

# Egg Production Facility, Mains of Dhuloch, Kirkcolm, Stranraer

784-B067657

## Landscape and Visual Appraisal

### First Issue

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**Aitken Turnbull Architects**

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**Document prepared on behalf of Aitken Turnbull Architects**



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Tetra Tech is instructed by Aitken Turnbull Architects to prepare this Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) which relates to the proposed Egg Production Facility at Mains of Dhuloch, Kirkholm, Stranraer.

## 1.2 SCOPE OF THE APPRAISAL

1.2.1 The proposal is for two large poultry sheds, a dung store and group of four silos by each shed, chicken paddocks and shelters, and associated infrastructure works.

1.2.2 This LVA provides an assessment of the effects of the proposed development, on the landscape of the site and its context. The design of the proposed development and the identification of mitigation measures incorporated within the design to minimise adverse effects, is informed by the findings of the appraisal. In this LVA, effects on features identified as important to the scenic quality, or effects on the landscape character of the site and its setting are assessed. Effects on peoples' views of the site and its setting, or visual amenity, are also assessed.

1.2.3 For the purposes of assessing the landscape and visual effects of this proposal, study areas have been defined:

- The “site” location as shown on **Figure LA.01**;
- The “landscape context” extends to a radius of 2km as shown on **Figure LA.02**; and
- The visual study area extends to a radius of 2km as shown on **Figures LA.06-1 – LA.06-3**. The 2km study area is considered appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposed development.

1.2.4 The objectives of the appraisal are to:

- Describe and evaluate the landscape of the site and surrounding landscape context and visual amenity of the surrounding area, which might be affected by the proposed development;
- Examine the development proposals and analyse the potential effects on the landscape and visual amenity associated with the scheme’s design or operation;
- Provide an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development with integral mitigation measures in place.

1.2.5 The LVA is presented with separate sections dealing with effects on landscape, effects on visual amenity, and cumulative effects. The LVA is illustrated by plans and photographs, as follows:

<b>Figure LA.01</b>	Site Location Plan
<b>Figure LA.02</b>	Designations and Public Access
<b>Figure LA.03</b>	Landscape Character
<b>Figure LA.04</b>	Topography

<b>Figure LA.05</b>	Site Context
<b>Figure LA.06-1</b>	Zone of Theoretical Visibility Bare earth scenario
<b>Figure LA.06-2</b>	Zone of Theoretical Visibility Existing screening features included
<b>Figure LA.06-3</b>	Zone of Theoretical Visibility Intervisibility of proposed units
<b>Figure LA.07-1 – LA.07-8</b>	Viewpoint Photographs

1.2.6 Detailed information is presented in Appendices as follows:

<b>Appendix 1</b>	Methodology
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Policy
<b>Appendix 3</b>	Block Plan as Proposed
<b>Appendix 4</b>	Landscape Proposals plan
<b>Appendix 5</b>	Figures

### 1.3 APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

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1.3.1 The methodology used for assessing the landscape and visual effects is based on the recommendations in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in 2013 (GLVIA3) and Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01, Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3) published August 2024. A summary of the general methodology used is set out in Appendix 1.

1.3.2 This appraisal comprises a non-Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) LVA. The Landscape Institute advises in relation to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in EIA versus non-EIA appraisals in its “Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01, Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3)”<sup>1</sup> as follows:

“In carrying out an LVA, the same principles and process as set out in GLVIA3 may be applied to report on effects (identifying the relative importance/ levels of the effects on a scale with reference to sensitivity and magnitude of effect), but it is not required to establish whether

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<sup>1</sup> Landscape Institute website: [LITGN-2024-01-GLVIA3-NC\\_Aug-2024.pdf\(landscapeinstitute.org\)](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-guidance-note-litgn-2024-01-notes-and-clarifications-on-aspects-of-guidelines-for-landscape-and-visual-impact-assessment-third-edition-glvia3/) [accessed October 2024]

the effects arising are or are not significant. Effects should be comparable between LVA and LVIA. For example, a ‘moderate effect’ should be the same in both assessment contexts.”

- 1.3.3 The appraisal process comprises a combination of desk studies and field survey, with subsequent analysis, and involved:
- A review of landscape designations and planning policies for the landscape, and of other landscape studies relevant to the area, including national and local landscape character assessments;
  - Identification of the extent of theoretic visibility of the development and potentially sensitive viewers and view locations, supported by a viewpoint analysis;
  - A survey of the site and landscape context study areas and inspection of views of the site from publicly accessible viewpoints, including a photographic survey. The survey was carried out on 27 November 2024;
  - Evaluation of the features and elements of the landscape and their contribution to the landscape character, context and setting, based on these studies;
  - Analysis of the development proposals and consideration of potential landscape and visual effects;
  - Assessment of the susceptibility and sensitivity of the landscape to the changes likely to arise from the development;
  - Consideration of proposals for mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or offset adverse effects; and
  - Assessment of magnitude of change arising from the proposal and the degree and nature of effects on the landscape and on visual amenity, with the mitigation proposals in place.
- 1.3.4 In relation to the assessment of cumulative effects analysis of the Dumfries and Galloway Council planning portal shows an application for the retention of existing buildings/structures at an existing landfill site to the south of the site beyond Slewcart Hill. At the time of writing this appraisal the submitted application was not validated. Notwithstanding this, the submitted application site is generally separated from the proposed development by intervening hill forms including Slewcart Hill and Knockwhillie. The hills limit the influence and potential for effects on landscape character and visual amenity provided by the proposed development in addition to the submitted application. No other applications for planning permission are included within the study area and as a result no further assessment in relation to cumulative effects is included in this LVA.

## Assessment and mitigation

- 1.3.5 The effects of the development, whether beneficial or adverse, may vary in nature and degree through its lifecycle and, where feasible, mitigation measures are proposed to be incorporated in the design of the development. Where design measures cannot address identified likely adverse effects, measures such as management of the construction and operational processes are proposed. The purpose of mitigation measures is, first, to prevent or avoid the potential adverse effects identified, and if that is not possible, to reduce the potential adverse effect. Where

notable adverse effects are unavoidable, the purpose is to offset or compensate for the effect where possible.

- 1.3.6 Details of the assessment criteria for landscape effects and visual effects are set out in those respective sections.

## 1.4 WEATHER

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1.4.1 The weather is a factor affecting the assessment of landscape and visual effects, especially visual impacts. The Met Office publish average statistics for weather patterns for the region, monthly and annual, for maximum and minimum temperatures, days of air frost, hours of sunshine, amount of rainfall - both generally and the number of days when rainfall is above 1mm. The nearest climate station to where the site is located at approximately 17km to the south is West Freugh (Dumfries and Galloway)<sup>2</sup> in the Scotland W District. For the Scotland W District:

- Rainfall above 1mm per day, which limits visibility, occurs on an average of 196.86 days in the year, about 54% of the year;
- There are on average 57.56 days when air frost occurs, which can produce hazy conditions limiting visibility, about 16% of the year; and
- There is an average of 1240.71 hours of sunshine per annum for the Scotland W District, more than the Scotland Region average of 1199.64 hours.

## 1.5 GUIDANCE

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1.5.1 In addition to GLVIA3 and Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01, the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note, Visual Representation of Development Proposals, September 2019<sup>3</sup> was referred to.

1.5.2 Relevant policy, landscape character assessments, and other contextual information sources were also referred to, including:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4);
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2;
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Design Quality and Placemaking Supplementary Guidance - February 2020;
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Trees and Development Supplementary Guidance - February 2020;
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Regional Scenic Areas Technical Paper - January 2018;
- Scottish Landscape Character Types Map and Descriptions, NatureScot, 2019;
- National Landscape Character Assessment Landscape Character Type 156 Peninsula; and

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<sup>2</sup> The data quoted are those for West Freugh Climate Station in the Scotland W District and Scotland Region, obtained from The Met Office website: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-climate-averages/gcu2pdv8y> [accessed September 2024]

<sup>3</sup> The Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19, [Visual Representation of Development Proposals](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/visualisation/), September 2019, on LI website: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/visualisation/> [accessed October 2024]

- Historic Environment Scotland’s Listing, scheduling and designations search portal.

## Photography

- 1.5.3 Photographs have a special role in describing landscape character and illustrating key views. In order for photography to be representative and to create an image that is as similar as possible to that which is seen with the human eye, the Landscape Institute (LI) advises using a lens with a focal length equivalent to 50 mm for a 35 mm Single Lens Reflex (SLR) camera, and a horizontal field of view of a little under 40 degrees. The equipment used for the appraisal photography includes:
- A Canon EOS 6D Mark ii digital SLR camera with a full frame sensor, built in electronic level and GPS;
  - Canon 50mm EF 1:1.8 II lens; and
  - Manfrotto tripod and panoramic head.
- 1.5.4 Photographs were taken with a focal length of 50mm, unless otherwise stated.
- 1.5.5 Landscape photography includes wide angle or panoramic views requiring a sequence of photographs to be taken across the view. Where this approach is taken, a series of overlapping photographs are digitally spliced together in PTGui Pro using a cylindrical projection to provide a panorama approximating to the normal field of view in a landscape context. Where necessary, the contrast and brightness of individual photographs is slightly manipulated in order to create a consistent panorama without visible joins.
- 1.5.6 The viewpoint locations were established using the integral camera GPS device and verified against site survey.

## 1.6 CONSULTATION

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- 1.6.1 Consultation was carried out with Dumfries and Galloway Council regarding the viewpoints to be considered in the appraisal. Although they were unable to comment specifically, they suggested for the viewpoint selection that, “the more sensitive receptors are included, accounting for potential impacts on the landscape, any landscape designations, heritage assets and residential amenity for example.” This was taken into consideration in the selection of viewpoints.

## 1.7 LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

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- 1.7.1 This LVA has been based on the available information.
- 1.7.2 The site based survey work was undertaken from publicly accessible locations and included a site walkover. The site survey was carried out in November 2024 in good weather conditions and clear visibility. Whilst the sequence of viewpoint visits was programmed to avoid issues of low winter sun affecting photography, some sun glare and lens flare issues were experienced however, generally, visibility was considered suitable for the appraisal. The weather conditions at the time are also representative of typical conditions in the region, as discussed in section 1.4 above.

## 2.0 LANDSCAPE POLICIES AND DESIGNATIONS

### 2.1 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY

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#### National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

- 2.1.1 The NPF4<sup>4</sup>, published on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 is the national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out Scotland’s spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy. NPF4 replaces National Planning Framework 3 (2014) and Scottish Planning Policy (2014).
- 2.1.2 Part 1 of NPF4 includes six overarching spatial principles for the planning of future places, as below:
- “Just transition. We will empower people to shape their places and ensure the transition to net zero is fair and inclusive;
  - Conserving and recycling assets. We will make productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure and services, locking in carbon, minimising waste, and building a circular economy.
  - Local living. We will support local liveability and improve community health and wellbeing by ensuring people can easily access services, greenspace, learning, work and leisure locally.
  - Compact urban growth. We will limit urban expansion so we can optimise the use of land to provide services and resources, including carbon storage, flood risk management, blue and green infrastructure and biodiversity.
  - Rebalanced development. We will target development to create opportunities for communities and investment in areas of past decline, and manage development sustainably in areas of high demand.
  - Rural revitalisation. We will encourage sustainable development in rural areas, recognising the need to grow and support urban and rural communities together.”
- 2.1.3 NPF4 states that the spatial principles, “will play a key role in delivering on the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our national outcomes.” “By applying these spatial principles, our national spatial strategy will support the planning and delivery of:
- sustainable places, where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity;
  - liveable places, where we can all live better, healthier lives; and
  - productive places, where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy.”
- 2.1.4 NPF4 provides national planning policies. Of relevance to the development is Policy 29. Rural Development. The policy intent is, “To encourage rural economic activity, innovation and diversification whilst ensuring that the distinctive character of the rural area and the service function of small towns, natural assets and cultural heritage are safeguarded and enhanced.” Of

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/> [accessed September 2024]

relevance to this appraisal, part b) of the policy states, “Development proposals in rural areas should be suitably scaled, sited and designed to be in keeping with the character of the area.”

## Local Policy

2.1.5 The site lies within the boundaries of Dumfries and Galloway Council. Local planning policy relevant to the proposed development of the site is provided in Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 adopted on 3 October 2019<sup>5</sup>. Policies relating to the proposed development and landscape and visual matters are outlined below. Details of these policies can be found in **Appendix 2** of this report.

### Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2

- **Policy OP1: Development Considerations** The policy states that development will be assessed against a number of considerations where relevant to the scale, nature and location of the proposal. This includes the policy’s landscape consideration which advises that development proposals, “should respect, protect and/or enhance the region’s rich landscape character, and scenic qualities, including features and sites identified for their landscape qualities or wild land character as identified on the 2014 Scottish National Heritage map (or any subsequent revised or amended map) of wild land areas. They should also reflect the scale and local distinctiveness of the landscape. The detailed guidance set out in the Dumfries and Galloway Landscape Assessment, and any subsequent revised or amended document, will be a material consideration in the assessment of proposals.”
- **Policy OP2: Design Quality and Placemaking** The policy relates to development proposals achieving, “high quality design in terms of their contribution to the existing built and natural environment contributing positively to a sense of place and local distinctiveness.”
- **Policy HE6: Gardens and Designed Landscapes** The policy relates to the protection or enhancement of gardens and designed landscapes included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes or the Non-Inventory List. The policy is relevant as there are Gardens and Designed Landscapes at Lochnaw Castle approximately 1.8km to the south of the site.
- **Policy NE2: Regional Scenic Areas** The policy states that the “siting and design of development within a Regional Scenic Area (RSAs) should respect the special qualities of the area. Development within, or which affects Regional Scenic Areas, may be supported where the Council is satisfied that, the factors taken into account in designating the area would not be significantly adversely affected.” The development site does not fall within a RSA however it is situated approximately 600m to the east of the RSA which extends along the nearby coast.
- **Policy NE8: Trees and Development** The policy relates to development proposals and trees, woodlands and hedgerows. It encourages retention and protection of existing trees and, “planting of a type, scale, design, composition and species mix that is appropriate to its locality and appropriately incorporates the woodland resource into the overall design of the scheme”.

2.1.6 The following supplementary planning guidance is also of relevance:

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<sup>5</sup> [Local Development Plan 2 \(LDP2\) | Dumfries and Galloway Council \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](#) [accessed September 2024]

## **Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Design Quality and Placemaking Supplementary Guidance - February 2020**

2.1.7 The Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Design Quality and Placemaking Supplementary Guidance – February 2020<sup>6</sup> relates to the design and development of buildings, places and spaces. It identifies key points for successful developments as listed below:

- Retain and incorporate existing site features and characteristics;
- Respond appropriately to wider landscape character;
- Protect and enhance attractive spaces and vistas;
- Respond positively to landform and do not result in significant levelling off or use of mounds, platforms or underbuilding;
- Usually avoid unnatural land changes and the use of retaining wall structures but instead incorporate slopes into the overall design;
- Incorporate key views, both into and out of the site;
- Use views and landmarks to assist in orientation;
- Reflect local building forms and proportions;
- Ensure that the size and pattern of development is in keeping with the local area;
- Respect and complement existing building materials in the area;
- Seek to create a positive edge when located on the edge of settlements; and
- Incorporate adequate and convenient bin storage facilities.

## **Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Trees and Development Supplementary Guidance - February 2020**

2.1.8 The Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 Trees and Development Supplementary Guidance - February 2020<sup>7</sup> document states its purpose is to, “Encourage developers to retain, safeguard and protect existing trees and woodlands through the development process” and, “Encourage the planting and aftercare of appropriate new trees.”

## **2.2 DESIGNATIONS**

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2.2.1 Designations provide an indication of landscape value. They are areas that have been recognised for qualities such as scenic beauty and the recreational potential of the landscape. Designations are shown on **Figure LA.02**.

### **National landscape designations**

2.2.2 There are no National Parks or National Scenic Areas in the study area.

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<sup>6</sup> [Design Quality and Placemaking SG LDP2 Adopted.pdf \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](#) [accessed September 2024]

<sup>7</sup> [Trees and Development SG LDP2 Adopted.pdf \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](#) [accessed September 2024]

## Local landscape designations

- 2.2.3 The Rhins Coast Regional Scenic Area (RSA) extends along the nearby coast at just under 500m from the site to the west. The RSA is described in the Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2, Regional Scenic Areas Technical Paper January 2018<sup>8</sup> as comprising, “the attractive rocky coastlines of the Rhins Peninsula from the Wig in the north, round past the Mull of Galloway in the south, to Ardwell. It also includes the eastern shore of Loch Ryan from opposite the Wig northwards.” The paper describes the area further as, “The coast is characterised by steep cliffs of varying height, plus raised beaches and rocky foreshores, with small rocky and sandy bays connected by a ribbon of low lying land. It is relatively inaccessible, approached only at intervals by a network of narrow lanes which serve scattered farmsteads, plus occasional coastal villages connected by more major roads. There are several camping, caravanning and chalet sites, and the area is subject to a degree of interest in further tourist facilities. Inland the topography is gently undulating, with a pattern of smooth hills and valleys, and the landscape is an open one of improved pastures, bounded by walls or hedges, but with few trees. Views of the coast generally tend to be lost over near ground horizons within a kilometre or so from the shore, other than from the crests of hills.”
- 2.2.4 RSAs are defined within the Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2 as, “Important areas of outstanding scenic beauty within Dumfries and Galloway.”

## Historic and cultural landscape designations

- 2.2.5 The setting of historic and cultural designations is a consideration during the preparation of landscape and visual appraisals as these features inform the overall landscape character, quality and value of the area. The LVA does not address the effects on heritage assets however it considers the contribution these features make to landscape value and scenic quality.

### World Heritage Site

- 2.2.6 There are no World Heritage Sites in the study area.

### Conservation areas

- 2.2.7 There are no conservation areas in the study area.

### Listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments

- 2.2.8 Within the study area is the Category C, Mains of Cairnbrock, Cheeseloft listed building<sup>9</sup>, situated just under 1km from the site to the west by B738. Category B, Ervie Manse, with boundary wall and gatepiers listed building is situated circa 1.75km to the north east of the site<sup>10</sup>. Several listed

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<sup>8</sup> [https://dumgal.gov.uk/media/19851/Regional-Scenic-Areas-technical-paper/pdf/Regional\\_Scenic\\_Areas\\_Technical\\_Paper.pdf?m=637064038441030000](https://dumgal.gov.uk/media/19851/Regional-Scenic-Areas-technical-paper/pdf/Regional_Scenic_Areas_Technical_Paper.pdf?m=637064038441030000) [accessed December 2024]

<sup>9</sup> Historic Environment Scotland: [MAINS OF CAIRNBROCK, CHEESE LOFT \(LB13555\)](https://historicenvironment.scot/) (historicenvironment.scot) [accessed October 2024]

<sup>10</sup> Historic Environment Scotland: <https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/apex/f?p=1505:300:::::VIEWTYPE,VIEWREF:designation,LB13516> [accessed October 2024]

buildings associated with the Lochnaw Castle estate are situated over 2km from the site to the south and include the Category A, Lochnaw Castle<sup>11</sup> and Category A, Lochnaw walled garden<sup>12</sup>.

- 2.2.9 Category B, Agnew Monument<sup>13</sup> listed building is situated circa 2km south east of the site at the top of hillfort and Scheduled Monument, Tor of Craigoch, fort 1200m NW of Leswalt<sup>14</sup>.
- 2.2.10 Mains of Airies, farmstead 900m WSW of (SM4880) Scheduled Monument<sup>15</sup> is situated circa 1.75km from the site on the north western edge of the study area. Further west along the coast and just beyond the study area are a number of Iron Age fort Scheduled Monuments along with Castle Ban, motte Scheduled Monument.

### **Garden and Designed Landscape**

- 2.2.11 The Lochnaw Castle Inventory Garden & Designed Landscape is situated approximately 1.8km to the south of the site. It is described within the Historic Environment Scotland website<sup>16</sup> as, “A large estate landscape with a loch-side setting combining formal and informal landscape features around a modified, scheduled 16th century keep.” Adjacent land is also designated as Non-Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape with a small extent situated within the study area.

### **Ecological designations**

- 2.2.12 Ecological designations, although not specifically related to landscape amenity and not assessed within this report, are an indication of landscape value.

### **Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR) and Local Nature Reserves**

- 2.2.13 There are no Ramsar sites, SACs, SPA, SSSIs, NNRs and LNRs in the study area.

### **Ancient Woodland**

- 2.2.14 Ancient Woodland is situated at the southern extent of the study area at Lochnaw Castle estate and to the south west of the village of Leswalt alongside B7043.

### **Public access**

#### **Core Paths**

- 2.2.15 Core Paths are defined on the NatureScot website as, “main local routes for recreation and travel.<sup>17</sup>” Within the study area at just over 500m to the north west of the site is the Corsewall

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<sup>11</sup> Historic Environment Scotland [LOCHNAW CASTLE, WITH TERRACE, GATEPIERS, COURTYARD WALLS, BELL, MONUMENT AND PAVILION \(LB13498\) \(historicenvironment.scot\)](#) [accessed October 2024]

<sup>12</sup> Historic Environment Scotland: [LOCHNAW, WALLED GARDEN \(LB13505\) \(historicenvironment.scot\)](#) [accessed October 2024]

<sup>13</sup> Historic Environment Scotland: [AGNEW MONUMENT \(LB10115\) \(historicenvironment.scot\)](#) [accessed October 2024]

<sup>14</sup> Historic Environment Scotland: [Tor of Craigoch, fort 1200m NW of Leswalt \(SM2001\) \(historicenvironment.scot\)](#) [accessed October 2024]

<sup>15</sup> Historic Environment Scotland: <https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/apex/?p=1505:300:::VIEWTYPE,VIEWREF:designation,SM4880> [accessed October 2024]

<sup>16</sup> Historic Environment Scotland: [Lochnaw Castle \(GDL00407\) \(historicenvironment.scot\)](#) [accessed October 2024]

<sup>17</sup> NatureScot website: <https://www.nature.scot/enjoying-outdoors/routes-explore/local-path-networks> [accessed October 2024]

Lighthouse Core Path, ID – KIRC/343/2. It forms part of the Rhins coastal path which runs along the coast on the western edge of the study area. Circa 1.2km to the south east of the site is the High to Low Weirston, Leswalt Core Path, ID – KIRC/357/1.

### **Long distance paths & national cycleways**

2.2.16 The Rhins of Galloway Coast Path is a proposed long distance circular walking route around the coast of the Rhins of Galloway peninsula.<sup>18</sup> There are no national cycleways within the study area.

## **2.3 INTERIM SUMMARY**

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2.3.1 The following elements of the policies and designations are relevant to the assessment of landscape and visual effects of this proposal:

- Development proposals should respect, protect and/or enhance the region’s landscape character and scenic qualities and reflect the scale and local distinctiveness of the landscape as stated in Policy OP1;
- Development proposals should achieve high quality design in relation to the existing built and natural environment, contributing positively to a sense of place and local distinctiveness as set out in Policy OP2;
- Gardens and Designed Landscapes should be protected or enhanced by development proposals including their character and setting as stated in Policy HE6. Lochnaw Castle Inventory Garden & Designed Landscape is situated within the study area;
- Development proposals should respect the special qualities of RSAs as stipulated in Policy NE2. A RSA is situated just under 500m to the west of the site along the coast;
- The retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows along with planting appropriate to its locality is encouraged in development proposals as set out in Policy NE8;
- The contribution to landscape value and scenic quality made by the designated features including the RSAs, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and Lochnaw Castle Gardens and Designed Landscape in or close to the study area;
- The landscape value associated with Ancient Woodland within the study area; and
- The landscape value associated with the Core Paths in the study area.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://dgtrails.org/rhins-of-galloway-path/development/#:~:text=This%2064-mile%20route%20will%20take%20you%20from%20the,create%20an%2083-mile%20circular%20route%20around%20the%20peninsula.>  
[accessed December 2024]

## 3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1.1 Details of the proposed development are provided on the application plans and the Planning Statement accompanying the application. This chapter describes the main aspects of the proposed development which may affect the landscape and/or visual amenity. It also identifies features of the proposals which will assist in mitigating adverse landscape and visual impacts.
- 3.1.2 The proposed development comprises two large poultry sheds, a dung store and group of four silos by each shed, chicken paddocks and shelters, and associated infrastructure works. The facility is proposed for the production of free range eggs.
- 3.1.3 Poultry shed Unit A is situated on the western part of the site at 78m AOD and poultry shed Unit B at 81.5m AOD on the eastern part of the site. The sheds are circa 178m long, 32m wide and 8m high. The sheds are situated in separate parts of the site for the operational requirements of free range egg production. A group of four circa 9m high silos is situated on the southern side of Unit A and on the northern side of Unit B. A dung store circa 37m long, 20m wide and 8m high is situated on the northern side of Unit A and southern side of Unit B. The units are accessed from the existing Mains of Dhuloch access track via proposed hardcore access tracks and turning area adjacent to each shed. The buildings are finished in Juniper Green profiled PP coated steel cladding panels with a precast concrete panel base course. PV panels are included along part of the roof of the sheds. Chicken paddocks over 1ha size and bounded by a timber post and wire mesh fencing 1.2m in height are situated adjacent to the sheds and each include four timber chicken shelters circa 2.4m long, 1.8m wide and 2m high.
- 3.1.4 Lighting includes 2 small domestic PIR security lights on each shed.
- 3.1.5 Surface water is taken off site via underground pipes by the poultry sheds, proposed swales and detentions basins before discharge into existing watercourses at the northern part of the site.
- 3.1.6 Landscape proposals include native tree and shrub groups to provide cover for the birds within the paddocks and to provide screening/softening of views and landscape integration of the development.

### Sources of potential effects on landscape and views

- 3.1.7 The main features of the development proposal which could potentially result in landscape and visual impacts are:

#### Construction Phase

- Activities and movement of plant and equipment during the construction period;
- The construction of the egg production facility and associated infrastructure; and
- Potential lighting associated with the construction works.

#### Operational Phase

- The introduction of the egg production facility and associated infrastructure within a landscape previously used for grazing of livestock;

- Vehicular access to the site for operation of the facility; and
- The introduction of planting within the site.

## Mitigation measures

- 3.1.8 The potential for adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity has been recognised and mitigation measures incorporated in the scheme to avoid or reduce adverse effects or to offset or compensate for unavoidable adverse effects.
- 3.1.9 The mitigation measures design has considered the local landscape character and visual amenity along with the planning policy requirements set out in Section 2. In addition, the open character and exposed nature of the site and its ground conditions have been considered along with the large size of the poultry sheds. The sheds are situated on the western and eastern extents of the site beyond the higher, more prominent land along the site access road. The higher land in general provides visual screening of one or other of the proposed poultry sheds where direct views of the site are available. Planting is proposed by the poultry sheds to screen/soften views of the sheds and integrate the proposals within the landscape as well as to provide cover for the birds within the paddocks. The planting is proposed at a scale appropriate to the wider setting of the site and follows the alignment of nearby boundaries to minimise adverse change to landscape character. In addition, scrub is proposed along new fence lines to link to existing boundaries and further strengthen landscape integration of the proposals and offer connectivity for wildlife. Planting is proposed within existing grassland away from the site's rocky outcrops and marsh areas. A limited palette of proposed native tree and shrub species is proposed appropriate to the site and its context. Trees and shrubs will be planted as transplant size stock and protected by shelters supported by stakes to aid establishment.

## 4.0 EFFECTS ON THE LANDSCAPE

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 This section deals with the effects on the landscape of the site and its surrounding context due to the proposed construction and occupation of the site.

### 4.2 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

4.2.1 The assessment process is described generally in section 1.3 above. The general methodology for assessing the effects in this report is set out in **Appendix 1**.

4.2.2 The degree of the likely landscape effects of the proposed development is determined by relating the sensitivity of the receptors to the changes arising from the development proposals, and the degree and nature of the changes in the landscape arising from the proposals.

### 4.3 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

4.3.1 The landscape baseline is a description and analysis of the existing landscape, against which the effects of the proposed development are assessed. The landscape is described, first, by reference to landscape character assessments for the area in which the site is located, at national and local levels, and then, from site-specific surveys and analysis carried out for the purposes of this assessment.

4.3.2 The whole of Scotland has been mapped and described through Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)<sup>19</sup>. Studies were carried out in the 1990s and “each study typically covered a local authority area and provided the landscape foundation for natural heritage and planning policymaking”. These have subsequently been updated in 2019, but the original studies form the basis of the updates. An interactive map provides character information for the whole of Scotland<sup>20</sup>. For each area, the Landscape Character Types (LCT) are identified and described, and their distribution represented on the map.

4.3.3 The site and study area are located in **LCT 156 Peninsula** as illustrated on **Figure LA.03**. The LCT covers the western half of Dumfries and Galloway, “where it extends along the main peninsulas and coastal promontories.” Within the LCA, the key characteristics of the LCT are identified as:

- Medium scale landscape rising from boggy hollows, to rolling pastureland, up to gorse moorland;
- Narrow intertidal range with abrupt end to inland land use;
- Intimate sheltered bays with stony beaches or occasional narrow strips of exposed flat land, used for transport routes;

<sup>19</sup> NatureScot website: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/landscape-character-assessment-scotland> [accessed September 2024]

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/scottish-landscape-character-types-map-and-descriptions> [accessed September 2024]

- Medium scale field systems, enclosed by drystone dykes or hedgerows although Mull of Galloway has distinctive shore turf on flat land, no field boundaries and steep cliffs to the sea;
- Few, but well developed, policy landscapes;
- Numerous evenly spaced farmsteads, and few small settlements;
- Old forts and castles defend rocky western coasts;
- Early Christian settlement and abbeys; and
- Inland areas less influenced by the sea.

4.3.4 The development is unlikely to influence the landscape character beyond the LCT 156 Peninsula including the characteristics of the higher ground to the north east beyond Loch Ryan where Glen App windfarm is situated at 200 – 240m AOD and is not considered further in this assessment. This is due to the scale and type of development proposed and the 10km distance of the area of upland from the site. Site-specific appraisal

4.3.5 The following paragraphs provide descriptions of the site and should be read alongside **Figure LA.05 Site Context**.

### **The landscape of the site and landscape context**

4.3.6 The site is situated within a landscape characterised by rolling farmland on the northern end of the Rhins of Galloway peninsula. The Irish Sea coast is situated 2km to the west, the Loch Ryan sea loch circa 4.5km to the east and Galloway Hills over 10km to the north east. Land at the site is associated with the Mains of Dhuloch farm.

### **Features of the site**

4.3.7 The site comprises agricultural land used for grazing livestock. An access track runs through the centre of the site in a north easterly direction from an unnamed road on the site's south western boundary to the Mains of Dhuloch farmhouse, farm buildings and nearby residential property to the immediate north of the site. A stand of trees is present north of the site access on higher land within the site at circa 90m AOD. The trees include sycamore which are dead or in decline. Stone outcrops are a feature of the site along with rush pasture on wetter ground particularly to the west of the access road. Gorse scrub is present on site along with rush pasture and sphagnum moss within the northern extent of the site where the land falls away gradually towards an unnamed watercourse and lower ground. Elsewhere grazing pasture is present including at the site of the proposed poultry sheds and tree and shrub groups. Stockproof fencing marks the boundary of the grazing land, with gorse dominated scrub often present along field boundaries. On the southern side of the site access track are the ruins of a building, remains of a stone wall and small disused pit where the north facing edge of a rocky outcrop has been quarried. Areas of ponding are present within the site and a larger pond area present within the southern part of the site. A well defined ditch is present along the south western edge of the site and along the northern side of the site access road.

4.3.8 The landform of the site falls gently from a high point of 93m AOD north of the site access to 80m AOD on the site's northern boundary and to 55m AOD on the site's north eastern corner where land falls towards Glengyre Burn. Higher ground at Dogstone Hill and Knockwhillie is situated to

the immediate south of the site where the elevation rises to 105m AOD and 104m AOD respectively. Elsewhere higher ground is situated by High Weirston at 119m AOD at circa 1.75km from the site and beyond towards Tor of Craigoch fort and Agnew Monument. To the north circa 500m from the site are Dhuloch Hill, Knockbennan Hill and Drumbuie Hill.

### **Characteristics and aesthetics**

4.3.9 Undulating farmland used for grazing with occasional small farmsteads and individual dwellings are characteristic features of the local landscape. Trees and woodlands are sparse, and fields with gorse scrub and rush pasture are common. Where trees and shrubs are present, they are often stunted and windswept and are indicators of the prevailing coastal environment. The presence of the coast and sea contribute to the landscape's aesthetic appeal as do the local hill forms and higher ground to the north east beyond Loch Ryan and on the Kintyre peninsula in the distance to the north east. Locally, the Agnew Monument is a notable landmark on the edge of the study area to the south east and contributes further to the scenic quality of the area. The local landscape is tranquil with little disturbance from vehicle traffic. The characteristics of the study area are typical of the medium scale farming landscape of the LCT 156 Peninsula.

### **Landscape of the surrounding area**

4.3.10 Farming of livestock is the dominant land use and farmsteads include dwellings and farm buildings of modern construction using concrete blocks and steel cladding. Farm buildings are small to medium in size and include those up to 50m in length and circa 8m in height. Occasional isolated residential dwellings are also present in the landscape and to the south east at circa 650m from the site is a small camp site at North Rhinns Camping by Glengyre Cottage.

## **4.4 PUBLIC ACCESS**

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4.4.1 In Scotland there is a general right of access to all land and inland water with some exceptions as set out in the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code<sup>21</sup> sets out the rights and responsibilities of those exercising access rights and is based on three key principles as below:

- respecting the interests of other people;
- caring for the environment; and
- taking responsibility for your own actions.

4.4.2 Within the site is the track to the Mains of Dhuloch farm from the local access road which runs between B738 to the north west and B798 to the south east. There is no evidence of regular public use of the site.

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<sup>21</sup> Scottish Outdoor Access Code website: [What is the Scottish Outdoor Access Code? | Scottish Outdoor Access Code \(outdooraccess-scotland.scot\)](https://www.scotland.scot/outdooraccess-scotland.scot) [accessed September 2024]

## 4.5 LANDSCAPE BASELINE SUMMARY

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- 4.5.1 The following elements of the landscape baseline are relevant to the assessment of effects of this proposal and are taken forward as receptors for assessment within this appraisal:
- The site’s landscape fabric which is characterised by agricultural land; and
  - The landscape of the LCT 156 Peninsula within the study area
- 4.5.2 In addition to the above, the Rhins Coast RSA on the western extent of the study area as described in Section 2 above is taken forward for assessment as a landscape receptor due to its designation as an important area of outstanding scenic beauty within Dumfries and Galloway.

## 4.6 LANDSCAPE VALUE

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- 4.6.1 The characteristics, sensitivities and guidelines in the existing character assessments at national and local level and the site-specific analyses carried out for the purposes of this LVA were taken into account as indicators of the aspects of the landscape important to the character and evaluated according to the criteria in **Appendix 1 Table A1-1** in order to determine the value of the landscape receptors.
- 4.6.2 The features/elements/characteristics identified as important or “key” to the landscape character of the site are:
- 4.6.3 The **agricultural land** within the site. The land is used for grazing which is consistent in use with the surrounding landscape. The grazing land includes areas of pasture, rush pasture on wetter ground, rocky outcrops, areas of gorse scrub and pond areas which contribute to the character of the local landscape, its scenic quality and tranquillity. The character of the land is weakened to an extent by the dilapidated nature of some of the features including the building ruins and nearby neglected wall and the poor condition of the stand of trees at the site entrance. Overall, the agricultural land is judged to be of **medium** value.
- 4.6.4 **LCT 156 – Peninsula:** The study area includes key characteristics of the landscape character type including the medium scale landscape, rolling pastureland, numerous evenly spaced farmsteads, and few small settlements. The characteristics contribute to the scenic quality of the area along with the influence of the sea and distant upland landscape. The Rhins Coast RSA and cultural heritage features are also indicators of a valued landscape. Overall, the LCT 156 – Peninsula is judged to be of **high** value.
- 4.6.5 **Rhins Coast RSA:** The landscape is designated locally for its outstanding scenic beauty and is therefore of **high** value.

## 4.7 EFFECTS ON THE LANDSCAPE

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- 4.7.1 This section examines the landscape effects arising as a result of the proposed development with reference to:
- the effects on landscape fabric within the site; and

- the effects on landscape character, including consideration of the effects on designated landscapes.

4.7.2 Landscape character is derived from the combination and pattern of landscape elements. The effects of proposed development on landscape character would arise from its relationship to these combinations and patterns, and thus the character of the landscape. Effects on the landscape features, qualities and character may occur where there are either direct or indirect physical changes to the landscape. Direct changes to landscape fabric would only occur within the application boundary.

4.7.3 The effect of the proposed development on landscape character will depend on key characteristics of the receiving landscape; the degree to which the proposed development is considered consistent with or at odds with them; and how the proposed development would be perceived within the setting, with perception being influenced by:

- the distance to the site;
- weather conditions; and
- the ‘fit’ of the proposed development within the landscape pattern and characteristics.

4.7.4 The appraisal covers the following scenarios:

- Construction phase - this includes all demolition works and clearance, ancillary structures on site; remediation of the site, and various phases of the development;
- Operation phase – this is day one of operation of the site when the construction is complete; and
- Year 15 post completion – when the proposed vegetation and structure planting has begun to mature.

4.7.5 Decommissioning of the proposed development is not considered within the assessment as it is considered long term and permanent, lasting greater than 25 years.

## Sensitivity

4.7.6 Landscape sensitivity is a product of consideration of the value associated with the landscape receptor and its susceptibility to the changes likely to arise from the proposed development. For this informal appraisal the assessment of sensitivity is based on bringing value and susceptibility considerations together in one combined step, in accordance with the criteria set out in

### Appendix 1.

4.7.7 The receptors, their value and susceptibility are set out in the following table, with the resultant judgement of their sensitivity to the proposed development:

**Table 4-1** Susceptibility and Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
<b>Fabric and features within the site</b>			
Agricultural land	Medium	The agricultural land and its associated features will	Moderate

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
<b>Fabric and features within the site</b>			
		be directly altered by the proposed development. As a result, it has <b>high</b> susceptibility to the change arising from the development.	
<b>Landscape character</b>			
LCT 156 – Peninsula	High	The development proposals will directly alter features and aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character. The change will be local to the site and unlikely to alter the overall character of the LCT. As a result, a <b>medium</b> susceptibility is assessed.	Moderate
<b>Landscape designations</b>			
Rhins Coast RSA	High	The RSA is within 500m of the site and the development has the potential to indirectly alter the landscape characteristics of the designated land. The RSA is therefore judged to be of <b>medium</b> susceptibility to the changes brought about by the development.	Moderate

### Magnitude of Change

- 4.7.8 The magnitude of change considers the key features of the development as described in **section 3.0** and the degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by these changes or by the structures associated with the development. The magnitude of change is described in **Table 4.2** below:

**Table 4-2** Assessment of Landscape Magnitude of Change

Receptor	Magnitude of Change during construction, operation and year 15 post completion
<b>Fabric and features within the site</b>	
<p>Agricultural land</p>	<p>During construction the agricultural land will change from the grazing of cattle to construction of the egg production facility. Grazing land will be removed to accommodate the poultry sheds, hardstanding, access tracks and the tree and shrub planting. Two pond areas associated with the grazing land will be removed to allow for construction of the units. Removal of scrub within the grazing pasture will be limited to land required for the construction of the swales and detention basins and where the proposed Unit A access track crosses a field boundary. Overall, the changes to the agricultural land at the site during construction are assessed as intermediate in scale resulting in a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change during construction.</p> <p>At operation and at year 15 post completion, grazing land removed for construction of the built development will remain permanently lost. Areas temporarily disturbed during construction will be reinstated/restored. The ponds will not be replaced as part of proposals although new swales and detention features will provide an alternative wetland feature. The grassland and scrub will be used for a different type of livestock farming which will include fenced paddocks and shelters. Grassland, rush pasture and scrub will remain as a large proportion of the site and overall, the magnitude of change at operation and 15 years post completion to the agricultural land is assessed as <b>small</b>.</p>
<b>Landscape character</b>	
<p>LCT 156 – Peninsula</p>	<p>Construction works will occur within the LCT resulting in direct effects on its landscape character. The works are likely to provide perceived change to the local landscape character in areas influenced by the site including to the north west extending to and beyond B738, to the immediate south west, south towards Glengyre and higher land at High Weirston along with the landscape of higher ground at Little Glengyre to the north east. Within these areas which extend to circa 1km from the site a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change is expected. Elsewhere the local topography including the hill forms, along with the scale of the proposals will restrict the works’ influence on the wider LCT. As a result, a minor proportion of the wider LCT will be affected and a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is assessed at construction.</p> <p>At operation, the development will provide apparent change within the areas of the local landscape affected during construction as described above. The young age and small size of proposed planting at completion is unlikely to reduce the development’s influence on the local landscape character at this stage and a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change is expected. Beyond this the intervening hills, the scale of the proposed development and its diminishing influence on the wider LCT will reduce the development’s influence on the landscape character.</p>

Receptor	Magnitude of Change during construction, operation and year 15 post completion
	<p>Therefore, beyond circa 1km from the site the magnitude of change is assessed as <b>small</b>.</p> <p>At year 15 post completion, the proposed tree and shrub groups and scrub as it matures should assist with integration of the development within the local landscape and reducing apparent change to landscape characteristics. The magnitude of change is therefore anticipated to reduce to <b>small</b> for the areas influenced by the development within 1km. Beyond this the change the apparent change will be further reduced resulting in a <b>negligible</b> change to the wider LCT at year 15.</p>
Landscape designations	
Rhins Coast RSA	<p>The construction works are likely to provide perceived change to a minor proportion of the RSA where higher ground at circa 0.5 – 2km to the north west of the site is likely to be influenced by the development. As a minor proportion of the designated land will be affected a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is expected.</p> <p>At operation the young age and size of the development’s proposed planting is unlikely to reduce the development’s influence on the designated land and a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is expected to continue.</p> <p>At year 15 post completion , the maturing proposed tree and shrub will assist with integrating the development into the local landscape reducing apparent change to the landscape character of the designated land. A <b>negligible</b> magnitude of change is expected at year 15.</p>

## Assessment of effects on the landscape

4.7.9 Consideration of the magnitude of the changes due to the proposals is combined with consideration of the sensitivity of landscape receptors affected by the proposals to assess the degree and nature of the effect due to the development.

4.7.10 The assessment conclusions are set out in the following table:

**Table 4-3** Summary of Effects on the Landscape

Landscape Receptor/ Element	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change	Degree and nature of effects during construction	Degree and nature of effects at operation	Degree and nature of effects year 15 post completion
Agricultural land	Moderate	<p><u>Construction</u> - Medium</p> <p><u>Operation</u> - Small</p> <p><u>Year 15 post completion</u> - Small</p>	<b>Moderate adverse</b>	<b>Minor adverse</b>	<b>Minor adverse</b>

Landscape Receptor/ Element	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change	Degree and nature of effects during construction	Degree and nature of effects at operation	Degree and nature of effects year 15 post completion
LCT 156 – Peninsula	Moderate	<p><u>Construction</u> Medium (areas influenced by the site within 1km) Small (beyond 1km)</p> <p><u>Operation</u> Medium (areas influenced by the site within 1km) Small (beyond 1km)</p> <p><u>Year 15 post completion</u> Small (areas influenced by the site within 1km) Negligible (beyond 1km)</p>	<p><b>Moderate adverse</b> (areas influenced by the site within 1km)</p> <p><b>Minor adverse</b> (beyond 1km)</p>	<p><b>Moderate adverse</b> (areas influenced by the site within 1km)</p> <p><b>Minor adverse</b> (beyond 1km)</p>	<p><b>Minor adverse</b> (areas influenced by the site within 1km)</p> <p><b>Negligible</b> (beyond 1km)</p>
Rhins Coast RSA	Moderate	<p><u>Construction</u> - Small</p> <p><u>Operation</u> - Small</p> <p><u>Year 15 post completion</u> - Negligible</p>	<b>Minor adverse</b>	<b>Minor adverse</b>	<b>Negligible</b>

## 5.0 EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

- 5.1.1 This section deals with the effects on visual amenity, arising from changes in the views available to people in the surrounding area.

### 5.2 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- 5.2.1 The assessment process is described generally in section 1.3. The general methodology for assessing the effects in this report is set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.2.2 The degree of the likely visual effects of the proposed development is determined by relating the sensitivity of the receptors to the changes arising from the development proposals, and the degree and nature of the changes in the views available to people and in their visual amenity arising from the proposals.

### 5.3 VISUAL BASELINE

#### Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

- 5.3.1 The ZTVs illustrated on **Figures LA.06-1 – LA.06-3** illustrate the theoretical visibility of the proposed development within the study area using a 5m resolution model derived from OS Terrain 5 data. The ZTVs assume a maximum poultry shed height of 8.09m, silo height of 9.22m, dung store height of 7.42m and a viewer height of 2m.
- 5.3.2 The ZTV on **Figure LA.06-1** is based on topographic data only – the “bare earth scenario” – and minor undulations in the terrain may not be reflected in the 5m grid interval of the dataset. The ZTV on **Figure LA.06-2** considers screening features and includes woodland (modelled at 10m in height) and existing buildings (modelled at 8m in height). **Figure LA.06-3** considers screening features and illustrates the intervisibility of the egg production units. The ZTVs show theoretical visibility of the proposed development and actual visibility may be affected by other intervening vegetation, buildings and topographic features.
- 5.3.3 For the visual impact appraisal, a ZTV study area of a 2-kilometre radius from the site was investigated and mapped on the plans. Potentially sensitive visual receptors include residents, people visiting areas covered by landscape designations, users of Core Paths, cycle routes, and visitor attractions.
- 5.3.4 During the field study the ZTV was used as a starting point and features such as vegetation, buildings or localised topographic variation, which influence actual visibility, were identified during field studies. Representative viewpoints were then selected to inform the visual impact assessment. The locations of viewpoints studied relate to the “receptors”, that is, residents and users of the landscape, and locations from which they may have views towards or of the site.

#### Viewpoint study

- 5.3.5 **Figure LA.06-3** shows the location of the viewpoints and the ZTV at a scale of 1:20,000. The viewpoint photographs are reproduced on **Figures LA.07-1 – LA.07-8**.

- 5.3.6 A representative selection of eight viewpoint receptor locations were selected to illustrate the site and its appearance in publicly available views (**Figures LA.07-1 - LA.07-8**) for consideration in the visual impact assessment. For assessment of the view from Corsewall Lighthouse Core Path, ID – KIRC/343/2 to the north west of the site, two locations along the path were identified to analyse the sequential views along the route for the assessment of effects on users of the path.
- 5.3.7 Views of the site are generally available from the north west and east with shorter views from the south west where the land rises away from the site to Dogstone Hill. In general, views from the north west and south west are of the western part of the site and views from the south, east including the north east are of the eastern part of the site. The higher ground within the centre of the site along the Mains of Dhuloch access track generally limits views of the entire site from local viewpoints. The key areas of visibility are:
- Views from the north west along limited sections of the B738, and areas of higher ground within the Regional Scenic Area beyond and towards the coast;
  - Near views from the unnamed road situated to the immediate south west of the site;
  - Views from the south east at Glengyre where land falls towards Glengyre Burn before rising again to Slewcart Hill to the south and to High Weirston and Eldrig of Weirston to the south east at circa 1 – 1.5km from the site; and
  - Views to the north east from Little Glengyre at circa 1km from the site.
- 5.3.8 Views from the Mains of Airies, farmstead 900m WSW of (SM4880) Scheduled Monument were not assessed during the field study due to the presence of bulls in a nearby field.
- 5.3.9 An assessment of effects for residential receptors at or adjacent to the selected viewpoints has been carried out where the view from the publicly accessible location is considered representative of the view likely to be experienced by the residential receptor. Where there is uncertainty about the view from residential receptors being representative of the view from the publicly accessible location, e.g. uncertainty regarding the extent of visual screening provided by vegetation within the property curtilage and by intervening features; uncertainty regarding a difference in elevation and its influence on the view; and by the angle of view towards the site from inside the property, an assessment of visual effects for the residential receptor is not provided. This applies to the residential receptors by viewpoints 01, 02 and 06 below.

**Table 5-1** Viewpoint details

Viewpoint Ref	Location	Distance from site (m/km)	Receptors represented/Reasons for selection
01	B738 by Drumleight, north west of the site	438m	Users of B738 with views towards the site.
02	B738 by Little Cairnbrock, west of the site	393m	Views from users of B738 on the edge of the RSA with views towards the site.
03	Unnamed road by Dhunholm, south west of the site	6m	Residents in the property at Dhunholm with views towards the site. Users of the unnamed road with views towards the site.

Viewpoint Ref	Location	Distance from site (m/km)	Receptors represented/Reasons for selection
04	Corsewall Lighthouse Core Path, ID – KIRC/343/2, north west of the site	04a = 1.737km 04.b = 805m	Users of the path with views towards the site.
05	Tor of Craigoch Scheduled Monument and Agnew Monument listed building and landmark, south west of the site	2.015km	Visitors to the Scheduled Monument and listed building landmark.
06	Leswalt Core Path, ID – KIRC/357/1, nr High Weirston House, south east of the site	1.12km	Users of the path with views towards the site.
07	Glengyre, south east of site	573m	Residents in the property at East Cranberry, off the unnamed road through Glengyre with views towards the site.
08	Little Glengyre, north east of the site	960m	Resident in the property at Little Glengyre with views towards the site.

**Table 5-2** Existing view descriptions

View-point Ref	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
01	Rural landscape and B road situated within rolling farmland land and an adjacent individual residential property with landscaped garden situated on land rising towards Dhuloch Hill.	View along the base of Dhuloch Hill towards the scrub and rough grassland on the western side of the site. The trees by the site entrance can be seen on the horizon. Some interruption of the view towards the site is provided by slightly higher intervening land. The residential property by the viewpoint at Drumleight is situated on higher ground by the viewpoint. There may be views of the western side of the site from the southern side of the residential property. Due to the uncertainty of the view towards the site from the residential property the visual effect on the residential receptors by the viewpoint is not considered further in the detailed assessment of visual effects.
02	Small number of residential properties situated alongside B738 with gardens bound by stone walls and/or trees and shrubs within rolling farmland. A further individual residential	From B738 rolling farmland can be seen extending towards the high ground of the site where the trees by the site entrance feature on the horizon. Some interruption of the view towards the site is

View-point Ref	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
	property, Knockbennan House is situated further south along the road.	provided by the intervening hill form. It is anticipated that views from the residential properties by the viewpoint are interrupted by trees and shrubs within the property curtilage. Due to the uncertainty of the view towards the site from the residential properties the visual effect on the residential receptors at the viewpoint is not considered further in the detailed assessment of visual effects.
03	Individual single storey residential property situated on the unnamed road adjacent to the site's south western boundary within a rural landscape at the base of Dogstone Hill. A farm at West Dhuloch is situated nearby to the south.	Close direct view onto lower ground within the western part of the site beyond which the land rises towards the higher ground of Knockbennan Hill and Drumbuie Hill in the middle distance. On the horizon the view is dominated by the higher ground beyond Loch Ryan where the Glen App Wind Farm can be seen with forested hills.
04a	Track through a farmland landscape by Mains of Airies Farm, close to the coast.	The view comprises the Core Path track and farmland in the foreground. In the middle distance is the farm at Mains of Aries beyond which the land rises to Knockmoney Hill. The properties at and close to Little Cairnbrock can be seen in the distance to the south east and the trees at the site entrance beyond on the horizon. It is anticipated that views of the site from the nearby Mains of Aries farm are likely to be screened by Knockmoney Hill.
04b	Track through a farmland landscape by Mains of Airies Farm.	The view comprises the Core Path track and shrub vegetation alongside it. Airies House can be seen on higher ground by Knockmoney Hill to the south west.
05	Iron Age hillfort known as the Tor of Craigoch, and Agnew Monument situated on high ground within the local area at 125m AOD.	There is a wide far-reaching view to the north west towards the higher ground of the Kintyre peninsula in the distance. In the middle distance is Eldrig of Weirston which obscures views of the site. Residential properties at Little Glengyre can be seen on higher ground in the middle distance.
06	A path running through farmland providing access between High Weirston and Low Weirston.	Far reaching and panoramic views to the west across farmland and rolling hills towards the coast and sea with the higher ground of Kintyre in the distance. The farmland of the site and the adjacent Mains of Dhuloch farm buildings can be seen in the middle distance. Residential properties and farm

View-point Ref	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
		buildings can be seen in the middle distance at Glengyre. Due to the uncertainty of the view towards the site from residential receptors at High Weirston House by the viewpoint the visual effect on the residential receptor is not considered further in the detailed assessment of visual effects.
07	Land at circa 75 – 80m AOD by Glengyre Burn with a number of dwellings, farms and North Rhinns Camping campsite situated alongside the local road that provides access to the site.	Wide view across farmland and rolling hills. Residential properties and farm buildings can be seen on the lower ground at Glengyre by the unnamed road in the middle distance. The trees at the entrance to the site can be seen on the horizon within the view.
08	Farm at Little Glengyre off B798 along with occasional residential properties, an area of woodland and scrub on land rising away from Ervie Burn.	View across farmland and rolling hills with the lower ground in the view comprising the valley of Glengyre Burn. Buildings at the Mains of Dhuloch and the farmland within the western part of the site can be seen in the distance on land rising away from the burn and against the backdrop of Dogstone Hill.

## 5.4 VISUAL RECEPTORS

5.4.1 The assessment of visual effects is described by considering how the different groups of “visual receptors” may be affected. The following is a review of the viewers (the visual receptors) and the views available to them at the selected representative locations:

**Table 5-3** Visual receptors represented by each viewpoint and views available to them

View-point Ref	People in settlements and residential properties	Users of public rights of way and public access areas	Road users	Views from other landscapes of interest
01	-	-	View of western part of site for road users.	-
02	-	-	View of western part of site for road users.	-
03	Direct view of western part of site for residents in the property at the viewpoint.	-	View of western part of site for road users.	-
04	-	View towards the site obscured by Knockmoney	-	-

View-point Ref	People in settlements and residential properties	Users of public rights of way and public access areas	Road users	Views from other landscapes of interest
		Hill or shrub vegetation along the track.		
05	-	-	-	Far reaching, wide view with the site obscured by the hill form of Eldrig of Weirston.
06	-	Far reaching, panoramic view with the farmland of the site present in the middle distance.	-	-
07	Direct view of the eastern part of the site.	-	-	-
08	Direct view of the eastern part of the site.	-	-	-

## 5.5 VISUAL BASELINE SUMMARY

5.5.1 A summary of the visual baseline information to be taken into account as part of the detailed assessment of the effects on visual amenity is as follows:

- Views from the north west, from the B738 and the Corsewall Lighthouse Core Path, ID – KIRC/343/2 beyond within the Regional Scenic Area;
- Views from the unnamed road to the immediate south west of the site and from the residential property situated along it overlooking the western part of the site;
- Views from visitors to the Tor of Craigoch Iron Age hillfort and Agnew Monument; and
- Views from the south east, from residents at East Cranberry, Glengyre and users of the High to Low Weirston, Leswalt Core Path, ID – KIRC/357/1; and
- Views from the north east from the residential property at Little Glengyre.

## 5.6 EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

5.6.1 The visual appraisal covers the scenarios described in section 4.8.4.

### Sensitivity

5.6.2 The susceptibility of viewers is affected by factors such as the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view and the extent to which their attention or interest may be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations. The context of the viewpoint may also contribute to its ability to accommodate change; for example a view from residential properties or from a valued landscape might be regarded as less able to

accommodate change, than a view from an industrial context. **Table A1-8** provides examples of High, Moderate and Lesser sensitivity, demonstrating how the contributing factors are interpreted.

5.6.3 The sensitivity of the visual receptors is assessed as follows in **Table 5-4**:

**Table 5-4** Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
<b>Residential</b>			
Residents in the property, Dhunholm (viewpoint 01), at East Cranberry at Glengyre (viewpoint 07) and in the property at Little Glengyre (viewpoint 08).	Situated within a landscape characterised by rolling hill forms. Elevated setting. No landscape designations present. <b>Medium</b> value.	Residents at home. Views are focused on the landscape and are permanent resulting in <b>high</b> susceptibility to changes in visual amenity.	<b>High</b>
<b>Public Rights of Way and areas of public access</b>			
Users of Corsewall Lighthouse Core Path, ID – KIRC/343/2, north west of the site (viewpoint 04)	The Core Path is situated within and close to the Rhins Coast RSA important for its scenic beauty. <b>High</b> value	Users of the path for recreation and appreciation of views. <b>High</b> susceptibility to changes in visual amenity.	<b>High</b>
Leswalt Core Path, ID – KIRC/357/1, nr High Weirston House, south east of the site (viewpoint 06)	Far reaching, panoramic views available from the path. No landscape designations present. <b>Medium</b> value	Users of the path for recreation and appreciation of views. <b>High</b> susceptibility to changes in visual amenity.	<b>High</b>
<b>Road users</b>			
B738 (viewpoint 01) and unnamed road to south west of site (viewpoint 03)	Roads situated within rolling hills, close to the Rhins Coast RSA important for its scenic beauty. <b>Medium</b> value	Travellers/motorists where the focus of attention is only partly on the view resulting in <b>low</b> susceptibility to changes in visual amenity.	<b>Moderate</b>
B738 (viewpoint 02)	Road situated on the edge of the Rhins Coast RSA important for its scenic beauty. <b>High</b> value	Travellers/motorists where the focus of attention is only partly on the view resulting in <b>low</b> susceptibility to changes in visual amenity.	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Other landscapes of interest</b>			
Tor of Craigoich Scheduled Monument and Agnew	Heritage asset and local landmark.	Visitors to heritage assets and attractions where	<b>High</b>

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Monument listed building and landmark, south west of the site (viewpoint 05)	<b>High</b> value	views of the surrounding are an important contributor to the experience are susceptible to visual change resulting in a judgment of <b>high</b> susceptibility.	

## Magnitude of Change

5.6.4 The representative views are described below with an analysis of the degree and nature of changes in them resulting from the development, to inform the effects appraisal.

**Table 5-5** View with development & magnitude of change

Viewpoint Ref	View and Magnitude of Change during construction, operation and year 15 post completion
01	<p>Construction activities associated with Unit A in the western part of the site will be seen in this close view. Works associated with Unit B will be screened by the higher land within the centre of the site. For users of the road a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is expected due to the passing nature of the view towards the site and interruption in the view provided by the intervening hill form.</p> <p>At operation Unit B will be screened from view by the higher land in the centre of the site. The Unit A poultry shed, dung store, silos, access track, paddocks, fencing and new planting is likely to feature in the view towards the site. For users of B738 a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is expected due to the passing nature of the view and interruption in the view provided by the intervening hill form.</p> <p>At year 15 post completion the proposed native species tree and shrub groups and areas of scrub should be sufficiently established to provide visual screening/softening of the Unit A poultry shed and integration of the development including the paddocks and fencing within the landscape. Unit B will continue to be screened from view. For users of the road the degree of change is likely to be difficult to discern in the passing view at this stage of the development and a <b>negligible</b> change is expected.</p>
02	<p>There will be views of construction activities associated with Unit A in the western part of the site in this close view. Works associated with Unit B will be screened by the higher land within the centre of the site. For users of the road a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is expected due to the passing nature of the view towards the site from the road and the interruption provided by the intervening hill form.</p> <p>At operation, Unit B will be screened from view by the higher land in the centre of the site. The Unit A poultry shed, dung store, silos, access track, paddocks, fencing and new planting will feature in the view from the road. Due to the passing nature of the view and interruption provided by the intervening hill form a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is expected for road users.</p>

Viewpoint Ref	View and Magnitude of Change during construction, operation and year 15 post completion
	<p>At year 15 post completion the proposed native species tree and shrub groups and areas of scrub should be sufficiently established, providing visual screening/softening of the Unit A poultry shed and integration of the development including the paddocks and fencing within the landscape. Unit B will continue to be screened from view. For users of the road the degree of change is likely to be difficult to discern in the passing view at this stage of the development and a <b>negligible</b> change is expected.</p>
03	<p>Construction activities associated with Unit A in the western part of the site will be seen in this close view. Works associated with Unit B will be screened by the higher land by the site entrance. The longer view out to the higher ground to the north east will be maintained as construction works will be situated on lower ground within the view. For road users the Unit A works will be viewed directly and in close proximity in the passing view. For residential receptors and road users a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change is expected due to the intermediate scale of change expected.</p> <p>At operation the Unit A poultry shed, dung store, silos, access track, paddocks, fencing and new planting will be seen in the immediate context. Unit B will be screened from view by the higher ground by the site entrance. The long views out to the north east will be maintained due to the development's location on lower ground within the view. For receptors the Unit A development will be viewed directly and in close proximity. An intermediate scale of change is expected for the residential receptors and road users at the viewpoint resulting in a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change.</p> <p>At year 15 post completion the proposed native species tree and shrub groups and areas of scrub should have established to provide screening/softening of the view of the Unit A poultry shed and integration of the development including the paddocks and fencing within the landscape. The proposed planting is situated to provide visual screening/softening of the shed whilst not interrupting the full extent of long views out to the north east from the residential receptor. Some of the site operations are likely to be visible including birds using the paddock situated closest to the viewpoint and partial views of the Unit A facility for road users. This is anticipated to cause a minor visual intrusion within the wider view. Overall, the visual intrusion is likely to reduce when the planting establishes resulting in a <b>small</b> magnitude of change for receptors.</p>
04	<p>During construction, operation (at completion) and year 15, works are likely to be largely screened by the intervening Knockmoney Hill or by shrub vegetation along the track. It is possible that the very tops of the silos by the poultry sheds will be visible although difficult to discern within the view. A <b>negligible</b> change in view is expected at all stages of development.</p>
05	<p>Construction and operation of the development will be screened from view by the Eldrig of Weirston hill form. <b>No change</b> in view is expected.</p>
06	<p>Construction activities associated with Unit B will be seen in the middle distance beyond the residential properties and farm buildings at Glengyre and adjacent to the buildings at Mains of Dhuloch. The work will be viewed as a localised intrusion within the wide view from this location. The distance of the viewpoint from the site will also restrict the scale of visual intrusion. The work will be viewed in general against the landform of the site which rises towards the site's existing central access track. Works associated with the construction of Unit A will be screened by</p>

Viewpoint Ref	View and Magnitude of Change during construction, operation and year 15 post completion
	<p>the higher land within the centre of the site. The localised visual intrusion will result in a <b>small</b> magnitude of change.</p> <p>At operation Unit B will be viewed within the lower ground of the eastern part of the site alongside the existing buildings at Mains of Dhuloch and beyond the properties and farm buildings at Glengyre. The poultry shed and silos are likely to be viewed against the backdrop of the land to north as it rises towards the centre of the site and not extend above the skyline. The poultry shed will appear larger than other agricultural or farm buildings in the view because of its length however in general the development is unlikely to appear incongruous due to its agricultural character. Unit A will be screened from view by the higher land within the centre of the site. Overall, a <b>small</b> magnitude of change is expected.</p> <p>At year 15 post completion the native tree and shrub groups should be sufficiently established to provide visual screening/softening of the Unit B development and integration of the proposed features including the paddocks. The degree of change in the view is likely to remain as <b>small</b> due to the direct nature of the view.</p>
07	<p>There will be views of construction activities associated with Unit B in the eastern part of the site along with associated construction of the swale and detention basin. The view is direct and the works likely to provide an intermediate scale of change affecting part of the angle of the view. Works associated with Unit A will be screened by the higher land within the centre of the site. Overall, a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change is expected.</p> <p>At operation Unit A will be screened from view by the higher land in the centre of the site. The Unit B poultry shed, dung store, silos, access track, paddocks, fencing and new planting will be viewed on the land on the eastern part of the site. The entire length of the poultry shed will be seen, larger than the other agricultural buildings within the view providing an intermediate scale of change in part of the angle of the view. As a result, a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change is expected.</p> <p>At year 15 post completion the proposed native species tree and shrub groups and areas of scrub should have established to provide visual screening/softening of the Unit B poultry shed and integration of the development including the paddocks and fencing within the landscape. Unit A will continue to be screened from view. The visual intrusion of the Unit B development within the view is likely to reduce when the planting establishes resulting in a <b>small</b> magnitude of change.</p>
08	<p>Construction activities associated with Unit B will be seen beyond the middle distance adjacent to the buildings of Mains of Dhuloch. The work will be viewed against the landform of Dogstone Hill and at almost 1km from the site is likely to provide a localised intrusion in the view. Works associated with the construction of Unit A will be screened by the intervening landform. The localised visual intrusion will result in a <b>small</b> magnitude of change.</p> <p>Once complete Unit A will be screened by intervening landform. Unit B will be viewed alongside the buildings at Mains of Dhuloch. The northern end of the Unit B poultry shed, dung store and silos will be visible although the entire length of the shed is unlikely to be visible due to the angle of the view from the viewpoint at this location to the north east. The Unit B buildings and silos</p>

Viewpoint Ref	View and Magnitude of Change during construction, operation and year 15 post completion
	<p>will be viewed against the backdrop of Dogstone Hill and at circa 1km distance from a localised intrusion in the view is expected resulting in a <b>small</b> magnitude of change.</p> <p>At 15 years post completion the native tree and shrub group at the north eastern end of Unit B should be sufficiently established to provide visual screening/softening of the Unit B development and integration of the proposed features including the paddocks. The degree of change in the view is likely to remain as <b>small</b> due to the direct nature of the view.</p>

## Assessment

- 5.6.5 The visual appraisal has been informed by the ZTV studies shown on **Figures LA.06-1 – LA.06-3**. They identified a number of locations from which the proposed development might be theoretically visible. A selection of representative views to illustrate the views available at a range of distances and for different receptors are identified and described in **Table 5-2** and the sensitivity of the viewers (visual receptors) represented defined in **Table 5-4** above.
- 5.6.6 The following table sets out the assessment of effects on the visual amenity of the identified viewers likely to be affected by the proposals:

**Table 5-6** Assessment of visual effects

Viewers/ Visual Receptors & Sensitivity	Ref VPs	Magnitude of change	Degree & nature of effect – construction phase	Degree & nature of effect – after completion	Degree & nature of effect – 15 years post completion
Residential High	03 & 07	<i>Construction</i> - Medium <i>Operation</i> - Medium <i>15 years post completion</i> - Small	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse
Residential High	08	<i>Construction</i> - Small <i>Operation</i> - Small <i>15 years post completion</i> - Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
Public Rights of Way and areas of public access High	04	<i>Construction</i> - Negligible <i>Operation</i> - Negligible <i>15 years post completion</i> - Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Road users Moderate	01 02	<i>Construction</i> - Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Negligible

Viewers/ Visual Receptors & Sensitivity	Ref VPs	Magnitude of change	Degree & nature of effect – construction phase	Degree & nature of effect – after completion	Degree & nature of effect – 15 years post completion
		<i>Operation</i> - Small <i>15 years post completion</i> - Negligible			
Road users Moderate	03	<i>Construction</i> - Medium <i>Operation</i> - Medium <i>15 years post completion</i> - Small	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse
Other landscapes of interest High	05	No change	No effect	No effect	No effect

## 6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has considered the likely effects of the proposed development on the landscape character and visual amenity within a 2km study area.
- 6.1.2 The proposed development comprises two large poultry sheds, a dung store and a group of four silos by each shed, chicken paddocks and shelters, and associated infrastructure works. The facility is proposed for the production of free range eggs.
- 6.1.3 The sheds are proposed as Unit A on the western part of the site and Unit B on the eastern part and both are accessed from the existing Mains of Dhuloch access track via proposed hardcore access tracks and a turning area adjacent to each shed. Chicken paddocks over 1ha size and bounded by a timber post and wire mesh fencing 1.2m are situated adjacent to the sheds and each include four timber chicken shelters. Lighting includes 2 small domestic PIR security lights on each shed.
- 6.1.4 Surface water is taken off site via underground pipes by the poultry sheds, proposed swales and detention basins before discharge into existing watercourses at the northern part of the site.
- 6.1.5 The potential for adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity has been recognised and mitigation measures incorporated in the scheme to avoid or reduce adverse effects or to offset or compensate for unavoidable adverse effects. Landscape proposals include native tree and shrub groups to provide cover for the birds within the paddocks and to provide screening/softening of views and landscape integration of the development.
- 6.1.6 The methodology used for assessing the potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity was based on the recommendations in GLVIA3. The application of the guidance document established an appropriate scope for this assessment to be undertaken.
- 6.1.7 Consultation was carried out Dumfries and Galloway Council regarding the viewpoints to be considered in the appraisal.

## 6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Landscape assessment

- 6.2.1 The assessment of effects on the landscape has identified a moderate adverse effect during construction on the agricultural land of the site due to the intermediate scale of change expected to the feature as a result of the works. In addition to the poultry sheds the land at the site will be used for a different type of livestock farming which will include fenced paddocks, shelters and new planting. Grassland, rush pasture and scrub will remain as a large proportion of the site and overall, the effect on the agricultural land feature is expected to reduce to minor adverse at operation and 15 years post completion of the development.
- 6.2.2 Within the receiving landscape of the LCT 156 - Peninsula, effects are anticipated to be moderate adverse during construction and at operation for areas influenced by the site including to the north west extending to and beyond B738, to the immediate south west, south towards Glengyre and higher land at High Weirston along with the landscape of higher ground at Little Glengyre to

the north east. At year 15 post completion effects are expected to reduce to minor adverse when the proposed tree and shrub planting should have established sufficiently to assist with landscape integration of the development. Beyond 1km, effects are predicted to be minor adverse at all three development stages due to the reduction of influence on the landscape.

- 6.2.3 For the Rhins Coast RSA a minor proportion of the designated land will be affected by the development and a minor adverse effect is expected during construction and at completion reducing to negligible at year 15.

## Visual assessment

- 6.2.4 Following viewpoint studies, a representative selection of eight views were taken forward to the visual assessment. The views were chosen to represent views from receptors, that is, residents and users of the landscape and locations from which they may have views of the site.
- 6.2.5 The assessment of visual effects finds that, in general terms, either one of the poultry shed units will be visible in the local views of the site. This includes views of Unit A from the north west along B738 and from the unnamed road to the immediate south west of the site. Unit B will be visible from Little Glengyre to the north east, from Glengyre to the south east and Core Path users at High Weirston. Elsewhere the proposed development will be screened by intervening hill forms and/or vegetation including from the Corsewall Lighthouse Core Path, ID – KIRC/343/2 to the north west of the site and from Tor of Craigoch Scheduled Monument and Agnew Monument to the south east.
- 6.2.6 Moderate adverse effects are anticipated during construction and at completion from viewpoints 03 and 07 due to the high sensitivity of the residential receptors and medium change of visual intrusion expected in the close, direct view of the site. The effect is anticipated to reduce to minor adverse at 15 years post completion due to the visual screening/softening provided by the new groups of trees and shrubs. In addition, moderate adverse effects are anticipated for road users at viewpoint 03 the unnamed road where it runs adjacent to the site due to the close, direct nature and intermediate scale of change in the view.
- 6.2.7 Minor adverse effects are anticipated from residential receptors at viewpoint 08 due to the receptors' circa 1km distance from the site which limits the scale of change in the view. Minor adverse effects are predicted for road users on B738 at viewpoints 01 and 02 due to the passing nature of the view and the interruption provided by the intervening hill form.

## 6.3 CONCLUSIONS

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- 6.3.1 In conclusion, the proposed development will provide a limited change to the agricultural land due to the extent of land affected at the site. A medium change is expected to the character of the local landscape influenced by the site due to the scale of development proposed. Beyond this the influence of the development is limited. The proposed planting when established will reduce the influence of the proposed development on the landscape and help assimilate it into the site's context. The proposed development will be visible in local views to the north west, north east, south east and immediate south west of the site. Whilst moderate adverse effects are anticipated on views from high sensitivity receptors, these are anticipated to reduce once the

proposed tree and shrub groups and scrub planting has sufficiently established to visually screen/soften views of the facility.

## 7.0 REFERENCES

- The Landscape Institute, Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition);
- The Landscape Institute, Advice Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019);
- Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3) LITGN-2024-01;
- Scottish Landscape Character Types Map and Descriptions, Nature Scot, 2019: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/scottish-landscape-character-types-map-and-descriptions>
- National Planning Framework 4: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/documents/>;
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Local Development Plan 2;
- Weather information website: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-climate-averages/gcu2pdv8y>;
- Ordnance Survey Mapping, 1:25,000 (www.emapsite.co.uk); and
- Google 2024. Google Maps Aerial photography <http://maps.google.co.uk/maps>

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 - METHODOLOGY

#### GENERAL METHODOLOGY

Although not an ‘EIA’ project the methodology used in this informal appraisal has been based upon the recommendations in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in 2013 (GLVIA3). As advised in the Guidelines, the general approach and process can be applied to non-EIA assessments, or “Appraisals”. The Landscape Institute’s Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01, Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3 also advises that it is not required in a Landscape and Visual Appraisal to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant. However, the degree and nature of the effects identified is assessed.

#### LANDSCAPE EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

##### Establishing the landscape baseline

Baseline studies for assessing the landscape effects included a mix of desk study and field work to identify and record the character of the landscape and the elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors which contribute to it.

The elements that make up the landscape in the study area were recorded, including:

- physical influences - geology, soils, landform, drainage and water bodies;
- land cover, including different types of vegetation and patterns and types of tree cover;
- the influence of human activity, such as, land use and management, the character of settlements and buildings, the pattern and type of fields and enclosure; and
- the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape, e.g.: its scale, complexity, openness, tranquillity, wildness.

The overall character of the landscape in the study area was considered, including the particular combinations of elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects that make each distinctive, usually by identification as key characteristics of the landscape. Evidence about change in the landscape was considered, including the condition of the different landscape types and/or areas, and their constituent parts and evidence of current pressures causing change in the landscape.

##### Landscape value

The European Landscape Convention promotes taking account of all landscapes, including ordinary or undesignated landscapes. The relative value attached to the landscape was considered at the baseline stage to inform the judgments about the effects likely to occur, whether to areas of landscape as a whole

or to individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions, at the community, local, national or international levels.

Landscape designation is a starting point in understanding landscape value but value may also be attached to undesignated landscapes. Special Qualities, reasons for designation, relevant policies in management plans or designation-specific policies in development plans, were consulted in assessing the relative value of the landscape within designated areas.

Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition, and where scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and natural or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important associations, are likely to be highly valued. For “ordinary, everyday landscapes”, the judgement was based upon the degree to which they are representative of typical character, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of its elements, scenic quality, sense of place, aesthetic and perceptual qualities.

When determining the landscape value the following elements were considered, in addition to consideration of values associated with designations:

- The importance of the landscape, or the perceived value of the landscape to users or consultees, as indicated by, for example, international, national or local designations;
- The importance of elements or components of the landscape in the landscape character of the area or in their contribution to the landscape setting of other areas;
- Intrinsic aesthetic characteristics, scenic quality or sense of place, including providing landscape setting to other places;
- Cultural associations in the arts or in guides to the area, or popular use of the area for recreation, where experience of the landscape is important;
- The presence and scale of detractors in the landscape and the degree to which they are susceptible to improvement or upgrading; and
- Conservation interests: The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.

The following table indicates the criteria used to determine the Landscape value:

**Table A1- 1** Indicative criteria to determine landscape value

Value	Criteria
High Value	Landscapes subject to international, national or local designations, and non-designated landscapes where the following considerations apply: Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape; There are important cultural and artistic associations; They are representative of typical character of the area or have a character or elements that are valued for their rarity; Particular components may be identified as important contributors to the landscape character; The landscape is valued for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.

Value	Criteria
Low Value	Areas of landscape whose character is in poor condition; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features are not key characteristics of the landscape; Cultural and artistic associations are absent; They are not representative of typical character of the area, but are also not valued for rarity; Particular components may be identified as important contributors to the landscape character; There is little scope for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.

Where the value falls between high and low, an intermediate level of value is assigned, e.g. “medium”.

The landscape baseline report aims to:

- describe, map and illustrate the character of the landscape of both the wider study area and the site and its immediate surroundings;
- identify and describe the individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape, particularly those that are key characteristics contributing to its distinctive character;
- indicate the condition of the landscape, including the condition of landscape elements or features;
- project forward drivers and trends in change and how they may affect the landscape over time, in the absence of the proposal; and
- evaluate the landscape and, where appropriate, its components, aesthetic and perceptual aspects, particularly the key characteristics.

### Assessing the Landscape Effects

The baseline information about the landscape was combined with understanding of the details of the proposal to identify and describe the landscape effects. The landscape receptors were identified, that is, the components or aspects of the landscape likely to be affected, such as, overall character or key characteristics, individual elements or features, or specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects.

Interactions between the landscape receptors and the components or characteristics of the development at its different stages were considered: construction and operation, and the different types of effect: direct and indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long- term, permanent and temporary, adverse and beneficial.

Landscape effects considered included:

- change in and/or partial or complete loss of elements, features or aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- addition of new elements or features that will influence the character and distinctiveness of the landscape; and
- combined effects of these changes on overall character.

The landscape effects were categorised as adverse, beneficial, or negligible in their consequences for the landscape, judged from the degree to which the proposal fits with existing character and the contribution the development makes to the landscape in its own right, even if in contrast to existing character.

The assessment of the landscape effects was based on assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change in the landscape arising from the proposal.

### Sensitivity of the landscape receptors

The sensitivity of landscape receptors combines judgments of their susceptibility to the type of change arising from the development proposal and the value attached to the landscape.

Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

The value attached to the landscape receptors was established in the baseline study.

When determining the landscape susceptibility the following elements were considered:

- The ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the landscape character and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies;
- The degree to which the changes arising from the development would alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area;
- The degree to which the changes arising from the development would alter individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character; and
- Existing landscape studies may identify the sensitivity of the landscape type or area or its characteristics to the general type of development that is proposed.

The following table indicates the criteria used to determine the Landscape susceptibility:

**Table A1- 2** Criteria for landscape susceptibility

Susceptibility	Criteria
High Susceptibility	<p>The changes arising from the type of development would alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area.</p> <p>The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to, or add new elements incongruous to, the landscape character.</p> <p>The type of development would compromise the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies for the landscape.</p> <p>The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character, or add new elements that would reinforce the key characteristics of the landscape character.</p>
Low Susceptibility	<p>The changes arising from the type of development would not alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area.</p>

Susceptibility	Criteria
	<p>The type of development would not compromise the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies for the landscape.</p> <p>The changes arising from the type of development would not alter or remove individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to, or add new elements incongruous to, the landscape character.</p>

Where the susceptibility identified falls between high and low, an intermediate level of susceptibility is assigned, e.g. “medium”. The basis for the scale of susceptibility assigned to the landscape receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

**Table A1-3** illustrates indicative criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity combining susceptibility and value. These are the criteria against which receptors are considered in order to arrive at a judgement as to their sensitivity, but it is not necessary for all the criteria set out for a category to apply.

**Table A1- 3** Indicative criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity

Category	Indicative criteria
High sensitivity	<p>A highly valued landscape e.g. of national or international importance, whose character or key characteristics are very susceptible to change;</p> <p>Aspects of the landscape character are highly valued as “key characteristics” and, often identified as susceptible to change in national or local character assessments;</p> <p>The landscape character is highly valued as intact and in good condition and particularly vulnerable to disturbance;</p> <p>A highly valued landscape with no or limited potential for substitution or replacement.</p>
Moderate sensitivity	<p>A landscape of local importance or value, whose character or key characteristics are susceptible to change;</p> <p>Other characteristics of the landscape character also valued in national or local character assessments and susceptible to change;</p> <p>The landscape character is valued for moderate condition and not particularly vulnerable to disturbance;</p> <p>A moderately valued landscape with some potential for substitution or replacement.</p>
Lesser sensitivity	<p>No or little evidence of value or importance attached to the landscape area, its features or characteristics;</p> <p>Few features, characteristics or qualities susceptible to disturbance or particularly susceptible to improvement or upgrading</p> <p>Good potential for substitution or replacement</p>

## Magnitude of Landscape Change

Effects on landscape receptors are assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility.

**Table A1- 4** Considerations for assessing magnitude of landscape change

Consideration	Indicative criteria
Size or scale of change	Categorised on a scale of Large, Medium, Small, Negligible or None, based upon: The extent of existing landscape elements that will be lost (or added), the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape; The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered either by removal of existing components of the landscape or additions of new ones; Whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character.
Geographical area over which the landscape would be changed	Categorised on a scale of: Small: at site level, within the development site itself or at the level of the immediate setting of the site; Medium: at the scale of the landscape type or character area within which the proposal lies; Large: where the development influences several landscape types or character areas.
The duration of the changes	The durations of changes due to the development are categorised as: Short term: zero to five years; Medium term: five to ten years; Long term: ten to twenty-five years; Permanent: more than twenty-five.
Reversibility	The prospect and the practicality of the effect being reversed within twenty-five years.

Indicative criteria used to determine the magnitude of change is as follows:

**Table A1- 5** Indicative criteria for assessing magnitude of landscape change

Magnitude of Change	Landscape Change
Great change	Major size or scale of change, affecting the landscape type or character of the area within which the proposal lies or extending over the wider area; likely to be longer term or permanently, with low prospect of reversibility
Medium change	Intermediate size or scale of change, affecting part of the landscape type or character of the area within which the proposal lies, or larger scale of change at the level of the site or immediate context; likely to continue into the medium term, with good prospect of reversibility
Small change	A minor proportion of the extent of the character type or area is affected or smaller scale of change over a larger extent; the changes occur at the level of the site or immediate context, and likely to be short term and reversible.
Negligible/no change	No apparent change to landscape characteristics

While GLVIA3 includes the duration of the change in the consideration of the magnitude of change, in some cases a major size or scale of change of shorter duration may be considered a “great change”.

## Degree of Landscape Effects

Final conclusions about the degree of effect, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes combined, based upon the following indicative considerations and criteria:

**Table A1- 6** Indicative criteria for assessing landscape effects

Landscape effect	Indicative criteria
Major	Highly sensitive landscape completely degraded or greatly changed, with little or no scope for mitigation; Great improvement, sufficient to upgrade overall landscape character. Irreversible adverse or beneficial effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes.
Moderate	Medium change to moderately sensitive landscape or its character; lesser change to higher sensitivity landscape or greater change to less sensitive landscape.
Minor	Small or limited adverse change to the existing landscape or its character; greater change to less sensitive landscape; Considerable scope for mitigation; Small improvement to the existing landscape. Reversible adverse or beneficial effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to, but are not key characteristics of the character of landscapes of community value.
Negligible	No perceptible change to the existing landscape or its character; The change is difficult to discern.

Intermediate conditions may be described, such as Moderate-Major, where the criteria for Moderate may be exceeded but not qualify as Major. Where magnitude of change is “None”, the effect would correspondingly be “None”.

Effects may be adverse or beneficial. In some instances, the effect may be offset by other considerations, for example, through the mitigation or landscape proposals, and the resulting effect may be neither beneficial nor adverse.

## VISUAL EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

### Establishing the visual baseline

Baseline studies for visual effects establish:

- the area in which the development may be visible;
- the different groups of people who may experience views of the development;
- the location where they will be affected;
- the nature of the views at those points; and
- the different groups of people who may be affected by the changes in views or visual amenity.

The potential areas where the site and development proposal are likely to be visible were mapped. Landscape components affecting visibility, like buildings, walls, fences, trees, hedgerows, woodland and banks, were identified through field surveys and mapped where relevant.

The people within the area who may be affected by the changes in views and visual amenity – the visual receptors – were identified, for example:

- people living in the area;
- people passing through on roads and the local lanes;
- people visiting promoted landscapes or attractions; and
- people engaged in recreation of different types, including users of public rights of way, bridleways and access land.

Where relevant, views that form part of the experience and enjoyment of the landscape were noted, for example, from promoted paths, tourist or scenic routes and associated viewpoints.

The local authority was consulted regarding the viewpoint selection. The viewpoint selection was informed by the visual appraisal, field surveys, and by desk based research on various issues, for example, access and recreation, valued landscapes, tourist attractions and destinations, popular vantage points, and relative distribution of population. Viewpoints were selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptors.

The details of viewpoint locations were mapped and catalogued, sufficient to allow someone else to return to the location and record the same view. Photography was carried out in accordance with the Landscape Institute, Advice Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019).

The baseline report aims to describe, map and illustrate:

- the type of people (visual receptors) likely to be affected, making clear the activities they are likely to be involved in when enjoying the view;
- details of the viewpoints and of the visual receptors likely to be affected at each;
- the nature, composition and characteristics of the existing view, noting any particular horizontal or vertical emphasis, and any key foci; existing views have been illustrated in annotated photographs identifying important components of the view.
- elements, such as landform, buildings or vegetation, which may interrupt, filter or otherwise influence the views;
- whether or how the view may be affected by seasonal or weather variation.

## Assessing the Visual Effects

### Predicting and describing visual effects

The baseline information about the visual receptors was combined with understanding of the details of the proposal to identify and describe the visual effects, considering:

- changes in views and visual amenity arising from elements of the development;

- the distance of the viewpoint from the development and whether the viewer would focus on the development due to its scale and proximity or whether the development would be only a small or minor element in a panoramic view;
- whether the view is stationary or transient or one of a sequence of views;
- the nature of the changes: changes in the skyline, creation of a new visual focus in the view, introduction of new elements, changes in visual simplicity or complexity, alteration of visual scale or the degree of visual enclosure; and
- seasonal differences in effects, arising from the varying degree of screening and/or filtering of views by vegetation in summer and winter.

Categorising the visual effects as adverse or beneficial (or neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity was based on judgments about whether the changes affect the quality of the visual experience, and the nature of the existing views and the nature of the changes to the views.

The visual effects were assessed, based on assessment of the nature of the visual receptors and their sensitivity, and the nature of the effect on views and visual amenity, that is, the magnitude of visual change.

### Sensitivity of the visual receptors

The people or groups of people likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint – the visual receptors – are assessed in terms of their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and the value attached to particular view locations and views.

The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations and the extent to which their attention or interest is focused on the views or the visual amenity they experience at particular locations. The context of the location also contributes to susceptibility, for example, people viewing from residential properties or from a valued landscape are likely to be more susceptible to change than people viewing from an industrial context. **Table A1-7** illustrates indicative criteria used to determine visual receptor susceptibility:

**Table A1- 7** Indicative criteria to determine visual receptor susceptibility

Susceptibility	Criteria
High Susceptibility	Residents at home. People engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views. Visitors to designated landscapes, heritage assets, or other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.
Low Susceptibility	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape. People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity not on their surroundings and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, except along recognised scenic routes, where awareness of views is likely to be high.

Where the susceptibility identified falls between high and low, an intermediate level of susceptibility is assigned, e.g. “medium”. The basis for the scale of susceptibility assigned to the visual receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

Judgments were made about the value attached to the views identified, taking account of recognition, for example, in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations, appearance in guidebooks or on tourist maps, promotion of particular locations or provision of facilities provided for their enjoyment, such as parking places, sign boards and interpretive material, or references to them in literature or art.

The sensitivity of visual receptors to change is categorised as high, moderate or lesser, in accordance with the criteria set out below.

**Table A1- 8** Indicative criteria for visual sensitivity

Category	Indicative criteria
High sensitivity	Viewers in residential or community properties. Views experienced by many viewers. Daily, prolonged or sustained views available over a long period, or where the view of the landscape is an important attractant. A view from a landscape, recreation facility or route valued nationally or internationally for its visual amenity.
Moderate sensitivity	Viewers in residential or community properties with partial or largely screened views of the site. Frequent open views available. Viewers are pursuing activities such as sports or outdoor work, where the landscape is not the principal reason for being there or the focus of attention is only partly on the view. A view from other valued landscapes, or a regionally important recreation facility or route.
Lesser sensitivity	A view of low importance or value, or where the viewer’s attention is not focused their surroundings. A view from a landscape of moderate or less importance, or a locally important recreation facility. Occasional open views or glimpsed views available; passing views available to travellers in vehicles. A view available to few viewers.

### Magnitude of visual change

The visual effects identified are evaluated in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, duration and reversibility.

**Table A1- 9** Considerations for assessing magnitude of visual change

Consideration	Indicative criteria
Size or scale of change	Categorised on a scale of major, moderate, minor or none, based upon: The degree of the loss or addition of features in the view; The extent of changes in the composition of the view, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development; The degree of contrast or integration of the changes with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics;

Consideration	Indicative criteria
	The nature of the view of the proposed development, whether full, partial or glimpsed, or the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced.
Geographical area over which the changes would be experienced	The geographic extent reflects: The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible; The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development.
The duration of the changes	Categorised as: Short term: zero to five years; Medium term: five to ten years; Long term: ten to twenty-five years Permanent: more than twenty-five.
Reversibility	The prospect and the practicality of the effect being reversed within twenty-five years, or within a generation

Indicative criteria used to determine the magnitude of change is as follows:

**Table A1- 10** Indicative criteria for assessing magnitude of visual change

Magnitude of Change	Visual Change
Great change	Major size or scale of change, affecting a large proportion of the angle of the view, or affecting views from a wide area; continuing into the longer term or permanently, with low prospect of reversibility.
Medium change	Intermediate size or scale of change, affecting part of the angle of the view, or affecting some views from the wider area, or larger scale of change in views from within the immediate context of the site; continuing into the medium term, with good prospect of reversibility.
Small change	A minor proportion of the angle of view is affected or the contribution of the changed elements or characteristics to the composition of the view is not important; the changes are viewed from longer distances, are short term and reversible.
Negligible/no change	Barely perceptible change or the change is difficult to discern; No change in the view or the changes due to the development are out of view.

### Judging the overall significance of visual effects

Final conclusions about the degree of visual effects, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes, as illustrated in the indicative criteria shown in **Table A1-11**:

**Table A1- 11** Indicative criteria for assessing visual effects

Visual effect	Indicative criteria
Major	Great change or visual intrusion experienced by highly sensitive viewers or from highly sensitive public viewpoints;

Visual effect	Indicative criteria
	The proposal would cause a great deterioration in the existing view available to highly sensitive viewers; Great improvement in the view, sufficient to upgrade overall visual amenity. Large scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view, especially where affecting people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity or people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes.
Moderate	Medium change or visual intrusion experienced by moderately sensitive viewers; Smaller change to higher sensitivity viewers or greater change to less sensitive viewers.
Minor	Small or localised visual intrusion in the existing view, especially for less sensitive viewers. Small or localised reduction in visual intrusion, or improvement in the view. Reversible short term changes, in views available to people for whom the view of the landscape is not the principle focus of interest.
Negligible	Negligible change in the view or the change is difficult to discern even for a highly sensitive viewer.

In addition to these criteria, in some instances the effect may be discernible or greater, but offset by other considerations, for example, through the mitigation or landscape proposals for the development, and the resulting effect is neither beneficial nor adverse.

## APPENDIX 2 - POLICY

### DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2

- **Policy OP1: Development Considerations** Development will be assessed against the following considerations where relevant to the scale, nature and location of the proposal:

**a) General Amenity**

Development proposals should be compatible with the character and amenity of the area and should not conflict with nearby land uses. The following issues which may result from the development will be a material consideration in the assessment of proposals:

- noise and vibration;
- odour and fumes;
- potential loss of privacy, sunlight and daylight on nearby properties;
- emissions including dust, smoke, soot, ash, dirt or grit or any other environmental pollution to water, air, or soil; and
- light pollution.

**b) Historic Environment**

Development proposals should protect and/or enhance the character, appearance and setting of the region's rich historic environment principally by ensuring they are sympathetic to nearby buildings, sites and features, integrate well and complement the surrounding area. The information contained within the Council's Historic Environment Record and the Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement, and any subsequent revised or amended document, will be a material consideration in the assessment of proposals.

**c) Landscape**

Development proposals should respect, protect and/or enhance the region's rich landscape character, and scenic qualities, including features and sites identified for their landscape qualities or wild land character as identified on the 2014 Scottish National Heritage map (or any subsequent revised or amended map) of wild land areas. They should also reflect the scale and local distinctiveness of the landscape. The detailed guidance set out in the Dumfries and Galloway Landscape Assessment, and any subsequent revised or amended document, will be a material consideration in the assessment of proposals.

**d) Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

Development proposals should respect, protect and/or enhance the region's rich and distinct biodiversity, geodiversity and sites identified for their contribution to the natural environment at any level including ancient and semi-natural woodland. The guidance contained within the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, and any subsequent revised or amended document, will be a material consideration in the assessment of proposals.

**e) Transport and Travel**

Development proposals should minimise the need for travel by car and encourage active and other more sustainable forms of travel whilst avoiding or mitigating any adverse impact on the transport network or road safety.

#### **f) Sustainability**

Development proposals should limit the impacts of climate change, support resilience, and promote sustainable development by:

- assisting the development of the local economy through sustainable economic growth; • minimising adverse impacts on water, air and soil quality;
- reusing and/or regenerating previously used land and property, including derelict and contaminated land;
- making the most efficient use of land. This means looking for and where practical making use of opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including low carbon district heating networks;
- integrating with existing infrastructure where possible;
- supporting the Scottish Government’s Zero Waste objectives and the Council’s waste resource management objectives;
- avoiding areas of significant flood risk;
- using sustainable drainage systems (SuDS);
- supporting reduction in carbon emissions through:
  - o a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through the introduction of energy efficiency measures and, where feasible, the installation of on-site renewable energy generation technology (information on this matter is provided in supplementary guidance: Design Quality and Placemaking);
  - o passive aspects of design, including consideration of: location, layout, orientation, massing, materials, detailed design, topography, and vegetation; and
  - o all new buildings being required to demonstrate that a proportion of the carbon emissions reduction standard set by Scottish Building Regulations will be met through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon technologies. The relevant building standards and percentage contribution required is set out in supplementary guidance. The supplementary guidance will be kept under review to ensure that the proportion of the carbon emissions reduction standard to be met by these technologies will increase over time.\*

\* Supplementary guidance provides further detail on this including its application to existing buildings and the circumstances where exceptions should apply.

#### **g) Water Environment**

Development proposals should maintain or enhance water quality, and take account of the need to manage water quantity, including flooding. In securing these objectives they should also seek to contribute positively to the general environmental quality of their area.

- **Policy OP2: Design Quality and Placemaking** Development proposals should achieve high quality design in terms of their contribution to the existing built and natural environment contributing positively to a sense of place and local distinctiveness.

Where relevant proposals should:

- relate well to the scale, density, massing, character, appearance and use of materials of the surrounding area and in so doing be sympathetic to the local built forms as well as respecting the important physical, historic and landscape features of the site and its vicinity;
- be designed with people, not vehicle movement, as the primary focus, incorporating the principles set out in ‘Designing Streets’ and where possible increase connectivity to nearby places, paths, streets and open spaces;
- ensure that any open space required is of high quality, appropriate and integrated to the development and where possible provides linkages to the wider green network;
- incorporate a hard landscaping and planting scheme which includes the proposed treatment of existing trees and other landscape features;
- be designed to create safe, accessible and inclusive places for all people which are well integrated into existing settlements and respect the established historic layout and patterns of development, that are also adaptable to future changes;
- integrate sustainable energy and design measures.

Supplementary guidance provides further detail on the above elements.

A Masterplan and/or development brief may be needed for some sites, the site guidance in Chapter 6 outlines where this is required.

- **Policy HE6: Gardens and Designed Landscapes**
  - a) The Council will support development that protects or enhances the significant elements, specific qualities, character, integrity and setting, including key views to and from, gardens and designed landscapes included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes or the Non-Inventory List.

In considering development proposals the Council will need to be satisfied that:

- the development protects or enhances the significant elements of the garden or landscape in situ; and
- due consideration has been given to the significance and value of the asset in relation to the longterm benefit and specific need for the development in the location proposed.

b) Developers will be required to submit the results of an assessment of the impact of their proposals on the sites and their settings including details of any potential mitigation measures.

c) Proposals that would have a detrimental effect on the specific quality, character or integrity of a garden or designed landscape will not be approved unless it is demonstrated that the benefits of the proposal are of sufficient public interest to override that detriment.

Boundaries are shown on Map 7 and the Proposals Maps.

- **Policy NE2: Regional Scenic Areas** The siting and design of development within a Regional Scenic Area (RSAs) should respect the special qualities of the area. Development within, or which affects Regional Scenic Areas, may be supported where the Council is satisfied that:
  - the factors taken into account in designating the area would not be significantly adversely affected; or
  - there is a specific need for the development at that location. Boundaries of RSAs are shown on the Proposals Maps. Full details of relevant policy.
- **Policy NE8: Trees and Development** In assessing development proposals, the Council will support proposals that:
  - promote additional tree planting;
  - protect and enhance ancient woodland sites;
  - maintain trees, woodlands (in particular ancient and semi-natural woodlands), and hedgerows (thereafter referred to as the 'woodland resource') and require developers to incorporate, wherever feasible, the existing woodland resource into their schemes;
  - encourage planting of a type, scale, design, composition and species mix that is appropriate to its locality and appropriately incorporates the woodland resource into the overall design of the scheme; and
  - show how existing trees will be appropriately protected during the construction period.

In submitting development proposals, details should be provided of the arrangements to be made for the long term maintenance of both the existing woodland resource and any proposed new planting, including providing adequate room for further growth.

If it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that it is not possible to retain the woodland resource then an appropriate replacement planting scheme will be required to be agreed by the Council. Any such replacement planting scheme should normally be located within the site.

The processes and recommendations contained in BS 5837:2012, and any subsequent revised or amended document, should be taken into account in designing and implementing development proposals.

Where the works to a protected tree or trees forms part of a development proposal, the applicant should also demonstrate that:

- the benefits of the development, including any replacement planting, will outweigh the loss of or potential harm caused by the works to the tree or trees; and
- the development has been designed and located in order to minimise potential adverse impacts on the protected tree or trees. Supplementary guidance provides further advice and guidance in respect of survey work, designing around trees, new planting, protection during construction, maintenance and removing existing trees.

## **APPENDIX 3 – BLOCK PLAN AS PROPOSED**

Aitken Turnbull Architects, Block Plan as Proposed, Drawing no. P002

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## APPENDIX 4 - LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS PLAN

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## APPENDIX 5 - LIST OF FIGURES

Figure LA.01	Site Location Plan
Figure LA.02	Designations and Public Access
Figure LA.03	Landscape Character
Figure LA.04	Topography
Figure LA.05	Site Context
Figure LA.06-1	Zone of Theoretical Visibility Bare earth scenario
Figure LA.06-2	Zone of Theoretical Visibility Existing screening features included
Figure LA.06-3	Zone of Theoretical Visibility Intervisibility of proposed units
Figure LA.07-1 – LA07-8	Viewpoint Photographs