



Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm, Offshore EIA Report

Technical Appendix 20.1: Seascape, Landscape
and Visual Impact Assessment

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Glossary

Defined Term	Definition
Array Area	The Array Area is the area in which the Offshore Generation Assets will be located.
Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited (BOWFL)	A Special-Purpose Vehicle (SPV) (legal entity) for the purpose of developing the Project. BOWFL are the Applicant for the Offshore Application.
Designated Landscape	Areas of landscape identified as being of importance at international, national or local levels, either defined by statute or identified in development plans or other documents.
Effect	Term used to express the consequence of an impact (i.e. the result of change or changes) on specific environmental resources or receptors. The significance of an effect is determined by correlating the magnitude of the impact with the importance, or sensitivity of the receptor or resource in accordance with defined significance criteria.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Process for the assessment of likely significant environmental effects of a project on the physical, biological, and human environment during construction, Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and decommissioning.
Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA Regulations)	Terminology used in this Offshore EIA Report to refer to three sets of regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017; • The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017; and • The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007.
Export Cable Corridor	The area of seabed seaward of Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) which connects the Array Area with the Landfall within which the Offshore Export Cables will be installed.
Export Cables	The cables which will bring electricity from the Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) to the Landfall, and then to the Onshore Substation.
Impact	A change caused by an action that occurs during a project's lifetime.
Inter-Array Cables (IAC)	Cables which link the Wind Turbines to each other and with the Offshore Substation Platforms (OSPs).
Interconnector Cables	Cables which will connect individual OSPs to each other to provide redundancy against cable failure elsewhere.
Landfall	The area in which the Offshore Export Cables make landfall and is also the transitional area between the Offshore Transmission Assets and the Onshore Transmission Assets. Located in the Intertidal Area at Benholm.
Landscape Character Type	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another.
Maximum Design Scenario (MDS)	The scenario within the design envelope likely to result in the greatest impact on a particular topic receptor, and therefore the one that should be assessed for that topic receptor.

Defined Term	Definition
Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)	The average tidal height throughout the year of two successive high waters during those periods of 24 hours when the range of the tide is at its greatest.
Offshore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report (hereafter, 'Offshore EIA Report')	Document prepared to report the findings of the EIA for the Proposed Development and produced in accordance with the EIA Regulations. The Offshore EIA Report is submitted to support the Offshore Application for the Proposed Development, and to comply with EIA Regulations.
Offshore Export Cables	Subsea cables used to transmit electricity generated offshore by the Wind Turbines from the OSPs to shore. The Transition Joint Bay (TJB) is the location where the Offshore Export Cable terminates, and the onshore cabling begins.
Offshore Scoping Report	The report that presents the findings of the EIA scoping process undertaken for the Proposed Development with the purpose of obtaining a Scoping Opinion. The Offshore Scoping Report defines what is intended to be assessed and reported as part of the EIA.
Offshore Substation Platform(s) (OSPs)	OSPs comprise the support structure, topside and electrical components used for collecting and/or converting electricity generated by the Wind Turbines for transmission by the Offshore Export Cables.
Operation and Maintenance (O&M)	The phase of the Proposed Development following completion of construction. This phase of development includes routine inspections, repairs and replacement of infrastructure and equipment (including Interconnector Cables and IACs), Scour Protection replenishment or replacement, major component replacement, painting and/or other coating works, removal of marine growth, and replacement of access ladders.
Plan Option Area (POA)	A location identified in the Sectoral Marine Plan (SMP) as a preferred area for commercial scale offshore wind development.
Project (the)	An overarching term for the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm (Bowdun OWF) comprising the offshore and onshore infrastructure required to generate and transmit electricity from the Array Area to the onshore Grid Connection Point. The Project includes the Offshore Generation Assets, the Offshore Transmission Assets and the Onshore Transmission Assets.
Project Design Envelope (PDE)	A description of the range of possible elements that make up the design options for the Proposed Development under consideration when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known.
Proposed Development	Term used to define the Offshore Infrastructure associated with the Project seaward of MHWS for which consent is being sought. Further details of the parameters are included in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description.
Scoping Opinion	A document produced by MD-LOT which is issued in response to submission and review of the Offshore Scoping Report. The Scoping Opinion is supported with feedback and advice from consultees, which details what is expected to be included in the Offshore EIA Report and what can be scoped out of the EIA process.

Defined Term	Definition
Scoping Workshop	A series of sessions preceding the finalisation of the Offshore Scoping Report to provide an opportunity for the Applicant to consult on the draft scope and for stakeholders to request additional information on key issues.
Sectoral Marine Plan (SMP)	A plan developed by the Scottish Government which provides the strategically planned spatial footprint for offshore wind development in Scotland.
Significance	Effect factor that is determined by the magnitude of impact along with the sensitivity of the receptor.
Site Boundary	The boundary within which all elements of the Proposed Development will be located. The Site Boundary comprises the Array Area and Export Cable Corridor which ends at MHWS.
Study area	For each environmental topic, the baseline environment will be characterised, and the potential environmental impacts will be described within a topic-specific study area. Specific study areas are defined for each topic and are based on the maximum spatial extent across which potential impacts of the Project may be experienced by the relevant receptors (i.e. Zone of Influence).
Thistle Wind Partners (TWP)	Company established for the development of the Project.
Wind Turbines	Structures comprising of a tubular tower, rotor blades, and a nacelle which houses the Wind Turbine generator.
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)	A computer-generated tool to identify the likely (or theoretical) extent of visibility of a development. The elevation (or a set of elevations) of the development is tested against a 3D terrain model.

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
BOWFL	Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GDL	Gardens and Designed Landscapes
GIS	Geographic Information System
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HVAC	High Voltage Alternating Current
IAC	Inter-Array Cable
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LSLVE	Likely Significant Landscape and Visual Effects
MDS	Maximum Design Scenario
MHWS	Mean High Water Springs
NSA	National Scenic Area
OLA	Option Lease Area
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
OWF	Offshore Wind Farm
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
PDE	Project Design Envelope
POA	Plan Option Area
SCT	Seascape Character Type
SLA	Special Landscape Area
SLVIA	Seascape, Landscape, and Visual Impact Assessment
SMP	Sectoral Marine Plan
TWP	Thistle Wind Partners Limited
WHS	World Heritage Site
ZoI	Zone of Influence
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Table of Units

Units	Definition
km	Kilometre
km ²	Square kilometre
m	Metre

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) Technical Report presents the baseline Seascape Character and Landscape Character, provides a description of the principal visual receptors and identifies the proposed representative viewpoints of relevance for the offshore elements of the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm (OWF) Project (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development). The Proposed Development covers the Option Lease Area (OLA) and comprises of the Array Area, which is located in the E3 Plan Option Area (POA) detailed in the Scottish Sectoral Marine Plan (SMP) (Scottish Government, 2020), and the Export Cable Corridor. The Array Area is located 38 km from the Aberdeenshire coast at its closest point, covering an area of 187 km² (Figure 2.1). The Proposed Development will comprise of Wind Turbines (fixed foundations), Inter-Array Cables (IACs), Offshore Substation Platforms (OSPs), Interconnector Cables, Offshore Export Cables and any necessary scour/cable protection. The Export Cable Corridor will include a maximum of three High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) Offshore Export Cables, each with a length of up to 70 km and will make Landfall at Benholm, Aberdeenshire.
- 1.1.2 Data of relevance to the Seascape Character, Landscape Character and landscape designations has been collated through a detailed desktop review of published studies and datasets available for areas within the SLVIA Study Area to gain an understanding of the baseline conditions and sensitivities of the seascape and landscape environment within the SLVIA Study Area which is detailed in Section 2.
- 1.1.3 The information from this Offshore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Technical Report informs the SLVIA baseline and the subsequent assessment of the Likely Significant Landscape and Visual Effects (LSLVE) (both direct and indirect) of the Proposed Development on Seascape Character, Landscape Character and visual receptors within the SLVIA Study Area. This report accompanies the EIA provided in Volume 2, Chapter 20: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts to support the consent application for the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.4 The aim of this SLVIA Technical Report is to:
- identify the existing Seascape Character Types (SCT) of relevance to the Proposed Development;
 - identify the existing Landscape Character Types (LCT) of relevance to the Proposed Development;
 - identify existing Designated Landscapes of relevance to the Proposed Development;
 - identify principal visual receptors within the SLVIA Study Area of relevance to the Proposed Development; and
 - identify representative viewpoints within the SLVIA Study Area of relevance to the Proposed Development.

2 SLVIA Study Area

- 2.1.1 The SLVIA Study Area is shown in Figure 2.1, extending to include all areas within which direct and indirect seascape, landscape and visual effects are considered most likely to occur, and is comprised of a 60 km buffer surrounding the Array Area. The buffer used to define the SLVIA Study Area is based on the Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) set out in Volume 2, Chapter 20: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts.
- 2.1.2 The SLVIA Study Area has been selected in accordance with NatureScot Guidance (NatureScot, 2017).
- 2.1.3 The SLVIA Study Area was presented to NatureScot and Aberdeenshire Council during the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Scoping Workshop held on 25 April 2024.
- 2.1.4 The SLVIA Study Area was included in and accepted by NatureScot in their Scoping Opinion that was received in response to the Offshore Scoping Report submitted on 22 August 2024.
- 2.1.5 As part of the Offshore Scoping Report submission, a preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was prepared (Figure 2.2) for the SLVIA Study Area to ensure that all seascape, coastal landscapes and visual receptors of relevance have been identified.

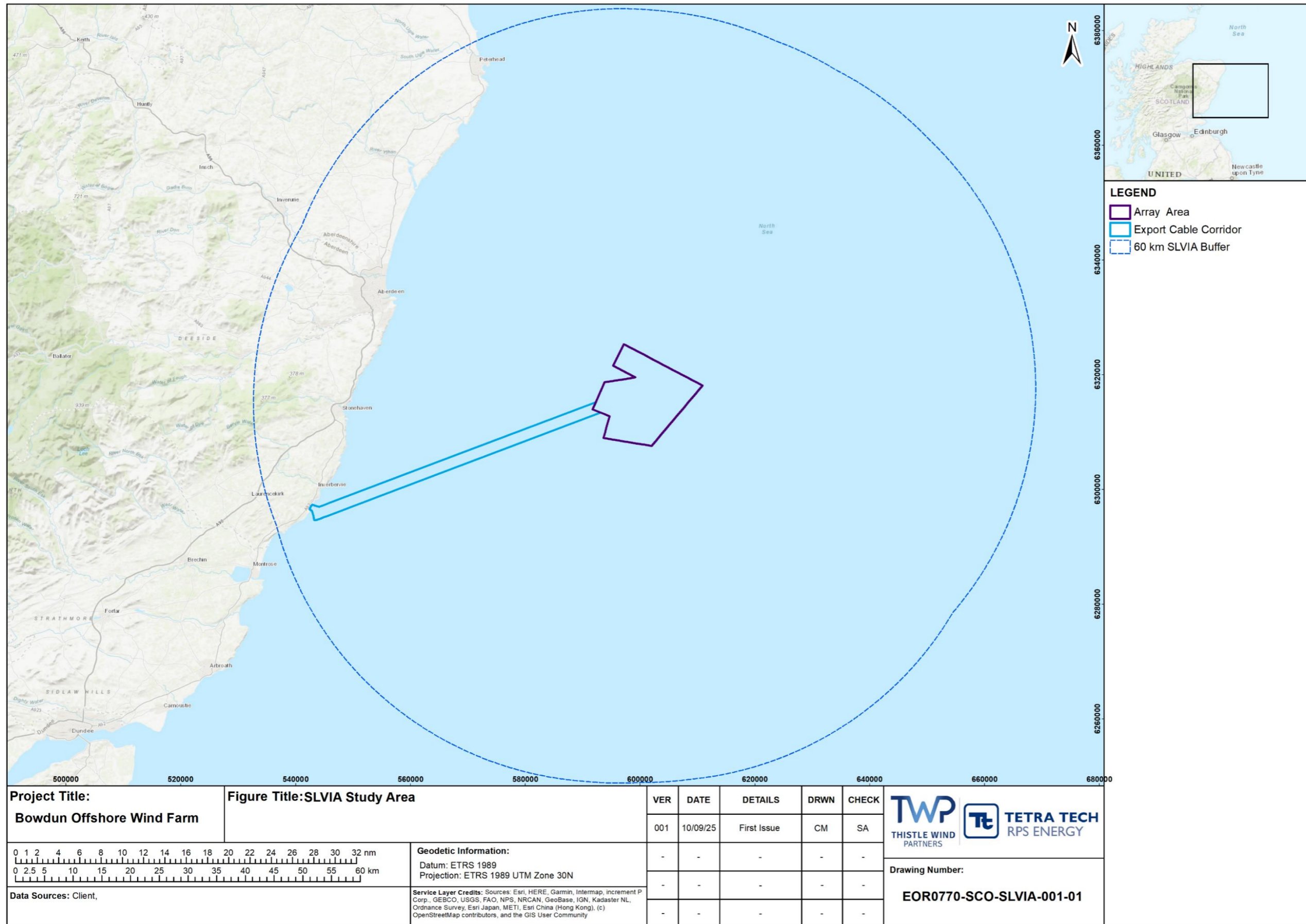


Figure 2.1: SLVIA Study Area

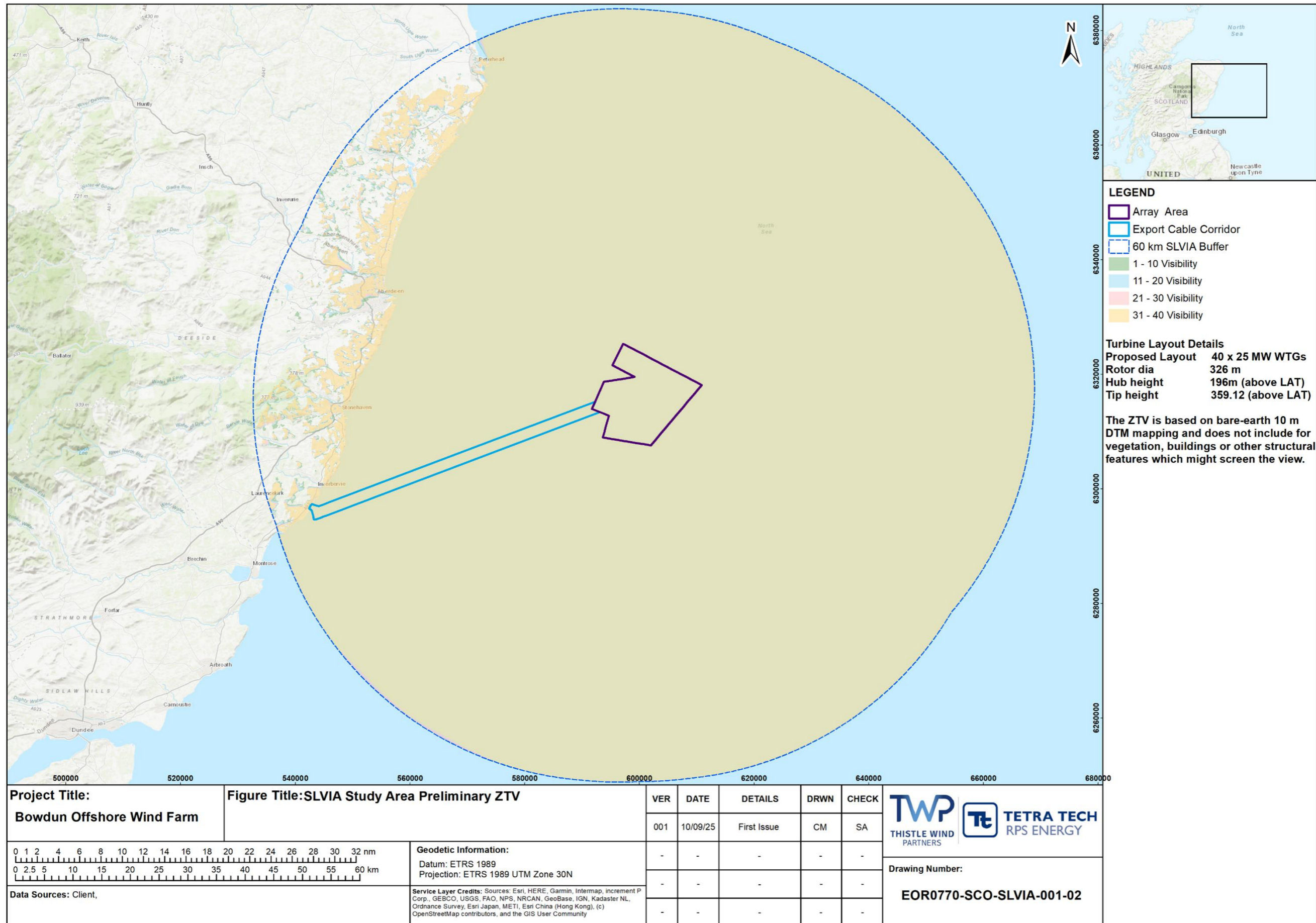


Figure 2.2: SLVIA Study Area Preliminary ZTV

3 Methodology

3.1 Desktop Study

- 3.1.1 Information on Seascape Character, Landscape Character and Designated Landscapes within the SLVIA Study Area was collected through a detailed desktop review of existing studies and datasets.
- 3.1.2 Published studies and datasets available for Seascape Character and Landscape Character associated with the SLVIA Study Area are summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Summary of Key Desktop datasets and reports for Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact

Title	Source	Extent	Year Data Last Updated	Author
National Coastal Character Map	NatureScot	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2025a	NatureScot
NatureScot Landscape Character Assessment	NatureScot	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2023a	NatureScot
National Cycle Network	Sustrans	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2024	Sustrans
Overview map for Long Distance Paths and Walks	Long Distance Walkers Association	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2021	Long Distance Walkers Association
Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDL) in Scotland	Historic Environment Scotland	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2024	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
Wild Land Areas map and descriptions	NatureScot	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2023b	NatureScot
National Scenic Areas in Scotland Map	NatureScot	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2025b	NatureScot
Aberdeen Local Development plan 2023	Aberdeen City Council	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2023	Aberdeen City Council
Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023	Aberdeenshire Council	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2023	Aberdeenshire Council
Landscape Character Assessment:	NatureScot	Aberdeen City	2019	NatureScot

Title	Source	Extent	Year Data Last Updated	Author
Aberdeen City – Landscape Evolution and Influences				
Ferry Routes – Orkney and Shetland	Northlink Ferries	Full coverage of the SLVIA Study Area	2025	Northlink Ferries

3.2 Site-Specific Surveys

3.2.1 A summary of the surveys undertaken to inform the potential visual impacts associated with the Proposed Development is outlined in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Summary of Site-Specific Surveys Undertaken for Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impacts

Title	Extent of Survey	Overview of Survey	Survey Contractor	Date	Reference to Further Information
Photographic Survey from agreed Viewpoints	Various locations within the SLVIA Study Area	Baseline photography capture from agreed viewpoints in line with NatureScot Guidance	RPS	21/05/2025 to 22/05/2025 inclusive	Photographic Survey from agreed Viewpoints
Photographic Survey from various Cultural Heritage locations	Various locations within the SLVIA Study Area	Baseline photography capture from agreed viewpoints in line with NatureScot Guidance	RPS	21/05/2025 to 22/05/2025 inclusive	Photographic Survey from various Cultural Heritage locations

3.2.2 All visualisations from and wirelines of the agreed viewpoints are shown within Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact – Accompanying Graphics.

4 Baseline Characterisation

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 This section provides a summary description of the National SCT, National LCT and landscape designations following a review of the existing seascape and landscape baseline conditions associated with the Proposed Development. This has been undertaken by identifying the Seascape Character and Landscape Character units within SLVIA Study Area associated with the Proposed Development.

4.2 Seascape Character

National Seascape Character Types

4.2.1 Two National SCTs are found within the SLVIA Study Area (NatureScot, 2025a) (Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2). These have been identified as:

- Type 2: Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views; and
- Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views.

4.2.2 Extracts from NatureScot (2025a), for each of the above identified SCTs have been reproduced in Annex A.

4.2.3 Table 4.1 identifies the closest distance at which the identified National SCT occur in relation to the Proposed Development.

Table 4.1: Summary of National SCT Type and Distance from Array Area

National Seascape Character Type	National SCT Name	Closest Distance to Array Area (km)
Type 2	Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views	38.4
Type 3	Mainland deposition coastline with open views	36.7

4.3 Seascape Designations

4.3.1 A review of the available information has identified that there are no national or regional seascape designations within the SLVIA Study Area.

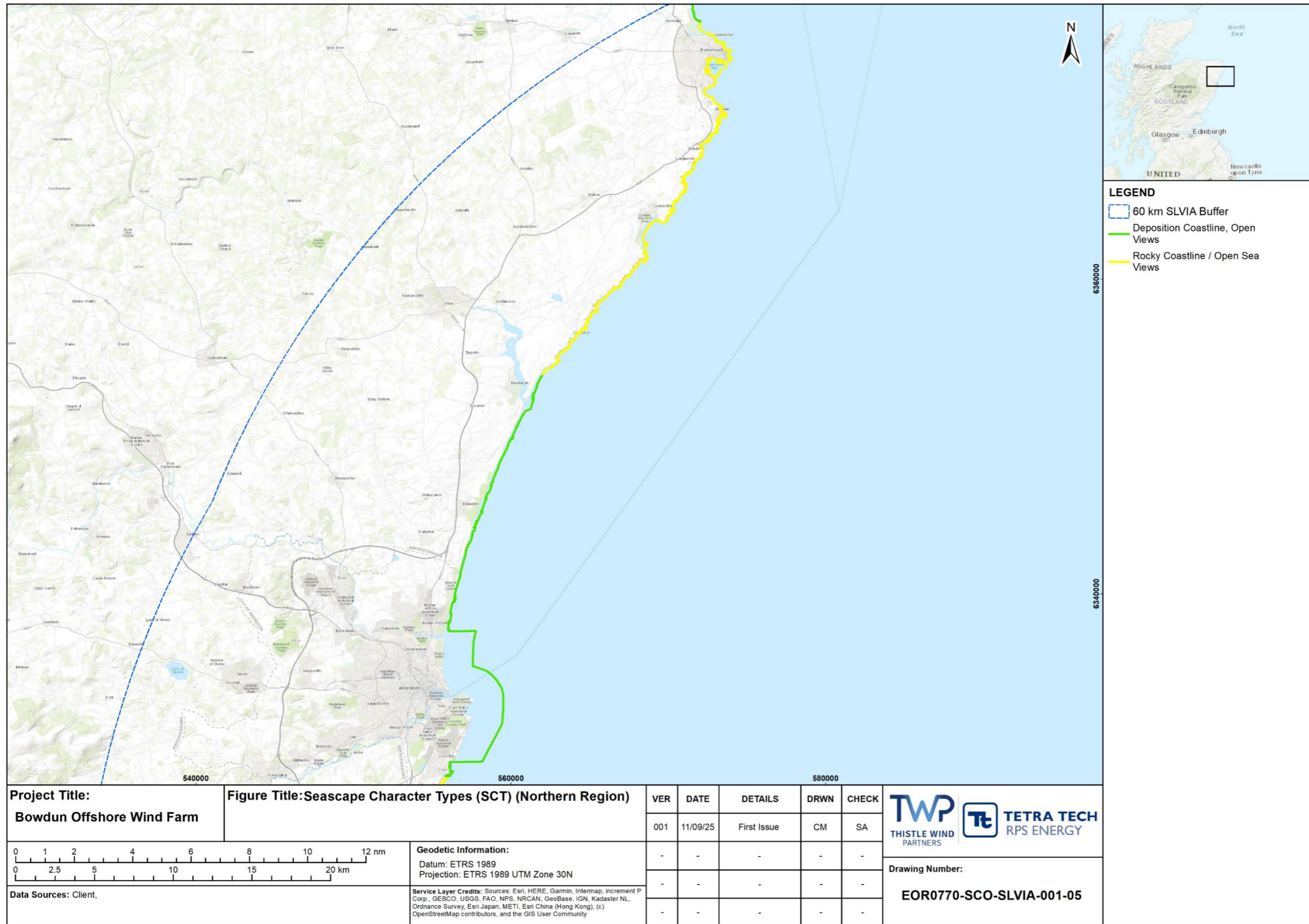


Figure 4.1: Seascape Character Types (SCT) (Northern Region)

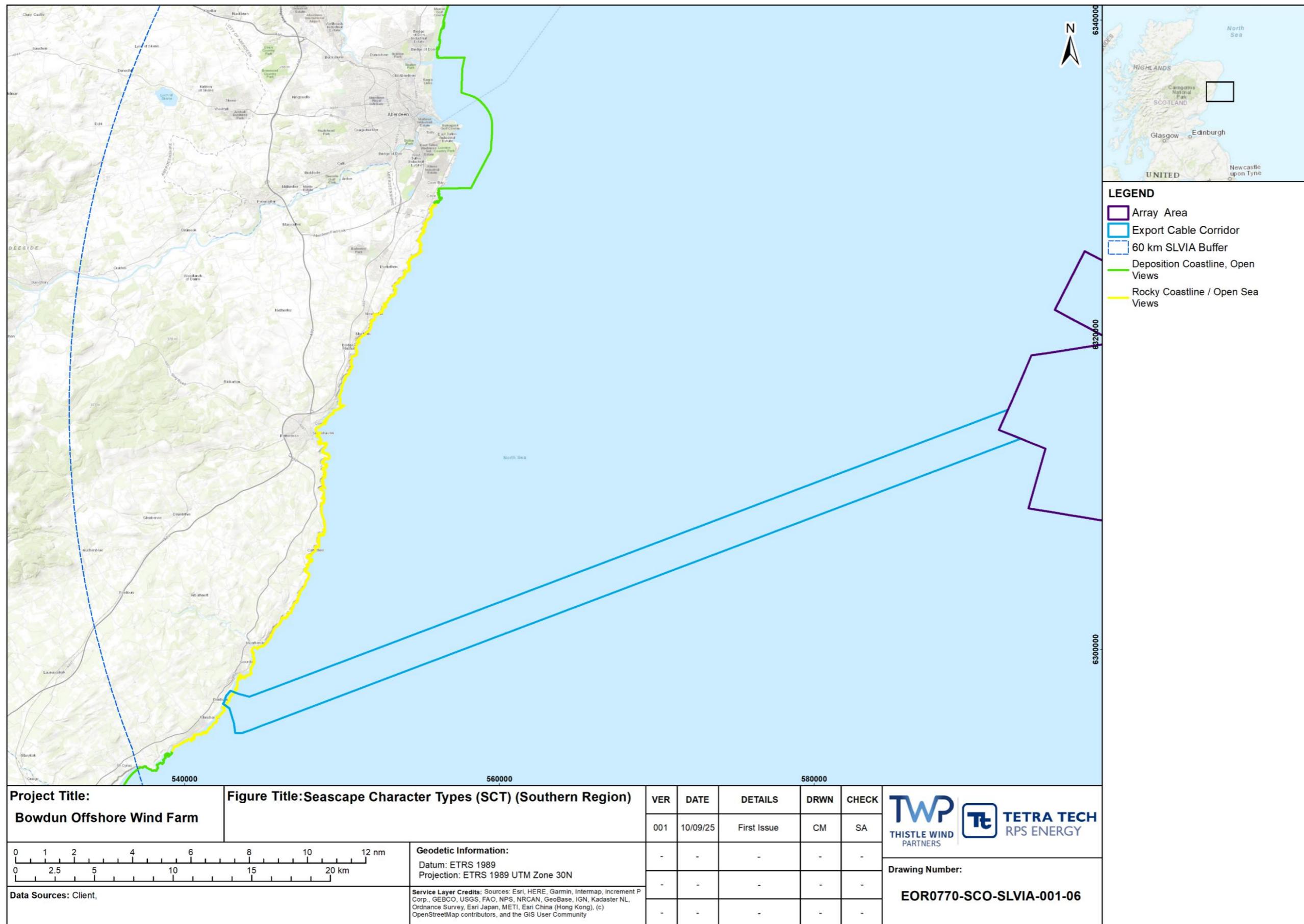


Figure 4.2: Seascape Character Types (SCT) (Southern Region)

4.4 Landscape Character Types

4.4.1 An LCT is an area of consistent and recognisable Landscape Character. A review of the available datasets (NatureScot, 2023a) has identified (Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4) that the following LCTs are located within the SLVIA Study Area:

- Map Id 17 – Urban (LCT 0);
- Map Id 26 – Fragmented Rocky Coast (LCT 11);
- Map Id 39 – Urban and Farmland (LCT 8);
- Map Id 62 – Wooded Estates – Aberdeen (LCT 9);
- Map Id 63 – Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire; (LCT 26);
- Map Id 86 – Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeen; (LCT 1);
- Map Id 87 – Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire (LCT 12);
- Map Id 105 – Low Hills – Aberdeen (LCT 5);
- Map Id 141 – Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire (LCT 22);
- Map Id 169 – Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley (LCT 31);
- Map Id 170 – Broad Wooded Valley with Estates (LCT 33);
- Map Id 173 – Cliffs and Rocky Coast – Aberdeen (LCT 2);
- Map Id 209 – Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire (LCT 17);
- Map Id 214 – Coastal Farmed Plain (LCT 3);
- Map Id 215 – Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills – Aberdeenshire (LCT 24);
- Map Id 228 – Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire (LCT 29);
- Map Id 254 – Narrow Winding Farmed Valley (LCT 30);
- Map Id 258 – Undulating Agricultural Heartland (LCT 20);
- Map Id 288 – Undulating Open Farmland (LCT 6);
- Map Id 304 – Undulating Wooded Farmland – Aberdeen (LCT 7);
- Map Id 355 – Farmed Moorland Edge – Aberdeenshire (LCT 27);
- Map Id 366 – Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire (LCT 13);
- Map Id 369 – River Valley – Aberdeen (LCT 4);
- Map Id 382 – Farmed Strath – Aberdeenshire (LCT 25); and
- Map Id 385 – Farmland and Wooded Policies (LCT 21).

4.4.2 Extracts from each of the relevant NatureScot National Landscape Character Assessments for each of the above identified national LCTs have been reproduced in Annex B.

4.4.3 Table 4.2 identifies the closest distance at which the identified LCTs occurs in relation to the Proposed Development.

Table 4.2: Summary of Landscape Character Type and Distance from Array Area

Map Id	LCT Number	LCT Name	Closest Distance to Array Area (km)
17	LCT 0	Urban	38.7
26	LCT 11	Fragmented Rocky Coast	38.4
39	LCT 8	Urban and Farmland	40.1
62	LCT 9	Wooded Estates – Aberdeen	44.5
63	LCT 26	Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire	47.4
86	LCT 1	Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeen	40.3
87	LCT 12	Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeenshire	43.4
105	LCT 5	Low Hills – Aberdeen	38.7
141	LCT 22	Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire	53.7
169	LCT 31	Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley	40.9
170	LCT 33	Broad Wooded Valley and Estates	56.8
173	LCT 2	Cliffs and Rocky Coast – Aberdeen	38.4
209	LCT 17	Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire	44.6
214	LCT 3	Coastal Farmed Plain	38.8
215	LCT 24	Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills – Aberdeenshire	42.9
228	LCT 29	Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire	44.5
254	LCT 30	Narrow Winding Farmed Valley	49.3
258	LCT 20	Undulating Agricultural Heartland	56.8
288	LCT 6	Undulating Open Farmland	44.3
304	LCT 7	Undulating Wooded Farmland – Aberdeen	45.6
355	LCT 27	Farmed Moorland Edge – Aberdeenshire	39.4
366	LCT 13	Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire	46.6
369	LCT 4	River Valley – Aberdeen	40.6
382	LCT 25	Farmed Strath – Aberdeenshire	56.0
385	LCT 21	Farmland and Wooded Policies	58.9

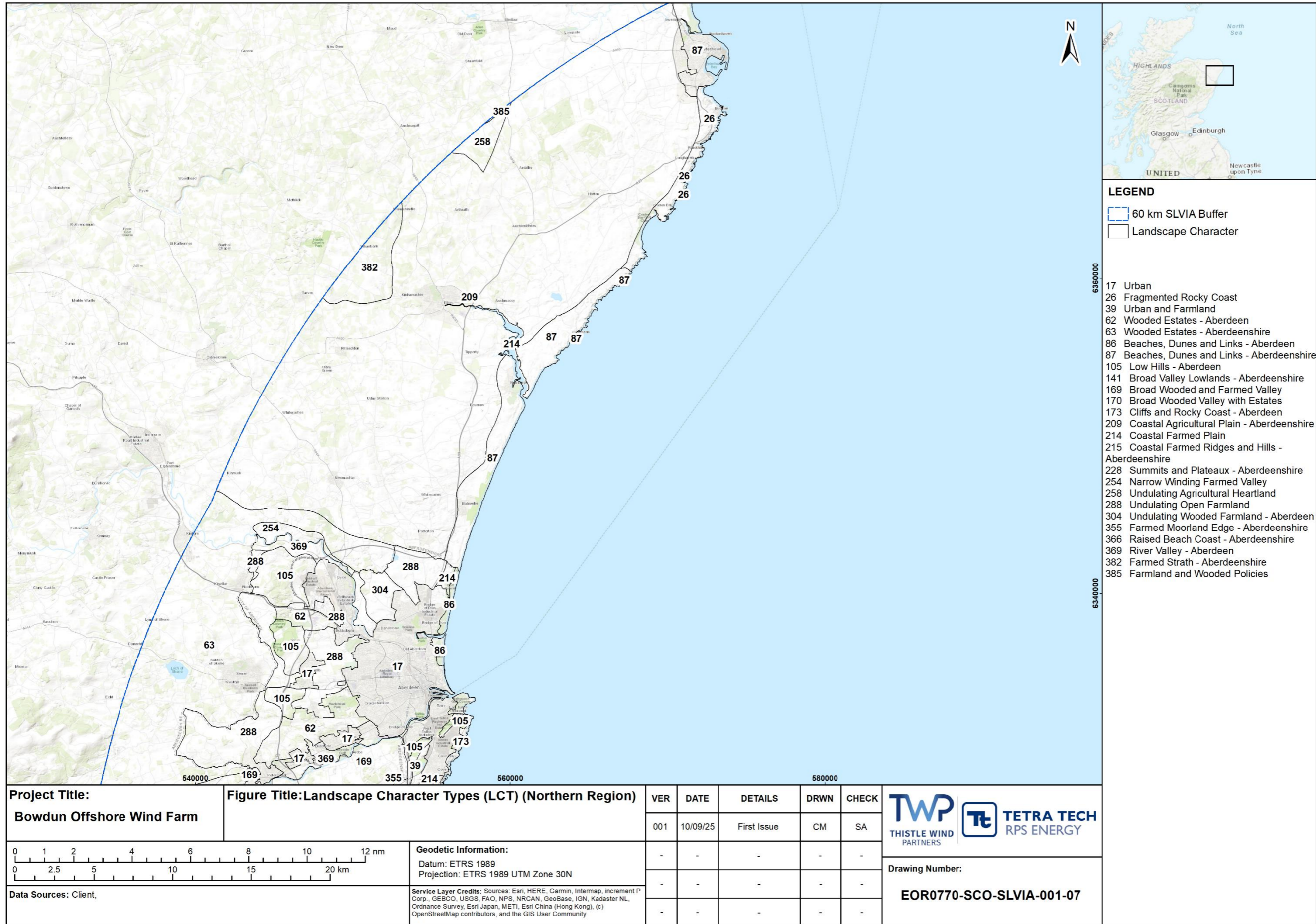


Figure 4.3: Landscape Character Types (LCT) (Northern Region)

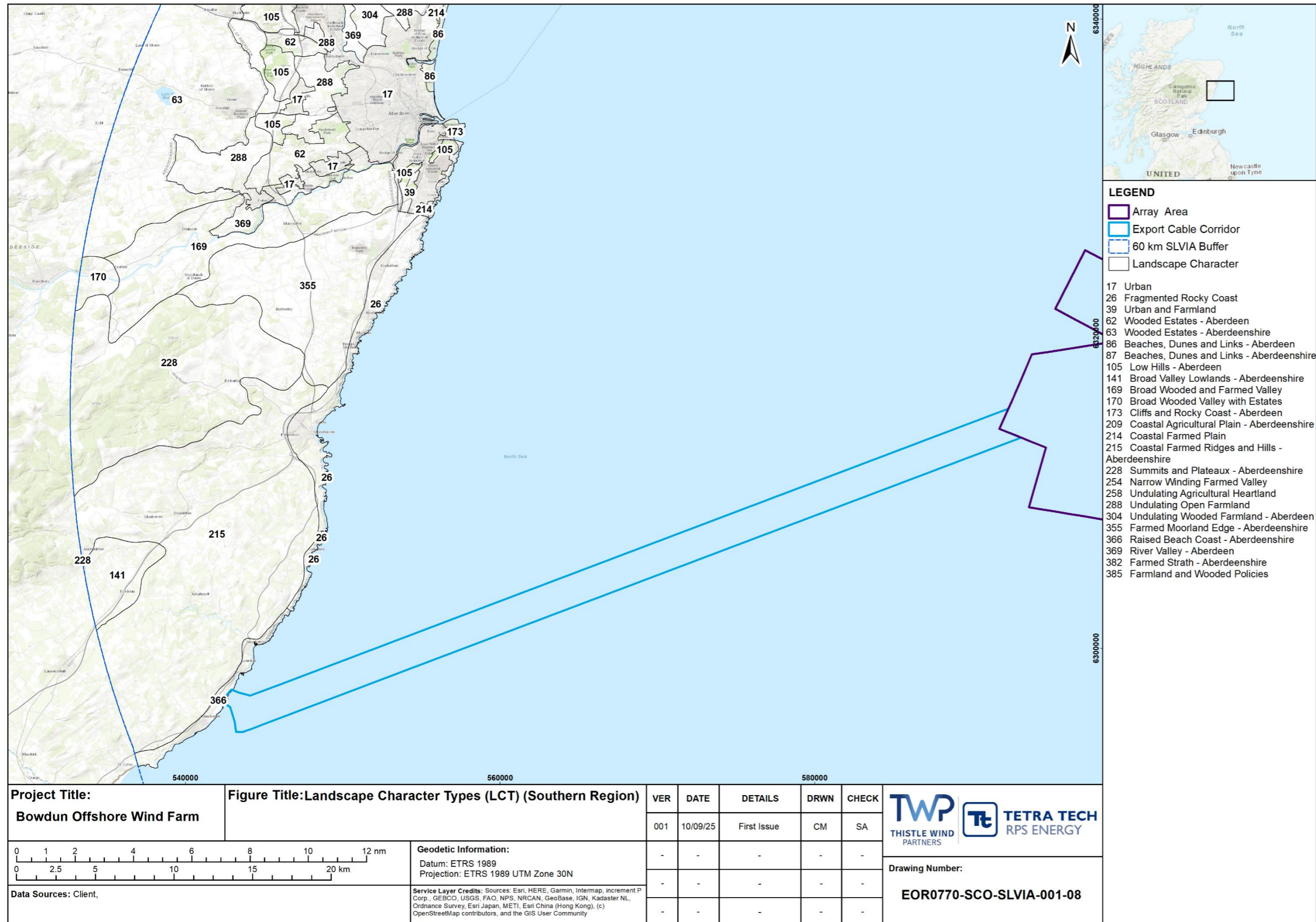


Figure 4.4: Landscape Character Types (LCT) (Southern Region)

4.5 Landscape Designations

World Heritage Sites

- 4.5.1 A review of the data set defining the areas identified as a World Heritage Site (WHS) has identified that there are no areas defined as WHS located within the SLVIA Study Area.

National Scenic Areas

- 4.5.2 First established in 1980, National Scenic Areas (NSAs) were designated under Planning Legislation (Part 10 of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006). The Town and Country Planning (National Scenic Areas) (Scotland) Designation Directions 2010 then brought this into force. The legislation defines NSAs as areas “*of outstanding scenic value in a national context*”, for which special protection measures are required. The designation’s purpose is both to identify Scotland’s finest scenery and to ensure its protection from inappropriate development.
- 4.5.3 A review of the dataset defining NSAs (NatureScot, 2025b) has identified that there are no NSAs located within the SLVIA Study Area.

Gardens and Designed Landscapes

- 4.5.4 A review of the Geographic Information System (GIS) dataset available from HES (HES, 2024), relating to GDLs has identified ten GDLs located within the SLVIA Study Area (Figure 4.5).
- 4.5.5 These have been identified as follows:
- Arbuthnott House (GDL00016);
 - Crathes Castle (GDL00119);
 - Drum Castle (GDL00141);
 - Dunecht House (GDL00153);
 - Duthie Park (GDL00166);
 - Glenbervie House (GDL00194);
 - Park House (GDL00309);
 - Pitmedden (GDL00314);
 - Straloch (GDL00351); and
 - Piper Alpha Memorial Garden/North Sea Memorial Rose Garden (GDL00412).

Special Landscape Areas

- 4.5.6 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) are a local landscape designation placed on areas that exhibit particular qualities and characteristics within them that are valued locally. SLAs complement the NSA designation, which identifies those landscapes that are seen as nationally important owing to their unsurpassed scenery.

4.5.7 A review of the datasets available from Aberdeenshire Council, relating to SLAs has identified four SLAs located within the SLVIA Study Area (Figure 4.5).

4.5.8 These have been identified as follows:

- South East Aberdeenshire Coast;
- North East Aberdeenshire Coast;
- Braes of the Mearns; and
- Dee Valley.

4.5.9 Table 4.3 identifies the closest distance at which the identified designated sites occur in relation to the Proposed Development.

Table 4.3: Summary of Landscape Designation and Distance from Array Area

Designation	Designation Name	Closest Distance from Array Area (km)
GDL	Arbuthnott House (GDL00016)	51.9
	Crathes Castle (GDL00119)	57.5
	Drum Castle (GDL00141)	52.8
	Dunecht House (GDL00153)	56.1
	Duthie Park (GDL00166)	41.4
	Glenbervie House (GDL00194)	53.4
	Park House (GDL00309)	53.7
	Pitmedden (GDL00314)	57.0
	Straloch (GDL00351)	53.9
	Piper Alpha Memorial Garden/North Sea Memorial Rose Garden (GDL00412)	46.2
SLA	South East Aberdeenshire Coast	38.4
	North East Aberdeenshire Coast	43.2
	Braes of the Mearns	58.5
	Dee Valley	49.1

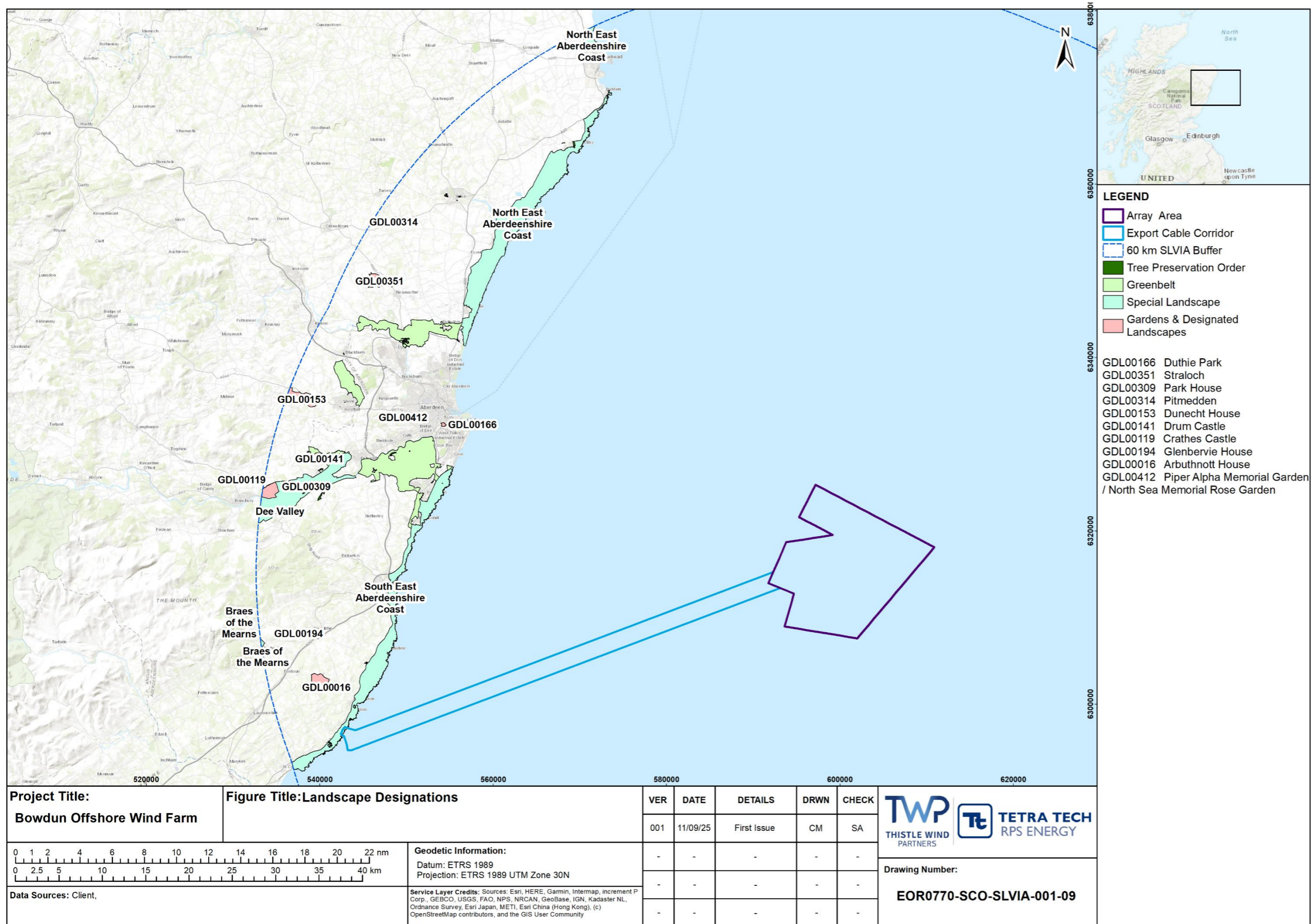


Figure 4.5: Landscape Designations within the SLVIA Study Area

4.6 Principal Visual Receptors and Representative Viewpoints

4.6.1 Listed below are the types of visual receptors that have been identified within the SLVIA Study Area:

- Recreational receptors:
 - walkers, equestrians and cyclists using the public rights of way networks;
 - users of beaches, public open spaces and common land;
 - tourists and visitors using facilities such as hotels and cafes within settlements;
 - tourists and visitors at coastal caravan and camping sites; and
 - tourists and visitors at attractions and points of interest.
- Residential receptors;
- People at their places of work;
- Transient receptors:
 - Occupiers of vehicles travelling on local and national road networks.
- For potential visual impacts arising because of the Proposed Development on water-based receptors, wireline imagery only, of the Proposed Development will be utilised to illustrate proposed views from:
 - passengers and workers on board commercial ferries or cruise liners;
 - people at their place of work on passing cargo, tanker or other commercial vessels;
 - people at their place of work on commercial fishing vessels; and
 - recreational water users.

4.6.2 Viewpoint locations were initially selected to illustrate potential views from both land-based and water-based receptors and locations were provided within the Seascape and Visual Impact Chapter of the Offshore Scoping Report for discussion and agreement.

4.6.3 The Scoping Opinion received from NatureScot, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council confirmed that the selected viewpoints were appropriate for assessment purposes. However, the Scoping Opinion received from Angus Council requested additional wireline to be provided from the Angus shoreline, near Ethie Haven or Dunninald Castle. Angus Council recognise that these locations are beyond the SLVIA Study Area, however requested additional wireline provision as this was in keeping with the Morven Offshore Wind Farm Array Project Scoping request.

4.6.4 Additional wireline images of the Proposed Development from both locations suggested by Angus Council have been included for information purposes only within Volume 3, Technical Appendix 20.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact – Accompanying Graphics, as they provide an understanding of the visibility of the Proposed Development from coastal areas of Angus.

- 4.6.5 During Site Survey works viewpoint locations were locally modified to account for changes on site, including access issues to Broad Hill, Aberdeen, which at the time of survey was inaccessible due to construction works. The viewpoint locations and the details utilised in the SLVIA assessment are provided in Table 4.4.
- 4.6.6 Therefore, the viewpoints selected and indicated in Figure 4.6 have been utilised within Volume 2, Chapter 20: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment associated with the Proposed Development.

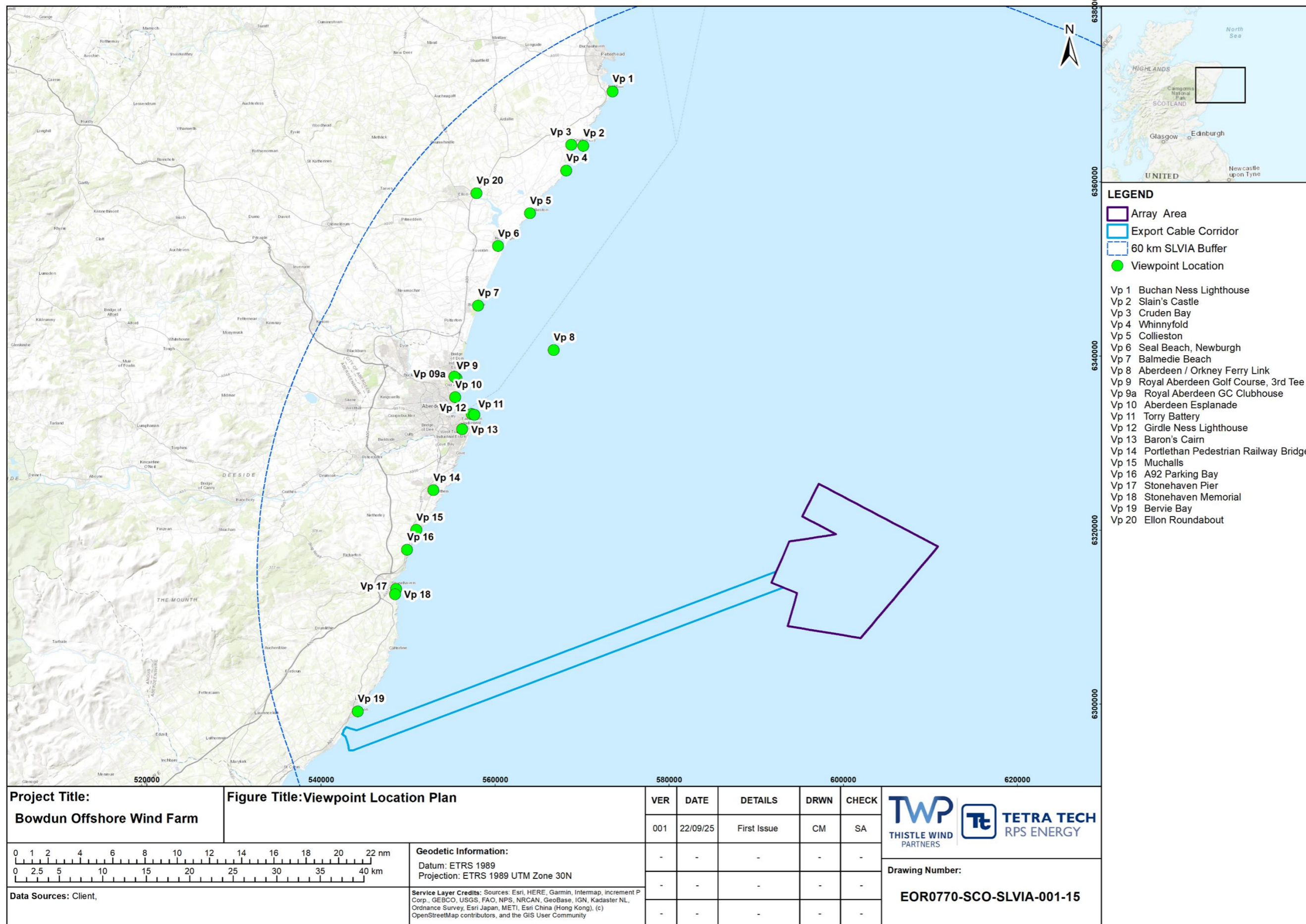


Figure 4.6: Viewpoint Location Plan

Table 4.4: Viewpoint Information

Viewpoint Number	Location	Distance from Array Area (km)
Vp 01	Buchan Ness Lighthouse	51.10
Vp 02	Slains Castle	47.49
Vp 03	Cruden Bay	48.38
Vp 04	Whinnyfold	46.32
Vp 05	Collieston	45.52
Vp 06	Seal Beach, Newburgh	45.34
Vp 07	Balmedie Beach	44.08
Vp 08	Aberdeen/Orkney Ferry Link	34.1
Vp 09	Royal Aberdeen Golf Course, third Tee	42.45
Vp 09a	Royal Aberdeen Golf Course Clubhouse	42.66
Vp 10	Aberdeen Esplanade	41.48
Vp 11	Torry Battery	39.56
Vp 12	Girdle Ness Lighthouse	38.84
Vp 13	Baron's Cairn	39.50
Vp 14	Portlethen Pedestrian Railway Bridge	40.19
Vp 15	Muchalls	41.15
Vp 16	A92 Parking Bay	41.96
Vp 17	Stonehaven Pier	43.07
Vp 18	Stonehaven Memorial	43.21
Vp 19	Bervie Bay	49.76
Vp 20	Ellon Roundabout	51.67

5 Summary

- 5.1.1 This technical report identifies the Seascape Character, Landscape Character, landscape designations and principle visual receptors within the SLVIA Study Area that have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 5.1.2 The SLVIA Study Area and accompanying ZTV mapping is based on the MDS for the Proposed Development.
- 5.1.3 National SCTs and National LCTs which have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development have been identified and described in Section 4.2 and Section 4.3.
- 5.1.4 Designated landscapes which have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development have been identified in Section 4.5. Section 4.3 has identified that there are no Designated Seascapes that will be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 5.1.5 Extracts from published assessments for relevant National Seascape Character and National Landscape Character Types have been provided in Annex A and Annex B.

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ANNEX A. Extracts From Published National Seascape Character Types

Table A1.1: Extracts from Published National Seascape Character Types (NatureScot) (Scott et al., 2005)

Character Type	Key Information
Type 2: Mainland rocky coastline with open sea views	
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive stretches of the north-east (Angus and Aberdeenshire) coast
Physical Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long straight stretches of coastline with cliffs rising to some 30 m height and often with a raised beach edge. There are few significant headlands although geological differences create variety where softer sandstone forms an indented coast with bays and inlets, arches and caves; harder volcanic rocks produce a more resistant coastline of promontories, low cliffs and rocky shoreline. Notable groups on the north-east coast. Productive arable farming occurs up to the cliff edge and tree cover is minimal. Compact fishing villages are located at the base of cliffs in small bays, while castles and cliff-top forts perch on dramatic headland locations, for example Dunottar, near Stonehaven. These are highlighted against the simple sea backdrop. These settlements and built features all appear to be spaced at even intervals and thus provide a visual rhythm of foci along the coast. Views over the North Sea are generally expansive and open, although parts of the Caithness coast have views of Hoy over the Pentland Firth. Shipping is a common feature in gazing out to sea.
Experiential Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposed coastline with open views. Strong historical associations of castles and cliff-top forts and cultural interest of fishing villages. These coastlines are of geological and ecological interest, and support colonies of seabirds. While there are exposed and open seascapes to one side, to the other the coast gives way to an agricultural hinterland, the presence of settlements and nearby roads. These features along with views of shipping and occasional industry, limit the sense of wildness likely to be experienced.
Type 3: Mainland deposition coastline with open views	
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive stretches of the north-east (Angus and Aberdeenshire) coast
Physical Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low lying coastal sections comprising long, sweeping curved sandy beaches. These are often backed by dunes and form a soft linear edge to the sea. This type is distinguished by a simple horizontal visual composition of sky, sea and land. Grassland and gorse occurs behind dunes and in turn, this is backed by flat, mixed or arable farmland. Some areas of dunes (e.g. Barry Links) are reserved for military live firing. Golf courses occur within this type and settlements are located within farmland. Larger settlements such as Carnoustie, are popular holiday and golf resorts. St Fergus Gas terminal is a distinct, visually prominent feature in Aberdeenshire. Uninterrupted views are long and expansive along beaches with low level, and sea level views over the North Sea. Shipping traffic is a common feature.
Experiential Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This type is located within a relatively well-populated area and beaches are an important recreational resource. The straightness of the coast and open views of the sea give a degree of exposure. The northern coastal light can often accentuate particular textures, shapes and colours. This type has a dynamic character – physically, visually and experientially – noticeable in the migration of sand, the constantly changing character of the sea and passing weather systems.

Annex B. Extracts From Published National Landscape Character Assessment

Table B1.1: Extracts from Published National Landscape Character Assessments (NatureScot, 2019)

Map Id	Character Type	Key Characteristics
17	LCT 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No description available from published National Landscape Character Assessments
26	LCT 11: Fragmented Rocky Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragmented rocky coastline. Dramatic coastal features, including rugged cliffs, caves, arches, stacks and numerous broken islets. Sandy beach and sand dunes at Cruden Bay which interrupt the cliffs. Grazed fields extending close to the top of the cliffs. Coastal settlements limited to small fishing villages and occasional larger towns. Isolated castles and lighthouses occur infrequently along the coast and form landmark features seen from roads and coastal footpaths. Strong sense of naturalness, heightened by wheeling and nesting birds, together with exposure to the elements, giving a pronounced sense of wild character, particularly in more remote areas.
39	LCT 8: Urban and Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A landscape that lies close to the coast but also on the fringes of the uplands of Aberdeenshire. Gently undulating with some flatter areas of moss and a small water body. Semi-natural vegetation is limited but includes some coastal grassland, wetlands and scrub. Diverse land uses with some areas within and adjacent to the landscape undergoing development. Small fields of pasture with many of these unmanaged or severed by development. Coniferous shelterbelts and small blocky plantations. Small scattered farms, isolated groups of dispersed post-war and adjacent new business parks. Strongly influenced by major transport routes and a network of local roads. Views tend to be short range, contained by nearby built development and woodland blocks. A busy and fragmented landscape.
62	LCT 9: Wooded Estates – Aberdeen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A gently undulating landform becoming more rolling to the west. Well-wooded with large areas of broadleaf woodland, mixed plantations and policy plantings. Some areas of pasture are present with these often used as horse paddocks closer to the urban area. A golf course, sports fields and former nurseries occur close to the city. Dispersed small farmsteads and other residential buildings are often well screened by woodland. Hazelhead Park and many of the larger woodlands across this type are well-used for recreation. Views tend to be short range being strongly contained by woodland. Nearby urban areas are often well-screened by woodland, and this can give a sense of detachment from the city.
63	LCT 26: Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rolling landform of low gently rounded hills and broad valleys. Occasional low-lying basins are filled with mosses or lochs. Strong woodland structure associated with numerous estate policies. Mixed farmland with varying size and pattern of fields, these are enclosed by a mix of fences, low stone walls and, in places, thick mixed shelterbelts and field trees. Occasional mosses are ringed by birch and Scots pine. Numerous and varied archaeological features occur in this landscape and include henges, carved stone balls, recumbent stone circles and Pictish monuments. Well settled with a large number of towns and villages. More recent settlement expansion and housing development is particularly evident closer to Aberdeen. Significant network of roads radiating out from Aberdeen. Long views across open farmland contrast with sudden enclosure by woodland as one passes through this landscape. The prominent Grampian Outlying Hills and Ridges often form a focus in these views.

Map Id	Character Type	Key Characteristics
86	LCT 1: Beaches, Dunes and Links – Aberdeen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong horizontal emphasis and great sense of openness. • Long, gently curving sandy beaches are a consistent feature with dunes and grassy links backing the beach in the north. • Gently undulating links north of the Don estuary form a golf course. • Links are more modified, forming municipal grassland and sports facilities south of the Don. • Little settlement apart from the village of Footdee and occasional golf club buildings although the urban edge lies close to the coast in the south. • Intensively used beaches, esplanade and road close to the urban core of Aberdeen in the south although the coast is less frequented north of the Don estuary. • Extensive open views along beaches and out to sea contrast with the urban hinterland. • A dynamic landscape where natural coastal processes change the appearance of dunes and beaches. • A distinct sense of naturalness and tranquillity is associated with the northern section of coast.
87	LCT 12: Beaches, Dunes and Links - Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long and gently curved sandy beaches backed by wind-sculpted seaward dunes to the east and comparatively solid landward dunes to the west. • Low-lying scrubby grassland and occasional areas of wetland and pools forming immediate coast hinterland. • Gradual transition between coast and Coastal Agricultural Plain of flat to very undulating pastures used mainly for sheep grazing. • Saltmarsh, pools and inlets around higher farmland pastures. • Few trees, with vegetation limited to coastal grassland, moss and marram which hold shifting sands together. • Farm buildings in the area west of Loch of Strathbeg sited on subtly higher knolls above salt marsh. • Containment within the dunes contrasting with expansive long beaches and open skies. • Sense of naturalness and remoteness.
105	LCT 5: Low Hills – Aberdeen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominent hills which form distinctive landmark features seen from the city. • A gently rounded landform with relatively steep slopes gives these hills a well-defined profile. • Large areas of open moorland and woodland cover summits and upper slopes. • Farmland is associated with the lower slopes of the western hills. • These hills are largely undeveloped apart from telecommunication masts on some summits. • Small farms are generally situated at the foot of the larger western hills. • Prehistoric monuments are associated with many of these hills. • Many of these hills are well-used for recreation. • Areas of higher open ground provide panoramic views across the city, Aberdeenshire and the sea. • A sense of seclusion can be experienced on summits and within the more extensive woodlands.
141	LCT 22: Broad Valley Lowlands - Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A broad and generally gently undulating strath with some flatter basins. • Steep scarp of the Mounth uplands rising steeply to the north-west and low rounded ridge of Garvock Hill provides a lesser degree of containment along the southeastern boundary. • Predominantly intensive agriculture with distinctive patchwork of large open fields divided by ditches and fences interspersed with small conifer woodlands. • More folded terrain at the foot of The Mounth uplands, with a number of small, rounded hills and small incised valleys, supporting diverse policy woodlands and well-managed farmland. • Mature beech woodlands and avenues with stone walls associated with estates at the base of slopes. • Pockets of rowan and birch woodland along watercourses stand out within this expansive plain. • Small traditional villages and numerous farms, constructed of warm red stone, dotted throughout the countryside. • Landscape forms a major communications corridor accommodating the A90, the East Coast railway and transmission line. • Striking contrast of open, expansive strath and adjacent uplands.

Map Id	Character Type	Key Characteristics
169	LCT 31: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large-scale valley landform in which the valley sides form a series of rolling terraces patterned with bands of birch and pine, interspersed with walled pastures. • Pastoral areas of green fields and shady woods. Greater proportion of open farmland occurs further east and along some tributaries in contrast with the more densely wooded valley in Landscape Character Types further west. • Sparkling shallow river that meanders across the valley floor, its course divided by several wooded islets. • Frequent settlement in a series of separate villages and groups of houses. Also, estates with fine buildings, grand gatehouses, and stone boundary walls. • Main road corridor with a sequence of settlements spaced along the valley, mostly on the northern side, interspersed with steadings and frequent groups of houses. • Views along the strath and out to the higher ground beyond give a sense of scale. • A well-settled, prosperous, often traditional character. • A focus for a range of recreational activities. • Long views contrast with sudden enclosures by woodland.
170	LCT 33: Broad Wooded Valley with Estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large-scale valley landform in which the valley sides generally consist of undulating slopes and hills and the valley floors are flat. • Richly wooded landscape often providing a strong sense of enclosure, particularly on lower slopes. • Sparkling shingly rivers follow the valley floors: wide, with occasional islands in the Dee, tributaries meander in narrower glens. • Range of settlements from a small town and villages, mostly on the north banks of the rivers, to groups of houses, estates, steadings and individual dwellings. • Frequent estates with fine buildings, grand gateways and stone boundary walls. • Main road corridor. • Grand castles hotels and houses given an impression of a well-settled, prosperous and traditional character. • Views along the strath and out to the surrounding uplands giving a sense of scale. • Great diversity of trees and rich understorey form a landscape of colourful foliage and dappled light; striking colours in autumn. • Westwards the landscape assumes a more Highland character • Focus for a range of recreational activities.
173	LCT 2: Cliffs and Rocky Coast - Aberdeen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep rugged slopes and cliffs cut by narrow inlets and with fissured headlands and occasional small coves. • Grazed fields extend close to the top of cliffs while semi-natural coastal grassland covers rocky headlands. • Business and industrial buildings, a quarry and a landfill site form the urban edge abutting this coast. • A narrow road and the East Coast Mainline railway are aligned tight against this coast. • A long cultural heritage associated with the fishing industry. • The battery and lighthouse on the headland of Girdle Ness form landmark features seen from the city. • Dramatic sea views from cliff-top paths and the railway. • Rugged cliffs and exposure to the elements instil a sense of wildness unusual in a city.
209	LCT: Coastal Agricultural Plain – Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-lying and very gently undulating landform, with a pattern of subtle ridges and valleys in the north-east. • Prominent landmark feature of Mormond Hill on the western edge of the area, which includes the White Horse and White Stag quartz hillside figures, the only such in Scotland. • Water courses in broad shallow valleys. • Mainly arable farming, with fairly extensive areas of moss and wetland. • Large, open, geometric fields. • Coniferous forest particularly extensive in southern part of the area. • Limited broadleaf woodland, forming rare shelterbelts and small groups around farms. • Well settled landscape of dispersed farms, many newer houses and a number of settlements, and occasional mansions in designed landscapes. • Communication structures and tall masts on some higher ground, and power transmission lines radiating from Peterhead power station, which itself is highly visible. • Major roads crossing the area. • Consistent views of high coastal dunes and sea, giving a strong coastal context.

Map Id	Character Type	Key Characteristics
214	LCT: Coastal Farmed Plain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A low-lying plain which gradually falls toward the coast but becomes more undulating in the west as it merges with the Undulating Open Farmland Landscape Character Type. • An open, occasionally exposed character emphasised by low relief, scarcity of woodland and a coastal aspect and influence. • Land use is principally improved grassland with some arable fields. • Semi-natural habitats limited to pockets of rough grass edging fields and ditches and clumps of gorse. • Woodland is sparse and limited to small clumps of trees sheltering stone farm buildings. • A restored landfill site is located close to the Aberdeenshire boundary. • Older dispersed stone farmsteads and cottages contrast with larger business park buildings and dense housing on the edge of Aberdeen. • This landscape lies close to the A90 which forms the main approach to Aberdeen from the north. • The gently eastward falling relief allows long views across this landscape to the sea.
215	LCT 24: Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills – Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large scale and open landscape of smoothly rolling ridges and shallow valleys. • Narrow ravines cutting through the ridges towards the coast. • Large fields of arable land and pasture with red-pink soils present a rich tapestry of colours with the strong patchwork pattern influenced by different crops and ploughed fields. • Few hedges or dykes. • Sparse woodland with coniferous shelterbelts planted on some ridges. Broadleaf woodlands, although small, commonly emphasise the landform, tracing water courses or planted on knolls. • Scattered settlement pattern with varied architectural styles including some large stately homes, farms and traditional cottages, often built of local red sandstone. • Comprehensive network of minor roads, as well as the main A90 which provides glimpses of the sea. • A concentration of Bronze Age burial cairns often focussed on hilltops with views to the sea. • Telecommunication masts located on the highest hills. • Frequent single and small groups of large Wind Turbines. • Strong coastal influence particularly where more open slopes fall gently to the top of cliffs or raised beach allowing views of the sea. • Sea views to the east and views westwards across the Howe of the Mearns.
228	LCT 29: Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An expansive upland plateau with a smooth rolling landform and rounded hill summits. Landform is more complex along the Highland Boundary Fault. • Foreground to the Cairngorm massif and Cairngorms National Park. • Backdrop in views from the north from Lower Deeside and the fringes of Aberdeen city. • Extensive central and western ridges covered with expansive heather and grass moorland. • Regionally prominent hills. • Coniferous forested lower hills, particularly extensive in the north-east. Wind farm development also present in this area. • A patchwork of green pasture extends high into narrow valleys on the fringes of these uplands. • Unexpected pockets of farmland and isolated farms and estate buildings associated lower ground in part of the core of these uplands. • Derelict grey stone cottages are occasional features amidst open moorland. • Numerous old routeways popular with walkers. these and the B974 Cairn o'Mount road, offer commanding views to the Howe of Mearns and the coast, and to Deeside. • Wild character experienced in the less modified central and western parts of this landscape. • Dramatic juxtaposition of the steep scarp slopes of these rugged uplands with the expansive low-lying farmed and settled Howe of the Mearns.
254	LCT 30: Narrow Winding Farmed Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley landform, steeply banked on the northern side with gentler slopes on the south. • Varied width of the flat valley floor, in places fringed by small knolls and terraces; the river meanders in this section. • Diverse woodland on the valley sides, including policies, shelterbelts and clumps of trees. • Farmland on the valley floor and lower sides. • The upper Don is generally less settled and more rural in character. • Strong historic character of estate parklands and buildings with striking historic and modern bridges. • Views are contained by the valley landform; often it is visible only from narrow minor roads. • Sense of relative tranquillity despite the proximity of the city, airport, and roads. • Long history as a communication route.

Map Id	Character Type	Key Characteristics
258	LCT 20: Undulating Agricultural Heartland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently undulating, rolling landform of low hills and ridges, with broad shallow valleys. • Smoothly rounded terrain. • Large fields. • Occasional beech and thorn hedges, with stone dykes more common in parts. • Generally sparse woodland cover, with broadleaf trees concentrated in shelterbelts along ridges, and around farms. Larger coniferous forests occur in some areas, and estate policies and occasional beech shelterbelts also occur. • A well settled landscape with a number of small settlements including historic planned fermtouns, castles and designed landscapes. • Frequent, regularly dispersed medium-sized farms, with pockets of smaller farms and crofts. • Open, expansive character with views to landmark hills; the Culsh monument above New Deer is a key landmark feature.
288	LCT 6: Undulating Open Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gently undulating landform with some shallow basins contained by low-lying ridges. • Predominantly improved pasture and arable farming with a weak enclosure pattern. • Semi-natural habitats are limited to pockets of rough grass and scrub with occasional areas of moss and wetland. • Sparse woodland with only occasional small clumps and lines of trees and some coniferous plantations in the south-west. • A sparsely settled landscape with a pattern of scattered farmsteads and houses accessed by a network of minor but often busy roads. • The openness of this landscape allows extensive views particularly on the western edges of the city. • A landscape with a prevailing rural character although eastern areas are influenced by the proximity of the urban area.
304	LCT 7: Undulating Wooded Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gently undulating landform with occasional shallow basins and low ridges. • Particularly well-wooded in the north-west with many former estate woodlands. • Long shelterbelts of beech line roads and screen residential areas on the edge of the city. • Wet woodland, bog communities and heathland habitats are associated with low lying basins. • A mix of open and expansive predominantly arable farmland in the south with smaller pastures in the north-west. • Surviving influence of estate landscapes, including policy woodland and estate buildings. • Settlement is dispersed and often hidden by woodland. Well-used roads traverse this landscape. • Views tend to be short-medium range, curtailed by nearby woodland blocks. • Despite the proximity to the city there is a strongly rural character, and a sense of tranquillity can be experienced.
355	LCT 27: Farmed Moorland Edge – Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rolling hills and valleys with some rocky ridges on higher slopes. • Dark heather-clad and forested hills often form the backdrop to these upland fringe areas. • Areas of moorland are interspersed with farmland on higher slopes. • Marginal upland farming, sheep grazing and patches of gorse scrub, birch and willow occurs at the transition with the uplands. • More intensive farmland is present on softly rolling ground. • Areas of waterlogged ground and small bogs in places, particularly at the transition with moorland or in wetter valley bottoms. • Scrubby patches of birch, willow and Scots pine occur in more marginal areas. • Clumps of broadleaf trees and shelterbelts pattern farmed lower slopes. • Mixed policy-influenced plantings more common in some areas. • Farm buildings of grey/brown stone are often marked by clumps of trees. • Derelict buildings are particularly evident on marginal upland areas. • Prehistoric monuments and artefacts, including stone circles, carved stone balls and souterrains. • Strong sense of history and culture, giving the landscape a timeless character.
366	LCT 13: Raised Beach Coast – Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised beaches from 50 m to 600 m wide are backed by cliffs. • Soft Old Red Sandstone cliffs have a tumbling, worn profile rather than a sheer edge although steeper volcanic cliffs occur to the south of St Cyrus. • Gently sloping agricultural hinterland descends gradually to cliffs or, where cliffs are low, almost to the sea. • Cliff slopes are well-vegetated with grasses and scrub. • Raised beach platforms encompass open farmland, marsh and reed beds, with little woodland, and are edged by a narrow sandy and shingle beach with some rocky areas. • Villages are perched on or set back from cliff tops. • Farms and caravan sites are prominent features on sloping agricultural hinterland. • Sea views provide a sense of space and immense scale.

Map Id	Character Type	Key Characteristics
369	LCT 4: River Valley – Aberdeen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dramatic river valleys of the Dee and Don are a major landscape feature of the city and instrumental to its development. • Fast flowing rivers channelled within an increasingly constricted valley floor close to the city. • Semi-natural habitats of riparian woodland and marginal vegetation pattern the generally open floodplains associated with the Dee and Upper Don. • Diverse and often extensive wooded policies, shelterbelts and clumps of trees cover valley sides. • Farming is the dominant land use in the upper Don, while the lower Don and Dee feature more recreational uses and open space. • A nucleated settlement pattern is associated with the lower slopes of the Dee valley while a denser urban edge borders the western banks of the lower Don. • The upper Don is generally less settled and more rural in character. • A strong historic character of estate parklands and buildings with striking historic bridges across rivers. • Roads are aligned within or close to these valleys and some provide key approaches to the city. • Views are contained by the valley landform. • Well-used recreational routes are aligned close to the Dee and lower Don. • A sense of tranquillity can be experienced in these often strongly contained valleys.
382	LCT 25: Farmed Strath – Aberdeenshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowland area of undulating landform centred around the shallow strath of the Ythan River. • Open hills and sheltered boggy hollows interspersed with more intensively farmed pockets. • Small to medium sized fields of pasture bounded by coarse boulder dykes. • Diverse vegetation pattern and structure includes areas of gorse and broom along field margins and roads, birch scrub, wetland grasses and windblown trees. • Scattered boulders, rocky outcrops together with field dykes and stone cottages contribute to a more marginal feel in places. • Small blocks of conifers fit well into the small scale landscape mosaic. Dense mixed policy woodlands are different in character. • Settlements generally scarce although small cottages and farms are more widespread within the strath. • The Prop of Ythsie forms a local landmark on a locally prominent Hill of Ythsie. • Contrast with the more intensively farmed landscapes which surround this area.
385	LCT 21: Farmland and Wooded Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling landscape with diverse woodland cover. • Area cut through by South Ugie Water, with a valley enclosed by soft rolling hills, with an open river floodplain and lower farmed slopes. • Policy plantings trace ridge lines and curve around valley sides. • Distinct roundel and crescent shaped woodlands on small hill tops in parts of the area. • Diverse mixed farmland on lower hill slopes, with compact farms with beech shelterbelts and smaller woodlands; conifer forest in part of the area. • More open, larger scale farmland on gentler slopes at Undulating Agricultural Heartlands transition. • Numerous remnant built features associated with former estates • Well settled landscape with planned villages, numerous farmsteads, manses and farmhouses, as well as the historic village of Old Deer. • Contained views from roads and paths due to rolling landform and woodland cover. • A timeless quality to the landscape. • A richly scenic landscape.