

Appendix 5.1 Special Landscape Qualities Assessment – Shetland National Scenic Area

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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 (NSA) updates the assessment presented within the 2020 Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) and articulates the further reduction in visual and perceptual effects on the special qualities of parts of the NSA that would arise through the removal of five turbines

It provides an assessment of the revised Proposed Development, as discussed with NatureScot (NS) in December 2020 and seeks to further address NS's objection letter dated 15th July 2019. The objection states *“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 neither the 2019 EIA Report nor the 2020 SEI found any significant effects on the constituent landscape character units and associated special qualities within the NSA, the revision to the Proposed Development through the deletion of five further turbines and the introduction of a consistent blade tip height of 180m, is intended to reduce the indirect influence of the Proposed Development on the affected sub units of the NSA by reducing the wind farm's association with the coastal landscape and reinforcing its presence with the upland core of Yell.

The assessment set out below is based on the draft guidance prepared by NS to guide the assessment of effects on the special landscape qualities on assessing how special landscape qualities may be affected by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 NS. 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 NS methodology which was provided to the consultant team by NS 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 NSA, 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, some of which have the potential to be indirectly influenced through perception of 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 20km 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*, NS 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.”*

SEI 2 Figure 5.2.11 illustrates 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 5.3.16d and Viewpoint 17, Loch of Houllsquey, Figure 5.3.17d, 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 NS 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.”*

SEI 2 Figure 5.2.11 illustrates the extent of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development, indicating visibility over distances greater than 13km from the headland at Tonga and over c.17 km from Hermaness Hill, with limited areas of intermittent visibility between. Viewpoint 18, Hermaness Hill, Figure 5.3.18d 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 NS 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 18 wind turbines at 180m high to blade tip. 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 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 (9km from the edge of the NSA at sea) and 12.5 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 5.2.1 illustrate the blade tip 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.

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-Unit of the Shetland NSA

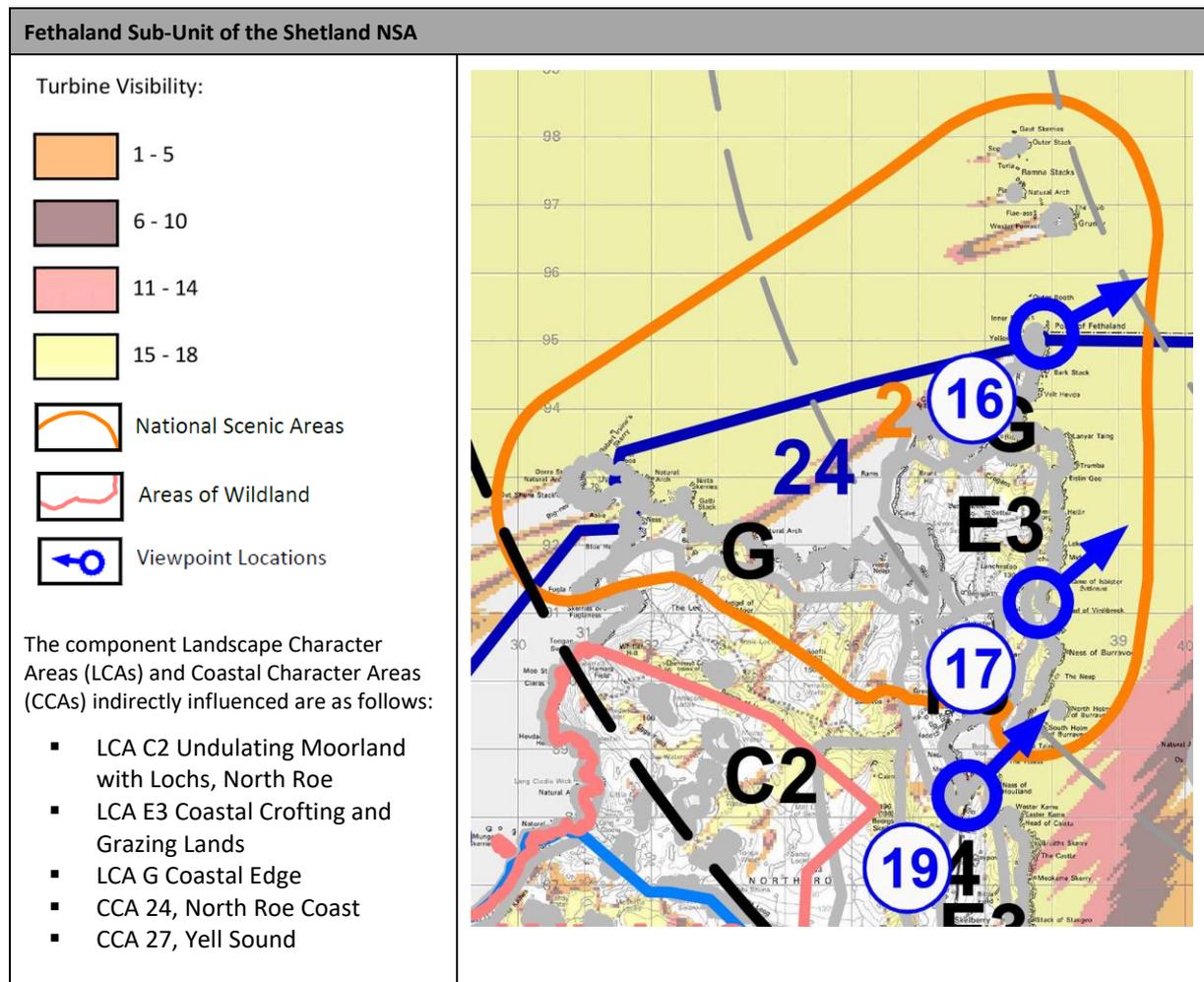
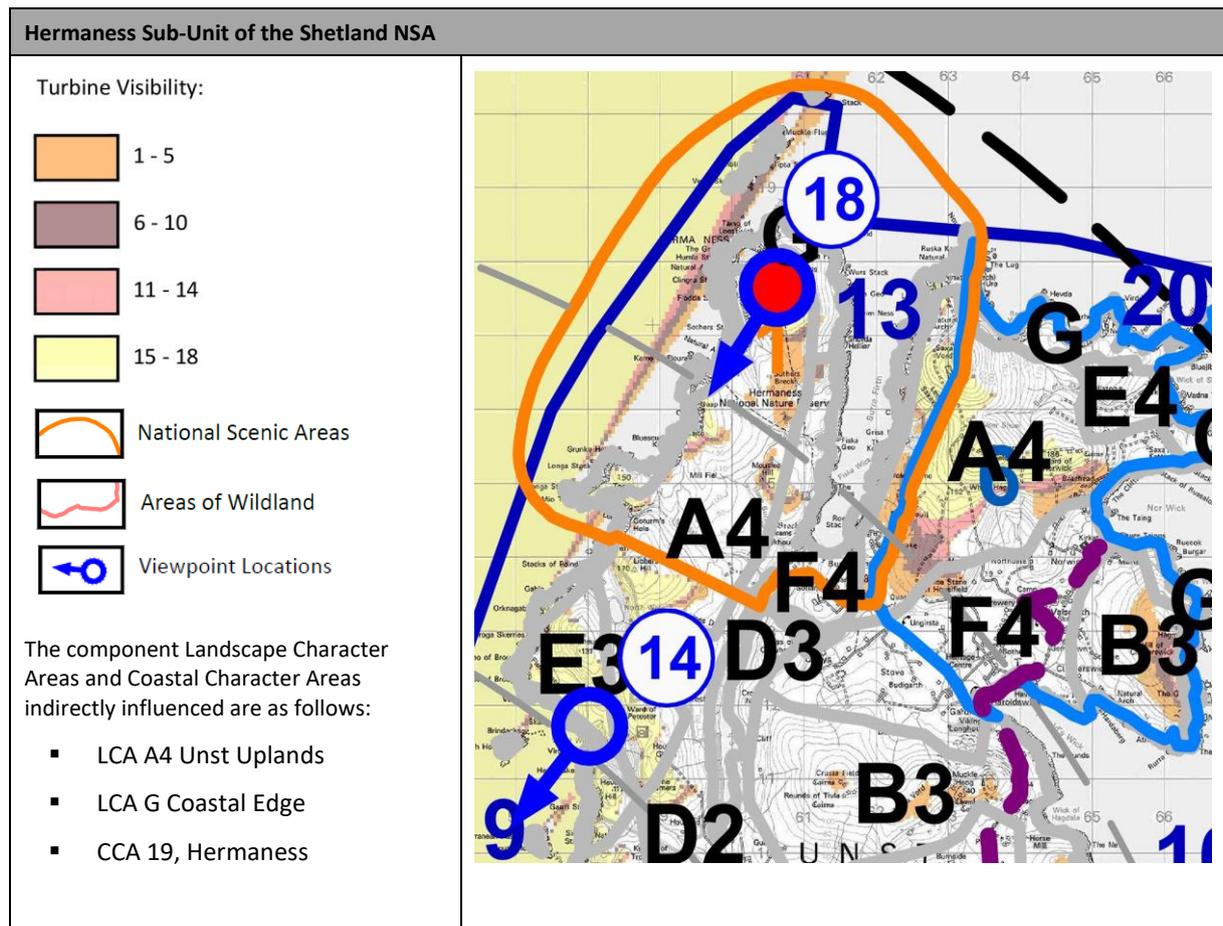


Table 5.1.3 – Hermaness Sub-Unit of the Shetland NSA



Within Hermaness the landward areas with theoretical visibility to blade tip are limited to the south west facing coastline at Tonga (13 km), the Neap / Saito (14 km) area and Hermaness Hill (17.7 km), as well as partial visibility from Mouslee Hill and Sothers Breck. The Coastal Area 19, of Burra Firth, no longer has any theoretical visibility.

Whilst theoretical visibility extends across the seaward edge of the NSA, visibility is highly 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 Goturm’s Hole. The coastline to the north of Herma Ness and the sheltered inlet at Burra firth 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>Fethaland Sub Area</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 Isbister and Sandvoe to the north east. Cemeteries are located adjacent to sheltered beach at Sandvoe and to the north of Isbister.</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> <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.</p> <p>The Fethaland sub unit is sparsely populated with scattered settlement confined to the sheltered south eastern corner between North Roe, Houll, and Sandvoe. Residents of this settled area will not experience views to the Proposed Development. The wider Fethaland 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.</p> <p>Hermaness Sub Area</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 Winnaswarta 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 south 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.</p>

Table 5.1.5– Fethaland Sub-Unit – Typical Views

Fethaland Sub Unit
 <p data-bbox="204 719 1422 752">Lanchestoo Hill looking north to Upper Loch of Setter, grid reference 4375124, 1191616</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1234 1422 1267">Point of Fethaland, grid reference 437912, 1195192</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1615 1422 1648">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 2020 layout and the mitigation achieved through the removal of five turbines and the reduction in height of some turbines to 180m to blade tip.

It should be noted that the Proposed Development is not located within the NSA and effects will be indirect, with only a visual or perceptual influence, and no direct physical effects. The onshore NSA sub-units at Fethaland and Hermaness units are located at over 12.5km and 13.5km respectively from the Proposed Development, and visibility is partial, with relatively limited areas of theoretical visibility arising. The amendments to the Proposed Development that are set out in SEI 2, to position it further inland, have had the effect of reducing the perceived association of the wind turbines with the coastline, when viewed from either sub area of the NSA, and to strengthen their association with the upland core of the Yell peninsula.

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.

Step 3: The Assessment

Table 5.1.7 – Assessment of Effects on the Shetland National Scenic Area –

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>Generic Special Landscape Quality: “The stunning variety of the extensive coastline”</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><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>Fethaland Specific Special Qualities: <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>Hermaness Specific Special Qualities: <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</p>	<p>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2020 layout:</p> <p>The alteration to the Proposed Development reduced the horizontal extent of the wind farm, as seen in views, and removed turbines from the coastal headland on Yell. The 2020 layout appeared 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 was 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 remained some visual effects associated with the addition of the Proposed Development in respect of the perception of the coastline, as seen in longer views, however, these were not judged to have a significant effect on the “stunning variety of the coastline” SLQ.</p> <p>Mitigation achieved through the revised 2021 layout:</p> <p>The removal of five turbines from the western side of the Proposed Development, as proposed in this SEI 2, has the effect of further reducing the perceived association of the turbines with the coastline. This in turn, strengthens the perception that the wind farm is located in the core of the uplands, diminishing further the visual magnitude of change from the Proposed Development.</p> <p>This beneficial effect, experienced from both sub areas of the NSA is seen in the comparative wirelines for Viewpoint 16, Point of Fethaland (SEI 2 Figure 5.3.16e) and Viewpoint 18, Hermaness Hill (SEI 2 Figure 5.2.18e) respectively.</p> <p>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</p> <p>The magnitude of change from the revised Proposed Development on the SLQ of ‘the stunning variety of the extensive coastline’ is Slight and Not Significant, being confined to distant, indirect effects.</p>

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>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>Generic Special Landscape Quality: “Coastal views both close and distant”</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>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2020 layout:</p> <p>The removal of turbines from the headland and adjoining hill slopes at the northern extent of Yell reduced 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 were removed from the headland of Yell, retaining the open flow of views to Saxa Vord and Hermaness Hill, which would be seen above the headland of Yell. The turbines were 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 were set back from the coastal headland of Yell and the 2020 layout was seen to have a clear design rationale, relating closely with the moorland interior of Yell. Turbines were 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>The Proposed Development influenced 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 would be more noticeable, however the weather and light conditions are dynamic and the influence on views would in general be limited.</p> <p>There would 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>Mitigation achieved through the revised 2021 layout:</p> <p>The removal of five turbines from the western side of the Proposed Development, as proposed in this SEI 2, has the effect of further reducing the perceived association of the turbines with the coastal views emphasised in this SLQ. This in turn, strengthens the perception that the wind farm is located in the core of the uplands, diminishing further the visual magnitude of change from the Proposed Development.</p> <p>This beneficial effect, experienced from both sub areas of the NSA, is seen in the comparative wirelines for Viewpoint 16, Point of Fethaland (SEI 2 Figure 5.3.16e) and Viewpoint 18, Hermaness Hill (SEI 2 Figure 5.2.18e) respectively.</p> <p>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</p> <p>The magnitude of change from the revised Proposed Development on the SLQ of ‘coastal views both close and distant’ is considered to be reduced</p>

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
	from the 2020 SEI by the change to the wind farm and is assessed to be Slight and Not Significant, being confined to distant, indirect effects.
<p>Generic Special Landscape Quality: “Coastal settlement and fertility within a large hinterland of unsettled moorland and coast”</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>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</p> <p>No Change to SLQ</p>
<p>Generic Special Landscape Quality: “The hidden coasts”</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 ghoups are suddenly encountered, inviting further exploration.”</i></p>	<p>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2020 layout:</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.</p> <p>The changes to the Proposed Development in 2020 reduced the influence of development on views from both Tonga and at the Point of Fethaland. The areas with visibility of the Proposed Development were more intermittent and reduced overall. Where visible in the context of foreground views to the hidden coastline, the Proposed Development would 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 would only have indirect effects on wider views.</p> <p>Mitigation achieved through the revised 2021 layout:</p> <p>The removal of five turbines from the western side of the Proposed Development, as proposed in this SEI 2, has the effect of further reducing the perceived association of the turbines with the hidden coast views emphasised in this SLQ. This in turn, strengthens the perception that the wind farm is located in the core of the uplands, diminishing further the visual magnitude of change from the Proposed Development.</p> <p>This beneficial effect, experienced from both sub areas of the NSA, is seen in the comparative wirelines for Viewpoint 16, Point of Fethaland (SEI 2</p>

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>Figure 5.3.16e) and Viewpoint 18, Hermaness Hill (SEI 2 Figure 5.2.18e) respectively.</p> <p>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</p> <p>The magnitude of change from the revised Proposed Development on the SLQ of 'hidden coasts' is considered to be reduced by the change to the wind farm and is assessed to be Slight and Not Significant, being confined to distant, indirect effects.</p>
<p>Generic Special Quality: "The effects and co-existence of wind and shelter"</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>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2020 layout:</p> <p>The presence of slowly rotating turbines seen in distant views from the sub-units of the NSA may be perceived to influence and enhance the effect of wind in the landscape. The wind farm, in itself, would offer no perception of shelter in the landscape.</p> <p>The change to the Proposed Development would 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>The Proposed Development would not have a significant influence on "the effects and co-existence of wind and shelter".</p> <p>Mitigation achieved through the revised 2021 layout:</p> <p>The removal of five turbines from the western side of the Proposed Development, as proposed in this SEI 2, has the effect of further reducing the perceived association of the turbines with the coastal views emphasised in this SLQ and reinforces its association with the wind swept interior moorland.</p> <p>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</p> <p>The magnitude of change from the revised Proposed Development on the SLQ of 'the effects and co-existence of wind and shelter' is Negligible and Not Significant, being confined to distant, indirect effects.</p>
<p>Generic Special Landscape Quality: "A sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity"</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 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"</i></p>	<p>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2020 layout:</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.</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, would 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 would be reduced and more intermittent.</p> <p>The landscape remains very exposed, wild and dynamic and the "sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity" will remain largely intact.</p> <p>Mitigation achieved through the revised 2021 layout:</p>

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><i>as the wind picks up, the rain begins and an Atlantic storm sets in.</i></p> <p>Hermaness Specific Special Landscape Qualities: <i>“Muckle Flugga, within the Hermaness section of the NSA, is further from the Scottish/English border than Lands End.”</i></p>	<p>The removal of five turbines from the western side of the Proposed Development, as proposed in this SEI 2, has the effect of further reducing the perceived association of the turbines with the coastline emphasised in this SLQ and reinforces its association with the wind-swept interior moorland.</p> <p>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</p> <p>The magnitude of change from the revised Proposed Development on the SLQ of <i>‘sense of remoteness, solitude and tranquillity’</i> is reduced from the 2020 SEI assessment but remains Slight and Not Significant, being confined to distant, indirect effects focussed in the moorland core.</p>
<p>Generic Special Landscape Quality: <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"> • <i>“Muckle Flugga with its distinctive sloping, pointed rocks (within Hermaness)”</i> • <i>“The imposing cliffs of Hermaness itself, with its nesting seabirds.”</i> • <i>“Ramna Stacks, a group of skerries seen off the Point of Fethaland.”</i> 	<p>Effects on SLQ arising from the 2020 layout:</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 be 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>The removal of turbines within the 2020 layout would consolidate the Proposed Development into the interior of Yell and reduce the horizontal extent of the development, and the influence on coastal views. This would reduce the areas within the NSA which could 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>Mitigation achieved through the revised 2021 layout:</p> <p>The removal of five turbines from the western side of the Proposed Development, as proposed in this SEI 2, has the effect of further reducing the perceived association of the turbines with the notable and memorable coastal stacks, promontories and cliffs that form the focus of in this SLQ and reinforces its association with the wind-swept interior moorland.</p> <p>Risk of damage / loss to SLQ:</p> <p>The magnitude of change from the revised Proposed Development on the SLQ of <i>‘notable and memorable coastal stacks, promontories and cliffs’</i> is reduced from the 2020 SEI assessment to Negligible and Not Significant, being confined to distant, indirect effects that do not encroach on the sensitive coastal features.</p>

Step 4: Summary of Effects on the SLQs

The Proposed Development is located beyond most parts of the Shetland NSA, however, there are two sub areas of the NSA, which lie within a 20km radius of the Proposed Development and from where there will be the potential for indirect visual or perceptual 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 five turbines within the western extent of the array and the reduction in some turbine heights has consolidated the wind farm within a single landscape character type and associated it with the moorland core of Yell. The changes have removed turbines from proximity to the western shoreline of Yell and reduced the influence of the wind farm on coastal views and coastal qualities emphasised within the NSA citation. 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, such as cliffs and coastal geology, and the experience of these from within the NSA will be largely unaffected. The perception of the Proposed Development will only affect the wider setting of the NSA. As such the SLQs 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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