

## **Landscape Character Type 9: Upland Moorland and Forestry**

### ***Introduction***

The Upland Moorland and Forestry character type occurs in a single area within Moray. Some minor alteration has been made to the southern and northern boundaries of this character type to exclude the more settled farmed hill fringes which have a smaller scale. These areas have been incorporated into the adjacent character types of the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) to the south and the 'Rolling Farmlands and Forest with broad valleys' (5b) to the north.

This character type merges gradually with the 'Open Uplands' (10) to the west although the 'Open Uplands' (10) forms a higher plateau with generally more defined hills than the 'Upland Moorland and Forestry' (9).

Detailed sensitivity assessment has been undertaken for the larger development typologies only, due to the sparsely settled nature of this landscape which is likely to limit interest in medium-small and small typologies. General guidance is given for smaller typologies within the summary that follows.

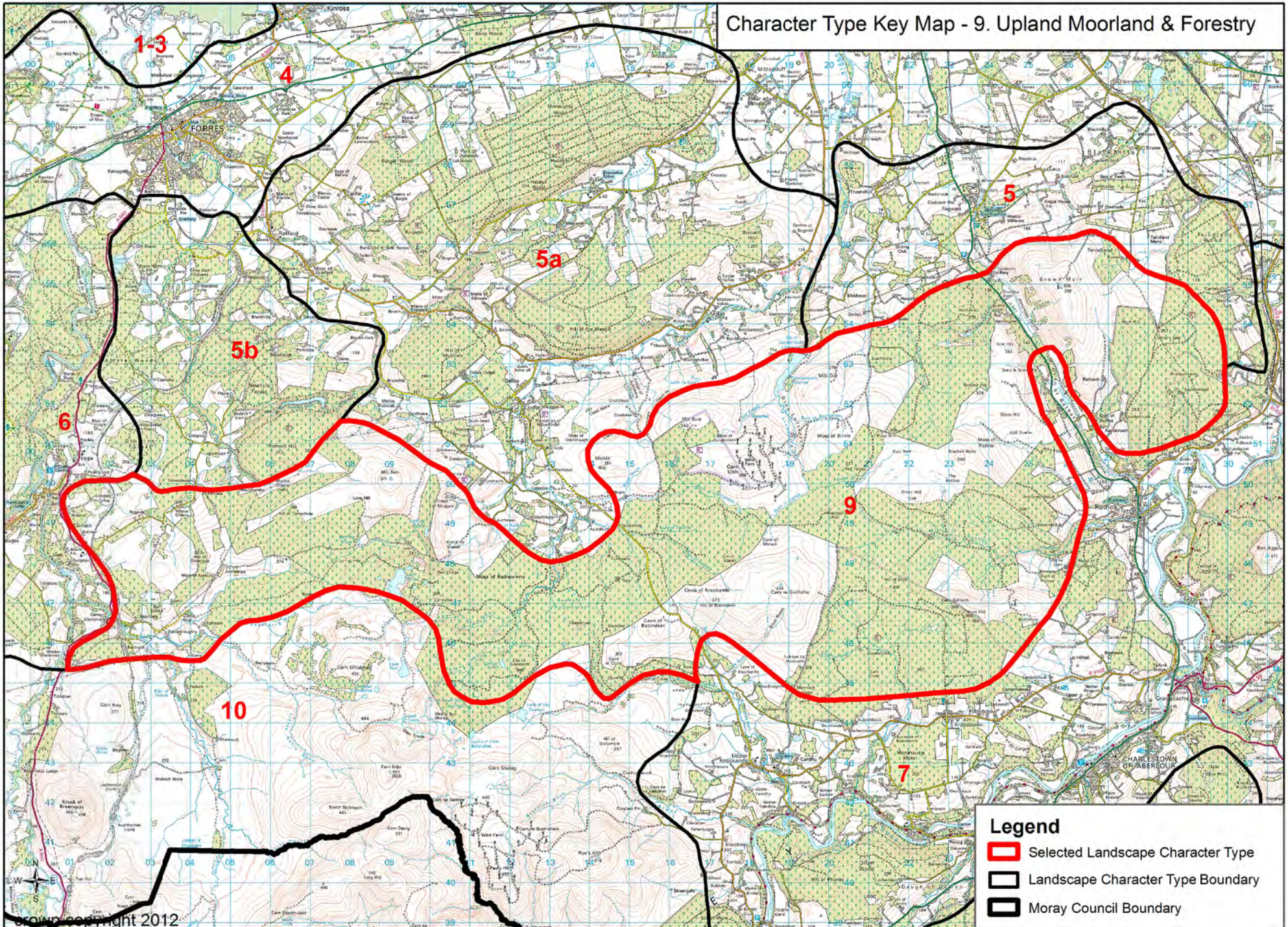
### ***Operational and consented wind farm development***

The operational Rothes wind farm is located within this character type. This development comprises 22 turbines, 100m high to blade tip. An extension for 18 turbines, 125m high has been consented to this wind farm.

The operational Paul's Hill wind farm sited within the 'Open Uplands' (10) and the Hill of Towie wind farm are visible within 7-12km from this character type. The consented Berry Burn wind farm located within the 'Open Uplands' (10) will also be visible from this character type.



# Character Type Key Map - 9. Upland Moorland & Forestry



**Legend**

- Selected Landscape Character Type
- Landscape Character Type Boundary
- Moray Council Boundary



**Landscape character type 9: Upland Moorland and Forestry – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Summary description</b>	<b>Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>	<b>Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>
<b>Landscape context</b>	<p>This landscape forms a relatively low backdrop of extensively forested and open hills to the more richly patterned and smaller scale hill fringes of LCTs 5, 5a, 5b and 6 to the north and west and to LCT 7 to the south. These uplands are seen as a distant long low ridge from the well-settled ‘Coastal Farmlands’ (4) to the north.</p> <p>Visibility into the interior of these uplands is limited from these surrounding landscapes. The more defined hills of Mill Buie, Brown Muir and Carn na Calliche stand out as easily recognisable and frequently visible ‘landmark’ hills on the edge of this character type.</p> <p>This character type is relatively extensive, a characteristic which is reinforced where it adjoins Open Uplands (10), which has a similar vegetation pattern.</p>	<p>Larger typologies sited on the occasional more pronounced hills such as Brown Muir and Mill Buie would affect the backdrop provided to well-settled landscapes to the north as they are landmark hills views of which recur across these lowland character types.</p> <p>The outward-facing hill slopes seen from the Broad Valley Farmland (7) would also be sensitive to this typology which would dominate this adjacent settled and smaller scale landscape.</p> <p>In general however, the extensiveness of this character type reduces sensitivity provided development were located within the ‘interior’ of the uplands and set well back from more sensitive hill tops and slopes on the fringes of this character type to minimise effects on adjoining smaller scale landscapes.</p>	<b>Medium-low</b>	<p>Larger typologies sited on the occasional more pronounced hills such as Brown Muir and Mill Buie would affect the backdrop provided to well-settled landscapes to the north as they are landmark hills views of which recur across these lowland character types.</p> <p>The outward-facing hill slopes seen from the Broad Valley Farmland (7) would also be sensitive to this typology which would dominate this adjacent settled and smaller scale landscape.</p> <p>In general however, the extensiveness of this character type reduces sensitivity provided development were located within the ‘interior’ of the uplands and set well back from more sensitive slopes on the fringes of this character type.</p> <p>There may be increased scope to accommodate the smaller turbines of this typology to minimise effects on adjoining more sensitive landscapes.</p>	<b>Medium-low</b>
<b>Scale and openness</b>	<p>A large scale gently undulating upland plateau rising to between 300-400m. Slightly lower hills occur on the northern edge of this character type. Scale is reduced within occasional narrow glens such as the Glen of Rothes.</p>	<p>This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the interior plateau, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller glens and hills.</p>	<b>Medium</b>	<p>This typology could relate to the expansiveness of the interior plateau. Turbines of this size would have less of an effect on the relatively low relief of smaller edge hills but would still dominate the scale of narrow glens</p>	<b>Medium-low</b>

<b>Landform</b>	These uplands form a simple undulating plateau with broad gentle slopes, shallow basins and rounded summits. Landform is more complex at the transition with the 'Rolling Farmland and Forests with Valleys' (5a) to the south-west of Dallas where incised valleys and lochans occur. The narrow incised Glen of Rothes and steep-sided and pronounced hills of Mill Buie, Brown Muir and Carn na Cailliche form landmark features.	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of this gently undulating plateau. Turbines of this size would detract from the landmark hills of Brown Muir, Mill Buie and Carn na Cailliche, the deep trough of the Glen of Rothes and pockets of more complex landform, if sited on or nearby.	<b>Medium</b>	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of this gently undulating plateau. Turbines of this size would detract from the landmark hills of Brown Muir, Mill Buie and Carn na Cailliche, the deep trough of the Glen of Rothes and pockets of more complex landform, if sited on or nearby.	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Landscape pattern</b>	Extensive coniferous forestry and grass/heather moorland with occasional boggy basins between hills.	This typology could fit with the simple land cover found within the upland interior of this character type.	<b>Low</b>	This typology could fit with the simple land cover found within the upland interior of this character type.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Built environment</b>	A very sparsely settled landscape with isolated farms located within the Glen of Rothes and on hill slopes above the 'Broad Farmland Valley' (7) and the 'Rolling Farmlands and Forest' (5). The A941 and a narrow minor road cross this landscape although access is restricted generally within the upland core. The operational Rothes wind farm and its consented extension, masts and power lines are located within this character type.	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farm development and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity.	<b>Low</b>	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farms and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Although access is relatively restricted within this landscape and it can feel secluded, the presence of extensive commercial forestry and wind farm development negates any sense of wildness.	Although in places secluded, 'wildland' character is generally not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity.	<b>Medium-low</b>	Although in places secluded, 'wildland' character is generally not pronounced and there would therefore be little effect on this sensitivity.	<b>Medium-low</b>

<p><b>Visual amenity</b></p>	<p>This upland landscape is sparsely settled. It is crossed by two public roads; the A94 is aligned through Glen of Rothes has restricted views while views from the single-track unclassified road between the Spey Valley and Dallas is more open and the existing Rothes wind farm (and the Paul's Hill wind farm in the adjacent 'Open Uplands' (10)) are visible from this route. Forest and wind farm tracks provide access to the interior of these hills although public access is likely to be fairly limited. Views from more settled lowland areas and valleys into the interior of these uplands are restricted by the more defined or higher 'edge' hills, such as Brown Muir and Mill Buie. These are important in views from surrounding settled lowland areas and also visually contain the operational Rothes wind farm.</p>	<p>The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower basin-like landform within the interior of these uplands from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity. The higher or more pronounced hills on the northern edge of this character type are more visually sensitive however as they either form landmark hills in their own right when viewed from the north or contain views of the operational Rothes wind farm development (as in the case of Carn na Cailliche 404m) from the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7). Turbines of this size could have cumulative visual effects with existing/consented wind farm developments in views from surrounding areas.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p>The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower basin-like landform within the interior of these uplands from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity. The higher or more pronounced hills on the northern edge of this character type are more visually sensitive however as they either form landmark hills in their own right when viewed from the north or contain views of the operational Rothes wind farm development (as in the case of Carn na Cailliche 404m) from the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7). There may be increased scope for this typology to limit impacts on key views although smaller turbines could have cumulative impacts with existing/consented developments sited in this landscape if seen in close proximity from key views.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>
<p><b>Cumulative effects</b></p>	<p>The operational Rothes wind farm and its consented extension are sited within the interior of this upland plateau and this generally limits landscape and visual impact on adjoining more sensitive settled landscapes. There is very limited visibility of this wind farm from the 'Broad Valley Farmland' (7) although it is more visible in views from the north within LCTs (4), (5) and (5a). Close views of the operational and consented Rothes</p>	<p>Any additional turbine development sited within this character type could have impacts on the skyline this landscape provides to LCT (5) and (5a) (extensive forest cover limits views from LCT (5b)). Avoidance of landmark hills such as Mill Buie would limit cumulative impacts by containing and separating wind farm developments. Cumulative effects could occur if development encroached closer to</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p>Any additional turbine development sited within this character type could have impacts on the skyline this landscape provides to LCT (5) and (5a) (extensive forest cover limits views from LCT (5b)). Avoidance of landmark hills such as Mill Buie would limit cumulative impacts by containing and separating wind farm developments. Cumulative effects could occur if development encroached closer to the unclassified road between Spey</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>

	<p>wind farm developments occur from the unclassified road between the Spey Valley and Dallas and these developments are/will be seen with the Paul's Hill and Berry Burn wind farms sited in the adjacent 'Open Uplands' (10) from this route.</p>	<p>the unclassified road between Spey Valley and Dallas and potentially affected the setting, separation and design integrity of existing and consented developments seen from this road. Cumulative effects could occur from the Dava Way Trail where wind farms in LCT (10) and this landscape were seen simultaneously or sequentially from this recreational route.</p>		<p>Valley and Dallas and potentially affected the setting, separation and design integrity of existing and consented developments seen from this road. Cumulative effects could occur from the Dava Way Trail where wind farms in LCT (10) and this landscape were seen simultaneously or sequentially from this recreational route.</p>	
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## Character type 9: Upland Moorland and Forestry

### **Summary of sensitivity**

The Upland Moorland and Forestry character type features a gently undulating plateau-like landform with smooth even slopes. This landscape has a simple land cover of extensive coniferous forestry and moorland. It is sparsely populated and already accommodates the operational/consented Rothes wind farm. Many of these characteristics present potential opportunities to accommodate large scale wind farm development although the more defined and higher hills found on the edge of the lower-lying interior hills and basins are important in providing a backdrop to smaller scale valleys and thus have an increased sensitivity to larger turbines. This is a very sparsely settled area which is not notably popular for recreation. Visibility of the interior of these uplands is restricted from roads and settlement within adjacent settled valleys and hill fringes although there are longer views from the Coastal Farmlands within Moray. The more defined landmark hills of Brown Muir, Mill Buie and Carn na Cailliche, located on the edges of these uplands, are sensitive to turbine development as they either form a focus in views from low-lying well-settled character types or contain existing wind farm development within the lower-lying interior.

Overall sensitivity is judged to be **Medium** for the large and medium typologies.

### **Smaller typologies**

There is unlikely to be a significant demand for smaller typologies (turbines <50m) within the very sparsely settled uplands of this landscape. Smaller typologies would appear out of scale in relation to the predominantly large scale of these uplands and could have cumulative effects with existing and consented wind farm developments in some nearby views if seen in close proximity with existing/consented turbines.

Some limited opportunities exist for the smaller typologies to be located on lower hill slopes at the transition with the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) and the 'Rolling Farmland and Forest with Broad Valleys' (5b) where they could be back dropped by rising ground and visually associated with the more settled and farmed hill fringes. Smaller typologies should be sited within this transitional landscape away from key areas of close inter-visibility with the operational/consented Rothes wind farm however. There are greater opportunities to accommodate the small typology (turbines <35m) in these areas due to their better scale relationship with nearby settlement.

### **Cumulative issues**

The existing wind farm development of Rothes and its consented extension are located in a concentrated cluster within the interior of this upland area. This development comprises a total of 40 turbines between 100-125m high to blade tip.

Key cumulative landscape and visual issues include:

- Potential sequential and simultaneous views of multiple developments visible on the long, low skylines of this character type seen in views from the 'Coastal Plain' (4), 'Rolling Farmland and Forest' (5) and 'Rolling Farmland and Forest with Valleys' (5a) from the north.
- Potential effects on views from the A95 and settlement within the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) (Spey Valley) where the Paul's Hill and Hill of Towie wind farms are already visible and where any additional development in this character type could increase impacts.

- Sequential and simultaneous visibility of multiple wind farm developments within this character type and the adjacent 'Open Uplands' (10) from the Dava Way which could affect the experience of using this popular recreational route.

**Constraints:**

- The more defined steeper-sided hills of Brown Muir and Mill Buie which form landmark features in views from the north, and particularly from the 'Coastal Plain' (4), within the context of more even lower ridges which form the backdrop to these views. Views of these hills recur across the more settled northern character types.
- The landmark hill of Carn na Cailliche which lies on the south-western edge of this landscape and provides a simple upland backdrop seen from the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) to the south and visually contains the operational and consented Rothes wind farm from parts of the Spey Valley.
- Smaller hills and ridges on the edges of these uplands which form immediate skylines to adjacent valleys, for example above Glen of Rothes and the upper Lossie valley within the 'Rolling Farmland and Forest with Broad Valleys' (5b) character type and small forested hills seen on the approach to Moray from the A940 and forming a low backdrop in views from rare open spaces within the 'Narrow Wooded Valley' (6).
- Cumulative effects with operational and consented wind farm developments both within this character type and the adjacent 'Open Uplands' (10).

**Opportunities:**

- The simple landform and expansive scale of the interior plateau areas.
- The sparsely settled nature of this character type and the relatively limited visibility of the interior of these uplands from surrounding settled landscapes

**Guidance on development**

There is some *limited* scope to accommodate further larger scale typologies in this character type. The more defined landmark hills of Brown Muir, Mill Buie and Carn na Cailliche should be avoided with development being sited in lower-lying areas set well back into the interior of these uplands to minimise landscape and visual impacts on adjacent sensitive well-settled and smaller scale landscapes. Small hills and ridges which lie on the outer fringes of these uplands and form the immediate skyline to smaller scale valleys, such as the Glen of Rothes, the upper Lossie within the adjacent 'Rolling Farmland and Forest with Broad Valleys' (5b) and the 'Narrow Wooded Valleys' (6) should be avoided. Intrusion on the key approach to Moray on the A940 (see Figure 4) should also be avoided.

Care should additionally be taken to minimise cumulative effects with operational and consented wind farm development sited in this and adjacent character types. These developments include the Rothes wind farm (and its extension) in this character type and the Paul's Hill and Berry Burn wind farm in the 'Open Upland' (10). Key issues to consider will be potential effects on the design and setting of these developments appreciated in key views and cumulative effects on views and the experience of using the Dava Way recreational route.

Smaller typologies should be located on lower hill slopes at the transition with the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) and the 'Rolling Farmland and Forest with Broad Valleys' (5b) character types. There are greater opportunities to accommodate the small typology (turbines <35m) in these areas due to their better scale relationship with nearby settlement. Detailed



guidance on the siting and design of smaller turbines is set out in section 5 of the Main Study Report.



*The 'landmark' hill of Carn na Cailliche is important in visually containing the Rothes wind farm development which is set within the interior of these uplands*



*Forestry extends on lower slopes either side of the minor road between Knockando and Dallas*



*The Rothes wind farm is seen in close proximity to the upper Lossie valley near Dallas and occupies a generally low, even section of skyline between more pronounced hills.*



*The 'landmark' hill of Brown Muir forms a prominent feature seen extensively across the settled 'Coastal Farmland' (4) of Moray.*

### ***Character Type 9: Upland Moorland and Forestry***

## **Landscape Character Type 10: Open Uplands**

### ***Introduction***

The Open Uplands character type occurs in two areas within Moray. It is the most southerly upland landscape in Moray. To the north lie the Upland Farmland (8) and Upland Moorland and Forestry (9) character types. The Open Uplands (10) also overlook the Broad Farmed valleys (7) of the Spey and Glen Rinnes, and the very south-eastern end of the Narrow Wooded Valley (6) to the west.

Due to the differences in context, character and scale of landscapes within the Open Uplands (10) character type, two sub-divisions have been identified for the purpose of this study:

- The 'Open Uplands with Settled Glens' (10a) which occurs to the far east of Moray, and includes rounded hills and gentle slopes enclosing the wide bowl of The Cabrach and the upper reaches of the River Deveron;
- The 'Open Uplands with Steep-Sided Slopes' (10b) which includes the western side of Glenfiddich Forest and the steep-sided Ben Rinnes

The western area of the Open Uplands has been retained as character type 10. This landscape forms a relatively narrow band of broad rounded hills interspersed with shallow valleys and low-lying moss lying adjacent to the generally lower upland plateau of the Upland Moorland and Forestry (9). This character type forms part of a more extensive area of similar uplands extending south and west in the adjoining Highland area.

This sensitivity assessment considers the Open Uplands (5) character type. Detailed sensitivity assessment has been undertaken for the larger development typologies only, due to the sparsely settled nature of this landscape which is likely to limit interest in medium-small and small typologies. General guidance is given for smaller typologies within the summary that follows.

### ***Operational and consented wind farm development***

The operational Paul's Hill wind farm is sited within this character type. This development comprises 28 turbines, 100m high. The consented Berry Burn wind farm is also located in this character type and this development comprises 32 turbines, 104m high.

The operational Rothes wind farm is located within the adjacent 'Upland Moor and Forest' (9) character type. This development comprises 28 turbines, 100m high. An extension for 18 turbines, 125m high, has been consented to this wind farm.







**Landscape character type 10: Open Uplands – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Summary description</b>	<b>Large scale typology assessment (80-130m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>	<b>Medium scale typology assessment (50-80m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>
<b>Landscape context</b>	This upland landscape comprises a relatively small area in Moray although it appears more expansive due to its similar character to the adjacent uplands within Highland Council area to the south and west. The extensiveness of this landscape also increases where it adjoins the 'Upland Moorland and Forestry' (9) to the east and north. The Moray 'Open Uplands' (10) form a backdrop of open hills to the more richly patterned and smaller scale hill fringes of the "Broad Farmed Valley' (7) of the Spey Valley to the south. They are seen as a distant long ridge from the well-settled 'Coastal Farmlands' (4) to the north. The more defined hills of Knock of Braemoray, Paul's Hill and the conical peak of Carn Kitty stand out in views from surrounding landscapes although visibility into the interior of these uplands is limited.	Larger typologies sited on the occasional more pronounced hills would affect the backdrop provided to the well-settled landscapes of the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) and to the north as they are landmark hills views of which recur across these character types. The outward-facing hill slopes seen from the Broad Farmed Valley (7) would also be sensitive to this typology which would dominate this adjacent settled and smaller scale landscape. The limited visibility of the lower-lying interior of these uplands however reduces effects on adjoining landscapes as does the merging of this landscape with adjacent uplands which increases the perception of expansiveness.	<b>Medium</b>	Larger typologies sited on the occasional more pronounced hills would affect the backdrop provided to the well-settled landscapes of the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) and to the north as they are landmark hills views of which recur across these character types. The outward-facing hill slopes seen from the Broad Farmed Valley (7) would also be sensitive to this typology which would dominate this adjacent settled and smaller scale landscape. The limited visibility of the lower-lying interior of these uplands however reduces effects on adjoining landscapes as does the merging of this landscape with adjacent uplands which increases the perception of expansiveness.	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Scale and openness</b>	A large scale gently undulating upland plateau with rounded hills rising generally to between 400-520m. The low-lying basin of Moidach More is very open and expansive. Scale is reduced within the shallow valleys of the Divie and	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the interior plateau, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller scale valleys and hills.	<b>Medium</b>	This typology could relate to the expansiveness of the interior plateau. Turbines of this size would have less of an effect on the relatively low relief of smaller edge hills but would still dominate the scale of shallows settled valleys	<b>Medium-low</b>



	Dorback Burn where settlement, woodlands and enclosed farmland introduce smaller scale features.				
<b>Landform</b>	These uplands form a simple undulating plateau with broad gentle slopes, shallow basins, flat mosses and rounded summits. The more defined steep-sided hills of Knock of Braemoray and Roy's Hill have a more pronounced landform and some more complex areas of smaller scale knolls and lochans occur in the north-eastern fringes of these uplands.	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of low-lying basins and broad hill slopes although turbines of this size would detract from more pronounced higher or steep-sided hills and areas of more complex landform if sited on or near them.	<b>Medium</b>	This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of low-lying basins and broad hill slopes although turbines of this size would detract from more pronounced higher or steep-sided hills and areas of more complex landform if sited on or near them.	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Landscape pattern</b>	This landscape has a predominantly simple land cover of grass/heather moorland with areas of moss and deep peat, patterned with small lochans and wetland, and occasional semi-improved fields and small coniferous woodlands within shallow valleys. Native pine woodland is a feature within the valley of the Dorback Burn	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to this typology although turbines of this size could detract from more patterned lochans and wetland within Moidach More and native pine woodland within the valley of the Dorback Burn.	<b>Medium-low</b>	The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to this typology although turbines of this size could detract from more patterned lochans and wetland within Moidach More and native pine woodland within the valley of the Dorback Burn.	<b>Medium-low</b>
<b>Built environment</b>	A very sparsely settled landscape with isolated farms associated with the shallow valleys of the River Divie and Dorback Burn. The A940 is aligned close to the western edge of this character type. The operational Paul's Hill wind farm and the consented Berry Burn wind farm are located in this landscape. A transmission line is aligned in the north-west of this character type.	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farm development and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity.	<b>Low</b>	The relatively sparse settlement and presence of existing wind farms and other built infrastructure reduces sensitivity.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Access is relatively restricted within this landscape and it can feel secluded. A sense of naturalness	Although in places secluded and appearing natural, the presence of operational and consented wind	<b>Medium</b>	Although in places secluded and appearing natural, the presence of operational and consented wind farm	<b>Medium</b>

	can be associated with some features, for example the moss of Moidach More although the presence of wind farm development reduces the sense of wildness overall, assuming the Berry Burn wind farm is built.	farm development reduces wildland qualities.		development reduces wildland qualities.	
<b>Visual amenity</b>	<p>This upland landscape is sparsely settled and access is generally limited. It forms the threshold to Moray seen from the A940, although the prominent hills of the Knock of Braemoray and Carn Biorach restrict views into the interior of this character type. The Dava Way Trail, aligned on a former railway route, is popular with walkers and cyclists and provides access into the interior basin of Moidach More.</p> <p>A single-track road between Upper Knockando and Dallas provides more open views of these uplands from the east. The existing Paul's Hill and consented Berry Burn wind farms are visible from this road.</p> <p>Views from more settled lowland areas and valleys into the interior of these uplands are restricted by the more defined or higher 'edge' hills including Knock of Braemoray and Roy's Hill and these hills are also important in views from surrounding settled lowland areas and also visually contain operational and consented wind farm developments.</p> <p>Views from more settled landscapes</p>	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower interior hills and basin from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity although views are possible from the Dava Way Trail. The higher and/or more pronounced hills on the fringes of this character type are more visually sensitive.	<b>Medium</b>	The sparsely settled nature of this character type and restricted visibility of the lower interior hills and basin from roads and settlement in more settled lowland areas reduces sensitivity although views are possible from the Dava Way Trail. The higher and/or more pronounced hills on the fringes of this character type are more visually sensitive.	<b>Medium</b>

	to the north are reduced by the 'buffer' provided by the 'Upland Moorland and Forestry' (9) which directly abuts the 'Rolling Farmlands and Forest with Valleys' (5a).				
<b>Cumulative effects</b>	The operational Paul's Hill wind farm and the consented Berry Burn wind farm are located in this character type. The Rothes wind farm is located in the adjacent 'Upland Moorland and Forestry' (9). These wind farms are most visible together when seen from the minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas.	The presence of operational and consented wind farms in this character type increases sensitivity. Potential cumulative effects include those affecting the design integrity of these wind farms as well as effects on views from the Spey Valley, Dava Way Trail and minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas. Further discussion of cumulative issues is set out in the following text.	<b>High</b>	The presence of operational and consented wind farms in this character type increases sensitivity. Potential cumulative effects include those affecting the design integrity of these wind farms as well as effects on views from the Spey Valley, Dava Way Trail and minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas. Further discussion of cumulative issues is set out in the following text.	<b>High</b>

## Character type 10: Open Uplands

### **Summary of sensitivity**

The Open Uplands character type forms an upland plateau of rounded hills, some of these are well-defined such as the Knock of Braemoray and Roy's Hill, and the broad low-lying basin of Moidach More. Smaller, more complex knolly hills and lochans occur on the north-eastern fringes of these uplands. This landscape has a simple land cover of grass and heather moorland with drained pastures and moss on lower hill slopes and within low-lying basins. It is sparsely populated with small farms associated with the shallow valleys of the River Divie and Dorback Burn on the northern and western fringes of the character type. The operational and consented wind farms of Paul's Hill and Berry Burn are sited within this character type. While the scale and generally simple landform of these uplands reduces sensitivity to larger typologies, the presence of operational and consented wind farm development and the limited extent of this landscape, restricts opportunities for additional development. The more pronounced landmark hills of Knock of Braemoray and Roy's Hill, additionally constrain scope for development due to their prominence, but also their importance in visually containing and separating operational and consented wind farm developments. Although this is a very sparsely settled area with only limited views possible into the interior uplands and basins from roads and settlement in the surrounding area, the landmark hills on the fringes of these uplands form key foci in views and visual sensitivity is also increased by the Dava Way Trail which is aligned through this landscape.

This landscape has an overall **High-medium** sensitivity to both the large and the medium typologies.

### **Smaller typologies**

There is unlikely to be a significant demand for smaller typologies (turbines <50m) within the very sparsely settled uplands of this landscape. Smaller typologies would appear out of scale in relation to the predominantly large scale of these uplands and could have cumulative effects with large scale operational and consented wind farm developments if seen in close proximity with existing/consented turbines.

Some limited opportunities exist for the smaller typologies to be located within the sparsely settled valleys of the Dorback Burn and at the transition with the adjacent 'Upland Moorland and Forest' (9) and 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) although significant cumulative effects with operational and consented wind farm developments should be avoided by careful site selection. There are greater opportunities to accommodate the small typology (turbines <35m) in these areas due to their better scale relationship with nearby settlement and to minimise cumulative landscape and visual effects where there would be inter-visibility with larger development typologies sited within the core of these uplands.

### **Cumulative issues**

The operational wind farm development of Paul's Hill is clustered in a defined grouping of turbines on slightly lower ground north-west of Roy's Hill. The higher Roy's Hill provides a degree of containment to this wind farm in views from the Spey Valley. This wind farm is also largely shielded in views from the west by a band of higher hills, for example, from the Dava Way trail. It is however seen extensively in more open and elevated views from the minor hill road between Upper Knockando and Dallas (and is also seen sequentially with the Rothes wind farm in the adjacent 'Upland Moorland and Forest' (9) from this road).



The consented Berry Burn wind farm is located to the north west of Paul's Hill wind farm. This development comprises a concentrated grouping of turbines on the west-facing slopes of Carn Ghiubhais but has a more linear form to the south, wrapping around the lower slopes of Carn Kitty. This wind farm will be most visually prominent from the minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas (where it will appear to form a more extensive band of turbines merging with Paul's Hill wind farm) and from the sparsely settled Divie Valley on the northern fringes of this character type. There will be visibility of the wind farm from the Lochindorb area and intermittent views from the A940. More distant views will also occur to the north from the Elgin/Lossiemouth and Forres/Findhorn area.

Key cumulative landscape and visual issues include:

- Sequential and simultaneous views of multiple developments visible from the minor road between Upper Knockando and Dallas. The wind farm developments of Paul's Hill, Berry Burn and Rothes are seen at 3-7km from this road and the consented Rothes extension will be significant closer. The Paul's Hill and Berry Burn developments occupy much of the skyline of these uplands seen to the west but are/would be set back into the hills thus reducing their prominence. The defined hill of Carn na Cailliche within the 'Upland Moorland and Forest' (9) is important in visually containing the Rothes development and preventing a 'corridor' effect of turbines consistently occupying the skyline of ridges adjacent to the road. Further wind farm development within the 'Open Uplands' (10) character type could compromise the integrity of design and setting of operational and consented developments seen from this road.
- Potential cumulative effects on views and the experience of using the Dava Way Trail and the effects of multiple developments within this character type and within the adjacent Highland Council area from the A940 and Lochindorb area.
- Potential effects on views from the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) where additional development could affect the containment and setting higher hills such as Roy's Hill provide to the operational Paul's Hill wind farm.

**Constraints:**

- The more defined steeper-sided hills of Knock of Braemoray (which forms a key landmark feature in rare open views from the 'Narrow Wooded Valley' (6)) and Carn Biorach which form highly visible hills on the more visible western edge of this character type seen from the A940, a key approach to Moray.
- Roy's Hill, which forms a landmark feature seen from the Spey Valley on the southern edge of this character type and which provides some visual containment of the operational Paul's Hill wind farm, and the conical peak of Carn Kitty (521m).
- Smaller, more complex knolly hills and lochans on the north-eastern fringes of landscape at the transition with the 'Upland Forest and Moorland' (9) character type.
- The smaller scale, sparsely settled valleys of the River Divie and the Dorback Burn.
- Views from the Dava Way Trail between Grantown and Forres.
- Cumulative effects with operational and consented wind farm developments both within this character type and the adjacent 'Upland Moorland and Forestry' (9) (see key cumulative issues listed above).

**Opportunities:**

- The simple landform and large scale of the interior plateau and basin areas.

- The sparsely settled nature of this character type and the relatively limited visibility of the interior of these uplands from surrounding settled landscapes

### ***Guidance on development***

Opportunities for additional wind farm development are ***severely limited*** by key landscape and visual constraints and the potential for significant cumulative impacts to arise with operational and consented wind farm developments. There may be some limited opportunities for very small extensions to the Paul's Hill and Berry Burn wind farms but no scope to open up any new areas of development due to cumulative effects on key views but also because of effects on the integrity of design, setting and separation of these operational and consented wind farms.

This character type extends into the adjacent Highland Council area. Although not lying within Moray, the higher hills on the south-west boundary of this character type are important in shielding views of the Paul's Hill wind farm from the A940 and the Lochindorb area and also limiting cumulative impacts with the consented Berry Burn wind farm in views from the Dava Way Trail. Wind farm development sited on these hills would compromise the present containment and setting of the Paul's Hill wind farm and would be likely to significantly increase cumulative impacts with the consented Berry Burn wind farm in views from the Lochindorb area.

Smaller typologies should be located on lower hill slopes at the transition with the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) and the 'Upland Moorland and Forestry' (9) character types. There are greater opportunities to accommodate the small typology (turbines <35m) in these areas due to their better scale relationship with nearby settlement and the clear differential in size with larger turbines sited within the core of these uplands. Guidance on the siting of smaller turbines is set out in section 5 of the main study report.



*Landform becomes more complex in the north-eastern corner of this landscape where small knolls, deeply incised valleys and lochans feature.*



*The existing Paul's Hill wind farm is located in this landscape and is partially contained by the 'landmark' Roy's Hill in views from the Spey valley.*



*These uplands are characteristically open in comparison with the more densely forested 'Upland Moorland and Forestry' (9) seen in the backdrop*



*A low-lying boggy moor forms the watershed of the River Divie and is surrounded by gently undulating upland ridges*



*Bright green improved pastures stand out amidst moorland and bog vegetation within the sparsely settled valleys of the Divie and Dorback Burn.*



*The 'landmark' hill of Knock of Braemoray forms a focus in views from the A940 and also screens views of wind farm development sited in the interior of these uplands.*

## **Character Type 10: Open Upland**

## **Landscape Character Type 10a: Open Uplands with Steep Slopes**

### ***Introduction***

The Open Uplands (10) landscape character type is the most southerly upland landscape in Moray. To the north lie the Upland Farmland (8) and Upland Moorland and Forestry (9) character types. The Open Uplands (10) also overlook the Broad Farmed valleys (7) of the Spey and Glen Rinnnes, and the very south-eastern end of the Narrow Wooded Valley (6).

Due to the differences in context, character and scale of landscapes within the Open Uplands (10) character type, two sub-divisions have been identified for the purpose of this study:

- The 'Open Uplands with Steep-Sided Slopes' (10a) which includes the steep slopes east of Glen Rinnnes and the steep sided Ben Rinnnes
- The 'Open Uplands with Settled Glens' (10b) which occurs to the far east of Moray, and includes rounded hills and gentle slopes enclosing the wide bowl of The Cabrach and the upper reaches of the River Deveron;

This section of the report is the landscape sensitivity assessment which has been undertaken for the sub-type 'Open Uplands with Steep Slopes' (10a).

Open Uplands with Steep Slopes (10a) forms the steep-sided uplands of ridges and rugged summits which contain the Broad Farmed Valleys (7) and lie adjacent to the more rounded Open Uplands with Settled Glens (10b) to the east.

Detailed sensitivity assessment has been undertaken for the larger development typologies only, due to the sparsely settled nature of this landscape which is likely to limit interest in medium-small and small typologies. General guidance is given for smaller typologies within the summary that follows.

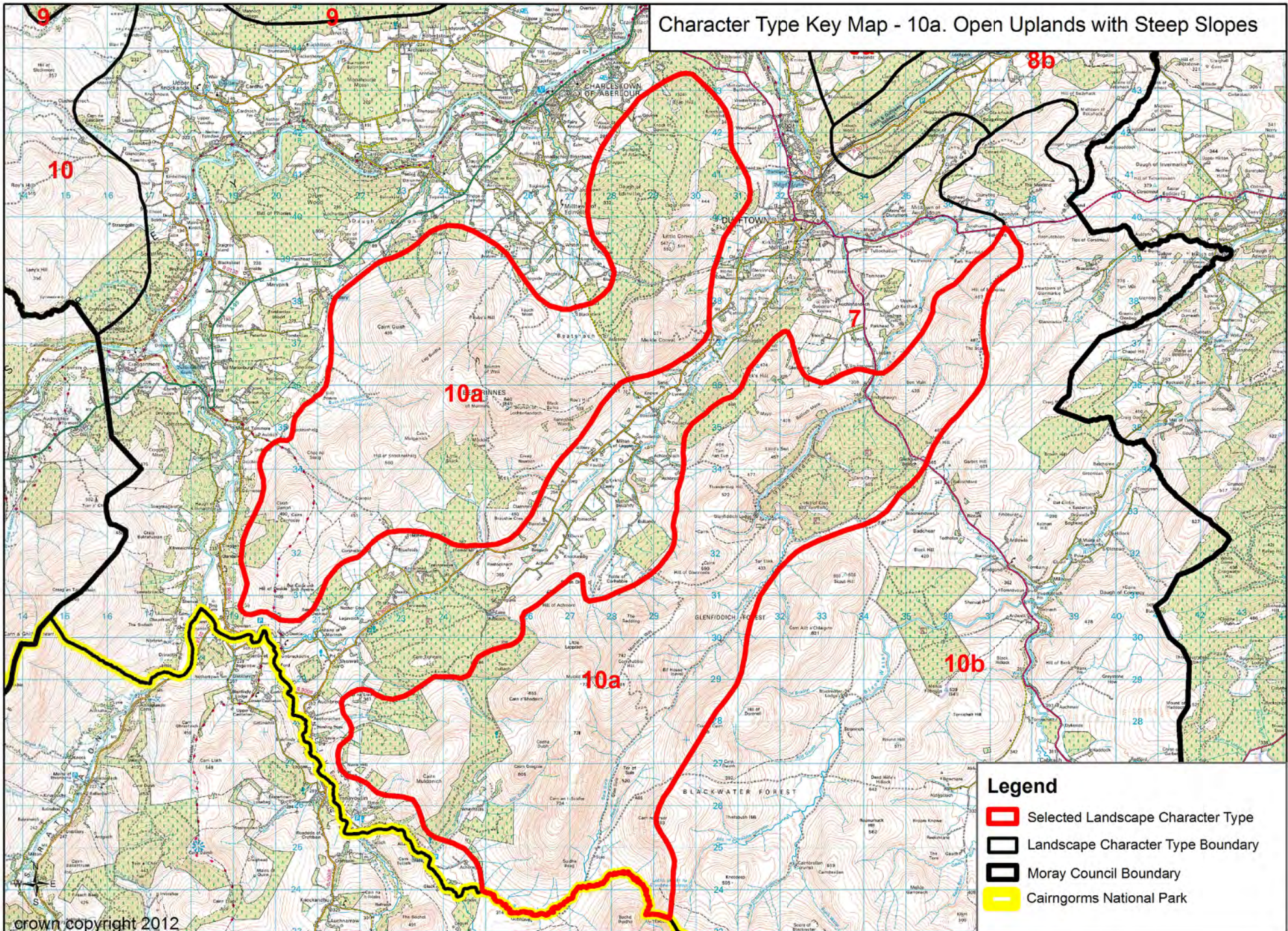
### ***Operational and consented wind farm development***

The consented Dorenell wind farm is located in the adjacent Open Uplands with Settled Glens character type (10b), on the boundary with this character type. This development comprises 59 turbines, up to 126m high to blade tip.

Pauls Hill (28 turbines, up to 100m high to blade tip), Hill of Towie (21 turbines, up to 100m to blade tip) and Rothes (22 turbines, up to 100m high to blade tip) wind farms are visible, within distances which vary from 12 to 15 km, from key viewpoints within this character type. The consented Berryburn windfarm (32 turbines, up to 104m high to blade tip) and Clashindarroch windfarm (18 turbines, up to 110m high to blade tip), which lies within Aberdeenshire on the border with Moray, will also be visible from this LCT. At a greater distance, the four turbines at Findhorn are also visible.



# Character Type Key Map - 10a. Open Uplands with Steep Slopes





**Landscape character type 10a: Open Uplands with Steep Slopes – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Summary description</b>	<b>Large typology assessment (80-130m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>	<b>Medium typology assessment (50-80m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>
<b>Landscape context</b>	<p>This upland landscape is narrow and limited in extent, in part because it occupies two areas on either side of Glen Rinnes. Nevertheless, it appears more expansive where it merges with the ‘Open Uplands with Settled Glens’ (10b) to the east and the Ladder Hills within the Cairngorms National Park to the south. It becomes narrower and more constrained in extent to the north. This character type forms the containing edge and ridges to the Broad Farmed Valley LCT (7), contributing to the wider upland setting of Dufftown. It also overlooks the Braes of Glenlivet within the Cairngorms National Park, and is close to the Ladder Hills. The rugged hill group of Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conval and Little Conval are an outlier group of landmark hills which are widely visible and easily recognisable.</p>	<p>These uplands merge with adjacent hills to the east and south to create an upland landscape which appears more expansive because of the adjacent hills. This large typology, however, would affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscape character types associated with the adjacent Broad Farmed valleys (7). The setting of Dufftown is a further sensitivity. This large typology could also affect the setting of the northern Ladder Hills if located on the southern border of Moray, as well as potentially overlooking the smaller scale, settled glen of the Braes of Glenlivet in the Cairngorms National Park. The sensitivity of the setting of Ben Rinnes, and smaller hills within this group, also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it is widely recognisable hill feature across lowland areas of Moray.</p>	<b>High</b>	<p>These uplands merge with adjacent hills to the east and south to create an upland landscape which appears more expansive because of the adjacent hills. This typology, however, would affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscape character types associated with the adjacent Broad Farmed valleys (7). The setting of Dufftown is a further sensitivity. This large typology could also affect the setting of the northern Ladder Hills if located on the southern border of Moray, as well as potentially overlooking the smaller scale, settled glen of the Braes of Glenlivet in the Cairngorms National Park, although it would have less significant visual impact than the large (80m-130m) typologies. The sensitivity of the setting of Ben Rinnes, and smaller hills within this group, also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it is widely recognisable hill feature across lowland areas of Moray.</p>	<b>High-Medium</b>
<b>Scale and openness</b>	<p>Large scale, strongly vertical sided long, open but often narrow ridges rise directly up from the adjacent valleys to an elevation of over 700m in the south, dropping to lower relief</p>	<p>This typology could relate to the expansiveness and high relief of the long ridges and open hills, although turbines of this size would dominate the narrow ridgelines, the enclosed</p>	<b>Medium</b>	<p>This typology could relate to the expansiveness and high relief of the long ridges and open hills, although turbines of this size would dominate the narrow ridgelines, the enclosed</p>	<b>Medium</b>

	<p>associated with lower ridges (487m) in the north. Ben Rinnes rises to 840m, forming the highest point of an outlying group of steep sided open hill summits. Scale is reduced by increased containment created by narrow glens and passes. Woodland and smaller topographical features, including smaller stand-alone hills which provide the back drop to Dufftown, also reduce the scale along the transition between these slopes and adjacent valleys.</p>	<p>glens and passes, smaller foothills and the lower relief of the hills to the north.</p>		<p>glens and passes, smaller foothills and the lower relief of the hills to the north.</p>	
<b>Landform</b>	<p>These uplands form long, sloping but relatively even ridgelines to the east of Glen Rinnes. The rugged profile formed by more complex gradients rise to the pronounced summit of Ben Rinnes to the west. The character type is dominated by steep slopes, with only occasional areas of more gentle gradients. More complex landform, including smaller hills, overlook the broad valley around Dufftown.</p>	<p>The more complex landforms and steeper slopes are sensitive to this typology, although it could relate to the simple landform of long ridges and the occasional more gentle slopes and gradients. Tracks and platforms sited on the steeper slopes are likely to require extensive earth works.</p>	<b>High-Medium</b>	<p>The more complex landforms and steeper slopes are sensitive to this typology, although it could relate to the simple landform of long ridges and the occasional more gentle slopes and gradients. Tracks and platforms sited on the steeper slopes are likely to require considerable earth moving.</p>	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Landscape pattern</b>	<p>This landscape has a predominantly simple land cover of heather moorland across the upper slopes and summits, with occasional improved grassland fields along the lower hill slopes. These blend seamlessly with grass fields within the farmed low-lying land. Coniferous woodlands, some of which are quite extensive, and</p>	<p>The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size.</p>	<b>Medium-low</b>	<p>The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size.</p>	<b>Medium-low</b>

	smaller shelter woods are to be found along the lower slopes.				
<b>Built environment</b>	A very sparsely settled landscape with isolated farms associated with the occasional sheltered valley on the periphery of this type. There are farm and forestry tracks in this character type, but only short stretches of public road which extend through narrow passes. The consented Dorenell wind farm lies close to this character type.	There is limited settlement within this character type. If built, the adjacent consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed character in the south eastern uplands, which reduces sensitivity in this area.	<b>Low</b>	There is limited settlement within this character type. If built, the adjacent consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed character in the south eastern uplands, which reduces sensitivity in this area.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Access to the upland areas and the more remote, unsettled glens is limited, and the moorland is semi-natural in character. This increases the sense of wildness and relative seclusion, but the area is relatively narrow in extent and never far from settled lowlands. If built, the presence of the consented wind farm at Dorenell will reduce wild land qualities within the Glen Fiddich forest and its potential widespread visibility limits sense of wildness elsewhere in this type.	These less accessible ridges, summits and unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural, but if built, the presence of the consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce sense of wildness.	<b>Medium</b>	These less accessible ridges, summits and unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural, but if built, the presence of the consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce sense of wildness.	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Visual amenity</b>	There is limited settlement and public road access to this area, but the summits and the high ridgelines are walking routes. Ben Rinnes is a popular, high summit which stands above the surrounding glens offering fine views. The consented Dorenell wind farm, within the adjacent Open Uplands with Steep Slopes (10a) will be visible and prominent from Ben	The ridges and hill summits are both highly inter-visible and are viewpoints in their own right, therefore it is likely to be difficult to locate this typology where it does not have a visual impact.	<b>High</b>	The ridges and hill summits are both highly inter-visible and are viewpoints in their own right, therefore it is likely to be difficult to locate this typology where it does not have a visual impact, although the lower height range of this typology may be easier to site where visual impact on key views is avoided.	<b>High-medium</b>

	Rinnes and other high points in this character type. Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conval and Little Conval also stand out as a landmark hills from elsewhere in the type, because of their distinctive shape and 'stand-alone' setting.				
<b>Cumulative effects</b>	<p>The consented Dorenell wind farm lies on the western edge of the neighbouring Open Uplands with Settled Glens (10b). This wind farm has 59 turbines, some of which extend along a north-south ridge overlooking the glen of Glen Fiddich and Glen Suie.</p> <p>The ridge along the east side of Glen Rinnes provides a visual screen to Dorenell, limiting its impact on the smaller scale settled valley of Glen Rinnes.</p> <p>From Ben Rinnes, an accessible and relatively well used walking route, it is also possible to see Pauls Hill, Rothes, the Hill of Towie and the consented Berryburn and Clashindarroch wind farms within 10 - 15km of the summit.</p>	<p>The presence of a large consented wind farm on the edge of this character type increases sensitivity to cumulative effects, especially in terms of further development on the adjacent ridge which forms the eastern flank of Glen Rinnes.</p> <p>It is noted that this ridge also limits impacts of Dorenell on the smaller scale adjacent lowland Broad Farmed Valley (7) type by providing a visual separation between Dorenell and Glen Rinnes.</p> <p>Visual cumulative effects from Ben Rinnes are also sensitive, as this key viewpoint has a sequence of wind farms arrayed on high points along its north-western through to its eastern views.</p>	<b>High-Medium</b>	<p>The presence of a large consented wind farm on the edge of this character type increases sensitivity to cumulative effects, especially in terms of further development on the adjacent ridge which forms the eastern flank of Glen Rinnes.</p> <p>It is noted that this ridge also limits impacts of Dorenell on the smaller scale adjacent lowland Broad Farmed Valley (7) type by providing a visual separation between Dorenell and Glen Rinnes.</p> <p>Visual cumulative effects from Ben Rinnes are also sensitive, as this key viewpoint has a sequence of wind farms arrayed on high points along its north-western through to its eastern views.</p>	<b>High-Medium</b>



## Character type 10a: Open Uplands with Steep Slopes

### **Summary of sensitivity**

The Open Uplands with Steep Slopes (10a) character type forms two relatively narrow areas which provide the immediate upland context and backdrop for the low-lying and smaller scaled Broad Farmed Valley (7) character type. The steep slopes extend up to narrow ridges or more complex summit forms. The landscape scale of the highest upland areas is large, but the topographical relief is much lower to the north and where there are more complex landforms and small foothills at the transition with the valleys. This landscape has a relatively simple land cover of moorland and upland grass, with some conifer forests and shelter woods along the lower slopes. It is sparsely populated with occasional small farms associated with the glens which extend into the hills from the broad farmed valleys. The consented Dorenell wind farm is located in the neighbouring Open Upland with Settled Glens (10b).

While the scale of this landscape is generally extensive and this reduces sensitivity to the larger typologies, these slopes, ridges and summits provide the backdrop and setting as well as the containment for the smaller scale adjacent Broad Farmed Valleys (7). The steep slopes, areas of more complex landform and the presence of a large consented wind farm development on the boundary with an adjacent landscape type restricts opportunities for additional development. This is a very sparsely settled area but it is highly inter-visible with the surrounding area, and from key summits and ridges within the character type. Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conval and Little Conval form key visual foci in views, as they are both prominent and easily recognisable landmark hills. Visual sensitivity is further increased by the relative popularity of Ben Rinnes as a walking route.

This landscape has an overall **High** sensitivity to the large typology and **High-medium** sensitivity to the medium typology.

### **Smaller typologies**

There is unlikely to be a significant demand for smaller typologies (turbines <50m) within the very sparsely settled uplands of this landscape. Smaller typologies (turbines <50m) would appear out of scale in relation to the predominantly large scale of these uplands and could have cumulative effects with large scale consented wind farm developments if seen in close proximity with existing/consented turbines.

Limited opportunities exist for the small-medium and small typologies to be located within the sparsely settled valleys, across the more gentle slopes and lower relief of the hill slopes to the north of the character type and at the transition with the adjacent 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7). Significant cumulative effects with consented wind farm developments should be avoided by careful site selection.

There are greater opportunities to accommodate the small typology (turbines <35m) in the low-lying valleys and settled glens, where they are likely to have a balanced scale relationship with farmed landscapes, small woodlands and nearby settlement. Locating smaller turbines in these lowlying settled areas would also minimise cumulative landscape and visual effects by reducing inter-visibility with larger development typologies sited within the core of the uplands.

### **Potential cumulative issues**

The consented wind farm of Dorenell lies in the neighbouring Open Uplands with Settled Glens (10b) character type, but on the western edge, at the transition with this landscape character type. It extends for nearly 7km along the ridge and hill slopes above Glenfiddich forest. The wind farm straddles a ridge, so that from the east, viewpoints such as Ben Rinnes will overlook up to 36 turbines<sup>1</sup>. Other nearest large scale operational wind farms include Paul's Hill (at approximately 12km north west of Ben Rinnes), Hill of Towie (formerly Drummair) (at approximately 12-15km north east of Ben Rinnes) and Rothes and its consented extension (at approximately 15km north-north west of Ben Rinnes). In addition, consents have been given for Berryburn (at 15-20km north-west of Ben Rinnes) and Clashindarroch (at approximately 15km east of Ben Rinnes).

Key cumulative landscape and visual issues include:

- Views from the top of Ben Rinnes to surrounding high ridges and landmark hills which form the immediate upland context for this hill
- The erosion and diminution of Moray's wild land qualities and the sense of remoteness especially as experienced from hill tops, other upland landscapes and more remote glens
- The role played by the undeveloped eastern flank of Glen Rinnes, which currently provides a visual buffer between the consented Dorenell and the low-lying, smaller scale 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) of Glen Rinnes
- Potential effects on views from the neighbouring 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) from where Hill of Towie and Paul's Hill wind farm are already visible
- The setting of Dufftown, from which Hill of Towie wind farm and a small number of the Dorenell turbines are partially visible
- Potential visual clutter if turbines of any size are located in visual juxtaposition with the consented Dorenell wind farm.

### **Constraints:**

- The steep slopes which form the containment of the smaller scaled and well-settled Broad Farmed Valley (7) character type, and also overlook the Braes of Glenlivet to the south
- The lower relief and more complex landform associated with smaller scale foothills and lower hills to the northern end of this character type and at the transition with the Broad Farmed Valley (7) character type
- The narrowness of the ridgeline along the eastern flank of Glen Rinnes, from Carn an t-Suidhe north to Thunderslap Hill
- The rugged profile, more complex landform and the prominent 'stand alone' setting of Ben Rinnes, Meikle Conival and Little Conival, which together form a group of landmark hills which are highly visible and recognisable features over a wide area
- The more enclosed and narrow valleys such as Glen Fiddich and the narrow passes which are occupied by public roads, including the A941
- The setting of Dufftown, in neighbouring 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7), which is in part created by these upland areas
- Views from Ben Rinnes

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<sup>1</sup> Dorenell Windfarm ES, Volume 4: Landscape and Visual, Visualisations and Figures, 2008

- Cumulative effects with the consented wind farm at Dorenell in the adjacent Open Uplands with Settled Glens (10b) character type (see cumulative issues listed above).

***Opportunities:***

- The large scale and high relief of the topography associated with the higher uplands
- The sparsely settled nature of this character type

***Guidance on development***

Opportunities for larger typologies are limited by key landscape and visual constraints, including potential cumulative visual effects on views from Ben Rinnes.

There is limited opportunity to site the small-medium (35-50m) typology in this area. These should be located on lower hill slopes at the transition with the 'Broad Farmed Valley' (7) character type. There are greater opportunities to accommodate the small typology (turbines <35m) on the transition with the farmed valleys and along the lower slopes of this LCT due to their better scale relationship with nearby settlement and the scale of the farmed lowlands of the glens. Care should be taken to avoid potential visual confusion between different sizes of turbines. Guidance on the siting of smaller turbines is set out in Section 5 of the main study report.



*Ben Rinnes – an easily recognisable ‘landmark hill’ which is highly visible - the summit is also a popular viewpoint*



*Meikle Conval – this prominent hill is one of the Ben Rinnes range of ‘landmark hills’, and also contributes to the enclosure of Glen Rinnes, a broad farmed valley*



*Steep sided slopes are a key characteristic of this landscape character type – they form enclosure which reduces the scale of the adjacent valleys*



*Steep-sided passes cut through the mountains, forming narrow, enclosed and small scale glens within the larger scale hill ranges*



*These steep slopes enclose the valley of Glen Rinnes, forming a pronounced edge and also limiting views of the consented Dorenell wind farm to the east*

***Landscape Character Type 10a: Open Uplands with Steep Slopes***

## **Landscape Character Type 10b: Open Uplands with Settled Glens**

### ***Introduction***

The Open Uplands (10) landscape character type is the most southerly upland landscape in Moray. To the north lie the Upland Farmland (8) and Upland Moorland and Forestry (9) character types. The Open Uplands (10) also overlook the Broad Farmed valleys (7) of the Spey and Glen Rinnnes, and the very south-eastern end of the Narrow Wooded Valley (6).

Due to the differences in context, character and scale of landscapes within the Open Uplands (10) character type, two sub-divisions have been identified for the purpose of this study:

- The 'Open Uplands with Steep-Sided Slopes' (10a) which includes the high ridges and steep slopes extending east of Glen Rinnnes and the steep sided Ben Rinnnes.
- The 'Open Uplands with Settled Glens' (10b) which occurs to the far east of Moray, and includes rounded hills and gentle slopes enclosing the wide bowl of The Cabrach and the upper reaches of the River Deveron.

This section of the report is the landscape sensitivity assessment which has been undertaken for the sub-type 'Open Uplands with Settled Glens' (10b).

'Open Uplands with Settled Glens' (10b) extends across lower rounded hills which form the eastern boundary of Moray. This type includes the elevated shallow bowl of the Cabrach and the upper valley of the Deveron and it is adjacent to the Open Uplands with Steep Slopes (10a) to the west, and forms the outer south eastern boundary of Moray.

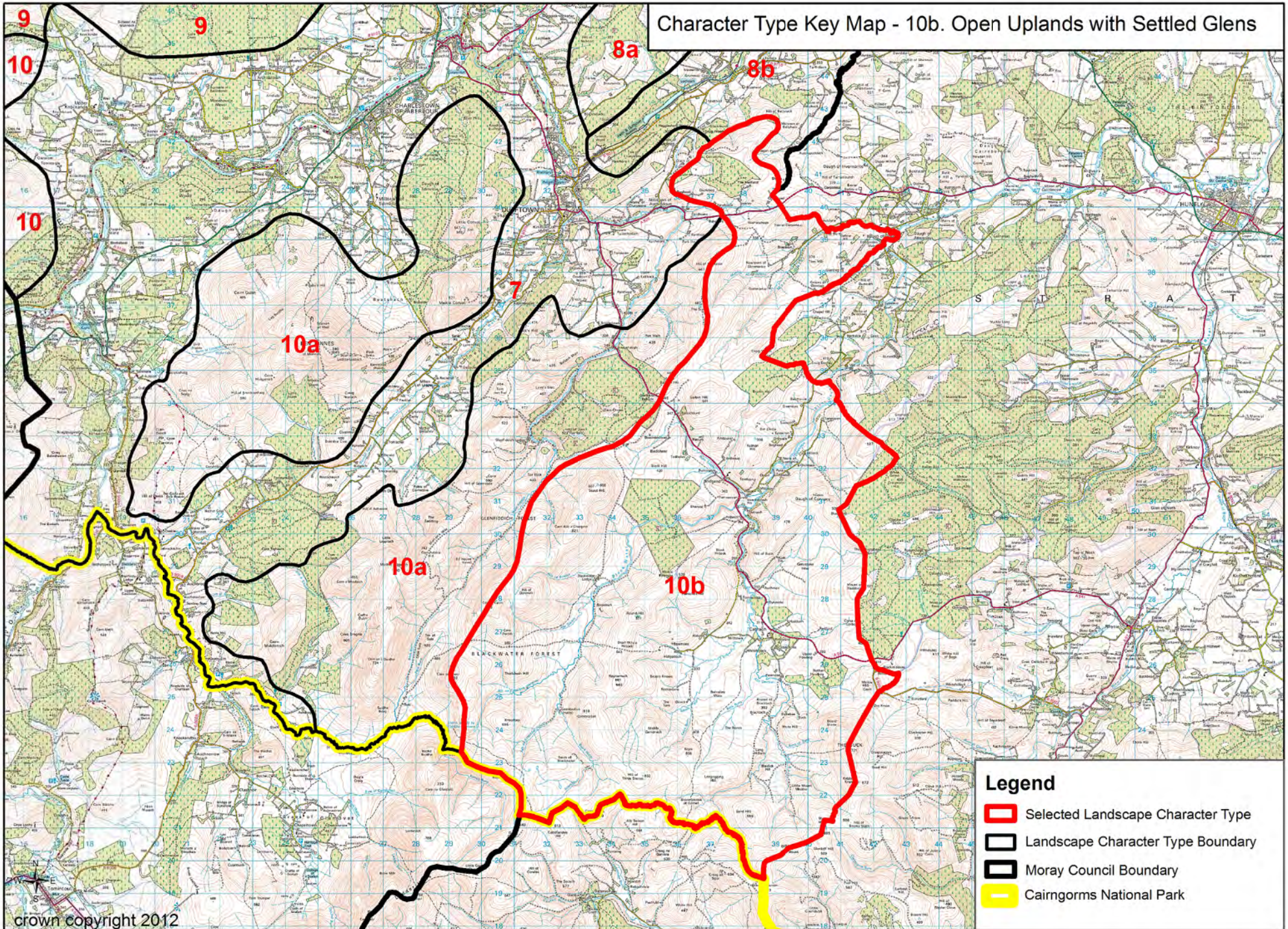
### ***Operational and consented wind farm development***

The consented Dorenell wind farm is located within this type at its boundary with Open Uplands with Steep Slopes (10a). This development comprises 59 turbines up to 126m high to blade tip.





The operational Pauls Hill (28 turbines, up to 100m high to blade tip), Rothes (22 turbines, up to 100m high to blade tip) and Hill of Towie (21 turbines, up to 100m to blade tip) wind farms are visible, within distances which vary from 5 – 20 km from viewpoints within this character type. The consented Clashindarroch windfarm (18 turbines, up to 110m high to blade tip) lies within Aberdeenshire on the border with Moray, immediately adjacent to this LCT. At a greater distance, the four turbines at Findhorn are also visible.



Character Type Key Map - 10b. Open Uplands with Settled Glens



**Legend**

-  Selected Landscape Character Type
-  Landscape Character Type Boundary
-  Moray Council Boundary
-  Cairngorms National Park



**Landscape character type 10b: Open Uplands with Settled Glens – Sensitivity assessment for larger typologies**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Summary description</b>	<b>Large typology assessment (80-130m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>	<b>Medium typology assessment (50-80m)</b>	<b>Sensitivity rating</b>
<b>Landscape context</b>	<p>This upland landscape is larger in extent to the south. The extensiveness of this landscape also increases where it merges with 'Open Uplands with Steep Slopes' (10a) to the west and with the Ladder Hills within the Cairngorms National Park to the south. It becomes narrower in extent to the north, where it forms the upland edge to the smaller scale Valleys within Upland Farmland (8b), and lowlands within Aberdeenshire and is more frequently seen within this lowland context.</p> <p>The conical, higher landmark hill of The Buck stands out in views from the surrounding area, including adjacent Aberdeenshire. The area forms dramatic gateways to Moray from Aberdeenshire, across the high passes of The Cabrach (A941) and A920 at Corsemaul.</p> <p>This LCT contributes to the setting of the Ladder Hills and its southern boundary forms the ridgeline which encloses Glen Buchat, both of which lie within the adjacent Cairngorms National Park.</p>	<p>The broad scale of the uplands merges with adjacent hills to the west to create an upland landscape which appears even more expansive because of the adjacent uplands.</p> <p>This typology would, however, affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscape character types around the narrower, northern end of this character type.</p> <p>The setting and the dramatic 'sense of arrival' over the high passes from the east are also sensitive.</p> <p>This large typology would affect the wider setting of the northern Ladder Hills if located on the southern border of Moray, as well as potentially overlooking the smaller scale, settled glen of Glen Buchat in the Cairngorms National Park.</p> <p>The setting of The Buck – a landmark hill – also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it sits on the border with Aberdeenshire.</p>	<b>High-medium</b>	<p>The broad scale of the uplands merges with adjacent hills to the west to create an upland landscape which appears more expansive because of the adjacent uplands.</p> <p>This typology would, however, affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscape character types around the narrower, northern end of this character type.</p> <p>The setting and the dramatic 'sense of arrival' over the high passes from the east are also sensitive.</p> <p>The larger size of this typology would affect the wider setting of the northern Ladder Hills in the Cairngorms National Park, if located on the southern border of Moray, although it would have less significant visual impact than the large (80m-130m) typologies.</p> <p>The setting of the Buck – a landmark hill – also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it sits on the border with Aberdeenshire.</p>	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Scale and openness</b>	Large scale gently undulating ridges create a sense of sweeping	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the long	<b>Medium</b>	This typology could relate to the expansiveness and relief of the long	<b>Medium-low</b>

	<p>horizontal scale emphasised by open uplands, rising generally to between 500 – 630m, although the ridge above Blackwater extends to 755m at Cooks Cairn and The Buck stands out as a high, stand alone hill at 721m.</p> <p>The lower-lying basin of Cabrach is expansive, but at only 200m or so below the height of the containing hills the basin is shallow. Scale is reduced within the gently enclosed, shallow valleys of the Deveron and the Treble Burn where scattered settlement, shelter woodlands and fields introduce smaller scale features.</p>	ridges, although turbines of this size would dominate smaller scale valleys, the shallow bowl of the Cabrach and small topographical features.		ridges, although the larger turbines of this typology would dominate smaller scale valleys, the shallow bowl of the Cabrach and small topographical features.	
<b>Landform</b>	<p>These uplands form undulating ridges with broad rounded slopes containing shallow valleys and bowls.</p> <p>Steeper slopes contain the glen of the Black Water and become more steep westwards over the Dorenell/Glen Fiddich ridge to form a transition between this type and the neighbouring Open Uplands with Steeper Slopes (10a) type. The steeper sided and more pronounced summit of the Buck stands out as a landmark hill.</p>	<p>This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of undulating ridges and broad smooth hill slopes, although the steeper western slopes are more sensitive and may also require extensive earth works to accommodate tracks and platforms.</p> <p>The more rugged landform and conical shape of The Buck, which contrasts with the more gentle undulations of nearby ridges, is more sensitive.</p>	<b>Medium-Low</b>	<p>This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform of undulating ridges and broad smooth hill slopes, although the steeper western slopes are more sensitive and may also require extensive earth works to accommodate tracks and platforms.</p> <p>The more rugged landform and conical shape of the Buck, which contrasts with the more gentle undulations of nearby ridges, is more sensitive.</p>	<b>Medium-Low</b>
<b>Landscape pattern</b>	<p>This landscape has a predominantly simple land cover of heather moorland across the upper slopes and summits, with improved grassland fields along the lower hill slopes. These blend seamlessly with grass fields within the farmed low-lying land.</p>	<p>The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size, although the farmed glens and shallow bowls have a more complex pattern which is more sensitive to development of this size.</p>	<b>Medium</b>	<p>The generally simple land cover of this character type would be less sensitive to turbines of this size, although the farmed glens and shallow bowls have a more complex pattern which is more sensitive to development of this size.</p>	<b>Medium</b>

	Small coniferous shelter woodlands and occasional larger woods lie within the sheltered shallow bowls and settled glens.				
<b>Built environment</b>	The settlement is limited to dispersed farms and small settlements, associated with the farmed lowlying glens and shallow basin of the Cabrach. The A941 and A920 pass through this character type, and there are several minor roads and farm tracks associated with the glens. The consented Dorenell wind farm lies within this character type.	The dispersed but widespread settlement increases sensitivity in the settled low-lying glens and basin of the Cabrach. If built, the consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed upland character which will influence the southern part of this type and reduce sensitivity in this area	<b>Medium</b>	The dispersed but widespread settlement increases sensitivity in the settled low-lying glens and basin of the Cabrach. If built, the consented Dorenell wind farm will create a much more developed upland character which will influence the southern part of this type and reduce sensitivity in this area	<b>Medium-Low</b>
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	The lower-lying glens and bowl of the Cabrach are settled and accessible. Access to the upland areas and the more remote, unsettled glens is limited, and the moorland is semi-natural in character. This increases the sense of wildness and relative seclusion. The presence of wind farm development will reduce the sense of wildness in the southern part of this character type, assuming the Dorenell wind farm is built.	The more remote uplands and the less accessible and enclosed unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural. If built, the presence of the consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce wild land qualities on the more remote ridges and in the Black Water glen.	<b>Medium</b>	The more remote uplands and the less accessible and enclosed unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural. If built, the presence of the consented Dorenell wind farm will reduce wild land qualities on the more remote ridges and in the Black Water glen.	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Visual amenity</b>	The dispersed but widespread settlement is located largely on the lower lying slopes and glen floors, but the shallow sides of these glens permits long views onto the upper ridges. The threshold or 'sense of arrival' to Moray as experienced from the A941 at the Cabrach and the A920	The long ridges are largely visible from the roads and settlement within the shallow glens, therefore it is likely to be difficult to locate this size of typology where it does not have a visual impact, although development located in less populated glens and within more contained landform is likely to be	<b>High-medium</b>	The long ridges are largely visible from the roads and settlement within the shallow glens, therefore it is likely to be difficult to locate the larger sizes of this size of typology where it does not have a visual impact, although development located in less populated glens and within more contained landform is likely to be less	<b>Medium</b>

	<p>at Corsemaul is sensitive because of the panorama revealed on cresting the top of these passes. The consented Dorenell wind farm, will be very visible and prominent from the A941 pass at the Cabrach and also visible elsewhere along this road.</p> <p>The prominent hill of The Buck is sensitive as a prominent visual landmark feature.</p>	<p>less widely visible.</p> <p>The high passes along the A920 and A941 increase visibility in this character type, as the views westwards into Moray are elevated and panoramic.</p>		<p>widely visible.</p> <p>The high passes along the A920 and A941 increase visibility in this character type, as the views westwards into Moray are elevated and panoramic.</p>	
<b>Cumulative effects</b>	<p>The consented Dorenell wind farm has 59 turbines of up to 126m to blade tip which extend along a north-south aligned ridge between the glens of Glen Fiddich and the Black Water.</p> <p>The turbines will not be seen from within much of the Deveron valley and parts of the lower basin of the Cabrach.</p> <p>However, because of the height of the ridge on which the wind farm is located, there is no visual buffer to the east or from higher elevations to the north.</p> <p>If built, at least 36 of the turbines will be visible from the high pass at the Cabrach as well as from other locations within the this landscape character type, including on other locations along the A941.</p>	<p>The presence of a large consented wind farm within this character type increases sensitivity.</p> <p>Potential cumulative effects include the amount of ridgeline which is occupied by wind turbines encircling the Cabrach basin, visual clutter created by turbine development extending onto the ridgelines east of Dorenell, and potential visual cumulative effects from the Cabrach Pass, The Buck and experienced sequentially along the A941.</p> <p>This height of turbine is likely to be difficult to site within the remainder of this area without incurring some cumulative effects with Dorenell.</p>	<b>High</b>	<p>The presence of a large consented wind farm within this character type increases sensitivity.</p> <p>Potential cumulative effects include the amount of ridgeline which is occupied by wind turbines encircling the Cabrach basin, visual clutter created by turbine development extending onto the ridgelines east of Dorenell, and potential visual cumulative effects from the Cabrach Pass, The Buck and experienced sequentially along the A941.</p> <p>However, elsewhere in this area this height of turbine may be sited where cumulative simultaneous or sequential effects can be limited.</p>	<b>High-medium</b>



**Landscape character type 10b: Open Uplands with Settled Glens – Sensitivity assessment for smaller typologies**

Topic	Summary description	Medium-small typology assessment (35-50m)	Sensitivity rating	Small typology assessment (20-35m)	Sensitivity rating
<b>Landscape context</b>	<p>This upland landscape is larger in extent to the south. The extensiveness of this landscape also increases where it merges with 'Open Uplands with Steep Slopes' (10a) to the west and with the Ladder Hills within the Cairngorms National Park to the south. It becomes narrower in extent to the north, where it forms the upland edge to the smaller scale Valleys within Upland Farmland (8b), and lowlands within Aberdeenshire and is more frequently seen within this lowland context.</p> <p>The conical, higher landmark hill of The Buck stands out in views from the surrounding area, including adjacent Aberdeenshire. The area forms dramatic gateways to Moray from Aberdeenshire, across the high passes of The Cabrach (A941) and A920 at Corsemaul.</p> <p>This LCT contributes to the setting of the Ladder Hills and its southern boundary forms the ridgeline which encloses Glen Buchat, both of which lie within the adjacent Cairngorms National Park.</p>	<p>The broad scale of the uplands merges with adjacent hills to the west to create an upland landscape which appears more expansive because of the adjacent uplands. This typology could, however, affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscapes around the narrower, northern end of this character type if located close to the transition with these types.</p> <p>The setting and the dramatic 'sense of arrival' over the high passes from the east is also sensitive, although turbines of this height could be sited where they do not have direct impacts on the sense of arrival.</p> <p>The setting of the Buck – a landmark hill – also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it sits on the border with Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>Turbines of this height are less likely to be widely visible from adjacent landscape character types, especially if located along the lower slopes of the hills</p>	<b>Low</b>	<p>This typology could affect the setting of small scaled and more settled lowland landscapes around the narrower, northern end of this character type if located close to the transition with these types.</p> <p>The setting and the dramatic 'sense of arrival' over the high passes from the east is also sensitive, although turbines of this height could be sited where they do not have direct impacts on the sense of arrival.</p> <p>The setting of the Buck – a landmark hill – also has an impact beyond the landscape character type, as it sits on the border with Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>Turbines of this height are less likely to be widely visible from adjacent landscape character types.</p>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Scale and openness</b>	<p>Large scale gently undulating ridges create a sense of sweeping horizontal scale emphasised by</p>	<p>This typology could relate to the low relief of the wide, shallow glens and basin of the Cabrach especially if</p>	<b>Low</b>	<p>This typology could relate well to the wide shallow relief of the settled landscapes, and to the size and</p>	<b>Low</b>

	<p>open uplands, rising generally to between 500 – 630m, although the ridge above Blackwater extends to 755m at Cooks Cairn and The Buck stands out as a high, stand alone hill at 721m.</p> <p>The lower-lying basin of Cabrach is expansive, but at only 200m or so below the height of the containing hills the basin is shallow.</p> <p>Scale is reduced within the gently enclosed, shallow valleys of the Deveron and the Burn Treble Burn where scattered settlement, shelter woodlands and fields introduce smaller scale features.</p>	<p>located on the gentle, contained slopes. The individual features, such as houses, small farms and small woodlands remain sensitive to this size of typology, as do the narrowest passes and glens.</p>		<p>distribution of the buildings and other smaller features in this landscape.</p>	
<b>Landform</b>	<p>These uplands form undulating ridges with broad rounded slopes containing shallow valleys and bowls.</p> <p>Steeper slopes contain the glen of the Black Water and become more steep westwards over the Dorenell/Glen Fiddich ridge to form a transition between this type and the neighbouring Open Uplands with Steeper Slopes (10a) type.</p> <p>The steeper sided and more pronounced summit of the Buck stands out as a landmark hill.</p>	<p>This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform, the smooth rounded low hills and broad hill slopes.</p> <p>The more rugged landform and conical shape of the Buck, which contrasts with the more gentle undulations of nearby ridges, is more sensitive.</p>	<b>Low</b>	<p>This typology could relate to the predominantly simple landform, the smooth rounded low hills and broad hill slopes.</p> <p>The more rugged landform and conical shape of the Buck, which contrasts with the more gentle undulations of nearby ridges, is more sensitive.</p>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Landscape pattern</b>	<p>This landscape has a predominantly simple land cover of heather moorland across the upper slopes and summits, with improved grassland fields along the lower hill slopes. These blend seamlessly with grass fields within the farmed low-lying land.</p> <p>Small coniferous shelter woodlands</p>	<p>The generally simple land cover, including the lower-lying farmland within this character type is not sensitive to this typology</p>	<b>Low</b>	<p>The generally simple land cover, including the lower-lying farmland within this character type is not sensitive to this typology</p>	<b>Low</b>

	and occasional larger woods lie within the sheltered shallow bowls and settled glens.				
<b>Built environment</b>	The settlement is limited to dispersed farms and small settlements, associated with the farmed lowlying glens and shallow basin of the Cabrach. The A941 and A920 pass through this character type, and there are several minor roads and farm tracks associated with the glens. The consented Dorenell wind farm lies within this character type.	The dispersed settlement increases sensitivity in the settled low-lying glens and also the basin of the Cabrach, which is where this size of typology is most likely to be located. Nevertheless, there is likely to be scope to site this typology on the transition between the uplands and lower lying managed land where their impact on the pattern of settlement is likely to be limited.	<b>Medium-Low</b>	The dispersed settlement increases sensitivity in the settled low-lying glens and basin of the Cabrach, which is where this size of typology is most likely to be located. Nevertheless, the small size of this typology could be sited to relate well to the dispersed development pattern which exists in these lower-lying areas.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	The lower-lying glens and bowl of the Cabrach are settled and accessible. Access to the upland areas and the more remote, unsettled glens is limited, and the moorland is semi-natural in character. This increases the sense of wildness and relative seclusion. The presence of wind farm development will reduce the sense of wildness in the southern part of this character type, assuming the Dorenell wind farm is built.	The more remote uplands and the less accessible and enclosed unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural, but there is scope to site this typology on the transition between the uplands and lower lying managed land which would limit their impact on any sense of wildness.	<b>Medium-low</b>	The more remote uplands and the less accessible and enclosed unsettled glens are relatively wild and semi-natural, but there is scope to site this typology closer to existing clusters of development within lower lying managed land which would limit their impact on any sense of wildness.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Visual amenity</b>	The dispersed but widespread settlement is located largely on the lower lying slopes and glen floors, but the shallow sides of these glens permits long views onto the upper ridges. The threshold or 'sense of arrival' to Moray as experienced from the A941 at the Cabrach and the A920	Much of this area is visible from the roads and settlement within the shallow glens, therefore it is likely to be difficult to locate this typology where it does not have a visual impact. The smaller size of this typology will limit visibility to some extent especially as it is likely to be located on the lower slopes of hillsides	<b>Medium-low</b>	Much of this area is visible from the roads and settlement within the shallow glens, but the relatively small size of this typology limits widespread visibility of individual developments. The high passes along the A920 and A941 increase visibility in this character type, as the view westwards into Moray are elevated and panoramic.	<b>Low</b>

	<p>at Corsemaul is sensitive because of the panorama revealed on cresting the top of these passes. The consented Dorenell wind farm, will be very visible and prominent from the A941 pass at the Cabrach and also visible elsewhere along this road.</p> <p>The prominent landmark hill of The Buck is sensitive as a prominent visual I feature.</p>	<p>rather than more open ridgelines. The high passes along the A920 and A941 increase visibility in this character type, as the views westwards into Moray are elevated and panoramic.</p>			
<b>Cumulative effects</b>	<p>The consented Dorenell wind farm has 59 turbines of up to 126m to blade tip which extend along a north-south aligned ridge between the glens of Glen Fiddich and the Black Water.</p> <p>The turbines will not be seen from within much of the Deveron valley and parts of the lower basin of the Cabrach.</p> <p>However, because of the height of the ridge on which the wind farm is located, there is no visual buffer to the east or from higher elevations to the north.</p> <p>If built, at least 36 of the turbines will be visible from the high pass at the Cabrach as well as from other locations within the this landscape character type, including on other locations along the A941.</p>	<p>The presence of a large consented wind farm within this character type increases sensitivity.</p> <p>Potential cumulative effects include the amount of ridgeline which is occupied by wind turbines encircling the Cabrach basin, and potential visual clutter with simultaneous views of large and smaller turbines. Views from the Cabrach Pass, and experienced sequentially along the A941 will be important considerations even for this height of turbine.</p> <p>Elsewhere, cumulative effects with this height of turbine and Dorenell are unlikely to be significant.</p>	<b>Medium-low</b>	<p>The presence of a large consented wind farm within this character type increases sensitivity, however there is likely to be little visual cumulative effect between the wind farm and these smaller turbines which are likely to be located near to existing clusters of development.</p> <p>In terms of landscape character, smaller turbines should be located in more managed and developed lowlying areas, while larger turbines are more appropriate in larger scaled upland areas. This will help to maintain the distinction between upland and lowland landscapes and limit potential for cumulative effects.</p>	<b>Low</b>



## Character type 10b: Open Uplands with Settled Glens

### **Summary of sensitivity**

'Open Uplands with Settled Glens' (10b) extends across lower rounded hills which form the eastern boundary of Moray. These higher hills contain the elevated shallow bowl of the Cabrach and the upper valley of the Deveron. Steeper slopes between Black Water Glen and Glen Fiddich create a transition between this and the neighbouring Open Uplands with Steep Slopes (10a) character type.

These uplands lie adjacent to the forested uplands of Aberdeenshire to the east and the steeper slopes of Open Upland with Steep-Sided Slopes (10a) to the west. They extend from the Valleys within Upland Farmland (8b) in the north to the hinterland of the Ladder Hills and glens of Strathdon which lie within the Cairngorms National Park to the south. Characterised by generally smooth landform and open moorland occasionally fragmented by conifer woodland above improved pasture fields. The low-lying valleys of this landscape are widely settled, but with dispersed farms and small settlements, and two 'A' roads pass through the area, entering Moray across high passes.

The extensive sweeping scale of this landscape, the generally smooth landform, often with gentle gradients, as well as the overall extent of the uplands and the simple landcover pattern of the upland areas, all combine to create some scope for wind farm development in this area, if it is associated with the uplands.

However, the consented wind farm of Dorenell is sited within this character type, and consented Clashindarroch lies adjacent to this character type, and this increases sensitivity in relation to potential cumulative effects of the larger typologies.

Scope to accommodate additional larger typologies is further limited by the relatively small extent of remaining undeveloped upland areas, which are also closer to settled and smaller scaled lower lying landscapes and the A class roads. In addition, remaining upland areas are closer to contextual sensitivities, including the sense of arrival to Moray from the east and the setting of smaller scale landscapes in neighbouring glens within the Cairngorms National Park. Elevated views from the high passes and the relatively high inter-visibility within this landscape created by the wide shallow basin and glens, increase visual sensitivity.

This landscape therefore has an overall **High-Medium** sensitivity to the large (80m – 130m) typology, **Medium** sensitivity to the medium (50m – 80m) typology, and **Medium-low** to the small-medium (35m- 50m) typology and **Low** sensitivity to the small (20m – 35m) typology.

### **Potential cumulative issues**

The consented wind farm of Dorenell lies within this landscape type. This development comprises a total of 59 turbines of up to 126m high to blade tip. The consented wind farm of Clashindarroch lies immediately adjacent to this landscape character type, within Aberdeenshire. This development comprises 18 turbines of up to 110m high to blade tip.

Key cumulative landscape and visual issues include:

- Potential sequential and simultaneous views of multiple developments along the skyline around the bowl of the Cabrach and from the A941

- Visual confusion and an absence of rationale which could occur between large turbines sited in simple and more expansive upland areas and the same size of turbines also sited within these more settled smaller scale valleys
- Variations in the type and size of single and small groups of small turbines proposed within the landscape type.

***Constraints:***

- The shallow farmed and settled basin of the Cabrach and the settled valley of the upper Deveron, where the scale of the landscape is reduced by the presence of the land cover pattern and settlement
- The narrow extent of this character type to the north, where it provides the context for more low-lying and smaller scale landscapes
- The elevated 'sense of arrival' panoramic views crossing into Moray from the east over high passes on the A941 and the A920
- The visual prominence of The Buck, a landmark hill
- The proximity of the Cairngorms National Park and the setting of the Ladder Hills and Glen Buchat to the south
- Cumulative effects with consented wind farm developments of Dorenell and Clashindarroch

***Opportunities:***

- The simple, gently graded landform and expansive scale of the long undulating ridges and shallow, contained bowls to be found within the upland areas.
- The simplicity and openness of the upland vegetation pattern and relative extensiveness of the upland areas.

***Guidance on development***

Scope to accommodate further larger scale typologies in this character type is limited, largely due to the cumulative effects likely to arise in conjunction with the consented Dorenell and Clashindarroch wind farms and the sensitivities of siting large typologies within the narrow extent of remaining undeveloped upland areas. Extensions to Dorenell wind farm are likely to be difficult to accommodate without creating visual confusion due to the existing number of turbines and their widespread distribution.

Smaller typologies (turbines <50m) should be located on lower hill slopes at the transition between the upland ridges and the farmed land, along gentle slopes. The small-medium typologies (35-50m) should be sited to avoid overwhelming the scale of small buildings and clusters of development. There are opportunities to accommodate the small typology (turbines <35m) closer to large farm buildings. Care should be taken to avoid potential visual confusion between different sizes of turbines. Guidance on the siting of smaller turbines is set out in section 5 of the main study report.



*The wide bowl of the Cabrach is rimmed by extensive, long gently undulating ridges, but the degree of vertical relief between the farmed bowl and the ridgeline is low*



*Fields within the lower lying land of the Cabrach extend along the lower, gentle hill slopes. Farms and small woodlands are small elements in this landscape*



*The Buck, a 'landmark hill', rises to over 700m and is prominently sited on the boundary with Aberdeenshire*



*Small scale landform along the floor of the glen and a higher degree of enclosure, reinforces the smaller scale of the Deveron valley*



*Farmland and small woodlands, as well as its settled character further reduce the landscape scale of the Deveron valley*

### ***Character Type 10b: Open Uplands with Settled Glens***

