

Chapter 14 - Landscape and Visual

Cahermurphy West Wind
Farm, Co. Clare





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Prepared By: **MKO
Tuam Road
Galway
Ireland
H91 VW84**



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14. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

14.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). The LVIA assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Project on the landscape and visual amenity. The LVIA reported in this chapter was informed by desktop studies and receptor mapping, site visits, verified photomontages, and an impact assessment methodology which follows best practice guidance for LVIA. The LVIA also includes assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects. This chapter is supported by one volume and four appendices:

- **EIAR Volume 2 Photomontage Booklet** (Hereafter ‘Photomontage Booklet’): A1 Banner Photomontage Booklet presenting verified photomontage visualisations from representative viewpoints;
- **Appendix 14-1, LVIA Methodology**: An appendix detailing the methodology and guidance used for the assessments reported in this chapter;
- **Appendix 14-2, LCA Impact Assessment**: An assessment of effects on designated Landscape Character Areas (LCAs);
- **Appendix 14-3, Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables**: A visual impact assessment of the representative viewpoints included in the Photomontage Booklet;
- **Appendix 14-4, LVIA Baseline Map**: A large scale (A0) map showing all baseline landscape and visual receptors and LVIA tools (e.g. Viewpoints and Visibility mapping).

14.1.1 Statement of Authority

MKO has developed extensive expertise and experience over the last 20 years in the LVIA of large-scale infrastructure developments for Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR). The MKO Landscape and Visual team have produced LVIA across a diverse range of project types, including: renewable energy and grid infrastructure; residential developments; transport infrastructure; extraction infrastructure; and a range of other projects requiring EIAR.

This LVIA was written by Dija Mazonaite and Jack Workman and cowritten by Daniel Mulpeter with oversight by Michael Watson. Daniel Mulpeter provided technical support for the production of the LVIA including fieldwork and GIS with oversight from Jack and Michael.

Jack Workman MSc., TMLI, is the Landscape & Visual Project Director at MKO and is chartered as a Technician Member of the British Landscape Institute. Jack is an environmental scientist and an LVIA specialist with an academic background in the field of Environmental Science and Geography. Jack’s primary role at MKO is scoping and writing LVIA for EIARs with over 5 years’ experience managing all aspects of LVIA for a broad range of commercial infrastructure developments. Jack holds a BSc. in Psychology, and an MSc. in Coastal and Marine Environments (Physical Processes, Policy & Practice). Jack is an active participant in the National Landscape Forum, presenting in 2023 and 2024 on the topic of LVIA, he also regularly delivers guest lectures for students on the topic of LVIA at top third level institutions in Ireland including University of Galway, Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin and University College Cork. Jack holds a membership with the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management and is also a member of the Landscape Research Group.

Michael Watson is the Environment Division Director in MKO who has over 25 years’ experience in the environmental sector. Following the completion of his master’s degree in environmental resource management, Geography, from National University of Ireland, Maynooth he worked for the Geological Survey of Ireland and then a prominent private environmental consultancy prior to joining MKO in 2014. Michael’s professional experience includes managing Environmental Impact Assessments and Landscape & Visual Impact Assessments on behalf of clients in the wind farm, waste management,

commercial and industrial sectors nationally. Michael worked on the capture and development of photomontages as well as compiling the Landscape & Visual Impact Assessments for some of the first wind turbines being proposed in Ireland in the early 2000's and has been compiling and reviewing LVIA chapters for multiple wind farm projects each year since 2014. Michael is a key member of the MKO senior management team and as head of the Environment Division has responsibilities to mentor various grades of team members, foster a positive and promote continuous professional development for employees. Michael also has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Geography and Economics from NUI Maynooth, is a Member of IEMA, a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv).

Dija Mazonaite is a Project Environmental Scientist and LVIA Specialist at MKO. Dija has a BSc (Hons) in Geography & Geosystems and was recognised as a University Scholar at the University of Galway. Dija was also a finalist in Undergraduate of the Year for Innovative Sustainable Thinking. Dija's primary role at MKO is producing the LVIA chapter of EIA reports for large infrastructure developments. Since joining MKO, Dija has conducted and project managed all aspects of LVIA for a broad range of commercial infrastructure developments including wind and solar energy projects, grid infrastructure, extraction industry and Strategic Housing Developments. Dija's key strengths include proficiency in GIS tools such as ArcGIS and QGIS, conducting landscape and visual impact assessments and capturing image data through drone surveys and photomontages. Dija is an affiliate member with the Landscape Institute and is also a member with IEMA, with qualifications to fly drones in the A1/A3 subcategories.

Daniel Mulpeter is an Affiliate Member of the Landscape Institute and an LVIA Specialist with MKO with experience engaging in LVIA assessments for wind energy and public infrastructure. Daniel holds an MSc in Environmental Science from Trinity College Dublin, where he completed his thesis on "Estimating Peat Depth using Gamma-ray Spectrometry and Photogrammetry". Furthermore, he received a BSc (Hons) in General Science, finishing with Applied Maths and Biology. Daniel's key strengths include proficiency in GIS tools such as QGIS and ArcGIS, conducting landscape and visual impact assessments, and capturing data through drone surveys and photomontages

14.1.2 Proposed Project Description

A full and detailed description of the Proposed Project can be found in Chapter 4: 'Description' of this EIAR. Section 4.1 of that chapter describes the Proposed Project and its component parts, including the works subject to proposed applications for planning permission to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP). The Proposed Project seeks a ten-year planning permission and 35-year operational life from the date of commissioning of the Proposed Wind Farm and Proposed Grid Connection (Proposed Project).

14.1.2.1 In-Text Reference to the Proposed Project

Please see project specific definitions as set out in Section 1.1.1 Chapter 1 of this EIAR. For the purposes of clarity for this chapter, the following references are specific for this chapter:

- Where the "Proposed Wind Farm site" is referred to, this refers to the portion of the Site surrounding the Proposed Wind Farm but excluding the portion of the Site surrounding the Proposed Grid Connection underground cabling route
- Where the 'proposed turbines' are referred to, this includes the turbine components of the Proposed Project.

14.1.2.2 Essential Aspects of the Proposed Project and Primary Focus of the LVIA

This LVIA follows 'The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition' (hereafter, GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute (LI) & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2013) as well as 'Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of

GLVIA3: Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2024-01' (hereafter, LI TGN 24-01) published by the Landscape Institute (LI) (2024). This guidance states that:

“It is important to make sure that the Project description provides all the information needed to identify its effect on particular aspects of the environment. For LVIA it is important to understand, from the Project description, the essential aspects of the scheme that will potentially give rise to its effects on the landscape and visual amenity”.

The tall, vertical nature of the proposed turbines make them the most prominent elements of the Proposed Project from a landscape and visual perspective and have the most potential to give rise to significant landscape and visual effects. In this regard, the proposed turbines are deemed to be the ‘essential aspect’ of the Proposed Project which will give rise to effects on the landscape and visual amenity and are the primary focus of the LVIA reported in this chapter.

Other components of the Proposed Project are not deemed to be as visually prominent as the proposed turbines; however, they have the potential to give rise to localised landscape and visual effects. These other components are assessed in Section 14.7: *Likely Significant Landscape and Visual Effects* of this Chapter. Although not the primary focus of this LVIA, these elements are given full consideration throughout this Chapter.

14.1.2.3 Range of Turbine Dimensions Assessed in this Chapter

As detailed in Chapter 1 of this EIAR, the proposed turbines to be installed on the Proposed Wind Farm site will have a ground-to-blade tip height, hub height and blade length with the following range of dimensions:

- Turbine Tip Height: Maximum Height 185 metres, Minimum Height 180 metres;
- Hub Height: Maximum Height 110.5 metres, Minimum Height 98.5 metres;
- Rotor Diameter: Maximum Length 163 metres, Minimum Length 149 metres;

Primary Turbine Model used for Assessment in the LVIA and the Photomontage Booklet

Throughout this LVIA, a turbine model comprising a rotor diameter of 149m and a hub height of 110.5m and max tip height of 185m is considered to be the primary representative illustration of the Proposed Wind Farm and was used for all photomontage visualisations and used for Zone of Theoretical Visibility Mapping (ZTV) mapping.

On the basis of professional judgement and on consideration of the range of turbines which could be installed, the following combination of rotor diameter and hub height has been identified as the most representative for assessment in this LVIA, this configuration is termed as ‘Maximum Tip Height, Maximum Hub Height, Minimum Rotor Diameter’:

- ‘Maximum Tip Height, Maximum Hub Height, Minimum Rotor Diameter’ – All 15 No. Photomontage Viewpoints.
 - Maximum Tip Height – 185 metres;
 - Maximum Hub Height – 110.5 metres;
 - Minimum Rotor Diameter – 149 metres.

The turbine configuration above has been selected within the proposed range for inclusion for all viewpoints within the Photomontage Booklet (and all photowires). The basis for this selection is that this combination is likely to show the greatest extent of the entire turbine structure (hub, blades and tower) and is likely to be the most visible from the Viewpoints assessed in this LVIA. The hub (or ‘Nacelle’) of a turbine is a prominent focal point and the visual prominence of a turbine is typically increased if the hub is viewed above a landscape feature, rather than below. Therefore, the turbine configuration above

(Tip Height 185; Hub Height 110.5m; Rotor Diameter 149m) which incorporates the maximum hub height and maximum tip height is likely to increase the visual prominence of turbines and represents a worst case scenario for likely significant landscape and visual effects within the range proposed. This turbine configuration constitutes the tallest height for the purposes of modelling Half-Blade ZTV Maps and was the model used for all ZTVs in in this Chapter. The ZTV map generated from the proposed turbines is presented and discussed in Section 0.

Assessing the Turbine Range Using Photomontages and Comparative Wirelines

Photomontage visualisations are the best LVIA tool to assess any likely effects arising due to differences of turbine configurations used within the proposed range.

Irrespective of which combination of hub height and blade length within the range is installed on-site, the significance of residual landscape and visual effects will not be altered. However, for the avoidance of doubt, two alternative turbine configurations are presented for 2 selected viewpoints included in the Photomontage Booklet accompanying this document, these configurations are termed ‘Maximum Tip Height, Intermediate Hub Height, Maximum Rotor Diameter’, and ‘Minimum Tip Height, Minimum Hub Height, Maximum Rotor Diameter’. The viewpoints selected are VP14 and VP15. The photomontage assessment tables for these viewpoints within *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables* include a comment addressing the alternative turbine configurations and confirm that the turbine configuration ultimately installed on-site will not alter the assessment of residual visual effects.

The dimensions and configurations of the ‘Maximum Tip Height, Intermediate Hub Height, Maximum Rotor Diameter’ and ‘Minimum Tip Height, Minimum Hub Height, Maximum Rotor Diameter’ used for the assessment are detailed below:

- Maximum Tip Height, Intermediate Hub Height, Maximum Rotor Diameter’ – 2 No. Photomontage Viewpoints.
 - Maximum Tip Height – 185 metres;
 - Intermediate Hub Height – 103.5 metres;
 - Maximum Rotor Diameter – 163 metres.
- Minimum Tip Height, Minimum Hub Height, Maximum Rotor Diameter’ – 2 No. Photomontage Viewpoints.
 - Minimum Tip Height – 180 metres;
 - Minimum Hub Height – 98.5 metres;
 - Maximum Rotor Diameter – 163 metres.

14.1.3 Mitigation by Design

The Proposed Wind Farm site was strategically selected as a landscape highly suitable for the development of wind energy. Through the iterative project design process, various best practice tools, for assessing the landscape and visual impact of a proposed wind farm development were utilised to bring forward the optimum design for the Proposed Project with respect to landscape and visual factors. These tools include landscape modelling, ZTV mapping and the preparation of photomontage visualisations. In reality, this process is a continuation of the iterative design process since the refusal, on visual grounds and landscape designation grounds, of the previous application (Cahermurphy II Wind Farm Application). Details of the various turbine layout iterations included as part of this design process are included in Chapter 3: ‘Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives’ of this EIAR.

The iterative design process was informed by the siting and design guidance for wind farms in specific landscape types as set out in the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government [DoEHLG], 2006), hereafter the ‘WEDGs (2006)’, and regard to the Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government [DoHPLG], 2019), hereafter the ‘Draft WEDGs (2019)’.

This LVIA has identified the key benefits of the Site location and project design, in mind of wind-energy-related and landscape-related planning considerations. The key factors with respect to landscape and visual impacts of the Proposed Project design are briefly introduced below and comprehensively analysed in Section 14.7.

The Proposed Wind Farm layout that is the subject of this LVIA incorporates the following landscape and visual design considerations for best practice wind farm design:

- 7 no. proposed turbines of the Proposed Project are sited in a “Strategic Area” for wind energy development in the Clare Wind Energy Strategy, and 1 no. proposed turbine ‘T8’ is sited within an area designated as ‘Acceptable in Principle’.
- The Proposed Wind Farm is primarily sited within the Slieve Callan Uplands Landscape Character Area (LCA), an LCA of the lowest landscape sensitivity rating for wind energy development in County Clare, as set out in local planning policy. The landscape characteristics of this LCA make it highly suitable and capable of absorbing multiple large scale wind energy developments.
- The Proposed Wind Farm is not located within any high sensitivity landscape designations of County Clare (‘Heritage’ Landscapes’), nor is it the subject of protected scenic amenity designations within the local planning policy.
- The Site is primarily comprised of a marginal upland landscape with commercial forestry, where wind energy is well established. As such, it is a modified working landscape with low sensitivity, deemed capable of effectively absorbing the Proposed Wind Farm.
- The proposed turbines are sited in an upland landscape of large scale, capable of effectively accommodating multiple wind energy developments.
- The proposed turbines are sited in a sparsely populated area with appropriate setback distances from local population centres.
- The topographical characteristics of the marginal upland landscape and its surrounding area naturally limit the visual exposure of the proposed turbines. Distinctive ridgelines and landforms of the upland landscape to the east and north effectively obscure visibility of the turbines from much of the broader landscape, thereby limiting the extent of landscape and visual impact upon large numbers of receptors.
- The turbine layout has been designed to create a coherent arrangement of turbines, contiguous and connected to each other visually and with consistent spacing in line with the guidance for design and siting of wind farms in ‘Transitional Marginal’ Landscape Types in the WEDGs (2006), and regard to the ‘Draft WEDGs (2019).
- Siting of proposed turbines adheres to the minimum 500m set back distance in the current WEDGs (2006) and also the recommended larger 4 times tip height set back distance to third party properties, explicitly set out for residential visual amenity, prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019).
- The proposed Grid Connection is underground and follows the local road network and existing forestry tracks, thereby eliminating potential landscape and visual effects during the operational phase;
- The internal site road layout makes use of the existing forestry tracks wherever possible (to be upgraded for construction and delivery of wind turbine components), to minimise the requirement for new tracks within the Site;
- Felling of existing coniferous plantation is predominantly limited to keyhole felling in localised parts of the Site, in keeping with existing practices in the commercial forestry plantation on-site.

14.1.4 Scoping Replies & Pre-Planning Meetings

Clare County Council

A scoping and consultation exercise has been carried out by MKO with Clare County Council, as detailed in Chapter 2 of this EIAR: *Background*. A pre-application consultation meeting was held on 6th of November 2024; the meeting was attended by representatives of Clare County Council, FEI and MKO. MKO presented an overview of the scope of the LVIA to be included in this chapter of the EIAR including ZTV mapping and photomontage locations and noted the key sensitive receptors which were to be assessed.

Clare County Council noted that the proposed turbines are of a large scale and that there is potential for cumulative visual impacts with other wind energy developments in this area of West Clare. This LVIA comprehensively addresses the scale of the proposed turbines and their cumulative interactions with other existing, permitted and proposed wind energy developments.

During consultation with the council, a specific request was made for a photomontage to be produced from Doonbeg Golf Club. In response to this request, this LVIA includes a photomontage (VP09 in the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*) captured from a location on this golf course where there is a local, well-trafficked pathway to the amenities of Doonbeg Beach.

This chapter has assessed the likely landscape and visual impacts of the Proposed Project on the landscape and visual receptors discussed at these pre-planning meetings.

14.2 Brief Methodology And Assessment Criteria

This section broadly outlines the guidance and methodology used to undertake the LVIA of the Proposed Project; a more detailed description of the methodology is provided in *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology*. There are five main sections to the LVIA reported in this Chapter:

- Visibility of the Proposed Wind Farm
 - ZTV mapping;
 - Overview of actual visibility from site visits;
 - Route Screening Analysis;
- Landscape Baseline:
 - Policy Context – Relevant landscape and visual policies and designations in local planning policy documents;
 - Landscape Character and Sensitivity of the Site - informed by site visits, and an overview of relevant best practice siting and design guidance for wind farms appropriate to the landscape of the Site;
 - Landscape Character and Sensitivities of the wider landscape setting – Identify designated LCAs and high sensitivity landscape receptors scoped in for impact assessment.
- Visual Baseline:
 - Identify visual receptors scoped in for impact assessment;
 - Selection of photomontage viewpoints.
- Cumulative Context: Identification of other wind energy developments included for cumulative LVIA.
- Likely Significant Landscape and Visual Effects:
 - Impact assessment supported by *Appendix 14-2 – LCA Impact Assessment*, and *Appendix 14-3 – Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*.
 - Landscape and Visual effects reported through the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project.
 - Assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects.

14.2.1 Scope and Definition of the LVIA Study Areas

The landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Project on the Site are assessed in this LVIA. However, the landscape baseline mapping, visual receptor mapping and viewpoint selection are based on wider study areas. Following best practice guidance, the experience and professional judgement, two study areas were defined for this LVIA:

- **'LVIA Study Area':** All of the landscape within **25km** from the proposed turbines for assessment of effects on landscape and visual receptors and is the search area for other wind energy developments included for cumulative assessment;
- **'LCA Study Area':** All of the landscape within **15km** from the proposed turbines for assessment of effects on designated Landscape Character Areas (LCAs).

The full justification and rationale for use of the 25km LVIA Study Area for assessment of effects on landscape and visual receptors, 15km LCA Study Area for assessment of effects on designated LCAs are presented in detail in Section 1.4 of Appendix 14-1: *LVIA Methodology*.

After defining the parameters for this LVIA, and on the basis of desk studies, survey work undertaken (as discussed throughout this Chapter and in Appendix 14-1: *LVIA Methodology*), professional judgement and experience of the assessment team, the following are scoped out of assessment in this LVIA:

- Effects on landscape and visual receptors with minimal or no theoretical visibility (as predicted by the ZTV mapping), and/or very distant visibility, and are therefore unlikely to be subject to significant effects;
- Effects on designated landscape receptors beyond 25km from the proposed turbines where it is judged that significant effects on key characteristics and/or special qualities are unlikely to occur;
- Effects on designated LCAs beyond 15km from the proposed turbines, where it is judged that significant effects on landscape character are unlikely to occur;
- Effects on visual receptors beyond 25km from the proposed turbines where it is judged that significant effects are unlikely occur;
- Cumulative landscape and visual effects beyond 25km from the proposed turbines where it is judged that significant effects are unlikely to occur.
- Cumulative effects in combination with single turbines with a tip height lower than 50 metres beyond 3km from the proposed turbines, where it is judged that significant effects are unlikely to occur in these potential cumulative scenarios.

14.2.2 Methodology Overview for Assessment of Potential Impacts

The landscape and visual assessment methodology used in this chapter (Detailed in Appendix 14-1) includes clearly documented methods based on the GLVIA3 (LI & IEMA, 2013). This includes consideration of landscape and visual sensitivity balanced with the magnitude of change to determine the likely significance of effects. Potential for cumulative effects are also considered and accounted for in these determinations and judgements. Mitigating factors are then taken into consideration to arrive at residual landscape and visual effects. Residual landscape and visual effects are graded upon an 'impact assessment classification of significance' scale, as defined by the 'Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (EPA, 2022). The assessments have been informed by many site visits and are supported by a range of best practice tools for LVIA including ZTV mapping and photomontages. Further details of the methods used to produce ZTV maps and photomontages, as well as the LVIA process, including assessment of cumulative effects are presented in Appendix 14-1.

14.2.3 LVIA Wind Energy Context

Given Ireland's renewable energy targets which have been set by the State for on-shore renewable wind energy development, wind turbines will form a new component in the working landscape for the coming decades. The focus for visual impact assessment of wind energy developments is therefore distance, arrangement, location and potential disruption to key scenic sensitivities rather than a commonly misconceived focus on whether turbines are visible or not from a particular vantage point. The outcome of the visual impact assessment, with regards to the EPA (2022) definition of significance, is calibrated in the overall context of LVIA of wind energy developments in Ireland and what is acceptable in the context of emerging baseline trends and the acceptability of wind turbines within views as a result of national policy.

Over time, wind turbines have, and will become a more familiar and accepted component of the Irish landscape, particularly in working rural contexts. Accordingly, their presence may not carry the same level of perceived visual intrusion as less common or incongruous forms of development. In this context, the calibration of visual impact significance reflects both the policy-driven imperative for renewable energy development and the evolving visual baseline in parts of the Irish landscape. While the visibility of turbines remains an important consideration, it does not in itself equate to significant visual impact.

Key factors of focus in the overall impact assessment on visual receptors in relation to photomontages are:

- The perceived scale of the proposed turbines relative to the landscape as a result of setback distance;
- The number of proposed turbines visible;
- Full or partial visibility of partial turbines e.g. are they partially screened by features;
- The horizontal extent of the proposed turbines in the field of view;
- Overall visual coherency with regards to form and arrangement and how the proposed turbines correspond to the landscape from a particular vantage point as per best practice siting and design guidance

14.3 Visibility of the Proposed Wind Farm

14.3.1 ZTV Mapping: Theoretical Visibility of the Proposed Turbines

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping is an important step in the LVIA process, in that it clearly shows which areas have theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines and which areas have no theoretical visibility. The ZTV mapping methodology outlined in Section 1.4 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility Mapping' of Appendix 14-1: *LVIA Methodology* was used to examine the theoretical visibility of the 8 no. proposed turbines from all landscape and visual receptors within the LVIA Study Area, using the half-blade height of the wind turbines as points of reference, called the Half-Blade ZTV or ZTV, and with the associated map called the ZTV map. The turbine model used for the generation of ZTVs is the 'Maximum Tip Height, Maximum Hub Height, Minimum Rotor Diameter' which represents the greatest visual exposure for a Half-Blade ZTV within the range of turbine dimensions proposed.

The WEDGs (p.94) (DoEHLG, 2006) and Draft Revised WEDGs (p.152) (DoHLG, 2019) note that:

"It is recommended that the Zone of Theoretical Visibility should assess the degree of visibility based on the numbers of turbines visible to half the blade length in addition to hub-height".

A Half-Blade ZTV is considered more appropriate and useful than a Full-Blade ZTV for analysing visibility of the proposed turbines and scoping receptors in and out for assessment, particularly when using an elevation model representing a bare earth scenario. As well as the guidance cited above, the decision to use a Half-Blade ZTV is based upon professional judgement and guided by the extensive experience the assessment team have ground truthing ZTVs against the reality of turbine visibility within landscapes where turbines already exist. As noted in Appendix 14-1, actual visibility on the ground is significantly less than predicted by the ZTV mapping due to intervening factors including on-site visual screening from natural and man-made features, atmospheric weather and/or localised topography.

Generation of the Half-Blade ZTV utilises large scale topographical data (interpolation across 10m Tailte Éireann contour data) and does not account for topographical variation of smaller scale (e.g. < 10m). Therefore, in reality, small, localised undulations in topography are likely to further inhibit visibility of the proposed turbines that may not be represented in the ZTV map. Other features of the landscape such as vegetation and man-made elements are also likely to obscure the proposed turbines from view from many areas where the Half-Blade ZTV indicates there is full visibility. In this regard, the ZTV Map is a useful tool to indicate where there is definitely no visibility of the proposed turbines, thus receptors located in these areas can be scoped out from further assessment.

14.3.2 Half Blade ZTV of the proposed turbines

The Half Blade ZTV of the Proposed Wind Farm and LVIA Study Area is shown in Figure 14-2 below. The ZTV map is used within several mapping figures included in this chapter to enable assessment of theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines from landscape and visual receptors (See Appendix 14-1). Separate colour bands are used on each ZTV map to indicate the number of turbines of which the half blade will potentially be visible. The legend on each map shows the number of theoretically visible turbines for each corresponding colour, which are as follows:

- Teal: 1 - 3 turbines theoretically visible;
- Yellow: 4 - 6 turbines theoretically visible;
- Navy: 7 - 8 turbines theoretically visible.

Figure 14-1 below shows the topographical features and elevation gradients existent within the receiving landscape of the LVIA Study Area, the geography of these topographical landforms defines the distribution of theoretical visibility illustrated Figure 14-2.

The proposed turbines are situated on the ridgeline immediately north of Cahermurphy Hill, within the upland landform to the south of the Slieve Callan Uplands. The elevated Slieve Callan Upland landscape extends across the northwestern portion of the LVIA Study Area and is defined by notable topographical features such as Slieve Callan, Knockabullaunduff, Slievenalicka, and Ben Dash.

To the south of the proposed turbines, the landscape transitions to a gently undulating farmland landscape with more localised variations in topography. To the west of the LVIA Study Area, the landscape is primarily characterised by a lower-lying coastal plain where the landform descends gradually towards the Atlantic coastline.

Description of Theoretical Visibility within 5km of the proposed turbines

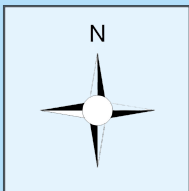
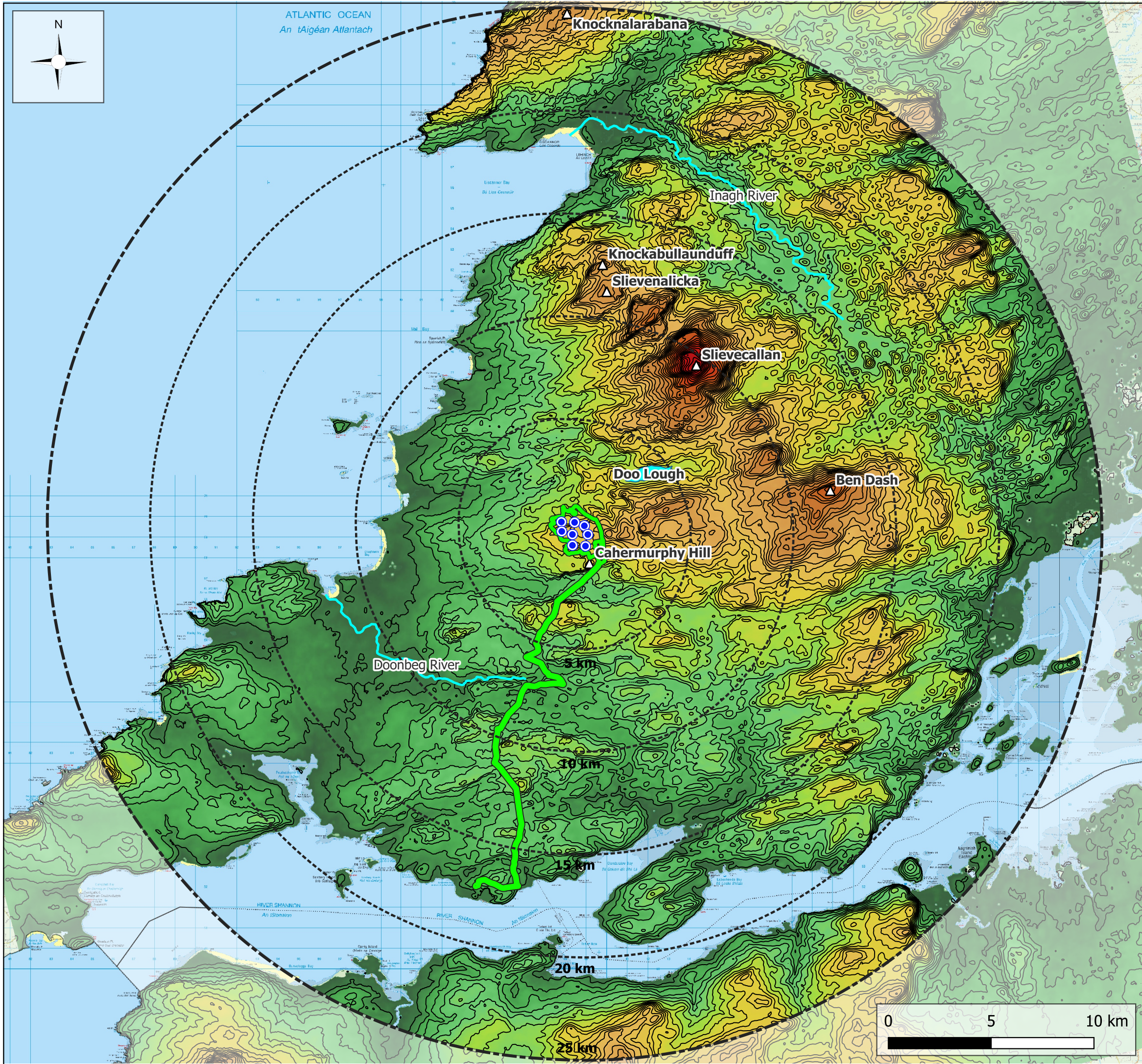
Within approx. 5 km of the proposed turbines, there is primarily full theoretical visibility, with localised pockets of no visibility occurring due to variations in the upland landform and intervening topographical undulations.

Description of Theoretical Visibility beyond 5km of the proposed turbines

Beyond 5km, theoretical visibility becomes more limited and is largely confined to the western extent of the LVIA Study Area, within the low-lying flat coastal plains along the Clare coastline. To the east, there is primarily no theoretical visibility due to topographical screening from the Slieve Callan Uplands. Small, intermittent pockets of theoretical visibility occur only at elevated vantage points along these upland ridgelines and high points.

Patches of theoretical visibility extend in a southward direction, interspersed with patches of no theoretical visibility due to localised variations and undulations within the landscape. Beyond 25km to the south, a stretch of full theoretical visibility occurs along the County Kerry and Limerick coastline overlooking the Shannon Estuary.

To the north, theoretical visibility is generally limited to within approximately 10km of the nearest proposed turbine, with intervening upland landform limiting visibility within the landscape. A distinct area of full theoretical visibility is located at the northern edge of the LVIA Study Area at the Cliffs of Moher, an elevated vantage point offering panoramic views across the landscape.



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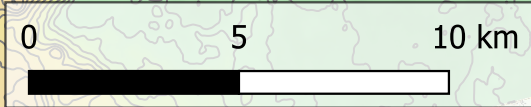
Map Legend

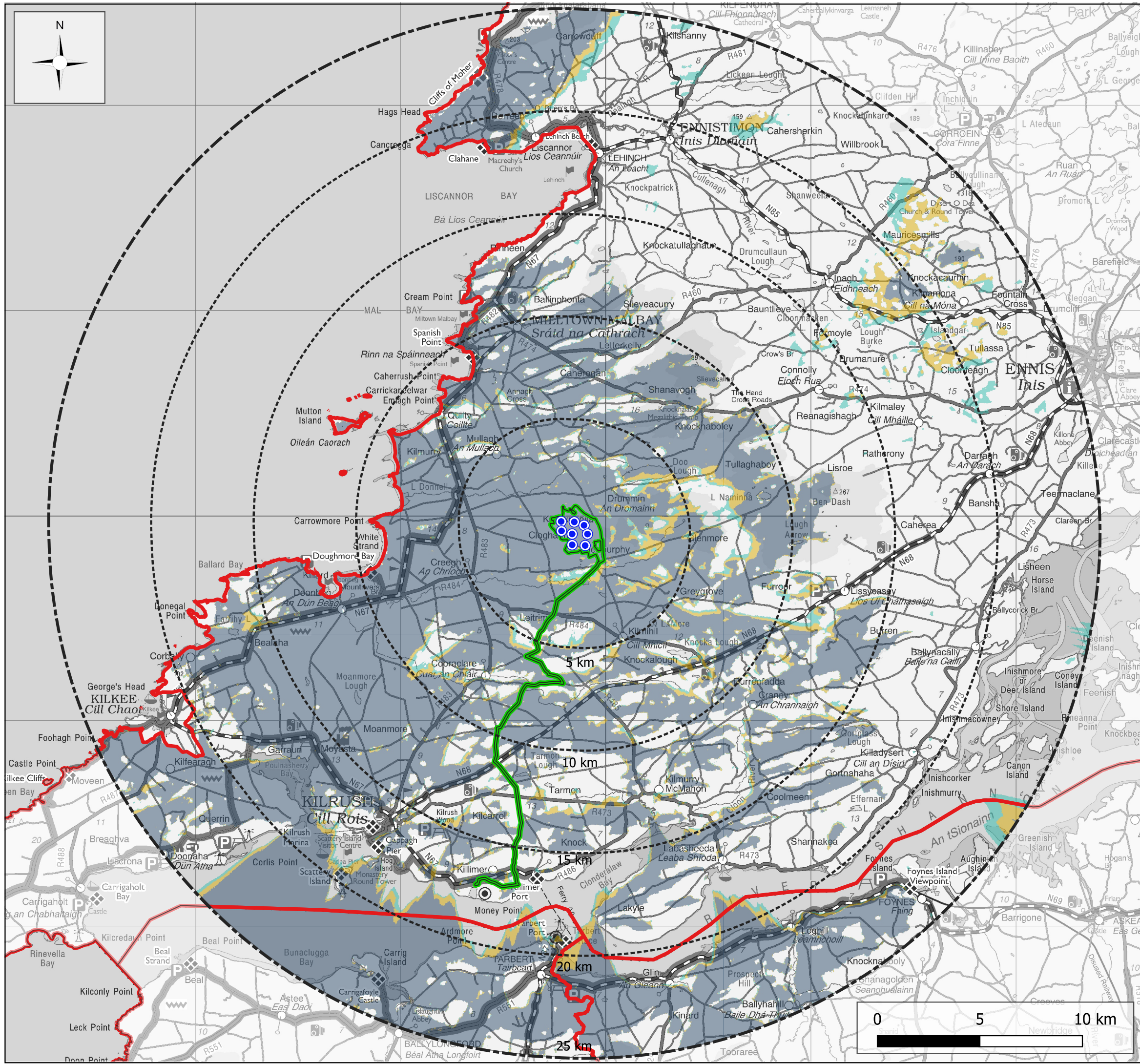
- LVIA Study Area
- EIA Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbines
- △ Hills
- Water Courses
- 10m Contours

Elevations m (AOD)

25
50
75
100
150
200
250
300
350
400

Drawing No.	Figure 14-1			
Drawing Title	Physical Features Map			
Project Title	Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:180,000	230843	03/02/2026	GL	DM





Map Legend

- LVIA Study Area
 - County Borders
 - EIA Site Boundary
 - Proposed Turbines
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility**
- 1-3 Turbines Theoretically Visible
 - 4-6 Turbines Theoretically Visible
 - 7-8 Turbines Theoretically Visible

Drawing No.				
Figure 14-2				
Drawing Title				
Zone of Theoretical Visibility				
Project Title				
Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development				
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:180,000	230843	19/01/2026	GL	DM



14.3.3 ZTV Versus Actual Visibility

The ZTV map is a useful tool to indicate areas where there will be no visibility of the proposed turbines. Further, in practice, vast areas of the LVIA Study Area which have an indication of full theoretical visibility by the ZTV map (Figure 14-2) are likely to have no visibility of the proposed turbines due to other visual screening factors existent within the landscape.

Multiple field surveys were conducted by Jack Workman on 1st of August and 1st of October 2024, and by Daniel Mulpeter on the 21st of February 2025 to determine the actual likely visibility from locations where the ZTV has indicated full theoretical visibility. These surveys determined that visual screening from localised undulations in topography, vegetation and man-made elements substantially reduce the likelihood of viewing the proposed turbines in vast areas of the LVIA Study Area.

As stated in Appendix 14-1, a 25 km LVIA Study Area has been adopted as a precautionary measure due to the presence of the Cliffs of Moher and Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark sited to the north of the LVIA Study Area. Within the outer extent of the LVIA Study Area, including parts of Counties Kerry and Limerick, site visits confirmed that the proposed turbines would be perceived at considerable distance, appearing as small and indistinct elements within the wider view. In these locations, views are experienced within an established industrial and energy landscape context where wind turbines already form part of the visual baseline. As such, Significant visual effects are not envisaged.

14.3.3.1 Visibility in Close Proximity: Route Screening Analysis (RSA)

For this LVIA, Route Screening Analysis (RSA) was carried out within a 3km radius of the proposed turbines and on major roads extending to 5km. RSA was conducted to record the varying degrees of visual screening along the local road network and demonstrate the actual potential for visibility of the Proposed Turbines compared to ZTV mapping. The full methodology is outlined in *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology* (Section 1.5.3 On-Site Visibility Appraisal: RSA). The RSA visual screening categories are:

- **Little/No Screening** – visual screening: areas of the road that are mainly open with open views in the direction of the proposed turbines (see Plate 14-1);
- **Partial/Intermittent Screening** – visual screening: areas of the road where there are intermittent or partial views in the direction of the proposed turbines (see Plate 14-2);
- **Dense/Full Screening** – visual screening: areas of the road with dense visual screening, sufficient to block views in the direction of the proposed turbines (see Plate 14-3).

Figure 14-3 maps the quantified results of the RSA, showing the extent to which each visual screening classification is present on all public roads within 3km of the proposed turbines, and on major roads extending to 5km, using the following colour scheme: Little/None (green); Intermittent/Partial (blue); Dense/Full (orange).



Plate 14-1 Example of 'Little/No Screening' on the L-2082 Local Road north of Kilmihil



Plate 14-2 Example of 'Intermittent/Partial Screening' on the L-6188 Local Road south of the Proposed Wind Farm site



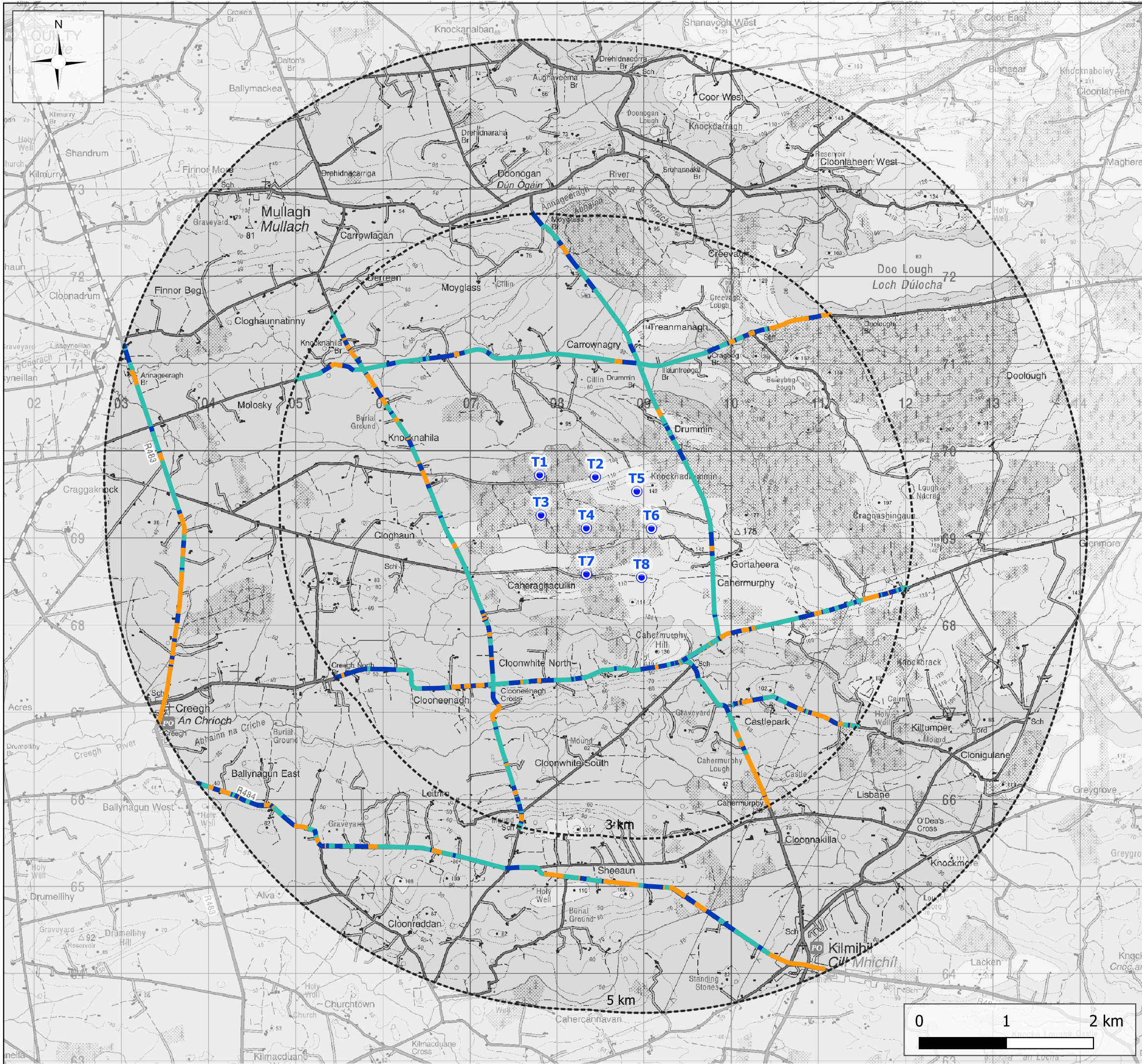
Plate 14-3 Example of 'Full Screening' on the L-2082 Local Road south of the Proposed Wind Farm site

Table 14-1 Distribution of Visual Screening Recorded during RSA.

Screening Class	Length of Road Mapped in Figure 14-3	Percentage Distribution of Screening on the Surveyed Roads
Little/No Screening	20.747 km	50.65%
Intermittent/Partial Screening	9.575 km	23.38%
Dense/Full Screening	10.635 km	25.97%

'Little/No Screening' was the most common class recorded, where the majority of these open views with little to no screening were located on local roads in the immediate setting of the Proposed Wind Farm in a grid-like pattern, as seen below in Figure 14-3. As shown in Figure 14-3, the stretches of 'No/Little Screening' are interspersed with short stretches of 'Intermittent/Partial' or 'Dense/Full Screening', becoming more prevalent in closer proximity to the site. As distance increases from the Wind Farm site, 'Intermittent/Partial' or 'Dense/Full Screening' becomes more prevalent .

Stretches of 'Intermittent/Partial' or 'Dense/Full Screening' are more noticeable around areas of dense stretches of coniferous plantations, for example to the northeast of the proposed turbines where the L-6204 local road traversing south of Doo Lough and along L-2082 local road and the R484 regional road, to the south of the proposed turbines. Near the junction of the L-6194, L-2100 and the L-2048 local roads, to the southwest of the proposed turbines, the RSA indicates more 'Intermittent/Partial Screening'. The R483 regional road traverses parallel to the west of the proposed turbines. Dense roadside vegetation along the south section of the R483 regional road, which is sited along relatively lower elevated land, screens visibility towards the Proposed Wind Farm. Further north along the R483 regional road there is much less roadside vegetation allowing more visibility .



Map Legend

- Proposed Turbines
- Route Screening Analysis**
- No / Very Little Screening
- Partial / Intermittent Screening
- Dense / Full Screening

Drawing No.	Figure 14-3			
Drawing Title	Route Screening Analysis			
Project Title	Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:42,500	230843	03/02/2026	GL	DM



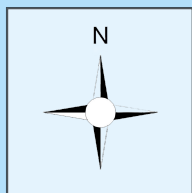
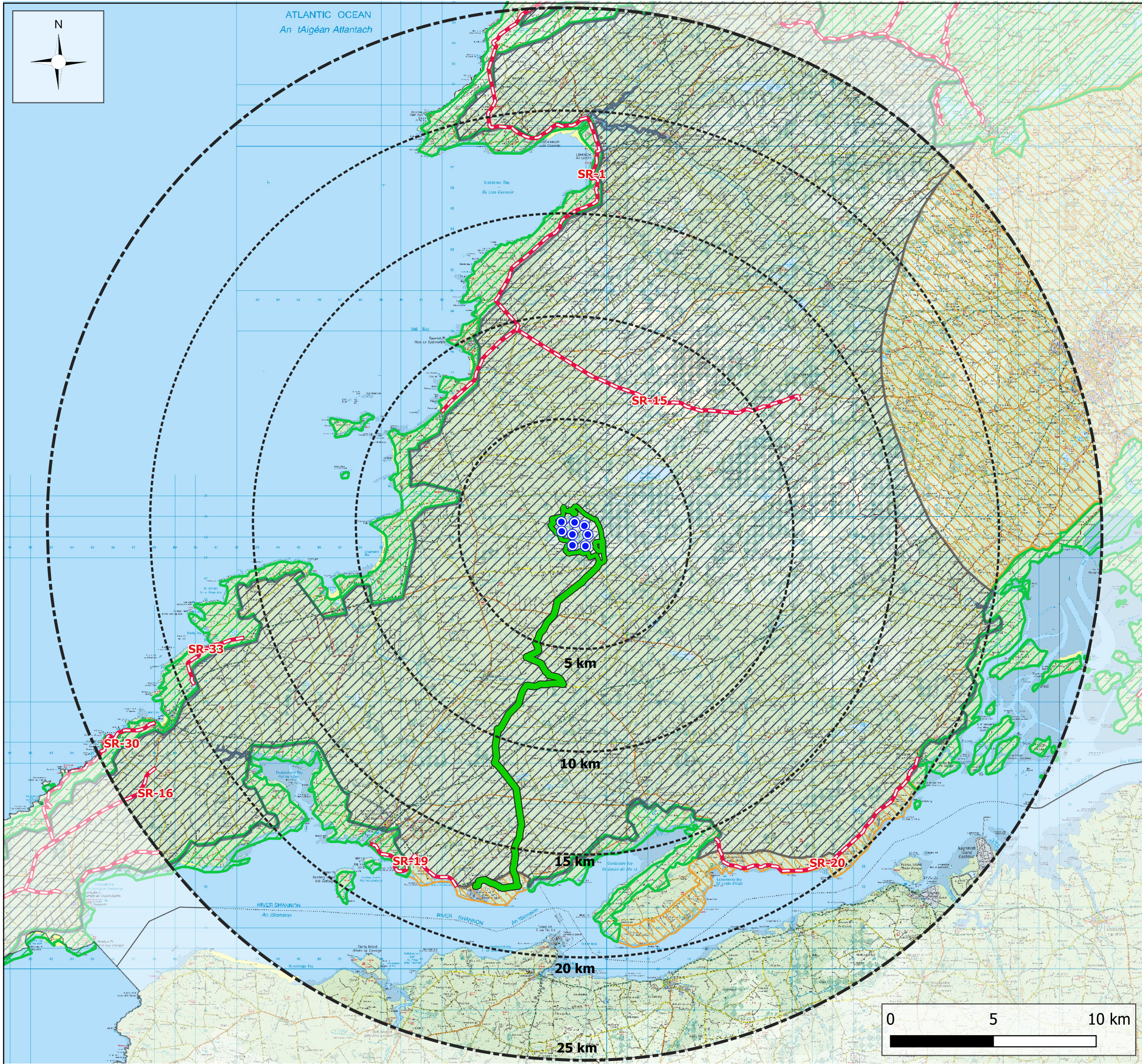
14.3.3.2 Overview of RSA and Visibility Appraisals

The visibility appraisals conducted as part of the RSA have found that local roads within the immediate setting of the Proposed Wind Farm generally have ‘Little/No Screening’ with open views of the proposed turbines, as indicated by the ZTV. However, the visibility indicated by the ZTV beyond the immediate road network is not fully representative of the actual on-ground visibility considering the roadside screening as determined by the RSA. Site visits determined that this is also the case for the wider landscape of the LVIA Study Area, where above-ground screening from localised topography, mature vegetation and the built environment substantially reduce the visual exposure of the proposed turbines compared with what is indicated by the ZTV. Visibility within the LVIA Study Area will be discussed further throughout this chapter.

14.4 Landscape Baseline

The landscape baseline reports relevant policy pertinent to the LVIA, as well as a description of the receiving landscape of the Proposed Wind Farm site and its wider setting. This is broken down into the following sections:

- **Landscape Designations and Policy Context** – Policy setting pertaining to the location and nature of the Site from a landscape perspective based on:
 - Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029.
- **Landscape Character of the Site** – A description of the physical landscape and characteristics of the Site and its immediate setting, this includes the following considerations:
 - Landscape characteristics based upon findings from site visits conducted in the years 2024 and 2025.
 - An appraisal of landscape value and the susceptibility of the landscape to change, and a determination of landscape sensitivity.
- **Landscape Characterisation in the 2006 WEDGs for Planning Authorities** – A review of the guidance (2006 WEDGs and 2019 draft WEDGs) relating to the landscape characteristics of the Site.
- **Landscape Character of the Wider Landscape Setting** - A description of the wider landscape setting, including the identification of designated Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) located within a 15 km LCA Study Area and a preliminary analysis using ZTV mapping.

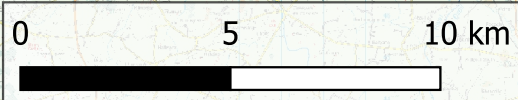


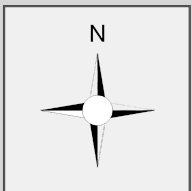
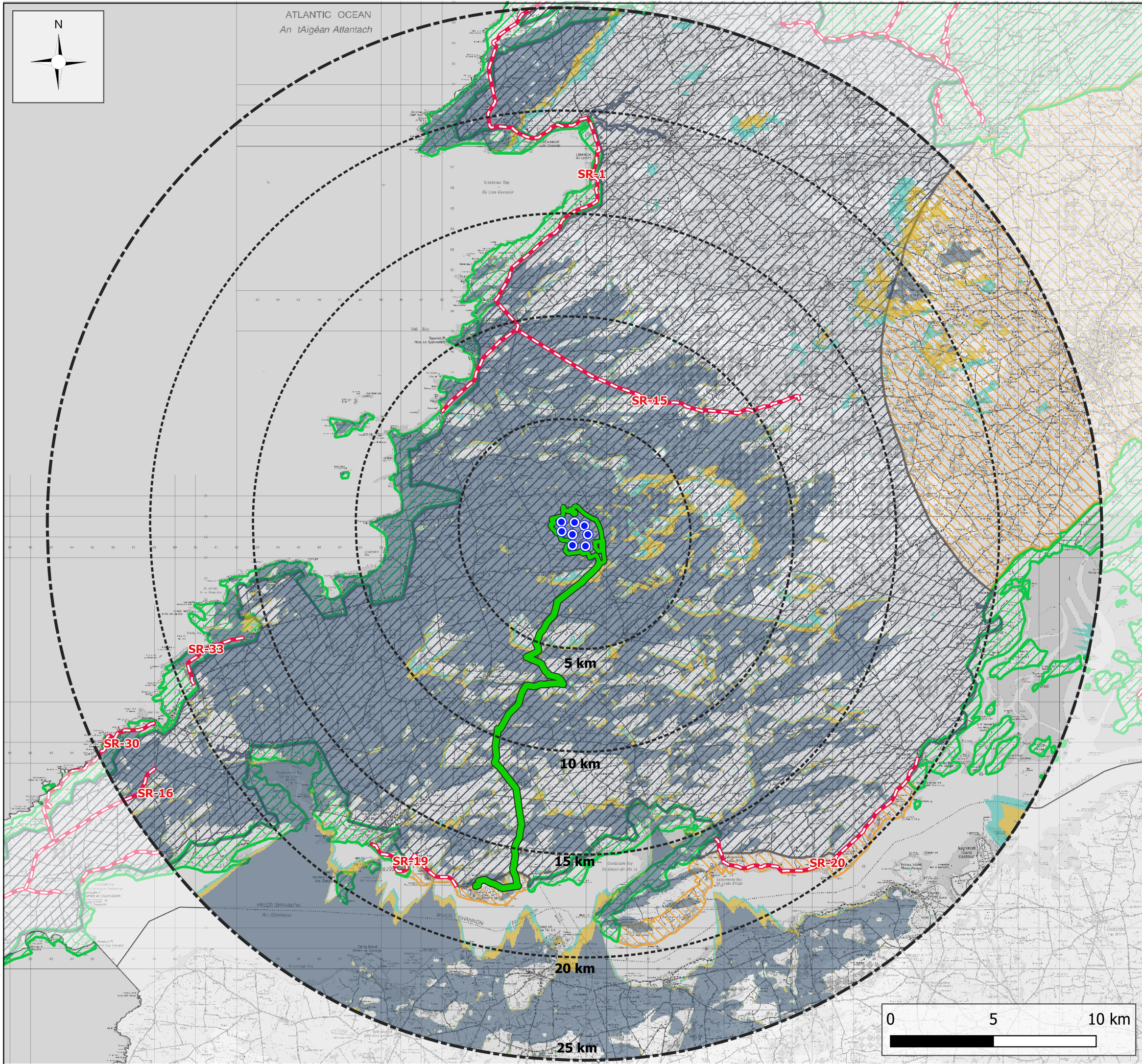
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Map Legend

- LVIA Study Area
- EIA Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbines
- Clare Scenic Routes
- ▨ Clare CDP Settled Landscape
- ▨ Clare CDP Heritage Landscape
- ▨ Clare CDP Working Landscape

Drawing No.	Figure 14-4			
Drawing Title	Policy Context Map			
Project Title	Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:180,000	230843	12/11/2025	JC	DM



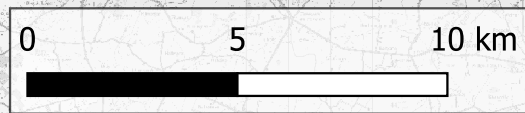


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Map Legend

- LVIA Study Area
 - EIA Site Boundary
 - Proposed Turbines
 - Clare Scenic Routes
 - ▨ Clare CDP Settled Landscape
 - ▨ Clare CDP Heritage Landscape
 - ▨ Clare CDP Working Landscape
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility**
- 1-3 Turbines Theoretically Visible
 - 4-6 Turbines Theoretically Visible
 - 7-8 Turbines Theoretically Visible

Drawing No.	Figure 14-5			
Drawing Title	Policy Context Map with ZTV			
Project Title	Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:180,000	230843	03/02/2026	GL	DM



14.4.1 Landscape Policy Context

This section provides an overview of local planning policy and identifies landscape and visual protections, designations and spatial zoning for wind energy development relevant to the LVIA of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project is located in Co. Clare, therefore the Clare County Development Plan 2023–2029 (hereafter ‘CCDP’) was the primary document used to inform this exercise.

14.4.1.1 County Clare Development Plan 2023-2029 (CCDP)

The CCDP describes landscape character as comprising of *“a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another and which makes an area unique”*.

Chapter 14 outlines the policies relating to the landscape and visual amenities within County Clare. The key goal identified in this chapter, as discussed in Section 1.5 of the CCDP is as follows:

“Goal XIV: A county of ‘living landscapes; where people live, work, recreate and visit while respecting, managing and taking pride in the unique landscape of the County”.

Section 14.0 of the CCDP notes that *“County Clare accommodates areas of significant landscape value which are important for both their natural beauty and for the opportunities they provide for recreation, tourism and other uses”*.

Section 14.1 of the CCDP sets out the Strategic Aims required to sustainably manage the diverse landscapes of County Clare:

- *“To ensure the implementation of the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 in County Clare.*
- *To implement the ‘Clare’s Living Landscapes’ approach to landscape management and enhancement throughout the County.*
- *To encourage the utilisation of the Clare County Landscape Character Assessment in both the preparation and assessment of planning applications.*
- *To utilise the ‘Clare Living Landscapes’ approach to ensure that development in the County takes place in the location /landscape deemed most appropriate; and*
- *To sustain the natural and cultural heritage of the County.”*

The following address the specific elements covered by this planning policy, including the landscape character assessment, the Heritage Landscapes, the designated protected views and prospects.

14.4.1.2 Designated Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)

The Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare discussed in Section 14.2.1 of Volume 1 of the CCDP, and the *Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare 2004* identifies 26 Landscape Character Types (LCTs), which the CCDP describes as *“distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character”*. These are further subdivided into Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), which the CCDP describes as *“Units of the landscape that are geographically specific and have their own character and sense of place. Each LCA has its own distinctive character, based upon patterns of geology, landform, land use, cultural, historical and ecological features.”*

The CCDP sets out the following objectives in relation to LCAs:

“It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- *To encourage the utilisation of the Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare, the forthcoming Regional Landscape Strategy and other relevant landscape policy and guidelines and to have regard to them in the facilitation, protection and management of appropriate landscape change in County Clare.”*

The Co. Clare LCAs which are located within the 15km LCA Study Area are listed below, and can be seen in Figure 14-6 below.

- LCA 03 - Cliffs of Moher and Lahinch
- LCA 16 - Cullenagh River Farmlands
- LCA 17 - Slieve Callan Upland
- LCA 18 - Shannon Estuary Farmland
- LCA 19 - Kilrush Farmland
- LCA 20 - Malbay Coastal Farmland
- LCA 21 - Loop Head

The proposed turbines are located primarily within LCA 17 - *Slieve Callan Upland*, with turbines T1 and T2 located within LCA 20 – *Malbay Coastal Farmland*.

The *County Clare Landscape Character Assessment 2004* describes LCA 17 - *Slieve Callan Upland* as:

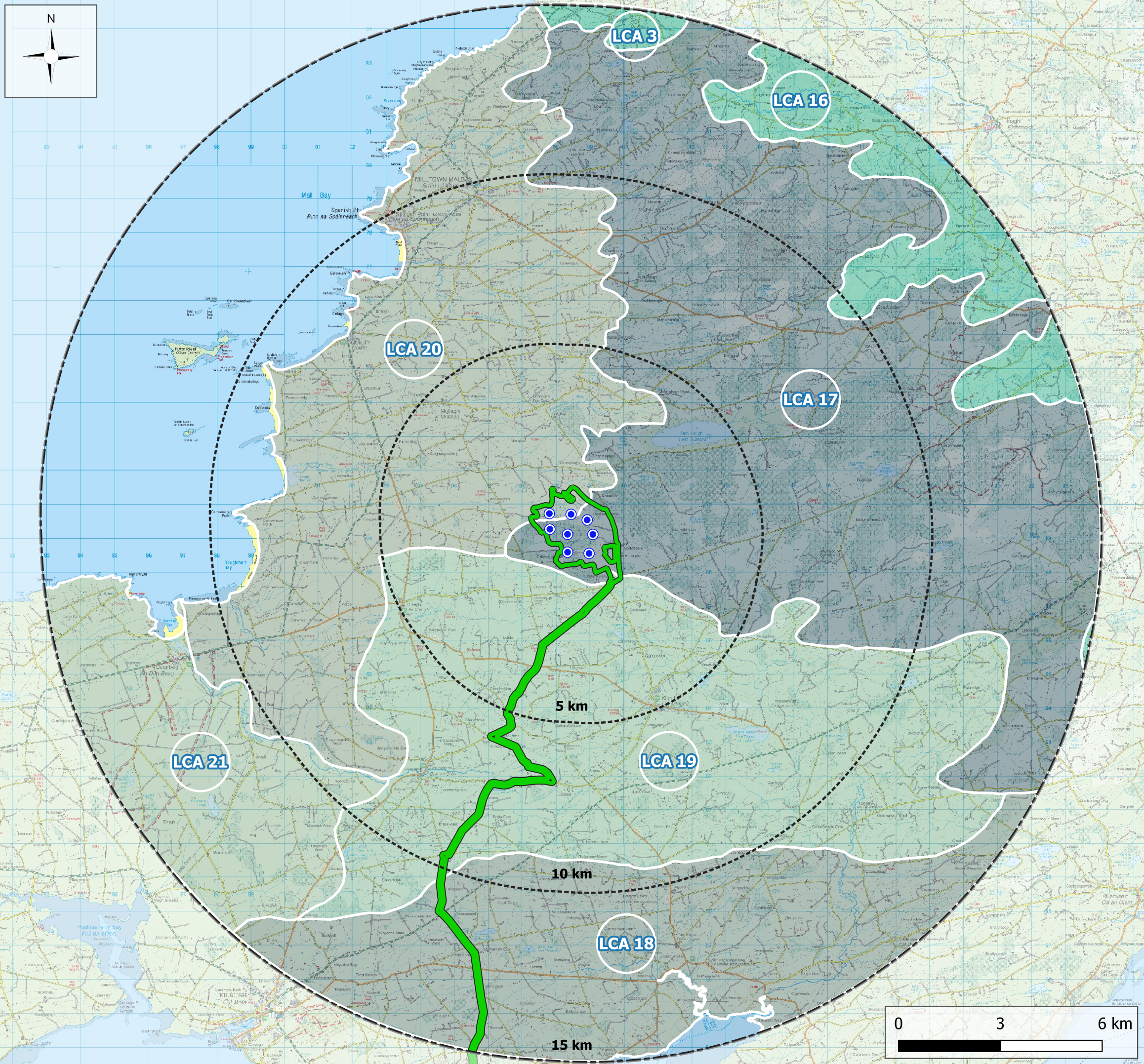
“Upland hills and slopes of Sliabh Callan and Ben Dash extending south to Lisnafaha, west to Caheraghacullin, to N67 near Rineen, and northwards towards Ennistymon.”

The *County Clare Landscape Character Assessment 2004* describes LCA 20 – *Malbay Coastal Farmland* is described as:

“This gently sloping area between the Sliabh Callan Uplands and the Atlantic coast forms this Landscape Character Area, which extends along the coast to north of Doonbeg.”

A full description of the key characteristics of LCAs scoped in for further assessment below in Section 14.4.3.2 are included in the LCA impact assessment tables comprising Appendix 14-2.

The Landscape Character Assessment for Co. Clare contains references to wind farms and the suitability or pressures of wind farms in different areas of the County. However, the Landscape Character Assessment for Co. Clare was first published in 2004, and landscape policy, capacity and considerations with respect to wind energy development was superseded by the Clare Wind Energy Strategy which was published in 2009. The Clare Wind Energy includes specific consideration of landscape capacity for wind farms of various scales and sizes.



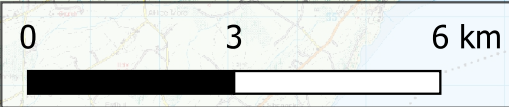
Map Legend

- LCA Study Area
- ▭ EIAR Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbines

Co. Clare LCAs

- C-LCA 3 - Cliffs of Moher and Lahinch
- C-LCA 16 - Cullenagh River Farmlands
- C-LCA 17 - Slieve Callan Upland
- C-LCA 18 - Shannon Estuary Farmland
- C-LCA 19 - Kilrush Farmland
- C-LCA 20 - Malbay Coastal Farmland
- C-LCA 21 - Loop Head

Drawing No.	Figure 14-6			
Drawing Title	Landscape Character Areas Map			
Project Title	Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:110,000	230843	03/02/2026	GL	DM



14.4.1.3 Living Landscapes

The CCDP identifies ‘Living Landscapes’ as a *“a living entity where people live and work and which changes and evolves in line with the changing needs of the community”*. The different ‘Living Landscapes’ identified in the CCDP *“have similar characteristics and clear policies relate to each area”*.

Section 14.3 of the CCDP identifies three types of ‘Living Landscapes’:

- **“Settled Landscapes** – areas where people live and work.
- **Working Landscapes** – intensively settled and developed areas within Settled Landscapes
or areas with a unique natural resource
- **Heritage Landscapes** – areas where natural and cultural heritage are given priority and
where development is not precluded but happens more slowly and carefully”

Co. Clare applies different sensitivities and objectives to each Living Landscape designation within County Clare. ‘Heritage’ landscape areas are considered the most sensitive landscapes, while ‘Settled’ and ‘Working’ landscapes are of lower sensitivity. Working landscapes will not be considered further considering the proposed turbines are setback from any working landscapes by approximately 15.2km from the nearest proposed turbine.

Heritage Landscapes

Co. Clare ‘Heritage Landscapes’ are the most sensitive of the Living Landscape designations, comprising sensitive landscape areas such as the Burren and Lough Derg, as well as coastal areas such as the Atlantic coastal corridor and the Shannon Estuary. Section 14.3.2.3 of the CCDP describes Heritage Landscapes as *“areas within the County where sensitive environmental resources – scenic, ecological and historic – are located”*. The CCDP continues to note that:

“these landscapes are envisioned as the most valued parts of the County, that are important to the people of County Clare as well as to wider national and international communities. The principal role of these landscapes is to sustain natural and cultural heritage”.

The Proposed Wind Farm is not located within any Heritage Landscape. There are two Heritage Landscapes within the LVIA Study Area, these are:

- Heritage Landscape 3: The Fergus / Shannon Estuary – approx. 12.7km from the nearest proposed wind turbine;
- Heritage Landscape 4: The Coast – approx. 5.1km from the nearest proposed turbine.

Section 14.3.2.3 of the CCDP continues to note the following Development Plan Objective for Heritage Landscapes:

“CDP14.5

It is an objective of the Clare County Council:

To require that all proposed developments in Heritage Landscapes demonstrate that every effort has been made to reduce visual impact. This must be demonstrated for all aspects of the proposal - from site selection through to details of siting and design. All other relevant provisions of the Development Plan and the RSES must be complied with. All proposed developments in these areas will be required to demonstrate;

- I. *That sites have been selected to avoid visual prominence*
- II. *That site layouts avail of existing topography and vegetation to minimise visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, public amenities and roads;*
- III. *That design for buildings and structures minimises height and visual contrast through careful choice of forms, finishes and colour and that any site works seek to reduce the visual impact of the development”*

In relation to wind energy development, discussed further in Section 14.4.1.2.3 below, the Co. Clare ‘Heritage Landscapes’ generally mirror the ‘Not Normally Permissible’ areas designated in the Clare Wind Energy Strategy (CWES). Areas of Co. Clare ‘Heritage Landscapes’ in the LVIA Study Area are mapped in Figure 14-4 above and include areas around the Atlantic coastal corridor and the Shannon Estuary.

These ‘Heritage Landscapes’ located within the LVIA Study Area are assessed further in Section 14.7.4.1.2 below.

Settled Landscapes

The Proposed Wind Farm site itself is located with a ‘Settled Landscape’. Developments within this landscape are guided by the development plan Objective CPD 14.2. The policy objective is as follows:

“CDP14.2

It is an objective of the Clare County Council:

To permit development in areas designated as ‘settled landscapes’ to sustain and enhance quality of life and residential amenity and promote economic activity subject to:

- I. *Conformity with all other relevant provisions of the Plan and the availability and protection of resources;*
- II. *Selection of appropriate sites in the first instance within this landscape, together with consideration of the details of siting and design which are directed towards minimising visual impacts;*
- III. *Regard being had to the need to avoid intrusion on scenic routes and on ridges or shorelines.*

Developments in these areas will be required to demonstrate:

- a) *That the site has been selected to avoid visual prominence*
- b) *That the site layouts avail of existing topography and vegetation to reduce visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, water bodies, public amenities and roads.*
- c) *That design of buildings and structures reduces visual impact through careful choice of forms, finishes and colours, and that any site works seek to reduce visual impact.*

The three ‘Living Landscape’ designations cover the entirety of Co. Clare, comprising a total area of approximately 3,450 km². ‘Settled landscapes’ comprises approximately 51.6% (1782 km²) of Co. Clare, therefore this policy pertains to a large area and is very general in nature.

Item C in Objective CDP 11.47 of the CCDP, which relates to Renewable Energy, cites that it is an objective of the plan to assess wind energy proposals with regard to the Clare Wind Energy Strategy (hereafter referred to as the CWES). The CWES designates only 2.9% of Co. Clare as ‘Strategic Areas’ for wind energy development (in which the Proposed Project is located). Considering the trade-off in a spatial context between the clear and specific designations of the CWES (and Objective CDP 11.47) and the very general policy objective of CDP 14.2, the limited amount (2.9% of Co. Clare) of viable areas reserved as ‘Strategic’ must take precedence over policy designations and objectives for ‘Settled

landscape' which comprises a vast area (51.6% of Co. Clare). The Wind Energy Strategy of County Clare is discussed in the subsequent section below.

14.4.1.4 Wind Energy Zoning

Section 11.8.5 of the CCDP sets out objectives and policy in relation to renewable energy resources in County Clare. Item C of the Development Plan Objective CDP 11.47 relates specifically to the development of Wind Energy, stating the assessment of proposals for Wind Energy Developments, such as this Proposed Project, will be assessed against and will have regard to the Clare Wind Energy Strategy:

“It is an objective of Clare County Council:

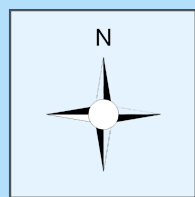
- *c) To support the sustainable development of renewable wind energy (on-shore and offshore) at appropriate locations and of its related grid infrastructure in County Clare, in accordance with all relevant policies, guidance and guidelines pertaining to the protection of the environment and protected habitats and species, and to assess proposals having regard to the Clare Wind Energy Strategy in Volume 6 of this plan and the associated SEA and AA, or any subsequent updated adopted Strategy and to national Wind Energy Guidelines;”*

CDP 11.48 sets out the following objective for the Renewable Energy Strategy, stating that:

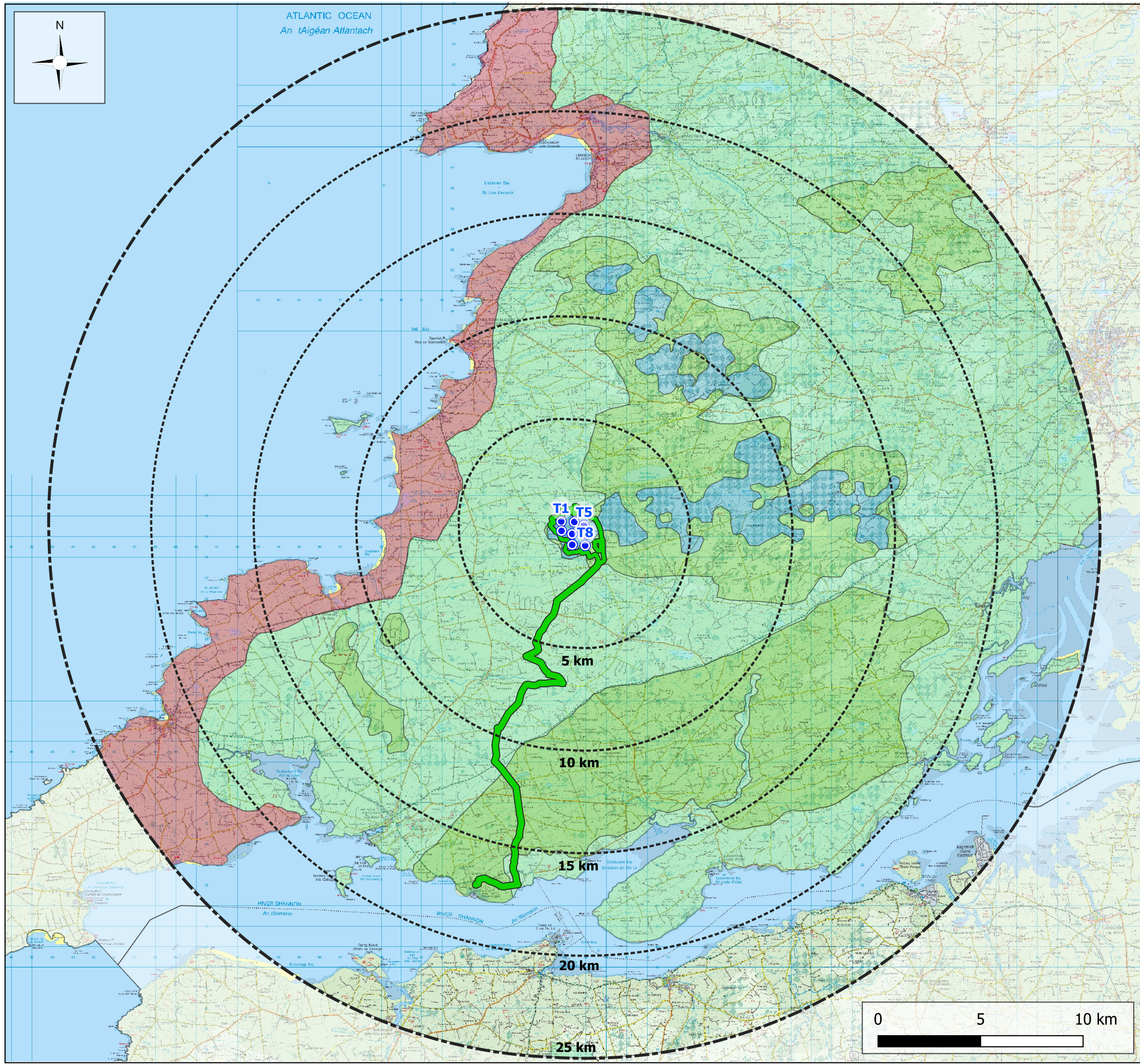
“It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- *a) “To support implementation of the National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP), and the Offshore Renewable Energy Plan including mitigation measures outlined in their respective SEA and AA and promote County Clare and the Southern Region as a leader and innovator in sustainable renewable energy generation.*
- *b) To support the implementation of the Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2023-2029 in Volume 5 of this plan.*
- *c) To support the development of a Regional Renewable Energy Strategy with relevant stakeholders”.*

Again, it is an objective of CCC to support the implementation of the National Renewable Energy Action Plan and to support the implementation of the Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2023-2029. In this case, the Proposed Wind Farm is located within an area designated as a ‘Strategic Area’ and ‘Acceptable in Principle’ for wind energy development in Volume 6: Clare Wind Energy Strategy (CWES) of the CCDP. It is therefore reasoned that the CWES, as a local planning policy document, envisions turbine development to be located within the ‘Strategic Area’ landscapes as part of the county’s renewable energy policy framework.



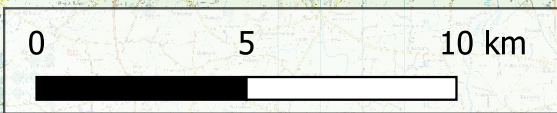
ATLANTIC OCEAN
An tAigéan Atlantach



Map Legend

- LVIA Study Area
- Proposed Turbines
- Clare Wind Energy Strategy**
- Strategic Areas
- Acceptable in Principle Areas
- Open to Consideration Areas
- Not Normally Permissible Areas

Drawing No.	Figure 14-7			
Drawing Title	Wind Energy Strategy			
Project Title	Cahermurphy West Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:180,000	230843	03/02/2026	DM	DM



14.4.1.4.1 Clare Wind Energy Strategy 2023-2029 (CWES)

The CWES forms Volume 6 of the CCDP and contains the Wind Energy Strategy for County Clare. There are four wind energy designations within the CWES, as listed below.

- “Strategic Areas
- Acceptable in Principle Areas
- Open to Consideration Areas
- Not Normally Permissible Areas”

Section 3.2 of the CWES sets out the general objectives regarding the CWES, noting that:

“WES One: Development of Renewable Energy Generation

It is the objective of the Council to support, in principle and in appropriate scales and locations, the development of wind energy resources in County Clare. It is an objective of the Council to ensure the security of energy supply by accommodating the development of wind energy resources in appropriate areas and at appropriate scales within the County.”

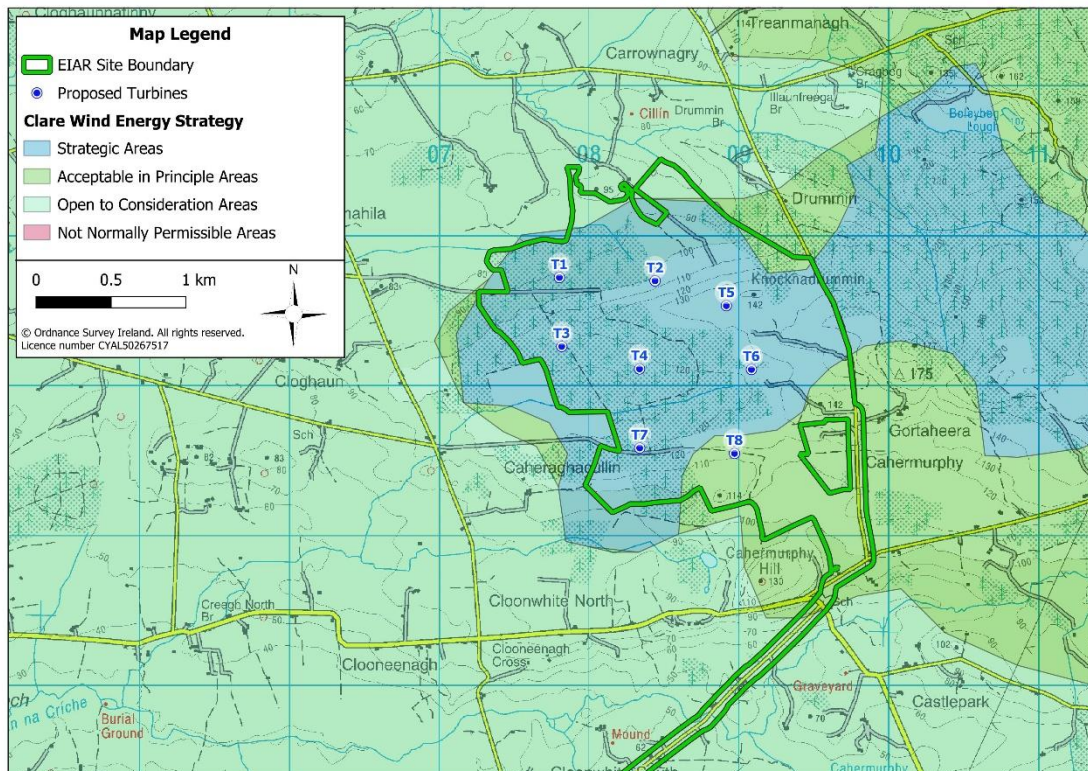


Figure 14-8 Wind Energy Strategy of the Proposed Wind Farm

As seen in Figure 14-7 above, 7 no. of the proposed turbines are located within the area designated as ‘Strategic Area’ for wind energy development, which are described in the CWES as being “key areas are considered to be eminently suitable for wind farm development and are of strategic importance”.

Section 3.3 of the CWES continues to note what makes areas ‘Strategic’:

- “Good/excellent wind resources
- Access to grid
- Distance from properties
- Outside any Natura 2000 sites

Projects within these areas must:

- *Demonstrate conformity with existing and approved wind farms to avoid visual clutter.*
- *Be designed and developed in line with the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2006) in terms of siting, layout and environmental studies.*
- *Provide a Habitats Directive Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitat Regulations if the site is located in close proximity to a Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area.*
- *Be developed in a comprehensive manner avoiding the piecemeal development of the areas designated as 'strategic'.*

Target wind energy generation from strategic areas is 400 MW”.

1 no. proposed turbine, T8, is located within the area designated as ‘Acceptable in Principle Area’ for wind energy development, which are described in the CWES as being “suitable for wind farm development” for the following reasons:

- *“Sufficient wind speeds*
- *Access to grid network, and*
- *Established patterns of inquiries.*

Projects within these areas must:

- *Demonstrate conformity with existing and approved wind farms to avoid visual clutter.*
- *Designed and developed in line with the Planning Guidelines in terms of siting, layout and environmental studies.*
- *Provide a Habitats Directive Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitat Regulations if situated in proximity to a Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area will require.”*

The Proposed Project is in line with the above objectives in relation to areas designated as ‘Strategic Areas’ and ‘Acceptable in Principle’ for wind energy development. As discussed below in Section 14.4.2, the Proposed Wind Farm is located within a ‘Transitional Marginal Landscape’ and is cognisant of the guidelines set out by the WEDGs (2006) and the Draft WEDGs (2019) in terms of siting and design and to avoid any potential for visual clutter.

LCAs and Wind Energy Capacity

Chapter 4 of the CWES, ‘Advice on Landscape Capacity for Wind Energy Developments based on Landscape Character Areas’ identifies and designates Co. Clare’s LCAs into 4 No. classifications relating to their suitability for wind energy development. The ‘Wind Energy Designations’ map from Chapter 4 of the CWES is reproduced in Figure 14-7 below. Annex B of the CWES in the CCDP illustrates the strategic guidance on landscape capacity for wind energy developments. The information on LCA 17, within which the majority of the proposed turbines are located have been reproduced and included in Figure 14-9 below.

L.C.A. Sliabh Callan	
This LCA encompasses upland hills and slopes of Sliabh Callan and Ben Dash	
Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics and Values	Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development
<p>Scale: Medium to large</p> <p>Landform: Upland area of hills and plateaux broad valleys in between.</p> <p>Landcover: Mix of pasture with increased forestry on upper soils.</p> <p>Enclosure: Upper slopes more open with increased enclosure though hedgerows on lower slopes.</p> <p>Human influence: Agricultural activity, afforestation, scattered settlement.</p> <p>Landscape Quality: Good to moderate</p> <p>Wildness and Tranquillity: Increasingly remote further north.</p> <p>Natural and Cultural Heritage Features: NHA designation at Sliabh Callan.</p> <p>Amenity and Recreation: Limited facilities.</p>	<p>Overall Sensitivity:</p> <p>Very large/large wind farm:</p> <p>Medium wind farm:</p> <p>Small wind farm:</p>
<p>Capacity Assessment: The rolling hills, low settlement, extensive plantations reduce the overall sensitivity of this LCA to Wind farm development. The area could accommodate large or medium wind farms subject to careful siting to avoid significant impacts on skylines.</p> <p>Potential Energy for this Area is 250 MW (Limerick Clare Energy Agency - LCEA)</p>	

Figure 14-9 Sliabh Callan LCA Characteristics, Values, and Sensitivity as per Annex B: LCA Forms of the CWES

Landscape Character Area	
Malbay Coastal Farmland	
Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics and Values	Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development
<p>Scale: Medium</p> <p>Landform: Generally low-lying sloping coastal landform</p> <p>Enclosure: Principally open with limited enclosure</p> <p>Complexity of landcover and features: Simple landuse of pasture, coastal habitats and small pockets of coniferous forestry</p> <p>Man-made influence: Evident through recreational and tourism facilities, historic monuments such as promontory forts and agricultural activity</p> <p>Landscape quality (condition): Good to moderate</p> <p>Wildness and tranquillity: Proximity to Atlantic creates a sense of wildness in certain locations</p> <p>Natural and cultural heritage features: Coastal habitats including sand dunes are designated as SACs. Megalithic tombs and promontory forts</p> <p>Amenity and recreation: Important tourism and recreation along the coast</p>	<p>Overall Sensitivity: High</p> <p>Very large/large wind farm: High</p> <p>Medium wind farm: High</p> <p>Small wind farm: Medium</p>
<p>Capacity Assessment: The open exposed character of this area and its significance as a tourism and recreational area increases the overall sensitivity. Large or medium wind farms would be highly visible particularly close to the coastal area. There may be some limited capacity to accommodate small wind farms further east where the landform is more undulating.</p>	

Figure 14-10 Malbay Coastal Farmland LCA Characteristics, Values, and Sensitivity as per Annex B: LCA Forms of the CWES

The Proposed Wind Farm is primarily located within LCA 17 - Slieve Callan Uplands which primarily comprises of upland areas. As shown in Figure 14-9 above, this LCA has an overall ‘Medium to Low’ sensitivity to windfarm development, and has the capacity to absorb large wind farms, such as the Proposed Wind Farm. Annex B of the CWES also notes that *“the rolling hills, low settlement, extensive plantations reduce the overall sensitivity of this LCA to Wind farm development. The area could accommodate large or medium wind farms subject to careful siting to avoid significant impacts on skylines.”*

Two of the proposed turbines are located within LCA 20 - Malbay Coastal Farmland, within a small area designated as a ‘Strategic Area’ for wind energy development as seen above in Figure 14-8. The appropriate scale of wind farms within LCA 20 is deemed to be small, aligning with the two proposed turbines located within this LCA.

14.4.1.5 Visual Designations & Protected Scenic Amenity

Section 14.5 of the CCDP notes that County Clare *“contains a number of valuable views and prospects which offer a very attractive cross-sectional view and overall impression of differing landscapes as one traverses the County”*. The CCDP notes that the views and prospects of County Clare are mostly located on identified Scenic Routes. Section 14.5 of the CCDP sets out the following objectives relating to these designated scenic routes:

“It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- *To protect sensitive areas from inappropriate development while providing for development and change that will benefit the rural community.*
- *To ensure that proposed developments take into consideration their effects on views from the public road towards scenic features or areas and are designed and located to minimise their impact.*
- *To ensure that appropriate standards of location, siting, design, finishing, and landscaping are achieved.”*

Designated CCDP Scenic Routes are listed in Appendix 5 of the CCDP, and those that are within the LVIA Study Area have been reproduced above in Figure 14-4.

There are 35 no. designated Scenic Routes across the county and 7 no. are located within the LVIA Study Area. The closest scenic route (No.15) is located 6.8km north from the nearest proposed turbine (T2). These scenic routes are detailed in full in Appendix 5 of the CCDP and are shown on Figure 14-4 – Policy Context Map. As these 7 no. scenic amenity designations are of a visual nature, they are comprehensively addressed in Section 14.5 of this Chapter – Visual Baseline, where ZTV mapping and on-site appraisals determine the likely visibility of the Proposed Wind Farm from each route. The 7 no. Scenic Routes located within the LVIA Study Area are discussed in further detail below in 14.5 Visual Baseline.

14.4.2 **Landscape Character of the Proposed Wind Farm Site**

Landscape character refers to the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how people perceive this. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement, and creates the particular sense of place found in different areas.

The Proposed Wind Farm site was visited multiple times by Jack Workman on 1st of August and 1st of October 2024, and by Daniel Mulpeter on the 21st of February 2025 where an assessment of topography, drainage, landcover and land use was conducted in conjunction with other LVIA surveys. Information gathered during these visits have informed the following descriptions of the Proposed Wind Farm site. The landscape character of the Proposed Grid Connection is discussed at the end of this section.

Proposed Wind Farm site Overview

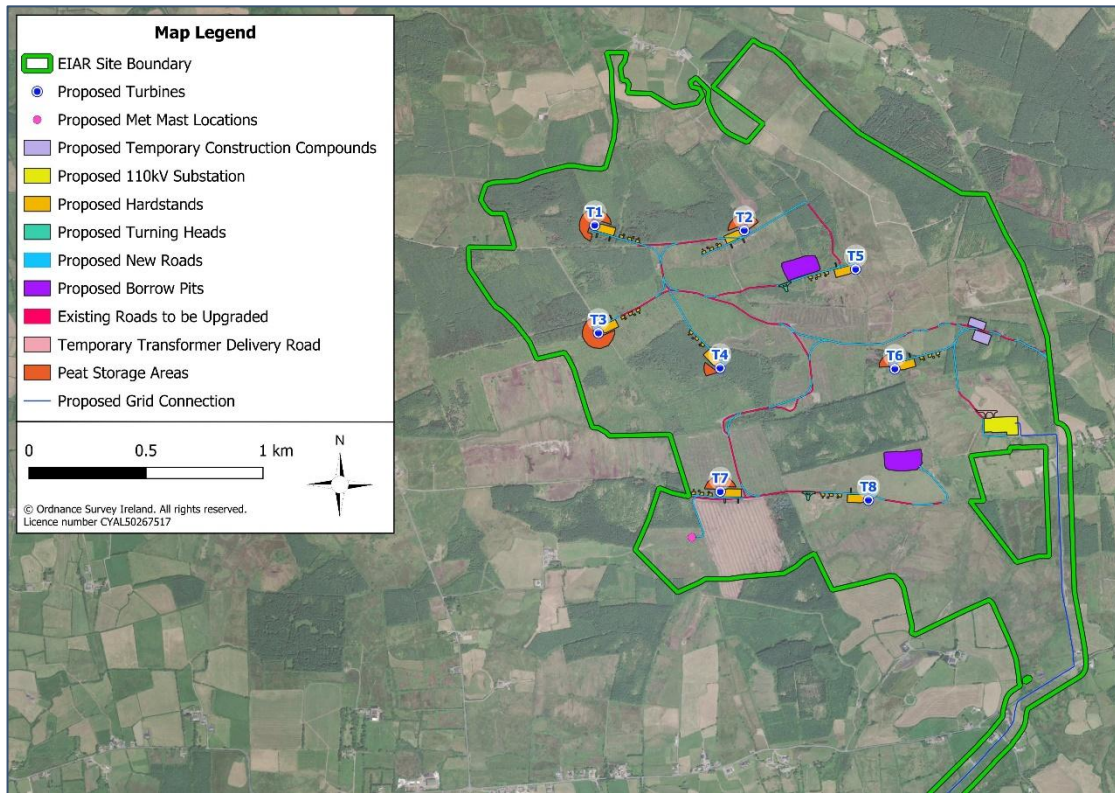


Figure 14-11 Aerial view of the Proposed Wind Farm site

The Proposed Wind Farm is located along a ridgeline immediately north of Cahermurphy Hill, which forms part of the wider Slieve Callan Uplands, located approximately 9km inland from the Atlantic coastline. The Proposed Wind Farm site, situated within a remote upland setting, set-back from larger settlement clusters, is characterised by an area of land that has been heavily modified by human activity, comprising existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm, expanses of commercial forestry plantations, agricultural fields, and areas of boglands. Plate 14-4 and Plate 14-5 below are aerial images captured from a drone showing the character, land use and landcover of the Wind Farm site.



Plate 14-4 Aerial Image from above the Proposed Wind Farm site facing Northwest, showing the character of the marginal upland landscape, a mosaic of agricultural fields, conifer plantations and peatland



Plate 14-5 Aerial Image from above the Proposed Wind Farm site facing South, showing the character of the marginal upland landscape, a mosaic of agricultural fields, conifer plantations and peatland

Landform and Drainage

The Proposed Wind Farm site is situated along the western edge of an elevated plateau that extends eastwards towards Ben Dash and Slieve Callan, forming part of the broader upland landform of the Slieve Callan Uplands. The Proposed Wind Farm site's topography is characterised by an undulating landscape, ranging from a maximum elevation of 142 metres AOD to just under 80 metres AOD. The terrain elevation gradually declines westward towards the coastal plains of County Clare.

A central ridge of higher ground running east to west bisects the Proposed Wind Farm site, with a valley running through its centre. Elevation descends to both the north and south of this ridge, creating a defined upland plateau with flanking slopes. The majority of the proposed turbines are located along the upper slopes of the ridge, whilst Turbines T1 and T2 are positioned on a slightly lower ridgeline to the north, beyond the central valley feature.

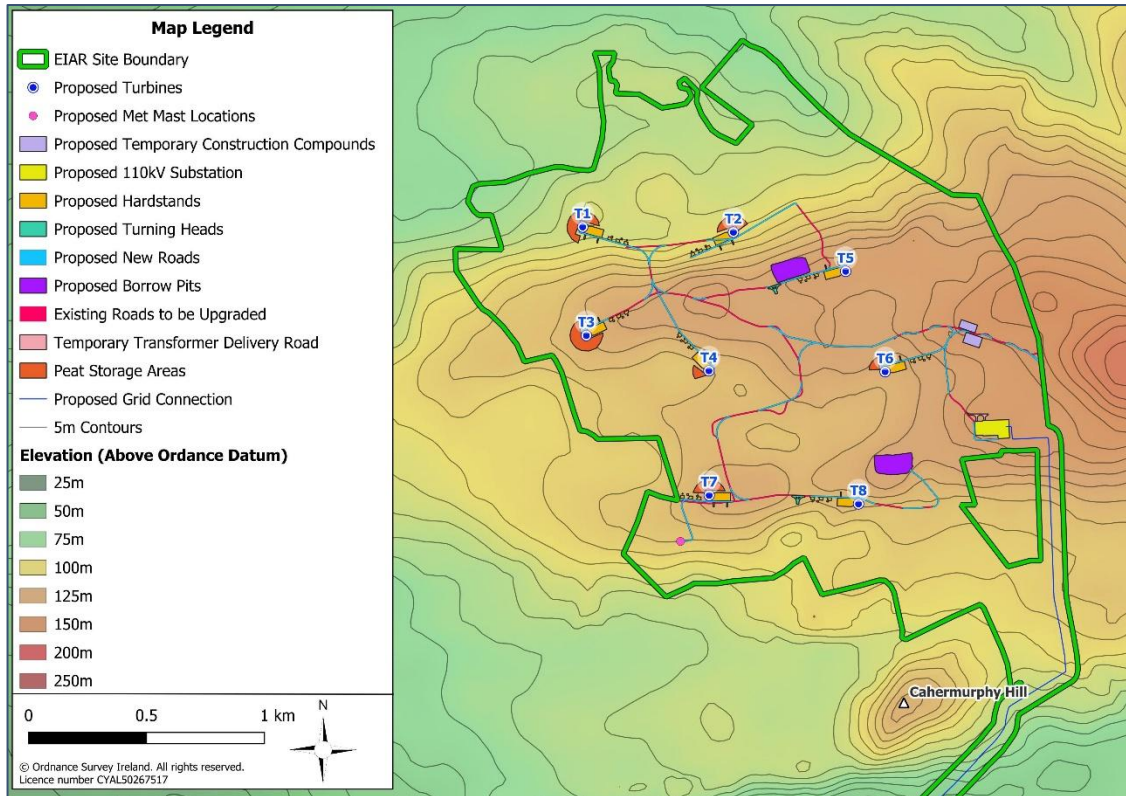


Figure 14-12 DEM of the Proposed Wind Farm site

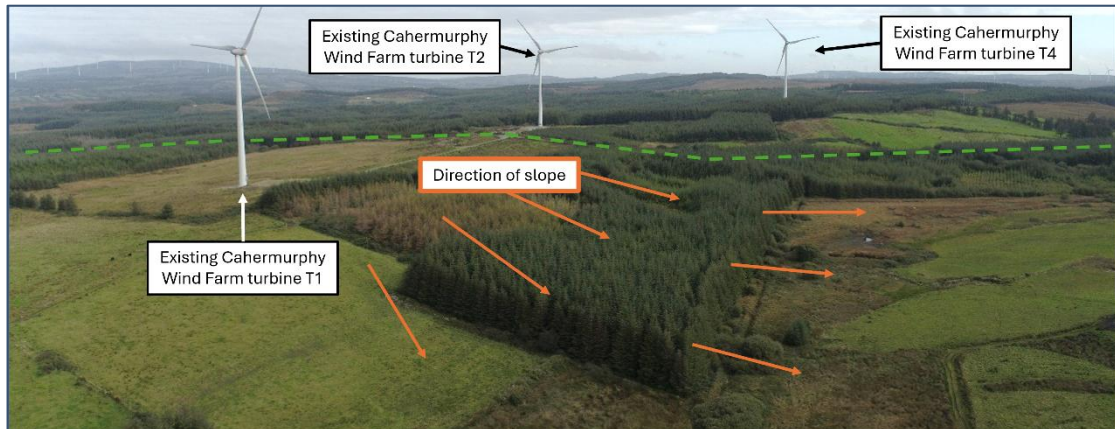


Plate 14-6 Aerial Image from above the Proposed Wind Farm site facing northeast, showing a ridgeline traversing through the Proposed Wind Farm site and the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines

The Proposed Wind Farm site and wider area generally drain from east to west, from the elevated plateaux of higher ground in the central West-Clare uplands towards the Atlantic coast. There are small waterbodies within the Site as seen in Plate 14-7 below. There are a number of lakes in the surrounding landscape, particularly in the upland landscape, such as Doo Lough located approx. 2.86km northeast. The watercourses within proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site drain down into these lakes, or drain west and join up with larger water bodies. Further information on the drainage of the Site can be seen in Chapter 9 – *Hydrology and Hydrogeology* of this EIA.



Plate 14-7 Minor Watercourse located within the Proposed Wind Farm site

Landcover and Land Use

Landcover is the term used to describe the combinations of vegetation and land-use that cover the land surface. It comprises the more detailed constituent parts of the landscape and encompasses both natural and man-made features.

As can be seen in Plate 14-8 and Plate 14-9 below, the landcover of the Proposed Wind Farm site primarily consists of coniferous forestry plantations, agricultural fields and areas of bog lands. The condition of the landscape is degraded in several locations due to extensive human activities within the Site. As seen in Plate 14-6 previously the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm is located immediately to the east of the Proposed Wind Farm site. Consequently, the Proposed Wind Farm site is a working landscape, modified by current and historic land uses.

There is evidence of some historic human settlement within the area, where a ringfort cashel has been identified approximately 840m south of the nearest proposed turbine. For further information regarding these historic receptors, see Chapter 13 – Cultural Heritage.



Plate 14-8 Aerial Image from above the Proposed Wind Farm site facing South, showing coniferous forestry and agricultural fields within the Proposed Wind Farm site

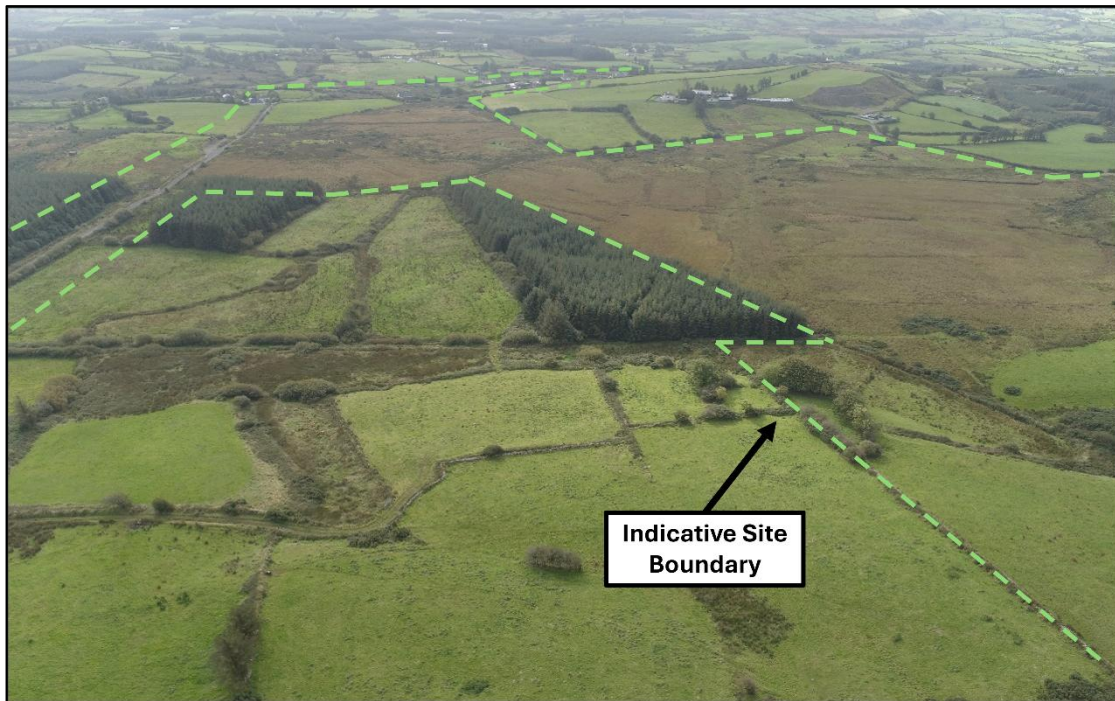


Plate 14-9 Aerial Image from above the Proposed Wind Farm site facing south, showing coniferous forestry and agricultural fields within the Proposed Wind Farm site

The Proposed Wind Farm site contains an existing network of forestry and farm access tracks as seen in Plate 14-10 and Plate 14-11 below. Existing access to the Proposed Wind Farm site is via several local roads which branch out to R483, R484, R474 regional roads and N67 and N68 national roads.

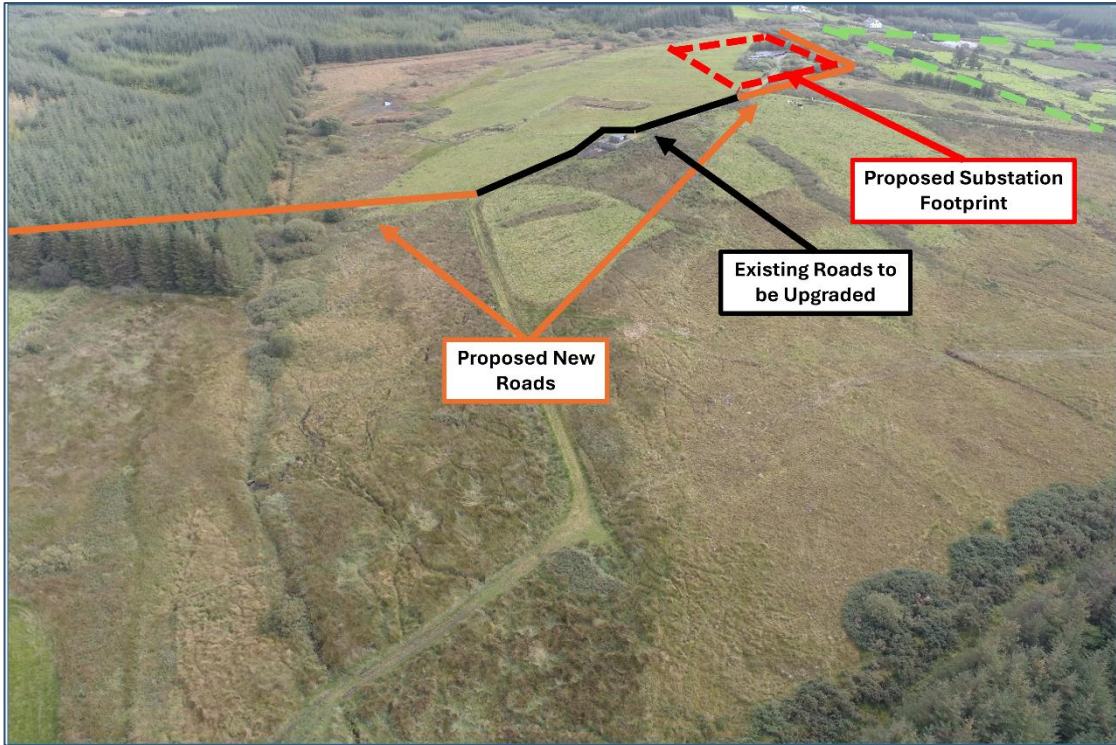


Plate 14-10 Aerial Image from above the Proposed Wind Farm site facing East, Illustrating the Proposed Substation Location Existing Roads and Proposed New Roads in the east of the Proposed Wind Farm site



Plate 14-11 Aerial Image from above the Proposed Wind Farm site facing Northeast, Showing Existing Forestry Tracks



Plate 14-12 Drone image showing historic peat extraction on bog within the Proposed Wind Farm site

Overall, the character of the landscape within the Proposed Wind Farm site is influenced by the agricultural and coniferous commercial forestry activities with evidence of historic peat extraction, and historic settlement patterns. The mixed utilisation of the landscape represents it as a mosaic landscape comprising both natural and artificial elements, influenced by human intervention and modification.

The Proposed Grid Connection extends along proposed and existing roads within the Proposed Wind Farm site as part of the Proposed Project connecting to the proposed on-site substation. This underground cable will be lead to the L-6254 local road to the east of the proposed turbines, where it will run within the road corridor. As stated, this is an underground cable running through land already modified by coniferous plantations and agricultural activities. The proposed on-site substation will be sited approximately 156m west of the L-6254 local road, within an agricultural field, as indicated in Plate 14-10 above.

14.4.2.2 Landscape Character of the Proposed Hen Harrier Enhancement Areas

There are 6 no. Proposed Hen Harrier Enhancement Areas (approximately 123.74 hectares) located approx. 920m northwest of the nearest proposed turbine T5 at its closest. These proposed areas are comprised of agricultural lands and tracts of commercial forestry, and are located on the northern slopes of the elevated plateaux that extends eastwards towards Ben Dash and Slieve Callan. The character of the Proposed Hen Harrier Enhancement Areas has been highly influenced and modified by the previous and existing land uses of commercial forestry and agricultural uses.

Measures for the agricultural fields include implementation of a rotational grazing scheme, planting of wildlife seed crop, hedgerow enhancement, scrub planting, cessation of fertiliser application and predator fencing. It is also proposed to permanently remove commercial forestry. This will create more biodiverse upland habitat for foraging hen harrier. Areas of patchy scrub will be planted in order to create a diversity of vegetation structures to provide cover and resources for hen harrier prey species. A detailed description of the proposed enhancement measures are included in Appendix 7-8.

The Proposed Hen Harrier Enhancement Areas are located within the transitional marginal landscape, in an area surrounded by existing farmland, commercial forestry and bogland, as discussed in Section 14.4.4 and Section 14.4.5 below. Sensitivity of these Proposed Hen Harrier Enhancement Areas are deemed to be Low due to the landscape being modified for commercial forestry and agriculture.

14.4.3 Landscape Sensitivity of the Proposed Wind Farm Site

To determine the landscape ‘Sensitivity’ of the Proposed Wind Farm site, the landscape ‘Value’ and ‘Susceptibility to Change’ were assessed to determine the capacity of the immediate landscape in which the Proposed Wind Farm will be built, as is prescribed by best practise guidance (GLVIA3, LI & IEMA, 2013, p.80).

Comprehension of the Landscape Value and Landscape ‘Susceptibility to Change’ (to wind farm development) enables determination of the sensitivity of the landscape at a micro-level (meaning, the landscape of the Proposed Wind Farm site) and its capacity to absorb the infrastructure of a wind farm development.

Table 14-2 below considers the collective appraisal of seven indicators of landscape value in the LVIA guidance (listed below). Landscape value and susceptibility to change are then combined to assign an overall Sensitivity rating of the Proposed Wind Farm site.

The determination of landscape value takes into consideration the scenic amenity designations and landscape sensitivity and value designations found in the local landscape policy, as well as other indications of landscape value attached to undesignated landscapes.

Below, Table 14-2 describes the following seven indicators appraised collectively to establish landscape Value and Susceptibility to Change, which were then considered in forming the overall landscape Sensitivity classification of the site:

- Landscape designations (LCA setting, Scenic Routes and Views, amenity areas, etc.);
- Quality/condition of landscape elements;
- Scenic/aesthetic qualities;
- Rarity/conversation status;
- Wildness/naturalness;
- Recreational value;
- Cultural meaning/associations.

The ratings of Value and Susceptibility range from High, Medium, or Low, while the overall Sensitivity is assigned as **Very High**, **High**, **Medium** or **Low**, following criteria outlined in the full detailed methodology, presented in *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology* (Section 1.7: Assessing Landscape Effects).

Table 14-2 Analysis of Indicators of Landscape Value and Susceptibility to Change

Indicator	Description
Landscape Designations	The Proposed Wind Farm site is located primarily within LCA 17 – Slieve Callan Uplands. As shown in Figure 14-9 above, this LCA has an overall ‘Medium to Low’ sensitivity to windfarm development, and has the capacity to absorb large wind farms, such as the Proposed Wind Farm. Two of the proposed turbines are located within the inland portion of LCA 20 – Malbay Coastal Farmland, largely set back from the highly sensitive coastline, within an area of lower sensitivity.

	<p>The Proposed Wind Farm site is not located within any protected or sensitive landscape designation of any local landscape policy or within a Heritage Landscape designation.</p> <p>7 no. of the proposed turbines are sited within an area designated as ‘Strategic Area’, and 1 no. of the proposed turbines are sited within an area designated as Acceptable in Principle Area’ for Wind Energy Development in the Clare Wind Energy Strategy.</p> <p>The proposed turbines are located with a landscape designated as a ‘Settled Landscape’, a landscape comprising a network of farmlands and settlements as per Section 6.5 of the Clare Wind Energy Strategy.</p>
Landscape Elements / Qualities / Condition	<p>This refers to the physical state of the landscape and the condition of each individual element. Due to its nature as an agricultural and commercial forestry site, the Proposed Wind Farm site is a modified working landscape. Furthermore, the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm is sited in immediate proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site. The condition of the landscape is degraded in several locations within the Site due to the forestry operations.</p>
Scenic / Aesthetic Qualities	<p>The Proposed Wind Farm site itself has some rural aesthetic qualities due to its remote siting within an upland landscape and open coastal views to the west. However, the heavy human influence arising from a pre-existing windfarm and commercial forestry detracts somewhat from the aesthetic quality of the Proposed Wind Farm site.</p>
Rarity or Conservation Interests	<p>As discussed in Chapter 7 of this EIAR, the Hen Harrier is an Annex I species of the EU Birds Directive, which have been observed foraging and roosting within the Proposed Wind Farm site and in the wider area as a whole. Within the Proposed Wind Farm site there are Blanket Bogs and Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica teralix</i>, which were assessed as Annex I habitats of the EU Habitats Directive, and watercourses were assessed a Local Importance (higher value) to County Importance, as they support protected flora and fauna. This is discussed further in Chapter 06 – Biodiversity.</p>
Cultural Meaning / Associations	<p>No monuments have been recorded within the Proposed Wind Farm site itself. A ringfort cashel (AH70; CL048-005; Preservation Order 4/1957) has been identified approx. 840m south of proposed turbine T8. This is discussed further in Chapter 13 – Cultural Heritage.</p>
Wildness / Naturalness	<p>This refers to the present degree of human interference on the landscape of the Proposed Wind Farm site. There is a sense of wildness associated with the relatively remote and unpopulated nature of this upland landscape of the proposed turbines. However, the Proposed Wind Farm site is comprised of a highly managed area of coniferous forestry plantations, agricultural fields and boglands. Therefore, while there is a degree of wildness and naturalness within the site, despite its natural elements, the Proposed Wind Farm site is considered to be a landscape influenced by high levels of human modification and interference.</p>
Recreational Value	<p>There are no known recreational uses within the Proposed Wind Farm site.</p> <p>There are numerous designated walking and cycling routes within the wider landscape setting. The Eurovelo which is an international cycling route is located within the wider landscape, approximately 1km west from the nearest proposed turbine, T3.</p>

In consideration of the factors detailed in Table 14-2 above, the landscape value of the Proposed Wind Farm site is deemed **Low**.

There is no recreational value, and the Proposed Wind Farm site has already undergone human interference due to the commercial forestry plantation. The Proposed Wind Farm site is largely located in the Slieve Callan Uplands LCA, which is recognised as having an overall Medium to Low sensitivity to wind farm developments in local planning policy, in which “large” sized wind farms are deemed to be appropriate. The Wind Farm site is a sparsely settled landscape of marginal upland designated as a ‘Strategic Area’ for Wind Energy Development in the CWES. In consideration of these factors listed in Table 14-2 above, the susceptibility of the Site to the proposed change is considered Low. The landscape sensitivity of the site is also deemed **Low**.

14.4.4 Landscape Character from the Wind Energy Development Guidelines

This section considers the context of the Proposed Wind Farm site based on siting and design guidance in the WEDGs (2006) and cognisant of the Draft WEDGs (2019) with respect to landscape and visual effects. Here, we identify the appropriate landscape character type defined by the WEDGs (2006) and describe the landscape type of the Proposed Wind Farm site in that context.

Section 6.9 of the WEDGs (2006) and Section 6.10 of the Draft WEDGs (2019) is called ‘Landscape Character Types as a Basis for Guidelines’ and offers guidance for the siting and design specifically of wind energy developments in multiple landscape contexts, defining six landscape character types representing most situations where wind turbines may be proposed. These are:

- Hilly and Flat Farmland
- Flat Peatland
- **‘Transitional Marginal Landscape’ – category selected by this assessment**
- Urban/industrial
- Coastal

The guidance is intended to be indicative and general and notes that it represents the ‘best fit’ solutions to likely situations. The guidelines note that, in the case where a wind energy development is located in one landscape character type but is visible from another, it will be necessary to decide which of the landscape types more strongly influences the approach adopted for the LVIA.

Based on information gathered during site visits (see previous section) and visualisations presented in the *EIAR Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*, as well as from other mapping and imagery present in this Chapter, this LVIA selects the ‘Transitional Marginal Landscape’ character type as best representative of the landscape in which the proposed turbines are located. Therefore, the best practice siting and design strategies prescribed for this landscape character type (the WEDGs (2006)) are presented below, which were considered during the design of the Proposed Project.

14.4.4.1 ‘Transitional Marginal Landscapes’

The key characteristics of Transitional Marginal Landscapes’ as stated in the WEDGs (2006) (p.52) and Draft WEDGs (2019) (p.104) are:

- *“Comprises something of both mountain moorland and farmland, thus involving a mix of small fields, tight hedgerows and shelterbelts.*
- *May include relatively rugged and rocky terrain, and thus a reasonable degree of spatial enclosure.*
- *Higher ground tends to be wet and boggy. Lower areas are usually cultivated and managed as fields.*
- *Houses and farmsteads are usually fairly common.*

- *This landscape type bridges the organised and intensively managed farmland and the more naturalistic moorland.”*

This LVIA considers the importance of the following design consideration for Transitional Marginal Landscapes according to the Draft WEDGs (2019) (p.104):

“The essential key here is one of respect for scale and human activities. These landscapes are often relatively small-scale due to spatial enclosure provided by hills and wind energy developments should respond sensitively to this intimacy. These landscapes are also visually complex due to diverse landform and landcover, as well as houses and power and telegraph poles and lines. Wind energy developments should avoid adding to such complexity due to the risk of creating visual confusion and conflict.”

Design guidance for the siting of turbines in this landscape type according to the WEDGs (2006) and cognisant of the Draft WEDGs (2019) and with respect to the proposed turbines are outlined below: **location, spatial extent, spacing, layout, height and cumulative effect.**

All relevant ‘guidance’ quotations shown below are taken from the WEDGs (2006) (p.52-55) and Draft WEDGs (2019) (p.104-107).

Location

‘As wind energy developments, for reasons of commercial viability, will typically be located on ridges and peaks, a clear visual separation will be achieved from the complexity of lower ground. However, wind energy developments might also be located at lower levels in extensive areas of this landscape type, where they will be perceived against a relatively complex backdrop. In these situations, it is important to minimise visual confusion such as the crossing by blade sets of skylines, buildings, utility lines and varied landcover’.

In terms of **location**, the proposed turbines are strategically positioned on a ridge of an elevated plateau, providing a distinct visual separation from the complexity of the lower ground features. Additionally, the proposed turbines maintain a reasonable set-back distance from dwellings, adhering to the 500m set-back distance recommended in the WEDGs (2006), as well as the larger 4-times-tip-height set-back distance recommended in the Draft WEDGs (2019). Photomontages in *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet* show limited instances where visual interference and visual confusion with other landscape elements occurs.

Spatial extent

“Wind energy developments in these landscapes should be relatively small in terms of spatial extent. It is important that they do not dominate but achieve a balance with their surrounds, especially considering that small fields and houses are prevalent.”

Further, the guidance provides three examples of imagery, of which *Examples 4(b)* and *4(c)* describe the appropriateness of irregular spacing/random layout and visual ambivalence between two landscape types:

- *“4(a) Wind energy development with regular spacing and linear layout - may not be appropriate due to the undulation of land form as well as limited field pattern.*
- *4(b) Wind energy development with irregular spacing and random layout - is more appropriate given the relative undulation of the setting.*
- *4(c) Large wind energy development straddling two landscape character types within the same visual unit – this creates a visual ambivalence and, thus, negative tension between the two character types involved.”*

In terms of **Spatial Extent**, the proposed turbines occupy a limited horizontal spatial extent. The proposed turbines are located on a ridge, visually separated by topographical undulations and valleys. The proposed turbines are generally seen within a staggered layout when viewed from close proximity, that is visually sympathetic to the undulating landscape.

The guidance highlights that irregular spacing is most appropriate given the complexity of the landform in these landscapes. As discussed below, the Proposed Wind Farm adheres to this by adopting an irregular spacing pattern for the proposed turbines, allowing the turbines to follow the natural contours and variations of the undulating terrain, thereby enabling effective integration within the landscape. The irregular spacing minimises visual intrusion and helps achieve a more cohesive and aesthetically pleasing arrangement.

Spacing

“All options are possible, depending on the actual landscape characteristics. However, irregular spacing is likely to be most appropriate, given the complexity of landform and land cover typical of these landscapes, and the absence of extensive swaths of fields of regular and rectilinear pattern.”

In terms of **Spacing**, the proposed turbines follow an irregular spacing pattern, which is most appropriate considering the landform and landcover complexity of the Proposed Wind Farm site, on a sloping hill with irregular field and forestry patterns. This irregular spacing ensures that the turbines assimilate with the natural contours of the landscape and variations of the undulating terrain, enhancing their visual integration within the landscape. As illustrated in *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*, this approach helps to create a more cohesive and aesthetically pleasing arrangement of the turbines.

Layout

‘The likely location of wind energy developments on ridges suggests a linear or staggered linear layout whereas on broader hilltops they could be linear or clustered. Grid layouts are less likely to succeed aesthetically unless there is an open continuity of similar landcover’.

In terms of **Layout**, the proposed turbines follow a layout on a broad slopping hill. When viewed from beyond the Proposed Wind Farm site, the proposed turbines are viewed in a linear layout. A grid layout is line with the above statement due to the grid setting of the agriculture fields and commercial forestry on top of a broad hill. The proposed turbines are viewed in a linear layout across a ridgeline.

Height

*“In small-scaled enclosed areas, short turbines are preferred in order to avoid their spatial dominance and to ensure visual balance. However, where the **upper ground is relatively open and visually extensive, taller turbines may be more appropriate**. In terms of perceived height, the profile can be even or uneven, depending on the profile and visual complexity of the terrain involved. The more rugged and undulating, the greater the acceptability of an uneven profile provided it does not result in significant visual confusion and conflict.”*

In terms of **height**, the proposed turbines are of a greater tip height of than existing and proposed turbines in the immediate area. However, the siting within a relatively open and extensive landscape, where they appear appropriately scaled to the topographical features located within the surrounding landscape.

Cumulative effect

“This would have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, but great caution should be exercised. The spatial enclosure often found in transitional marginal landscapes is likely to preclude the possibility of seeing another wind energy development. However, should two or more wind energy developments be visible within a confined setting a critically adverse effect might result, depending on turbine height and wind energy development extent and proximity.”

In terms of **cumulative effect**, there is the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm in immediate proximity to the proposed turbines, and a number of other operational, permitted and proposed wind farms in the wider area. The upland marginal landscape is considered to have the capacity to absorb the proposed turbines. The cumulative context is discussed further in Section 14.6 below and an assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects is addressed later in this chapter.

14.4.5 Landscape Character of the Wider Setting

The wider landscape setting from 5-25km surrounding the proposed turbines is predominantly agricultural, settled landscape. The strip of upland, marginal landscape that the proposed turbines sit within stretches north towards Slieve Callan, and east towards Ben Dash. It is an elevated region featuring hills, along with expansive plateaus in certain areas. The landscape is largely covered by extensive coniferous plantations, interspersed with blanket bog and marshy regions. In the lower areas to the west and south of the LVIA Study Area, it is a rolling agricultural landscape of rural settlements with a scattered rural population. To the west of the proposed turbines, the landscape is rolling farmland of lower elevation, that extends towards the coastal ‘Heritage Landscape’ of County Clare. The Cliffs of Moher, part of the UNESCO Global Geopark, is located in the north of the LVIA Study Area.

Immediately south of the Proposed Wind Farm site, there is evidence of a historic settlement within the landscape. A ringfort - Cashel can be seen in Plate 14-13 located on top of Cahermurphy Hill. See Chapter 13 – *Cultural Heritage* for further details on the ringfort - Cashel.



Plate 14-13 Drone Image Facing Southwest Overlooking a Historic Settlement on Top of Cahermurphy Hill

14.4.5.1 LCA Preliminary Analysis

This section provides initial analysis of designated LCAs from the county-level policy Landscape Character Assessments. As discussed in Section 14.4.1.2 previously, 7 no. Landscape Character Areas have been identified within the LCA Study Area (15km Study Area for assessment of designated LCAs). Following preliminary assessment, 4 no. LCAs in the 15km LCA Study Area were scoped in for

assessment in this LVIA. The comprehensive assessment is detailed in *Appendix 14-2: LCA Impact Assessment*.

- LCA 17: Slieve Callan Uplands;
- LCA 19: Kilmihil Farmlands;
- LCA 20: Malbay Coastal Farmlands;
- LCA 21: Loop Head Peninsula.

In addition, 3 no. LCAs are existent in the LCA Study Area; these have been scoped out of further assessment:

- LCA 3: Cliffs of Moher and Lahinch;
- LCA 16: Cullenagh River Farmlands;
- LCA 18: Shannon Estuary Farmlands;

All LCAs identified within the 15km LCA Study Area are mapped below in Figure 14-13 to indicate theoretical visibility from within the landscape areas. Table 14-3 lists the preliminary analysis and scoping of each LCA and rationale for scoping out individual LCAs from further assessment.

Table 14-3 Preliminary Assessment of LCAs in the LCA Study

Map Ref	LCA	Theoretical Visibility (TV) as indicated by ZTV	Actual Visibility	Scoped in for Assessment
Up to 5km				
LCA 17	Slieve Callan Uplands	Primarily full theoretical visibility within 5km from the Proposed Wind Farm with small pockets of no visibility. Theoretical visibility reduces beyond 5km.	Visibility will be greatest within 5km of the site. Beyond 5km there is intermittent to limited visibility on relatively flat landscapes with the majority of the actual visibility coming from elevated vantage points.	Yes
LCA 20	Malbay Coastal Farmland	Primarily full theoretical visibility with patches of no theoretical visibility beyond 5km.	Considering the elevation difference from the coastal plain to the upland areas where the Proposed Wind Farm is located, the proposed turbines are visible in the majority of this LCA.	Yes
LCA 19	Kilmihil Farmlands	Predominantly full theoretical visibility within 5km. There are large areas with no theoretical visibility beyond 5km.	There are open views towards the Proposed Wind Farm from areas within 5km of the proposed turbines, and from other elevated areas within this LCA.	Yes

5 to 10km				
LCA 21	Loop Head Peninsula	There is primarily full theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines within this LCA.	There is reduced actual visibility versus the theoretical visibility within this LCA considering the vegetation lining the local roads and fields patterns. There is potential for visibility from the coast such as beaches as White Strand and Doonbeg Bay and where there are open views across the field patterns towards the upland area and proposed turbines.	Yes
LCA 18	Shannon Estuary Farmland	Large areas of no theoretical visibility. Consists of patches of full theoretical visibility.	There are few elevated vantage points which have open views towards the Proposed Wind Farm. Due to local undulations and vegetation, actual visibility is limited from sensitive landscape and visual receptors on relatively flat areas of this LCA	No.
LCA 16	Cullenagh River Farmlands	Primarily No theoretical visibility indicated within this LCA.	There is no actual visibility from this LCA within the LCA Study Area.	No
10 to 15km				
LCA 3	Cliffs of Moher and Lahinch	No theoretical visibility indicated within the LCA Study Area.	There is no actual visibility from this LCA within the LCA Study Area.	No

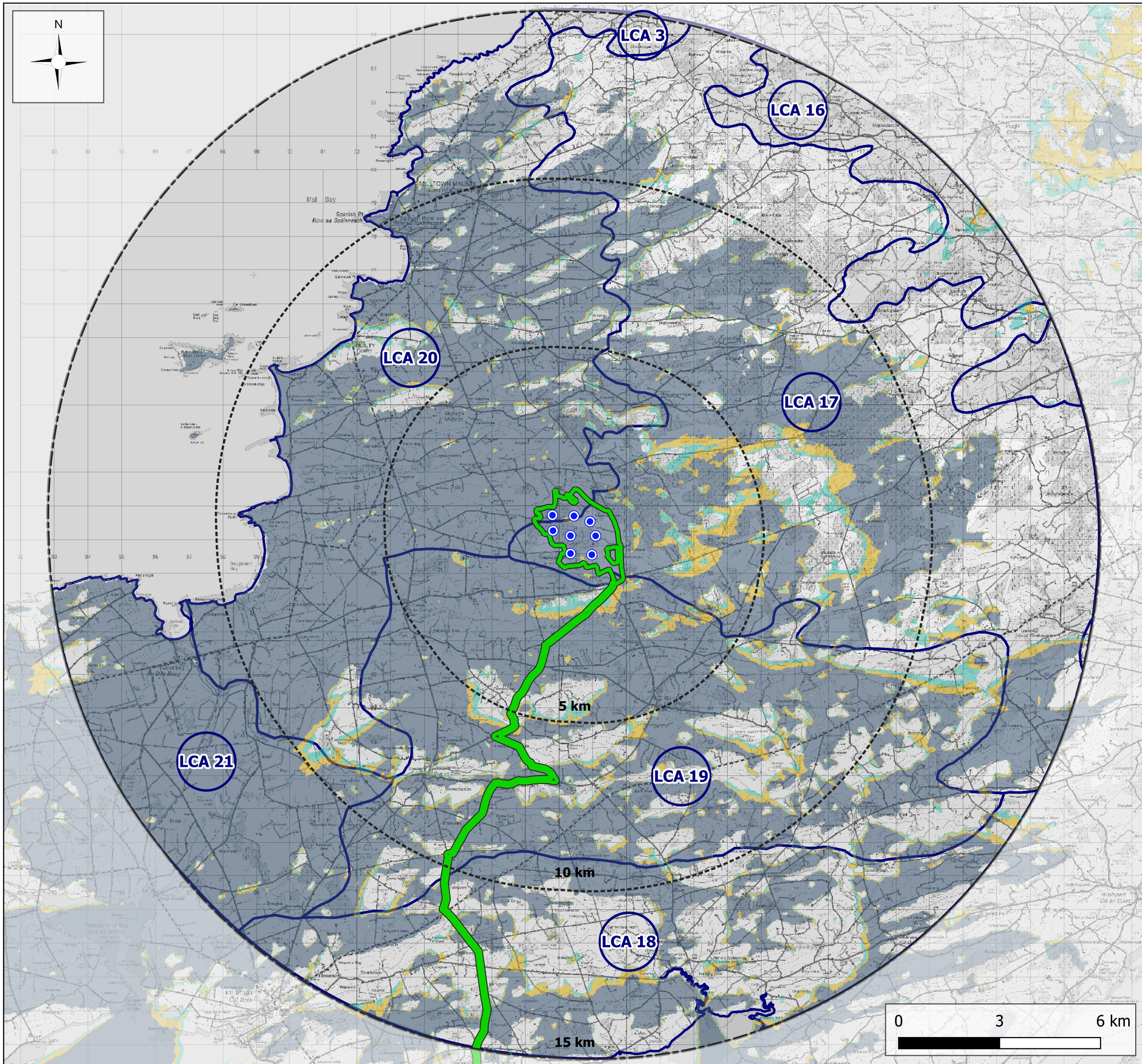
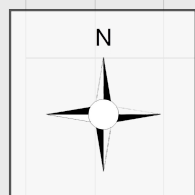
14.4.5.2 Preliminary Assessment – Other Landscape Receptors

Apart from the LCAs identified above, a number of additional landscape receptors have been identified in the preceding sections. These are mapped Figure 14-4 and listed in Table 14-4 below, along with a description of theoretical visibility from each receptor, as indicated by the ZTV in Figure 14-5. Potential visibility of the proposed turbines was appraised during site surveys (conducted in the

years 2024 and 2025) from all receptors with very limited or partial theoretical visibility. The ZTV and on-site visibility appraisals determine which landscape receptors are scoped-in for full assessment later in this chapter, the results are noted in Section 14.7.4.

Table 14-4 Landscape Receptors within 25km of the proposed turbines

Name	Theoretical Visibility (TV) as indicated by the ZTV	Actual Visibility	Scoped in for Assessment
The Coast - CCDP Heritage Landscape	Within 10km of the proposed turbines there is primarily full TV indicated. Beyond 10km to the southwest, there is primarily full TV interspersed with some small areas of no TV. Between 10km and 20km there is primarily no TV, with TV becoming more prevalent northwest of Liscannor.	Visibility is likely to occur from elevated and exposed portions of this landscape receptor.	Yes
Fergus Estuary and River Shannon - CCDP Heritage Landscape	To the south along the River Shannon there are patches of full TV indicated within this landscape receptor. To the east along the Fergus Estuary there is no TV indicated within this landscape receptor.	Visibility is likely to occur from exposed portions of this landscape receptor.	Yes
Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark	Primarily full TV indicated where this landscape receptor falls within the LVIA Study Area. TV is limited further north, just within the LVIA Study Area.	In reality, at this distance, the proposed turbines, if visible, will appear as small elements in the distant background. Significant effects on landscape character of this LCT and visual effects not likely to occur.	No



Map Legend

- LCA Study Area
- ▭ EIA Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbines

Co. Clare LCAs

- C-LCA 3 - Cliffs of Moher and Lahinch
- C-LCA 16 - Cullenagh River Farmlands
- C-LCA 17 - Slieve Callan Upland
- C-LCA 18 - Shannon Estuary Farmland
- C-LCA 19 - Kilrush Farmland
- C-LCA 20 - Malbay Coastal Farmland
- C-LCA 21 - Loop Head

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 1-3 Turbines Theoretically Visible
- 4-6 Turbines Theoretically Visible
- 7-8 Turbines Theoretically Visible

Drawing No.

Figure 14-13

Drawing Title

Landscape Character Areas
Map with ZTV

Project Title

Cahermurphy Renewable Energy
Development

Scale

1:110,000

Project No.

230843

Date

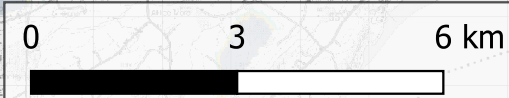
03/02/2026

Drawn By

GL

Checked By

DM



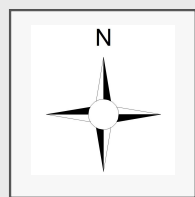
14.5 Visual Baseline

The ‘Visual Baseline’ exercise identifies the key visual receptors to be considered for assessment within the 25km LVIA Study Area, having utilised ZTV mapping, on-site visibility appraisals and desk study to scope receptors in/out of further assessment. The Visual Baseline map is shown below in Figure 14-14.

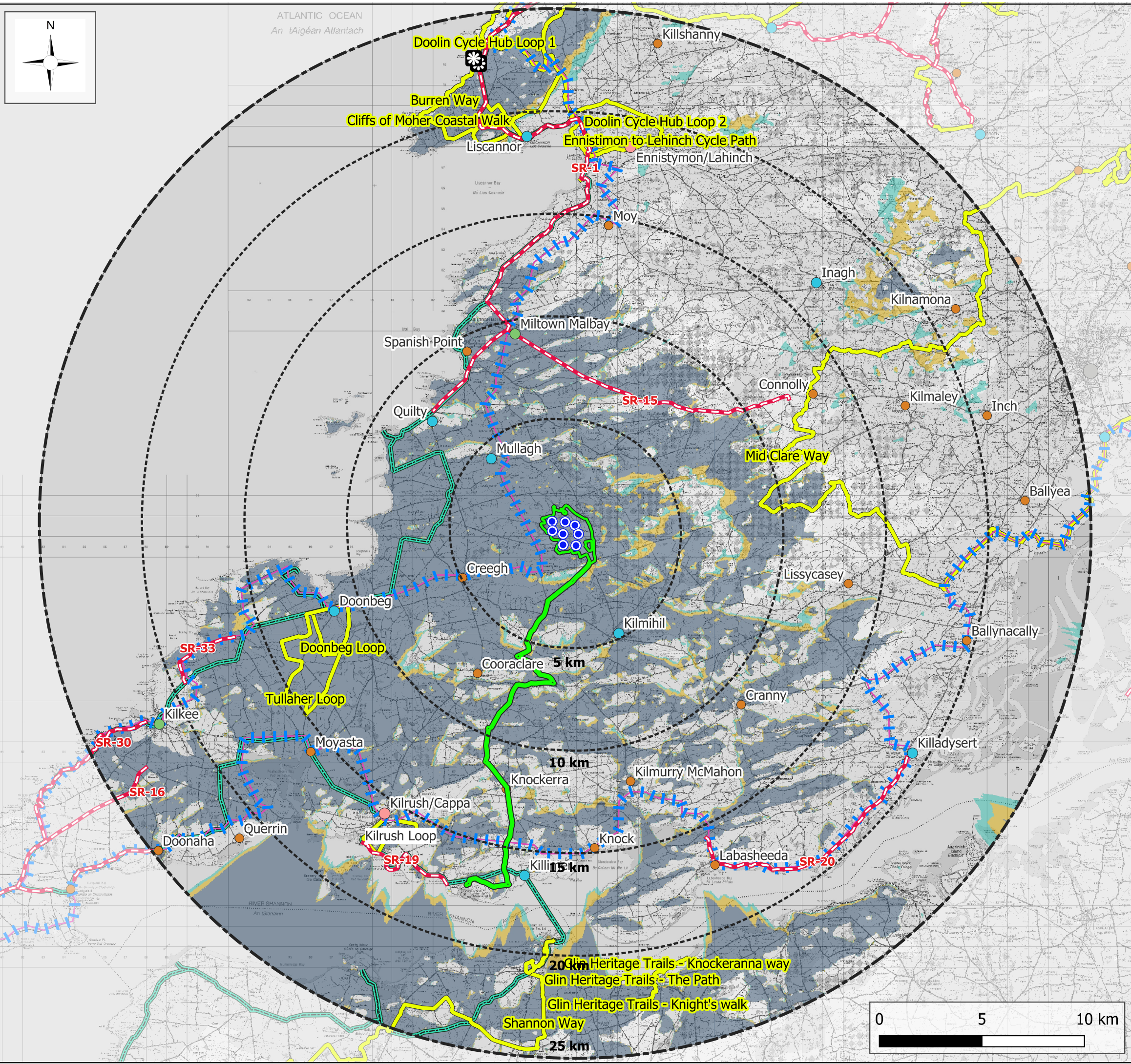
The key visual receptors identified for assessment in the visual baseline exercise are represented by ‘Viewpoints’. Viewpoints are locations from which visual effects are assessed using photomontages (see *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology*, Section 1.6: Photomontage Visualisations). To this end, the following visual receptors have been identified within the LVIA Study Area and are presented in this section:

- > Designated Scenic Routes and Views;
- > Tailte Éireann Viewing Areas;
- > Settlements;
- > Recreational Routes and Trails, including:
 - Waymarked Walking Routes;
 - Cycle Routes;
 - Scenic Drives and Tourist Routes;
- > Recreational, Cultural Heritage & Tourist Destinations;
- > Residential Receptors:
 - See below Section 14.5.3: Visual Amenity from Residential Receptors.
- > Transport Routes;

Below, Figure 14-14 presents the visual baseline map overlain with the Half-Blade ZTV. All receptors are listed in the tables in the following sections along with theoretical visibility at those locations indicated by the ZTV. During site visits conducted in the years 2024 and 2025, the likely visibility of the proposed turbines was appraised from receptors where the ZTV indicated theoretical visibility. In the case of there being either no theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines, or where on-site appraisal determined visibility of the proposed turbines to be very unlikely or very limited, visual receptors were scoped out from further assessment. Where appropriate, the specific reasons for scoping out a receptor are included in the tables below. In some cases, specific receptors are scoped out where there is no potential for significant visual effects to occur on account of combination of factors such as distance, visual screening and the nature and sensitivity of the receptors at a particular location. Where appropriate, the specific reasons for scoping out a receptor are included in the tables below.



ATLANTIC OCEAN
An tAigéan Atlantach



Map Legend

- LVIA Study Area
- EIAR Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbines
- Clare Scenic Routes
- ✳ OSi Viewing Points
- Recreational Routes**
- EuroLevo Route
- Waymarked Trails
- The Wild Atlantic Way
- Co. Clare Settlement Hierarchy**
- Service Town
- Small Town
- Large Village
- Small Village
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility**
- 1-3 Turbines Theoretically Visible
- 4-6 Turbines Theoretically Visible
- 7-8 Turbines Theoretically Visible

Drawing No.

Figure 14-14

Drawing Title

Visual Baseline with ZTV Map

Project Title

Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development

Scale

1:180,000

Project No.

230843

Date

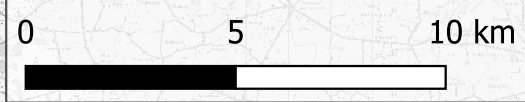
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14.5.1 Visual Receptors

The following subsections present the scoping tables for all visual receptors, including designated Scenic Routes and Views; Tailte Éireann Viewing Areas; Settlements; Recreational Routes; Cultural Heritage, Recreational & Tourist Destinations; prominent Transport Routes.

14.5.1.1 Designated Scenic Routes

A total of 7 no. CCDP Scenic Routes are existent within the LVIA Study Area. Below, Table 14-5 displays the scoping of all identified receptors (scoped in or out for assessment), along with a description of each item, the direction of view indicated by the policy documents and whether it is directed towards the proposed turbines, the nature of theoretical visibility, and whether the receptor was scoped in for assessment.

Table 14-5 Designated Scenic Routes

Destination	Description (CCDP 2023-2029)	Direction of View	Location in relation to the Site	Theoretical Visibility	Scoped in for Assessment
5 to 10km					
SR1	Coast Road from County boundary (along the Kinvarra Road) to Quilty including the R479 spur to Doolin.	N/A	Approx. 7.9km Northwest of the Site.	Stretch of full theoretical visibility within 10km of the Site and within 25km from the Proposed Wind Farm site. There is a large extent of no theoretical visibility 10km to 20km	Yes
SR15	R474 from Connolly to Miltown Malbay.	N/A	Approx. 6.8km North of the Site.	Primarily full theoretical visibility within 10km of the Proposed Wind Farm site, with pockets of no TV. No theoretical visibility beyond 10km.	Yes
15 to 20km					
SR19	Coast road southeast of Cappagh to	N/A	Approx. 16.9km	Limited theoretical visibility,	No

	Carrowdotia South.		Southwest of the Site.	confined to a short section of the N67.	Site visits determined no actual visibility of the proposed turbines could be established as a result of screening from roadside vegetation located along the route.
SR20	R473 from outside Labasheeda to T-junction before Kiladysert.	N/A	Approx. 15.9km Southeast of the Site.	Primarily no theoretical Visibility.	No
SR33	Road running west from Bealaha Bridge as far as its junction with the N67	N/A	Approx. 16.3km Southwest of the Site.	Primarily full theoretical visibility	No Given the set-back distance from the proposed turbines, and the key scenic amenity is in the opposite direction to the proposed turbines overlooking the Atlantic Coast .
20 to 25km					
SR30	R487 from junction at Carrounaveehaun along the coast road to Kilkee	N/A	Approx. 21.9km Southwest of the Site.	Primarily full theoretical visibility	No Given the set-back distance from the proposed turbines, and the key scenic amenity is in the opposite direction to the proposed turbines overlooking the Atlantic Coast
SR16	R487 from Kilfearagh to T-junction before Breaghva	N/A	Approx. 22.9km Southwest of the Site.	Primarily full Theoretically Visibility	No Given a short stretch of this scenic route is located within the LVIA Study Area, and its set-back distance from the proposed turbines.

14.5.1.2 Tailte Éireann Viewing Areas

According to the Tailte Éireann maps, 2 no. Tailte Éireann Viewing Areas were identified within the LVIA Study Area; these are described in the table.

Below, Table 14-6 displays the scoping of all identified views, along with a description of the view, the direction of view indicated by the Tailte Éireann data and whether it is directed towards the proposed turbines, the nature of theoretical visibility, and whether the receptor was scoped in for assessment

Table 14-6 Tailte Éireann Viewing Areas

Map Ref.	Description	Direction and Range of View	Directed to Turbines?	Theoretical Visibility	Scoped In
20 to 25km					
#90	Tailte Éireann Viewing Area located along the Burren Way at the Cliffs of Mohr.	West to Southwest	No	None	No
#175	Tailte Éireann Viewing Area located near O'Brien's Tower at the Cliffs of Moher.	View is focused to the west south over the Cliff of Moher.	No	None	No

14.5.1.3 Settlements

In order to identify which settlements within the LVIA Study Area should be considered for viewpoint selection, the settlement hierarchy set out in the CCDP was consulted. The settlement hierarchy ranks settlements from the Shannon and Ennis, down to service towns, small towns, large villages, small villages, and cluster settlements as listed in Table 3.1, Chapter 3 of the CCDP. Clusters beyond 5km are not deemed to experience significant effects and are not considered in Table 14-7 below. The settlements that are located within the LVIA Study Area are outlined in Table 14-7 and are mapped in Figure 14-14 above.

Table 14-7 Co Clare Settlement Hierarchy within the LVIA Study Area

Settlement	County Settlement Hierarchy	Theoretical Visibility	Scoped In
Up to 5km			
Creagh	Small Village	Full theoretical visibility	Yes
Kilmihil	Large Village	Full theoretical visibility	Yes
Mullagh	Large Villag	Full theoretical visibility	Yes

5 to 10km			
Cooraclare	Small Village	Full theoretical visibility	Yes
Spanish Point	Small Village	Full theoretical visibility	No, while there is visibility, views from this small settlement are directed south and west along scenic areas of the coast, not in the direction of the proposed turbines
Quilty	Large Village	Primarily no TV with pockets of partial TV	No, considering that there is primarily no TV indicated and that there is no visibility from within the village itself to its built form, visibility is not likely to occur
Miltown Malbay	Small Town	Primarily full theoretical visibility with pockets of partial theoretical visibility	Yes
10 to 15km			
Knockerra	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Knock	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Kilmurry McMahon	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Cranny	Small Village	Partial theoretical visibility	No
Lissycasey	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Connolly	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Moy	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Doonbeg	Large Village	Full theoretical visibility	Yes
15 to 20km			

Moyasta	Small Village	Mix of full and no visibility	Yes
Labasheeda	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Ballynacally	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Kilmaley	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Killimer	Large Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Killadysert	Large Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Inagh	Large Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Liscannor	Large Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Kilrush/Cappa	Service Town	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Ennistymon/ Lehinch	Service Town	No Theoretical Visibility	No
20 to 25km			
Querrin	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Doonaha	Small Village	Partial theoretical visibility	No
Ballyea	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Inch	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Kilnamona	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Kilshanny	Small Village	No Theoretical Visibility	No
Kilkee	Small Town	Large areas of theoretical visibility.	No, on-site surveys determined there is no actual visibility from within the town of Kilkee itself due to its built form. Potential visibility may occur

			on the outskirts of the town, however, the proposed turbines will appear as miniature elements in the background of the view. No significant effects are likely to arise.
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14.5.1.4 Recreational Routes

Recreational routes are sensitive receptors as people are likely to be using them in a recreational capacity where there is high value on views as well as the scenic amenities of the landscape. The term recreational routes encompass the following:

- Waymarked walking routes (Source – Sport Ireland Designated Trails)
- Cycle routes (Source – Sport Ireland Designated Cycle Routes)
- Scenic drives and tourist routes (e.g., the Wild Atlantic Way)

Routes were identified and located within the LVIA Study Area by examination of Tailte Éireann maps and online sources such as: Sportireland.ie/outdoors/Irelands-trails. Many routes existing of differing scale and prominence are located within the LVIA Study Area, only recreational routes of county or national importance were included in this LVIA. The routes are shown on Figure 14-14 and are listed in Table 14-8 below, along with theoretical visibility distributed upon each route by ZTV mapping.

Table 14-8 Recreational Routes within the LVIA Study Area

Route Name	Description	Theoretical Visibility	Actual Visibility	Scoped in For Assessment
Up to 5km				
Eurovelo	Eurovelo is the European cycle route network. Travelling along the southern and western seaboard of Ireland, Eurovelo explores the Irish coastline.	Primarily full theoretical visibility indicated within 5km and beyond in the West of the LVIA Study Area. To the southeast and north (beyond 10km) there is primarily no TV indicated.	Visibility of the proposed turbines likely to occur	Yes
5 to 10km				
Mid Clare Way	<i>“A 130km long circular walking route around the centre of County Clare in the west of Ireland, with the county capital, the busy and picturesque town of Ennis, at its centre. The route touches</i>	Full TV indicated along a short section of the route within where it is at its closest to	Intermittent visibility of the Proposed Wind Farm.	Yes

	<i>on the Burren to the north and the broad Shannon Estuary to the south. Terrain on the route consists mainly of quiet tarmac side roads and farm roads with only brief sections on forestry tracks and through fields.</i> (Sport Ireland)	the Proposed Wind Farm. Primarily no TV indicated beyond 5km.		
The Wild Atlantic Way	The Wild Atlantic Way is a tourism trail on the west coast, and on parts of the north and south coasts, of Ireland. The 2,600 km driving route passes through nine counties and three provinces.	Primarily full TV indicated with pockets of no TV.	There is visibility of the proposed turbines from elevated vantage points on the Wild Atlantic Way	Yes
10 to 15km				
Doonbeg Loop	<i>“This loop travels on minor roads and bog tracks to the south of Doonbeg village. It includes views of Doughmore Bay, Mattle Island and Mutton Island. Other natural features of note are the Doonbeg River and Lough Doonbeg.”</i> (Sport Ireland)	Mix of partial and full theoretical visibility	There is limited actual visibility from Doonbeg Loop due to roadside vegetation.	Yes
Tullaheer Loop, Doonbeg	<i>“This loop on minor roads and bog tracks heads south of Doonbeg village towards the low hills of Carrowblough Moor with fine views of Doonbeg River and Estuary, Doughmore Bay, Mattle and Mutton Islands. Tullaheer Bog has fine examples of raised bog, wet grassland, scrub woodland, alkaline fen and lake.”</i> (Sport Ireland)	Mix of partial and full theoretical visibility	There is limited actual visibility from Doonbeg Loop due to roadside vegetation.	Yes
Beyond 15km				
Kilrush Loop	Two looped trails of 3 km in length and a multi access trail of just over 1 km.	Primarily no theoretical visibility with pockets of no theoretical visibility	There is no actual visibility due to views being contained within the forestry	No, considering there no actual visibility of the proposed turbines due to views being contained within the forestry

<p>Doolin Cycle Hub Loop 1</p>	<p><i>“This is a short but steep trip southward to the Cliffs of Moher and back via Knocknalarabana, the hill overlooking Doolin, passing the round tower of Doonagore Castle but prepare for a severe climb. The route offers wonderful views of the local countryside with stunning coastal panoramas.”</i> (Sport Ireland)</p>	<p>Mix of partial and full theoretical visibility</p>	<p>Mix of partial and full actual visibility</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Doolin Cycle Hub Loop 2</p>	<p><i>“This cycle visits the southwest corner of North Clare taking in some amazing coastal views as well as wonderful vistas of the surrounding countryside. Cyclists pass the Cliffs of Moher and can also stop off at the famous St Bridget’s Well approximately 300 - 400 metres south of the Cliffs of Moher or enjoy a walk or swim at Lehinch Beach. There is an option to cut the route short just before O’Brien’s Bridge or about 2 km north of Lehinch.”</i> (Sport Ireland)</p>	<p>Mix of partial, full and no theoretical visibility</p>	<p>Mix of partial, full and no actual visibility</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk</p>	<p><i>“This is a challenging, remote and exposed cliff top path which requires high levels of fitness. It is narrow with steep ascents, flagstone steps, farm tracks and local and regional road and views of the Atlantic Ocean, the cliffs and the hinterland which are stunningly spectacular.”</i> (Sport Ireland)</p>	<p>Mix of partial, full and no theoretical visibility</p>	<p>Mix of partial, full and no actual visibility</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Burren Way</p>	<p><i>“The Burren Way is a 114km walking route that takes in the best of what the Burren area has to offer, from the coast at Doolin to majestic wild-flower-decorated limestone terraces and from the remains left by the Neolithic inhabitants of the Burren to the rich heritage of early Christian churches and sites.”</i> (Sport Ireland)</p>	<p>Mix of partial, full and no theoretical visibility</p>	<p>Mix of partial, full and no actual visibility</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Ennistimon to Lehinch Cycle Path	<p>“A 4 km route linking The Square, Ennistimon and the Atlantic Ocean at The Promenade, Lehinch running alongside the N67.</p> <p>The route is approximately 3km off road on a shared use bi-directional cycle path/footpath & 1km on road, which is not a marked cycle track.”</p>	No theoretical visibility	No actual visibility	No
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14.5.1.5 Recreational, Cultural Heritage and Tourism Destinations

Popular recreational, cultural heritage and tourist destinations were identified in the LVIA Study Area through a desktop exploration of localised tourism plans as well as considering the most popular tourism destinations in County Clare listed on Tripadvisor.ie (and other similar websites).

The impact assessment in this chapter considers the effects of the Proposed Wind Farm on cultural heritage receptors from the perspective of a visitor to a site, monument, or heritage landscape. In this regard, only prominent and popular cultural heritage receptors are identified in the visual baseline exercise. A comprehensive description and assessment of all cultural heritage receptors are assessed in Chapter 13 of this *ELAR- Cultural Heritage*.

Prominent outdoor tourism, recreational destinations and cultural heritage destinations identified within the LVIA study area are listed below in Table 14-9.

Table 14-9 Recreational, Cultural Heritage and Tourism Destinations.

Tourist Destination	Description	Theoretical Visibility	Actual Visibility	Scoped in for Assessment
5 to 10km				
Spanish Point	<p>A local scenic area with a blue flag beach on the Wild Atlantic Way on the West Coast of Clare.</p> <p>Sited approx. 8.6km Northwest from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	Partial TV indicated.	The lower elevation of the beach results in no visibility available in the direction of the Proposed Wind Farm. Visibility would be available from the elevated section of road, though the scenic amenity is directed west, away from the proposed turbines	No
Doonbeg Golf Club	<p>A golf course and resort nestled along the coast of Ireland.</p> <p>Sited approx. 8km West from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	Primarily full TV indicated	Visibility of the proposed turbines will occur.	Yes

15 to 20km				
Vandeleur Walled Garden and Visitor Centre	<p>Set on 170 hectares of native woodlands, where visitors can enjoy walks around a walked garden and learn the history of landlords that once owned the estate.</p> <p>Sited approx. 15.8km Southwest from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	Full TV indicated	There is no actual visibility from within the walled garden and visitor centre due to the woodlands surrounding the garden and visitor centre	No, considering there is no actual visibility
Clahane Viewpoint	<p>This viewing point over the Atlantic Ocean at Clahane is a Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Point in County Clare, Ireland. It offers panoramic views of Liscannor Bay, Mutton Island and Spanish Point.</p> <p>Sited approx. 18.8km North from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	Full TV indicated	There is potential for visibility of the proposed turbines due to the long range open views across the Liscannor Bay.	Yes
Lahinch beach and golf club	<p>An entertainment and fitness centre. Featuring an indoor aquarium, 25 metre swimming pool shops and restaurants.</p> <p>Sited approx. 18km North from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	No TV indicated	No actual visibility	No
Scattery Island	<p>Scattery Island is home to a monastic settlement founded in the early 6th century by St. Senan.</p> <p>Sited approx. 19.8km Southwest from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	Partial TV indicated on the northern extent of the island. The rest of the island has full theoretical visibility.	Visibility not likely to occur.	No.
20 to 25km				

<p>Cliffs of Moher</p>	<p>Part of the UNESCO Global Geopark. Rising out of the Atlantic waters to a height of over 700ft at O'Brien's Tower and running along the coast of Clare, the Cliffs of Moher were formed over 320 million years ago.</p> <p>Sited approx. 22km North from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	<p>Full TV indicated</p>	<p>Visibility of the proposed turbines is likely to occur along elevated points of this tourist destination.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Moher Tower at Hag's Head</p>	<p>Moher Tower is the stone ruin of an old Napoleonic-era watchtower which stands on Hag's Head, at the southern end of the Cliffs of Moher</p> <p>Sited approx. 20.9km North from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	<p>Full TV indicated</p>	<p>While visibility occurs at this location, views are directed north towards the Cliffs of Moher and south along the coast, not in the direction of the proposed turbines.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>O'Brien's Tower</p>	<p>The tower was built on the cliffs in 1835, as an observation point. The tower marks the highest point on the Cliffs of Moher.</p> <p>Sited approx. 22.9km North from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	<p>Full TV indicated</p>	<p>Visibility will occur.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Dysert O'Dea Castle</p>	<p>The centre is a restored 15th century Gaelic tower house. It includes an extensive museum, bookshop, and a wall walk at top of castle.</p> <p>Sited approx. 24.5km Northeast from the Proposed Wind Farm</p>	<p>No TV indicated</p>	<p>No actual visibility</p>	<p>No</p>

14.5.1.6 Transport Routes

Motorways, national primary roads and national secondary roads within the LVIA Study Area were investigated via desktop analysis. Transport routes are not typically considered to represent receptors of

high sensitivity. Therefore, the potential for ‘Significant’ visual effects is only likely to occur for transport routes in close proximity to the Site where the magnitude change is likely to be greater. Consideration is also given to the number of receptors travelling these routes (as per GLVIA3 guidance). In mind of this, only prominent high-trafficked transport routes such as national roads and motorways are considered to 25km and only regional roads within 10km (excepting outer regional roads overlapping with a designated scenic route) are considered in the visual baseline exercise. The visual baseline exercise determined that most visibility of the proposed turbines will occur within 5km of the Site. Therefore, regional roads within 5km were included in this preliminary analysis scoping exercise of transport routes.

Table 14-10 below lists all identified transport routes, describes the geographical extent of theoretical visibility upon each route as illustrated by ZTV mapping, and indicates whether the receptor was scoped in for assessment. The road types are prefixed as follows: local (L), regional (R), national (N), and motorway (M).

Table 14-10 Transport Routes

Transport Route	Theoretical Visibility	Scoped in for Assessment?
Up to 5km		
R483	Mostly full theoretical visibility within the 5km of the Proposed Turbines. Partial theoretical visibility between 5-15km from the Proposed Turbines.	Yes
R484	Primarily full theoretical visibility within the 5km of the Proposed Turbines.	Yes
5 to 10km		
R460	There is primarily no theoretical visibility from the R460	No, considering the adequate setback distance and the limited theoretical visibility from this road
R474	Mix of partial theoretical visibility and none between 5-10km from the proposed turbines.	Yes
R482	Partial theoretical visibility along R482 in the Spanish Point area.	No, considering the adequate setback distance and the partial theoretical visibility from this road
R485	There is a mix of partial and no TV indicated. Commercial forestry and hedgerows screen most of the views from the road within 5-20km of the Proposed Wind Farm.	No
N67	Mostly full theoretical visibility between 5-10km of the Proposed Turbines. Partial TV between 10-15km from the Proposed Turbines.	Yes

N68	The N68 traverses through a mix of areas of full theoretical visibility and no theoretical visibility. There is limited visual screening from vegetation along the N68 which results in open long ranging views towards the proposed turbines. However the proposed turbines are located on the horizon and is not obstructing any designated views on this road. There are no highly sensitive receptors on this route	No, considering the proposed turbines are located on the horizon and do not obstruct any scenic views. the proposed turbines are setback from the N68 by field patterns and commercial forestry. There will be no significant effects on the N68
10 to 15km		
R473	There is a mix of partial and no theoretical visibility along the part of this route within the LVIA Study Area.	No
N85	There is primarily no theoretical visibility on this route. There will be no actual visibility from this route of the proposed turbines.	No, considering there is no actual visibility of the proposed turbines
R478	No TV indicated between Lehinch and Liscannor. Full TV indicated along a stretch of road between 19 to 23km.	Yes, given its proximity to the Cliffs of Moher and CCDP Scenic Route 1 along here.

14.5.2 Visual Receptors Preliminary Assessment

After identifying all visual receptors in the LVIA Study Area, the preliminary analysis was carried out to determine the likely visibility of the proposed turbines using ZTV mapping and on-site visibility appraisals, as reported in the tables of the previous sections. Following this, the final list of visual receptors was selected for further assessment as part of this LVIA using viewpoint selection and photomontage visualisation, supplemented by photowire, or early-stage 'draft' photomontage, analysis. Viewpoints, photomontages and photowires are explained below in Section 14.5.4 Viewpoint Selection: Photomontage and Photowire Locations.

Below, Table 14-11 presents the final list of visual receptors selected for assessment in this LVIA and identifies the viewpoint number(s) (indicated by 'VP') and/or photowire number(s) (indicated by 'PW') representative of that receptor. All viewpoint and photowire locations are mapped along with the visual receptors below in the subsequent Section 14.5.3.

Table 14-11 Visual Receptors **Scoped In** for Assessment

Visual Receptor	Description	Viewpoint (VP) or Photowire (PW) No.
Designated Scenic Routes and Views	SR 1	VP06
	SR 15	VP04, VP05
Settlements	Creagh	VP02
	Kilmihil	VP03
	Mullagh	VP01 PWB
	Miltown Malbay	VP04
	Doonbeg	VP09
	Cooraclare	VP02
	Moyasta	PWA
Recreational Routes	Mid Clare Way	VP07
	The Wild Atlantic Way	VP06, PW-A, PW-C PW-D, PW-E
	Doonbeg Loop	VP09
	Tullaheer Loop Doonbeg	VP09
	Doolin Cycle Hub Loop 1	VP06
	Doolin Cycle Hub Loop 2	VP06
	Burren Way	VP06, PW-D
	Cliffs of Moher Experience	VP06
	Eurovelo	VP10, VP14, PW-A, PWC, PWG
Recreational, Tourism and Cultural Heritage Destinations	Cliffs of Moher (and associated Towers at Cliffs of Moher)	VP06
	Doughmore Bay, Doonbeg Golf Club	VP09
	Clahane Viewpoint	PW-D
Transport Routes	R483	PW-F
	R474	VP04, VP05
	R484	VP02

	N67	PW-A PW-C, PW-E
	R478	VP06

Visual Receptors Scoped Out

ZTV mapping and visibility appraisals conducted on-site during 2024 and 2025 were used to inform the analysis and scope out visual receptors from further assessment. Some of the visual receptors identified in the Visual Baseline were excluded due to the very limited visibility of the proposed turbines, as determined by ZTV mapping as well as onsite appraisals of each visual receptor location. In some cases, the factor of distance to the Proposed Wind Farm site as well as the directional focus of views was included in the preliminary analysis and was a contributing factor in excluding these locations from being selected as viewpoints. Visual receptors that are not mentioned above in Table 14-11 have been excluded from further assessment.

14.5.3 Visual Amenity from Residential Receptors

During multiple surveys conducted during the years 2024 and 2025, visibility appraisals determined that most visibility of the proposed turbines will occur within 5km of the proposed turbines. It is a settled landscape and residential housing is organised along the local road network as well as in small settlement clusters around local crossroads and junctions. Some residential receptors located in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site will likely have views of the proposed turbines and are likely to have the greatest visual effects arising as a result of the Proposed Wind Farm.

In light of this, several photomontage viewpoint locations representing residential properties located in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm were selected for inclusion in the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet* and are assessed in *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*, as well as discussed later in this Chapter.

The following representative viewpoints (VPs) and/or photowires (PW-VPs) are located in proximity to residential receptors and settlement centres within 5km from the proposed turbines.

- > VP 01 (Mullagh)
- > VP 02 (Creagh)
- > VP 03 (Kilmihil)
- > VP 10 (Knocknahila More North townland)
- > VP 11 (Cloghaun More (East) townland)
- > VP 12 (Cloonwhite North townland)
- > VP 13 (Cahermurphy townland)
- > VP 14 (Cloghaun More (East) townland)
- > VP 15 (Carrownagry North townland)
- > PW B (Mullagh)
- > PW G (Cloghaun More (East) townland)
- > PW H (Cahermurphy townland)
- > PW I (Drummin townland)
- > PW J (Carrownagry South townland)

14.5.4 Viewpoint Selection: Photomontage and Photowire Locations

Selection of Main Photomontage Viewpoints

Photomontage imagery was captured from multiple viewpoint locations in the LVIA Study Area; from these, a total of 15 no. photomontage viewpoints were selected for full assessment (named VP01–VP15). These are mapped below in Figure 14-17 and Figure 14-18 (marked as blue/white icons) and presented in the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet* accompanying this report. All VPs are comprehensively assessed in Section 14.7.4.3.2: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Outcomes.

Imagery captured from each viewpoint was used to assess the significance of visual effects arising from the proposed turbines from each viewpoint location. The viewpoint locations are representative of visual receptors; in some instances, imagery was not captured directly at a visual receptor but from another location in close proximity to the receptor, from which there was a superior line of sight towards the proposed turbines (e.g. a point of higher elevation or a position with less visual screening).

The likely Significant visual effects of the proposed turbines arising from each viewpoint location are reported below in Section 14.7.4.3. The comprehensive and detailed assessment is presented within the viewpoint (photomontage) impact assessment tables in *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*.

Supplementary Photomontage Viewpoints: Photowires

Before selection of the final viewpoints, early-stage photomontages (draft-overlaid wireframes) were produced, known as ‘photowires’, representing all visual receptors listed above. In some instances, photowires indicated limited visibility of the proposed turbines and were therefore excluded from assessment in the final *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*.

To aid discussions, a total of 10 no. supplementary photowires (named PW-A through PW-J) representing additional locations of visual receptors are discussed in the text during the assessments included below in Section 14.7 to illustrate certain points relating to visual effects on specific receptors. These photowires are classified as ‘Type 3’ Visualisations in the LI TGN (2019) and do not form part of the assessment of visual effects included in *Appendix 14-3*.

The locations of the 10 no. supplementary photowires (PW-A through PW-J, marked as orange icons) are also included below in Figure 14-17. A detailed description of the viewpoint selection process and photomontage/photowire assessment methodology is provided in *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology*.

14.6 Cumulative Context: Other Wind Farms

This LVIA Chapter assesses the likely landscape and visual impacts of the Proposed Wind Farm, both independently, as well as in combination with all other existing wind farm developments in the LVIA Study Area. In this section, all wind farm developments in the LVIA Study Area which are likely to have significant effects in cumulation with the proposed turbines.

In addition, this chapter assesses the Proposed Wind Farm in combination with all ‘likely future receiving environments’ according to the EPA, 2022 in the LVIA Study Area, which includes other permitted and proposed wind farm developments.

14.6.1

Cumulative Developments Identified in the LVIA Study Area

All wind farm developments in the LVIA Study Area are identified in this section and each is categorised as one of the following:

- **Existing** – Wind energy developments that are currently operational in the baseline landscape at the time of conducting this LVIA;
- **Permitted** – Wind energy developments that are permitted (consented) at the time of conducting this LVIA. These developments have a high probability of being operational in a future receiving environment;
- **Proposed** – All well-developed wind farm proposals with project specifications in the public domain at the time of conducting this LVIA. Cumulative effects between the Proposed Wind Farm and other proposed developments within this category are inherently uncertain and are reliant on the outcome of the planning and consenting system (amongst other factors).

A description of the various cumulative categories are presented in the *EIAR Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*, and comprehensively reported on in *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology* (Section 1.6: Photomontage Visualisations). The above categories are a useful guide to enable understanding and structure when viewing the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet* and identification of the developments listed in this section. However, irrespective of how a development is categorised, the assessments of cumulative landscape and visual effects include all other wind farm developments.

The effects reported both in this Chapter and within the assessment appendices (*Appendix 14-2: LCA Assessment Tables* and *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*) uses appropriate and logical narrative to discuss cumulative interactions between the Proposed Wind Farm and all other wind energy developments irrespective of which category they occur. Whilst the categories provide clarity in the presentation of visuals with respect to the scope of potential development in this landscape, discussion of cumulative interactions on specific landscape and visual receptors is relative to the effects on each receptor and is proportionate to the likelihood of significant landscape and visual effects occurring on that receptor.

In terms of cumulative landscape and visual effects, only other wind energy projects have been considered, as only these development types can be described as having very tall, vertical elements in the landscape (i.e. turbines) and therefore have the most potential to give rise to ‘Significant’ cumulative landscape and visual effects. These other wind energy developments within 25km of the proposed turbines were identified by searching past planning applications lodged through the online planning portals of relevant planning authorities (i.e. An Coimisiún Pleanála, Clare County Council).

The information identified in the initial planning search was then used to verify, by means of a desk-based study and ground-truthing, whether the permitted wind energy developments had been constructed. The list of existing and proposed wind turbines present within the LVIA Study Area are listed below in Table 14-12.

Table 14-12 Cumulative Wind Farms Identified in the LVIA Study Area

Other Wind Farms	Status	No. of Turbines	Distance from Nearest Proposed Turbine
Up to 5km			
Cahermurphy	Existing	4	Approx. 460m. east from proposed turbine T6

Other Wind Farms	Status	No. of Turbines	Distance from Nearest Proposed Turbine
Kiltumper	Existing	2	2.7km southeast from proposed turbine T8
Glenmore	Existing	12	4.8km east from proposed turbine T6
5 to 10km			
Booltiagh	Existing	12	6km east from proposed turbine T6
Booltiagh Extension	Existing	6	6.8km east from proposed turbine T6
Slieve Callan	Existing	29	7km north from proposed turbine T5
Letteragh	Existing	6	9.2km east from proposed turbine T5
Crossmore	Existing	7	8.6km southeast from proposed turbine T5
Slieveacurry	Proposed	9	10km north from proposed turbine T2
10 to 15km			
Tullabrack	Existing	6	11.8km southwest from proposed turbine T7
Moanmore	Existing	7	12.9km southwest from proposed turbine T7
Moanmore Lower	Proposed	3	14.8km southwest from proposed turbine T7
Boolynagleragh	Existing	9	13km east from proposed turbine T6
Boolynagleragh Extension	Existing	7	13.8km east from proposed turbine T6
Illaunbaun	Proposed	6	11.6 north from proposed turbine T2
Cloonkett	Proposed	14	13.1km southeast from proposed turbine T8
Ballykett	Proposed	4	12.1km southeast from proposed turbine T7
15 to 20km			
Moneypoint	Existing	5	17.2km south from proposed turbine T7
20 to 25km			
Leanamore	Existing	9	22.9km south from proposed turbine T7

Within the LVIA Study Area (25km radius), 14 no. existing and 5 no. proposed wind farms have been identified. The locations of these wind farms are mapped in the following section. In cases where turbines of these wind farms are theoretically visible from the selected 15 no. photomontage viewpoints selected for this LVIA, the turbines are modelled and rendered within the 'Proposed View' photomontage imagery in the *Photomontage Booklet*.

14.6.2 Cumulative Context and Theoretical Visibility

Below, Figure 14-15 compares the cumulative theoretical visibility of all existing and proposed wind farms with an additional visibility of the proposed turbines, and the subsequent Figure 14-16 shows the same map overlain with a newly calculated ZTV for cumulative effects.

The legend of Figure 14-16 shows the theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines and cumulative turbines for each corresponding colour, as follows:

- Teal: Only turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are theoretically visible;
- Yellow: Only turbines from existing and other proposed windfarms are theoretically visible;
- Grey: All cumulative turbines are theoretically visible, including the Proposed Wind Farm and all other existing and proposed windfarms.

On Figure 14-16 below, the very small areas of the teal colour on the ZTV map illustrates that the Proposed Wind Farm, on its own, adds very little additional theoretical visibility of cumulative turbines across the landscape within the LVIA Study Area. The theoretical visibility of cumulative turbines is most prominent within the east portion of the LVIA Study Area, while combined theoretical visibility of the cumulative turbines and Proposed Wind Farm is prominent in the west half of the LVIA Study Area.

This suggests that, if permitted and constructed, the Proposed Wind Farm would have similar theoretical visibility to the other cumulative turbines within the area. Therefore, while the Proposed Wind Farm would increase the density of wind energy developments into a future receiving environment where other wind energy developments may already be visible, there are very few locations where it would introduce turbines as entirely new or novel elements within the landscape.

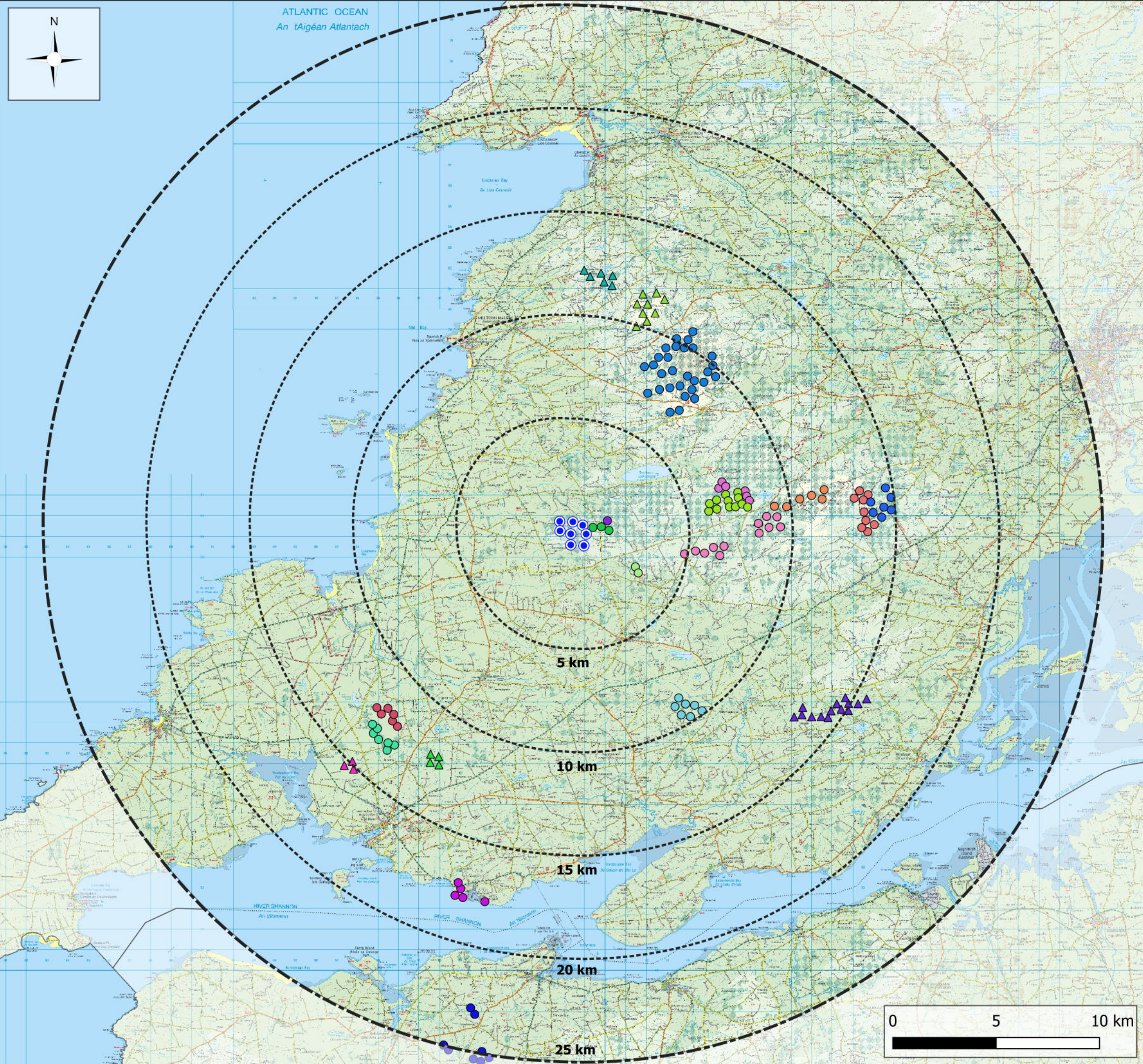
As noted previously, the ZTV does not account for localised undulations in topography or other screening factors; as such, the actual visibility from areas of lowland vegetated landscape is likely to be far less than is indicated by the ZTV. Whilst the cumulative ZTV is a useful tool to aid assessment of cumulative effects and identify areas of non-visibility where certain cumulative impacts will not occur, its utility is limited.

It should be emphasised that, in general, photomontages are a more informative tool than the Cumulative ZTV for assessing the potential cumulative landscape and visual impacts of the Proposed Wind Farm; the likely cumulative visual effects as shown in photomontages are comprehensively assessed in *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*.

In addition, this report highlights that cumulative effects between the proposed turbines and other wind farms (not permitted) are more uncertain and are reliant on an outcome of the planning and consenting system.

Detailed discussions of cumulative landscape and visual effects are included below in Section 14.7.4.4.3: Discussion of Cumulative Visual Effects. The likely cumulative landscape effects are assessed in the landscape character assessment tables in *Appendix 14-2: LCA Impact Assessment*, and the likely cumulative visual effects are assessed in the Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables in *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*.

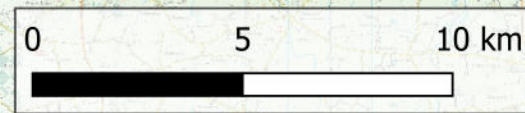
It is noted that the assessment of likely significant cumulative landscape and visual effects must be proportional, meaning that the focus of the assessment is on the extent to which the Proposed Wind Farm contributes toward cumulative effects on the particular receptors under assessment; these contributions are clearly explained in the narrative on cumulative impact assessment included in this Chapter (Section 14.7.4.4.3) as well as in the impact assessment Appendices (*Appendix 14-2* and *Appendix 14-3*).

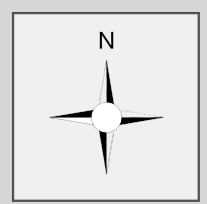
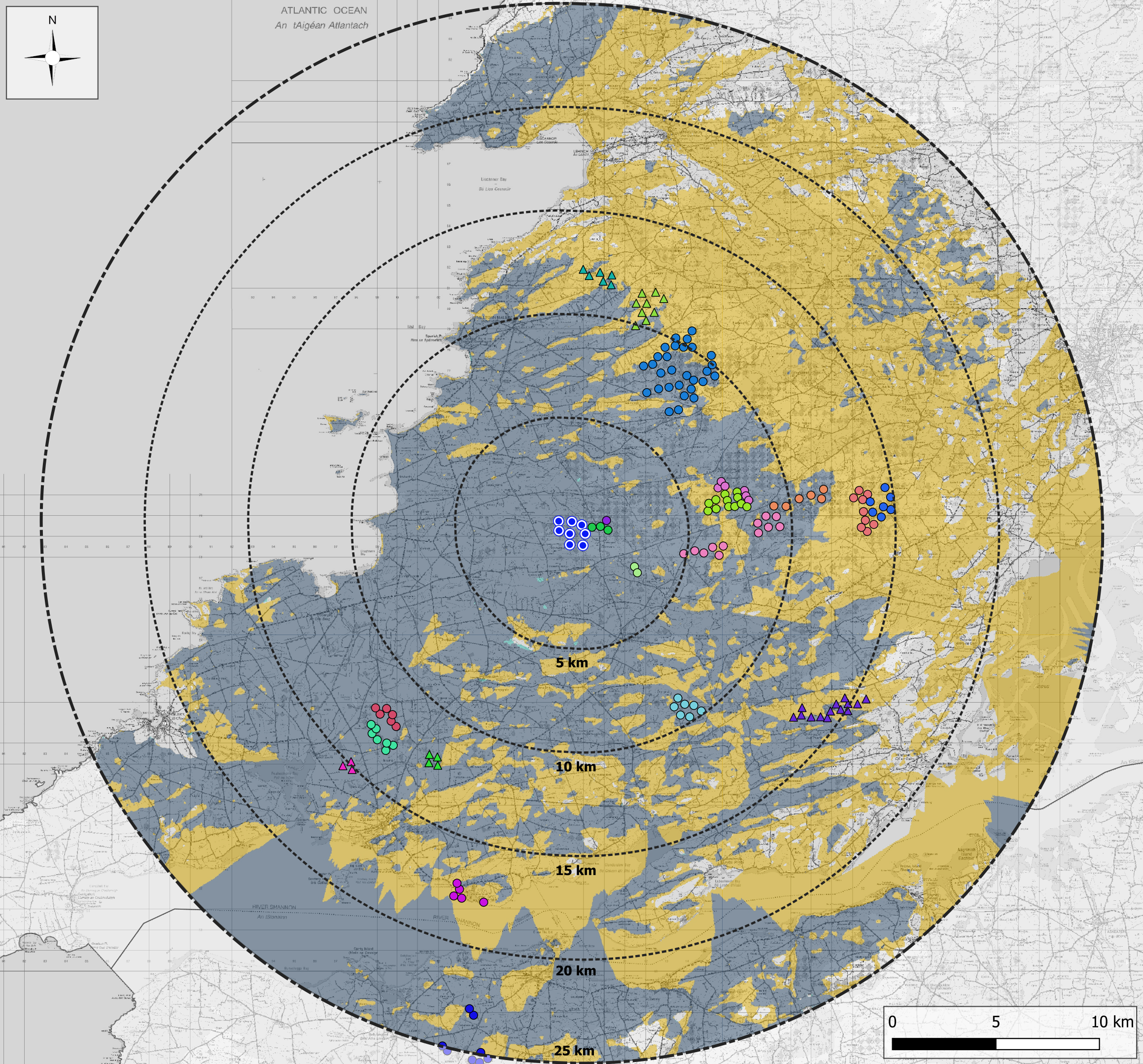


Map Legend

- LVIA Study Area
 - Proposed Turbines
- Cumulative Wind Farms**
- Booltiagh Extension Wind Farm (existing)
 - Booltiagh Wind Farm (existing)
 - Boolynagleragh Extension Wind Farm (existing)
 - Boolynagleragh Extension Wind Farm (existing)
 - Cahermurphy Wind Farm (T1, T2 & T4) (existing)
 - Cahermurphy Wind Farm (T3) (existing)
 - Crossmore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Glenmore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Kiltumper Wind Farm (existing)
 - Leanamore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Letteragh Wind Farm (existing)
 - Moanmore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Moneypoint Wind Farm (existing)
 - Slieve Callan Wind Farm (existing)
 - Tullabrack Wind Farm (existing)
 - ▲ Ballykett Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Cloonkett Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Illaunbaun Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Moanmore Lower Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Slieveacurry Wind Farm (proposed)

Drawing No.	Figure 14-15			
Drawing Title	Cumulative Context Map			
Project Title	Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:180,000	230843	03/02/2026	GL	DM





ATLANTIC OCEAN
An tAigéan Atlantach

Map Legend

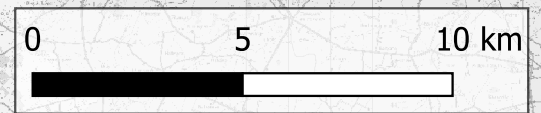
- LVIA Study Area
 - Proposed Turbines
- Cumulative Wind Farms**
- Booltiagh Extension Wind Farm (existing)
 - Booltiagh Wind Farm (existing)
 - Boolynagleragh Extension Wind Farm (existing)
 - Boolynagleragh Extension Wind Farm (existing)
 - Cahermurphy Wind Farm (T1, T2 & T4) (existing)
 - Cahermurphy Wind Farm (T3) (existing)
 - Crossmore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Glenmore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Kiltumper Wind Farm (existing)
 - Leanamore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Letteragh Wind Farm (existing)
 - Moanmore Wind Farm (existing)
 - Moneypoint Wind Farm (existing)
 - Slieve Callan Wind Farm (existing)
 - Tullabrack Wind Farm (existing)
 - ▲ Ballykett Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Cloonkett Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Illaunbaun Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Moanmore Lower Wind Farm (proposed)
 - ▲ Slieveacurry Wind Farm (proposed)
- Comparative Zone of Theoretical Visibility**
- Only proposed turbines theoretically visible
 - Only cumulative turbines theoretically visible
 - All turbines theoretically visible

Drawing No. **Figure 14-16**

Drawing Title **Cumulative Comparative ZTV Map**

Project Title **Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development**

Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:180,000	230843	03/02/2026	GL	DM



14.7 Likely Significant Landscape and Visual Effects

Based on the analysis of landscape and visual baseline information reported above in this Chapter, combined with considerations of the cumulative effects with other wind farms, this section reports the landscape and visual effects likely to occur during all three phases of the Proposed Project:

- > Construction phase;
- > Operational phase;
- > Decommissioning phase.

In addition, this section summarises the outcomes of LCA and photomontage visual impact assessments (refer to *Appendix 14-2* and *Appendix 14-3*, respectively). A comprehensive description of the guidance and methodology used for the assessment of landscape and visual effects are included in *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology*, along with information about the photomontages as a tool used to inform the impact assessment, including their limitations (*Appendix 14-1*, Section 1.6.4: Limitations of Photomontage Visualisation).

14.7.1 Do-Nothing Scenario

If the Proposed Project was not to proceed, no changes would be made to the current land-use practice of commercial forestry and low-intensity agricultural land. The future receiving landscape is likely to continue evolving gradually in line with existing land use and management practices. Small-scale agriculture and commercial forestry practices in the area would continue to be managed under their existing farming practices and commercial forestry arrangements. The public road network would remain unaltered. Should this occur, the landscape and visual impact would be neutral in the context of this EIAR.

In implementing the 'Do-Nothing' alternative, the opportunity to capture a significant amount of County Clare's renewable energy resource would be lost, as would the opportunity to contributing to meeting Government's as well as the European Union's (EU) targets for the production and consumption of electricity from renewable resources and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

14.7.2 Construction Phase Effects

It is estimated that the construction phase of the Proposed Project will last between 18-24 months – Short-Term (EPA, 2022). The construction of the development will involve the construction of 8 No. turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 185m and all associated works, and a proposed on-site 110kV electrical substation and associated works, including underground cabling.

Construction phase effects will also include the associated effects resulting from the movement of construction and turbine transport vehicles into and out of the Proposed Wind Farm site, to allow the construction of the turbines, roads, and associated elements.

All landscape and visual effects during the construction phase are deemed to be short-term and negative.

14.7.2.1 Landscape Effects (Construction Phase)

Associated earthworks such as the cut and fill required to facilitate the construction of the Proposed Project will have a direct effect on the landscape and have the greatest potential for landscape effects. Where excavation is required, the existing landcover, vegetation and spoil will be removed during the construction phase. In most instances, groundworks and excavation trenches will be re-installed upon

the completion of construction. Excavation will be visually contained by the surrounding landform and will not be visible from the wider LVIA Study Area.

The construction activities may potentially cause temporary impacts on the landscape such as the creation of temporary structures, dust and noise. In general, it is considered that the construction phase will have a 'Slight', 'Short-Term', 'Negative' effect in terms of direct landscape effects.

The construction works will be temporary/short-term in nature and completed as soon as practically possible. All construction activities will follow best practise methods to reduce impacts upon the environment and landscape of the Site. Further details are set forth in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) contained in Appendix 4-5 of this EIAR.

14.7.2.2 Visual Effects (Construction Phase)

The most substantial visual effects will arise from requisite construction activities, such as assembling the tower sections and erecting the turbines. These will be temporary scenarios during the construction phase where the proposed turbines will be partially constructed and may be seen as either standalone tower sections, or incomplete turbines where only one or two blades are visible. The equipment and vehicles required to transport and erect the wind farm components include large cranes and large haulage vehicles. These construction activities will cause 'Slight', 'Short-Term', 'Negative' visual effects.

General housekeeping measures, necessary for health and safety requirements, will be implemented to ensure that the active construction areas will be kept tidy, mitigating localised visual impacts during the construction phase. A detailed description of the Proposed Wind Farm is included in Chapter 4 of this EIAR. The following sections assess the visual effects associated with the construction phase of the other (non-turbine) components of the Proposed Wind Farm.

14.7.2.3 Ancillary Project Elements (Construction Phase)

14.7.2.3.1 Site Access Roads and Hardstand Areas

The existing and proposed access roads and hardstand areas are flat features and will be most visible within their immediate surroundings, within the Site, hence no 'Significant' impacts will arise within the landscape. Every use will be made of the existing farm and access tracks on the Site. Some tracks will be upgraded appropriately whilst several stretches of new internal roads will need to be newly constructed. The landscape and visual impact of the construction of these flat and hard surfaces will be extremely localised. Thus, the visual effects arising from the access roads and hardstand areas are considered to be localised, 'Slight' and 'Short-Term'.

14.7.2.3.2 Turbine Delivery Route (TDR) Accommodation Works

As detailed in Section 4.2.1 of Chapter 4, works are required along proposed turbine transport routes to accommodate the large vehicles used to transport turbine components to wind farm sites. In some instances (See Section 4.2.11.2), temporary local road widening and temporary relocation of some signs and street furniture will be required. Full details of the assessment are included as part of the traffic impact assessment set out in Chapter 15: 'Material Assets' of this EIAR.

As detailed in Section 4.2.11.2 of Chapter 4, small areas of hedgerow and trees may need to either be removed or trimmed at several locations. The landscape value and sensitivity of the Site of the TDR accommodation works are deemed to be Low and the change to occur will be highly localised. These works are likely to cause 'Not Significant', 'Temporary', 'Negative' landscape and visual effects.

14.7.2.3.3

Proposed Borrow Pits, Spoil and Peat Management Areas

It is proposed to construct 2 no. temporary borrow pits within the Proposed Wind farm site. The extraction of material from the borrow pits is a construction phase activity only, done through means of rock breaking and blasting (as appropriate). The direct effects of the borrow pit on the physical fabric of the landscape itself will be highly localised within the agricultural field in which they are located in.

While on an elevated landform, the proposed borrow pit to the north will be enclosed by commercial forestry, and as such will be largely screened by dense vegetation within the Proposed Wind farm site. However, as the borrow pit is located on a slope of an elevated ridge, instances may occur where the borrow pit may be visible from elevated vantage points within the wider landscape, and will therefore have an effect on landscape character in combination with the proposed turbines and other infrastructure. The proposed borrow pit is located within an area already influenced by high levels of human modification, and is deemed to be of Low sensitivity. The landscape and visual effects will be very localised, temporary, 'Short-Term,' and 'Not Significant'.

The proposed borrow pit to the south will be located within an open agricultural field comprised of agricultural grassland. This borrow pit will be more visible within the immediate vicinity, as well as from elevated vantage points in the wider landscape and will therefore have an effect on landscape character in combination with the proposed turbines. However, the proposed borrow pits will be located in a highly modified degraded grassland of low sensitivity. The landscape and visual effects will be very localised, temporary, 'Short-Term,' and 'Slight'.

Several rehabilitation measures will be implemented post-construction phase. For example, the borrow pits will be backfilled with spoil and then reseeded. Following rehabilitation, the landscape and visual effects will be 'Not Significant' during the operational phase.

To manage any excess overburden generated through construction activities, 6 no. spoil management areas have been selected within the Site. The peat placed within these will be at a maximum height of 1m, where effects of spoil management areas will be very localised within the Proposed Wind Farm site itself. Therefore, the creation of spoil management areas will have a Temporary 'Slight' and localised effect on the landscape during the construction phase. Following regrading and re-establishment of vegetation of these areas following completion of the construction phase, effects will be 'Not Significant' during the operational phase.

To manage any excess overburden generated through construction activities, peat storage areas have been selected within areas suitable for spoil management. The effects of peat storage areas will be highly localised within the Site; therefore, the creation of peat storage areas will have a temporary 'Not Significant' effect on the landscape.

14.7.2.3.4

Meteorological (Met) Mast

One no. meteorological (met) mast is proposed as part of the Proposed Project. The met mast will be equipped with wind monitoring equipment at various heights. The proposed met mast will be located 230m southwest of proposed turbine T7. The met mast will be a free-standing slender lattice structure 100 metres in height. It will be constructed on a hard-standing area, 14 x21 meters, sufficiently large to accommodate the equipment that will be used to erect the mast. Within the Site and its immediate landscape setting, the landscape and visual effects arising from the construction of the met mast within an agricultural field is considered to be of highly localised 'Negative,' 'Short-Term,' 'Slight' effects.

14.7.2.3.5

Temporary Construction Compound

Two temporary construction compounds will be located within the Proposed Wind Farm site, within an area of a commercial plantation. A detailed description of the construction compound is provided in Chapter 4.

The landscape and visual effects of the construction compounds will be highly localised, considering that construction activities relating to them will be most visible within their immediate surroundings. Within the Site and its immediate landscape setting, the landscape and visual effects arising from the construction compounds are considered to be of highly localised 'Negative,' Short-Term 'Not Significant' effects.

14.7.3 Proposed Grid Connection

14.7.3.1.1 Proposed On-site 110kV Electrical Substation

Visual effects will occur as the proposed substation is built due to the earthworks and requisite construction activities; these will cause a localised change to views in the immediate area, mainly from the local road network and residential receptors. As established in the baseline investigations, the proposed substation is located within an existing agricultural field, with substantial setback distance from the nearest residential receptor, located approx. 240m east of the proposed substation. There is a small tract of commercial forestry to the east of the proposed substation. Visibility of the proposed substation will be limited from residential receptors in the immediate vicinity due to the visual screening effect from the dense vegetation enclosing the proposed substation. Therefore, the visual effects are likely to be highly localised, 'Negative', and 'Slight'.

It is proposed to connect the proposed Cahermurphy West Wind Farm substation to the existing Moneypoint 110kV substation, located approximately 17.7km south of the Proposed Wind farm site. Connection via the Moneypoint route will comprise underground cabling, measuring approximately 25km in total, located within the public road corridor and private agricultural lands for the entirety of the route. The underground electrical cabling route will be located underground, therefore the greatest effects attributed to this element of the Proposed Project will occur during the construction phase. The overall construction phase of the underground electrical cabling route will be 'Short-term'. These construction works will be very localised, and transient in nature, as the works will relocate incrementally along the cabling route, therefore works are 'Temporary' in any one area. The works will include roadside vegetation removal, soil/road surface stripping, excavation, Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) and other associated construction activities. Regarding the Grid Connection, changes will be localised to the immediate environment surrounding the Grid Connection and will not permanently affect the character of the landscape setting or visual amenity of the wider area. Therefore, the proposed Grid Connection underground electrical cabling works are likely to cause 'Slight', 'Short-Term', 'Negative' landscape and visual effects.

The following measures will be implemented to mitigate effects during the construction phase and operational phase of the Grid Connection underground electrical cabling route:

- In all circumstances, excavation depths and volumes will be minimised, and excavated material will be re-used;
- Where the cable trench is to be located in the road verge, subsoil will be piled on-site and re-used after cabling works. Should any medium planting be removed, it will be replaced with the same or similar species in cases where it is not possible to salvage and reinstate the original plants;

14.7.4 Operational Phase Effect

Planning permission is being sought for a thirty-five-year operational life of the Proposed Project from the date of full commissioning of the wind farm and subsequent decommissioning which will involve the removal of the proposed turbines from the Site. Potential impacts of the Proposed Project during the operational phase are defined as 'Long-Term' as per the definition for duration in the EPA Guidance (2022). The proposed turbines would be removed from the Site at the end of the operational phase. Therefore, potential landscape and visual impacts effects on receptors caused by the Proposed turbines are not permanent and are reversible.

This section reports the landscape and visual effects anticipated during the operational lifetime of the Proposed Project. This section is organised as follows:

- **Landscape Effects:** Reporting landscape effects for the Proposed Wind Farm and Proposed Grid Connection route.
- **LCA Assessment Outcomes:** A summary of the landscape impact assessment outcomes for each LCA in the (15km) LCA Study Area as is comprehensively reported in Appendix 14-2: *LCA Impact Assessment*.
- **Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Outcomes:** A summary of the visual impact assessment outcomes in the (25km) LVIA Study Area for each photomontage as is comprehensively reported in Appendix 14-3: *Photomontage Viewpoint Impact Assessment*.
- **Visual Effects: Receptors:** Discussion of visual effects on the specific visual receptors selected for assessment within the visual baseline exercise (Recall Section 14.5.2 *Visual Receptors Preliminary Analysis*) with reference to photomontages and photowires.
- **Residential Visual Amenity:** Discussion of visual effects on residential receptors within close proximity to the Site.
- **Visual Effects: Ancillary Project Elements:** Discussion of visual effects of the non-turbine infrastructure of the Proposed Project.
- **Cumulative Effects:** Discussion of landscape and visual effects expected to occur in combination with the Proposed Project and all identified existing, permitted and proposed wind farms identified in the LVIA Study Area

14.7.4.1 Landscape Effects (Operational Phase)

14.7.4.1.1 Proposed Wind Farm Site

The landscape character of the Proposed Wind Farm site will undergo major changes in the landscape by the introduction of vertical man-made structures and ancillary infrastructure. There will be a Substantial magnitude of change to the landscape in the localised areas within the Site where the landscape is materially altered (infrastructure footprint).

In a local context, the Proposed Wind Farm site is a modified, remote landscape, comprised of agricultural fields, bog land and coniferous commercial forestry. As outlined in Section 14.4.2, the landscape value and sensitivity of the Site was deemed to be 'Low'. Low sensitivity balanced with a Substantial magnitude of change amounts to long-term landscape effects of 'Moderate' significance upon the physical fabric of the landscape of the Site (refer to Appendix 14-1: *LVIA Methodology*, Section 1.7: Assessing Landscape Effects). These direct landscape effects will be highly localised to the footprint of the Proposed Project. Effects on the perceptual and aesthetic character of the Site are also deemed to be of Moderate significance.

Mitigation of Landscape Effects within the Landscape of the Site

The following measures have been included in the Proposed Project design and will be implemented in order to avoid, reduce, mitigate or offset effects on landscape receptors of the Site:

- The spatial configuration of the proposed infrastructure footprint has been carefully designed to minimise the loss of valuable landscape receptors on the Site, such as peatland of high biodiversity value.
- The proposed internal site road layout maximises the use of the existing forestry tracks wherever possible, to minimise the requirement for new tracks within the Site.

- In all circumstances, excavation depths and volumes will be minimised, and excavated material will be re-used where possible.
- The layout and design of the Proposed Project has been designed to make maximum use of existing infrastructure, ensuring minimal loss of valuable landscape receptors and biodiversity corridors such as woodland and hedgerows.
- To minimise cut and fill activities required to construct the Proposed Project, the proposed access roads, and other infrastructure such as hardstands have been designed to align with the existing terrain within the landscape of the Site.
- In all circumstances, excavation depths and volumes will be minimised, and excavated material will be re-used where possible.

Residual Landscape Effects

Once the Proposed Project is operational and construction is complete, the landscape will naturally re-vegetate around the Proposed Project footprint with the aid of mitigation measures. Considering the mitigation measures above, residual effects upon the landscape of the Proposed Wind Farm site are deemed to be ‘Slight’.

14.7.4.1.2 Proposed Grid Connection

As the Proposed Grid Connection route cabling is located underground, landscape and visual effects during the operational phase will be ‘Imperceptible’ once vegetation has been re-established along the roadway following earthworks during the construction phase. The landscape and visual effects occurring during the construction phase of the Proposed Grid Connection route are reported previously in Section 14.7.2: Construction Phase Effects.

14.7.4.1.3 LCA Assessment Outcomes

An assessment of the effects on landscape character was undertaken for the 4 No. designated LCAs within the 15km LCA Study Area selected for assessment in Section 14.4.5.1 above. The individual assessments for each LCA are summarised below in Table 14-13 and are detailed in Appendix 14-2: *LCA Impact Assessment*. The assessment criteria and grading scales which aided the assessment of landscape effects are detailed in Section 1.7 ‘Assessing Landscape Effects’ of Appendix 14-1: *LVIA Methodology*.

Table 14-13 LCA Assessment Summary

Designated Landscape Character Area	LCA Sensitivity to Wind Farm Development	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Landscape Effect (EPA, 2022)
LCA 17 – Slieve Callan Uplands	Low	Moderate	Slight
LCA 20 – Malbay Coastal Farmlands	High	Slight	Moderate
LCA 19 – Kilmihil Farmlands	Medium	Slight	Slight
LCA 21 – Loop Head	High	Slight	Slight

The largest magnitude of change (Moderate) will occur in the LCA 17 - Slieve Callan Uplands, as the proposed turbines will alter the landscape of this LCA. The proposed turbines are likely to be mostly visible within 5km of the Site as well as from elevated vantage points within this LCA. On-site appraisals determined that there would be more limited visibility of the proposed turbines in parts of this LCT beyond 5km from the proposed turbines due to the visual screening from intervening vegetation and topography in the landscape which limits views of the proposed turbines.

2 no. turbines are located within LCA 20 – Malbay Coastal Farmlands, along the border with LCA 17. Given the expansive extent of this LCA and the relatively limited area occupied by the 2 no. turbines, the overall magnitude of change on the LCA as a whole is considered to be Slight. The proposed turbines are likely to be mostly visible within 5km of the Proposed Wind Farm site as well as from elevated vantage points within this LCA. On-site appraisals determined that there would be more limited visibility of the proposed turbines in parts of this LCA beyond 5km from the proposed turbines due to the gentle undulations and boundary vegetation in this LCA. The Malbay Coastal Farmland LCA is designated as a landscape of High sensitivity on account of the coastal corridor that traces the coastline in a north to south orientation. The proposed turbines do not significantly impact the key sensitivities of this LCA, e.g. the coastal corridor which is designated as County Clare Heritage Landscape. This designation only extends approximately 1.5 km inland where the landscape designation transitions to that of County Clare Settled Landscape which is a settled agricultural landscape deemed to be of lesser value and sensitivity.

A review of the landscape policy reported above (Section 14.4.1) concludes that the Proposed Wind Farm is sited within a designated ‘Settled Landscape’, which has the capacity to accommodate wind energy development. Furthermore, it is noted that all of the proposed turbines are located within an area classified as ‘Strategic Area’ in the CCDP, where wind energy has already been established.

The proposed turbines will not materially alter any of the other LCAs in the LCA Study Area and therefore the proposed turbines will give rise to a Long-term ‘Not Significant’ or ‘Slight’ negative residual landscape effect.

14.7.4.1.4 **Effects on Designated Landscape Receptors of High Sensitivity (Heritage Landscapes)**

Several designated Heritage Landscapes were identified in the landscape baseline as having High and Very High sensitivity and some theoretical visibility indicated by ZTV; the likely landscape effects on these receptors are discussed below. As noted previously, the CCDP states the following in relation to Heritage Landscapes:

“Heritage Landscapes’ are those areas within the County where sensitive environmental resources – scenic, ecological and historic - are located. These landscapes are envisioned as the most valued parts of the County, that are important to the people of County Clare as well as to wider national and international communities. The principal role of these landscapes is to sustain natural and cultural heritage”

The Proposed Project will not directly alter the physical fabric of these landscape receptors and therefore, any landscape effects that may occur are likely to impact only their character or setting. In all instances, there will be no ‘Significant’ impact on the key sensitivities of these receptors due to the large set-back distances of the Proposed Project from them.

The Coast (Heritage Landscape)

The area to the west of the LVIA Study Area comprises of the Atlantic coastal corridor, which is a ‘Heritage Landscape’ known as the ‘The Coast’. At its closest point, this Heritage Landscape is located approximately 5.15km west of the nearest proposed turbine, T1. Overall, while there will be some effects on the character and setting of this Heritage Landscape as the proposed turbines will introduce new elements into some distant views, they are viewed within the marginal uplands, inland, within a separate landscape type to the coastal plain and coastal corridor, whereas the key sensitivities are the coastline and adjacent rolling farmland. Also, the proposed turbines would not cause significant landscape or visual effects on the designated scenic routes, walking trails, or the overall tourism value within this Heritage Landscape as discussed in Section 14.7.4.3 below. Given the setback distance and narrow horizontal extent of which the turbines occupy within this expansive landscape, the Proposed

Project is not considered to significantly affect the character of this Heritage Landscape. As such, the overall residual landscape effect is 'Slight'.

UNESCO Landscape

The Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark is located in the northern extent of the LVIA Study Area, within the Heritage Landscape, and deemed to have Very High sensitivity. This landscape receptor is sited 19km away at its closest, where the proposed turbines are viewed within the marginal uplands, within a small portion of the expansive view over the coastal corridor. The Proposed Project is not considered to significantly affect the character of this UNESCO landscape, and hence the overall residual landscape effect is 'Slight'.

Fergus Estuary and River Shannon (Heritage Landscape)

ZTV mapping and on-site appraisals determined that the Proposed Wind Farm would have no impact upon this 'Heritage Landscape' (in the LVIA Study Area), forming the northern banks of the River Shannon. This Heritage Landscape is located approximately 12.9 km south of the nearest proposed turbine. Pockets of theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines occurs in small areas within this Heritage Landscape with the majority of the theoretical visibility surrounding the small village of Moyasta which is represented by PW-A (Photowire A). Whilst the proposed turbines will be visible in the background of views from elevated vantage points in the Heritage Landscape with south-facing aspects, they will only be visible as small background features of views at distances >17km, and will bring a 'Negligible' change to the setting and characteristics of this landscape. Given the setback distance and narrow horizontal extent of which the turbines occupy within this expansive landscape, the Proposed Project is not considered to significantly affect the character of this Heritage Landscape. As such, the overall residual landscape effect is 'Slight'.

14.7.4.2 Discussion of Cumulative Landscape Effects

The Proposed Wind Farm will contribute to cumulative effects on the landscape of west Clare where there are a number of other existing, permitted and proposed wind energy developments.

It is highlighted that although the LVIA Study Area includes many cumulative wind farms, many of which are existing, the likelihood of proposed or pre-application wind farms (Slieveacurry, Illaunbaun) cumulatively impact landscape character depends on a range of factors, most notably the outcome of the planning process.

The Proposed Wind Farm Site

The four existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines are located on elevated lands immediately north east of the Proposed Wind Farm site. Therefore, the proposed turbines and other proposed wind farm infrastructure will have a direct cumulative effect on the landscape of the Proposed Wind Farm Site in combination with these existing turbines. These cumulative landscape effects are considered acceptable given the suitability of the Proposed Wind Farm site as a low sensitivity (See Section 14.4.3) working landscape comprising sparsely populated marginal upland capable of accommodating many turbines, as well as its designation as a 'Strategic Area' for wind energy development in local planning policy.

LCA-17 – Slieve Callan Uplands

The Proposed Wind Farm will cause cumulative landscape effects with other wind energy developments within the Slieve Callan Uplands LCA-17. The existing 4 no. Cahermurphy wind turbines are located immediately adjacent to the Proposed Wind Farm. Also, extending eastward from the Proposed Wind Farm are the 2 no. existing Kiltumper turbines, and the existing Glenmore, Booltiagh, Booltiagh Extension, Letteragh, Boolynagleragh, and the Boolynagleragh Extension Wind

Farms. To the north of the LCA and north of the Proposed Wind Farm is the existing Slieve Callan Wind Farm and potentially the proposed Illaunbaun, and Slieveacurry Wind Farms in a future receiving environment. All these wind energy developments have the potential to contribute to cumulative landscape effects on the LCA-17 in combination with the Proposed Wind Farm, both in terms of impacting the physical fabric of this LCA and its landscape character.

Undulating landforms and well-defined ridgelines are prominent characteristics of LCA-17. These characteristics provide physical and visual separation between the various wind energy developments mentioned above and contribute to the landscapes capacity to absorb many wind farms. The greatest cumulative effects on landscape character are experienced from occasional elevated vantage points where the wind farm landscape of the Slieve Callan Uplands is seen in its entirety where and where many developments are experienced. Cumulative effects on the character of LCA 17 will also be experienced in a journey scenario where a visual receptor moves throughout this landscape intermittently experiencing the various existing, permitted and proposed wind energy developments. A description of the cumulative visual interactions between the proposed turbines and other cumulative projects in the LVIA Study Area is included in the Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables contained in *Appendix 14-3*. A comprehensive assessment of likely visual effects arising from the intervisibility of the Proposed Wind Farm and other wind farms is included in Section 14.7.4.5 – Discussion of Cumulative Visual Effects.

The Slieve Callan Uplands is an LCA of the lowest landscape sensitivity rating for wind energy development in County Clare, as set out in CCDP (CWES). The cumulative effects on the Landscape of LCA-17 are to be anticipated considering the zoning and direction for the development of wind energy in this LCA within local planning policy. LCA 17 is characterised as being of a large scale, sparsely populated landscape of marginal upland with the capacity to absorb a number of wind energy developments. The addition of the Proposed Wind Farm would see the extension of wind energy in a landscape where wind energy has been established, and not introducing novel elements to this landscape, both at the Proposed Wind Farm itself and the Slieve Callan Uplands. The assessments in this chapter have determined that the scale and character of the receiving upland landscape is such that it can absorb a wind energy development of this scale in combination with the other developments in the vicinity.

Cumulative Effects on LCA 20 and Co. Clare Heritage Landscape

The Proposed Wind Farm is located at the very eastern boundary of LCA 20 - Malbay Coastal Farmland, with one proposed turbine located in this LCA. From occasional elevated vantage points within the undulating coastal plain in this LCA, there are open views towards the Slieve Callan Uplands, the Proposed Project and other cumulative wind farms (See viewpoint 09). The Proposed Project and other developments cumulatively influence the character of LCA 20 as they are a noticeable component of the landscape when looking inland.

The western portion of LCA 20 includes an area of High sensitivity Heritage Landscape which comprises lands within the coastal corridor. The Proposed Wind Farm is well set-back from the coastline and this Heritage Landscape designation, it is experienced only within inland views towards the marginal upland landscape of the Wind Farm Site where the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm are visible. Whilst the Proposed Project and other cumulative turbines are visible, and indirectly influence the character of this Heritage landscape, they are well set back and do not impact the key sensitivities and key landscape qualities associated with the coastline, the Heritage Landscape and LCA 20.

Cumulative Effects on Other LCAs

To the southeast of the Proposed Wind Farm is the existing Crossmore Wind Farm sited within LCA 19 - Kilmihil Farmlands. The Proposed Wind Farm and other wind energy developments in the Slieve Callan Uplands will indirectly impact the character of the landscape in the northern portion of LCA 19 in combination with the Crossmore Wind Farm.

The proposed Cloonkett Wind Farm sited within LCA 18 – Shannon Estuary Farmland to the South-east. Beyond 10km to the south to southwest are the existing Moneypoint, Tullabrack, and Moanmore Wind Farms, and the proposed Moanmore Extension and Ballykett Wind Farms. Given the setback distances, as well as the physical and visual separation from the Proposed Wind Farm, these other wind energy developments have limited interaction and potential to cause cumulative landscape effects with these developments.

14.7.4.3 Visual Effects (Operational Phase)

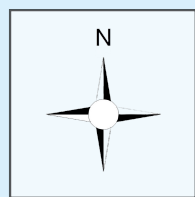
14.7.4.3.1 Selection of Photomontage Viewpoints

Photomontages were used to assess the visual effects of the proposed turbines from 15 No. viewpoint locations, which are presented in the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*. These 15 No. viewpoint locations are depicted in the A0 Map in Appendix 14-4: *LVIA Baseline Map* and below in Figure 14-17. The locations chosen for photomontages follow a detailed and extensive process including review of baseline information, site visits and high-quality photography taken at multiple locations within the LVIA Study Area. Many locations, which, according to the desktop review and ZTV mapping, were deemed to have potential views of the Proposed Wind Farm site, in reality, had complete intervening screening or views were visually screened to such an extent that the development of photomontages was not considered useful in terms of the assessment process, i.e. the viewpoints had little or no visibility towards the proposed turbines.

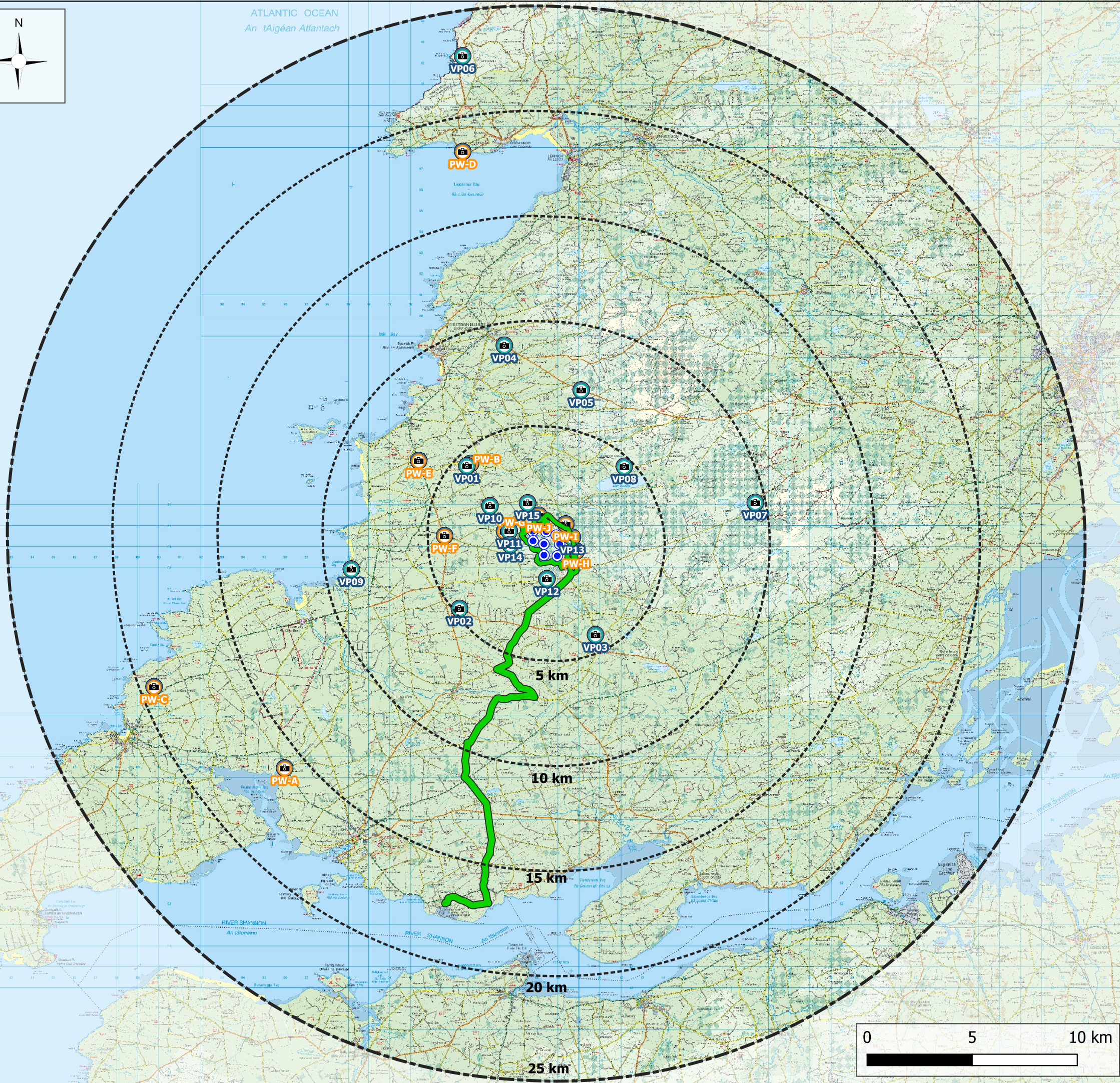
Multiple on-site surveys and visibility appraisals conducted throughout 2024 and 2025 determined that visibility of the proposed turbines is greatest from the locations in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site owing to the characteristics of the surrounding landscape. Due to this, viewpoint selection was particularly focused on locations proximate to the proposed turbines; 11 of the 15 No. final photomontage locations are located within 5km of the proposed turbines. In this regard, it is important to note that the visual impact of the proposed turbines shown in the photomontages selected for the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet* is not entirely representative of visual effects in the wider landscape of the 25km LVIA Study Area, where in reality, very little visibility occurs from vast areas and a large number of visual receptors.

Alternative Photomontage Viewpoints – Photowires

Photomontage imagery was captured from a number of additional locations in the LVIA Study Area other than the 15 No. photomontage viewpoints selected for the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*, these are presented as ‘photowires’. Photowires are early-stage photomontage visualisations comprising panoramic photos with overlaid wirelines (Classified as Type 3 Visualisations in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note, 2019). For this LVIA, photowires were produced from 10 No. additional viewpoint locations in the LVIA Study Area. These viewpoints were not selected for inclusion in the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet* due to their limited visibility of the proposed turbines. These photowires do not form part of the assessment of visual effects included in *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*. However, the 10 No. photowires are shown and discussed later in this section to illustrate certain important points of this assessment. The location of photowire viewpoints are marked as orange icons below in Figure 14-17 labelled as PW (i.e. PWA to PWJ).



ATLANTIC OCEAN
An tAigéan Atlantach



Map Legend

- LVIA Study Area
- EIA Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbines
- Photomontage Viewpoint Locations
- Photowire Viewpoint Locations

Drawing No.

Figure 14-17

Drawing Title

Photomontage and Photowire
Viewpoint Locations Map

Project Title

Cahermurphy Renewable Energy
Development

Scale

1:180,000

Project No.

230843

Date

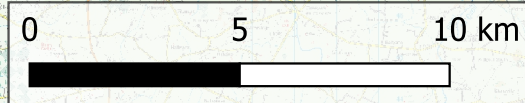
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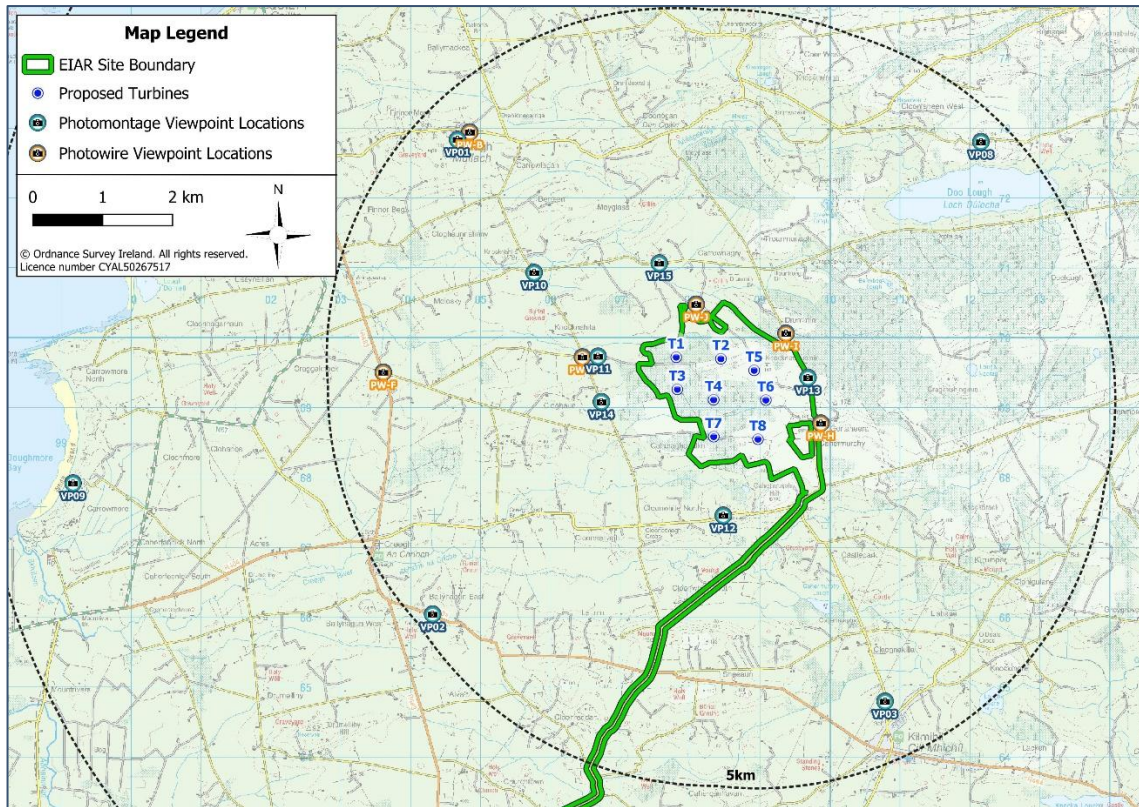


Figure 14-18 Photomontage and Photowire Viewpoint Locations (within 5km of the Proposed Turbines)

14.7.4.3.2

Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Outcomes

Visual effects were assessed using the assessment methodology described in Appendix 14-1: *LVIA Methodology*. Each viewpoint location is shown on Figure 14-17 and Figure 14-18 above. The individual, comprehensive, detailed assessment of the 15 No. viewpoints is presented in *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables* and summarised below in Table 14-14. *Appendix 14-3* and Table 14-14 should be read in conjunction with the *Photomontage Booklet* forming Volume 2 of the ELAR.

The visual effect of the proposed turbines was assessed from each viewpoint in terms of the sensitivity of visual receptors, along with the magnitude of change, as recommended in the GLVIA3 (LI & IEMA, 2013) guidelines. This, in conjunction with a detailed review of the photomontages themselves as well as the likely visibility of the proposed turbines within the LVIA Study Area informed the assessment of visual effects.

Visualisations such as photomontages are tools that represent the likely effect of a development and are used to inform the reader's perception of how that development will appear visually in the landscape. In terms of the predicted visual quality of the Proposed Wind Farm, however, whether a visual effect is deemed to be positive, negative or neutral, this involves a degree of subjectivity. What appears to be a positive effect to one viewer could be deemed to be a negative effect by another viewer. All predicted visual effects of the viewpoints below are deemed to be 'Long-Term', 'Direct' effects.

Table 14-14 Viewpoint Assessment Summary

VP No.	Viewpoint Description	Grid Ref.	Visual Sensitivity of Receptors	Magnitude of Visual Change	Significance of Residual Visual Effect
01	Mullagh: View from Mullagh sport field, in the village of Mullagh in the townland of Carrowlagan. The viewpoint is located approximately 4.4km northwest of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 504643 N: 672879	Medium	Moderate	Moderate (EPA, 2022)
02	Creagh: View from the R484 Regional Road in the townland of Ballynagun East. This viewpoint is representative of receptors south of the village of Creagh. This viewpoint is located approximately 4.7km southwest of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 504287 N: 666083	Medium	Moderate	Moderate (EPA, 2022)
03	Kilmihil: View from Church Street in the north of the village of Kilmihill. The viewpoint is located approximately 4.1km southeast of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 510759 N: 664836	Medium	Moderate	Moderate (EPA, 2022)
04	Miltown Malbay: View from the R474 Regional Road, just southeast outside the town of Milltown Malbay, in the townland of Poulawillin. This viewpoint is located along designated Scenic Route 15, and is located approximately 9km northwest of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 506421 N: 678606	High	Slight	Slight (EPA, 2022)
05	Doonsallagh West: View from the R474 Regional Road in the townland of Doonsallagh West. This viewpoint is located on designated Scenic Route 15, and is approximately 7km north of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 506421 N: 678606.	High	Slight	Slight (EPA, 2022)
06	Cliffs of Moher: View from the R478 Regional Road, and designated Scenic Route 1, beside the Cliffs of Moher. This	E: 504437	Very High	Slight	Slight (EPA, 2022)

VP No.	Viewpoint Description	Grid Ref.	Visual Sensitivity of Receptors	Magnitude of Visual Change	Significance of Residual Visual Effect
	viewpoint is located approximately 23km northwest from the nearest proposed turbine.	N: 692383			
07	Boolyneaska: View from the L-4074 Local Road in the townland of Boolyneaska. This viewpoint is located on the Mid-Clare Way, beside Lough Naminna. This viewpoint is located approximately 9.5km east of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 518363 N: 671127	Medium	Slight	Not Significant (EPA, 2022)
08	Doo Lough: View from an unnamed local road in the townland of Cloonlaheen West, overlooking the Doo Lough. This viewpoint is located approximately 4.6km northeast of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 512128 N: 672843	Medium	Moderate	Slight (EPA, 2022)
09	Doughmore: View from Doonbeg Golf Course adjacent to Doughmore Beach in the townland of Carrowmore. This viewpoint is located approximately 8.7m southwest from the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 499142 N: 667959	High	Slight	Slight (EPA 2022)
10	Knocknahila More North: View from the crossroads of two unnamed local roads in the townland of Knocknahila More North. This viewpoint is located approximately 2.4km northwest of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 505739 N: 670974	Medium	Moderate	Moderate (EPA, 2022)
11	Cloghaun More East (NorthWest): View from an unnamed local road in the townland of Cloghaun More (East). This viewpoint is located approximately 1.1km west from the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 506654 N: 669775	High	Substantial	Significant (EPA, 2022)

VP No.	Viewpoint Description	Grid Ref.	Visual Sensitivity of Receptors	Magnitude of Visual Change	Significance of Residual Visual Effect
12	Cahermurphy (South): View from an unnamed local road in the townland of Cahermurphy. This viewpoint is located approximately 1.2km south of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 508446 N: 667497	High	Substantial	Significant (EPA, 2022)
13	Cahermurphy (North): View from an unnamed local road in the townland of Cahermurphy. This viewpoint is located approximately 680m east of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 509668 N: 669471	High	Substantial	Significant (EPA, 2022)
14	Cloghaun More East (West): View from an unnamed local road in the townland of Cloghaun More (East). This viewpoint is located along the EuroVelo Route, and is approximately 1.1km west from the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 506702 N: 669124	High	Substantial	Significant (EPA, 2022)
15	Carrownagry North: View from an unnamed local road in the townland of Carrownagry North. This viewpoint is located approximately 1.3km north of the nearest proposed turbine.	E: 507530 N: 671109	High	Moderate	Moderate (EPA, 2022)

The significance of the residual visual effect was not considered to be ‘Profound’ or ‘Very Significant’ at any of the 15 No. viewpoint locations. The residual effects were found to be Significant (4), Moderate (5), Slight (5), and Not Significant (1).

The viewpoint assessment results (see *Appendix 14-3*) will be summarised and discussed in more detail in the following sections.

14.7.4.4 Discussion of Visibility and Visual Effects on Specific Visual Receptors in the LVIA Study Area

The assessment of visual effects uses photomontages shown in the *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*, and discussion of these effects is aided by the photowires shown later in this Section. ZTV mapping is also a useful tool for scoping receptors in and out (based on bare-ground topography) and selection of photomontage viewpoints. The ZTV indicates vast areas of the LVIA Study Area where the proposed turbines will not be visible, as comprehensively discussed in Section 0. The following section discusses the visual effects arising at key sensitive visual receptors within the zone of theoretical visibility and scoped in for assessment previously in Section 14.4.5.1 – Visual Baseline.

Designated Scenic Routes

As reported above in Section 14.5, 5 No. designated Scenic Routes and 2 No. Tailte Éireann Viewing Areas were scoped out from further assessment as the ZTV indicated that there is no visibility and visibility during the site visit was difficult to establish due to visual screening by topography and vegetation. The remaining 2 No. designated Scenic Routes have been scoped in for further assessment.

Clare Scenic Route 1 (Map. Ref SR 1)

This scenic route is described as “Coast Road from County boundary (along the Kinvarra Road) to Quilty including the R479 spur to Doolin” in the CCDP. This scenic route is located approximately 7.9km from the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point. Theoretical visibility varies along this route, with full theoretical visibility at its southern and northern extents, while a large stretch near Lahinch has no theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines.

The northern extent of the scenic route is at a higher elevation as it descends from the Cliffs of Moher offering open views southward overlooking Liscannor and Liscannor Bay. VP06 was captured from along this scenic route nearby the Cliffs of Moher. At this distance (22.8km), the proposed turbines are seen as small scale elements in the distant background, occupying a narrow horizontal extent within the expansive landscape. VP06 has been assigned a ‘Very High’ sensitivity, with a ‘Slight’ magnitude of change. As detailed in *Appendix 14-3*, an overall ‘Slight’ residual visual effect was deemed to arise.

The southern extent of the route follows relatively low-lying terrain with open expansive views directed westward towards the dramatic coastal landscape, in the opposing direction to the proposed turbines. Views eastward, towards the proposed turbines, are not the intended focus of the scenic view and are characteristic of a typical agricultural landscape, with marginal landscape of the Slieve Callan uplands forming the backdrop. Overall, a ‘High’ sensitivity was assigned to this southern portion of the scenic route. However, as the proposed turbines will be screened from view from large stretches of the road, and as the views of this scenic route are mainly directed along the coast, away from the proposed turbines, where there will be no significant impact on the key scenic amenity. Therefore, a ‘Not Significant’ magnitude of change was deemed to arise.

Clare Scenic Route 15 (Map. Ref SR 15)

This scenic route is described as “R474 from Connolly to Milltown Malbay” in the CCDP, where it travels along the R474 Regional Road. This scenic route is located approximately 6.9km from the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point. There is primarily full theoretical visibility in the western section of this scenic route, with no visibility to the east. Site visits determined that views towards the proposed turbines along this route are limited by visual screening caused by the characteristics of the low-lying terrain and roadside vegetation. This scenic route is represented by both VP04 and VP05, where the proposed turbines are seen over a short horizontal extent in the distant background of the view. As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, the more scenic Malbay coastal landscape and Clare Heritage Landscape are viewed to the southwest and west of this viewpoint, away from the proposed turbines. As a result, the magnitude of change was assessed as ‘Slight’ in *Appendix 14-3*, with a corresponding residual effect of ‘Slight’.

Overall, a ‘High’ sensitivity was assigned to this scenic route. However, as views towards the turbines along this route will be intermittent, a ‘Slight’ magnitude of change was deemed to arise. It is noted that the proposed turbines do not obstruct the coastal views to the west and therefore do not impact the key scenic sensitivities of the designated scenic route. The residual visual effect was deemed to be ‘Slight.’

Settlements

Of the 32 No. Settlements identified in the LVIA Study Area, 26 No. were scoped out, as the ZTV indicated that there was no theoretical visibility and/or no visibility of the proposed turbines could be established on-site, or the settlements were located at such a substantial distance from the Proposed Wind Farm that Significant visual effects were deemed not likely to arise. The remaining 7 settlements have been scoped in for further assessment.

Mullagh

Mullagh is the closest settlement to the Proposed Wind Farm, located approximately 4.1km northwest from the nearest proposed turbine and has primarily full theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines. However, on-site visibility appraisals determined that visibility of the proposed turbines will be much more limited from street level within the settlement due to the visual screening from the built environment and mature vegetation within the village. As a result, ‘Not Significant’ residual visual effects occur from the streetscape and street level receptors within the centre area of Mullagh village.

Visibility of the proposed turbines within the town itself is most likely to occur only from elevated vantage points. VP01 was captured from such a location within Mullagh’s GAA grounds, where open views towards the proposed turbines occur. As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, from this viewpoint, 8 No. of the proposed turbines are visible in the background of the view on an elevated ridgeline. Furthermore, the proposed turbines, while visible, appear as a coherent cluster aligning with the guidelines set out in the WEDGs (2006) and the Draft WEDGs (2019). As detailed in *Appendix 14-3*, a ‘Moderate’ magnitude of change was deemed to occur at this viewpoint, with an overall residual visual effect of ‘Moderate’.

Overall, while instances of open visibility towards the proposed turbines will occur from elevated locations permitting open views in the direction of turbines in and around Mullagh, such as from more open-views, as illustrated by PW-B in Plate 14-14 below, or second storey windows, or during the winter months when trees have shed their foliage, the majority of visibility within the settlement is largely screened by the built form within the village. In areas where visibility does occur, the proposed turbines will appear visually set-back, forming a coherent arrangement of turbines, in line with the WEDGs

(2006) and Draft WEDGs (2019). An overall 'Slight' residual visual effect was deemed to arise for the settlement of Mullagh.

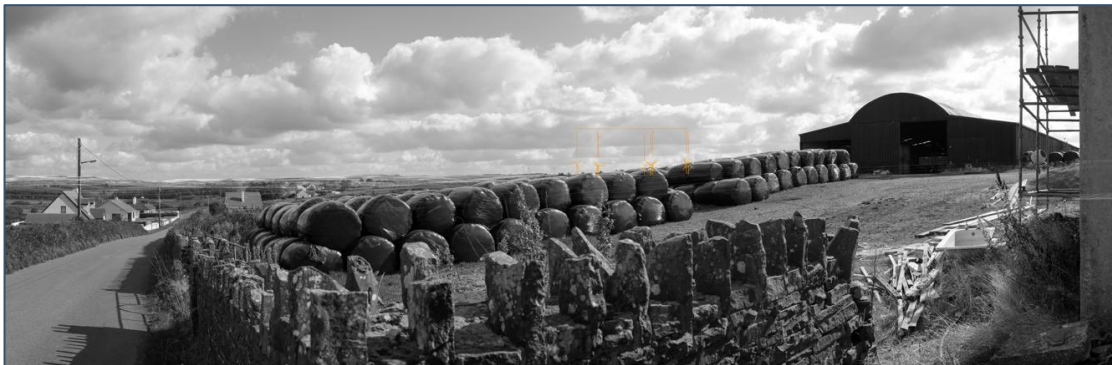


Plate 14-14 Photowire PW-B illustrating views of the proposed turbines from the settlement of Mullagh

Kilmihil

The centre of Kilmihil village is located 4.9km southeast from the nearest proposed turbine. The ZTV shows full theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines in Kilmihil, however, on-site appraisals determined that actual visibility within the settlement itself is much lower, due to screening from the built environment and surrounding vegetation within this low-lying settlement. As a result, 'Not Significant' residual visual effects occur from the streetscape and street level receptors within the centre area of Kilmihil village. However, there will likely be greater visibility of the proposed turbines on the outskirts of the town to the north, where more open views towards the proposed turbines occur.

VP03 was captured along the L-2028 local road, as it exists to the north within the townland of Kilmihil, and is representative of the most open views from this area. From this location, the proposed turbines are located in the background of the view seen as a linear array, where the proposed turbines appear appropriately scaled within the upland landscape and broad hilltop landscape visible in the background of the view. As detailed in *Appendix 14-3*, the magnitude of change was deemed to be 'Moderate'. The overall residual visual effect was deemed to be 'Moderate'. It is important to note that VP03 is located slightly closer to the proposed turbines than the settlement of Kilmihil, and as such, the level of visibility and visual effects from within the town, particularly from street level will be further mitigated due to distance and additional screening from the built environment. An overall 'Slight' visual effect was deemed to arise for the settlement of Kilmihil.

Creagh

The low-lying village of Creagh is located approximately 4.8km southwest from the nearest proposed turbine and has full theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines. On-site appraisals determined that, given the low-lying nature of this village, views of the proposed turbines within the settlement of Creagh will be very limited, due to visual screening occurring from the intervening vegetation and the built form of the settlement. VP02, captured from a more open location 1.2km southwest of the proposed turbines, is at a similar distance and geographic orientation as Creagh and is representative of the views from the settlement. As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, the magnitude of change was deemed to be 'Moderate', and the overall residual visual effect was also deemed to be 'Moderate'. Visual effects on the settlement of Creagh will be further mitigated by distance and the visual screening from the built form within the settlement. An overall 'Slight' visual effect was deemed to arise for the settlement of Creagh.

Miltown Malbay

Miltown Malbay is a small town located 9.3km northwest of the nearest proposed turbine and has full theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines. However, on-site appraisals determined that there will likely be very limited visibility from within the village itself due to visual screening occurring from the

intervening vegetation and the built form of the settlement. There will likely be greater visibility of the proposed turbines on the outskirts of the town, where more open views towards the proposed turbines occur. VP04 is located on the south-eastern edge of the settlement. From this location, the proposed turbines are seen in the distant background of the view, occupying an overall small horizontal extent within the view. As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, a 'Slight' magnitude of change was deemed to occur, and an overall residual visual effect of 'Slight' was deemed to arise. Visual effects on the settlement of Miltown Malbay, will be further mitigated by distance and the visual screening from the built form within the settlement. An overall 'Not Significant' residual visual effect was deemed to arise for the settlement of Miltown Malbay.

Cooraclare

Cooraclare is located 7.4km southwest of the nearest proposed turbine and has partial theoretical visibility. VP02 is located approx. 3.5km south of the village of Cooraclare, within the same geographic orientation, and is representative of views from within this settlement. As discussed above, a 'Moderate' magnitude of change was deemed to occur for this viewpoint, with a residual visual effect of 'Slight'. Within Cooraclare itself, the turbines will be further mitigated by distance and visual screening from the built environment. Overall, visual effects are deemed to be 'Not Significant' for the settlement of Cooraclare.

Doonbeg

Doonbeg is located 11.6km west of the nearest proposed turbine and has full theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines. VP09 is located approx. 2.9km north from the village of Doonbeg and is representative of views from this settlement. VP09 was captured from an elevated vantage point at Doonbeg Golf Course and shows that the proposed turbines are in the distant background and occupying a short horizontal extent. As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, a 'Slight' magnitude of change was deemed to occur, with an overall 'Slight' residual visual effect. Doonbeg, located at a lower elevation than VP09, will be further mitigated by distance, landform, and the visual screening from the built form within the settlement. An overall visual effect of 'Not Significant' was deemed to arise for Doonbeg.

Moyasta

Moyasta is located 15.8km southwest of the nearest proposed turbine, with full theoretical visibility. However in reality, at this distance within the low-lying settlement of Moyasta and visual screening from intervening vegetation and built form, visibility is not likely to occur, which can be seen by photowire PW-A, in Plate 14-15 and Plate 14-16 below. There may be greater visibility in the winter months when have trees have lost their foliage, however, at a distance of >15km, residual visual effects are deemed to be 'Imperceptible'.



Plate 14-15 Photowire PW-A illustrating views towards the proposed turbines from the settlement of Moyasta

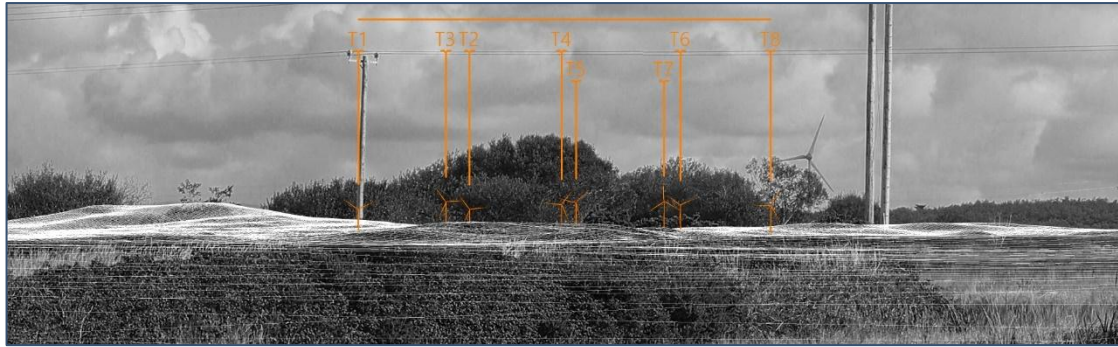


Plate 14-16 Zoomed-in view of Photowire PW-A illustrating views towards the proposed turbines from the settlement of Moyasta

Recreational Routes

Of the 11 no. recreational routes identified within the LVIA Study Area, 3 No. recreational routes were scoped out from further assessment in the ‘Visual Receptor Preliminary Analysis’, as the ZTV indicated that there was no theoretical visibility and/or no visibility of the proposed turbines could be established on-site. The remaining 8 recreational routes have been scoped in for further assessment.

Eurovelo

The Eurovelo cycling route is an international network of long-distance cycling routes across different European countries. The total Eurovelo route in Ireland is 2,350km in length, with only approximately 140.3km present within the LVIA Study Area, accounting for only 5.9% of the entire route. Of this section, only very small stretch exhibits full or partial theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines, as illustrated by the ZTV mapping. Within the LVIA Study Area, the Eurovelo generally follows the coastline, where visibility will be limited due to distance and intervening vegetative screening. This can be seen both at PW-A, see Plate 14-15 and above, and PW-C, see Plate 14-17 and Plate 14-18 below.



Plate 14-17 Photowire PW-C illustrating small extent of which the proposed turbines are visible from a local road north of the settlement of Kilkee

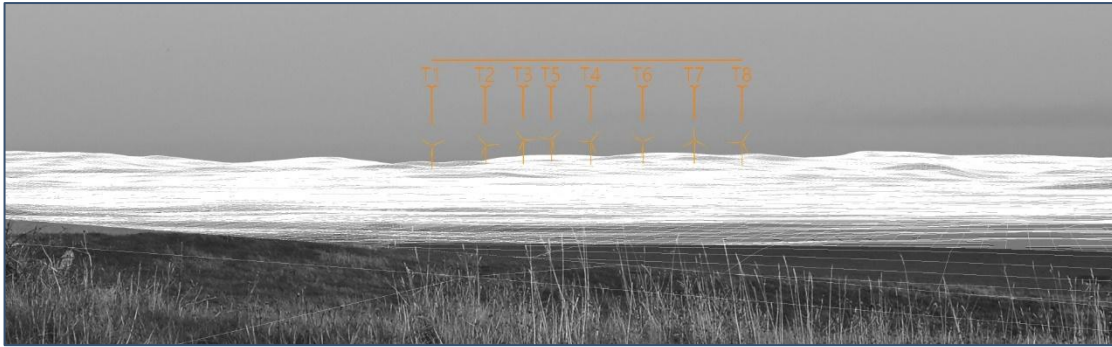


Plate 14-18 Zoomed-in view of Photowire PW-C illustrating small extent of which the proposed turbines are visible from a local road north of the settlement of Kilkee

Visibility will be greatest within 5km of the nearest proposed turbine. However, visibility along the route varies greatly due to intervening vegetation, as seen by the Route Screening Analysis shown in Section 14.3.3 previously. VP14 and VP10 located 1.1km and 2.3km from the nearest proposed turbine respectively, along the EuroVelo shows clear open views in the direction of the proposed turbines. As detailed in *Appendix 14-3*, a residual effect of ‘Significant’ and ‘Moderate’ was deemed to arise respectively. However, PW-G, located 695m north of VP14 shows dense visual screening in the direction of the proposed turbines, showing the varied roadside vegetation providing visual screening in the direction of the proposed turbines.



Plate 14-19 Photowire PW-G illustrating visual screening of the proposed turbines from close proximity on the Eurovelo Cycling Route - An example where the proposed turbines will be screened from view by features of the foreground.

Given the overall scale of the Eurovelo (approximately 2,350km in length), and the limited extent within the LVIA Study Area that exhibits potential visibility, the proposed turbines are not considered to have a significant impact on the route as a whole. As such, a ‘Not Significant’ residual visual effect has been assigned to this recreational route.

Wild Atlantic Way (WAW)

The Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) is a tourist route extending approximately 2,600km along Ireland’s western coastline. 128km of the WAW traverses through the LVIA Study Area, equating to only 3.7% of the entire route. There is primarily full theoretical visibility along the stretch of the WAW, with small pockets of no visibility. However, due to the low-lying nature of the WAW along the coastline, visibility of the proposed turbines is limited, due to visual screening from vegetation and the built form of settlements the WAW passes through. Where instances of open visibility does occur, the proposed turbines appear as small elements in the distant background. This can be seen at VP6, located approx. 22.8km from the nearest proposed turbine, where the turbines appear as small elements in the distant background, occupying a very small horizontal extent within the view. The turbines are barely discernible and appear as small-scale elements within the distant undulating landscape occupying a limited horizontal extent. VP6 was assigned a ‘Very High’ visual sensitivity, with a ‘Slight’ magnitude of change assessed in *Appendix 14-3*, resulting in a ‘Slight’ residual visual effect. Even in locations closer to the proposed turbines, the proposed turbines are generally seen in the distant background, beyond the ridgeline, partially screened by intervening vegetation, as seen in PW-E, see Plate 14-20 below.



Plate 14-20 Extract from PW-E with view facing Southwest towards the proposed turbines from the Wild Atlantic Way.

Given the overall scale of the Wild Atlantic Way (approximately 2,600km in length), and the limited extent within the LVIA Study Area that exhibits potential visibility, the proposed turbines are not considered to have a significant impact on the route as a whole. Visibility, where it does occur, is intermittent, and the proposed turbines appear as small, distant elements, occupying a small horizontal extent within the landscape. As such, a ‘Slight’ residual visual effect has been assigned to this recreational route.

Mid Clare Way

The Mid Clare Way is a recreational walking route which is approx. 130km in length. Only a very short stretch of the route closest to the proposed turbines has full theoretical visibility indicated, where the route follows the elevated terrain at Ben Dash. VP07 was captured at this location, where the magnitude of change was deemed to be ‘Slight’, and the overall residual visual effect was deemed to be ‘Not Significant’. Given the limited extent of visibility from most of this route, the visual effects on the Mid Clare Way are deemed to be ‘Imperceptible’.

The Burren Way

The Burren Way is a recreational walking route with total a length of 118.8km and has full theoretical visibility. The Burren Way is located 18.9km from the nearest proposed turbine at its nearest point. Viewpoint 06 was taken in close proximity to the Burren Way on an elevated vantage point. The sensitivity of the viewpoint was determined to be ‘Very High’ for its proximity to the Cliffs of Moher with a ‘Slight’ magnitude of change. A residual visual effect of ‘Slight’ is deemed to arise at this viewpoint. Given that only part of this falls within the LVIA Study Area, its set-back distance from the proposed turbines, it similarly is deemed to have visual effects of ‘Not Significant’.

Doolin Cycle Hub Loop 1 and 2

Doolin Cycle Hub Loop 1 and 2 are long range cycle loops located approx. >18km km from the nearest proposed turbine at their closest point, with a small pocket of full theoretical visibility at the Cliffs of Moher. Viewpoint 06 was captured along this Doolin Cycle Hub Loop from an elevated vantage point. The sensitivity of the viewpoint was determined to be ‘Very High’ for its proximity to the Cliffs of Moher with a ‘Slight’ magnitude of change. The overall residual visual effect was deemed to be

‘Slight’. Given the limited extent of visibility from most of this route, the visual effects on the Mid Clare Way are deemed to be ‘Imperceptible’.

Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk

Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk is located approx. 18km from the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point. Viewpoint 6, discussed above is captured from the same geographic orientation as the Cliffs of Moher and is representative of views from the coastal walk. As discussed above, the overall residual visual effect was deemed to be ‘Slight. PW-D was captured further along the coastal walk and shows that the proposed turbines are barely discernible in the very distant background, largely screened by intervening topography. Overall, visual effects on the Cliffs of Moher Walk are deemed to be ‘Imperceptible’.

Tullaher / Doonbeg Loop

Tullaher and Doonbeg Loops are located approx. 10.5km west of the of the nearest proposed turbine with full theoretical visibility. Viewpoint 09 is located in a similar geographic orientation to Tullaher / Doonbeg Loop and is representative of views from this direction. As discussed previously, residual visual effect were deemed to be ‘Slight’ for this viewpoint. Given the set-back distance, visual effects on the walking routes overall are deemed to be ‘Slight’.

Recreational, Cultural Heritage and Tourist Destinations

Of the 9 no. recreational, cultural heritage and tourist destinations identified within the LVIA Study Area, 6 No. recreational routes were scoped out from further assessment in the Table 14-9 previously, as the ZTV indicated that there was no theoretical visibility and/or no visibility of the proposed turbines could be established on-site. Hence, viewpoints were selected for the remaining 5 No. recreational, cultural heritage and tourist destinations.

Cliffs of Moher (and associated Towers at Cliffs of Moher)

The Cliffs of Moher are located 22.8 km northwest of the proposed turbines at its closest point. The key scenic views from the Cliffs of Moher, which includes views towards Atlantic Coastal seascape and the Branaunmore Sea Stack, are oriented to the west in the opposing direction of the proposed turbines.

The proposed turbines will largely not be visible from the Cliffs themselves where the focus of views remains towards the Atlantic coastline. Some views of the proposed turbines may arise from higher elevated receptors such as O’Brien’s Tower. Visibility will also occur from the Visitors Car Park as shown in VP6, the turbines are seen as small features in the distant background of the view, within an expansive landscape that has the capacity to effectively accommodate the proposed turbines as well as other wind energy developments. Overall, the proposed turbines occupy a very small portion – approx. 03 degrees (0.83%) of the expansive panoramic vista (360 degrees) available from this location as shown in VP6. Therefore, given the set-back distance, and limited visibility from the Cliffs of Moher, as discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, residual visual effects are deemed to be ‘Slight’.

Clahane Viewpoint

Clahane viewpoint is located 18.2km northwest of the nearest proposed turbine and has partial theoretical visibility. PW-D was captured at this location, see Plate 14-21 below. As discussed previously, the proposed turbines are barely discernible in the very distant background, largely screened by intervening topography which forms southern side of Liscannor Bay. Overall, residual ‘Not Significant’ visual effects are deemed to arise.



Plate 14-21 Extract Photowire View from PW-D at Clahane Viewpoint

Doonbeg Golf Links

Doonbeg Golf Club is located 8.6km west of the nearest proposed turbines and has primarily full theoretical visibility. Viewpoint 09 was captured at the Gold Club. As discussed previously, the proposed turbines are seen in the distant background of the view, occupying a short horizontal extent. The turbines exhibit a linear layout along the ridgeline within different landscape types which is appropriate for undulating terrain of this landscape type ('Transitional Marginal Landscape' type) according to the siting and design recommendations in the WEDGs (2006) and Draft WEDGs (2019). The sensitivity was determined to be 'High' with a magnitude of change of 'Slight'. The residual visual effect was deemed to be 'Slight'.

Major Transport Routes

Five major transport routes have been scoped in for assessment, see Section 14.4.5.1 previously. Viewpoints were selected for the 5 no. routes identified within the Visual Baseline. All the viewpoints below are discussed in greater detail in the Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables contained in *Appendix 14-3*. The Route Screening Analysis undertaken above in Section 14.3.3.1 details the likely visibility of the roads surrounding the Proposed Wind Farm site, including smaller local roads. There are no Significant effects deemed likely to arise in relation to these transport routes.

N67 National Road

The N67 national road is the major transport route which traverses along the west coast. The N67 is at a setback of 5km from the nearest proposed turbine at its closest point. There is primarily full theoretical visibility along this route with large areas of no theoretical visibility on the northern extent of the designated Scenic Route 1, represented by VP06. As discussed for Scenic Route 1 previously, the proposed turbines appear as small elements in the background of the view along this section of the route. PW-E is located immediately west of the Site, along a stretch of the N67. There is generally open visibility towards the proposed turbines, where localised landforms partially screen views of the proposed turbines. Viewpoint PW-A and PW-C are located on the N67 near the settlements of Moyasta and Kilkee respectively, to the south and southwest of the Proposed Wind Farm. There is very limited visibility of the Proposed Wind Farm from these views due to dense vegetative visual screening.

Overall, the visibility from the N67 of the Proposed Wind Farm is intermittent as evident from above. The residual visual effect is deemed to be 'Slight'.

R483 Regional Road

The R483 regional road traverses from north of the settlement Creegh to the south connecting to the settlement of Kilrush. There is full theoretical visibility of the Proposed Wind Farm from the R483. Photowire PW-F was captured on the R483, north of Creegh. As seen in Plate 14-22, the proposed turbines are partially visible due to the visual screening from the commercial forestry. As seen from the RSA map (See Figure 14-3) the remainder of this R483, south of PW-E within 5km of the proposed turbines, has dense to intermittent roadside screening. Overall, the residual visual effect is deemed to be 'Not Significant'.



Plate 14-22 Extract view from Photowire PW-F on the R483 Regional Road towards the proposed turbines.

R474 Regional Road

The R474 regional road connects the settlement Ennis (beyond the LVIA Study Area) to the settlement of Miltown Malbay. There is full theoretical visibility on the eastern extent of the R474 with no theoretical visibility on the western extent. The R474 is a heavily trafficked route and Scenic Route 15 is sited along this road as discussed previously. VP04 and dVP05 were both captured on the R474, where both have a sensitivity of 'High'. The magnitude of change was determined to be 'Slight'. The residual visual effect was deemed to be 'Slight'.

R484 Regional Road

The R464 connects the settlements of Creegh and Kilmihil within 5km of the Proposed Wind Farm. There is primarily full theoretical visibility on this route. Viewpoint 02 was captured on the R484, which shows an open view towards the proposed turbines. The RSA along this route shows a mix of clear, dense and intermittent roadside screening. The sensitivity was determined to 'Medium' with a 'Slight' magnitude of change. The residual visual effects were deemed to be 'Slight'.

R478 Regional Road

The R478 connects the settlements of Lahinch to Lisdoonvarna via the Cliffs of Moher, hence Scenic Route 1 passes along this route. Given the set-back distance of the proposed turbines, the visual effects along the stretch of road near the Cliffs of Moher are deemed to be 'Slight'. Where overall visual effects along this road are 'Not Significant'.

14.7.4.4.2 Residential Receptors

During the iterative design process, early stage LVIA studies identified local residential receptors as the most locally sensitive receptors with the greatest potential to be impacted by the proposed turbines with regard to visual impacts. Consequently, residential visual amenity was of key consideration throughout the iterative design process for the Proposed Project. This section of the LVIA firstly states how design measures have been used to mitigate the potential for significant visual effects on residential receptors, then gives an overview of the residential context in terms of population density in the surrounding area and the geographic arrangement of residential receptors in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site. Finally, a visual impact assessment of each cluster of residences is reported, these assessments use analysis of aerial maps, photomontages and photowire visualisations with the intention of identifying the worst-case scenario for potential visual effects on these residential receptors in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site.

The design of the Proposed Wind Farm has been informed by industry best practice set-back distances, with regard to the siting of the proposed turbines relative to residential receptors, including the following measures:

- All proposed turbines exceed the mandatory 500m set-back distance from residential receptors set out in the WEDGs (2006).
- All proposed turbines adhere to the recommended 4-times-tip-height set-back distance (740m) from domestic curtilage for residential visual amenity as prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019).

Residential Context – Population Density and Arrangement of Dwellings

As reported in the landscape baseline (see Section 14.4.2: ‘Landscape Character of the Proposed Wind Farm Site’), the Proposed Wind Farm site itself is located within a large area characterised primarily by commercial forestry, agricultural fields and areas of bog lands. Figure 14-19 below illustrates how the proposed turbines are set-back from residential receptors in the surrounding landscape and that the distances are compliant with the guidance in the WEDGs (2006) and Draft WEDGs (2019). There are 25 No. residential receptors located within 1km of the proposed turbine locations. The closest residential receptor is located greater than 750m from the nearest proposed turbine i.e., over 4-times-tip-height set-back distance ($4 \times \text{Tip Height at } 185\text{m} = 740\text{m}$). Aerial imagery as shown below in Figure 14-19, shows that the Proposed Wind Farm site itself, and the immediate surrounding landscape is sparsely populated.

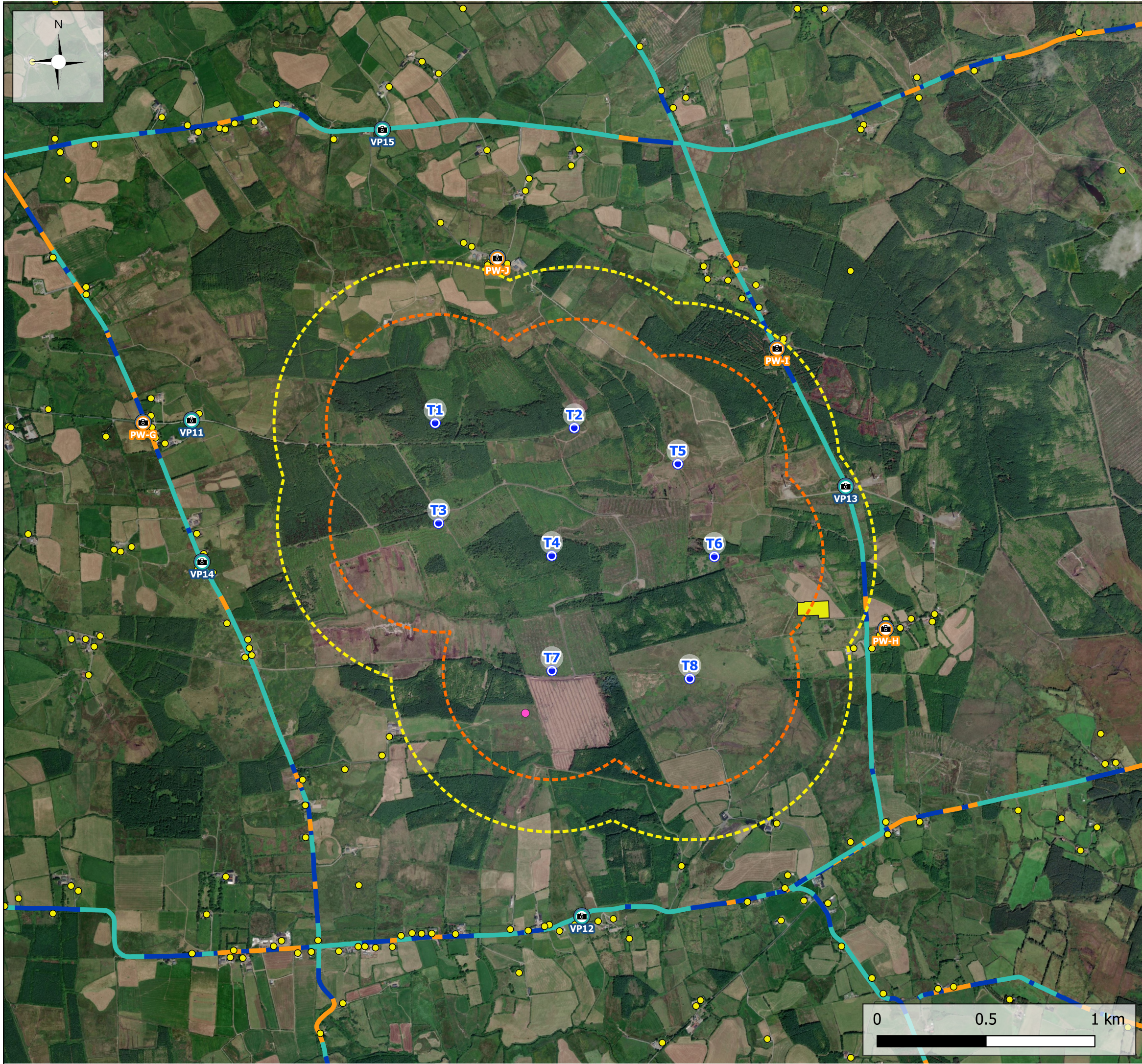
Assessment of Residential Amenity – Photomontages

It is to be anticipated that wind farms inevitably cause some ‘Significant’ visual effects on proximate sensitive visual receptors due to the prominence of turbines within landscape views and the ‘Substantial’ magnitude of change which will arise in close proximity to a wind farm development. A key focus in this LVIA is identifying the scenarios where the greatest likelihood of significant visual effects occur. Significant residual visual impacts have been determined from 5 photomontage viewpoint representing residential receptors in closest proximity to the proposed turbines (see *Appendix 14-3*). It is key to note that the residual significant impacts only occur for a small number of receptors and is not representative of effects on receptors in a vast proportion of the LVIA Study Area.

A large number of viewpoints (6 of the 15 No.) were taken within 3km of the proposed turbines, with an additional 4 No. viewpoints located between 3–5km from the Proposed Wind Farm site, amounting to a total of 10 of 15 No. viewpoints within 5km of the proposed turbines (along with 6 No. photowire viewpoints not ultimately brought forward as photomontages located within this area as well).

Photomontages are one of the many tools employed during LVIA in order to inform the assessment of landscape and visual effects. It would be a disproportionate measure to include an individual photomontage from all individual residential receptors; further, this is not required to conduct a

thorough and robust assessment of landscape and visual effects. In line with the guidance laid out in the GLVIA3 (LI & IEMA, 2013), the viewpoints selected for this LVIA were informed by a range of factors including the “ZTV analysis, by fieldwork, and by desk research” (para 6.18 in ‘Assessment of Visual Effects’, GLVIA3, p.109). Furthermore, the GLVIA3 states that representative viewpoints are to be “selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptor, where larger numbers of viewpoints cannot all be included individually and where the significant effects are unlikely to differ” (para 6.19, GLVIA3). The large number of viewpoints used to conduct the LVIA particularly in very close proximity to the proposed turbines is sufficient to represent all residential receptors within the LVIA Study Area, including the “distribution of population” (para 6.18, GLVIA3).



Map Legend

- Set Back Compliance - 500m (WEDGs (2006))
- Set Back Compliance - 740m (Draft WEDGs (2019))
- Proposed Turbines
- Residential Receptors to 3km
- Proposed Met Mast
- Proposed 110kV Substation

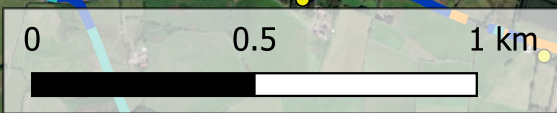
Captured Imagery

- 📷 EIAR Volume 2 Photomontage Locations
- 📷 Photowire Visualisations

Route Screening Analysis

- Class 1 - No / Very Little Screening
- Class 2 - Partial / Intermittent Screening
- Class 3 - Dense / Full Screening

Drawing No.	Figure 14-19			
Drawing Title	Residential Receptors			
Project Title	Cahermurphy Renewable Energy Development			
Scale	Project No.	Date	Drawn By	Checked By
1:17,000	230843	03/02/2026	GL	DM



Residential Receptors to the West of the Proposed Wind Farm site

To the west of the proposed turbines, the rural character of the landscape is primarily defined by agricultural fields and commercial forestry (see Plate 14-23 below). It is a sparsely settled landscape. Where residential receptors are present, they are typically located along the local road network. The Route Screening Analysis (see Section 14.3.3.1 previously) notes that the road network to the west of the proposed turbines is primarily classified as ‘Little/No Screening’ with stretches of ‘Partial/Intermittent Screening’ Visual Screening and ‘Dense/Full Screening’ Visual Screening.



Plate 14-23 Drone Image for Landscape Context: Views South-East overlooking the residential receptors to the west of the proposed turbines

Viewpoint 11 is located 1.1km west of the nearest proposed turbine T1, within the townland of Cloghaun More (East). This image was taken from a local road adjacent the Proposed Wind Farm site and illustrates a relatively open view towards the proposed turbines. Despite the proximity (1.1km), the proposed turbines occupy a relatively moderate horizontal extent within the view. This viewpoint is representative of one of the few locations in the surrounding area where such open views of the turbines occur. As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, a ‘Substantial’ magnitude of change was deemed to arise at VP11 with an overall ‘Significant’ residual effect. The Proposed Wind Farm exceeds the recommended 500m set-back distance in the WEDGs (2006) also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019). Further west (210m), where the L-2100 local road connects with the L-6256 local road, visual screening from roadside vegetation increases significantly, as illustrated in Plate 14-24 below, PW-G, where the intervening roadside vegetation largely screens the proposed turbines.



Plate 14-24 Extract View from PW-G in the Townland of Cloghaun More (East)

Viewpoint 14 is located 733m south of PW-G on the same local road in the townland of Cloghaun More (East), in an area where the Route Screening Analysis identified ‘Little/no Visual Screening’. This viewpoint illustrates the type of visibility likely to be experienced by residential receptors to the west of the proposed turbines where roadside vegetation is more limited. Due to the undulating landform, the turbines are seen beyond the intervening ridgeline at VP14, providing a degree of physical and visual setback from the residential receptors to the west. The Proposed Wind Farm adheres to the recommended 500m set-back distance in the WEDGs (2006) also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019).

In a general sense, where visibility of the proposed turbines will occur for residences located to the west, the proposed turbines are seen to occupy a generally moderate horizontal extent within the view and are seen in combination with the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines, where the proposed turbines read as an extension to an established wind farm landscape, rather than novel features. Furthermore, for residences to the west of the proposed turbines, the key scenic views are oriented westward towards long-ranging, open coastal panoramas of the Atlantic coastline, in the opposing direction to such views. As such, the proposed turbines are not obstructing or intruding upon any scenic views of county, regional or national renown.

Residential Receptors to the South of the Proposed Wind Farm site

To the south, residential receptors are primarily located in a linear arrangement along the local road network, where, as shown in the Route Screening Analysis, the roads are characterised by a mix of roadside vegetation. Plate 14-25 illustrates the mix landcover such as commercial forestry and agricultural fields delineated by hedgerows to the south of the Proposed Wind Farm site.



Plate 14-25 Drone Image for Landscape Context: Views overlooking the residential receptors to the south of the proposed turbines

Viewpoint 12 was captured to the south of the proposed turbines in the townland of Cahermurphy. This viewpoint is representative of residential receptors with open views towards the site in close proximity. All of the proposed turbines are visible within this field of view, within a relatively moderate horizontal extent. The magnitude of change was deemed to be ‘Substantial’, and a residual visual effect of ‘Significant’ was deemed to arise for this viewpoint. However, this location represents one of the few areas where such open views toward the proposed turbines are available; most residential receptors in the surrounding area will not experience comparable levels of visibility. Particularly for residential receptors located further east along this road, visibility of the proposed turbines will be further mitigated due to topographical screening by Cahermurphy Hill. As noted in *Appendix 14-3*, while the proposed turbines appear as tall vertical elements occupying a relatively moderate horizontal extent within this viewpoint, the proposed turbines read coherently in the view. The arrangement and spacing of the proposed turbines gives an orderly and visually coherent appearance within the view, with limited overlap of turbine components, avoiding visual confusion and supporting their assimilation into the landscape. The proposed turbines also exceed the 500m set-back distance in the WEDGs (2006) also are in line with the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019).

Residential Receptors to the East of the Proposed Wind Farm

To the east, there are very few residential receptors. Where residential receptors are present, they are primarily situated in small clusters along the local road network, which primarily experiences ‘Little/No Screening’ as outlined in the Route Screening Analysis in Section 14.3.3.

VP13 was captured on the L-6254 local road and is representative of the most open views towards the proposed turbines from the east. As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, the closest turbines (T6 and T5), appears as large and prominent features within the view, while the remaining turbines appear as moderately scaled features, visually set-back from this viewpoint, partially screened by intervening landform and vegetation. However, the arrangement and spacing of the proposed turbines gives an orderly and visually coherent appearance within the view, with limited overlap of turbine components, avoiding visual confusion and supporting their assimilation into the landscape.

The proposed turbines are also sited at a lower base elevation relative to the elevated vantage point of this viewpoint, reducing the visual prominence of the proposed turbines when visible. Furthermore, for residential receptors located to the east, visibility is further reduced by a combination of setback

distances and visual screening by intervening vegetation. This can be seen in both photowires PW-H (Plate 14-26) and PW-I (Plate 14-27), where the majority of the proposed turbines are visually screened by commercial forestry, resulting in limited and intermittent visibility of the proposed turbines. The proposed turbines also exceed the 500m set-back distance in the WEDGs (2006) also are in line with the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019).



Plate 14-26 Extract View from PW-H in the townland of Cahermurphy



Plate 14-27 Extract View from PW-I in the townland of Drummin

Residential Receptors to the North of the Proposed Wind Farm site

Residential Receptors to the north are primarily located in a linear array along the local roads, which, as discussed in the Route Screening Analysis are characterised by a mix of roadside vegetation



Plate 14-28 Drone Image for Landscape Context: Views overlooking the residential receptors to the north of the proposed turbines

Viewpoint 15 is located 800m north of the nearest proposed turbine along the L-6204 local road in the townland of Carrownagry South. The viewpoint is representative of the open views experienced by residential receptors to the north, where the proposed turbines are seen above the horizon, arranged in a linear array. The linear arrangement of the proposed turbines and their differing set-back distances as seen within the view allows the turbines to be read as a coherent cluster within the view. A ‘Moderate’ residual visual effects was deemed to occur at this viewpoint.

Viewpoint 10 was captured 1.8km west of Viewpoint 15, and set further back from the proposed turbines (approx. 2.4km) and demonstrates that even at increased viewing distances, the proposed turbines still read as a coherent cluster within the receiving landscape. From this viewpoint, the proposed turbines occupy a relatively moderate horizontal extent within the view, and are seen beyond the ridgeline, providing a degree of physical and visual setback from the residential receptors to the north.

Across both viewpoints, the arrangement and spacing of the proposed turbines results in an orderly and visually coherent appearance within the view, with limited overlap of turbine components, avoiding visual confusion and supporting their assimilation into the landscape. The proposed turbines also exceed the recommended 500m set-back distance in the WEDGs (2006) and comply with the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019). Overall, the separation distances, in combination with intervening topography and vegetation, reduce the visual prominence of the proposed turbines for the small number of residential receptors in this area.



Plate 14-29 Extract View from PWJ in the townland of Carrownagry South

14.7.4.4.3 **Visual Effects Relating to the Proposed Onsite 110kV Electrical Substation**

The proposed onsite 110kV electrical substation and its associated components including the associated electrical plant and equipment located within the footprint of the proposed onsite 110kV electrical substation constitute one of the larger and potentially more visually prominent elements of the ancillary infrastructure. The footprint of the proposed onsite 110kV electrical substation compound measures approximately 9800m² in area and is located at the east end of the Proposed Wind Farm site approx. 417m southeast of proposed turbine T6 and 160m west of L-6254 local road. The maximum height of buildings associated with the proposed onsite 110kV substation is the control building at 8.38m is likely to be visible from parts of L-6254 and some residential receptors, which has primarily 'No/ Very Little' visual screening, and some 'Dense/ Full' visual screening along the local road at its closest points. There are 6 no. proposed lightning poles sited within the proposed onsite 110kV electrical substation, standing at 18m in height. These will be tall, slender elements where the greatest visibility of these will be from receptors in proximity to the proposed onsite 110kV electrical substation.

14.7.4.4.4 **Visual Effects Relating to the Proposed Grid Connection**

The proposed Grid Connection cable route is located underground; therefore, no visual effects are deemed to arise from it during the operational phase. The Grid Connection cable route is connected to the proposed on-site 110 kV substation that and will connect to the existing substation at Moneypoint.

14.7.4.5 **Discussion of Cumulative Visual Effects**

There are many potential scenarios and interactions where cumulative visual effects may occur. These scenarios include interactions between the Proposed Wind Farm, other energy developments (wind farms or grid infrastructure), as well as other man-made landscape features (quarries, transport networks and overhead telecommunication lines) and land uses. Guidance for the assessment of cumulative effects of onshore wind farms (SNH, 2012; NatureScot, 2021) clearly states the following:

'At every stage in the process the focus should be on the key cumulative effects which are likely to influence decision making, rather than an assessment of every potential cumulative effect';

'The level of information generated can distract attention from the most significant cumulative effects which are likely to influence the consenting decision. Assessments should therefore focus on the most significant cumulative effects and conclude with a clear assessment of those which are likely to influence decision making'.

Following this guidance, a primary focus is given to the cumulative effects likely to occur as a result of other wind turbines identified in the LVIA Study Area as these are likely to cause the greatest significant cumulative effects. Cumulative visual effects were assessed as part of the viewpoint assessments in *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Assessment Tables*.

The discussion of cumulative visual effects in this section uses the term 'in combination' where the proposed turbines will be seen with other turbines from a particular vantage point representing visual receptors. In combination 'simultaneous' visual effects occur where the proposed turbines are seen with other cumulative turbines within the same or similar field of view. In combination 'successional' visual effects occur where the proposed turbines are seen with other turbines from the same viewpoint but in an alternative field of view where the receptor will need to turn to face a different direction to experience cumulative effects.

In relation to windfarms, as discussed previously, within the LVIA Study Area (25km radius) there are 12 no. existing wind farms, 5 no. proposed wind farms and 2 no. permitted wind farms, which are listed in Table 14-12 previously. The Cumulative Comparative ZTV of all cumulative turbines with the

proposed turbines can be seen in Figure 14-16 previously. As shown in Section 14.6 of this Chapter, the cumulative turbines are theoretically visible throughout majority of the LVIA Study Area, where a smaller portion of this area is where both the Proposed Wind Farm and cumulative turbines will be theoretically visible. As such, there are very few locations where the Proposed Project would introduce turbines as entirely new or novel elements within the landscape. While Figure 14-16 indicates full theoretical visibility, actual visibility is best understood through photomontages in Volume 2: *Photomontage Booklet* and assessments from site visits, which have been conveyed in *Appendix 14-3*.

Areas of theoretical visibility of both the proposed turbines and cumulative turbines are primarily confined to the west, south and southwest of the LVIA Study Area with patches seen to within 10km to the east and further north. As a result, combined visibility of both the proposed and cumulative turbines becomes increasingly limited with distance further north and east within the LVIA Study Area.

Cumulative Visual Effects with the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm

The 4 no. existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines are sited immediately west of the Proposed Wind Farm. The Proposed Wind Farm and existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines will be viewed in combination, along the ridgeline of the Proposed Wind Farm site, from most locations and visual receptors within the LVIA Study Area, as shown by almost all viewpoints, see VP01 and VP03 from local settlements. As shown from these viewpoints, the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm and the proposed turbines are viewed as one collective wind farm in the general from receptors around the Proposed Wind Farm site.

All proposed turbine models in this application are of a greater tip height (185m tip height) than the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines (150m Tip height). In order to counter-act potential for visual incongruity, the proposed turbines are strategically sited at a lower base elevation within the landscape relative to the existing turbines. These characteristics of the two developments result in a broadly comparable scale when viewed from many viewpoints and receptors in the LVIA Study Area, such as VP08. As illustrated in Figure 14-20 below, views from VP08 (Doo Lough to the north-east) shows that the hub height elevations of the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines and the proposed turbines are perceived as similar heights within the view. Whilst the proposed turbines have a taller tip height, they do not raise the overall vertical profile of the wind farm (both the existing Cahermurphy and Cahermurphy West) within the landscape, whilst maximising the use of this viable ‘Strategic Area’ land for the production of renewable energy.



Figure 14-20 Extract of Viewpoint 08 comparing the perceived scale of the existing and proposed turbines relative to their hub height

As discussed in *Appendix 14-3*, for photomontage viewpoints that were set back from the proposed turbines, such as VP01, VP02 and VP03, it was noted that while the proposed turbines would be seen in combination with the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines, they would be viewed as a

collective array that assimilate well together. For photomontage viewpoints in closer proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm, with views facing south, east or north, such as VP11, VP12, VP14, and VP15, the proposed turbines and the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines would be viewed in combination as two separate developments where their difference in scale would be more apparent.

Cumulative Visual Effects with Other Windfarms to the North

To the north of the proposed turbines, beyond 5km, are the existing Slieve Callan Wind Farm, and the proposed Slieveacurry and Illaunbaun Wind Farms. In the north of the LVIA Study Area, beyond these cumulative turbines the theoretical visibility is predominantly limited to cumulative turbines only. There is an area between 19-25km where theoretical visibility of both the proposed turbines and the cumulative turbines are indicated. Photomontage viewpoint VP06 was captured in this area, along CCDP Scenic Route 1 near the Cliffs of Moher. Visibility from this area generally permits long-ranging expansive views over Liscannor Bay with Slieve Callan Uplands forming the distant backdrop of the view. From here, the proposed turbines are viewed in combination with the existing Slieve Callan turbines, where the existing Slieve Callan turbines are seen in closer proximity within the upland landscape to the left of the view. Other existing wind farms are discernible in the distant background of the view sited within the Slieve Callan Upland landscape, and further south in Co. Clare. In a potential future receiving environment, the proposed Slieveacurry and Illaunbaun wind farms will be seen in the same direction as the proposed turbines. Visual receptors looking south from the designated Scenic Route 1 and from parts of the Cliffs of Moher will experience in combination views, where the proposed turbines would be visible beyond the cumulative turbines to the north. Viewpoint 06 was deemed to be 'Very High' sensitivity on account of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, where the magnitude of change was deemed to be 'Slight'. The residual visual effect was deemed to be 'Slight'. This effect incorporates cumulative visual effects that arise at this viewpoint (see *Appendix 14-3*).

From locations to the south west of the Proposed Wind Farm, the proposed turbines will be viewed in combination, in succession and sequentially with these cumulative turbines to the north. Elevated positions with open views, such as that of VP02 and VP09, are examples of in combination and successional views, respectively. From locations like these, these cumulative turbines are seen as smaller elements in the background of the view. Both the proposed turbines and cumulative turbines are viewed within the Slieve Callan Uplands, both seen inland, set-back from the more scenic views along County Clare's coastline. VP09 was deemed as a 'High' sensitivity viewpoint given that it is representative of the CCDP Heritage Landscape, and the magnitude of change was deemed 'Slight'. A residual visual effect of 'Slight' was deemed to arise in relation to the receptors located adjacent to the viewpoint. This effect incorporates cumulative visual effects that arise at this viewpoint (see *Appendix 14-3*).

Within 15km of the proposed turbines to the north, there will be more locations where the proposed turbines would be viewed in succession with cumulative turbines. Receptors from the north, such as from along the CCDP Scenic Route 15, will have views south towards the proposed turbines and other existing wind farms, such as the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines, and views east to northeast towards the existing Slieve Callan turbines. In an uncertain future receiving environment, the proposed Slieveacurry and Illaunbaun wind farms will also be viewed in succession, as illustrated by photomontage viewpoints VP04 and VP05. These viewpoints are representative of the designated Scenic Route 1 and as such have been deemed to be of 'High' sensitivity, with a 'Slight' magnitude of change. A residual visual effect of 'Slight' was deemed to arise in relation to the receptors located adjacent to the viewpoint. This effect incorporates cumulative visual effects that arise at this viewpoint (see *Appendix 14-3*).

Cumulative Visual Effects with Other Windfarms to the East

There are several cumulative wind farms located east of the Proposed Wind Farm. The closest are the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines located immediately beside the proposed turbines.

The cumulative wind farms further east include the existing Kiltumper, Booltiagh, Booltiagh Extension, Glenmore, Boolynagleragh, Boolynagleragh Extension, and Letteragh Wind Farms. From some locations to the north to northeast of the Proposed Wind Farm, these cumulative turbines are seen in the as smaller elements in the background of the view within the upland landscape. For example, VP01 from the settlement of Mullagh shows some these cumulative turbines in the distant background, the existing Kiltumper and Glenmore Wind Farms are just about discernible beyond the ridgeline. From viewpoints further north, such as VP04 and VP05, there is very limited visibility of the cumulative turbines east due to intervening landform.

To the east of the proposed turbines, views of the proposed turbines are limited to visual receptors within 15km east of the proposed turbines. The upland region to the east provides visual screening, where any in combination views that may potentially arise from visual receptors to the east are limited to the within 13km of the proposed turbines. Such views are illustrated by Viewpoint 07, where the proposed turbines are viewed as an addition to an area established with wind energy. Visual receptors within closer proximity will experience views in succession of the proposed turbines and these cumulative turbines in the opposing direction to the east. No Significant Cumulative Visual Effects are likely to occur from visual receptors to the east. While the Proposed Wind Farm increases the overall extent of turbines visible within the wider landscape, the turbines are seen at a large set-back distance. . A residual visual effect of 'Not Significant' was deemed to arise in relation to the receptors located adjacent to VP07.

Further southeast of the Proposed Wind Farm is the existing Crossmore Wind Farm and the proposed Cloonkett Wind Farm. There is more limited visibility of the proposed turbines beyond 10km in this direction, where intervening topography screens visibility. Viewpoint 03 was captured at Kilmihil, sited between the proposed turbines and the cumulative turbines. From this location, there will be in-combination and in succession cumulative visual effects with cumulative turbines to the north and northeast. From VP03, views southeast may be limited by the built form of Kilmihil, while there may be more open views along local roads allowing views in succession of the proposed turbines and the cumulative turbines southeast. Overall, while the proposed turbines increases the spatial extent of turbines visible in the landscape, they assimilate well within existing views. There are no Significant cumulative visual effects that arise at this viewpoint as a result of the proposed turbines.

Cumulative Visual Effects with Other Windfarms to the South

To the southwest of the Proposed Wind Farm are the existing Tullabrack and Moanmore Wind Farms, and the proposed Moanmore Lower and Ballykett Wind Farms. From locations beyond 15km southwest of the proposed turbines, there may be in combination views with the existing Tullabrack and Moanmore Wind Farms. Site visits found that the rolling farmland topography and roadside vegetation primarily screen views towards the proposed turbines, where views are most likely to occur from open and elevated locations within the landscape.

From locations within 15km of the proposed turbines, there will be in succession and sequential views of the proposed turbines and cumulative wind farms to the southwest. Similarly, in succession views are most likely to occur from open and or elevated locations due to the rolling farmland landscape and boundary vegetation. Viewpoint 09 was captured from an elevated location along the coastline, illustrating these open views, where the cumulative turbines to the southwest would be visible in the opposing direction. While the proposed turbines and cumulative turbines would be visible from these locations, they would be seen set-back inland from the more scenic coastal corridor, and hence seen as background features with limited visual influence. No Significant cumulative visual effects were deemed to arise at this viewpoint as a result of the proposed turbines.

From locations further northwest of the proposed turbines, such as from VP04 and VP06, the cumulative turbines to the southeast are seen as very small elements in the distant background, with very limited cumulative visual effects.

Further to the south of the LVIA Study Area are the existing Moneypoint and Leanamore Wind Farms. The existing Moneypoint Wind Farm located along the Shannon Estuary, and the existing Leanamore Wind Farm is located beyond 20km in County Kerry. Visibility of both the proposed turbines and cumulative wind farms in this direction becomes more fragmented beyond 10km from the proposed turbines, where there more sequential views arise. At these distances, Significant cumulative visual effects are not likely to occur with these cumulative turbines to the south.

14.7.5 Turbine Range Assessment

Section 14.1.2.3. describes the range of turbine dimensions assessed in this chapter. ‘Scenario 1 – Maximum’, with a tip height of 185m, a rotor diameter of 149m and a hub height of 110.5m is considered throughout the EIAR assessment and is a representative illustration of the Proposed Project. This combination of rotor diameter and hub height (Maximum Hub Height and Minimum Rotor Diameter for the Maximum 185m Tip Height) is the turbine presented for every photomontage viewpoint in the photomontage booklet.

Alternative turbine model configurations have been presented for 2 selected viewpoints included at the end of the photomontage booklet; Scenario 2 – Median, and Scenario 3 - Minimum. The viewpoints selected are representative of short-range views where the difference in range is likely to be most discernible. The Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables in *Appendix 14-3* for these viewpoints contained in the *Photomontage Booklet* include a row describing and addressing the alternative turbine configurations compared with Scenario 1 which was used for all photomontages.

The photomontage visuals show that there is only a very small discernible difference between the different scenarios – the difference is only evident with the aid of the comparative wirelines. The detailed assessment is provided in *Appendix 14-3* at the end of the tables for both Viewpoint 14 and Viewpoint 15, titled as the “Turbine Envelope Range”. Briefly, the Scenario 2 turbine model is discernible as a small difference between the hub height position. The Scenario model 3 is slightly more discernible, where the hub height and the tip height is slightly lower with a very small space between the blade-tips.

Irrespective of which combination of hub height and blade length within the range outlined in this application is installed on-site, the significance of residual landscape and visual effects as set out in this LVIA for VP14 and VP15 will not be altered.

14.7.6 Decommissioning Phase Effects

The landscape and visual effects during decommissioning are anticipated to be of a similar nature as those occurring during the construction phase.

The important element of decommissioning from an LVIA perspective is the dismantling and removal of the wind turbines. This will occur for a limited period of time and will predominately involve cranes adjacent to the turbines during the dismantling process. Upon decommissioning of the Proposed Wind Farm site, the wind turbines will be disassembled in reverse order to how they were erected. The turbines will be disassembled with a similar model of crane that was used for their erection. The turbine will likely be removed from the Site using the same transport methodology adopted for delivery to the Site initially.

The proposed onsite 110kV substation and the Proposed Grid Connection underground electrical cabling route will remain in place.

Removal of the turbines and ancillary infrastructure from the Proposed Wind Farm site during the decommissioning phase will result in a ‘Short-Term’, ‘Slight’, ‘Negative’ visual effect from local receptors, such as residences in the area. A Decommissioning Plan has been prepared (Appendix 4-7) the detail of which will be agreed with the local authority prior to any decommissioning. The

Decommissioning Plan will be updated prior to the end of the operational period in line with decommissioning methodologies that exist at the time and will be agreed with the competent authority at that time

14.8 Conclusion

This chapter of the EIAR is a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the Proposed Project. The assessments in this chapter focussed on the impact of the proposed turbines as the essential aspect of the Proposed Project likely to give rise to significant landscape and visual effects. A study area was set to 25km from the proposed turbines termed as the 'LVIA Study Area'. The LVIA was conducted in accordance with national and international best practice LVIA guidance for assessing wind energy developments. The assessment was informed by desktop GIS analysis, on-site appraisals, topographical and ZTV modelling and production of verified photomontages. This chapter includes a description of the landscape and visual baseline conditions of the Site and LVIA Study Area. The baseline exercises outline the local policy context with respect to landscape and visual designations, models the ZTV to help identify the landscape and visual receptors requiring assessment and evaluates the cumulative context of landscape and visual effects in combination with other existing, proposed and permitted wind farm developments in the LVIA Study Area.

This chapter is accompanied by one volume and four appendices as follows:

- *Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet*, presenting existing and cumulative visualisations of the proposed Cahermurphy West turbines from 15 No. representative viewpoints in the LVIA Study Area;
- *Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology*, outlining the detailed methodology and guidance used for the assessments reported in Chapter 14;
- *Appendix 14-2: LCA Assessment Tables*, assessing effects on designated Landscape Character Areas (LCAs);
- *Appendix 14-3: Photomontage Viewpoint Assessment Tables*, a visual impact assessment of the 15 No. representative viewpoints presented in the *Photomontage Booklet*, including assessment of cumulative effects;
- *Appendix 14-4: LVIA Baseline Map*, a large A0 map showing all baseline landscape features, visual receptors, ZTV and viewpoints.

The Proposed Wind Farm is primarily located in the Slieve Callan Uplands LCA of Co. Clare. The proposed turbines are sited in marginal upland characterised by commercial forestry, agricultural and bog lands. The landscape in this LCA has the lowest landscape sensitivity rating to wind energy in the CCDP 2023-29. Two of the eight proposed turbines are located within LCA 20 – *Malbay Coastal Farmlands* which is designated as 'High' sensitivity in local planning policy. The landscape within the Proposed Wind Farm site is strongly influenced by current and historic land use, it has been heavily modified for commercial forestry, agricultural activities and historic peat harvesting. 7 no. of the proposed turbines are located within an area designated as 'Strategic' for wind energy by the Clare Wind Energy Strategy, while 1 no. turbine (T8) is sited within an area designated as 'Acceptable in Principle'. Overall, this LVIA determined the Site to be of 'Low' landscape sensitivity, an acceptable receiving environment for the Proposed Project. The siting of the proposed turbines within the 'Transitional Marginal Landscape' are found to comply with development WEDGs (2006) in terms of its siting and design and 4-times-tip-height set-back distance from residential receptors, within a sparsely populated marginal upland on the foothills of the Slieve Callan Uplands.

Imagery was captured from a total of 25 No. viewpoints in the LVIA Study Area for the production of photomontages and photowire visualisations. These visualisations were used to assess the landscape and visual effects of the proposed turbines on all of the receptors scoped in for assessment during preliminary analysis using ZTV mapping. The visual receptors include: 2 No. designated Scenic Routes, 7 No. settlements, 8 No. recreational routes (i.e. walking trails), 5 No. Recreational, Cultural Heritage and Tourist Destinations and 5 No. regional- and national-level transport routes. Many

receptors are represented within the 15 No. selected photomontage viewpoints (Photomontage Booklet), and many are represented by the 10 No. supplementary photowire viewpoints representing locations and receptors where less, or no visibility occurs.

7 No. designated LCAs were identified within the LCA Study Area (area within 15km from the proposed turbines for assessment of effects on designated LCAs) and were scoped in for assessment following a preliminary analysis. The comprehensive assessment of each LCA is reported in *Appendix 14-2*. 2 No. LCAs were found to be of 'High' sensitivity: LCA 20 – Malbay Coastal Farmlands and LCA 21 – Loop Head Peninsula due to their proximity to the Atlantic Coast and 'Heritage Landscapes'. LCA 17 – Slieve Callan Uplands, in which the Proposed Wind Farm site is primarily located in, was found to have 'Low' sensitivity. The greatest landscape effects will occur within LCA 17 – Slieve Callan Uplands and LCA 20 – Malbay Coastal Farmlands with a residual landscape effect of 'Slight' and 'Moderate' respectively. For the remainder LCAs, the effects were found to have a significance rating of 'Not Significant'.

15 No. viewpoints were selected and comprehensively assessed for visual effects, of which 10 No. viewpoints were located within 5km of the proposed turbines. Of the viewpoints assessed, 11 No. had residual visual effects rating either 'Not Significant', 'Slight' or 'Moderate' according to the EPA (2022) approach, see *Appendix 14-3*, and 4 No. viewpoints had residual effects rating as 'Significant'. Significant residual visual effects only occur for a small number of local residential receptors in very close proximity to the proposed turbines, where 'Substantial' magnitude of change occurs. In all cases the proposed turbines exceed the mandatory 500m set-back distance in the WEDGs (2006) also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft WEDGs (2019). Importantly, the LVIA found no significant visual impact on views from protected scenic routes or any impact on the key scenic sensitivities and views of the County Clare high sensitivity Heritage Landscape.

Cumulative effects on landscape character are included in the impact assessment outlined in *Appendix 14-2*. Overall, the LCA-17 – Slieve Callan Uplands are found to be capable of accommodating the proposed turbines and cumulative turbines where its undulating characteristics provide physical and visual separation. There will be cumulative landscape effects with LCA 20 and the Heritage Landscape where wind energy developments will be visible within the upland landscape inland, and are well set-back from sensitivities. Cumulative effects on Cumulative visual effects are also discussed and summarised in *Appendix 14-3* and above in this Chapter. As demonstrated by the mapping and photomontage visualisations, the proposed turbines will be viewed in combination with the existing Cahermurphy Wind Farm turbines, where they will primarily be seen as a collective wind farm. This LVIA has shown that the proposed turbines are seen within the Slieve Callan Uplands, assimilating with the background of cumulative existing turbines further east and north. While visible from sensitive receptors in the environment, cumulative effects tend to arise when looking east and north at the proposed turbines, whereas the sensitive receptors are located to the west along the coast, in the opposing direction of the cumulative turbines.

In conclusion, the Proposed Project is an appropriately designed development and suitably aligned with the WEDGs (2006) and Draft WEDGs (2019), sited in a landscape envisioned for wind energy development. The site is located within a zoning designated as a 'Strategic Area' and 'Acceptable in Principle' for wind energy development in Volume 6: Clare Wind Energy Strategy (CWES) of the CCDP with no potential significant effects on protected landscape and visual sensitivities in the LVIA Study Area.

EIA CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY

Please see the below table for a summary of all identified impacts for the Proposed Project relating to Landscape and Visual Impact.

1. PROPOSED PROJECT

Table 1-1 Impact Assessment Classification Summary

Topic	Impact Assessment Discussion Section Reference	Residual Effects	Significance
Construction Phase			
Landscape Effects	Section 14.7.2.1	Slight, Short-term, Negative	Not Significant
Visual Effects – Construction equipment and plant	Section 14.7.2.2	Slight, Short-term, Negative	Not Significant
Visual Effects – Construction of ancillary project elements	Section 14.7.2.3 Section 14.7.3	<p>Site Access Roads and Hardstand Areas: Slight, Short-term, Negative</p> <p>Turbine Delivery Route (TDR) Accommodation Works: Not Significant, Temporary, Negative</p> <p>Proposed Borrow Pits Slight, Temporary, Negative</p> <p>Spoil and Peat Management Areas Slight, Temporary, Negative</p> <p>Meteorological (Met) Mast Slight, Short-term, Negative</p> <p>Temporary Construction Compounds Not Significant, Short-term, Negative</p> <p>On-site 110kV substation Slight, Short-term, Negative</p>	Not Significant

		Proposed Grid Connection Cabling Slight, Short-term, Negative	
Operational Phase – Landscape Effects			
Proposed Project	Section 14.7.4.1.1	Proposed Wind Farm Long-Term, Slight, Negative	Not Significant
	Section 14.7.4.1.2	Proposed Grid Connection Long term, Imperceptible, Negative	
LCA's	Section 14.7.4.1.3	Long-Term, Negative effects, within the following range: Not Significant to Slight	Not Significant
Designated Landscape Receptors of High Sensitivity	Section 14.7.4.1.4	Long-Term, Slight, Negative effects,	Not Significant
Operational Phase – Visual Effects			
Designated Scenic Routes	Section 14.7.4.4	Long-Term, Negative effects, within the following range: Not Significant, Slight	Not Significant
Settlements	Section 14.7.4.4	Long-Term, Negative effects, within the following range: Imperceptible, Slight	Not Significant
Recreational Routes	Section 14.7.4.4	Long-Term, Negative effects, within the following range: Slight, Not Significant, Imperceptible	Not Significant
Recreational Destinations, Cultural Heritage and Tourism Destinations	Section 14.7.4.4	Long-Term, Negative effects, within the following range: Slight, Not Significant	Not Significant
Major Transport Routes	Section 14.7.4.4	Long-Term, Negative effects, within the following range: Slight, Not Significant	Not Significant

Residential Receptors	Section 14.7.4.4.2	Long-Term, Negative effects, within the following range: Significant, Moderate, Slight	Significant
Decommissioning Phase			
Proposed Wind Farm	Section 14.7.6	Short-term, Slight Negative	Not Significant