Landscape protection is required in those areas where views or the setting of the Antonine Wall could be affected. In other areas suitably designed wind turbine groups which generally fit within the landscape could potentially be accommodated even though they may have an impact on the urban fringe landscape locally. Small scale development less than 20m in height may be acceptable where it relates well to the existing landscape in terms of scale and design, and where it relates well to existing buildings in terms of scale and location. All applications for smaller turbines will be decided on their own merits and must include detailed landscape and visual impact assessment including consideration of all criteria adopted in this study.

- 11.2 A relatively narrow, flat open valley between Falkirk and Grangemouth, its character is heavily influenced by adjacent industrialisation, other built development and major communication routes. At the northern end the area widens out where the River Carron meets the Forth & Clyde Canal, providing landscape interest including the location of 'The Helix' community project. Elsewhere the area lies within views from many residential properties in the urban fringe.
- 11.3 Some wind energy development within the urban fringe may be appropriate where it is in keeping with the character of the landscape, where existing transport routes, associated infrastructure and other development may combine to reduce the impact of new turbines. However if it was considered that the addition of new development would breach the threshold or 'tipping point' of landscape change, the Council would need to consider whether the resulting landscape, visual and cumulative effects would be acceptable, particularly where sited close to residential property.

#### 12. Capacity within Landscape Character Area 5(i) Manuel Farmlands

- 12.1 There is Low-Moderate capacity to accommodate wind energy development. The larger wind turbine typology heights above 50m are unlikely to be acceptable, with potentially significant effects on key visual criteria in particular. Landscape protection from wind energy development should be the objective in accordance with the Special Initiative for Residential-Led Regeneration (SIRR) in the Structure Plan which has identified the area as having the potential for large scale development which would significantly change existing landscape character and which is unlikely to be compatible with wind energy development. Small scale development less than 50m in height may be acceptable where it relates well to the existing landscape in terms of scale and design, and where it relates well to existing buildings in terms of scale and location. All applications for smaller turbines will be decided on their own merits and must include detailed landscape and visual impact assessment including consideration of all criteria adopted in this study.
- 12.2 Turbines located on prominent ridges or which affect views from the 'important' viewpoint at Cockleroy in West Lothian or sensitive routes to the Bathgate Hills or the Forth, or from / to the Antonine Wall, could create significant visual impact.

12.3 The *Manuel Farmlands* is a small-medium scale, smoothly rolling landscape, with a variety of landuses, some a legacy of previous minerals working, with surrounding farmland and isolated estate houses with policy woodlands. The semi-complex character due to the fragmented pattern of land uses would suggest that some wind energy development could be accommodated, but impacts on key visual criteria would need to be carefully considered.

#### 13. Capacity within Landscape Character Area 6(i) Bo'ness Coastal Hills

- 13.1 There is Low-Moderate capacity to accommodate wind energy development. The larger wind turbine typology heights above 50m are unlikely to be acceptable, with potentially significant effects on key visual criteria in particular. Landscape protection should be the objectiveto maintain the existing landscape character and visual resource, to retain or reinforce its present character and protect its quality and integrity. Small scale development less than 50m in height may be acceptable where it relates well to the existing landscape in terms of scale and design, and where it relates well to existing buildings in terms of scale and location. All applications for smaller turbines will be decided on their own merits and must include detailed landscape and visual impact assessment including consideration of all criteria adopted in this study.
- 13.2 Views from 'important' viewpoints at the House of Binns Tower and Cockleroy in West Lothian, and from sensitive routes cover significant parts of the area. Prominent ridges are important to intervisibility where wind turbines would be particularly visible. There are important views from the *Bo'ness Coastal Hills* to the Bathgate Hills and across the Firth of Forth to the Ochil Hills beyond the Falkirk Council boundary, where wind turbines would be harmful to the setting and landscape context of the landscape character area. The northern part of the landscape character area has a strong visual relationship with the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site (WHS) with views to and from the WHS where development has the potential to affect the setting of the Wall.
- 13.3 Turbines would intrude on views from popular walking routes. They would contrast with the settled nature and scale of the landscape. When seen in views of features in the distance they could intrude on the composition and affect the perception of distance. There are important 'iconic' views from Blackness Castle across the eastern part of the *Bo'ness Coastal Hills* where wind energy development would be inappropriate.
- 13.4 The six 20m tall operational turbines within farmland at Muirhouse lie within the *Bo'ness Coastal Hills*. These generally relate well to the existing simple pattern of the landscape in terms of location, scale and design. Any similar turbine development must relate to the field pattern and maintain separation to avoid cumulative impacts. Despite proximity to the Forth there is not a strong horizontal emphasis to the area due to the undulating hills which provide great contrast in views and limit scale to medium. Large turbines would affect openness when viewed against the coast and would not fit with the scale and semi-open character.
- 13.5 Potential cumulative effects of new development seen within views of the existing turbines at Muirhouse will need careful assessment. There is the potential for 'in combination', 'in succession' and/or 'sequential' cumulative

effects from locations within the *Bo'ness Coastal Hills* and when travelling through adjacent character areas which could create the perception of a landscape dominated by wind turbines where the landscape, and in particular visual sensitivity, is unable to accept such a level of change.

# 14. Capacity within Landscape Character Area 6(ii) Grangemouth / Kinneil Flats

- 14.1 There is Moderate-High capacity to accommodate wind energy development. Landscape accommodation or landscape change is the most appropriate objective where the landscape could become a landscape with some wind energy development.
- 14.2 The character area occupies the flat reclaimed saltmarsh between Grangemouth and Bo'ness. Despite being largely open, it has a unique, developed coastal character due to the presence of the petrochemical works, docks and other industrial installations on the wide, expansive, large scale coastal flats alongside the Forth. Large turbines taller than 100m could relate visually to the vertical nature of the industrial development nearby, where smaller and single turbines could appear trivial and out of scale in the context of the nearby industry. Blade movement could have a visual relationship with the movement of flames, steam and other outputs from the oil refinery and chemical works.

#### 15. Capacity within Landscape Character Area 6(iii) Skinflats

- 15.1 There is Moderate capacity to accommodate wind energy development. The larger wind turbine typology heights above 50m are unlikely to be acceptable. Landscape protection is requiredin those areas where the objective is to maintain the existing landscape character and visual resource, to retain or reinforce its present character and protect its quality and integrity. In other areas suitably designed wind turbine groups which generally fit within the landscape could potentially be accommodated even though they may have an impact on the urban fringe landscape locally. Small scale development less than 50m in height may be acceptable where it relates well to the existing landscape in terms of scale and design, and where it relates well to existing buildings in terms of scale and location. All applications for smaller turbines will be decided on their own merits and must include detailed landscape and visual impact assessment including consideration of all criteria adopted in this study.
- 15.2 Key landscape characteristics are the large scale, open, flat and very low lying, and horizontal coastal margin. The scale and character of the coastal landscape would suggest that larger turbines and groups could be an appropriate fit. However, the *Skinflats* are highly sensitive visually with extensive views of the Forth and to the Ochil Hills beyond from sensitive transport corridors and other amenity routes. The setting of the character area and in particular the contrast between the flat open coastal margins and the distinctive landmark hills is especially sensitive. Turbines could interrupt the strong horizon of the Forth and views of the long horizontal form of the Ochils, and it is important that turbines do not detract from these key characteristics.

- 15.3 There is a relatively narrow visual cone from the 'important' viewpoint at Airth Castle where wind energy development would be inappropriate where the character of the landscape and visual amenity was adversely affected.
- 15.4 There are close views of existing power lines and pylons which appear as incongruous vertical features into this characteristically flat landscape. Turbines could create visual confusion with the dominant foci of pylons, and would accentuate the visual impact. Even small turbines could appear out of scale with the wide open landscape, where fields are large and skies are huge.

#### 16. Capacity within Landscape Character Area 6(iv) Carse of Forth

- 16.1 There is Moderate capacity to accommodate wind energy development. The larger wind turbine typology heights above 50m are unlikely to be acceptable. Landscape protection is required in those areas where the objective is to maintain the existing landscape character and visual resource, to retain or reinforce its present character and protect its quality and integrity. In other areas suitably designed wind turbine groups which generally fit within the landscape could potentially be accommodated even though they may have an impact on the urban fringe landscape locally. Small scale development less than 50m in height may be acceptable where it relates well to the existing landscape in terms of scale and design, and where it relates well to existing buildings in terms of scale and location. All applications for smaller turbines will be decided on their own merits and must include detailed landscape and visual impact assessment including consideration of all criteria adopted in this study.
- 16.2 Key landscape characteristics are the large scale, open, flat and very low lying, horizontal coastal margin. The scale and character of the coastal landscape would suggest that larger turbines and groups could be an appropriate fit. However, the *Carse of Forth* is highly sensitive visually with extensive views of the Forth and to the Ochil Hills beyond from sensitive transport corridors and other amenity routes. Other key visual sensitivities are views from 'important' viewpoints at Airth Castle and the Falkirk Wheel. The setting of the character area and in particular the contrast between the flat open coastal margins and the distinctive landmark hills is especially sensitive. Turbines could interrupt the strong horizon of the Forth and views of the long horizontal form of the Ochils, and it is important that turbines do not detract from these key characteristics.
- 16.3 Existing power lines and pylons appear as incongruous vertical features into this characteristically flat landscape. Turbines would create visual confusion with the dominant foci of pylons, and would accentuate the visual impact. Even small turbines could appear out of scale with the wide open landscape, where fields are large and skies are huge. The perception of vertical scale afforded by the minor hills at Airth and Dunmore limits acceptable turbine height, where even the smallest turbines would be inappropriate.

# APPENDIX 4: LIST OF SENSITIVE ROUTES AND KEY VIEWS

VIEW	GRID REF	
Specific & general loc		en views:
Falkirk Wheel	NS852801	Important visitor attraction – elevated views to the north, west and east
Bo'ness foreshore & coastal section of Bo'ness railway	NS985815 approx.	Coastal paths / walks-views to the west up the Forth and to the north & east, although generally a narrow area of view
Coast near Dunmore / Airth	NS890900 approx.	Coastal path along foreshore. Views north to the Ochils, east & southeast down the Forth & south across the carseland
Falkirk - Slamannan Rd / Bantaskine area (south side of Falkirk) (see B803 below)	NS875786 approx.	Views over Falkirk north to the Ochils & east down the Forth. Also views up from southern edge of Falkirk, southwards
Upper Maddiston & Wallacestone / Shieldhill environs (including Maddiston to California minor road on ridge)	NS926765 approx.	Views predominantly to northwards across Falkirk & westwards. Also views up from southern edge of Wallacestone, Rumford & Maddiston, southwards
Denny Muir fringes - Minor road between Drumbowie Reservoir & B818 & environs of Myot Hill	NS 772825 approx.	Open views to the east over much of lowland Falkirk to the Forth. Minor roads appear well used for walking / cycling. Also views up to the hills & hill fringes & northwards across the <i>Carron Glen</i>
Bo'ness hills	NS995793 approx.	High ground / minor road network between Bo'ness & Linlithgow. Popular walking / cycling from Bo'ess & leading to Birkhall Station on Bo'ness railway. Views generally west to south and also eastwards to Airngath Hill, Tower at House of the Binns & the Bathgate Hills in West Lothian
Whitecross / B825	NS982770 approx.	Views eastwards of the Avon Viaduct, Avon Valley & the Bathgate Hills
West Lothian Golf Course south of Bo'ness/ Bomains	NT005793 approx.	On Falkirk Council boundary – views mainly northwards across the Forth and some views to the west
Blackness	NT055803	Views west up Forth, in particular from Blackness Castle which is an 'iconic' viewpoint
Antonine Wall and Buffer Zone	NS815795 etc.	Specific sections outside urban areas
Torwood (eastern edge to A9)	NS842848 approx.	Open views E over flat land to Letham Moss & carseland
Minor roads in Touch Hills Fringe between M80/A872 & A9	NS821845 approx.	Views westwards into hill fringes & Kilsyth / Denny Hills

Denny / Dunipace	NS805815	Glimpses through built up areas north-eastwards to Touch Hill
Denny / Dumpace	approx.	Fringe & westwards to Denny Hills
		Fringe
Roads / routes with or	oen sections ai	
B803 Slamannan –	NS850752	Views from high points on the B803 north of Slamannan,
Falkirk	approx.	mainly northwards across Falkirk Council area & south across
road		the plateau, & westwards
B8022/ B825	NS887720	Views north across Slamannan Plateau – including views
Slamannan / Limerigg	approx.	southwards from the B825 east of Avonbridge
to		
Avonbridge		
B8028	NS909745	Views across Slamannan Plateau - main views are
Avonbridge toFalkirk	approx.	southwards between Avonbridge & California, & north from
		northern edge of California & from the minor road west of Shieldhill
B805 / A801	NS944760	Views from south of Maddiston, southwards
D003 / A001	approx.	
'C' road between	NS861786	Views north over Bonnybridge including new viewpoint &
Allandale	approx.	Callendar Estate cycle trail, and other viewpoints from high
to Bantaskine (Drum /		ground on minor roads running north/south between the 'C'
Greenrig)		road &
•		Bonnybridge
B816 between	NS846795	Views north from Roughcastle Community
Bonnybridge	approx.	Woodland raised viewpoint on former workings
and Tamfourhill		
A876- Clackmannan /	NS920869	On the approaches, views to the east across the Forth and to
Kincardine Bridge	approx.	the west across the carseland
M9 & M876	NS890849	Elevated sections give views to the southwest and to the east
A872 / M80 north of	approx. NS803838	to the Ochil Hills Views west to <i>Kilsyth / Denny Hills</i> , especially from minor road
Dunipace / Denny	approx.	to west of M80
A803 Linlithgow –	NS927782	Sporadic open views to the south
Polmont	approx.	
A905 north of	NS906847	Open views to the west and east across the
Grangemouth	approx.	carselands
A88 (north of	NS900846	Views north to M9 Motorway / Letham Moss. East of M9
Stenhousemuir)	approx.	views are dominated by Longannet power station – west of
		M9 there are panoramic views to the southeast to the
		Bathgate Hills
Shieldhill – Brightons	NS906774	Views mainly to the east and north
Road	approx.	
(B810) Forth & Clyde Canal /	NS856798	From open sections where views are
Union	approx.	predominantly to the north (there is generally higher ground to
Canal		the south)
Linlithgow-Polmont	NS983769	Open rural views, in particular from Avon Viaduct
section	approx.	
of railway		
Edinburgh-Glasgow	NS882790	Open views to north and glimpses mostly from surrounding
railway	approx.	roads on high ground
line – environs of		
Falkirk High Station		
Bo'ness – Kinneil	NS967784	Visitor attraction with some views out across coastal hills and
steam	approx.	rolling farmlands
railway A803 on western	NS760787	A803 including parking area on council boundary with
council	approx.	extensive views to southeast across bonny water to northern
		_ CALCHORE VIEWS TO SOUTHEAST ACTOSS DUTING WALET TO HOTHERIN

boundary		plateau farmlands
M80/B816 on western	NS788783	Views north from M80 through arches of railway
council boundary at	approx.	viaduct to Denny Hill Fringe
Castlecary		

### **APPENDIX 5: LOCAL ECOLOGICAL SITES**

WILDLIFE SITES ALMOND BING NS 961 763 **BALQUATSTONE NS 865 725** BARLEYSIDE NS 862 759 BLACKHILL MOSS NS 813 776 BLACK LOCH NS 863 702 BO'NESS FORESHORE NS 982 811 **BONNYFIELD QUARRY NS 815 800** BONNYBRIDGE DAM NS 833 796 BRAES WOOD NS 795 850 CALIFORNIA NS 903 763 CALLENDAR WOOD & LAKE NS 902 787 CAMELON RIVERSIDE NS 870 813 CANDIE MIRE NS 927 738 CARRIDEN WOOD NT 022 804 CASTLECARY WOOD NS 808 772 **CLEUCH PLANTATION NS 887 775 COWDEN NS 767 803** CRAIGBANK QUARRY (AVONBRIDGE) NS 908 722 DRUMBROIDER NS 919 753 DUNMORE MOSS AND WOOD NS 870 890; NS 880 885 DRUMBOWIE RESERVOIR NS 784 810 EASTER DRUMCLAIR NS 865 711 EASTER GREENRIG NS 827 738 FORTH & CLYDE CANAL NS 805 790 - NS 843 804 GARBETHILL MOSS NS 831 755 **GRANGENEUK MOSS NS 820 736 GRAYSTONE KNOWE NS 810 760** HAINING WOOD NS 955 774 JUPITER URBAN WILDLIFE CENTRE NS 918 810 **KINNEIL ESTATE NS 980 803** LITTLE DENNY RESERVOIR NS 800 814 LOCH ELLRIG AND GARDRUM MOSS NS 886 750 LOCHGREEN HOSPITAL NS 875 786 LOCHGREEN MOSS NS 818 776 MADDISTON WEST NS 929 763 **MUIRAVONSIDE NS 965 753** NEW CRAIG (AUCHENGEAN) NS 855 767 NORTH WALTON BURN NS 806 763 PARKFOOT MARSH NS 811 794 POLMONT WOODS NS 945 795 POW BURN & ESTUARY NS 915 874 **RASHIEHILL MIRE NS 842 728** RIGHEAD NS 903 741 RIVER AVON (NORTH & SOUTH GLENS) NS 958 740 ROUGHCASTLE WOOD NS 844 800 RUMFORD WEST NS 924 769 SEABEGS WOOD NS 815 793 SHIELKNOWES MOSS NS 827 725 **SKIPPERTON GLEN NS 809 785** SOUTH DRUM MOSS NS 830 775

SOUTH TORWOOD NS 827 835 STANDBURN NS 928 750 STONEYWOOD NS 802 828 TAKMADOON(DENNY MUIR) NS 738 818 TORWOOD GLEN NS 832 855 TORWOOD MIRE NS 825 844 UPPER AVON MIRES NS 829 734 WALLACEBANK WOOD NS 848 848 WESTER DRUM NS 829 781 WESTERGLEN MOSS NS 875 775 WEST MAINS POND NS 905 814 WESTER WHIN NS 867 685 WESTQUARTER BURN NS 906 786

#### SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SINCs)

AVONBANK/BIRKHILL NS 965 786 **BANTASKINE ESTATE NS 869 793** CARRON MEANDER NS 896 826 DALES WOOD NS 818 850 FALKIRK GASWORKS NS 895 812 GLENYARDS NS 817 789 HALL WOOD, HIGH BONNYBRIDGE NS 828 793 HALLGLEN HAVEN NS 889 782 LETHAM MOSS NS 885 856 LIMERIGG PONDS NS 858 707 LITTLE BLACK LOCH NS 875 706 MADDISTON NS 942 768 MILNQUARTER, HIGH BONNYBRIDGE NS 825 797 NORTH STENHOUSEMUIR NS 869 846 POLMONT PARK NS 931 791 POLMONT STATION NS 928 783 **REDDING GRASSLANDS NS 918 787** RUMFORD EAST NS 935 772 SOUTH DRUM CLAYPIT NS 823 775 SOUTH POLMONT NS 942 782 STONERIDGE NS 873 702 SUMMERFORD NS 868 795 TIPPETCRAIG NS 829 771 UNION CANAL NS 866 794 WALLACESTONE NS 914 771

# APPENDIX 6: GUIDANCE ON LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL DETAILS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT WIND TURBINE APPLICATIONS

This guidance gives the minimum level of landscape and visual information that is required to support wind energy proposals for 1-3 turbines over 15m high. This information is essential to enable the council to fully assess the proposal. It is based on the SNH guidance 'Natural Heritage Assessment of small scale wind energy projects which do not require formal Environment Impact Assessment'. A more fully detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required in certain situations and where an EIA is required.

# 1. For ALL turbine proposals

The following basic landscape and visual information is required:

- Turbines details of hub and tip height, design and colour
- Location plans exact position(s) of turbines and associated structures, including details of any micrositing proposed.
- Turbine bases and working area details of earthworks and levels proposed
- New and existing access tracks to turbine details of location, construction, levels and access point to public road
- Construction compounds and hardstandings around turbine(s) details of levels, construction and reinstatement proposed (if temporary)
- Borrow pits details of locations, size, levels
- Landscape features to be removed vegetation / trees, fences, walls, and other features removed for the turbine(s), access track and associated works
- Transformer and ancillary structures locations and details
- Cable routes and grid connection locations and ground reinstatement

# 2. For turbines of 15 - 50m height to tip

Information in section 1 (above) plus the following are required, as a minimum:

- a) Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map to turbine tip coving an area of 15km radius from the turbine(s); it is also valuable to have a ZTV to turbine hub.
- b) Wirelines and photomontages from key viewpoints to illustrate the proposal; these should be agreed with the planning authority on the basis of the ZTV information and located where the turbines are visible.
- c) A base plan of all wind turbines that are operational and proposals that are in the public domain to 30km from the proposal (this depends on location). The council has information on the situation in its own area, but for elsewhere the adjacent authorities may hold information.
- d) A focussed cumulative assessment of the proposal with all current turbine applications, all consented and all constructed turbines : the assessment should cover (a) all turbines of any height within 2km of the proposal, (b) all turbines over 25m to tip between 2 – 5km of the proposal and (c) all turbines over 50m to tip between 5 - 15km of the proposal. This may require joint ZTVs to tip of the proposal with those of other wind turbines. The Council may also advise that a detailed assessment is required where there are many small scale wind turbine proposals within an area.
- e) Where the proposal is within or close to an Area of Great Landscape Value (or close to an AGLV of a neighbouring local authority), an assessment of the proposal's effects on the AGLV is essential; details in section 3(b) and 3(c) below should be supplied for the AGLV area, with a ZTV superimposed on the AGLV.

### 3. For turbines of over 50m height to tip

Information in section 1 (above) plus the following are required, as a minimum:

- a) Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map to turbine tip covering an area of up to 35km radius from the turbine(s) in accordance with SNH's guidance <sup>1</sup>; ZTVs to hub should also be provided to assess the extent of the turbine that is visible.
- b) Wirelines and photomontages from key viewpoints to illustrate the proposal; these should be agreed with the planning authority on the basis of the ZTV information and located where turbines are visible. An assessment of the sensitivity of the viewpoint, magnitude of change experienced and the overall level of effect should be assessed.
- c) An assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape of the immediate site and the surrounding local landscape character areas, an assessment of the magnitude of change on receptors as a result of the proposal, and an assessment of the overall level of effect and residual impacts; the ZTV superimposed on the local landscape character areas is helpful.
- d) A base plan of all wind turbines that are operational and proposals that are in the public domain up to 60km from the proposal. This depends on location, but will be required in many locations given the potential for cumulative effects. The council has information on the situation in its own area, but for elsewhere the adjacent authorities may hold information.
- e) A focussed cumulative assessment of the proposal with all current turbine applications, all consented and all constructed turbines: the assessment should cover (a) all turbines of any height within 2km of the proposal, (b) all turbines over 25m to tip between 2 – 5km of the proposal and (c) all turbines over 50m to tip that are over 5 km of the proposal. This may necessitate joint ZTVs to tip of the proposal with those of other wind turbines. The Council and SNH may also advise that a detailed assessment is required where there are many small scale wind turbine proposals within an area.
- f) Where the proposal falls within or close to an AGLV (or close to an AGLV of a neighbouring local authority), a full assessment of the proposal's effects on the AGLV is essential; a ZTV superimposed on the AGLV area must be supplied.

<sup>1</sup> Visual Representation of Windfarms Good practice Guidance, SNH 2006, table 2 page 36 <u>http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/renewable-energy/onshore-wind/landscape-impacts-guidance/</u>

**Zone of Theoretical Visibility** (ZTVs) should be on a 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey map base with the OS base detail clearly visible through shaded areas of visibility. **Photomontages from key viewpoints** should be based on a photograph with good contrast representing a similar field of view realistic to the natural view experienced by the human eye, with the viewing distance of the montage and the distance of the viewpoint from the turbine stated (zoom lenses must not be used). Positions of the viewpoints should be clearly shown on a location map with grid references.

### When to consult SNH on landscape issues:

- Any wind turbine proposal in Zone 3 (highest natural heritage sensitivity) in strategic locational guidance (higher area on Denny Muir, the plateau south of Bonnybridge, shoreline near Grangemouth / Bo'ness and small area of the Avon Valley)
- Turbines of over 50m to tip

Where turbines will create significant adverse effects or where there are many applications for single turbines in the same locality, comments from SNH can also be requested.

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