visibility within 20km of the Proposed Development. The adjacent plan extract from Figure 5.1.2 illustrates the position of the proposed turbines in north Yell (black dots) and the Hermaness sub area of the NSA to the north east and the Fethaland sub unit of the NSA to the south west, denoted with the orange boundary lines. The closest turbines are 12.5 km to the north east of the Point of Fethaland in the Fethaland sub area and 14 km to the south west of Tonga in the Hermaness sub area.</p>	

## Step 2: Define the Study Area and Scope of the Assessment identifying the area likely to be affected

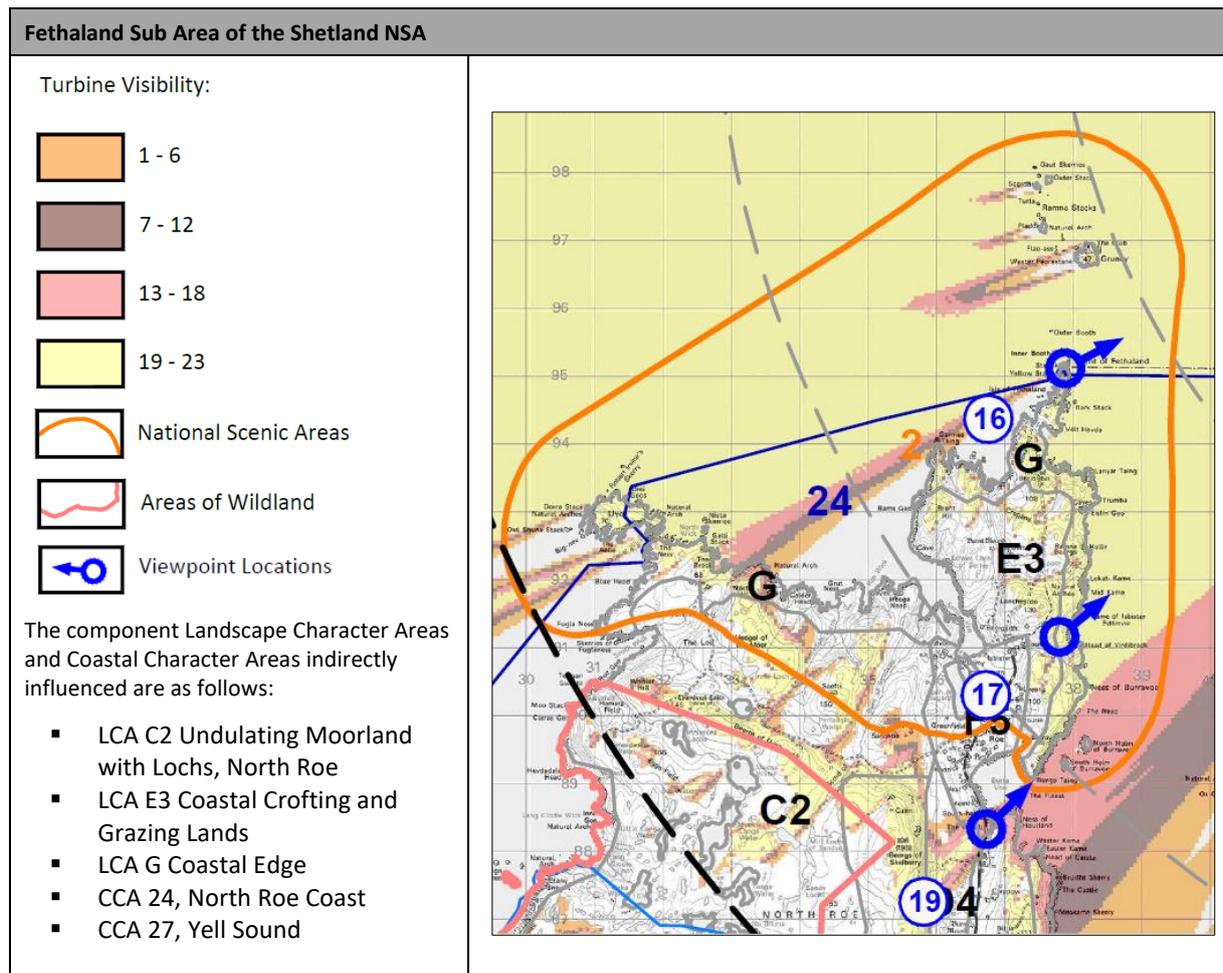
The following extracts from Figure 5.2.6 illustrate the hub height ZTV overlaid with each of the NSA sub units. Less than 50 % of the landward portion of the Fethaland sub unit and c. 20% of the landward portion of the Hermaness sub unit indicate theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development to hub height.

The boundaries of the component landscape character units/coastal character units are indicated on these plan extracts, alongside the locations of relevant viewpoints included in the revised assessment.

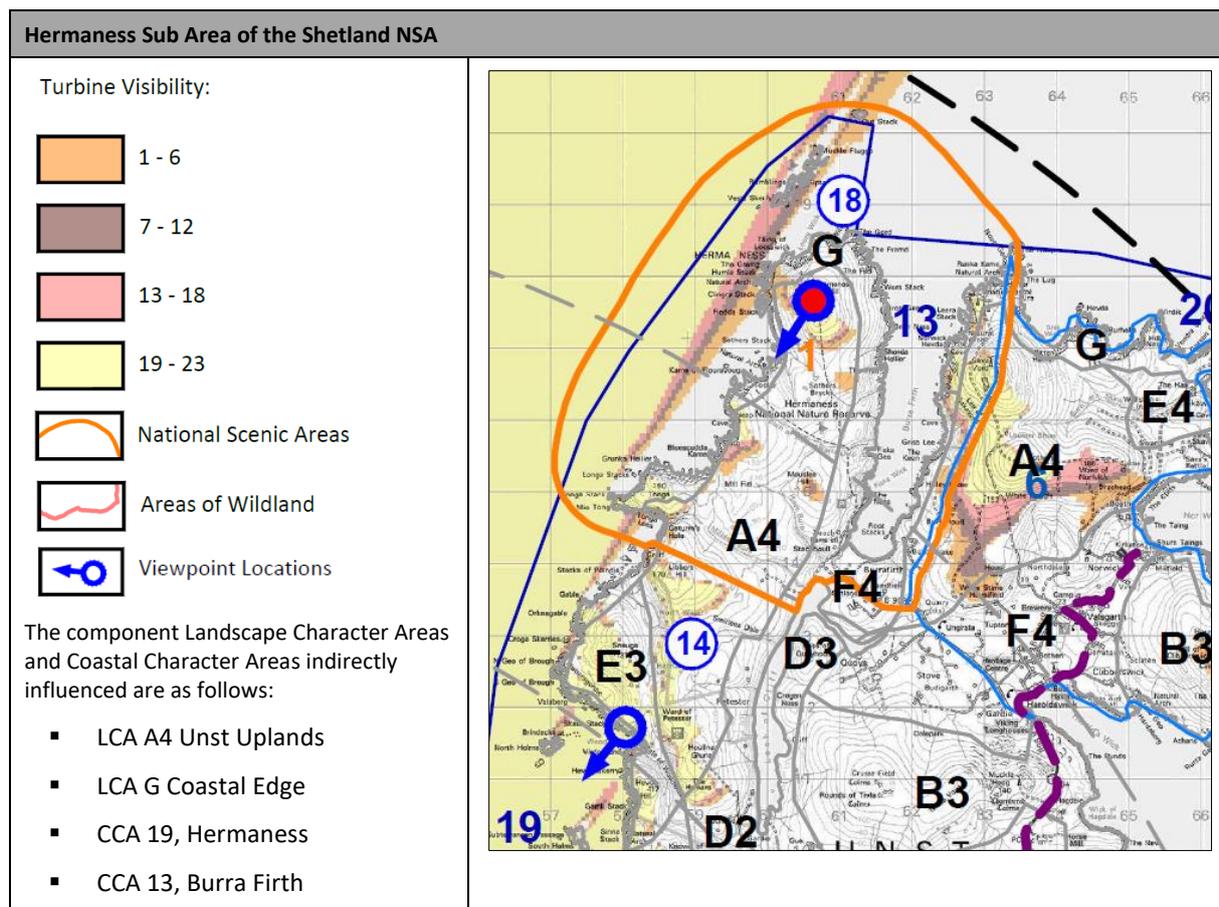
Within the Fethaland sub unit the landward areas affected by distant theoretical visibility to hub height occur along the eastern coastline from Burgo Taing in the south eastern edge of the NSA to the Point of Fethaland in the north, experienced in the context of diverse views over Yell Sound. There will be more limited areas of visibility, over a distance of 18.7 km from the coastline at Uyea and North Wick, and from the north-east facing slopes of interior hills including, The Breck (18.5 km) Heogel of the Moor (18 km) and Saefti Hill (17 km).

Whilst theoretical visibility extends across the seaward side of the NSA, visibility is restricted or absent from the exposed Atlantic facing coastline to the west of Fethaland, and at Burrier Wick and South Wick. The sheltered inlet at Sand Voe and the complex indented coastline to west is also in visual shadow.

**Table 5.1.2 – Fethaland Sub Area of the Shetland NSA**



**Table 5.1.3 – Hermaness Sub Area of the Shetland NSA**



Within Hermaness the landward areas with theoretical visibility to hub height are limited to the south west facing coastline at Tonga (14 km), the Neap / Saito (15 km) area and Hermaness Hill (17.2 km), as well as partial visibility from Mouslee Hill and Sothers Breck.

Whilst theoretical visibility extends across the seaward side of the NSA, visibility to hub height is restricted or absent from the exposed Atlantic facing coastline between Tonga and Herma Ness, and to the south west at the Ayre of Tonga and Gotrum’s Hole. The coastline to the north of Herma Ness and the sheltered inlet at Burrarfirth are also in visual shadow.

**Table 5.1.4 – Assessment of Effects on the Shetland National Scenic Area: how the area is used by people**

How the area is used and experienced by people
<p><b>Fethaland Sub Area</b></p> <p>There are areas of sheep pasture scattered across the northern extent of North Mavine, focussed on the former settlement at Uyea to the north west and at the settlements of Ibister and Sandvoe to the north east. Cemeteries are located adjacent to sheltered beach at Sandvoe and to the north of Ibister.</p> <p>Three core paths are mapped across the NSA which facilitate walking access to the wild and remote coastline and circular walks are promoted at Fethaland and between Sandvoe and Uyea. The coastline is an attraction for informal recreation, ornithology, enjoyment of the remote scenery, and the areas around Uyea and Fethaland are referred to in the Shetland Amenity Trust brochures on geology. The headland at the Point of Fethaland is a focus for recreational walking, being the most northerly point of the Shetland mainland. It was a fishing station until the twentieth century, with a lighthouse above the rocks on the Isle of Fethaland.</p>

The seaward area of the NSA attracts people engaged in recreational sailing and a loop of the Point of Fethaland peninsula offers a day trip for the experienced sea kayaker in good conditions. There are no ferry routes passing through this area though fishing vessels, cruise ships and other shipping will pass close to the NSA.

The Fethaland sub unit is sparsely populated with scattered settlement confined to the sheltered south eastern corner between North Roe, Houll, and Sand Voe. Residents of this settled area will not experience views to the Proposed Development. The wider Fethland NSA sub unit is lightly used for walking, with the coastlines at Fethaland and The Breck being a focus for visits. From these informal routes there will be distant views to the Proposed Development from the eastern side of Fethaland and from the coastal edge at The Breck, experienced in the context of diverse coastal scenery.

#### **Hermaness Sub Area**

Crofting settlement with associated pastures lie at the head of Burra Firth. To the north east, the hill at Saxa Vord is the location of the Saxa Vord radar station, housed within distinctive spherical radar domes.

Hermaness is home to the Hermaness National Nature Reserve, a haven for thousands of populations of seabirds during the breeding season. As such the area is frequently visited by tourists and ornithologists. Hermaness Hill is also the most northerly headland of the Shetland Islands. The car parking at Burrafirth provides access to the core path network which leads to Hermaness Hill, facilitating access to the dramatic coastal scenery.

The seaward area of the NSA attracts people engaged in recreational sailing and a trip along the eastern coast of Unst can be included as part of a multi-day trip for the experienced sea kayaker in good conditions. However, fast tidal movement, tidal races, overfalls and ocean swell limit activity. There are no ferry routes passing through this area though fishing vessels, cruise ships and other shipping will pass close to the NSA.

Permanent settlement is limited to the Lighthouse Station, Upper and Lower Sotland, Sanfield and Buddabracke at the southern extent of Burrafirth. Residents of this scattered settlement will not experience views to the Proposed Development. Hermaness is a popular focus for walking and ornithology with access formalised along a route leading from Burra Firth via Winnswarta Dale to the north west coastline at Humlataes and on to Herma Ness and Hermaness Hill. From this route there will be distant views to the Proposed Development from the western flank of Hermaness Hill. Further informal walking visits may access coastal areas with distant visibility to the Proposed Development such as the Neap and Tonga.

**Table 5.1.5– Fethaland Sub Unit – Typical Views**

Fethaland Sub Unit
 <p data-bbox="204 703 1422 752">Lanchestoo Hill looking north to Upper Loch of Setter, grid reference 4375124, 1191616</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1211 1422 1256">Point of Fethaland, grid reference 437912, 1195192</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1570 1422 1610">Lanchestoo Hill looking north west, grid reference 4375124, 1191616</p>



Lanchestoo Hill looking south towards Ronas Hill, grid reference 4375124, 1191616

**Table 5.1.6 – Hermaness Sub Unit – Typical Views**

**Hermaness Sub Unit**



Hermaness Hill looking north towards Muckle Flugga, grid reference 460635, 1217655



Hermaness Hill looking south towards Balta Sound, grid reference 460690, 1217574



Hermaness Hill looking east towards Saxa Vord, grid reference 460690, 1217574



Hermaness Hill looking south west towards the cliffs at Tonga 460635, 1217655

### Step 3: Effects on the Special Landscape Qualities

The following table sets out the special landscape qualities (SLQs) relevant to the NSA sub units at Fethaland and Hermaness and considers the effect of the Proposed Development on the key characteristics and SLQs. The assessment compares the effects of the 2019 layout and the mitigation achieved through the removal of six turbines and the reduction in height of nine turbines in the 2020 layout.

It should be noted that the Proposed Development is not located within the NSA and effects will be indirect, with only a visual influence, and no direct physical effects. The NSA sub units at Fethaland and Hermaness units are located at over 12.5 km and 16.5 km respectively from the Proposed Development, and visibility is partial with less than 50 % of the Fethaland sub unit and c. 20% of the Hermaness sub unit indicating visibility to hub height.

The Proposed Development will be experienced against a baseline which is already influenced by human activity and development, for example the existing settlement pattern and road network, the prominently sited radar facilities at Saxa Vord, the presence of the Garth Wind Farm on Yell, and the lighthouse at Muckle Flagga and the associated (former) shore station in Burrafirth.

**Table 5.1.7 – Assessment of Effects on the Shetland National Scenic Area – Step 3: The Assessment**

Assessment of effect and risk	
SLQs identified at scoping and refined during subsequent study, including detailed SLQ descriptions / underpinning landscape characteristics	Effects of the Proposed Development on key characteristics and SLQs
<p><b>Generic Special Landscape Quality: “The stunning variety of the extensive coastline”</b></p> <p><i>“Shetland’s long, extensive coastline is highly varied: from fissured and fragmented hard rock coasts, to gentler formations of accumulated gravels, sands, spits and bars; from remarkably steep cliffs to sloping bays; from long, sheltered voes to cliffs exposed to the full fury of the Atlantic ocean.”</i></p>	<p><b>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2019 layout:</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development would not have had a direct effect on the “stunning variety of the extensive coastline” in either sub area of the NSA because the Proposed Development is not located in the NSA, being located at a distance beyond 12.5 km from the closest NSA boundary.</p> <p>There will be indirect effects on the experience of coastal views and scenery from those north east facing slopes in Fethaland and south west facing slopes in Hermaness, where the Proposed Development would be seen as a small and distant component occupying a small proportion of the wider panoramic views.</p>

<p><i>“The landscape is an intimate mix of sea and land. The sea reaches far inland by way of voes, firths and sounds, an inland coast in marked contrast to the dynamic outer coast of wild Atlantic ‘oceanscapes’. Here the land reaches into the open sea on many points and promontories.”</i></p> <p><i>“This huge variety has arisen from the interaction between geology, glaciation and sea level changes, and results in the dramatic coastal scenery as encapsulated within the seven areas of the NSA.”</i></p> <p><b>Fethaland Specific Special Qualities:</b> <i>“The North Roe peninsula further exhibits a range of skerries, stacks, islets, geos, caves, headlands and natural arches. Its complex geology lends the area distinctive variations in coastal landform and colour between Fugla Ness, Uyea Isle, Fethaland and the Ramna Stacks.”</i></p> <p><b>Hermaness Specific Special Qualities:</b> <i>“At Hermaness on Unst, the coastal topography varies from the 175m high cliffs at the Neap, to the sandy beach and machair at the head of the narrow Burrafirth.”</i></p> <p>The foreground experience is intense with crashing waves, the movement of currents and overfalls in and around the islands, the constant activity of sea birds, the wind, exposure, movement of clouds, rapidly changing weather conditions and the intensity of light all contributing to a dynamic sensory experience. Views are diverse with foreshortened views to the surrounding undulating moorland and lochans within North Roe, or from the sloping dales on Hermaness, contrasting with expansive coastal views from the sea cliffs. The detail of the foreground is absorbing with floristic interest, a wide variety of minerals and rocks, flotsam and jetsam, raised beaches, sheltered coves, rocky cliffs and headlands creating a diverse scene.</p>	<p>Areas with visibility of the Proposed Development, that lie within the Fethaland sub area of the NSA, include the eastern flank of the Fethaland peninsula, north east facing slopes of Brunt Hill/Lee of Setter, Saefiti Hill, North Hill/Billia Field and Uyea. The Proposed Development would occupy c.19° of the panoramic 360° view from the Point of Fethaland, over a distance of 12.46 km. Representative viewpoints are included at Viewpoint 16, Point of Fethaland and Viewpoint 17, Loch of Houllsquey.</p> <p>The limited areas with visibility within the Hermaness sub unit of the NSA, include the south flank of Tonga, the south west flank of Neap and Saito and the southern and south western flanks of Hermaness Hill. A further small area of partial visibility is indicated at Mouslee Hill. The Proposed Development would occupy c.13.5° of the panoramic 360° view from Hermaness Hill, over a distance of 17.2km.</p> <p>The influence of the Proposed Development will be well separated from the foreground intensity of the coastal experience. There will be some limited effects associated with the addition of the Proposed Development in respect of the perception of the coastline as seen in some views, however, in general, views are expansive and the Proposed Development is not judged to affect the overall qualities and integrity of the Fethaland and Hermaness sub areas of the Shetland NSA.</p> <p>The special qualities of the sub areas of the NSA would not have been altered by the Proposed Development, with the key foreground and coastal views being well separated from influence of the Proposed Development.</p> <p><b>Mitigation achieved through the revision to the 2020 layout:</b></p> <p>The alteration to the Proposed Development will reduce the horizontal extent of the wind farm, as it would have been seen in views, and remove turbines from the coastal headland on Yell. The 2020 layout will appear more closely associated with the interior of Yell, set well back from the coastal edge.</p> <p>Following the revision, visibility of the Proposed Development will be reduced, occupying c.14° of the panoramic 360° view from the Point of Fethaland over a distance of 12.46 km, and c.10° of the panoramic 360° view from Hermaness Hill over a distance of 17.75 km.</p> <p>There will remain some effects associated with the addition of the Proposed Development in respect of the perception of the coastline, as seen in longer views, however, these are not judged to have a significant effect on the <i>“stunning variety of the coastline”</i> SLQ.</p> <p><b>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</b></p> <p>Low, limited to indirect effects.</p>
<p><b>Generic Special Landscape Quality:</b> <b><i>“Coastal views both close and distant”</i></b></p> <p><i>“Such a variety of coastal scenery allows for a magnificent range of coastal views. In places distant islands lie low on the horizon, in others there is a near view to an inshore island, or to a neighbouring shore of this articulated coast.”</i></p>	<p><b>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2019 layout:</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development would not have a direct effect on the <i>“the close in coastal views”</i> in either sub area of the NSA. However, there would have been an influence on the distant view between Fethaland (North Roe) – Yell – Hermaness (Unst) and vice versa.</p> <p>The 2019 layout extends onto the flat coastal headland at the northern extent of Yell and the profile of the turbines would have been seen in the foreground of views to Hermaness Hill from Fethaland, and in the foreground of Ronas Hill when viewed from Hermaness.</p> <p>The special qualities of the sub areas of the NSA would not have been altered by the Proposed Development, with the key foreground views being well separated from influence of the Proposed Development. There</p>

	<p>would have been indirect effects associated with the addition of the Proposed Development in respect of the perception of the coastline, as seen in longer views.</p> <p><b>Mitigation achieved through the revision to the 2020 layout:</b></p> <p>The removal of turbines from the headland and adjoining hill slopes at the northern extent of Yell will reduce the influence of the wind farm on distant views between the islands.</p> <p>In views from the Fethaland sub area, Viewpoint 16, Point of Fethaland, the turbines will be removed from the headland of Yell, retaining the open flow of views to Saxa Vord and Hermaness Hill, which will be seen above the headland of Yell. The turbines will be seen to the south of the Hill of Vignon on Yell, which forms a natural bookend to the Proposed Development.</p> <p>In views from the Hermaness sub area, Viewpoint 18, Hermaness Hill, the turbines will be set back from the coastal headland of Yell and the 2020 layout will be seen to have a clear design rationale, relating closely with the moorland interior of Yell. Turbines will be set further back from foreground views to the cliffs at Tonga and away from views in the direction of the coastal headland of Yell, Ronas Hill, and the coastline of North Roe.</p> <p>As set out above, the Proposed Development will influence a small c.3-4% component of the available panoramic 360°, seen over distances greater than 12.5 km. Under certain light conditions the influence on views will be more noticeable, however the weather and light conditions are dynamic and the influence on views will in general be limited.</p> <p>There will remain some indirect effects associated with the addition of the Proposed Development in respect of the perception of the coastline, as seen in longer views, however, these are not judged to have a significant effect on the “Coastal views both close and distant” SLQ.</p> <p><b>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</b></p> <p>Low - Medium, limited to indirect effects.</p>
<p><b>Generic Special Landscape Quality:</b>  <b>“Coastal settlement and fertility within a large hinterland of unsettled moorland and coast”</b></p> <p><i>“Thousands of years of human occupation has given the landscape a rich archaeological heritage, including ancient brochs and modern crofts.”</i></p> <p><i>“Settlement has always been constrained by the nature of the land, largely confined to strips of ground rarely out of sight of the sea. Houses are concentrated at the heads of voes or in sheltered bays, well placed to make use of the sea and coastal resources.”</i></p> <p><i>“The green, inbye land of the crofts and farms contrasts with the common grazings of wild, unimproved and uninhabited moorland and bog. There are also long lengths of remote and uninhabited coast.”</i></p>	<p>Settlement within the Fethaland sub area of the NSA is focussed on the sheltered farmstead at Sandvoe and Isbister which are both sheltered by Lanchestoo hill which prevents visibility of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>Settlement within Hermaness sub area is set within the sheltered setting of Burra Firth. The surrounding landform prevents any inter-visibility with the Proposed Development.</p> <p><b>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</b></p> <p>No Change to SLQ</p>
<p><b>Generic Special Landscape Quality: “The hidden coasts”</b></p>	<p><b>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2019 layout:</b></p>

<p><i>“Because the land is undulating, markedly so in the western mainland, the actual brink of the coastal edge may be hidden or difficult of access. This brings an element of surprise when caves, geos and gloups are suddenly encountered, inviting further exploration.”</i></p>	<p>The immediate coastlines of Hermaness and Fethaland are predominantly inaccessible, with walking access restricted to the coastal path above the cliffs. Routes follow closely around the indented terrain, and the foreground changes constantly. The SLQ relates to the immediate coastline of the NSA and the Proposed Development would only have indirect effects on wider views. Framed distant views towards the Proposed Development are limited and visibility is, on the whole, panoramic. The exceptions are at Tonga in Hermaness and at the Point of Fethaland where the coastal experience is more intimate with the coast and the Proposed Development would have had an indirect influence, as a distant new element in panoramic coastal views, although without a notable effect on the SLQ.</p> <p><b>Mitigation achieved through the revision to the 2020 layout:</b></p> <p>The change to the Proposed Development will reduce the influence of development on views from both Tonga and at the Point of Fethaland. The areas with visibility of the Proposed Development will be more intermittent and reduced overall. Where visible in the context of foreground views to the hidden coastline, the Proposed Development will appear in the distance, set back from foreground views and associated with the interior of Yell. The SLQ relates to the immediate coastline of the NSA and the Proposed Development will only have indirect effects on wider views.</p> <p><b>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</b></p> <p>Low, limited to indirect effects.</p>
<p><b>Generic Special Quality: “The effects and co-existence of wind and shelter”</b></p> <p><i>“The wind appears ever-present and the absence of trees, or even shrubs, gives an open and exposed feel to much of the landscape. The frequent gales can be awe-inspiring, and in high seas fröde (sea-foam) can fleck the coastal grasslands, well-inland from the coastal edge.”</i></p> <p><i>“Weather, skies and light are rarely static, with continual movement of clouds, waves, sea-spray and grasses. The interplay of light and shade moving across the sea, the coastal grasslands or the interior moorland adds a special dynamism.”</i></p> <p><i>“With wind a determining force, so the presence of shelter is acutely perceived. Hence, an awareness of both wind and shelter is a particular quality of these areas. There may be the distant sound of stormy seas pounding the mouth of a bay or voe, while inland waters or a sheltered hollow remain still and calm.”</i></p>	<p><b>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2019 layout:</b></p> <p>The presence of slowly rotating turbines seen in distant views from the sub units of the NSA may have been seen to influence and enhance the effect of wind in the landscape. The wind farm, in itself, would have offered no perception of shelter in the landscape.</p> <p>The Proposed Development would not have a significant influence on “the effects and co-existence of wind and shelter”.</p> <p><b>Mitigation achieved through the revision to the 2020 layout:</b></p> <p>The change to the Proposed Development will remove the presence of rotating turbines away from the low-lying headland on Yell, consolidating the wind farm within a single landscape type. This will assist in simplifying the influence on other aspects of the observed dynamic natural processes and panoramic views.</p> <p><b>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</b></p> <p>Low, limited to indirect effects.</p>
<p><b>Generic Special Landscape Quality: “A sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity”</b></p> <p><i>“The feeling of being at the northern limits of the British Isles is marked. The Shetland Isles are remote in themselves, and within</i></p>	<p><b>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2019 layout:</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development would not have a direct effect on “A sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity”. However, the presence of the Proposed Development in distant views would have an indirect effect owing to the increased presence of man-made artefacts in views. A wind farm in itself offers no refuge or habitation and is unlikely to significantly erode the experience of remoteness or solitude, however the distant</p>

<p><i>the archipelago there are also degrees of remoteness.”</i></p> <p><i>“Most of the coastline is undeveloped and natural, and long-stretches can be traversed without seeing anyone or any human influence.”</i></p> <p><i>“Hence solitude and tranquillity underpin much of the NSA coast, and it is easy to wander with only the seabirds for company. However, tranquillity can give way to alarm as the wind picks up, the rain begins and an Atlantic storm sets in.”</i></p> <p><b>Hermaness Specific Special Landscape Qualities:</b> <i>“Muckle Flugga, within the Hermaness section of the NSA, is further from the Scottish/English border than Lands End.”</i></p>	<p>movement of turbines may reduce the perception of tranquillity, though turbine movement would have been slow and seen within an already dynamic landscape.</p> <p><b>Mitigation achieved through the revision to the 2020 layout:</b></p> <p>The change to the Proposed Development through the removal of turbines from the flat coastal headland on Yell, and the consolidation of the Proposed Development into the interior of Yell, will reduce the influence it has on the undeveloped headlands in coastal views between islands. The areas within the NSA which experience views to the Proposed Development will be reduced and more intermittent.</p> <p>The landscape remains very exposed, wild and dynamic and the “<i>sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity</i>” will remain largely intact.</p> <p><b>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</b></p> <p>Low, limited to indirect effects.</p>
<p><b>Generic Special Landscape Quality:</b> <i>“The notable and memorable coastal stacks, promontories and cliffs.”</i></p> <p><i>“Where open to the full fury of the Atlantic Ocean, the sea has carved impressive cliffs, forming spectacular, towering, vertical scenery, varying greatly in colour according to the complex geology.”</i></p> <p><i>“The coast also contains many distinctive stacks, promontories and other features that form memorable images. Within the NSA these include:”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Muckle Flugga with its distinctive sloping, pointed rocks (within Hermaness)”</i></li> <li>• <i>“The imposing cliffs of Hermaness itself, with its nesting seabirds.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Ramna Stacks, a group of skerries seen off the Point of Fethaland.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2019 layout:</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development would not have had a direct effect on “<i>the notable and memorable coastal stacks, promontories and cliffs.</i>” as it would have been located in a geographically separate area, at a minimum distance of 12.5 km from the closest NSA boundary.</p> <p>The Proposed Development is set back some considerable distance from the distinctive “<i>coastal stacks, promontories and cliffs</i>” of the NSA and would not interrupt direct views to these features. The Proposed Development would, however, form a new artefact, visible as a distant component in wider views, which also encompass distinctive coastal features. As such, there would have been an indirect influence on the wider setting of the view, reducing to a limited degree the perception of wildness and slightly altering the perception of scale in some views. The extent of visibility of the Proposed Development would be limited within the NSA, and there would be a greater area without visibility to the Proposed Development, where the special quality would remain unaffected.</p> <p><b>Mitigation achieved through the revision to the 2020 layout:</b></p> <p>The removal of turbines within the revised 23 turbine layout will consolidate the Proposed Development into the interior of Yell and reduce the horizontal extent of the development, and the influence on coastal views.</p> <p>This will, both reduce the areas within the NSA which will experience views to the Proposed Development, and reduce the influence of the Proposed Development in the context of views to “<i>The notable and memorable coastal stacks, promontories and cliffs.</i>”</p> <p><b>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</b></p> <p>Low, limited to indirect effects.</p>

#### **Step 4: Summary of Effects on the SLQs**

The Proposed Development is located beyond 20 km from much of the Shetland NSA, however, there are two sub areas of the NSA, which lie within a 20 km radius of the Proposed Development and from where there will be the potential for indirect effects to arise. These are the Fethaland sub area in North Roe and the Hermaness sub area on north Unst. Yell lies between the two sub areas, with the Proposed Development set into the moorland interior of the northern sector of the island.

The changes to the Proposed Development through the removal of turbines within the northern extent of the array and the reduction in some turbine heights have consolidated the wind farm within a single landscape character type. The changes have removed turbines from the northern headland of Yell and reduced the influence of the wind farm on coastal views. Turbines have been removed from views between the headlands of the islands and away from the foreground of views, towards noticeable hills and topography such as Hermaness Hill/ Saxa Vord, as seen from the Point of Fethaland at North Roe in the Fethaland sub area of the NSA, and towards Ronas Hill, as seen from Hermaness Hill on Unst in the Hermaness sub area of the NSA.

Whilst the Proposed Development may appear as a distant element in some coastal views, it will be seen over a long separation distance (at least 12.5 km), within a narrow field of view and will be set back from foreground coastal features. Many of the SLQs relate to the physical attributes of the NSA and the experience of these from within the NSA and that the Proposed Development will only affect the wider setting of the NSA. As such the Special Landscape Qualities of the sub areas of the Shetland NSA will not be at risk or compromised by the Proposed Development and the overall integrity and objectives of the Shetland NSA will be maintained.

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