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# 1. Appendix 6H

## Assessment of landscape effects: Brecon Beacon National Park LCAs

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### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This appendix provides a detailed assessment of effects on the Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP). The assessment has been conducted for those LCAs which coincide with the blade tip ZTV as shown in **Figure 6.13** as follows:

- LCA 3: Fforest Fawr;
- LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys;
- LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys; and
- LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr.

1.1.2 None of these landscapes would be directly affected by the Proposed Development as the turbines and associated infrastructure would not be located within them, and there would be no change to their physical characteristics. Potential effects on these landscapes would be limited to indirect effects on the key visual or perceptual characteristics of these landscapes, resulting from views of wind turbines. The assessment considers the likely change to landscape character and as such it is different from the visual assessment of particular views, as experienced by people.

1.1.3 The cumulative landscape assessment has been informed by a review of **Figure 6.4**, the cumulative ZTVs in **Figures 6.20 to 6.22** and wirelines and has been undertaken in relation to the following scenarios:

- Cumulative Scenario 1: Baseline wind turbines (Operational + Consented); and
- Cumulative Scenario 2: Other proposed wind turbines (Cumulative Scenario 1 + Planning Application + Scoping Opinion).

## 1.2 Assessment of landscape effects

**Table 6H.1 Assessment of effects: LCA 3: Fforest Fawr**

LCA 3: Fforest Fawr	LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: 17
<p><b>Distinctive characteristics</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Complex underlying geology, with the Senni and Brownstones formations of the Old Red Sandstone in the north, a broken band of Carboniferous Limestone across the middle, and Marros Group sandstones and mudstones in the south. All three units form north-facing escarpments, that of the Old Red Sandstone being the most imposing.</i></li> <li>• <i>A glaciated landscape with a steep northern escarpment and a series of elevated summits. Cwms, and deep valleys are separated by intervening ridges (generally running north-south). Landform in the south of the LCA is less dramatic, forming a gently sloping plateau dissected by river valleys.</i></li> <li>• <i>Steep, fast flowing and rocky mountain streams (often spring-fed, or sourced from upland bogs), flow into larger rivers in valley bottoms. Ystradfellte Reservoir located near centre of LCA.</i></li> <li>• <i>Predominantly unenclosed moorland used for open grazing, with some forest blocks, particularly in the south and west of the LCA.</i></li> <li>• <i>Trees almost entirely coniferous, planted in forestry blocks often with sharp outlines. Distinctive coniferous shelter belts in the northern part of the area.</i></li> <li>• <i>Very few field boundaries, but dry-stone walls marking estate boundaries are distinctive to this LCA. Occasional post-and-wire fences.</i></li> <li>• <i>Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including marshy grassland, dry heath, acid/ neutral flushes and small areas of blanket bog. Vegetation composition reflects variations in underlying geology.</i></li> <li>• <i>Extensive prehistoric ritual landscapes, particularly in the south-east. Also evidence of Roman road, medieval settlements, industrial archaeology, WW2 defences and estate influences.</i></li> <li>• <i>A very lightly-settled landscape today, with occasional estate cottages and farms at its periphery. However in the past it has been much more densely settled, and the landscape contains evidence of settlement over millennia.</i></li> <li>• <i>An elevated, simple and expansive landscape, with colours and textures varying subtly with the underlying geology. Much of the LCA remains inaccessible except on foot, giving a sense of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness.”<sup>1</sup></i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Sensitivity</b></p>	<p>This LCA is located within a nationally designated landscape and the value of LCA 3: Fforest Fawr is therefore considered to be High. The perceptual characteristics relating to high levels of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness due to the relative lack of human influence and strong perceptions of naturalness indicate a landscape of higher susceptibility to change. Visual characteristics include higher levels of intervisibility from the summits with panoramic views over surrounding lower land, and across to the neighbouring uplands as well as dark skies with the LCA being within the BBNP core dark skies area. A sensitivity recorded in the extant assessment relates to <i>“Visual impacts, noise and night-time light pollution associated with developments beyond the National Park boundary”<sup>1</sup></i>. These factors combine to give rise to a susceptibility to change which is assessed as High-Medium and the overall sensitivity is assessed as <b>High</b>.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Fiona Fyfe Associates, with Julie Martin Associates, Alison Farmer Associates and Countryside. (2012). *Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment. LCA 3 Profile* [online]. Available at: [https://www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-3-PROFILE\\_final\\_120930.pdf](https://www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-3-PROFILE_final_120930.pdf)

<b>LCA 3: Fforest Fawr</b>	<b>LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: 17</b>
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<b>Magnitude of Change</b> (Proposed Development only)	<p><b>Whilst in Operation:</b>                  ZTV coverage is fragmentary across this LCA, as illustrated in <b>Figure 6.13</b> and is concentrated across three main areas at distances in excess of 18km (blade tip only) and over 20.5km for potential hub height visibility. The most southerly area coincides with Mynydd-y-Glog where visibility would primarily be with the blades/blade tips of the proposed turbines. A second area lies to the south of the A4059 and is concentrated across the summit of Cadair Fawr, extending across Cefn Sychbant to the south. A third area of broadly blade tip visibility extends across the southern slopes of Fan Fawr and Mynydd Y Garn on the north-eastern periphery of the study area. The majority of the LCA lies outside of the ZTV.</p> <p>It is not considered that the Proposed Development would significantly alter the key perceptual and visual characteristics of this landscape, which would remain an extensive area of upland moorland landscape with high scenic quality and a strong sense of place. LCA 3 would also continue to be valued for the integrity of its historic landscapes, and for its tranquillity and sense of remoteness. This is due to the fragmented visibility, separation distance (in excess of 18km) and the existing and closer influence of wind energy development within the extensive Pen-y-Cymoedd and Mynydd Bwlfa wind farms to the south, which means the Proposed Development would not appear incongruous. Instead, the distant and consequently small-scale presence of the Proposed Development in the wide panoramic views available from the elevated summits within the LCA, as shown in the photomontage in <b>Figure 6.39</b>, would give rise to an incremental influence on the perceptual qualities relating to a “<i>sense of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness</i>”<sup>1</sup> within these localised areas of landscape. The aviation warning lights would also contribute to a distant effect on the night-time views from areas of the LCA which coincide with the hub height ZTV, appearing as very small, points of perceived light.</p> <p>The magnitude of change on the landscape character would range from Very Low to Zero with the latter occurring across the majority of the LCA from which there is an absence of a visual effects pathway.</p> <p><b>Whilst Under Construction:</b>                  Ground based construction activities would not be visible from this location due to the separation distances and intervening landform, although a crane would be visible as a very small scale, distant vertical component when deployed during the construction period and only from areas of landscape which coincide with the hub height ZTV.</p> <p>The magnitude of change would range from Zero to Very Low.</p>	
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<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	High
	<b>Magnitude</b>	Very Low to Zero
	<b>Level of Effect</b>	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	<b>Type of Effect</b>	Long term (reversible), indirect and adverse

**Cumulative Assessment: Operational + Consented (Baseline) and Planning application + Scoping Opinion (Other proposed) wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD).**

<p><b>Cumulative Magnitude excluding the Proposed Development</b></p>	<p><b>Baseline wind turbines (Operational + Consented): <i>Low</i></b>                  Up to 14 operational wind turbine schemes within the CLVIA study area could be visible in southern and south-eastern views from this LCA. The majority of the turbines would be barely perceptible either due to turbine size, partial screening by intervening landform, their position below the horizon and/or separation distance. and would have very limited characterising influence. The two existing schemes of the Mynydd Bwillfa and Pen-y-Cymoedd which are located within 10km of the LCA and contribute to a Low magnitude of landscape change.                  The consented turbine at Maerdy T9 would have limited characterising influence within the LCA due to separation distance and location of the turbine beyond the cluster of existing turbines in outward views.  <b>Other proposed wind turbines (Planning application + Scoping Opinion): <i>Low</i></b>                  The planning application scheme at Mynydd Carn-y-Cefn would have limited landscape influence as a consequence of separation distance (<i>Very Low magnitude</i>).                  Scoping Opinion schemes which would be visible from within southern and south-eastern views from this LCA comprise Abertillery, Mynydd Llanhilleth, Manmoel, Pen March, Twyn Hywel, of which Pen March would have greatest influence due to its closer proximity to LCA 3. These schemes would give rise to a Low to Very Low magnitude of landscape change with a Moderate to Moderate/Minor level of effect which would be Not Significant.</p>			
<p><b>Scenario 1: Baseline wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)</b></p>	<p><b>Additional Magnitude:</b> (PD only)</p>	<p>Very Low to Zero</p>	<p><b>Additional Effect:</b> (PD only):</p>	<p>Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant</p>
	<p><b>Combined Magnitude:</b> (Baseline + PD)</p>	<p>Low to Zero</p>	<p><b>Combined Effect:</b> (Baseline + PD)</p>	<p>Moderate to None and Not Significant</p>
<p><b>Scenario 2: Baseline turbines + Other proposed wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)</b></p>	<p><b>Additional Magnitude:</b> (PD only)</p>	<p>Very Low to Zero</p>	<p><b>Additional Effect:</b> (PD only):</p>	<p>Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant</p>
	<p><b>Combined Magnitude:</b> (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)</p>	<p>Low to Zero</p>	<p><b>Combined Effect:</b> (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)</p>	<p>Moderate to None and Not Significant</p>
<p><b>Type of Effect</b></p>	<p>Long term (reversible), indirect, cumulative and adverse.</p>			

**Table 6H.2 Assessment of effects: LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys**

LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys	LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None
<b>Distinctive characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A complex underlying geology. Carboniferous limestone in the north with extensive cave systems. Elsewhere, predominantly sandstones and mudstones of the Marros Group and South Wales Lower Coal Measures.</li> <li>• A dramatic landform of steep, enclosed valleys, separated by ridges of flatter, higher land.</li> <li>• A series of fast-flowing, rocky streams and rivers running along the valley floors, often in shallow gorges. Numerous waterfalls – some spectacular-particularly at changes in geology.</li> <li>• Many waterfalls are accessible, including the popular Sgwyd yr Eira (‘fall of snow’)</li> <li>• Land use predominantly pastoral agriculture, but with extensive areas of forestry, particularly in the south of the area.</li> <li>• Limestone walls and hedgebanks enclosing irregular fields in valleys, with some hedges (predominantly beech or hawthorn). Higher land less enclosed, with more use of post-and-wire fencing.</li> <li>• A well-wooded landscape, with ancient broadleaved woodland in valleys and along streams, with blocks of conifer plantation on higher land.</li> <li>• Key Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including broadleaved woodland, wet woodland, a range of grasslands (calcareous, neutral and acid), fens, limestone pavement and wet heath.</li> <li>• A range of historic features in the landscape giving the area a strong sense of time-depth and reflecting the LCA’s past use for settlement, agriculture, transport and industry.</li> <li>• Settlements include villages of Ystradfellte and Penderyn, plus numerous scattered farms.</li> <li>• Development concentrated in valley floors, particularly along the A4067 and A4059. Some intervisibility with settlements, roads and other development beyond the National Park boundary</li> <li>• Limestone geology, field patterns and woodland creating a strongly textured landscape in the valleys, with grey and green the dominant colours. Higher areas are more open and simple in composition, with dark blocks of conifers contrasting in colour with the surrounding grassland.”<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Sensitivity</b>	<p>This LCA is located within a nationally designated landscape and the value is therefore considered to be <i>High</i>.</p> <p>The steep, enclosed valleys, and well-wooded landscape with corresponding lower levels of intervisibility indicate a landscape which is of moderate to low susceptibility to the type of change proposed. This is countered by the “<i>more open quality and long views</i>” which are available from the ridges of higher land between the valleys and reinforced by a LCA specific Management Guideline to “<i>Protect the upland skylines and occasional long views which form the backdrop to the area</i>”<sup>2</sup>. A stated sensitivity relates to the “<i>Loss of tranquillity as a result of visually intrusive/ audible developments beyond the National Park boundary</i>”<sup>2</sup>. These factors all combine to give rise to a susceptibility to change which is assessed as <i>Medium</i> and the overall sensitivity is assessed as <i>High</i></p>

<sup>2</sup> Fiona Fyfe Associates, with Julie Martin Associates, Alison Farmer Associates and Countryside. (2012). *Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment. LCA 4Profile* [online]. Available at: [https://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-4-PROFILE\\_final\\_120930.pdf](https://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-4-PROFILE_final_120930.pdf)

<b>LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys</b>	<b>LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None</b>
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<b>Magnitude of Change</b> (Proposed Development only)	<p><b>Whilst in Operation:</b>                  A review of <b>Figure 6.13</b> indicates a localised area of blade tip only visibility from within the LCA, concentrated across the area around Carreg Gorslwm, above the Afon Hepste and to the west of the A4059 from which the blade tips of up to six turbines within the Proposed Development may be visible.</p> <p>It is not considered that the Proposed Development would significantly alter the key perceptual and visual characteristics of LCA 4, which would continue to be valued for its dramatic landform of steep, enclosed valleys, separated by ridges of flatter, higher land and for the numerous and often accessible waterfalls which contribute to the area’s high scenic quality and strong sense of place. This is due to the fragmented blade tip visibility and separation distance in excess of 23km, which means that the distant presence of the blade tips would be barely perceptible. There would be no views of the aviation warning lights from within the LCA.</p> <p>The magnitude of change on the landscape character would range from <i>Very Low</i> across a small and localised area which coincides with the blade tip ZTV and would be <i>Zero</i> for the remainder (majority) of the LCA.</p> <p><b>Whilst Under Construction:</b>                  No ground based or elevated construction activities would be visible from this location due to the separation distances and intervening landform. The magnitude of change would be <i>Zero</i>.</p>
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<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	High
	<b>Magnitude</b>	Very Low to Zero
	<b>Level of Effect</b>	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	<b>Type of Effect</b>	Long term (reversible), indirect and neutral

**Cumulative Assessment: Operational + Consented (Baseline) and Planning application + Scoping Opinion (Other proposed) wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD).**

<b>Cumulative Magnitude excluding the Proposed Development</b>	<p><b>Baseline wind turbines (Operational + Consented):</b> <i>Low</i>                  Up to eight operational wind turbine schemes within the CLVIA study area could be visible in southern and western views from this LCA. These include those at Ferndale, Maerdy, Mynydd Bwllfa, Pen-y-Cymoedd, Ffynnon Oer, Melin Court in views to the south and Maesgwyn in views to the west. The majority of the turbines would be barely perceptible due to turbine size, partial screening by intervening landform and/or separation distance, and would have very limited characterising influence. The operational turbines at Pen-y-Cymoedd, Maerdy and Mynydd Bwllfa, although not prominent, extend across a moderate proportion of southerly views. The consented turbines (Maerdy T9) would be barely perceptible due to turbine size, separation distance and consequently would have very limited characterising influence within the LCA.</p> <p><b>Other proposed wind turbines (Planning application + Scoping Opinion):</b> <i>N/A</i>                  No planning application schemes would be visible from within LCA 4. Reference to the cumulative ZTVs and wirelines also indicates that no Scoping Opinion schemes would be visible from within LCA 4.</p>
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LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys		LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None		
<b>Scenario 1: Baseline wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)</b>	<b>Additional Magnitude:</b> (PD only)	Very Low to Zero	<b>Additional Effect:</b> (PD only):	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	<b>Combined Magnitude:</b> (Baseline + PD)	Low to Zero	<b>Combined Effect:</b> (Baseline + PD)	Moderate to None and Not Significant
<b>Scenario 2: Baseline turbines + Other proposed wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)</b>	<b>Additional Magnitude:</b> (PD only)	Very Low to Zero	<b>Additional Effect:</b> (PD only):	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	<b>Combined Magnitude:</b> (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)	Low to Zero	<b>Combined Effect:</b> (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)	Moderate to None and Not Significant
<b>Type of Effect</b>	Long term (reversible), indirect, cumulative and adverse.			



**Table 6H.3 Assessment of effects: LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys**

LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys	LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None
<b>Distinctive characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Mostly underlain by Devonian age sandstones of the Brownstones Formation, with small areas of the upper Old Red Sandstone Grey Grits and Carboniferous Limestone in the south, and Twrch Sandstone on the southern margin.</i></li> <li>• <i>A series of steep V-shaped valleys separated by flatter uplands. The Taff valleys have a strong north-south orientation and drain southwards, whilst the Talybont valley lies broadly north-east to south-west and drains into the Usk.</i></li> <li>• <i>Chains of artificial reservoirs occur in valleys, linked by rivers. Mountain streams (and occasional waterfalls) flow down the steep valley sides, sculpting sandstone and limestone rocks.</i></li> <li>• <i>Coniferous forestry is dominant land use, plus reservoirs, pasture and open moorland.</i></li> <li>• <i>Surviving field boundaries usually stone walls, occasionally patched with post and wire. Some former field boundaries still visible within forestry plantations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Extensive coniferous forests, with some larch and patches of more mixed deciduous woodland (for example on the western side of the Llwyn-onn valley). Deciduous trees also associated with watercourses.</i></li> <li>• <i>Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including modified blanket bog, marshy grassland, broadleaved and coniferous woodland, flush/spring and acid grassland.</i></li> <li>• <i>Many historic features lost under reservoirs and forests. Surviving features include farms, field boundaries and Vaynor church. Parts of the Brecon and Newport Railway survive, including Pont-sarn viaduct, the opening of the tunnel which connected the Talybont and Taff valleys, and some track (now the Brecon Mountain Railway) and station buildings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Very limited settlement within the LCA (Llwynonn, Pontsticill and occasional farms). Other built development includes housing for reservoir workers, large-scale water treatment works below dams, and former limestone quarries.</i></li> <li>• <i>Recreation provision e.g. car parks, picnic areas, trails, Garwant Forest Visitor Centre, watersports.</i></li> <li>• <i>Generally a simple landscape composition, with large blocks of forest in simple valley landform. Forests appear strongly textured (especially where they include deciduous trees) and contrast in colour with surrounding open moorland.”<sup>3</sup></i></li> </ul>
<b>Sensitivity</b>	<p>This LCA is located within a nationally designated landscape and the value is therefore considered to be <i>High</i>.</p> <p>The extensive coniferous forests and valley landforms and corresponding lower levels of intervisibility indicate a landscape which is of moderate to low susceptibility to the type of change proposed. Whilst some level of tranquillity and relative remoteness exists, this is weaker than in other more remote LCAs due to the LCA’s proximity to urban areas, the A470 and A465 although a stated sensitivity relates to the “<i>Loss of tranquillity as a result of visually intrusive/ audible developments beyond the National Park boundary</i>”<sup>3</sup>. These factors all combine to give rise to a susceptibility to change which is assessed as <i>Medium</i> and the overall sensitivity is assessed as <i>High</i>.</p>
<b>Magnitude of Change (Proposed Development only)</b>	<p><b>Whilst in Operation:</b></p> <p>Areas of intervisibility with the Proposed Development are concentrated across three small areas as indicated in <b>Figure 6.13</b>. The first coincides with the summit of Cefn</p>

<sup>3</sup> Fiona Fyfe Associates, with Julie Martin Associates, Alison Farmer Associates and Countryside. (2012). *Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment. LCA 8 Profile* (Online). Available at: [https://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-8-PROFILE\\_final\\_120930.pdf](https://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-8-PROFILE_final_120930.pdf) (Accessed April 2022).

<b>LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys</b>	<b>LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None</b>
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Cilsanws to the east of the A470 on the southern edge of the National Park whilst the second area lies to the west of the A470, covering the upper and south facing slopes of Onllwyn and Penmoelallt. Much of this western sub-area is covered by forestry which is not factored into the ZTV calculation and therefore intervisibility from within this area is more likely to be restricted. The third area of intervisibility covers the upper slopes to the north-east of Garn ddu.

It is not considered that the Proposed Development would significantly alter the key perceptual and visual characteristics of LCA 8, which would continue to be characterised by its reservoirs and steep sided, forested valleys. This is due to the fragmented areas of intervisibility, within which the distant and consequently small-scale presence of the Proposed Development in the wide panoramic views available from the elevated summits, (at minimum distance of 19.5km and 21.5km), would have limited influence on the perceptual qualities relating to tranquillity. The aviation warning lights would also contribute to a distant effect on the night-time views from areas of the LCA which coincide with the hub height ZTV, appearing as very small, points of perceived light beyond the brightly lit valley conurbations of Merthyr Tydfil, Rhymney and Tredegar to the south of the National Park boundary. The magnitude of change on the landscape character would range from *Very Low* within areas which overlap with the hub height and blade tip ZTV and would be *Zero* for the remainder (majority) of the LCA.

**Whilst Under Construction:**

Ground based construction activities would not be visible from this location due to the separation distances, although a crane would be visible as a very small scale, distant vertical component from areas of landscape which coincide with the hub height ZTV when deployed during the construction period.

The magnitude of change would range from *Zero to Very Low*.

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	High
	<b>Magnitude</b>	Very Low to Zero
	<b>Level of Effect</b>	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	<b>Type of Effect</b>	Long term (reversible), indirect and adverse

**Cumulative Assessment: Operational + Consented (Baseline) and Planning application + Scoping Opinion (Other proposed) wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD).**

<b>Cumulative Magnitude excluding the Proposed Development</b>	<p><b>Baseline wind turbines (Operational + Consented): <i>Low</i></b></p> <p>Up to 19 operational wind turbine schemes within the CLVIA study area could be visible in eastern, southern and western views from this LCA. The majority of the turbines would be barely perceptible either due to turbine size, partial screening by intervening landform, their position below the horizon and/or separation distance. and would have very limited characterising influence. The exception relates to the operational turbines at Pen-y-Cymoedd, Maerdy, Mynydd Bwllfa and Abergorki which although not prominent, extend across a moderate proportion of south-westerly views.</p> <p>The consented turbine at Graig yr hufen Road would be barely perceptible due to turbine size and separation distance whilst Maerdy T9 would be incremental to the Maerdy/Abergorki cluster of turbines within south-westerly views and consequently would have limited characterising influence within the LCA.</p>
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LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys		LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None		
<p><b>Other proposed wind turbines (Planning application + Scoping Opinion):</b>  <i>Medium</i></p> <p>The planning application scheme at Mynydd Carn Y Cefn would be visible from small and localised areas within the LCA but would have limited characterising influence due separation distance (<i>Low to Very Low magnitude</i>).</p> <p>Scoping Opinion schemes which would be visible from within southern and eastern views from this LCA comprise Abertillery, Mynydd Llanhilleth, Manmoel, Pen March and Twyn Hywel. Of these, the turbines at Pen March (180m to blade tip) would have greatest influence due to their closer proximity to the east of LCA 8 and could become moderately prominent visual components in eastern views from Cefn Cilsanws and from the upper slopes to the north-east of Garn ddu. This scheme has the potential to give rise to a <b>Medium</b> magnitude of landscape change and a <b>localised significant effect</b> but only as result of this scheme, not the addition of the Proposed Development. The four other Scoping Opinion Schemes would give rise to a Low to Very Low magnitude of landscape change with a Moderate to Moderate/Minor level of effect which would be Not Significant.</p>				
<b>Scenario 1: Baseline wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)</b>	<b>Additional Magnitude:</b> (PD only)	Very Low to Zero	<b>Additional Effect:</b> (PD only):	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	<b>Combined Magnitude:</b> (Baseline + PD)	Low to Zero	<b>Combined Effect:</b> (Baseline + PD)	Moderate to None and Not Significant
<b>Scenario 2: Baseline turbines + Other proposed wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)</b>	<b>Additional Magnitude:</b> (PD only)	Very Low to Zero	<b>Additional Effect:</b> (PD only):	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	<b>Combined Magnitude:</b> (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)	Medium to Zero	<b>Combined Effect:</b> (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)	<b>Major/Moderate and locally Significant</b> to None and Not Significant
<b>Type of Effect</b>	Long term (reversible), indirect, cumulative and adverse.			

**Table 6H.4 Assessment of effects: LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr**

LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr	LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None
<b>Distinctive characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“A north-facing scarp formed by Carboniferous Limestone; the moors to the south having a thin cover of Twrch Sandstone and displaying karstic features including cliffs, caves, shake holes and limestone pavement. Area of lowermost South Wales Coal Measures sandstones (‘Farewell Rock’) and mudstones in the east.</i></li> <li>• <i>An elevated plateau-like landform, mostly above 400m ASL. From high ground, horizons appear low and smooth.</i></li> <li>• <i>Boggy ground and springs forming the sources of several rivers. Few waterbodies, including small upland pools and Llangynidr reservoir.</i></li> <li>• <i>Land use almost entirely open grazing on unenclosed common land. Extensive quarries (no longer worked), and small area of plantation on southern edge.</i></li> <li>• <i>An open landscape with no field boundaries and very few trees.</i></li> <li>• <i>Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including dry dwarf shrub heath, marshy grassland, unmodified blanket bog, modified blanket bog, acid/ neutral flush and limestone cliff habitats.</i></li> <li>• <i>A concentration of prehistoric archaeological sites, including numerous Cairns on high ground, plus more recent archaeology associated with quarrying.</i></li> <li>• <i>Very limited settlement, but views to settlement in the Usk valley to the north, and other development (e.g. roads, pylons) beyond the southern boundary of the National Park.</i></li> <li>• <i>An exceptionally open landscape, with subtle changes in texture and seasonal colour resulting from variations in moorland vegetation.”<sup>4</sup></i></li> </ul>
<b>Sensitivity</b>	<p>This LCA is located within a nationally designated landscape and the value is therefore considered to be <i>High</i>. The perceptual characteristics relating to “<i>sense of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness in parts, despite its proximity to settlements to the south</i>”<sup>4</sup> and visual characteristic relating to high levels of intervisibility with other landscapes as well as the presence of dark skies (the western part is within the BBNP core dark skies area) are indicators of a landscape which is of higher susceptibility to change due to the type of development proposed. This is counterbalanced slightly by the baseline presence of vertical elements (pylons) which are noted in a distinctive characteristic and by the presence of existing turbines including those within the industrial estates of Brynmawr, Pen Bryn Oer and the array of turbines within the Maerdy, Mynydd Bwlfa and Pen-y-Cymoedd wind farms. Sensitivities recorded in the published Profile in relation to <i>Scenic quality and Sense of place and Perceptual qualities</i> include “<i>Inappropriate development, (including outside the National Park) which affects skylines and/or views</i>”<sup>4</sup> and “<i>Proximity to settlement and development to the south mean that perceptual qualities are sensitive to new development (including beyond the National Park boundary)....</i>”<sup>4</sup>. Whilst key views are recorded a being those of prehistoric sites, views northwards across the Usk Valley and the and across to the Central Beacons (i.e. not in the direction of the Proposed Development), the LCA-Specific Management Guidelines seek to “<i>Protect the long views from the area, including those southwards to land outside the National Park.</i>”<sup>4</sup> These factors all combine to give rise to a susceptibility to change which is assessed as <i>Medium</i> and the overall sensitivity is assessed as <i>High</i>.</p>

<sup>4</sup> Fiona Fyfe Associates, with Julie Martin Associates, Alison Farmer Associates and Countryside. (2012). *Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment. LCA 9 Profile* (Online). Available at: [https://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-9-PROFILE\\_final\\_120930.pdf](https://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCA-9-PROFILE_final_120930.pdf) (Accessed April 2022).

LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr		LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None	
<b>Magnitude of Change</b> (Proposed Development only)	<p><b>Whilst in Operation:</b></p> <p>Reference to <b>Figure 6.13</b> indicates that the Proposed Development would be visible from within a small proportion of this LCA, concentrated across the upper slopes of Buarth y Caerau and Waun Rydd at distances beyond 23.5km and across the southern and eastern slopes of Cefn yr Ystrad at a minimum distance of 21.5km. The Proposed Development would affect a very small part of the overall visual experience gained from within this landscape, experienced as part of much wider panoramas in which existing vertical structures beyond the National Park boundary are present and hence would not be incongruous. It would not alter the key views north across the Usk Valley and across to the Central Beacons, as cited in the extant Profile<sup>4</sup>, which are in the opposite direction to the turbines located to the south. It is not considered that the Proposed Development would significantly alter the distinctive characteristics or the key perceptual and visual characteristics of LCA 9, which would continue as an elevated plateau of moorland, characterised by its openness, smooth profile, lack of settlement, prehistoric archaeology and quarrying legacy. The aviation warning lights would also contribute to a very distant effect on the night-time views from areas of the LCA which coincide with the hub height ZTV, appearing as small points of perceived light, at times in the same field of view as the brightly lit valley conurbation Merthyr Tydfil. The magnitude of change on the landscape character would range from <i>Very Low</i> within areas which overlap with the blade tip and hub height ZTVs and would be <i>Zero</i> for the remainder of the LCA.</p> <p><b>Whilst Under Construction:</b></p> <p>Ground based construction activities would not be visible from this location due to the separation distances, although a crane may be visible from areas of landscape which coincide with the hub height ZTV in optimum viewing conditions and when deployed during the construction period.</p> <p>The magnitude of change would range from <i>Zero to Very Low</i>.</p>		
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	High	
	<b>Magnitude</b>	Very Low to Zero	
	<b>Level of Effect</b>	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant	
	<b>Type of Effect</b>	Long term (reversible), indirect and adverse	
<p><b>Cumulative Assessment: Operational + Consented (Baseline) and Planning application + Scoping Opinion (Other proposed) wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD).</b></p>			
<b>Cumulative Magnitude excluding the Proposed Development</b>	<p><b>Baseline wind turbines (Operational + Consented): <i>Low</i></b></p> <p>Up to 20 operational wind turbine schemes within the CLVIA study area could be visible in easterly, southerly and westerly views from this LCA. The majority of the turbines would be barely perceptible either due to turbine size, their position below the horizon and/or separation distance. and would have very limited characterising influence. The most noticeable operational turbines include those at Abergorki, Pen-y-Cymoedd, Maerdy and Mynydd Bwllfa, which although small in scale and not prominent as a consequence of the separation distance, extend across a moderate proportion of south-westerly views. The three turbines at Pen Bryn Oer would be noticeable vertical components in views due to the closer separation distance.</p> <p>The consented turbines would be barely perceptible due to turbine size and/or separation distance and consequently would have limited characterising influence within the LCA.</p>		

LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr		LVIA viewpoint locations within the LCA: None		
<p><b>Other proposed wind turbines (Planning application + Scoping Opinion): High</b>                      The planning application scheme at Mynydd Carn y Cefn would be visible from small and localised areas within the LCA but would have limited characterising influence due to separation distance (<i>Low magnitude</i>).</p> <p>Scoping Opinion schemes which would be visible from within this LCA comprise Abertillery, Mynydd Llanhilleth, Manmoel, Pen March and Twyn Hywel. The turbines at Pen March (180m to blade tip) would have greatest influence due to their location close to the southern edge of this LCA and would become dominant visual components in views south from Cefn yr Ystrad. This scheme has the potential to give rise to a <b>High to Medium</b> magnitude of landscape change and <b>localised significant effects</b> from within this LCA, particularly from across Cefn yr Ystrad, although not as a result of the addition of the Proposed Development. The remaining Scoping Opinion schemes would contribute to a Low magnitude of landscape change and a Moderate and Not Significant effect.</p>				
Scenario 1: Baseline wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)	Additional Magnitude: (PD only)	Very Low to Zero	Additional Effect: (PD only):	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	Combined Magnitude: (Baseline + PD)	Low to Zero	Combined Effect: (Baseline + PD)	Moderate to None and Not Significant
Scenario 2: Baseline turbines + Other proposed wind turbines and the Proposed Development (PD)	Additional Magnitude: (PD only)	Very Low to Zero	Additional Effect: (PD only):	Moderate/Minor to None and Not Significant
	Combined Magnitude: (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)	High to Zero	Combined Effect: (Baseline + Other proposed and PD)	<b>Major and locally Significant</b> to None and Not Significant
Type of Effect	Long term (reversible), indirect, cumulative and adverse.			