

# WELCOME TO OUR PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT



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## Welcome to the public consultation for the proposed ESB Chleansaïd Wind Farm on the Dalnessie Estate located 13 km to the north-east of Lairg.

Utilising the natural environment to harness clean, zero-carbon energy, the Chleansaïd Wind Farm project will, if consented, support local construction companies along with local supply chains during its operation; offer community benefit and shared ownership opportunities; and, support the long-term management of the estate. The proposed development site benefits from good wind speeds, existing site access and a nearby grid connection point, and has no on-site environmental designations.

## Site description

The proposed development site is on the Dalnessie Estate, off the A836 and about 13 km to the north-east of Lairg in the Scottish Highlands.

The site lies in the North, West and Central Sutherland ward of The Highland Council area.

The proposed site is currently a shooting estate with rough grazing land for sheep.

## Developer

ESB is developing Chleansaïd Wind Farm. ESB is Ireland's premier energy company and a leading independent power generator in the UK market. The company has a track record of over 20 years as a successful investor in the UK since commissioning one of the first independent power generation plants at Corby in Northamptonshire in 1994. ESB owns and operates wind farms across the UK and Ireland with a total installed capacity of 600 MW.





# THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT



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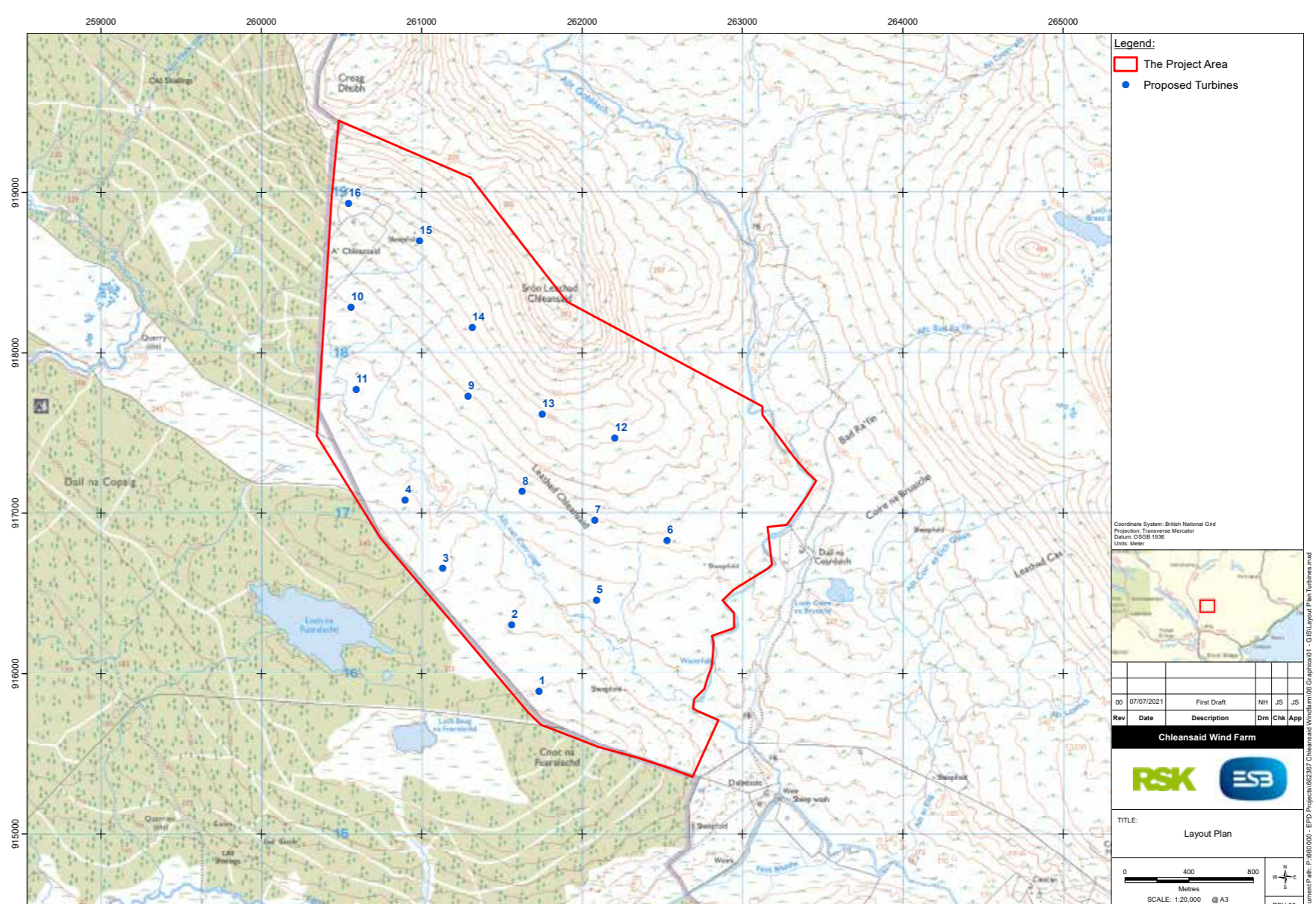
**ESB wishes to construct a new onshore wind farm with up to 16 turbines that aims to deliver energy generation in excess of 50 MW. Environmental, technical and commercial considerations throughout the design process will inform the final number of turbines.**

The turbines will have a maximum tip height of 200 m, a blade length of 82 m and a generating capacity of around 6 MW. The final turbine selection will be informed by an environmental impact assessment that will look at various factors to assess the environmental consequences of the development.

The plans include battery storage capacity to maximise the use of the grid connection and help balance the national electricity transmission grid.

## Construction and access

- One or more construction compounds, access tracks and watercourse crossings will require installation to enable wind farm construction.
- Access to the site for vehicles delivering construction materials and turbine components will be from the A836 to the west of the site via the existing forestry haulage route. The existing access track will be upgraded, where required, to meet the



specifications for all construction and turbine delivery vehicles.

- Watercourse crossings will be installed as required. Their design will be in accordance with Scottish Government best practice and due regard for Scottish Environment Protection Agency guidelines to enable the passage of fish and other wildlife.
- Crushed stone will be used to construct new tracks, create hardstanding areas for the cranes and to lay foundations. The source of the stone and aggregate is to be confirmed during the design process and the environmental impact assessment phase.





# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



**RSK Environment Ltd has been appointed to carry out a detailed environmental impact assessment of the Chleansaid Wind Farm project. This study will form part of the formal application for consent to the Scottish Ministers.**

The environmental impact assessment process includes

- Consultation with the local authority, various organisations and the public to identify specific concerns and issues
- Determining the existing conditions at and around the wind farm site by reviewing the available data and undertaking specialist field surveys
- Assessing the potential impacts on the existing environment
- Mitigation proposals to alleviate any significant impacts identified.

The environmental impact assessment will include detailed studies for the following disciplines:

- Landscape character and visual assessment
- Cultural heritage and archaeology
- Ecological and ornithological impact
- Geology, hydrogeology, hydrology and peat
- Noise and vibration
- Traffic and transportation
- Aviation and radar
- Telecommunications and electromagnetic interference.



# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

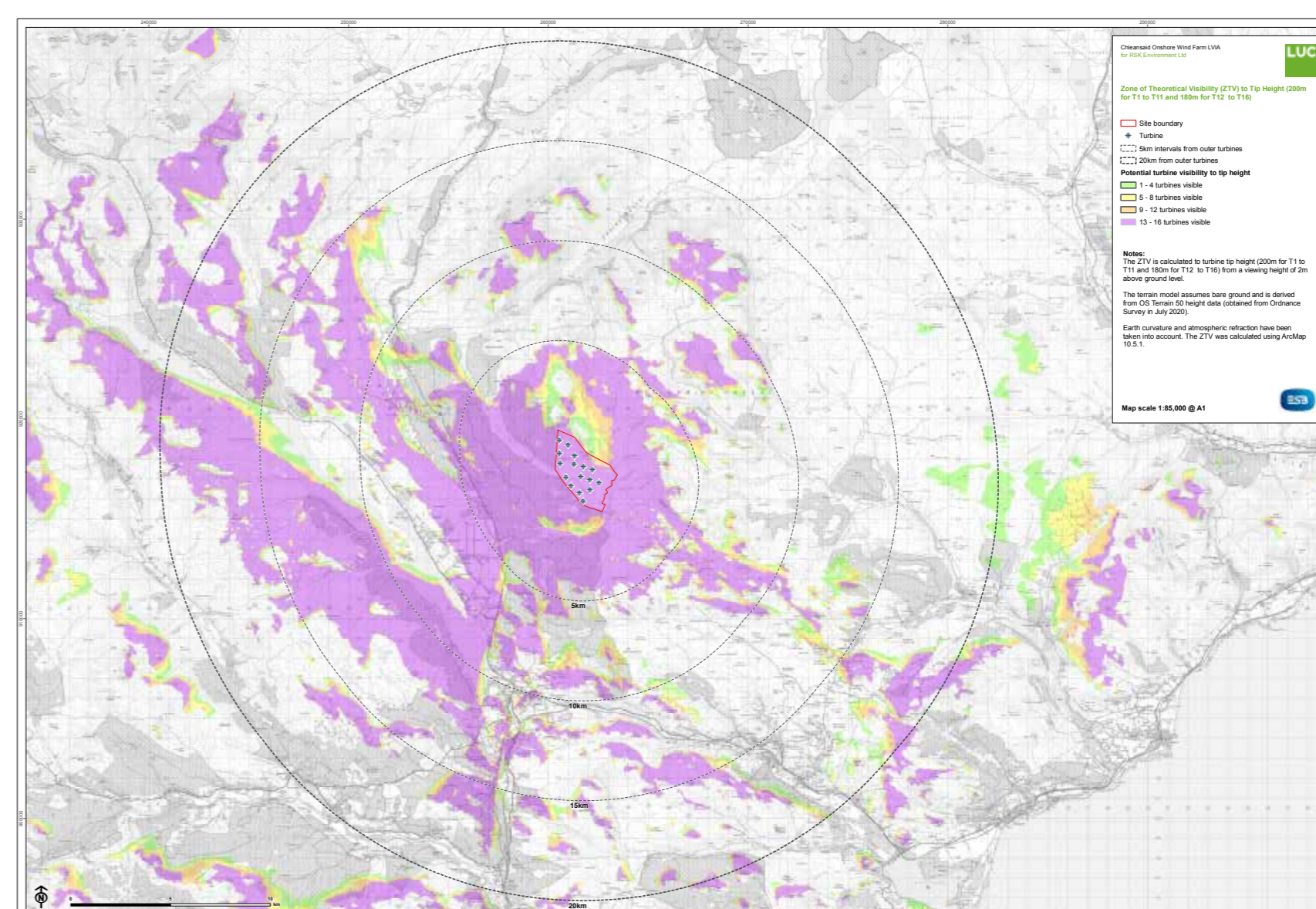


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**A landscape and visual impact assessment will establish the potential effects of the proposed development on the surrounding landscape and visual amenity.**

A zone of theoretical visibility is a computer-generated tool that establishes the likely extent of the visibility of a proposed development and key visual receptors. A zone of theoretical visibility based on preliminary design options has been prepared to inform the landscape and visual impact assessment.

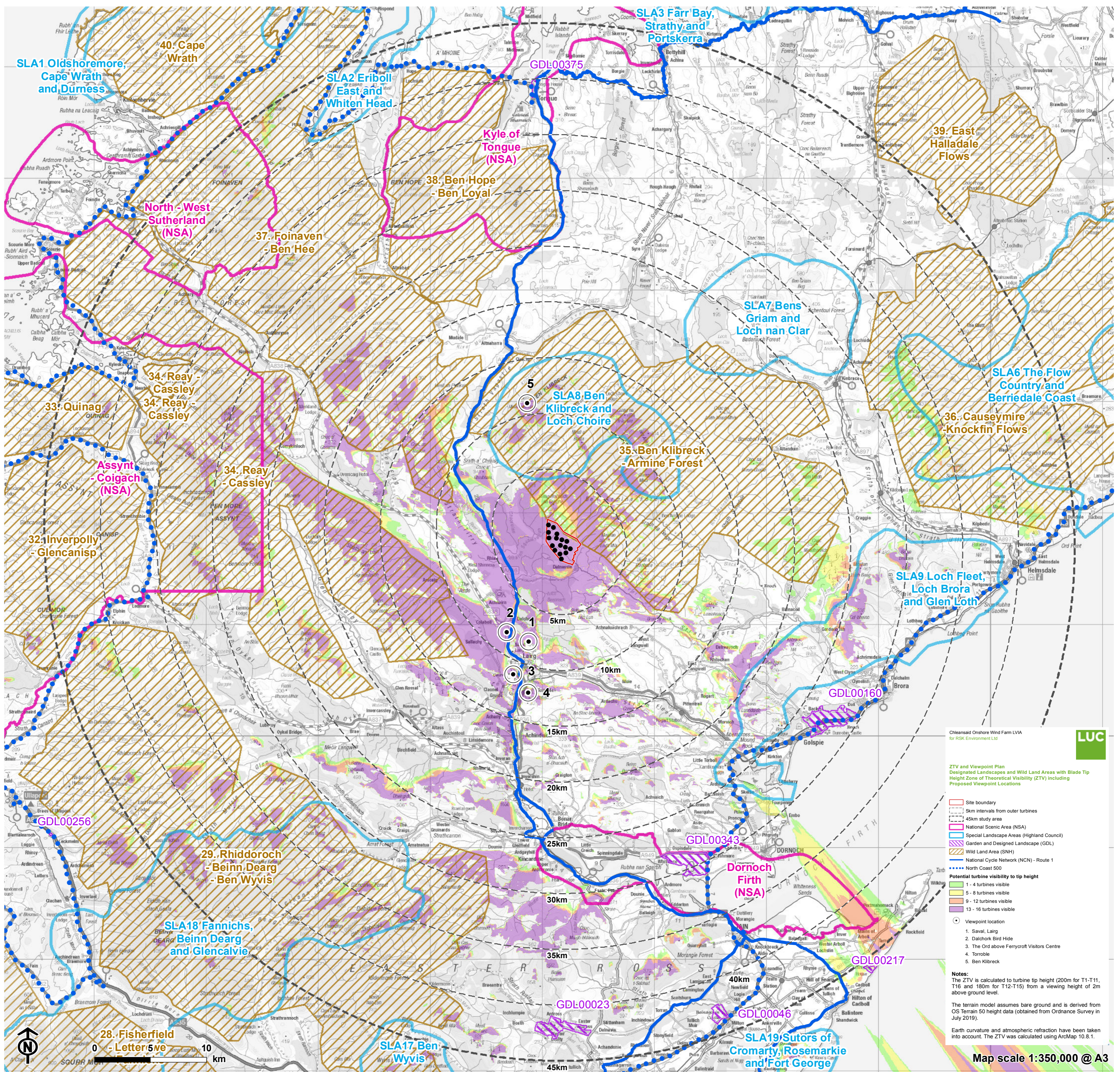
The zone of theoretical visibility indicates the areas where turbines will be visible, based on the relief of the surrounding study area (45 km from the outer turbines). This is supported by producing and analysing wirelines and photomontages from several agreed viewpoints that give a clearer picture of what the new turbines would look like.



The new turbines will be up to 200 m tall; however, a detailed assessment of their potential impacts will be considered when deciding on the final layout of the development and the turbines to be used.



# THE ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY





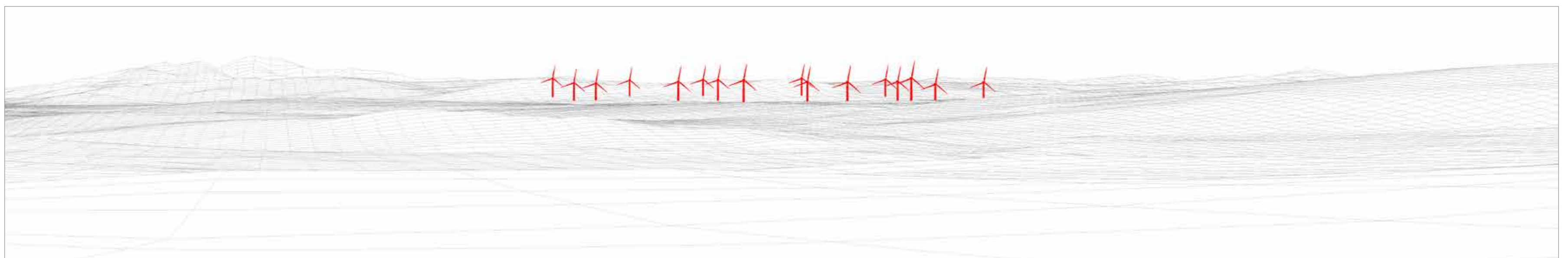
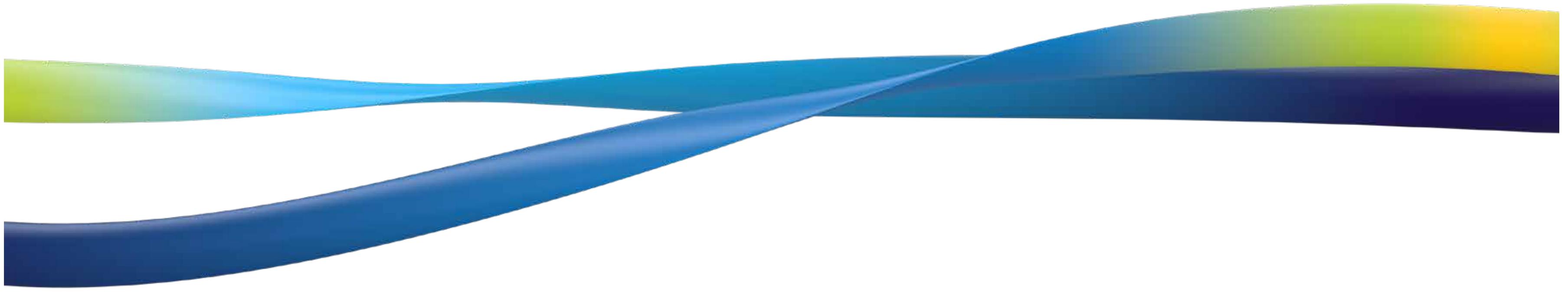
# PHOTOMONTAGE



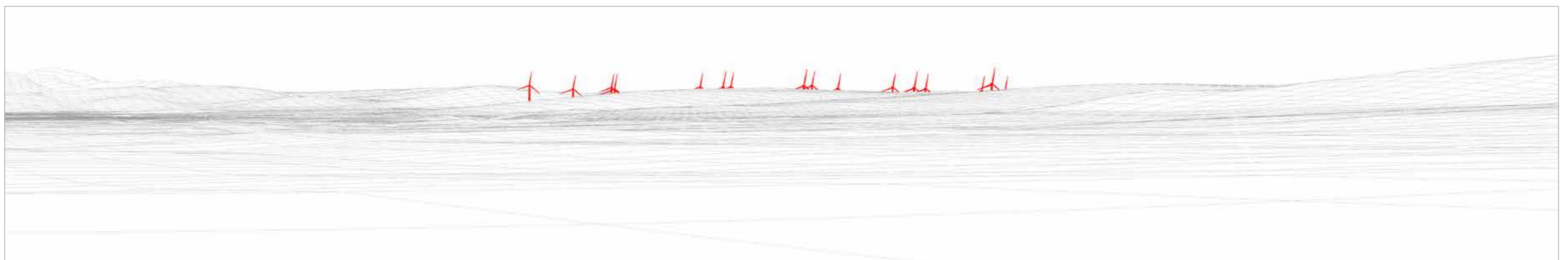
Viewpoint 3 (11.20 km): The Ord above Ferrycroft Visitor Centre. Photomontage of the proposed Chleansaíd turbines from the Ord, taken from Grid Reference 257400,905563 set up with a 53.5 degrees horizontal field of view. This represents a view from a local high point in Lairg, visibility from lower lying areas in Lairg is very limited.



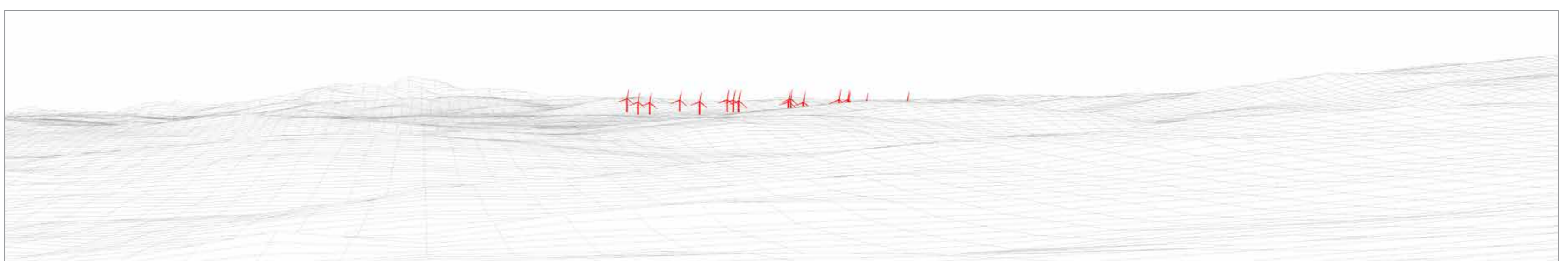
# VISUALISATIONS



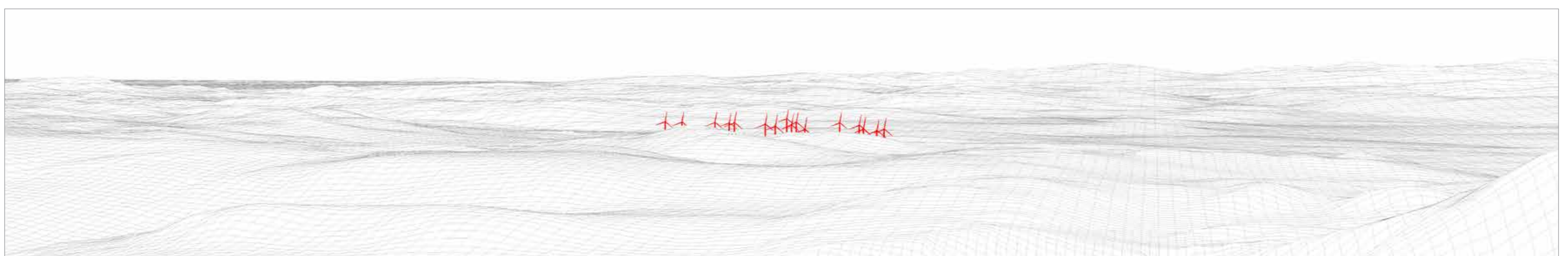
Viewpoint 1 (7.9 km): Saval, Lairg. Indicative wireline of the proposed Chleansaيد turbines from Saval, above Lairg, taken from Grid Reference 258780 908492 (note: very limited visibility from Lairg itself).



Viewpoint 2 (8.2 km): Dalchork Bird Hide. Indicative wireline from the bird hide at Dalchork near the A836, taken from Grid Reference 256833 909361.



Viewpoint 4 (12.3 km): Torroble. Indicative wireline of the proposed Chleansaيد turbines from Torroble, east of the A836, taken from Grid Reference 258724 903914 (note: roadside vegetation limits views from the A836 on the northern approach to Lairg).



Viewpoint 5 (11.1 km): Ben Klibreck (Meall nan Con). Indicative wireline of the proposed Chleansaيد turbines from summit of Ben Klibreck, Meall nan Con, taken from Grid Reference 258639 929881.

All the wirelines have been set up at a 53.5 degree horizontal field of view. The wirelines are based on bare earth digital terrain models, so, as such, do not take account of any screening through vegetation or built forms.





# CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

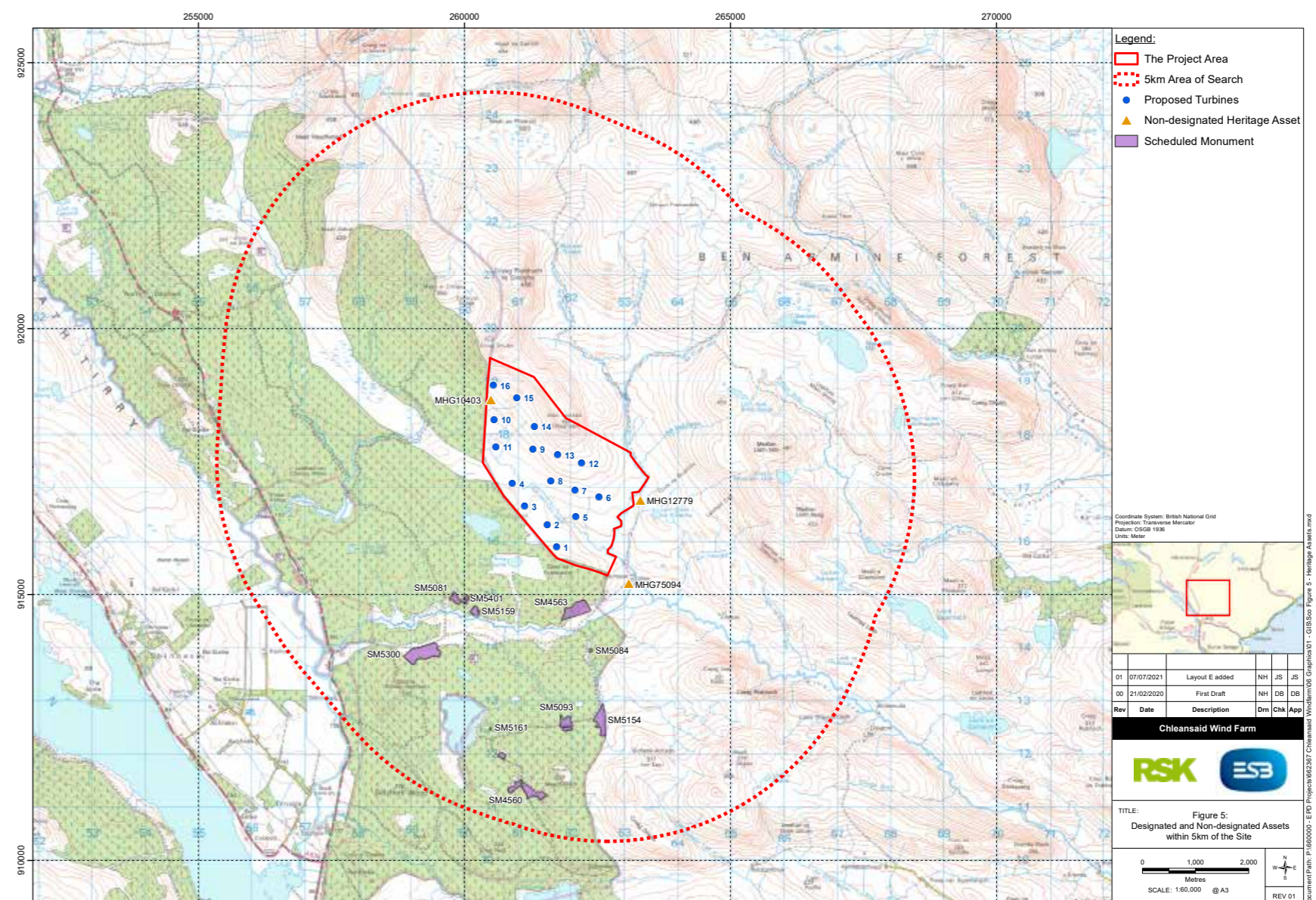


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The effects of the proposed development on the historic environment, including cultural heritage and archaeology, will be assessed. This study will consider the wind farm's direct and indirect effects on known and potential receptors. The potential impacts include

- Construction impacts (direct or indirect physical impacts on the setting) on designated and non-designated heritage assets
- Construction impacts on previously unrecorded heritage assets
- Operational impacts on designated heritage assets.

Once the known heritage assets have been established and the potential for the presence of previously unknown heritage assets has been assessed, the environmental impact assessment will assess the impact magnitude and significance on heritage assets in the area.





# ECOLOGY AND ORNITHOLOGY



**A programme of ecological and ornithological surveys is being carried out on the site. The results will be used to ensure that any impacts on wildlife are mitigated.**

In addition, opportunities for biodiversity enhancements that the development could deliver will be explored in consultation with specialist interest groups.

## **Ornithology surveys**

A comprehensive survey programme is under way to identify the use of the site and its wider surroundings by sensitive bird populations.



## **Ecology surveys**

The ecology surveys include

- A phase 1 habitat survey
- A National Vegetation Classification survey
- Terrestrial mammal surveys
- Bat surveys
- Fish habitat surveys.

The site is a mosaic of open moorland habitats, with semi-mature and clear-felled forestry plantations abutting the site to the south and west.

A few watercourses pass through the site, including the Allt nan Con-uisge and its tributaries, which flow into the River Brora that flows to the east from the boundary of the site.



# THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



**ESB will work closely with local communities, businesses and residents in seeking to ensure that it will bring real benefits and help to meet national climate change targets through the Chleansaيد Wind Farm proposal.**

## **Business, employment and investment**

ESB would like to hear from businesses across the Highlands and Scotland to ensure that it can fully consider the skills and services of local people and suppliers if the Chleansaيد Wind Farm receives approval.

The opportunities available include those for

- An engineering, procurement and construction contractor
- Construction material suppliers: concrete, aggregate and building materials
- Electrical contractors: supply and installation of plant, cabling, earthing, etc.
- Plant and equipment hire contractors: excavation earthworks, craneage, welfare units, etc.
- Labour hire companies: engineers, plant operatives and general labourers
- Transport: taxis and minibuses for local labourers.

## **Local accommodation providers**

Construction projects of this nature inevitably require some specialist technicians from outside the area, so they will require local accommodation and catering facilities.

To be considered, please register with the local suppliers' database on our project website: [www.esbenergy.co.uk/chleansaيد-wind-farm](http://www.esbenergy.co.uk/chleansaيد-wind-farm)

## **Community benefit**

ESB is committed to community benefit. We are currently exploring the options for community benefit and want to work with the community to create a workable and targeted package up to the value of £5,000 per megawatt of installed capacity.

We welcome feedback from the local community on community benefit structures.

## **Community shareholding**

ESB is keen to consult the community about interest in investing in owning a share of Chleansaيد Wind Farm.





# CHLEANSAID WIND FARM AND COVID-19



**We acknowledge that there is uncertainty regarding how the COVID-19 pandemic might influence the Chleansaaid Wind Farm project. We recognise that this is primarily a public health issue and are fully committed to protecting the health and well-being of the public, landowners, neighbours and personnel.**

We will regularly review our working methods and health and safety plans to reflect the latest advice and guidance the UK and Scottish governments issue.

Given the current restrictions on public events and social gatherings, we are progressing with innovative ways of engaging with communities and the public to inform them of the proposed Chleansaaid development.

Details of the feedback provided via public consultation before an application is submitted will be captured and included in a statement of community consultation provided to the Scottish Government alongside the application for consent.

ESB hopes to submit the planning application towards the end of 2021. There will be a second public consultation period in advance of the submission. This will either be held in a public space or online, depending on the Covid-19 guidance in place for Scotland at the time.



# WHAT NEXT?



ESB presenting this information is one of the early steps in the consultation process. We welcome your feedback on our initial proposals to help us refine the details of the Chleansaïd Wind Farm project.

When the application for consent is submitted to the Scottish Ministers, the Scottish Government will undertake its own consultation process when the public will be invited to make formal comment on the proposals.

You can view more detailed information on our website:  
[www.esbenergy.co.uk/chleansaïd-wind-farm](http://www.esbenergy.co.uk/chleansaïd-wind-farm)

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