

APPENDIX 6.2 VIEWPOINT ASSESSMENT

Viewpoint Assessment

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Introduction

This Appendix provides an assessment of the visual effects of the Proposed Development from the 7 viewpoints. For each of the assessment viewpoints a short description is given of the baseline view followed by a description of the features of the Proposed Development which would be visible from that viewpoint. For each viewpoint there is a comment on how vegetation, buildings or topography would affect the visibility of the development, as well as giving a comment on the sensitivity of the viewpoint, the magnitude of change experienced and the level of visual effects.

A summary of the sensitivity of the viewpoint, magnitude of change in the view and level of effect is given at Table 6.6 of Chapter 6 within the Environmental Report. Where a viewpoint is representative of more than one type of visual receptor, the sensitivity reported represents the most sensitive receptor group represented by the viewpoint. The view from each assessment viewpoint is illustrated in Volume 2 of the EIAR.

Viewpoint 1 – A9, Mybster Substation

Baseline				
<i>Grid reference</i>	316896	952084	<i>Elevation (m AOD)</i>	104
<i>Distance to Battery Compound (m)</i>	716	<i>Direction</i>	WSW	
<i>Landscape Character Type</i>	LCT134 Sweeping Moorland and Flows			
Description of Baseline View				
Existing views extend across the broad, flat open landscape mainly comprising rough grassland, occasional plantation woodland blocks and scattered properties. The views are influenced by the proximity of the Halsary wind turbines, overhead powerlines and Mybster Substation, while distant views through the Halsary site are available towards the low, rounded hills in the distance.				
<i>Receptor</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Susceptibility</i>	<i>Sensitivity</i>	
Road users	The viewpoint is not located within a landscape designated for its scenic qualities. It is not recognised for its scenic views, although views are available across the large-scale open landscape but views are strongly influenced by other energy infrastructure.	The viewpoint is located on a main A road. Users of main routes are generally considered to be less susceptible and are assessed as having low susceptibility.	Low	
Magnitude of Change				
The battery storage compound and its associated elements would introduce additional built form that would be backclothed against the remaining forestry plantation woodland to its east. The full lateral extent of the battery compound would be seen along with its security fencing and associated buildings. However, the new structures would be low in height and would be seen against the backdrop of the remaining forestry to the east of the compound. This change would occupy a moderate proportion and lateral extent of easterly views that are already influenced by existing energy infrastructure. The change would be experienced as a glimpsed view as motorists pass this point when travelling along the A9. The proposed access track would not be discernible from this viewpoint. Overall, this would introduce a high magnitude of change.				
Level of Effect				
Road users would experience a moderate minor effect .				

Viewpoint 2 – B870 near Achnamoine

Baseline				
<i>Grid reference</i>	317636	953821	<i>Elevation (m AOD)</i>	97.5
<i>Distance to Battery Compound (m)</i>	1,845	<i>Direction</i>	S	
<i>Landscape Character Type</i>	LCT143 Farmed Lowland Plain			
Description of Baseline View				
<p>Existing views extend across the broad, gently sloping rough pasture fields that extend between the road and Toftingall forest plantation that stretches across the horizon, beyond which distant hills can be seen. The character of the view is predominantly agricultural with farm buildings visible and the property Owls Rest. The Halsary wind turbines form a prominent component of existing views south from the road.</p>				
<i>Receptor</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Susceptibility</i>	<i>Sensitivity</i>	
Road users	The viewpoint is not located within a landscape designated for its scenic qualities. It is not recognised for its scenic views, although views are available across the large-scale open landscape but views are strongly influenced by the Halsary turbines.	The viewpoint is located on a minor road linking Spittal and Watten. Users of these routes are generally considered to be moderately susceptible to changes in their visual amenity.	Medium	
Magnitude of Change				
<p>The battery storage compound and its associated elements would introduce additional built form into the view, occupying a small proportion and lateral extent of southerly views that are already influenced by existing energy infrastructure. The battery compound would be seen along with its security fencing and associated buildings. However, the new structures would be low in height and seen in the context of other energy infrastructure. The change would be experienced an oblique angle to the road and at greater distance and due to the scale of the proposed structures would appear small in scale. The proposed access track would not be discernible from this viewpoint. Overall, this would introduce a medium magnitude of change.</p>				
Level of Effect				
Road users would experience a moderate effect .				

Viewpoint 3 – B870 near Toftingall Farm

Baseline			
<i>Grid reference</i>	318265	954391	<i>Elevation (m AOD)</i> 88
<i>Distance to Battery Compound (m)</i>	2,503	<i>Direction</i>	SSW
<i>Landscape Character Type</i>	LCT143 Farmed Lowland Plain		
Description of Baseline View			
<p>Existing views extend across the broad, gently sloping rough pasture fields between the road and Toftingall forest plantation that stretches across the horizon beyond which distant hills can be seen. The character of the view is predominantly agricultural with farm buildings visible and part of Spittal Quarry in the righthand part of the view. The Halsary wind turbines form a prominent component of existing views south west from the road. Mybster Substation can also be seen in the righthand part of the view.</p>			
<i>Receptor</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Susceptibility</i>	<i>Sensitivity</i>
Road users	The viewpoint is not located within a landscape designated for its scenic qualities. It is not recognised for its scenic views, although views are available across the large-scale open landscape but views are strongly influenced by the Halsary turbines and other energy infrastructure.	The viewpoint is located on a minor road linking Spittal and Watten. Users of these routes are generally considered to be moderately susceptible to changes in their visual amenity.	Medium
Magnitude of Change			
<p>The battery storage compound and its associated elements would introduce additional built form into the view, occupying a very small proportion and lateral extent of south south westerly views that are already influenced by existing energy infrastructure. The battery compound would be seen along with its security fencing and associated buildings. The change would be experienced an oblique angle to the road and at greater distance and due to the height of the proposed structures would appear very small in scale. The proposed access track would not be discernible from this viewpoint. Overall, this would introduce a low magnitude of change.</p>			
Level of Effect			
Road users would experience a moderate minor effect .			

Viewpoint 4 – Toftingall Forest track near northern boundary

Baseline				
<i>Grid reference</i>	317861	952698	<i>Elevation (m AOD)</i>	90
<i>Distance to Battery Compound (m)</i>	766	<i>Direction</i>	SSW	
<i>Landscape Character Type</i>	LCT134 Sweeping Moorland and Flows			
Description of Baseline View				
Existing views extend across the rough grassland and cleared forest land, with existing forest stands extending across part of the horizon and at the righthand side of the view. The Halsary turbines extend above the forest canopy while Mybster Substation and overhead pylons can also be seen in the distance.				
<i>Receptor</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Susceptibility</i>	<i>Sensitivity</i>	
Walkers	The viewpoint is not located within a landscape designated for its scenic qualities. It is not recognised for its scenic views, although views are available between forest blocks but are strongly influenced by the Halsary turbines and other energy infrastructure.	The viewpoint is located on a forest track that is used locally for informal recreation and forestry operations. As the track is not a formal walking route users are considered to be moderately susceptible.	Medium	
Magnitude of Change				
The battery storage compound and its associated elements would introduce additional built form into the view, occupying a moderate proportion and lateral extent of south south westerly views that are already influenced by existing energy infrastructure and the prominent turbines at Halsary. The battery compound would be seen along with its security fencing and associated buildings. However, the new structures would be low in height and the change would be experienced an oblique angle to the track and due to the scale of the proposed structures would appear relatively small in scale. The proposed access track would not be discernible from this viewpoint. Overall, this would introduce a medium magnitude of change.				
Level of Effect				
Walkers using the route would experience a moderate effect .				

Viewpoint 5 – Toftingall Forest track south of Knockglass

Baseline				
<i>Grid reference</i>	317597	952976	<i>Elevation (m AOD)</i>	97
<i>Distance to Battery Compound (m)</i>	1,000	<i>Direction</i>	S	
<i>Landscape Character Type</i>	LCT134 Sweeping Moorland and Flows			
Description of Baseline View				
Existing views extend across the rough grassland and recently planted new plantation woodland, with existing Toftingall forest extending across the majority of the horizon of the view. The Halsary turbines extend above the forest canopy through the central part of the view while overhead pylons can be seen, with views to rounded hills in the distance.				
<i>Receptor</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Susceptibility</i>	<i>Sensitivity</i>	
Walkers	The viewpoint is not located within a landscape designated for its scenic qualities. It is not recognised for its scenic views which are strongly influenced by the Halsary turbines and other energy infrastructure.	The viewpoint is located on a forest track that is used locally for informal recreation and forestry operations. As the track is not a formal walking route users are considered to be moderately susceptible.	Medium	
Magnitude of Change				
The battery storage compound and its associated elements would introduce additional built form into the view, occupying a moderate proportion and lateral extent of southerly views that are already influenced by the prominent turbines at Halsary. The battery compound would be seen along with its security fencing and associated buildings. However, the new structures would be low in height and the change would be experienced a perpendicular angle to the track and due to the scale of the proposed structures would appear relatively small in scale. The proposed access track would not be seen from this viewpoint. Overall, this would introduce a medium magnitude of change.				
Level of Effect				
Walkers using the route would experience a moderate effect .				

Viewpoint 6 – Haul road to Mybster Substation

Baseline				
<i>Grid reference</i>	317058	952668	<i>Elevation (m AOD)</i>	106
<i>Distance to Battery Compound (m)</i>	881	<i>Direction</i>	SE	
<i>Landscape Character Type</i>	LCT143 Farmed Lowland Plain			
Description of Baseline View				
<p>Existing views extend across the rough grassland towards Toftingall forest that extends across part of the horizon of the view. The Halsary turbines extend above the forest canopy and into the distance in the righthand part of the view where the cleared forest land at Halsary allows views towards the low hills in the distance. Mybster Substation and associated electricity pylons can be seen at the righthand edge of the view while a wood pole overhead electricity line crosses the open grassland between the former haul road and the plantation woodland.</p>				
<i>Receptor</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Susceptibility</i>	<i>Sensitivity</i>	
Walkers	The viewpoint is not located within a landscape designated for its scenic qualities. It is not recognised for its scenic views which are strongly influenced by the Halsary turbines and other energy infrastructure, although it does allow views to the distant hills.	The viewpoint is located on a former haul road that is used locally for informal recreation. As the track is not a formal walking route users are considered to be moderately susceptible.	Medium	
Magnitude of Change				
<p>The battery storage compound and its associated elements would introduce additional built form into the view, occupying a moderate proportion and lateral extent of south easterly views in relative proximity. The full lateral extent of the battery compound would be seen along with its security fencing and associated buildings. However, the new structures would be low in height and would be seen against the backdrop of the remaining forestry to the east of the compound. The change would be experienced at a perpendicular angle to the track and in a location where existing views are already partly characterised by existing energy infrastructure. The proposed access track would not be seen from this viewpoint. Overall, this would introduce a high magnitude of change.</p>				
Level of Effect				
Walkers using this route would experience a major moderate effect .				

Viewpoint 7 – Halsary Wind Farm access track

Baseline				
<i>Grid reference</i>	317706	951291	<i>Elevation (m AOD)</i>	92
<i>Distance to Battery Compound (m)</i>	581	<i>Direction</i>	SE	
<i>Landscape Character Type</i>	LCT134 Sweeping Moorland and Flows			
Description of Baseline View				
<p>Existing views extend across cleared forest land and rough grassland towards the southern edge of Toftingall forest that extends across part of the horizon of the view in the right hand part of the view. Further, more distant woodland and forest blocks extend through the lefthand part of the view, while the rising form of Spittal Hill in the background is mostly obscured by existing forestry. In the lefthand part of the view Mybster Substation forms a prominent element on the horizon, along with the overhead pylon line that extends along the A9.</p>				
<i>Receptor</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Susceptibility</i>	<i>Sensitivity</i>	
Walkers	The viewpoint is not located within a landscape designated for its scenic qualities and the quality of existing views is influenced by the prominence of existing electricity infrastructure and spoil left from the forestry felling.	The viewpoint is located on a wind farm access track that is used locally for informal recreation and by for access for wind farm maintenance vehicles. As the track is not a formal walking route users are considered to be moderately susceptible.	Medium	
Magnitude of Change				
<p>The battery storage compound and its associated elements would introduce additional built form into the view, occupying a moderate proportion and lateral extent of south easterly views in relative proximity. The battery compound would be seen from its southern, narrower edge along with its security fencing and associated buildings and the access track that would cross the cleared forest land in the foreground of the view. However, the new structures would be low in height and would be backclothed against terrain beyond. The change would be experienced at a perpendicular angle to the track and in a location where existing views are already partly characterised by existing energy infrastructure. Overall, this would introduce a high magnitude of change.</p>				
Level of Effect				
Walkers using this route would experience a major moderate effect .				