

FEARNA STORAGE

Fearna Pumped Storage Hydro Scheme EIA Report

Appendix 7.4 – Wild Land Assessment

February 2025



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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 NatureScot (previously Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)) *Policy Statement No 02/03: Wildness in Scotland's Countryside* (Policy Statement 02/03)¹ recognises the concept of wild land or wildness as land that is sensitive to any form of development and provides psychological benefit to those seeking more challenging forms of outdoor recreation. It notes that this type of land is scarce in national terms and has declined in extent over the past few decades. It aims to safeguard the character of these landscapes and protect them from inappropriate development or land use change.
- 1.1.2 Within the context of this policy, NatureScot have identified 42 Wild Land Areas (WLAs) considered to represent the most significant areas of wild land character in Scotland. These areas are considered as being of national importance.
- 1.1.3 WLAs do not constitute designated landscapes but are recognised within Policy 4 of the *National Planning Framework 4* (NPF4)². NPF4 states that development proposals in these areas would only be supported where they support meeting renewable energy targets, comprise small scale development directly linked to a rural business or croft, or are required to support a fragile community in a rural area. A wild land impact assessment is required to support such proposals, to set out how design, siting, or other mitigation measures have been and will be used to minimise significant impacts on the qualities of the wild land.
- 1.1.4 This WLA assessment considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development on WLA 18: Kinlochhourn - Knoydart - Morar. The WLA assessment analyses the baseline presence of the attributes which contribute to the key qualities of the WLA and the degree to which these attributes and qualities would be affected by the Proposed Development. It further outlines mitigation measures which have been developed to minimise the predicted effects. The assessment has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects, ASH design + assessment Ltd (ASH) and is supplementary to the Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) (**Chapter 7** of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)).

1.2 Wild Land Background

- 1.2.1 Annex 1 of *Policy Statement 02/03*¹ identifies five physical attributes which contribute to the experience of wildness and identification of wild land:
- A high degree of perceived naturalness in the setting, especially in its vegetation cover and wildlife, and in the natural processes affecting the land;
 - The lack of any modern artefacts or structures;
 - Little evidence of contemporary human uses of the land;
 - Landform which is rugged, or otherwise physically challenging; and
 - Remoteness and/or inaccessibility.
- 1.2.2 In addition, four perceptual responses are identified as being evoked by those experiencing wild land:
- A sense of sanctuary or solitude;

¹ Scottish Natural Heritage, now NatureScot (2002) *Wildness in Scotland's Countryside: Policy Statement 02/03*.

² The Scottish Government (2023) *National Planning Framework 4*.

- Risk or, for some visitors, a sense of awe or anxiety, depending on the individual's emotional response to the setting;
- Perceptions that the landscape has arresting or inspiring qualities; and
- Fulfilment from the physical challenge required to penetrate into these places.

1.2.3 Explanation of the physical attributes and perceptual responses are provided by NatureScot³ as detailed in **Table 1.1**:

Table 1.1: Explanation of Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses

Physical Attribute	Explanation
Perceived naturalness	Within WLAs vegetation cover is primarily composed of natural or semi-natural habitats (which may not be, ecologically, in the best condition). Catchment systems and other geomorphological processes are largely unmodified. The term 'perceived naturalness' reflects that some may consider the vegetation cover to be more 'natural and unmanaged' than they are in fact (for example, managed heather moorland).
Lack of construction or other artefacts	There is no or very limited evidence of contemporary buildings, structures or engineering works within WLAs although their presence outwith may be discerned. Older artefacts (for example, shielings and cleared settlements) and small scale features (for example, fences and stalkers paths) may be evident.
Evidence of contemporary land uses	Within WLAs no or very limited evidence of more intensive land use, but their presence outwith may be discerned. Extensive grazing and management for field sports may be evident (for example, muirburn, grazing pressure and use of ATVs).
Rugged or challenging terrain	Within WLAs, land that has extensive rough terrain or extensive boglands, which is difficult to traverse.
Remoteness and inaccessibility	Within WLAs, land that is distant from public motorised access (the nearest public road, ferry landing or railway station), taking account of the distance, barriers to travel (for example, lochs, rivers and cliffs), and ease of travel on foot / bicycle.
Perceptual Response	Explanation
Sense of sanctuary or solitude	The perception of separation from the 'modern world', isolation or distance from disturbance, that engenders feelings of respite or tranquillity, that enables a focus on the natural / semi-natural setting.
Risk, a sense of awe or anxiety	The perception of hazard that arises from being self-reliant in remote settings of large scale, whose rugged natural character and isolation from assistance (if required) engenders respect.
Arresting or inspiring qualities	An aesthetic reaction to the natural / semi-natural setting, often associated with the 'classic' high, steep and jagged mountains juxtaposed with deep lochs or seas, but can also be prompted by other superlative compositions such as the large scale simplicity of rounded massif, or the seemingly infinite expanse of open peatland or seas.
Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	The satisfaction and sense of accomplishment that arises from the physical effort required to traverse these settings, tackling their scale, topography, ground and weather conditions.

³ NatureScot (2020). *Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas: Technical Guidance, Annex 1 (updated 2023)*.

NatureScot's Mapping Scotland's Wildness and Wild Land Project

1.2.4 In 2014, NatureScot (then SNH) completed a two phase mapping project to identify areas where the highest degree of wildness is experienced in Scotland and which could be classed as wild land. The two phases to the project comprised:

- Phase 1: Desk-based mapping exercises leading to the production of a Map of Relative Wildness for Scotland; and
- Phase 2: Identification of WLAs where the highest degree of wildness was found to be experienced.

Map of Relative Wildness

1.2.5 The Map of Relative Wildness (illustrated on **Figures 7.4.1** and **7.4.2**) attempts to indicate relative wildness throughout Scotland and shows the degree of wildness considered to be present on a continuum from Low through to High at a 25 m resolution. This has been compiled through the combined mapping of four individual attributes giving equal weighting to each as follows:

- Perceived naturalness;
- Rugged or challenging terrain;
- Remoteness from public mechanised access; and
- Lack of built modern artefacts.

1.2.6 These attribute maps are shown on **Figure 7.4.3**.

Wild Land Areas

1.2.7 NatureScot have identified and mapped 42 WLAs throughout Scotland. These WLAs represent the areas considered to have the highest degree and extent of wild land, meriting safeguarding in the National interest.

1.2.8 The identification of WLAs involved a review of the Map of Relative Wildness using the Jenks Natural Breaks Optimisation method which divides the data into distinct classes by seeking to reduce the variance within each class and maximise the variance between them. A 'Jenks 8' classification (8 classes) was chosen for analysis of the Map of Relative Wildness data. Review of the Jenks 8 classification informed selection of areas for consideration as WLAs, requiring a sufficient area of contiguous coverage of Jenks 8 Classes 7 and 8, surrounded by a broader expanse of Jenks 8 Classes 5 and 6.

1.2.9 The Jenks 8 interpretation of the Map of Relatively Wildness is shown on **Figure 7.4.4**. Reference has been made the Jenks 8 interpretation when carrying out the assessment to help understand the variance of wildness through the study area and contribution of different areas to the identification of the WLA.

1.2.10 NatureScot have produced a suite of WLA Descriptions and identified Key Qualities (WLQs) for each of the 42 WLAs.

2. Methodology

2.1 Guidance

2.1.1 The assessment of effects on the WLA has been based on NatureScot 2020 Guidance *Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas: Technical Guidance*³ (the NatureScot Guidance) supported by a desk based analysis of the Proposed Development in relation to the Map of Relative Wildness and associated attribute mapping.

Consideration has also been given to the methods for landscape assessment outlined in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual assessment (Third Edition)* (GLVIA3)⁴.

2.2 Structure

2.2.1 The NatureScot Guidance³ advocates a five-step approach to the assessment of effects on the WLA broadly in line with GLVIA3⁴:

- Step 1: Define the study area and the scope of the assessment;
- Step 2: Verify the WLA baseline;
- Step 3: Assess the sensitivity of the WLQs;
- Step 4: Assess the magnitude of the effects; and
- Step 5: Judge the significance of the effects.

Step 1: Define the Study Area and Scope of the Assessment

2.2.2 The NatureScot Guidance³ notes that the study area for the WLA assessment should reflect the extent of the likely significant effects on the WLA, including any cumulative effects. A study area of 10 km from the upper reservoir area has been adopted for this WLA Assessment, in agreement with NatureScot (see **Figure 7.5.1**). This study area is broadly consistent with that for the LVIA for the Proposed Development although it does not include the Southern Access Route (SAR) which is outwith the WLA. Consideration has also been given to the potential for effects identified within the WLA study area to affect the WLA as a whole.

2.2.3 The WLA assessment therefore considers the effects of the Proposed Development on:

- The physical and perceptual attributes of the wild land within the study area;
- The WLQs within the study area; and
- The contribution of these effects to the WLA as a whole.

2.2.4 Effects are considered during construction, and during operation after 15 years, once vegetation has had an opportunity to fully establish.

Step 2: Establish the Baseline

2.2.5 Establishment of the baseline involves confirmation of the existing wild land qualities of the study area and their contribution to the WLA. This has involved consideration of the degree to which the physical and perceptual attributes of wild land and the identified WLQs are present within the WLA and has been established using a combination of desk-based study and site survey. Appraisal of the baseline has considered changes which have occurred directly and indirectly since the 2014 mapping exercises took place and WLA description were produced, and anticipated changes to the baseline in the form of consented development.

Desk Studies

2.2.6 Desk study has involved review and consideration of the following documents and resources:

- The Map of Relative Wildness and associated attribute mapping from the Mapping Scotland's Wildness project⁵;

⁴ Landscape Institute & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition*. Routledge.

⁵ Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot) (2014) Map of Relative Wildness (see: <https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/>)

- The Non-Technical Description of the Methodology⁶ for the Mapping Scotland's Wildness project;
- NatureScot (then SNH) Advice to Government⁷;
- NatureScot (then SNH) Description of WLA 18 (Kinlochhourn - Knoydart - Morar)⁸; and
- ZTVs and plans for the operational Beinneun Wind Farm, which was not taken into account in the original mapping exercise.

Site Survey

- 2.2.7 Site survey has been undertaken to verify the findings of the desk-based studies. To obtain a baseline understanding of the site, visits were undertaken by a team of Landscape Architects from ASH, in August and September 2024. Representative Wild Land Assessment Locations (WLs) within the WLA were visited and evaluated using a standardised form (see **Annex 1**). Site appraisal considered the strength of the physical and perceptual attributes at each location visited and the degree to which the identified WLA Key Qualities were found to be present.
- 2.2.8 A range of WLs have been selected in agreement with NatureScot, to obtain a robust picture of the varying strength of wildness throughout the WLA. The WLs have been selected to be representative of a particular area and are appraised on this basis, rather than as isolated points. The journey taken to reach these locations has also been considered as part of the evaluation.

Criteria for the Evaluation of Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses

- 2.2.9 The following criteria have been used as a basis for identifying the strength of physical attributes, as detailed in **Table 2.1** and

⁶ SNH (June 2014) *SNH's Mapping of Scotland's Wildness and Wild Land: Non-technical Description of the Methodology..*

⁷ SNH (June 2014) *Core Areas of Wild Land 2013 Map: Scottish Natural Heritage's Advice to Government.*

⁸ SNH (2017) *WLA 18. Kinlochhourn – Knoydart - Morar*. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2021-06/Wild%20land%20Description%20Kinlochhourn-Knoydart-Morar-July2016-18.pdf> (nature.scot). Accessed on 09.08.24.

2.2.11 Table 2.2.

Table 2.1: Physical Attributes – Strength of Attribute

Strength of Attribute	Description
High	Attribute is strongly present and a very noticeable characteristic of the location or area.
Medium	Attribute is partially present, to the extent that it is a noticeable characteristic of the location or area.
Low	Attribute is present to some degree but is a less noticeable characteristic of the location or area.
Negligible / Not present	The attribute is not recognisably present at the location or area.

Table 2.2: Perceptual Responses – Strength of Response

Strength of Response	Description
High	The response is very strongly evoked at and around the location and contributes strongly to the overall sense of place that is experienced.
Medium	The response is evoked to some extent either at or around the location and provides some influence on the overall sense of place that is experienced.
Low	The response is evoked to a limited extent at or around the location but provides little contribution to the overall sense of place.
Negligible / Not present	There is little or no sense of the response evoked at or around the location.

Strength of Wildness

- 2.2.12 Based on the strength identified for each of the above criteria an evaluation of strength of wildness has been applied ranging from Low to High as detailed in **Table 2.3** for each of the WLs. The individual evaluations at each WLs have then been considered in combination with the information obtained from the desk-based exercises to provide an evaluation of the baseline strength of wildness across the WLA as a whole.

Table 2.3: Strength of Wildness Ratings

Rating	Description
High	The area has an overriding sense of wildness. It is large scale and remote with little evidence of human influence on the landscape and strong impressions of isolation. It is likely to be difficult to access with a rugged and / or challenging terrain, inspiring qualities with a considerable sense of awe or risk.
Medium	The area has a generally dominating sense of wildness. It is likely to be large scale and fairly remote although locally influenced by some human interventions or neighbouring land uses. There is likely to be some rugged or challenging terrain with impressive or dramatic views from some areas and a general sense of isolation.
Low	The area has the qualities of wild land but is influenced by human interventions such as constructed features, tracks, paths and forestry which will be locally dominating. There will be some difficult terrain with a limited degree of risk, but tracks and paths will provide easier routes through the landscape. A sense of solitude or isolation is likely to be experienced in some areas and there may be some expansive or impressive views.

Step 3: Assess the Sensitivity of the Study Area

- 2.2.13 GLVIA recognises that landscape sensitivity is derived from a combination of two factors:
- Landscape value; and
 - Susceptibility to change.
- 2.2.14 Given its identification as a WLA, the value of the landscape is recognised as being high. However, susceptibility may change across the WLA depending on the strength of wildness and the degree to which the WLQs may be present, and the potential for the key elements of the WLQ to be altered by the type of development proposed.
- 2.2.15 Sensitivity has been evaluated for each of the WLQs rated on a three-point scale at each of the assessment locations. This is transcribed across the WLA area dependant on the degree to which the Key Qualities are present. The criteria for sensitivity are defined in **Table 2.4**.

Table 2.4: Sensitivity Criteria

Rating	Description
High	The WLQ is strongly present and a highly valued aspect of the WLA assessment location and is very susceptible to change of the type proposed.
Medium	The WLQ is present and a valued aspect of the WLA assessment location but has lower susceptibility to change of the type proposed; or, the WLQ is less strongly present, but is very susceptible to change of the type proposed.
Low	The WLQ is less strongly present and a less valued aspect of the WLA assessment location and/or has limited susceptibility to change of the type proposed.

Step 4: Assess the Magnitude of the Effects

- 2.2.16 Step 4 has involved evaluation of the magnitude of change to each of the physical attributes and perceptual responses which would result from the construction of the Proposed Development. This has fed into a conclusion of the magnitude of effect for each WLQ across the WLA as a whole.
- 2.2.17 Criteria used for the evaluation of magnitude of change are detailed in **Table 2.5**.

Table 2.5: Magnitude of Change Criteria

Rating	Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses	WLA Key Qualities
High	A very noticeable change to the presence of the physical attribute / perceptual response.	Alteration to wild land attributes would cause a notable change in the presence of the Key Quality over an extensive area ranging to a very intensive change over a more limited area.
Medium	A noticeable change to the presence of the physical attribute / perceptual response.	Alteration to wild land attributes would cause a perceptible change in the presence of the Key Quality over an extensive area ranging to notable change in a localised area.
Low	A small change to the presence of the physical attribute / perceptual response.	Alteration to wild land attributes would cause a perceptible change in the presence of the Key Quality in a localised area.
Negligible	A very small or barely perceptible change to the presence of the physical attribute / perceptible response.	Alteration to wild land attributes would cause a virtually imperceptible, or no discernible change in the presence of the Key Quality.

Step 5: Judge the Significance of the Effects

- 2.2.18 A final judgement of potential significance of effect has been applied based on the identified values for magnitude of effect for each WLA Key Quality against the sensitivity value, taking in to account the strength of wildness across the WLA. Explanation of the effects ratings is described in

2.2.19 **Table 2.6:**

Table 2.6: Significance of Effects Criteria

Rating	Description
Major	The Proposed Development would result in a very notable reduction in the presence of wild land attributes which contribute a WLQ to the extent that its presence would be very noticeably reduced.
Moderate	The Proposed Development would result in a partial reduction in the presence of wild land attributes which contribute to a WLQ to the extent that its presence would be partially reduced.
Minor	The Proposed Development would result in localised effects to wild land attributes and WLA Key Qualities but would not be sufficient to result in a material change to the presence of the WLQ.
Negligible	The Proposed Development would result in no discernible effect to the presence of the WLQ.

- 2.2.20 The NatureScot Guidance³ states that, “Where effects are identified that result in a material change in the experience of any of the wild land qualities, this is considered to be significant.” For the purposes of this assessment, this is considered to include effects rated as Moderate or greater.

3. Baseline

3.1 Description of WLA 18: Kinlochhourn – Knoydart – Morar

- 3.1.1 The Kinlochhourn – Knoydart - Morar WLA (WLA 18), is a very extensive WLA (1065 km²) which covers an area, stretching from north to south between the A87 through Glen Shiel and the A830 at Glenfinnan. The WLA consists of a core of complex rugged mountains, contained to the west by an intricate and remote shoreline of sea-lochs, and headlands with sparse isolated settlement and a higher ridgeline of steep rocky mountains to the north. To the east, the WLA breaks into three long “fingers” comprising narrower ridgelines of mountains and hills, which are separated by the long, linear lochs: Loch Quoich and Loch Arkaig. Long, narrow single-track roads follow the northern shores of the lochs leading into the WLA. The influence of forestry and hydro development is more prominent around this eastern edge of the WLA.
- 3.1.2 From some parts to the north and south of the WLA, existing infrastructure is set within deep glens and out of sight of more elevated areas. This creates a sense of continuity with neighbouring WLAs to the north and south.
- 3.1.3 Within the study area, the WLA covers the two more northerly “fingers” of the WLA, set to the north and south of Loch Quoich, as well as the western end of the loch which lies closer to the WLA core. This area is defined by a number of high peaks which rise steeply from the shoreline of Loch Quoich: notably, Gairich, Sgurr an Fhuarain and Sgurr Mòr to the south of the loch; and Sgurr a’ Mhaoraich, Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach to the north. These distinctive mountain profiles are separated by deep glens and passes and cut into by large, scooped corries. The western end of Loch Quoich falls within the WLA and is seen to extend towards the more remote westerly mountains. Loch Quoich comprises a hydroelectric reservoir and its shoreline often features a band of visible drawdown. A narrow road and existing steel lattice pylon line follow the north shore of the loch and are often visible from surrounding slopes, and there is a concentration of built development around the Quoich Dam at its eastern end.

WLA Key Qualities

- 3.1.4 The WLQs identified by NatureScot⁸ are:
- **WLQ 1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form:**
 - This WLQ highlights the rugged qualities of the mountains which leads to a physical challenge and a sense of naturalness;

- The extensive views, sense of elevation and rugged qualities also lead to arresting qualities, which are often emphasised by the contrast between the mountains and open waters of the sea or lochs.
- Sense of elevation, rugged qualities and steep slopes lead to a sense of awe and risk.
- The WLA description notes the influence of the existing pylon line as a human artefact through some of the mountain areas.
- **WLQ 2: A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers:**
 - This WLQ highlights the contrast of the central part of the WLA against the more accessible margins in terms of the physical challenge required to reach it, and associated sense of remoteness;
 - It highlights the lack of human artefacts and contemporary land use and limited accessibility including a lack of vehicular tracks which leads to a strong sense of solitude.
- **WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape:**
 - This WLA highlights the importance of lochs and glens which divide and edge the WLA, in terms of their landform and visual relationship with surrounding high mountains, which can be arresting or awe-inspiring;
 - The WLQ notes the influence these glens and lochs have on accessibility, forming a route for tracks and paths, but equally by limiting access to the use of boats, which can lead to increased sense of remoteness or physical challenge;
 - Containment of some glens can restrict views and create a sense of sanctuary, or can frame views towards other features or wild land or human artefacts. The WLQ also notes that extensive forest plantations are sometimes present, particularly around the edge of the WLA which give a sense of contemporary land use;
 - The influence of hydroelectric generation on some lochs, including Loch Quoich, is noted in terms of drawdown which can diminish the sense of naturalness.
- **WLQ 4: A strong influence of the sea around the north and western edges of the WLA, providing open views and contributing to perceived awe, remoteness and naturalness:**
 - This WLQ concerns the coastal aspects of the WLA, including the arresting and awe-inspiring panoramas created by the juxtaposition of the sea and high mountains;
 - The rugged coastline and wooded sections of shoreline are noted as accentuating the sense of naturalness;
 - Sheltered bays and sea-lochs and stretches of coastline with lack of vehicular access and settlement lead to a sense of remoteness and sanctuary.
- **WLQ 5: Secluded and elevated rocky cnocan and plateaux, containing hidden depressions and lochs with a strong sense of sanctuary:**
 - This WLQ relates to the southern part of the WLA and highlights a complex rugged landscape of cnocan which creates a sense of perceived isolation from human artefacts leading to a sense of sanctuary and solitude;
 - The rugged landform and preponderance of rock contributes to a sense of naturalness which can be accentuated by woodlands.
 - The rugged landform is challenging to access leading to difficult navigation and a sense of risk.

3.1.5 In agreement with NatureScot, WLQs 4 and 5 have been scoped out of further consideration within the assessment, because these WLQs refer specifically to landscape areas which are beyond the study area and would not be affected by the Proposed Development.

- 3.1.6 The key physical attributes and perceptual responses which are highlighted in the WLA Description as contributory to each remaining WLQ are summarised in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Key Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses Highlighted in WLQ Descriptions

WLQ	Physical Attributes	Perceptual Responses
WLQ 1	- Perceived naturalness; - Rugged or challenging terrain; - Localised influence of construction or other artefacts / contemporary land use.	- Risk, a sense of awe or anxiety; - Arresting or inspiring qualities; - Fulfilment from physical challenge
WLQ 2	- Lack of construction or other artefacts; - Evidence of contemporary land use; - Rugged or challenging terrain; - Remoteness and inaccessibility. - General.	- Sense of sanctuary or solitude; - Risk, a sense of awe or anxiety; - Arresting or inspiring qualities; - Fulfilment from physical challenge.
WLQ 3	- Perceived naturalness (generally); - Localised influence of construction or other artefacts and contemporary land use. - Remoteness and inaccessibility.	- Risk, a sense of awe or anxiety; - Arresting or inspiring qualities; - Sense of sanctuary or solitude.

3.2 Desk Study

Map of Relative Wildness

- 3.2.1 The Map of Relative Wildness for the study area (see **Figure 7.4.2**) shows the highest areas of wildness to be mostly associated with the individual elevated summits and higher slopes of the mountains to the north and south of Loch Quoich. The lowest areas of wildness are shown around Loch Quoich, particularly focussed around the northern shores, and also through Glen Quoich in the northern finger, between the mountain ridgelines of the Cluanie Forest, and the Glenquoich Forest where tracks and a number of small scale hydroelectric developments are present. A more moderate degree of wildness is indicated through the central finger (north of Loch Arkaig), with only discrete areas of high wildness indicated in corries, valleys or smaller depressions between the hills which are more visually isolated from the forested glens to the north and south.

- 3.2.2 The western edge of the study area fringes on the more continuous areas of high wildness which lie outside the study area, covering the more extensive mountainous areas to the west.

Jenks 8 Analysis

- 3.2.3 Review of the WLA in relation to the Jenks 8 classification (see **Figure 7.4.4**) shows that areas of Classes 7 and 8 (the two highest classes which are required to be present in sufficient expanse in order for the WLA to be identified) cover the majority of the mountain summit areas, with the small areas of Class 8 being predominantly focussed in more localised corries which are screened from the shoreline of Loch Quoich. The lower, surrounding slopes comprise a relatively continuous coverage of Class 6 with the lower Classes 4 and 5 found within the lower glens and around the edges of the WLA close to the shoreline of Loch Quoich.
- 3.2.4 Along the central finger, to the east of Glen Kingie, the majority of the area is Class 5, with Class 6 over the higher parts of the ridgeline. Class 7 is present only in a few discrete areas covering inward facing slopes and summits toward the centre of the finger, whilst there are only isolated patches of Class 8, typically within depressions and more isolated corries. Class 4 and Class 3 are limited to the very outer edges of the finger, mostly along its south side.

Changes to the Baseline

- 3.2.5 Changes to the baseline of the study area since 2014, when the Map of Relative Wildness was completed are relatively limited. Construction of a windfarm in the context to the east of the Proposed Development (Beinneun Wind Farm and Extension) has had some influence on easterly parts of the WLA. In addition, the replacement of several steel lattice transmission towers adjacent to the Quoich Dam with monopole structures (NeSTS towers), has led to some very localised change within the surrounding area. The Allt Garaidh Ghualaich Hydro Scheme near the boundary of the WLA east of Glas Bheinn has similarly led to a very localised change in this area.

Beinneun Wind Farm

- 3.2.6 Beinneun Wind Farm and Beinneun Wind Farm Extension comprises a total of 32 turbines, with construction completed in 2017. Review of the ZTV for the wind farm shows intervisibility across most northerly and elevated areas of the central arm within the study area, as well as the summits and east facing slopes of the more easterly mountains, particularly Spidean Mialach and Gairich at distances of 10 – 20 km. Theoretical visibility is also noted on some summits further west. This is distant and would be unlikely to be picked up by the Mapping Scotland's Wildness exercises, although clear visibility of the wind farm was noted during site photography work (see Visualisation Location 10: Sgurr Mòr (**Figure V3a-10a-e** and **Figure V3b-10a-h**)).

- 3.2.7 When viewed in combination with the Attribute Map for Absence of Modern Artefacts it is shown that theoretical visibility of the wind farm mostly affects areas of relatively low attribute strength. However, it is likely that this would slightly reduce the strength of this attribute around the summit of Spidean Mialach. The strength of wildness of this area on the overall Map of Relative Wildness appears to be more strongly related to other attributes, such as rugged terrain and perceived naturalness, however, so it is unlikely that this would make much perceptible difference to the Map of Relative Wildness.

Quoich Dam NeSTS Towers

- 3.2.8 Three NeSTS towers were erected in 2021 closer to Quoich Dam to replace original steel lattice transmission towers which were damaged by a landslide. These show slightly more prominently within the landscape due to their solid structure and are also visible from surrounding slopes due to areas of excavation and access surrounding each one. The NeSTS towers are situated on the very edge of the WLA in an area already defined by modern artefacts including the Quoich Dam. However, although they are slightly more visible than the steel lattice towers they have replaced, it is unlikely that this would lead to any noticeable change to the Map of Relative Wildness, because the steel lattice towers and other surrounding features were already taken into account in the 2014 mapping exercise.

Allt Garaidh Ghualaich Hydro Scheme

- 3.2.9 The Allt Garaidh Ghualaich run-of-river hydroelectric plant became operational in 2021 and includes two intakes close to the boundary of the WLA on the Allt Garaidh Ghualaich on the north side of the central arm, a powerhouse which is located outside the WLA, and a track which connects the different components of the scheme. Mapping suggests this part of the WLA to have a medium to low level of relative wildness and, given the scale of the structures, it is considered that this development would have only a very localised influence on the strength of wildness within the WLA and would be unlikely to lead to any noticeable changes to the Map of Relative Wildness.

3.3 Site Survey

- 3.3.1 Eight WLs have been identified, visited and evaluated for strength of physical and perceptual attributes and the presence of WLA Key Qualities. These locations are shown on **Figure 7.4.2** and comprise:

- WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe;
- WL2: Coire Dubh;
- WL3: Gleouraich;

- WL4: Spidean Mialach;
- WL5: Gairich;
- WL6: Western Loch Quoich;
- WL7: Sgurr Mhurlagain; and
- WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich.

3.3.2 Detailed description and analysis for each WL and representative photographs are presented in **Annex 1**. A summary description for each WL is provided below:

WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe

3.3.3 This WL is representative of the lower lying hills across the central finger of the WLA, situated approximately 1 km from the WLA boundary and is accessible from the Loch Poullary forest area to the north where a number of hydro tracks and stalkers paths reach into the WLA. It is representative of a range of knobbly, linear ridgelines which lead up to higher, individual summits with lower-lying river valleys and corries set between. Within the deeper valleys and corries there is a localised sense of isolation with landform limiting visibility of surrounding commercial forest areas. However, areas of contemporary land use are more influential on higher ridges and summits where proximity to actively managed landscapes and people is always more pronounced. There is a sense of wildness increasing when moving further to the centre of the finger, but this is limited due to the narrowness of this stretch of land.

WL2: Coire Dubh

3.3.4 This WL is representative of the corrie area within the horseshoe mountain ridge of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach, lying between 1.5 – 2 km from the edge of the WLA which follows the slope above Loch Quoich to the south. Access is via a relatively short but steep walk from the public road alongside Loch Quoich. Access is partly taken via rough track or path and then across rough steep ground requiring a reasonable level of fitness. The corrie area is contained, with a localised sense of isolation and sanctuary formed by the rugged surrounding mountainsides but with wider views of drawdown around Loch Quoich and steel lattice towers seen on the approach and from the surrounding slopes.

WL3: Gleouraich

3.3.5 This WL is located on the elevated, craggy mountain summit of Gleouraich with steep surrounding ridges and is situated 2 – 2.5 km from the WLA boundary to the south where it follows the Loch Quoich reservoir and 1.5 km from the west where it loops inland to exclude the reservoir part of Glen Quoich. It is reached by a steep walk via a stalkers' path of approximately 3.5 km from the rural public road alongside Loch Quoich which requires considerable fitness and provides elevated views over Loch Quoich (with its visible drawdown fringe) and extensive and arresting vistas of the surrounding ridges and summits leading into the distance, particularly to the west, but also in layers to north and south. A greater sense of contemporary land use is seen to the east where wind turbines and forestry areas are perceived and from some areas directly below to the west, where tracks and small-scale hydro development are present.

WL4: Spidean Mialach

3.3.6 This WL is located on the elevated, rocky and rugged mountain summit of Spidean Mialach (996 m AOD) with steep surrounding slopes located approximately 1.8 km from the WLA boundary, north of the Quoich Dam. It is reached by stalkers' path or rough track, a walk of around 1 – 2 km from the rural public road alongside Loch Quoich, passing transmission towers and hydro infrastructure enroute, followed by a steep ascent up a rough, open slope and ridge walk. The visible presence of wind turbines, and forestry to the east, along with built development in Glengarry below somewhat reduces the sense of remoteness but extensive vistas of the surrounding ridges and summits to the north, south and particularly the west, give a sense of being on the edge of a wider remote and wild landscape.

WL5: Gairich

- 3.3.7 This WL is located on the steep, rounded summit area of Gairich on the south side of Loch Quoich, which is situated approximately 1.5 km from the eastern boundary of the WLA. Access is via a rough, boggy footpath from Quoich Dam, a journey of approximately 7 km which requires considerable physical fitness. There are expansive surrounding views from this summit with those to the south and west showing numerous, layered mountain summits with little evidence of human interventions. Features around Loch Quoich to the north and north-east, including the public road, small forest plantations, transmission towers, the Quoich Dam and drawdown around the loch, show more contemporary land use in this context, whilst a more expansive view to the east featuring larger forest plantations and wind farms leads to a sense of being only on the eastern edge of the wider WLA.

WL6: Western Loch Quoich

- 3.3.8 This WL is representative of the remote south-western end of Loch Quoich and is situated on the steep, north-facing mountain slope of Sgurr Mòr, approximately 3 km from the boundary of the WLA, at the south-western end of Loch Quoich. This is a remote location of steep, sweeping mountain sides with deep, inset corries, with access on foot requiring a very long walk of at least 10 km, either crossing through remote glens from Loch Arkaig, following an ATV track from Kingie, or taking a long and largely pathless route around the shore of Loch Quoich, although the area is relatively accessible by boat. There is evidence of modern artefacts and contemporary land use seen on the northern side of the loch, including steel lattice transmission towers, small plantations, and the public road, and a few localised features such as tracks and a storage container in the nearby landscape. However, the remoteness and inaccessibility of this location leads to it having strong impressions of sanctuary and solitude.

WL7: Sgùrr Mhurlagain

- 3.3.9 This WL is located on the elevated summit of the steeply sloping mountain of Sgurr Mhurlagain, situated approximately 2 km to the north of the WLA boundary alongside Loch Arkaig to the south. Access is around 4.5 km up a rough, boggy path and open ground from a vehicle track at the western end of Loch Arkaig where there are a few clustered properties. There are strong arresting qualities to the location with an extensive vista of surrounding mountains which are particularly notable in their jagged forms to the south and west. Extensive forestry areas and distant properties in Glen Kingie and Glen Garry, and the Beinneun Wind Farm are present within the north-easterly context, introducing contemporary land use and reducing perceived naturalness, and there is an awareness to the proximity of forestry, tracks and properties at the west end of Loch Arkaig. In general there is a sense of being on the north-easterly fringe of the WLA with the narrowness of the central arm being clearly perceived between the relatively accessible and more managed Glen Garry and Loch Arkaig areas.

WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich

- 3.3.10 This WL is representative of the area at the western and northwestern end of Loch Quoich. The assessment is supported by wider site review of the surrounding area. The WL lies around 750 m from the WLA boundary at Loch Quoich to the south, and comprises a rough, hillside knoll which can be partially accessed via a landrover track or stalkers' path / ATV track, and thereafter across the rough, steep hill slope. This area is visually influenced by the drawdown edges of Loch Quoich which reveal some features of the historic hydro construction and reduce the surrounding sense of naturalness somewhat. A small scale hydro station, the public road, steel lattice transmission towers around the edge of the loch, and tracks extending up Coire nan Eincheallach lead to a perception of nearby contemporary land use, particularly in the south-easterly context. These features reduce in prominence when moving to higher ground where the surrounding rugged mountains to the west and south become more influential and suggestive of a more remote area extending in these directions.

Strength of Wildness Analysis

- 3.3.11 Analysis of the physical and perceptual attributes and strength of wildness identified at each of the WLs is summarised in **Table 3.2**:

Table 3.2: Summary of Physical Attributes, Perceptual Responses and Strength of Wildness

WL	Physical Attributes					Perceptual Responses				Strength of Wildness
	Perceived Naturalness	Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	
WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Low – Medium	Low	Low – Medium	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Low
WL2: Coire Dubh	High	Medium	Medium	High	Low – Medium	High	High	High	Medium – High	Medium – High
WL3: Gleouraich	High	Medium – High	Medium – High	High	Medium	Medium – High	High	High	High	Medium – High
WL4: Spidean Mialach	Medium – High	Medium – High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium – High	High	High	High	Medium
WL5: Gairich	Medium	Low – Medium	Low – Medium	High	Low	Medium	Medium – High	High	High	Medium
WL6: Western Loch Quoich	Medium – High	Medium – High	Medium – High	High	High	High	Medium – High	High	High	Medium – High
WL7: Sgùrr Mhurlagain	Medium – High	Medium - High	Medium	High	Medium	High	Medium	High	High	Medium – High
WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich	Medium	Low – Medium	Low – Medium	High	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium

WLA Strength of Wildness

- 3.3.12 Site survey has identified a generally Medium strength of wildness through the study area, varying to Medium – High within the summit areas that have a closer connection to the more extensive areas of mountain peaks which stretch to the west, and Low within lower lying areas to the east where forestry and development around Glengarry and Loch Poulary is more influential.
- 3.3.13 Loch Quoich, which provides the focus for the majority of the study area is mostly outwith the WLA, with the exception of its western end. This is due to the accessibility of the northern shoreline through the presence of a narrow public road, and associated modern artefacts along this shoreline, including an overhead transmission line, various small scale run-of river hydro powerhouses, and the Quoich Dam. Further indication of contemporary land use around the loch includes small coniferous plantations, and a visible drawdown line around the loch resulting from the Quoich hydro scheme. As a consequence, the parts of the WLA with the closest visual connection to Loch Quoich, typically within 1 – 1.5 km of the WLA boundary, show a lower strength of wildness due to their easier accessibility and the perception of closer human activity. This is broadly recognised by the Map of Relative Wildness.
- 3.3.14 The loch is framed by steep mountains to north and south. All of these summits retain a visual connection to surrounding landscapes which feature contemporary land use. However, a higher strength of wildness is typically experienced on these summits, largely associated with the rugged terrain and the wider expansive vistas of surrounding mountain ridgelines and summits which stretch to the north, south and west, suggestive of a more expansive area of wild land. Wildness around these summits is generally considered to be **Medium – High**, although this drops to **Medium** for the summits closer to the eastern edges of the WLA such as Spidean Mialach (WL4), and Gairich (WL5) where landscapes to the east which feature more contemporary land use (including a wind farm, extensive forest areas, and built development) are more influential. In these areas there is a much greater sense of being only on the edge of the more wild, mountainous landscape which stretches to the west.
- 3.3.15 A generally lower strength of wildness was identified across the central arm of the WLA, where proximity to contemporary land use around Loch Arkaig or Glen Garry is usually either seen or within awareness. This is recognised by a **Low** strength of wildness identified at WL1 (Druim na Luibe Duibhe).
- 3.3.16 Areas of higher strength wildness are mostly found in a series of deep corries which open off the loch and are visually separated from Loch Quoich. However, these areas are localised and relatively small in extent and due to the proximity to the loch, are usually insufficiently remote to be considered of the highest strength of wildness. WL2 (Coire Dubh) is broadly reflective of these corries, with a **Medium – High** strength of wildness. In general, the impression is of more expansive areas of high wildness occurring within the mountains to the west, beyond the western end of Loch Quoich and mostly outwith the study area. This is reflected by the Map of Relative Wildness.

WLA Key Qualities

- 3.3.17 **Table 3.3** summarises the baseline analysis of the WLA Key Qualities from each of the nine WLA:

Table 3.3: Baseline Presence of WLQs

WLQ Location	WLQ1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form.	WLQ 2: A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers.	WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape.
WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Partially present Mountains are seen as part of the westerly context rather than directly associated with the WL.	Not present This WL does not feel connected to the remote interior.	Not present There is no close connection or association with glens and lochs at this WL
WL2: Coire Dubh	Present Surrounding mountains are high and rugged but on the edge of the WLA with less sense of remoteness.	Not present This area is on the edge of the WLA and not representative of the remote interior.	Partially present Although not visible from the corrie itself there is a relationship to Loch Quoich outwith the WLA
WL3: Gleouraich	Present The location is evocative of the WLQ and is extensively expressed in surrounding areas.	Partially present There is a sense of connection to the remote interior with some aspects of the WLQ being present.	Present The location has a close relationship with Loch Quoich and other surrounding glens.
WL4: Spidean Mialach	Present The WLQ is extensively expressed in surrounding areas, particularly to the west.	Not present There is a notable sense of being on the edge of the WLA with greater influence from contemporary land use to the east.	Present The location has a close relationship with Loch Quoich and Glen Loyne to the north.
WL5: Gairich	Present Mountains are strongly characteristic of the WL.	Not present Contemporary land use to the north and east gives a clear sense of being on the edge of the mountainous area.	Present Loch Quoich is influential on the location in terms of arresting qualities and remoteness.
WL6: Western Loch Quoich	Present Surrounding area of mountains and rocky corries.	Partially present The isolated location gives a connection to the remote interior, although the appearance of contemporary land use and artefacts around Loch Quoich leads to a sense of being only on the edge	Present Strong association with Loch Quoich which contributes to the remoteness and inaccessibility of the WL.

WLQ Location	WLQ1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form.	WLQ 2: A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers.	WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape.
WL7: Sgùrr Mhurlagain	Present The WLQ which is extensively expressed in surrounding areas, to the north, south and west.	Partially present There is a sense of connection to the remote interior to the west and south with some aspects of the WLQ being present.	Present Loch Arkaig is strongly influential on the location, Loch Blair defines the hill to the east and Loch Quoich is also seen through the hills.
WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich	Present Surrounding slopes of Sgurr a' Mhaoraich strongly influence the location.	Not present The WL does not feel associated with the remote interior due to the proximity to contemporary land use and artefacts.	Present Loch Quoich is influential on the location including the physical contrast of mountain and loch and availability of long views.

4. Assessment of Effects

4.1 Wild Land Sensitivity

- 4.1.1 The sensitivity of each WLA Key Quality has been evaluated at each of the WLs (see **Annex 1**) in accordance with the criteria in **Table 2.4**. The sensitivity appraisal is summarised in **Table 4.1**.

Table 4.1: WLQ Sensitivity

Location \ WLQ	WLQ 1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains...	WLQ 2: A very remote interior...	WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs...
WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Low	N/A	N/A
WL2: Coire Dubh	Medium	N/A	Low
WL3: Gleouraich	Medium	Low	Low
WL4: Spidean Mialach	Medium	N/A	Low
WL5: Gairich	Medium	N/A	Low
WL6: Western Loch Quoich	Medium	Medium	Medium
WL7: Sgùrr Mhurlagain	Medium	Low	Low
WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich	Medium	N/A	Low

- 4.1.2 Sensitivity for each of the included WLQs within the study area is summarised as follows:

WLQ 1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form

- 4.1.3 This WLQ is present at all WLs with mountains being a generally dominant feature within the study area. The exception is WL1 (Druim na Luibe Duibhe) within the central arm where lower hills are more characteristic, although there is some visual connection with the mountains to the west which contribute indirectly to arresting qualities.
- 4.1.4 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is higher in the mountainous areas where the WLQ is directly present but is nevertheless considered to be only **Medium** because the arresting qualities and rugged terrain are mostly associated with the surrounding extent and vista of mountain peaks which is not highly susceptible to change. Within the corries, such as WL2 (Coire Dubh) there is greater susceptibility due to the sense of containment, but this also leads to slightly less influence of the mountain environment. Sensitivity is considered to be **Medium** within these areas to the north of Loch Quoich which are less remote due to the proximity of the public road and presence of small-scale hydro tracks. This rises to **Medium – High** for the more remote corries to the south of Loch Quoich. Sensitivity for this WLQ increases further to **High** within the more secluded and remote valleys and mountains further to the south-west within the study area.
- 4.1.5 Sensitivity is **Low** at WL1, and generally within the central arm where the mountains are less immediately present.

WLQ 2: A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers

- 4.1.6 This WLQ is not present in areas where influence of neighbouring contemporary land use and artefacts is stronger and there is a sense of being generally closer to the edge of the WLA This includes WL1 (Druim na Luibe Duibhe), WL4 (Spidean Mialach), WL5 (Gairich) and WL8 (Leac nan Gàidhseich). It is also not

present at WL2 (Coire Dubh) due to lack of visual connection to the surrounding landscapes and a less strong sense of remoteness.

- 4.1.7 The WLQ is considered to be partially present at WL3 (Gleouraich), WL6 (Western Loch Quoich) and WL7 Sgùrr Mhurlagain which, although influenced by surrounding land uses to some extent, have a closer relationship to the more remote-seeming and extensive mountainous area to the west and south-west. Sensitivity at these locations is considered to be **Medium** in recognition of the partial presence of the WLQ, countered by the somewhat higher susceptibility and presence of the WLA attributes 'Remoteness' and 'Sense of Solitude' which are strongly influential on this WLQ. This sensitivity rating is likely to be generally reflective of other mountain summit areas around western Loch Quoich where a visual connection to this interior is experienced and there is less notable influence of development and contemporary land use around the loch or to the east.
- 4.1.8 Sensitivity is likely to increase to **Medium – High** or **High** when moving into the mountains further to the south-west, where the WLQ is more directly present.

WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape

- 4.1.9 This WLQ was identified as present to some extent at all the WLS other than WL1 (Druim na Luibe Duibhe) because almost all are to some extent influenced by Loch Quoich, its striking surrounding landform and other surrounding glens. WL7 (Sgùrr Mhurlagain) is the exception to this but is influenced in a similar way by Loch Arkaig.
- 4.1.10 In general, this WLQ is not considered highly sensitive because it is closely related to the landform and physical topography which is less susceptible to change. It is also notable that Loch Arkaig and the majority of Loch Quoich, except its western end, are outwith the WLA. A **Medium** sensitivity has been noted at WL6 which is representative of the more remote end of Loch Quoich within the WLA, and where the loch contributes to the sense of remoteness. Elsewhere, sensitivity is considered **Low** where the associated areas of loch are outwith the WLA and the remoteness is less notable, but there is still some susceptibility where the contrast between loch shore areas and the upper surrounding corries and peaks could be diminished.

4.2 Magnitude of Change

Changes to Physical Attributes

- 4.2.1 The Proposed Development would introduce construction works and permanent features within a relatively focussed area of the WLA, contained by the horseshoe ridge of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach. There would also be some indirect change from construction works, and the permanent powerhouse and switchyard located outwith the WLA on the shore of Loch Quoich, just west of the existing Quoich Dam. A new access track would physically connect these two areas.
- 4.2.2 During construction, there would also be some indirect effects from the Southern Access Route (SAR) and main site compound / camp on parts of the central arm.
- 4.2.3 The WLA area likely to be physically or indirectly affected by the Proposed Development has been subdivided into four broad areas:
- Area 1: Spidean Mialach / Gleouraich horseshoe;
 - Area 2: North and north-easterly facing slopes of the central arm, lying roughly westwards of WL7 (Sgùrr Mhurlagain).
 - Area 3: Southern shoreline and summit areas to the south of Loch Quoich, including summit areas of Sur Mòr and Sgurr an Fhearan and the north-facing slopes, corries and summit of Gairach.

- Area 4: Rocky knolls and east-facing slopes to the north-west of Loch Quoich including the facing slopes and craggy terrain between Sgurr a' Chlaidheimh and Sròn Lice na Fearna and east-facing slopes up to the summit of Sgurr a' Mhaoraich including WL8 (Leac nan Gàidhseich).

Area 1

- 4.2.4 This area would be notably affected by the construction and permanent features of the upper works, with part of it being excavated and contained by the new dams to form the upper reservoir. This would be very noticeable from the summit areas of the two mountains and the majority of the horseshoe ridge leading to a notable increase in the influence of modern artefacts, contemporary land use and changes to the perceived naturalness of the Coire Dubh and Loch Fearna area. The construction of new tracks and, during construction, presence of many people within the corrie area would reduce the remoteness and improve accessibility. Excavations and introduction of the dam and reservoir may also reduce the perceived height of containing terrain and reduce some degree of challenge within the landscape. However, the surrounding summits and ridge would remain noticeably rugged and challenging.

Area 2

- 4.2.5 Within the central arm, construction at the upper reservoir area would lead to some increased presence of contemporary land use and modern artefacts within the northerly / north-westerly context. This would be a perceptible change within the context, but the baseline level of these attributes within this area is generally lower due to the extensive areas of forestry present to the north, and other influential features, such as the Beinneun wind farm to the north-east.
- 4.2.6 There would also be some influence during construction from the main construction compound / camp, including temporary effects of lighting this area, and use of the SAR. These elements would be present within a context where other similar contemporary land use and residential development is already present although their closer presence may slightly reduce a sense of remoteness from human activities.
- 4.2.7 During operation, influence on more easterly parts of this area would mostly be limited to the appearance of the Fearna Dam, seen adjacent to Spidean Mialach, as this would be likely to conceal the Coire Dubh Dam. Further to the west around VL7 (Sgùrr Mhurlagain), both dams would be noticeable in the more north-easterly context. From all areas, the dams would be a notable, but localised modern artefact within the context where other contemporary land use already affects the baseline presence of attributes.

Area 3

- 4.2.8 Along much of the shoreline and most summit areas lining the south side of Loch Quoich construction works and permanent features at the upper reservoir area would form a noticeable area of contemporary land use and modern artefacts within the setting of Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich to the north-east and would affect the perceived naturalness of this area. There would also be some change to the sense of remoteness, particularly during construction, due to contemporary land use and artefacts appearing closer to some of these areas.
- 4.2.9 The influence of the Proposed Development would diminish when moving further to the west and to the south where fewer areas would be affected and the wider influence of other northern, southern and western hills is greater but would be most noticeable across the summit and north-facing slopes of Gairich where it would lie directly across the loch and would be seen in its entirety. However, there is already a context of some modern artefacts and contemporary land use within this setting, including the Quoich Dam and an associated visible drawdown area around Loch Quoich, the minor public road, and electricity transmission towers (lattice towers and monopoles) along the loch-shore. Tracks up into the corries leading to small scale hydro intakes also give some indication of contemporary land use further up the slopes. The baseline presence of most physical attributes around the summit of Gairich is generally less high, as it lies on the edge of the WLA with more notable contemporary land use lying to the east.

- 4.2.10 The magnitude of change for all physical attributes across Area 2 would slightly reduce during operation as there would be less distraction from human activities once works were complete and reinstatement undertaken.

Area 4

- 4.2.11 From more southerly parts of Area 4, such as around Sron Lice na Fearna, the upper reservoir area would form an area of contemporary land use and modern artefacts seen on the higher slopes in the context of Spidean Mialach to the east, similar to more distant parts of Area 3. The lower works also add additional activity on the loch shore seen from a few areas. This would also lead to some changes in perceived naturalness within this part of the distant context. The appearance of the Proposed Development would reduce further north, becoming limited to only the partial appearance of the Fearn Dam on the skyline. This would be a relatively localised modern artefact, with some limited influence on the appearance of perceived naturalness.
- 4.2.12 This area is more noticeably influenced by existing contemporary land use in the baseline, including areas of drawdown and historic features of the Quoich Hydro construction. There is also a modern small hydroelectric scheme within Coire nan Eiricheallach with a powerhouse on the shore of Loch Quoich which forms a notable existing feature.

Changes to Perceptual Responses

- 4.2.13 Changes to perceptual responses would be most notable in areas closer to the Proposed Development focussed mostly around the summit areas and adjoining ridge of Gleouraich (WL3) and Spidean Mialach (WL4) and the enclosed corrie area which would be directly affected (WL2). Construction works close to these areas would increase the presence of people which would reduce sense of sanctuary and solitude, although the elevated position of the summits would still retain this perception to some extent. The proximity of more people along with vehicles, plant and a new access track may also lead to some reduced sense of risk and physical challenge. Arresting qualities would be affected where construction works would interrupt elevated views although this response would remain present around the elevated ridges and summits where the more extensive surrounding mountainous landscape forms a greater contribution to the experience.
- 4.2.14 Greater numbers of people and activities in this part of the landscape during construction may also lead to some change to the perceived sense of sanctuary and solitude and arresting qualities around the ridge and summit areas of Gairich (WL5) but would be less influential on the perceptions of risk and challenge due to the area being slightly further from the Proposed Development, and there being no direct change to accessibility.
- 4.2.15 During operation, the numbers of people in the landscape would not be substantially greater than existing. However, the presence of permanent features and the new access track could still create a sense of a more populated and managed landscape, easier accessibility and a closer connection to people. Nevertheless, the sense of sanctuary and solitude, and perceived risk during the operation of the Proposed Development would be closer to existing levels in most areas, particularly around the summits.
- 4.2.16 For other areas further from the Proposed Development, changes to perceptual responses are less likely because the Proposed Development would form only a small, focussed feature where the wider context of mountains is more influential on the experience of these responses. However, there would be some limited change to arresting or inspiring qualities, where the Proposed Development would form a new area of contemporary land use or built artefacts within this wider context. There would also be some small temporary changes to the sense of sanctuary and solitude around parts of the central arm which are closer to the proposed main construction compound and SAR during construction.

Summary of Magnitude of Change on Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses

- 4.2.17 The magnitude of change for physical attributes and perceptual responses at each of the WLs is considered in detail in **Annex 1** and summarised in **Table 4.2** during construction, and **Table 4.3** during operation. Representative wirelines illustrating visibility of the Proposed Development from each of the WLAs are included as **Figures 7.4.6a – 7.4.6i**. It should be noted that these are bare-ground wirelines and do not account for any proposed tree planting or local landform mitigation measures.

Table 4.2: Magnitude of Change - Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses (Construction)

WL	Physical Attributes					Perceptual Responses			
	Perceived Naturalness	Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Fulfillment from Physical Challenge
WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Low	Negligible
WL2: Coire Dubh	High	High	High	Medium	Medium – High	High	Medium	Medium – High	Medium – High
WL3: Gleouraich	Medium – High	High	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Low – Medium	Low
WL4: Spidean Mialach	Medium – High	Medium – High	Medium – High	Low – Medium	Medium – High	Medium	Low	Medium	Low – Medium
WL5: Gairich	Medium – High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low – Medium	Medium	Negligible	Low	Negligible
WL6: Western Loch Quoich	Negligible	Low – Medium	Low – Medium	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Low – Medium	Negligible
WL7: Sgurr Mhurlagain	Low	Low – Medium	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Negligible
WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Negligible

Table 4.3: Magnitude of Change - Physical Attributes and Perceptual Responses (Operation)

WL	Physical Attributes					Perceptual Responses			
	Perceived Naturalness	Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge
WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Negligible	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
WL2: Coire Dubh	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low – Medium	Low – Medium	Low – Medium
WL3: Gleouraich	Medium	High	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Negligible
WL4: Spidean Mialach	Medium	Medium – High	Medium – High	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Low – Medium	Low – Medium
WL5: Gairich	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Negligible	Low	Negligible
WL6: Western Loch Quoich	Negligible	Low – Medium	Low – Medium	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Negligible
WL7: Sgurr Mhurlagain	Low	Low – Medium	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Negligible
WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich	Negligible	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Negligible

Changes to Presence of WLQs

- 4.2.18 The magnitude of change for each WLQ has been evaluated at each of the WLs (see **Annex 1**) in accordance with the criteria in **Table 2.4**. The results of this evaluation are summarised in **Table 4.4**.

Table 4.4: Magnitude of Change to WLQs (Construction)

Location \ WLQ	WLQ 1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains...	WLQ 2: A very remote interior ...	WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs...
WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Low	N/A	N/A
WL2: Coire Dubh	High	N/A	Medium
WL3: Gleouraich	Medium	Low – Medium	Low
WL4: Spidean Mialach	High	N/A	Low
WL5: Gairich	Medium	N/A	Medium
WL6: Western Loch Quoich	Low	Low	Low
WL7: Sgurr Mhurlagain	Low	Negligible	Negligible
WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich	Low	N/A	Low

Table 4.5: Magnitude of Change to WLQs (Operation)

Location \ WLQ	WLQ 1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains...	WLQ 2: A very remote interior ...	WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs...
WL1: Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Negligible	N/A	N/A
WL2: Coire Dubh	Medium	N/A	Low
WL3: Gleouraich	Low – Medium	Low	Low
WL4: Spidean Mialach	Medium	N/A	Low
WL5: Gairich	Low – Medium	N/A	Low – Medium
WL6: Western Loch Quoich	Low	Low	Low
WL7: Sgurr Mhurlagain	Low	Negligible	Negligible
WL8: Leac nan Gàidhseich	Low	N/A	Low

- 4.2.19 Magnitude of change for each of the included WLQs within the study area is summarised as follows:

WLQ 1: High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form

- 4.2.20 Magnitude of change for this WLQ would be greatest in the corrie area contained by the mountains and horseshoe ridge of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach where direct and close indirect change would occur to physical attributes, including WL2 (Coire Dubh), WL3 (Gleouraich) and WL4 (Spidean Mialach). This area would be fundamentally changed by the construction of the Fearn and Coire Dubh dams and formation of the reservoir leading to very noticeably increased presence of modern artefacts and contemporary land use, reduction in perceived naturalness and some improvements to accessibility (see Visualisation Location (VL) 3 (**Figures V3a-3a-f** and **V3b-3a-i**) and VL4 (**Figures V3a-4a-f** and **V3b-4a-i**)). These physical changes would in turn alter the sense of remoteness and the arresting qualities which contribute to the WLQ, associated with the connection to the mountains which surround the corrie. Some

change to the arresting qualities associated with the wider mountain context perceived from some summits, particularly Spidean Mialach, may also occur, where the upper reservoir area would interrupt the visual connection to the more extensive western mountains (see VL4 (**Figures V3a-4a-fe and V3b-4a-i**)). However, arresting qualities associated with the elevated vistas from the summits, along with prevailing rugged and challenging terrain would lead to this WLQ still being present within these areas.

- 4.2.21 A noticeable level of change to this WLQ is also predicted around the north facing slopes of Gairich (WL5) where the Proposed Development would be on the opposite side of Loch Quoich. This setting already has some influence of contemporary land use and artefacts around the loch shore but the Proposed Development would be more prominent within an elevated position in the context of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach which are the most notable mountains seen from this area (see VL5 (**Figures V3a-5a-f and V3b-5a-k**)).
- 4.2.22 The change would be less notable from the summit areas of Gairich and Glouraich, where there is a strong connection to extensive mountainous areas to the south and west, and the WLQ is also directly associated with surrounding terrain.
- 4.2.23 The proposed dams would also be present as modern artefacts in the context of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach seen from other, more distant locations within the WLA, but in these areas would form a slightly less noticeable change where the physical attributes and perceptual responses which contributes to the presence of the WLQ are more associated with the wider mountainous landscape.
- 4.2.24 Magnitude of change is therefore predicted as follows:
- During Construction:
 - **High** within the corrie areas most directly affected including Coire Mhèil, Coire Dubh and Coire Glas / Loch Fearna area where contemporary land use would dominate, interrupting arresting qualities and the relationship to surrounding mountains;
 - **Medium – High** around the summit and ridge of Spidean Mialach where the construction activities would interrupt the connection to the mountain landscape to the south-west and west, but the rugged landscape and arresting qualities associated with the elevated summit would still be experienced;
 - **Medium** around the summits and ridges of Gleouraich and Gairich where construction activities would be seen within the context of Spidean Mialach, but the immediate rugged terrain and wider connection to mountains in other directions which contribute strongly to the presence of the WLQ would remain present.
 - **Low – Medium** within areas towards the western end of Loch Quoich, to south and west, where the construction activities would be noticeable in the easterly context but the more immediate mountainous landscape and wider expanse of mountains in other directions has a greater influence on the presence of the WLQ.
 - During Operation:
 - **Medium** within the corrie areas most directly affected, where the physical attributes would be noticeably changed, but the perceptual responses of wild land which contribute to the WLQ would remain substantially present;
 - **Medium** around the summit areas of Spidean Mialach, where the Proposed Development would interrupt the connection to the mountain landscape to the south-west and west, but the rugged landscape and arresting qualities associated with the elevated summit would still be experienced;
 - **Medium** around facing slopes of Gleouraich and Gairich, up to around 4 km from the proposed dams, where the Proposed Development would draw modern artefacts and contemporary land use higher into the mountain setting of Spidean Mialach, but graduating to

Low – Medium on the summit areas and ridges where the WLQ would continue to be strongly associated with other mountains within the surrounding setting;

- **Low** around other mountain areas and summits situated further to the south and west which would have intervisibility with the Proposed Development but where the wider mountainous landscape is more influential on the presence of the WLQ.

WLQ 2: A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers

- 4.2.25 This WLQ was found to be not present within the majority of the study area because a sense of closeness to the edge of the WLA is generally perceived due to the visual connection with modern artefacts and contemporary land use around the shoreline of Loch Quoich. There is some partial presence of the WLQ where a connection to more remote areas to the west is perceived from some mountain summit areas around the north of Loch Quoich, represented by WL3 (Gleouraich), areas at the south-western end of Loch Quoich represented by WL6 (Western Loch Quoich) and further to the south, represented by WL7 (Sgùrr Mhurlagain).
- 4.2.26 The magnitude of change would be generally limited by the proximity of the Proposed Development area to the edge of the WLQ which means that it is largely seen in combination with other development or land use when looking outwards from the WLA. However, its appearance as a large scale modern artefact and area of contemporary land use, particularly during construction, may create an appearance of a more established edge to the WLA at the eastern end of Loch Quoich (see VL10 (**Figures V3a-10a-e and V3b-10a-h**)) and draw this perceived edge closer to areas where the connection to the more remote westerly landscapes is felt. This may slightly diminish the sense of remoteness, although there would be no change to the visual connection to more remote and expansive landscapes to the west.
- 4.2.27 Magnitude of change is therefore predicted as follows:
- During Construction:
 - **Low – Medium** around the Gleouraich summit and ridge, where construction activities would appear close and prominent to the south-east and draw contemporary land use close to the WL, giving impressions of being on the outer edge of the WLA;
 - **Low** around summit areas and north / north-east and east facing slopes at the south-west and western end of Loch Quoich, where construction activities would increase the appearance of contemporary land use in the easterly landscape around Loch Quoich, but would still appear relatively distant within the landscape context.
 - **Negligible** around mountain summit areas further to the south including Sgùrr Mhurlagain, where the Proposed Development would not interrupt the connection to the westerly landscapes and would be seen in the context of other, closer contemporary land use such as forest areas in Glen Kingie
 - During operation:
 - **Low** in areas to the west and south-west of the Proposed Development where the Proposed Development would form a new modern artefact, appearing closer in the easterly landscape context, but the connection to the westerly landscape would not be changed.

WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape

- 4.2.28 The majority of areas where the greatest magnitude of change to physical attributes and perceptual responses would occur are located around an area of Loch Quoich which is already outwith the WLA. However, the loch still has some relationship to these areas, forming a setting to the adjacent mountains and side-glens, and a contrasting northern shoreline featuring some existing modern artefacts and contemporary land use features, and areas less likely to be perceived as natural. This includes the Loch Quoich Dam at its eastern end, associated drawdown areas around the shore of the loch, and linear features along the northern shoreline including the minor road and electricity transmission structures, as

well as some existing hydro tracks providing access into elevated corries. The setting of the loch would be somewhat changed by development at the upper reservoir site which would draw the more developed and managed character up into the mountain area and may reduce the contrast with the loch shore, affect arresting and inspiring qualities and sense of accessibility and remoteness (although some hydro tracks already provide some sense of accessibility). This would be most notable in the context of WL5 (Gairich) on the opposite side of the loch where the full development would form a feature within the landscape (see VL5, **Figure V3a-5a-f** and **Figure V3b-5a-k**), although in this area the existing features around the loch are also most clearly evident.

- 4.2.29 It would also change, to some extent, the setting and role of Loch Quoich in the landscape around WL2 (Coire Dubh), WL3 (Gleouraich) and WL4 (Spidean Mialach) by increasing accessibility and reducing contrast between the loch shore and mountain summit, and would change the setting of Loch Fearn, creating a new, less natural appearing waterbody at high elevation.
- 4.2.30 There would also be some change to the setting of Loch Quoich and associated inspiring qualities perceived within western areas including WL6 (Western Loch Quoich) where the Proposed Development would form a new, larger and more prominent modern artefact within the long easterly views along the loch.
- 4.2.31 There would be no change to this WLQ at Sgùrr Mhurlagain because the Proposed Development cannot be seen in the context of Loch Quoich at this location.
- 4.2.32 Magnitude of change is therefore predicted as follows:
- During construction:
 - **Medium** around Coire Dubh and Loch Fearn where direct change would occur and changes to perceived naturalness, contemporary land use and modern artefacts as well as increased accessibility would draw the character around Loch Quoich (outwith the WLA) up into these areas, reducing the sense of contrast;
 - **Medium** around Gairich where the setting of Loch Quoich would be changed by further presence of contemporary land use and modern artefacts, which would be drawn up into the more elevated mountainous context;
 - **Low** around summit and ridge areas of Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich where further influence of modern artefacts and contemporary land use would reduce perceived naturalness in the corrie areas below and affect the relationship between the mountain areas and loch shore, but where the greater influence of Loch Quoich as a large body of water leading into the heart of the WLA would still be experienced in the setting; and
 - **Low** across areas at the western end of Loch Quoich including summit areas and slopes to north and south of the loch (such as Sgurr an Fhuarain, Sgurr Mòr and Sron Lice na Fearn) where the construction of the Proposed Development would be seen within the long easterly views along Loch Quoich, increasing the presence of contemporary land use and modern artefacts.
 - During operation:
 - **Low – Medium** around Gairich where the Proposed Development would introduce modern artefacts, contemporary land use and reduce the sense of perceived naturalness within the higher setting above Loch Quoich linked by the new access track to the powerhouse area which would also reduce the strength of these attributes on the opposite loch shore;
 - **Low** around the upper areas directly affected by the Proposed Development and the surrounding summits and ridge areas of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach, where the managed reservoir area would increase contemporary land use and reduce perceived naturalness at higher elevation, but the relationship with Loch Quoich and other surrounding glens would be largely unchanged; and

- **Low** across areas at the western end of Loch Quoich where the Proposed Development would increase presence of contemporary land use and modern artefacts within the long easterly views along Loch Quoich, adding to the influence of existing drawdown to further reduce the overall sense of perceived naturalness associated with the loch.

4.3 Mitigation Measures

4.3.1 Potential mitigation measures which may be considered to help minimise significant effects on wild land areas are described in Box 1 of the NatureScot Guidance³. These include the following recommendations:

- Rationalise the spatial extent or scale of proposal or parts of the proposal;
- Sensitive siting of components;
- A high standard of design; and
- A high standard of restoration.

4.3.2 The potential for effects on WLA 18 has been considered throughout the design process for the Proposed Development. The full design process is described in **Chapter 3: Consideration of Alternatives and Design Evolution**, and **Appendix 2.1: Sustainable Design Statement** and can be summarised in relation to WLA 18 as follows:

- The design of the Proposed Development has sought to minimise the extent of permanent features and disturbance to the landscape as far as possible. The lower works have been targeted towards an existing brownfield quarry area, previously used in the construction of the Quoich Hydroelectric Scheme. The upper reservoir area would be unavoidably large but measures such as the location of borrow pits, compound areas and temporary tracks within the area to be inundated would be used to limit the extent and longer term influence of temporary works as far as possible.
- The positioning of dams has tried to minimise their prominence within the terrain including stepping back the Fearna dam from the crest of the ridge and applying a curved footprint to this dam. This would reduce the potential for a straight line on the skyline when seen from below and would help to tie the dam profile to the adjacent topography. Further refinements would be considered through detailed design to try and create profiles and shapes for the reservoir and dams that tie into the surrounding topography in as natural a way as possible.
- The front face of the dams would be too high and steep to turf but would be composed of local excavated rock which should reflect the similar tones and textures of scree areas on the surrounding mountain sides. As far as is practicable, rock for the visible front faces would be mixed to prevent changes in colour through excavated horizons giving a striped appearance. Weathering and growth of moss and lichens would be encouraged to soften the appearance of the dams over time, in a similar way to the existing Quoich Dam.
- Following construction works, a high standard of restoration would be employed to reinstate landform and vegetation across disturbed areas. This would include the careful stripping, storage and replacement of existing turves and peat / soils to allow natural regeneration to occur, as described in the LVIA, **Chapter 7**, Section 7.8 and **Appendix 2.3**.
- The access track to the upper reservoir area would be narrowed following construction to the minimum required for operational access. The existing access track for Allt a' Mheil hydro scheme would also be narrowed to an ATV track with verges and cuttings reinstated to minimise the cumulative effects of multiple tracks leading up into the WLA from the north shore of Loch Quoich.
- Measures for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and habitat mitigation including peatland restoration, rhododendron management and support for native woodland growth around Allt a' Mheil would also provide some mitigation for the WLA by improving perceived naturalness but as the detail of these measures has not been fully established they have not been taken into account in the assessment of residual effects (see **Appendix 8.7: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan**).

4.4 Significance of Effects

Effects on Strength of Wildness

- 4.4.1 During construction, the most notable changes to the strength of wildness would occur within the Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach horseshoe area where the proposed dams and upper reservoir would be located, as this is the area where the greatest focus of the works would occur. There would be a notable increase in human activities in this area, which would also reduce perceived naturalness and sense of solitude. The introduction of a new track and vehicle movements would also reduce perceptions of remoteness, inaccessibility and challenge associated with the landscape.
- 4.4.2 During operation, the intensity of this effect would be reduced by the reinstatement of habitats and a general absence of people and vehicular movements which would lead to perceptual responses such as sense of solitude, arresting qualities, risk and challenge still being experienced, albeit to lesser degrees. The dams, reservoirs and intake towers with periodic drawdown of up to 62 m, would continue to form very notable modern artefacts, creating a more managed, less natural appearance to the landscape which would be suggestive of large-scale contemporary land use. However, the proximity of this area to the northern Loch Quoich shore area where existing infrastructure features including the Loch Quoich Dam are already present and tracks associated with various small scale hydro schemes already lead into the corries, results in this area already being less remote and associated with the periphery of the WLA.
- 4.4.3 The effect during both operation and construction would be greatest within the corrie area due to its containment which would lead to the Proposed Development being a more dominating feature, but would also be notable around the Spidean Mialach summit area, where the upper reservoir and Fearna Dam would form an interruption to the connection with the greater wild land area to the west (see VL4 (**Figures V3a-3a-f** and **V3b-3a-i**)). Spidean Mialach already has a strong sense of being on the edge of the WLA due to the presence of development and contemporary land use in the easterly context, including extensive areas of forest within Glengarry and around Loch Poulary. The Proposed Development may isolate it slightly from the wider WLA but it would retain connection through the rugged ridgeline to Gleouraich, and visual association with the wider mountainous context to north and south. As the easternmost mountain, the rugged terrain would also be likely to continue to form a clearly perceived edge to the WLA.
- 4.4.4 To the south of Loch Quoich, strength of wildness would also be affected on north-facing slopes up to the summit and ridge of Gairich where the Proposed Development would be seen within the setting of Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich to the north-west. This context is already affected by localised modern artefacts and contemporary land use around Loch Quoich with the existing dam and drawdown area leading to an existing impression of management, and there is a clear sense of being at the edge of the WLA. This leads to a slightly lower sensitivity. However, the Proposed Development would draw the influence of this more developed shore area up into the mountain setting which may reduce the sense of height associated with the mountains and would lead to an increased presence of contemporary land use and modern artefacts, with consequent effects on perceived naturalness, and the strength of wildness (see VL5 (**Figures V3a-5a-f** and **V3b-5a-k**)). During construction, activity in this area would also lead to some reduced sense of remoteness and solitude. However, during operation, the perceptual responses would remain substantially present, due to the separation from the Proposed Development by the loch. Although the Proposed Development would be clearly visible and a prominent feature, it would be 2 – 5 km from this area and beyond other areas where people and vehicles are often present.
- 4.4.5 Around the summits of Gairich and Gleouraich, the wider connection to surrounding mountains, especially to the west, would remain uninterrupted and would continue to arouse notable arresting and inspiring qualities which contribute strongly to the strength of wildness in these areas. The rugged, challenging landform and sense of elevated separation from other people would also remain present. However, for both areas, there would be a more established sense of being close to the edge of the WLA due to the greater prominence of modern artefacts.

- 4.4.6 Moving further westwards along the south side of Loch Quoich, and towards the head of the loch at Sron Lice na Fearna, a similar effect would occur but would reduce in significance due to the more distant nature of the Proposed Development, less frequent intervisibility, and greater influence of the wider surrounding landscape. These areas are also affected by features of human intervention around Loch Quoich which lowers the baseline strength of wildness and sensitivity. However, the Proposed Development would be a larger more obvious feature within the more elevated landscape, likely to more clearly establish the apparent edge of the WLA to the east (see VL10 (**Figures V3a-10a-e** and **V3b-10a-h**)). This effect would be less notable on the northern side of Loch Quoich where the dams would only be partially visible and where there are other, closer features present around the loch shore. In general, the areas around the west and southwest of Loch Quoich within corries and depressions which display the higher baseline strength of wildness, due to lack of intervisibility with shore areas of Loch Quoich, would not be affected because these areas would also not have intervisibility with the Proposed Development.
- 4.4.7 Within the central arm area, there may be a very small increased influence in contemporary land use within the context during construction, but given the influence of existing features and forest activities on this part of the WLA, this is not predicted to noticeably reduce the baseline presence of physical attributes, perceptual responses or strength of wildness. The Proposed Development would be somewhat more prominent from the summit of Sgùrr Mhurlagain and other nearby hills but would be seen within a north or north-easterly context where existing contemporary land use such as forest plantations and a distant wind farm already lower the sense of wildness. The landscapes to the west and south-west which have a greater contribution to the presence of physical attributes and perceptual responses would not be affected.

Significance of Effects on Strength of Wildness - Construction

- 4.4.8 During construction, the effect is predicted to be **Major Adverse** (significant), within and around the areas directly affected by works at the upper reservoir and the close summit and ridge areas of Spidean Mialach. This would graduate to a **Moderate – Major Adverse** (significant) effect around the summit ridge of Gleouraich where the Proposed Development would be very prominent, but the connection to the wider WLA would be maintained uninterrupted. A **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is also predicted on the opposite side of Loch Quoich, across the slopes and up to the summit area of Gairich within around 5 km from the upper reservoir, where the works would be slightly more distant, but very prominent, and the baseline strength of wildness is slightly lower.
- 4.4.9 Effects on the remaining parts of the study area where there would be intervisibility with the Proposed Development are not predicted to be significant during construction. A **Moderate – Minor Adverse** (not significant) effect is predicted for other summit and elevated areas along the southern side of Loch Quoich beyond around 4 – 5 km from the upper reservoir area and up to around 10 km, and at the head of the loch, where it is predicted occasional intervisibility with the construction works would draw the perceived edge of the WLA closer within a context where other contemporary land use is already seen.
- 4.4.10 The effect would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) across other elevated areas to the north of Loch Quoich, where features would be only partially visible within a wider context of surrounding rugged mountains, and where existing modern artefacts and contemporary land use is already relatively noticeable around the loch shore and within the northern corries. A **Minor Adverse** (not significant) effect during construction is also predicted for areas of the central arm, where existing contemporary land use is present in the context and reduces the baseline strength of wildness and sensitivity.

Significance of Effects on Strength of Wildness – Operation

- 4.4.11 During operation, the reduced level of human activities at the reservoir and dam sites would lead to less notable effects on contemporary land use and sense of solitude, and mitigation measures would help to localise some of the effects of features such as tracks. However, the presence of the dams and management of the inundation area would still lead to very noticeable modern artefacts, increased presence of contemporary land use and consequent effects on perceived naturalness. There would be a generally High magnitude of change to physical attributes within this area, and around the surrounding

summits of Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich, but perceptual responses would mostly remain strongly present. This is predicted to lead to a *localised* **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect in this area.

- 4.4.12 Around Gairich on the opposite side of Loch Quoich, the dams of the Proposed Development would be prominent in the setting of Spidean Mialach and would draw the appearance of built artefacts and contemporary land use more into the mountain context which could have the effect of reducing the perceived height of Spidean Mialach. The baseline strength of wildness is considered Medium in this area and magnitude of change for physical attributes would range between Low and Medium. The level of effect is predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** (significant) within a *localised* area of around 4 km from the upper reservoir, graduating to **Minor – Moderate Adverse** (not significant) on the summit where the connection to the wider WLA to the south and west would be maintained, and there is already a strong sense of being on the eastern edge of the WLA.
- 4.4.13 For more distant areas, including slopes and summits to the west of Loch Quoich, and more isolated summits to the south, the effect is predicted to be no greater than **Minor – Moderate Adverse** (not significant). The Proposed Development would sometimes be prominent and may be seen to more clearly define the eastern edge of the WLA, but it would generally affect a part of the context where existing artefacts and contemporary land use (including drawdown areas around Loch Quoich) are already present. It would be a localised feature within this context, where surrounding mountains in other directions have a stronger influence on the presence of the physical attributes and perceptual responses which contribute to wild land.
- 4.4.14 In the longer term, the effect on other areas to the north of Loch Quoich, including the slopes leading up to Sgurr a' Mhaoraich and on the central arm to the east, would be **Minor Adverse** (not significant) or **Negligible** because these areas are already influenced by other contemporary land use, and there would be limited intervisibility of the Proposed Development.

Effects on WLQs

- 4.4.15 The effects on strength of wildness would lead to the following effects on WLQs:

WLQ 1: Mountain ranges and glens of varying landform, but all arresting, with towering, steep and rugged slopes and striking physical features.

- 4.4.16 This WLQ is present throughout most of the study area which is characterised by a mountainous landscape, although less notably present through the more easterly parts of the central arm. Sensitivity is generally medium, because the WLQ is mostly associated with aspects of the rugged terrain, physical landscape and arresting qualities of the extensive surrounding landscape, which are less susceptible to change on the higher summits, and less notably present within lower or more contained areas. The most remote areas of highest sensitivity would not be affected by the Proposed Development, being more contained within the central mountain area, and away from Loch Quoich where existing evidence of contemporary land use and lower perceived naturalness affect the sense of remoteness and arresting qualities. Magnitude of change would be most notable around the proposed upper reservoir area, where it would be seen to change the setting of the mountains of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach. The effect is likely to be greatest in areas of direct change, and where the Proposed Development would be seen in the context of Spidean Mialach, around its summit area and around the north-facing slopes of Gairich where Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich form the most notable mountain landforms in the context.
- 4.4.17 During construction:
- A **Moderate – Major Adverse** (significant) effect would occur within the area surrounding the upper reservoir, including the containing and facing slopes of Gleouraich, Spidean Mialach and Gairich (up to around 4 km) where the construction works at high elevation would affect the setting of Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich, potentially reducing their perceived height, sense of remoteness, risk and perceived naturalness. The mountainous character would still be retained however, through the rugged terrain, and arresting qualities would still be evoked in relation to the surroundings.

This effect would extend to the summit area of Spidean Mialach where the works would also interrupt the arresting qualities relating to the connection to the more extensive mountain areas to the west and south-west. This peak already has a sense of being on the very edge of the WLA due to the extent of contemporary land use seen to the east and, although this lowers sensitivity, the construction works would isolate it somewhat from other mountainous parts of the WLA. However, it would retain the presence of the WLQ through its rugged terrain and arresting qualities relating to its elevation and extensive views towards other mountain groups.

- A **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted around the highest slopes, summit areas and ridges of Gairich (within around 5 km of the upper reservoir) and Gleouraich. Although the construction activities would be very prominent within the setting of Spidean Mialach, the sensitivity and magnitude of change for these areas in relation to this WLQ is considered to be slightly lower than the lower slopes, due to the greater influence of wider mountain ranges to the south and west. The construction of the Proposed Development would be relatively localised in this context, generally associated with easterly areas and the Loch Quoich loch-shore which already features some evidence of contemporary land use.
- **Minor Adverse** or **Minor – Moderate Adverse** (not significant) effects are predicted across other mountain areas further from the Proposed Development to the south and west. Similar to Gairich, the construction of the Proposed Development would be relatively prominent from some of these areas, including western areas of Loch Quoich. However, the areas affected would be smaller and fewer, and the works would have less effect on perceptual qualities due to distance, with the more immediate mountain areas and surrounding peaks to north, south and particularly the west, continuing to contribute strongly to the presence of this WLQ.

4.4.18 During operation:

- The effects on the localised area containing the upper reservoir including the containing slopes of Gleouraich, Spidean Mialach and Gairich up to around 4 km would reduce to **Moderate Adverse** (significant). Without the activities and features associated with construction works, magnitude of change would reduce to Medium in these areas. Although permanent features of the Proposed Development would affect the presence of physical attributes, and would distract within the mountain landscape, the WLQ would continue to be present in association with the surrounding rugged landform.
- The Proposed Development would continue to lead to Spidean Mialach being somewhat isolated from the wider mountain environment to the west, although without the activities of construction this effect would be less pronounced with the operational effect predicted to be **Moderate Adverse** (significant).
- The effect on the summit areas of Gleouraich and Gairich would be **Minor – Moderate Adverse** (not significant) because, although affected in the context of the Proposed Development, the WLQ would remain strongly present in these areas, in relation to the wider surrounding mountains.
- The effect across other mountain areas to the south and west would be similar to that during construction and is not predicted to be significant. The Proposed Development would feature in a similar way to construction works within a localised part of the context with some localised effects on some physical attributes. However, the sense of naturalness, ruggedness and arresting qualities associated with the WLQ would remain present to a similar extent as existing. The effect would be not greater than **Minor – Moderate Adverse** (not significant), and generally **Minor Adverse** (not significant) because although the permanent features of the Proposed Development may have limited effects on physical attributes, the WLQ would remain strongly present.

WLQ 2: A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers.

- 4.4.19 This WLQ is mostly not present across the study area, being more associated with parts of the WLA further to the west. There would be some limited effects where the relationship with this more remote landscape

may be affected by the Proposed Development, which is mostly experienced from the higher summits further from the edge of the WLA, and also along the more remote south-western shore area of Loch Quoich. Within these areas, the appearance of the Proposed Development to the east would form a more obvious area of contemporary land use and modern artefacts, which may give a stronger sense of the eastern boundary of the WLA (in combination with other existing modern artefacts and contemporary land use features). This may cause these areas to feel slightly closer to the edge of the WLA and further from the remote interior. However, no significant effects are predicted to this WLQ during construction or operation as the connection to the south-west would be unaffected and sense of connection to the remote interior in this direction would still be felt. Effects are predicted as follows:

4.4.20 During construction and operation:

- A **Minor Adverse** (not significant) effect is predicted around summit areas including Gleouraich and those around the south-west of Loch Quoich including Sgurr an Fhuarain and Sgurr Mòr, and lower lying areas around the south-western end of Loch Quoich where the Proposed Development may lead to a sense of being closer to the edge of the WLA or less remote but the visual connection to the interior mountainous landscape would be maintained.

WLQ 3: Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape

- 4.4.21 Effects on this area would mostly occur where the relationship between the adjacent mountains and Loch Quoich would be changed. However, this WLQ is generally not considered to be very sensitive within the study area as Loch Quoich is mostly outwith the WLA, except at its western end. Within closer areas, including around Gairich, Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich, the Proposed Development would draw development away from the loch edge and up into the mountain interior and would reduce the contrast in remoteness between the shoreline and mountains, potentially diminishing the scale of the adjacent mountains. This effect would be most evident from Gairich where construction areas on both the loch shore and within the upper corrie area would be perceived. However, there is already a strong influence of contemporary land use within the context of this area around the northern loch shore, and the Proposed Development would be associated with this same area.
- 4.4.22 The Proposed Development would also alter the setting of Loch Fearn and create a new, larger waterbody which would appear managed and less natural. This would somewhat affect the setting of Loch Quoich and its relationship to the surrounding peaks (Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich), although there would still be a clear contrast between the loch side and elevated landscapes.
- 4.4.23 The Proposed Development would also feature in more distant framed views along Loch Quoich from areas at its western end where it would form a greater awareness of the edge of the WLA and affect the arresting qualities. However, by and large, the role of Loch Quoich, which is already visibly modified, would remain generally unchanged in relation to the WLA and would continue to contribute to arresting and inspiring qualities in relation to the setting of the surrounding mountains. Overall, in the longer term, the loch would continue to be a striking feature, influencing the visibility and accessibility within the WLA, and the WLQ would remain present in a similar way to the existing situation.
- 4.4.24 During construction:
- A **Moderate Adverse** (significant) effect is predicted around the north facing slopes of Gairich, where the construction activities at the powerhouse area and upper reservoir would create a greater area of contemporary land use extending to higher elevation, which may diminish the height of the mountain backdrop of Spidean Mialach and the setting of the loch.
 - A **Minor Adverse** (not significant) effect is predicted around Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach where closer contemporary land use at high altitude would interrupt the setting of Loch Quoich, although the physical relationship between the mountain summits and surrounding glens would not be changed.

- A **Minor Adverse** (not significant) effect would occur within areas at the western end of Loch Quoich where the Proposed Development would appear within long views down the loch and emphasise the boundary of the WLA, but the loch would continue to evoke arresting and inspiring qualities and the WLQ would continue to be strongly present.

4.4.25 During operation:

- The effect would not be greater than **Minor Adverse** (not significant) in all areas where the Proposed Development would be seen in the context of Loch Quoich, because the role of the loch as a feature within the landscape would not be fundamentally changed.

Summary of Significant Effects

- 4.4.26 Overall, the assessment has concluded that during construction, significant effects would occur within a relatively localised area, enclosed on the north side of Loch Quoich by the horseshoe ridge of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach within an area up to around 1.5 km, and on the south side of Loch Quoich, stretching up to the summit and ridgeline areas of Gairich, within about 5 km. This area would reduce during operation, when there would be little ongoing human activity associated with the Proposed Development, leading to perceptual responses of solitude, arresting qualities, challenge and risk continuing to be substantially present. Significant operational effects are predicted to be limited to more enclosed parts of the Gleourach / Spidean Mialach horseshoe and facing slopes of Gairich up to around 4 km, with the effect on the summit area and ridges of Gleouraich and Gairich predicted to be not significant. Around these summit areas, the influence of the wider surrounding mountains to the north, south and particularly the west, is likely to override the effects of the Proposed Development in the south-easterly / north-easterly context where other elements of contemporary land use are already present.
- 4.4.27 A significant effect is also predicted to continue during operation around the summit areas of Spidean Mialach, which would be partially disconnected from the greater WLA to the west by the Proposed Development.
- 4.4.28 Other areas to the east and west, including more remote peaks at the south-western end of Loch Quoich and individual peaks to the south would also have intervisibility of the Proposed Development, which may appear prominent from some areas. However, the effect on these areas is not predicted to be significant during either construction or operation, because the Proposed Development would be seen within a context where contemporary land use and modern artefacts are already apparent around Loch Quoich. The Proposed Development would not affect the wider context of mountains in other directions which have a greater influence on the presence of physical attributes, perceptual responses and WLQs in these areas. However, the appearance of the Proposed Development at the eastern end of Loch Quoich, would lead to a slightly reduced perceived extent of the WLA in this direction when seen from the south-western part of the loch.
- 4.4.29 During construction, levels of activity and large scale works such as excavation and construction of dams would very noticeably reduce the physical attributes of perceived naturalness, lack of construction or modern artefacts, contemporary land use and sense of solitude within the immediate area around the proposed upper reservoir, up to the summit areas of the surrounding peaks, Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach. This would in turn lead to changes to experiences of solitude, arresting qualities and the perceived accessibility and challenge associated with the landscape. On the opposite side of Loch Quoich, there would also be a noticeably reduced sense of remoteness, and disturbance from the works would affect the sense of solitude and arresting qualities. This is predicted to lead to significant effects on **WLQ1** (*High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains...*) within these areas. The effect would reduce in strength around the summits of Gairich and Gleouraich where the wider context of mountains to north, south and west is more influential, but would still be significant.
- 4.4.30 These effects on strength of wildness are also predicted to lead to lesser, but significant effects on **WLQ3** (*Spectacular deep glens and lochs...*) within around north facing slopes of Gairich (up to around 4 km from the Proposed Development on the south side of Loch Quoich) where the construction works at both the

upper reservoir and powerhouse areas would be seen and would draw activities higher into the elevated mountain setting, leading to the height of mountains and their role as a setting to the loch appearing somewhat diminished.

- 4.4.31 No significant effects are predicted to **WLQ2** during either construction or operation because there is limited connection to the remote interior within the study area and the Proposed Development would not interrupt this connection where it is perceived.
- 4.4.32 During operation, the extent and level of significant effects would reduce. With the completion of construction works and reinstatement of disturbed areas there would be less obvious human activity associated with the Proposed Development. Although the permanent features such as dams would remain highly prominent modern artefacts, and the reservoir area (with associated periodic drawdown) and dams would display a less natural and more managed landscape. However, the changes to perceptual responses would be less noticeable and would all still be experienced in the area around the reservoir. Significant effects would be limited to the area directly affected, and immediate enclosing slopes, including the corries within the Gleouraich / Spidean Mialach horseshoe and facing slopes of Gairich up to around 4 km from the Proposed Development. This is predicted to lead to a significant operational effect on **WLQ1** (*High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains...*). No significant effects during operation are predicted to WLQ3 because, without the activities of construction, there would be less distraction or change to perceptual responses in the context of Loch Quoich. When taking into account the existing effects of contemporary land use and modern artefacts on this part of Loch Quoich, including the existing drawdown resulting from the Loch Quoich hydro scheme, which reduce perceived naturalness, and the fact that the eastern part the loch is excluded from the WLA, the appearance of the operational Proposed Development, is not predicted to sufficiently alter the setting of Loch Quoich to lead to a significant effect on WLQ3.
- 4.4.33 Therefore, once construction works are complete and reinstatement has been undertaken, long term significant effects on WLQs are predicted to comprise the following:
- A *localised* significant effect to **WLQ1** within an area contained by the immediate enclosing slopes surrounding the upper reservoir including the corries within the Gleouraich / Spidean Mialach horseshoe (Coire Mhèil, Coire Dubh and Coire Glas), and facing slopes of Gairich up to around 4 km from the Proposed Development and across the summit area and ridge of Spidean Mialach

Effects on the WLA as a Whole

- 4.4.34 The longer-term significant effects associated with the operation of Proposed Development would be localised in relation to the WLA as a whole, affecting an area close to the edge of the WLA where there are already some influences which reduce the physical attributes of perceived naturalness, absence of modern artefacts and contemporary land use. Other effects across south easterly and westerly parts of the study area are not predicted to be significant, although would lead to some slight diminishing of extent associated with the WLA, when seen to the east from western areas.
- 4.4.35 The area significantly affected by the Proposed Development comprises a group of mountains which define the easterly extent of the WLA around Loch Quoich. Because these mountains define a clear change in the physical terrain between areas within and outwith the WLA, it is considered that this area would continue to be perceived as part of the WLA, despite the presence of Proposed Development and associated significant effects. The mountains would continue to be associated with rugged terrain, a sense of challenge and risk and arresting qualities and, following the completion of construction activities, despite the changes to physical wild land attributes that would occur, there would not be a noticeable presence of people at the upper reservoir site, so sense of solitude would continue to be experienced. A sense of connection to the wider WLA would also continue to be experienced from the southern and western peaks around the Proposed Development (Gairich and Gleouraich).
- 4.4.36 The WLA assessment has identified that some significant effects would be associated with a partial disconnect of the more easterly summit, Spidean Mialach, from the wider WLA as the reservoir and Fearna dam would interrupt the visual connection to other parts of the WLA to the west and south-west. However,

it is considered that the attributes and perceptual responses of wild land would still characterise this peak which would continue to be viewed as a part of the WLA due to its connection via the rugged ridgeline to Gleouraich, visual connection to other mountains to the north, and by its clearly established position as the most easterly of the mountain group around Loch Quoich, forming a defined edge to the WLA.

- 4.4.37 This conclusion is broadly supported by review of the Attribute Mapping (see **Figure 7.4.3**) which shows that rugged terrain and perceived naturalness provide a greater contribution to the strength of wildness across this summit area than absence of modern artefacts which is the map which would be most affected by the Proposed Development.
- 4.4.38 Further review of the Map of Relative Wildness (see **Figure 7.4.2**) including the Jenks 8 analysis (see **Figure 7.4.4**) suggests that the intervisibility of the Proposed Development would occur across several areas where the highest levels of wildness are identified including various mountain summit areas around the west and south-west parts of the Loch Quoich. However, these areas are mostly further from the Proposed Development with consequently lower levels of magnitude of change and have mostly been identified as unlikely to be significantly affected, except in the close vicinity of the Proposed Development. Areas identified as having the highest level of wildness (Jenks Classes 8 and 9) mostly comprise summit areas of mountains and due to the wide views which are available from these locations, have existing influence of modern artefacts and contemporary land use, as indicated by the attribute mapping (see **Figure 7.4.3**). The identification of high wildness in these areas is more closely associated with the rugged terrain, remoteness and perceived naturalness which would be less affected by the Proposed Development. Therefore, it is unlikely that the Map of Relative Wildness would be substantially changed with the addition of the Proposed Development
- 4.4.39 Overall, it is considered that, although the Proposed Development would lead to some changes in the strength of wildness leading to localised residual significant effects to one WLQ and slightly influencing the sense of remoteness more widely, these changes would be unlikely to lead to a significant effect on this very large WLA as a whole.

Annex A – WLA Location Analysis

WL1	Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Grid Reference: NN 10744 98305
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Description:	Elevated knolly ridge location situated approximately 1 km within the WLA boundary, and accessed via stalkers path from forestry tracks to the south of Loch Pouлары, around 5 km from the public road. An open, moorland location, but influenced by forestry areas to the north, north-east and north-west, with other features such as a wind farm visible on the north-easterly hills and some properties around Pouлары which reduces sense of remoteness.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Rough grass and heather with occasional rock perceived as generally natural but forest planting within the surrounding context appears less natural.	Low – Medium	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	General sense of solitude although proximity to others can be perceived.	Medium
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Fences, forest tracks and buildings are perceived in the valley to the north and a wind farm on the north-eastern hills. Hydro features are passed enroute.	Low	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Limited sense of risk or awe although this may be increased by moving further south away from the more peopled landscapes.	Low
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Extensive forest areas passed enroute and perceived in surroundings. Hydro features also passed enroute and windfarm seen to the north-east. Reducing influence moving southwards.	Low – Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Surrounding elevated views can be arresting although less striking than other mountainous views in the area.	Medium
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Terrain is occasionally steep and boggy but not overtly challenging.	Low	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Requires some physical fitness to access the location but less sense of achievement than the more notable mountains in the vicinity.	Low
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Reasonably easy to access via stalkers path and forest tracks with some obstacles. Although at some distance from public road is not very remote.	Low	Strength of Wildness	The attributes and responses of wild land are present to some degree but are limited by the obvious proximity of contemporary land use. Some sense of moving into a more wild landscape to the south.	Low

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Partially present	Mountains in the westerly context but are seen as part of the context rather than present at the WL. Partial presence of the WLQ reduces sensitivity at the WLA but there some susceptibility to the sense of awe or arresting qualities.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present.	This WL does not feel connected to the remote interior.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Not present	There is no close connection or association with glens and lochs at this WL.	N/A

WL1	Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Grid Reference: NN 10744 98305
		
Photograph Looking North	Photograph Looking East	
		
Photograph Looking South	Photograph Looking West	

WL1	Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Grid Reference: NN 10744 98305
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Nature of Change (Construction)	Construction of the Fearn Dam would be perceived in the westerly context, adjacent to the Spidean Mialach summit. Construction traffic on the southern access route would be seen passing through the forest which may increase the sense of people in the landscape, although this area already features some forest works. The main site compound and camp would be passed enroute to the WL, although not visible from the WL itself it could be visible from other nearby areas and may increase a sense of people being present in the surrounding landscape.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Unlikely to be any change.	Negligible	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Visible construction traffic and compound and camp passed enroute may slightly increase sense of nearby people in areas already influenced by forestry and hydro maintenance works.	Low
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Small increase in artefacts in this context but limited within the context of the baseline where artefacts are already influential.	Low	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Closer proximity of people may slightly reduce sense of risk, although this is already low at this WL.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Contemporary land use would be seen at higher altitude and potential increased activity in forest areas, but limited change to the attribute within the context where contemporary land use is already clearly evident.	Low	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The appearance of works at the Fearn dam site may interrupt some of the more inspiring views but would be small within the context.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The dam may be seen to slightly smooth out the terrain of the mountain in the west but would not affect any nearby terrain.	Negligible	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	There is unlikely to be any perceptible change to this response.	Negligible
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Possible slight decrease in sense of remoteness due to presence of access traffic, compound and camp, but in context where forestry activities already occur.	Low			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Works at the Fearn dam would slightly interrupt the mountain views towards Spidean Mialach, slightly reducing inspiring qualities. This may lead to a small change in the appreciation of this WLQ, but would be limited in comparison with the baseline where this WLQ is not strongly present.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	N/A	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	N/A	N/A

WL1	Druim na Luibe Duibhe	Grid Reference: NN 10744 98305
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Nature of Change (Operation)	The Fearna dam would be seen in the westerly landscape, adjacent to Spidean Mialach but would be relatively small within the wider context.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Unlikely to be any change.	Negligible	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Unlikely to be any change.	Negligible
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	The Fearna Dam would be a small feature adjacent to Spidean Mialach, but a limited change within the context of the baseline where artefacts are already influential.	Low	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Unlikely to be any change.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	There may be some perception of contemporary land use associated with the visible dam but this is unlikely to increase the baseline presence.	Negligible	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Fearna dam would form a feature in western mountains but would be unlikely to reduce the inspiring qualities.	Negligible
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The dam may be seen to slightly smooth out the terrain of the mountain in the west but would not affect any nearby terrain.	Negligible	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Unlikely to be any change.	Negligible
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	There would be no change to the remoteness and accessibility.	Negligible			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	The Fearna dam would form a new artefact in the mountain setting of Spidean Mialach which may slightly change the appreciation of this individual mountain. However, this is considered unlikely to affect the wider presence of inspiring qualities and the WLQ would not be likely to be changed in its presence.	Negligible
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	N/A	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	N/A	N/A

WL2	Coire Dubh	Grid Reference: NN 04817 04212
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Description:	Elevated corrie set under the steep and rocky slopes of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach 1.5 – 2 km from the edge of the WLA and accessed via a relatively short but steep walk from the public road alongside Loch Cuaich. Access is partly taken via rough track or path and then across rough steep ground requiring a reasonable level of fitness. The corrie is contained with a localised sense of isolation and sanctuary with wider views drawdown around Loch Cuaich and steel lattice towers from the surrounding slopes.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Predominant rough heather and grass cover with bare rock and boulders.	High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Quiet sense of solitude with little human activities and few other people present, especially within the containment of the corrie.	High
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Steel lattice towers and other features alongside the public road are evident enroute to the location, although are not seen from the more contained part of the corrie.	Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Steep slopes and rocky terrain gives a sense of risk.	High
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Steel lattice towers and other drawdown around Loch Cuaich give awareness of human activities enroute to the location although are not evident in the corrie itself.	Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Surrounding mountains evoke arresting qualities, particularly enroute to the location although views are more contained within the corrie.	High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Steep, rocky and boggy terrain is difficult to traverse.	High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Sense of achievement in reaching the location due to the rough ground although a relatively short walk.	Medium – High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Relatively close to the public road with paths and tracks providing some access although streams and bogs can be difficult to cross.	Low – Medium	Strength of Wildness	Perceptual attributes are strongly present but the proximity to the public road and small scale of the more contained area reduce overall wildness.	Medium – High

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Present	Surrounding mountains are high and rugged but on the edge of the WLA with less sense of remoteness. Sense of naturalness and rugged terrain is susceptible to development of the type proposed.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present	This area is on the edge of the WLA and not representative of the remote interior.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Partially present	Although not visible from the corrie itself there is a relationship to Loch Cuaich outwith the WLA. However, susceptibility in this location is low, because the loch is already modified by the Quoich Dam with visible drawdown present.	Low

WL2	Coire Dubh	Grid Reference: NN 04817 04212	
			
Photograph Looking North towards Coire Dubh from Loch Fearn		Photograph Looking North-east into Coire Dubh	
			
Photograph Looking South from the ridge above Coire Dubh		Photograph Looking South-west from ridge above Coire Dubh	

WL2	Coire Dubh	Grid Reference: NN 04817 04212
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Nature of Change (Construction)	This area would be a focus for construction activities including excavations for borrow pits and construction of the Coire Dubh Dam, with indirect effects also occurring from the construction of the Fearna dam.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Direct disturbance of construction works in this area would change sense of naturalness.	High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	The ongoing works and presence of people and plant would very noticeably reduce the sense of solitude.	High
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	The area would be dominated by construction works during this phase.	High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	The sense of risk or awe may be reduced by closer presence of people and ongoing activity.	Medium
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	The area would be dominated by construction works and activity during this phase.	High	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Surrounding mountains would lead to arresting qualities still being present, but the ongoing works would disrupt the association with the surrounding landscape.	Medium – High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Excavations and other construction would alter the terrain locally but the setting within the surrounding mountainsides would remain rugged.	Medium	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	There would still be challenge in reaching the area but the presence of tracks and people would be likely to reduce the sense of fulfilment in this.	Medium – High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Tracks, vehicle movements and people would reduce remoteness although accessibility would still be similar for members of the public on foot.	Medium – High			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Construction works would affect the sense of remoteness and relationship with the surrounding rugged terrain with the area being more dominated by excavation, construction and general activities. The surrounding mountains would still be of some influence on the location but would not be perceived as natural, remote and rugged in the same way during this period.	High
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Construction works, particularly the dams would interrupt and create a visual disconnect with the loch area from a greater part of the corrie, whilst access tracks would create a greater physical connection. It is likely that due to the ongoing works, the corrie area would feel closer to the more developed loch-side landscape which is outwith the WLA during the construction phase, and therefore less remote, and the distinction of the valley and loch and influence on accessibility would be less noticeably felt.	Medium

WL2	Coire Dubh	Grid Reference: NN 04817 04212
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Nature of Change (Operation)	Dams and inundation would be established in this area with Coire Dubh being flooded. A new track and paths would increase the accessibility of the location by vehicles although it would continue to be a reasonably challenging walk. The new reservoir would
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Dams and reservoirs with periodic visible drawdown likely to appear less natural. Though surrounding crags and vegetation types will still appear natural.	High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Structures may reduce sense of being far from others, although the landscape would not become very noticeably more peopled and sense of solitude would prevail.	Low
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Dams would become a prominent focus of this area.	High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Improved accessibility may reduce sense of risk, although the lack of people and surrounding terrain would likely continue to give a sense of anxiety.	Low – Medium
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Dams and other features as well as reservoir drawdown would lead to notable evidence of contemporary land use.	High	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The Proposed Development may interrupt key views and diminish the perceived scale of surrounding mountains but the surrounding terrain would still inspire arresting qualities.	Low – Medium
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Accessibility would be improved the new access tracks but surrounding terrain would still appear challenging.	Medium			
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	New access track and paths would lead to improved access, although reservoir would reduce some accessibility and the area is already less remote.	Medium	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Good fitness would still be required to reach the WL but presence of tracks may reduce the sense of achievement due to more apparent accessibility.	Low – Medium

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	The surrounding mountains would continue to be a strong influence on the sense of place although structures and man-made interventions such as rock cuttings would become more dominant and the perceived sense of challenge and risk would likely be reduced by the presence of access tracks.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present at this location	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The relationship with the glen below would continue to be similar in nature, although the perceived increase in accessibility and human influence in the corrie may reduce the contrast in sense of wildness between the two areas to some extent. The reservoir would create a new waterbody, although this may not be perceived as fully natural.	Low

WL3	Gleouraich	Grid Reference: NN 04030 05227
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Description:	Elevated, craggy mountain summit with steep surrounding ridges situated 1.5 km from the edge of the WLA to the west and 2 – 2.5 km to the south where the boundary follows the Loch Cuaich reservoir. It is reached by a steep walk via a stalkers' path of approximately 3.5 km from the rural public road alongside Loch Cuaich and allows elevated views over Loch Cuaich and extensive vistas of the surrounding ridges and summits leading into the distance, particularly west, but also in layers to north and south.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Rocky and rugged terrain is perceived as generally natural. Some forest plantation areas seen within surrounds but generally far away.	High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Popular summit but sense of elevation leads to sense of sanctuary, though public roads and other people are perceived in the surrounding.	Medium – High
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Wind turbines are visible in the north-east and easterly views. Other features such as pylons are passed on ascent and seen from the summit giving some sense of proximity.	Medium – High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Steep terrain and ridges gives sense of risk and awe.	High
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Wind turbines and forest plantations to the east and north-east and public road, pylons and visible drawdown around Loch Quoich shore indicate some contemporary land use, but little evidence in extensive westerly views.	Medium – High	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Extensive surrounding mountain views and surrounding steep, rocky terrain are arresting.	High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Terrain is very rugged and challenging.	High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Steep terrain and summit ridge lead to fulfilment of physical challenge	High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Challenging ascent but relative closeness to public road with a rough stalkers path leads most of the way.	Medium	Strength of Wildness	High presence of perceptual responses, although sense of contemporary land use is more evident to the east, the location appears as part of an extensively more wild landscape to the west.	Medium - High

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Present	The location is evocative of the WLQ and is extensively expressed in surrounding areas. The WLQ is moderately susceptible in the area to improved accessibility and development which may affect arresting qualities and sense of awe in particular views although these qualities are somewhat tied to the wider physical landscape.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Partially present	There is a sense of connection to the remote interior with some aspects of the WLQ being present. The location is susceptible to change which may breach this connection or diminish sense of remoteness or isolation although there is already some sense of being closer to more peopled landscapes.	Medium
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Present	The location has a close relationship with Loch Quoich and other surrounding glens. There is some susceptibility where the contrast in remoteness may be diminished although the relationship is largely tied to the physical characteristics of the landscape.	Low

WL3	Gleouraich	Grid Reference: NN 04030 05227	
			
Photograph Looking North		Photograph Looking East	
			
Photograph Looking South-east		Photograph Looking South-west	

WL3	Gleouraich	Grid Reference: NN 04030 05227
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Nature of Change (Construction)	Construction works including excavation of borrow pits and construction of dams and intake towers would be very noticeable in the corrie below this summit to the south-east at around 1.5 km and would be very noticeable to the north on the approach to the summit. There would be no change to the wider rugged landscape to the north and west.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Extensive excavation and construction activity in corrie to south-east although summit and surroundings in other directions, would continue to appear natural.	Medium – High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Activities and people within the corrie area would reduce the perceived sense of solitude although the summit would still be separate and remote from this.	Medium
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Construction works would be very noticeable in the corrie below.	High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	The closer presence of others may slightly reduce a sense of risk although this would be likely to remain substantially present, due to the terrain.	Low
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Construction activities would lead to very noticeable evidence of contemporary land use in the south-easterly context.	High	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Construction works would interrupt south-easterly views but the extensive surrounding mountainous landscape would continue to strongly evoke arresting qualities.	Low – Medium
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The WL would continue to be challenging to reach with rugged terrain, although works in the corrie may lead to less challenge being perceived in this part of the context.	Low	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	There would be no change to the physical challenge required to access the location but the visual presence of vehicles and people within the corrie below and seen on the approach may slightly reduce sense of fulfilment.	Low
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Construction activities would be likely to make the WL feel less remote, although there would be no real change to accessibility.	Medium			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Construction works would affect perceived naturalness and remoteness and increase contemporary land use and constructed artefacts in the south-easterly context but the overriding elements of rugged terrain, arresting qualities, risk and physical challenge associated with the mountains would generally remain present and would strongly influence the WL.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Construction works would occur in the south-easterly context which is less connected to the remote interior and already features some contemporary land use and features. The connection to the more extensive interior would be unaffected, although the closer presence of people to the south-east would reduce remoteness and lead to this WL feeling only on the edge of the WLA.	Low – Medium
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Construction works may lead to a closer connection with the Loch Cuaich loch-side and glen by bringing development up the hill and closer, whereby the corrie area may feel more associated with the loch shore, outwith the WLA. However, the physical relationship between the mountain summit and surrounding glens would not be changed.	Low

WL3	Gleouraich	Grid Reference: NN 04030 05227
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Nature of Change (Operation)	The upper reservoir and dams would be very noticeable in the corrie below this summit to the south-east at around 1.5 km and would be very noticeable to the north on the approach to the summit. From the ridge and summit, the reservoir and associated drawdown of up to 62 m would be overlooked, leading to increased presence of human intervention and management within the close context to the south-east. There would be no change to the wider rugged landscape to the north and west.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Dams and reservoir with rock cuttings and drawdown would reduce perceived naturalness in the corrie below but the rugged summit would continue to appear natural.	Medium	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Proposed Development may lead to greater perception of people in the nearby context though few would actually be present during operation. Sense of elevation may be slightly diminished by the reservoir and dams though the elevated summit would still feel remote from others.	Low
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	The dams would become notable constructed artefacts in the south-easterly context.	High			
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	The dams and reservoirs would lead to very noticeable evidence of contemporary land use in the south-easterly context.	High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	The closer perception of others may slightly reduce a sense of risk although this would be likely to remain substantially present, due to the terrain.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Some elements of the terrain would be covered / modified by the dams and reservoir although the overriding rugged nature of the summits and surrounding mountains would remain.	Low	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The Proposed Development would be prominent to the south-east and may slightly diminish the sense of height, but the extensive surrounding mountainous landscape would continue to strongly evoke arresting qualities.	Low
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	A new access track may reduce the sense of remoteness in the context but the accessibility of this location would not be changed.	Low	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	There would be no change to the physical challenge required to access the location and sense of fulfilment would remain equally present.	Negligible

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Changes to perceived naturalness and presence of contemporary land use and constructed artefacts would influence this WLQ but the overriding elements of rugged terrain, arresting qualities, risk and physical challenge associated with the mountains would remain substantially present, particularly associated with the wider extensive mountainous landscape to the north, south and west.	Low – Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	The Proposed Development would be situated in the south-easterly context which is less connected to the remote interior and already features some contemporary land use and features. The connection to the more extensive interior would be unaffected, although there may be some perception of development being closer to the south-east.	Low
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The Proposed Development may lead to a closer connection with the Loch Cuaich loch-side and glen by bringing hydro development up the hill and closer but the physical relationship between the mountain summit and surrounding glens would not be changed.	Low

WL4	Spidean Mialach	Grid Reference: NN 06551 04293
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Description:	Elevated, rocky, rugged mountain summit with steeply surrounding slopes, reached by stalkers' path or rough track for up to 2 km from the rural public road alongside Loch Quoich, followed by a steep ascent up a rough, open slope and ridge walk. Elevated views over Loch Fearn and Loch Cuaich, and extensive vistas of the surrounding ridges and summits leading into the distance, to north, south and west.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Generally perceived as very natural but managed forest plantations to east and south east, and drawdown areas around Loch Cuaich may be perceived as less natural.	Medium – High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Elevation and expansive vistas give sense of smallness and distance from others, although public road and buildings can be seen within the setting.	Medium – High
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Wind turbines and tracks to the east. Overhead pylon lines, public roads and buildings are present around Kingie below. General lack of artefacts in other directions.	Medium – High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	The steep rugged slopes give strong perceptions of risk.	High
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Large scale forest plantations and felled areas and tracks are seen to the east and south-east. Drawdown areas around Loch Quoich also suggest contemporary land use but wider landscape, particularly to west is unaffected.	Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Extensive surrounding, mountainous landscape gives arresting qualities, particularly when looking westwards.	High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Terrain is steep, rocky and rugged.	High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Notable challenge is require in reaching the location and achieving the summit.	High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Difficult to access but relative proximity to public road.	Medium	Strength of Wildness	Perceptual responses are strongly present but built artefacts and contemporary land use to the east suggest the location is on the edge of an extensive wilder area stretching to north, south and west.	Medium

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Present	WLQ and is extensively expressed in surrounding areas, particularly to the west. This WLQ is susceptible to potential changes to arresting qualities and sense of awe in particular views although these qualities are somewhat tied to the wider physical landscape.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present	There is a greater sense of being on the edge of the WLA due to the influence of contemporary land use to the east.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Present	The location has a close relationship with Loch Quoich but also other glens out with the WLA. There is some susceptibility where the contrast in remoteness may be diminished although the relationship is largely tied to the physical characteristics of the landscape.	Low

WL4	Spidean Mialach	Grid Reference: NN 06551 04293	
			
Photograph Looking North		Photograph Looking East	
			
Photograph Looking South-east		Photograph Looking West	

WL4	Spidean Mialach	Grid Reference: NN 06551 04293
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Nature of Change (Construction)	Construction would be very noticeable in this context in the corrie below the summit, to the immediate south-west including construction of the Fearna dam, intake towers and borrow pits and general construction activities.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	The large scale excavations in the corrie below, would notably change land cover though the surrounding summit area would continue to be perceived as natural.	Medium – High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	The closer proximity of workers and activity and possible noise may reduce sense of solitude.	Medium
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Construction and artefacts would become very noticeable in south-westerly views where this is more focussed to the east currently.	Medium – High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	The closer perception of others may slightly reduce a sense of risk although this would be likely to remain substantially present, due to the terrain.	Low
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Construction would lead to contemporary land use being a notable feature of the location to the southwest which currently features less presence of this attribute.	Medium – High	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The Proposed Development would be a prominent feature below and would interrupt the connection to the wider WLA, but the extensive surrounding mountainous landscape would continue to strongly evoke arresting qualities.	Medium
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The construction works below would change the terrain, although the ruggedness of the surrounding terrain would remain a defining characteristic of the WL.	Low – Medium			
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	The presence of vehicular movement in the corrie below, and passed enroute to the WL would reduce the attribute strength and the location would appear less remote.	Medium – High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Presence of tracks and features may reduce perceived sense of challenge although there would still be considerable challenge in reaching the location.	Low – Medium

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Construction activities would affect sense of naturalness, remoteness and solitude and would be likely to distract in inspiring qualities and sense of awe, interrupting the connection to the greater mountain group to the west although the overriding sense of mountain terrain would remain present through the rugged summit area and elevation.	High
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The Proposed Development may lead to a closer connection with the Loch Quoich loch-side and glen by bringing activities up the hill and closer, but the physical relationship between the mountain summit and surrounding glens would not be changed.	Low

WL4	Spidean Mialach	Grid Reference: NN 06551 04293
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Nature of Change (Operation)	The upper reservoir would be located to the immediate south-west with the upper side of the Fearna Dam and intake towers being very noticeable below, forming modern artefacts, contemporary land use, and leading to improvements in access in the surrounding area. Diversion around these features would also be required to reach the location from the public road, lead to the Proposed Development being a prominent feature enroute to the location.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	No change at the location but appearance of the reservoir, dams and drawdown in the nearby context would reduce perceived naturalness in the surrounding area.	Medium	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Perception of closer proximity to others may somewhat reduce sense of solitude, but the landscape would not become noticeably more peopled and sense of solitude would prevail.	Low
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	The nearby dams and intake towers would increase presence of artefacts at close proximity and introduce new artefacts in the western context.	Medium – High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	The closer perception of others may slightly reduce a sense of risk although this would be likely to remain substantially present, due to the terrain.	Low
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	The Proposed Development would lead to noticeable new presence of contemporary land use in close proximity in the westerly context.	Medium – High	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The Proposed Development would be a prominent feature below, but the extensive surrounding mountainous landscape would continue to strongly evoke arresting qualities.	Low – Medium
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	No change to the terrain at the location. New paths would assist access, but challenge would still be required to reach the summit.	Low	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Proximity of tracks and features and a new path across the top of the Fearna Dam may reduce perceived sense of challenge although there would still be considerable challenge in reaching the location.	Low – Medium
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	New tracks would not be visible from this location but it would be closer to vehicular access and large scale human development which would be passed enroute including a new path across the top of the Fearna Dam.	Medium			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	The overriding sense of the rugged terrain and surrounding sense of awe and arresting qualities would still be experienced at the location. However, the influence of the Proposed Development would affect the sense of naturalness and remoteness and may slightly detach this location from the association with the wider expansive mountains seen to the south and west.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not Present	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The Proposed Development may lead to a closer connection with the Loch Cuaich loch-side and glen by bringing hydro development up the hill and closer, but the physical relationship between the mountain summit and surrounding glens would not be changed.	Low

WLS	Gairich	Grid Reference: NN 02591 99571
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Description:	Summit of steep, rounded mountain on south side of Loch Cuaich situated approximately 1.5 km from the eastern boundary of the WLA and with expansive vistas over Loch Cuaich, down Glen Garry and of surrounding hills. Access is via a rough footpath from Quoich Dam, a journey of approximately 7 km.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Rough terrain of summit and surrounding mountains is very natural but forest plantations around Loch Cuaich and down towards Glen Garry are somewhat less natural.	Medium	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Although peopled landscapes are perceived nearby, the sense of elevation and long walk leads to sense of separation and solitude.	Medium
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Quoich dam, wind turbines and buildings are seen to east. Public road with bridge and transmission towers are seen to north and east. No features in other directions.	Low – Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Steep slopes and elevation introduce sense of risk although summit is less directly craggy than peaks to the north of Loch Cuaich.	Medium – High
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Wind turbines, transmission towers, forest plantations and tracks, plus Quoich dam with association drawdown suggest contemporary land use to east and around Loch Cuaich.	Low – Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Surrounding mountains to north, south and west likely to evoke inspiring qualities.	High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The terrain is steep, rugged and challenging with surrounding mountains to north, south and west appearing similar.	High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Steep climb and long walk and perception of surrounding peaks suggests physical challenge.	High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Proximity to the public road and peopled areas is clear, but a long walk is required to reach the location.	Low	Strength of Wildness	Although perceptual attributes are present, there is notable influence from the more developed easterly landscape with sense of being on the edge of the wider WLA stretching south and west.	Medium

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Present	Mountains are strongly characteristic of the WL although there is a clear sense of being on the edge of the mountain area which reduces susceptibility to some changes. Elements more closely related to physical and topographical qualities are less susceptible although attributes such as naturalness are more susceptible to changes of the type proposed.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present	Although there is a visual connection to the wider mountains, contemporary land use to the north and east gives a clear sense of being only on the edge of the mountainous area.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Present	Loch Cuaich is influential on the location in terms of arresting qualities and remoteness. The relationship is generally associated with the topography but the WLQ may be susceptible to perceived changes in accessibility at this WL.	Low

WLS	Gairich	Grid Reference: NN 02591 99571	
		Photograph Looking North-east	
		Photograph Looking South	
Photograph Looking South		Photograph Looking West	

WL5	Gairich	Grid Reference: NN 02591 99571
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Nature of Change (Construction)	Construction works would form a focused area of activity and contemporary land use on the opposite side of the loch shore and at the upper reservoir site with the upper access track connecting both areas. Would be seen in the context of other constructed artefacts including Quoich Dam, overhead transmission lattice towers and monopoles and the public road.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Construction works across the valley would reduce perceived naturalness in this part of the context but closer areas would continue to be perceived as natural.	Medium – High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Presence of construction activities within the nearby context likely to affect sense of solitude although would still be around 3.5 km distant.	Medium
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Notable increase in construction in north-easterly context, although artefacts are already present to some degree in this area.	Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	It is unlikely that construction works would reduce any perception of risk at this WL which is more associated with the immediate steep slopes.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Construction activities would lead to a noticeable increase within the north-easterly context, although contemporary land use is already evident in this area to some degree.	Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Construction works in the north-easterly context may affect the arresting qualities of views towards Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach but the response would still be substantially present in relation to other views into the heart of the WLA.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	There would be no change to the terrain at the WL although activities such as borrow pits would alter the terrain on the valleyside opposite.	Low			
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	There would be no access improvement to the WL, although the activities in the context would reduce the appearance of remoteness.	Low – Medium	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Fulfilment of physical challenge is unlikely to be changed.	Negligible

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Construction works would affect the appearance of Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich to the north-east, reducing perceived naturalness and inspiring qualities in this direction, but the more extensive mountainous landscapes to the south and west would be unaffected and there is already a reduced presence of these qualities in the north-easterly context and less notable sense of remoteness at the WL.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present	NA
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Construction works at this WL would reduce the sense of naturalness around Loch Quoich, although this part of the loch is already outwith the WLA. There would be increased influence of contemporary land use and less perceived remoteness, though these attributes are already affected by existing development around Quoich Dam. Accessibility to the WL would not be changed, and the striking relationship of the loch and mountain summit would continue to strongly influence the WL.	Medium

WLS	Gairich	Grid Reference: NN 02591 99571
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Nature of Change (Operation)	The Proposed Development would be situated on the opposite side of Loch Quoich with the powerhouse area seen on the shore, dams and reservoir prominent just below the northerly tops and a track visibly connecting the two areas. This would be a noticeable increase in built development within this context although seen in the context of existing features including the Quoich Dam and associated drawdown, overhead transmission lattice towers and monopoles and the minor public road.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	The dams and reservoir on the opposite side of the valley would lead to a perceived decrease in natural systems, although drawdown and a dam are already seen on Loch Cuaich.	Medium	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Proximity to a greater scale of development may slightly reduce perceived sense of sanctuary, but the location would still feel separate and far from others.	Low
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	The new dams and powerhouse would form prominent new artefacts, although the lower works within an area already influenced by some constructed development.	Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	The Proposed Development is unlikely to change perceptions of risk.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Contemporary land use is already seen in this part of the context, but the Proposed Development would lead to a noticeable increase, particular the upper reservoir area.	Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The Proposed Development in the northerly context may affect the arresting qualities of views towards Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach but the response would still be substantially present in relation to other views.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	There would be no change to the terrain at the WL although the dams would be seen to alter the terrain on the valleyside opposite.	Low			
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	There would be no access improvement to the WL, although proximity to large scale development may be seen to be reduced.	Low	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Fulfilment of physical challenge is unlikely to be changed.	Negligible

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	The Proposed Development would affect the appearance of Spidean Mialoch and Gleouraich to the north, potentially reducing perceived naturalness and inspiring qualities in this direction, but the more extensive mountainous landscapes to the south and west would be unaffected.	Low – Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The Proposed Development would be seen in its entirety from this WL which may lead to a further reduction in sense of naturalness associated with the Loch Quoich system, greater influence of contemporary land use and less perceived remoteness. However, accessibility to the WL would not be changed, and the striking topographical feature would continue to strongly influence the location. This part of Loch Quoich is already outwith the WLA.	Low – Medium

WL7	Sgùrr Mhurlagain	Grid Reference: NN 01258 94472
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Description:	Elevated summit situated approximately 2 km to the north of the WLA boundary alongside Loch Arkaig to the south. Access is around 4.5 km up a rough, boggy path and open ground from a vehicle track at the western end of Loch Arkaig where there are a few clustered properties. Jagged peaks to the south and west are somewhat enclosing with more expansive easterly vistas over the forested Glen Kingie and Glen Garry, Loch Arkaig and the lower lying hills which separate these two glens.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Rocky summits, montane grasses and heather covered slopes appear natural but forest areas in Glen Kingie and Glen Garry and around Loch Arkaig appear less natural.	Medium – High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	General sense of distance from other people and sense of separation due to height.	High
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Wind Farm to north east and occasional constructed features around Loch Arkaig and within Glen Garry but generally few constructed features visible.	Medium – High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Steep slopes and surrounding jagged slopes lead to sense of risk, although accessibility to this location does not have a high degree of risk.	Medium
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	A wind farm and extensive forest areas to north east in Glen Kingie and Glen Garry give sense of land use but limited evidence in other directions.	Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Surrounding mountain and loch views evoke intense inspiring qualities.	High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	A relatively challenging and steep location to reach with surrounding very rugged landscape evident within the wider context.	High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Steep slopes and moderate walk to mountain summit give a sense of physical challenge.	High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Moderate distance to reach the location though geographically not far from the public road, tracks and buildings.	Medium	Strength of Wildness	The location is relatively remote with strong presence of perceptual responses, although forest areas and a wind farm to the north-west give sense of proximity to contemporary land use and reduce perceived naturalness.	Medium – High

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Present	The location is evocative of the WLQ which is extensively expressed in surrounding areas, to the north, south and west. The WLQ is moderately susceptible to improved accessibility and development which may affect arresting qualities and sense of awe although these qualities are somewhat tied to the physical landscape and terrain.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Partially present	There is a sense of connection to the remote interior to the west and south with some aspects of the WLQ being present. The location is susceptible to change which may breach this connection or diminish sense of remoteness or isolation although there is already some sense of being closer to more peopled landscapes.	Medium
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Present	Loch Arkaig is strongly influential on the WL, Loch Blair defines the hill to the east and Loch Quoich is also seen through the hills. However, sensitivity is limited at the WL because the area affected by the Proposed Development is not perceived in relation to these lochs	Low

WL7	Sgùrr Mhurlagain	Grid Reference: NN 01258 94472
		
Photograph Looking North	Photograph Looking East (most forestry concealed by low cloud).	
		
Photograph Looking South	Photograph Looking West	

WL7	Sgùrr Mhurlagain	Grid Reference: NN 01258 94472
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Nature of Change (Construction)	Construction works at the upper reservoir site including excavation of borrow pits and construction of dams and intake towers would be a noticeable but focussed feature within the north-easterly context. Features would be quite distant with individual plant and vehicles likely to be difficult to perceive. There is also potential for some visible activity relating to the SAR and construction compound to be perceptible in Glen Garry but at the distance involved and in the context of other forestry works and road traffic this is unlikely to be a perceptible change. There would be no change to the south, west or north-west context or across the WLA to the east.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Works at higher elevation to the north-east would appear less natural in a small area but within part of the context where extensive forest already lowers attribute strength.	Low	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Unlikely to be changed due to the distant nature of the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Construction works would form new noticeable artefacts within a localised part of the context to the north-east.	Low – Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Unlikely to be changed by the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Proposed Development would lead to new focal point of contemporary land use to north-east but within the context of other forestry works at closer proximity.	Low	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Construction works would affect north-easterly views but would be quite distant. This comprises a somewhat less notable part of the context in terms of arresting qualities which are particularly attributable to the mountains to south and west where there would be no change.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The appearance of the works would affect the perception of the terrain in the area affected but would not affect the degree of challenge in the local terrain.	Low			
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Given the context where other human activity is already seen in Glen Garry and Glen Kingie, the Proposed Development is unlikely to affect the sense of remoteness.	Negligible	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Unlikely to be changed by the Proposed Development.	Negligible

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	The construction would affect mountains in the context to the north but, although elevated, would appear relatively low within the context of receding peaks. There would be some change to sense of perceived naturalness and arresting qualities in this context, but these attributes and the WLQ are more applicable to the landscape of jagged peaks to the west which would not be affected.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Construction works would take place in the north-easterly context where existing contemporary land use is already present and would not affect the connection to the remote interior.	Negligible
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The Proposed Development would not be seen within the context of the lochs and therefore would not affect this WLQ.	Negligible

WL7	Sgùrr Mhurlagain	Grid Reference: NN 01258 94472
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Nature of Change (Operation)	The dams and intake towers would be a noticeable but focussed feature within the north-easterly context, set within a corrie but appearing relatively low in relation to the surrounding mountains and backdrop of peaks. There would be no change to the south, west or north-west context or across the WLA to the east.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	The dams would appear less natural in a small area but within part of the context where extensive forest already lowers attribute strength.	Low	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Unlikely to be changed due to the distant nature of the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Dams would form new noticeable artefacts within a localised part of the context to the north-east.	Low – Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Unlikely to be changed by the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Proposed Development would increase sense of contemporary land use in north-east context though other contemporary land use is already seen in this context.	Low	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Proposed Development would be a new feature within north-easterly views in the middle distance. Arresting qualities would remain strongly present in relation to the surrounding mountains, and particularly to the west and south where the more jagged peaks are present.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The Proposed Development would not affect the challenge or rugged terrain to any perceptible degree.	Negligible			
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Given the context where other human activity is already seen in Glen Garry and Glen Kingie, the Proposed Development is unlikely to affect the sense of remoteness.	Negligible	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Unlikely to be changed by the Proposed Development.	Negligible

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	The Proposed Development would be seen in the context of mountains to the north but, although elevated, would appear relatively low within the context of receding peaks. There would be some change to sense of perceived naturalness and arresting qualities in this context, but these attributes and the WLQ are more applicable to the landscape of jagged peaks to the west which would not be affected. The WLQ would remain strongly present.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	The Proposed Development would be seen in the north-easterly context where existing contemporary land use is already present and would not affect the connection to the remote interior.	Negligible
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The Proposed Development would not be seen within the context of the lochs and therefore would not affect this WLQ.	Negligible

WL7	Western Loch Quoich	Grid Reference: NG 98018 00179
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Description:	Steep, north-facing mountain slope of Sgurr Mòr, situated approximately 3 km from the boundary of the WLA, at the south-western end of Loch Quoich. Representative of the south-western end of Loch Quoich, this is a remote location of steep, sweeping mountain sides with deep, inset corries, with access on foot being by a very long walk of over 10 km following an ATV track from Loch Arkaig, a long and largely pathless route around the shore of Loch Quoich, or by boat.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Rough grassy, heathery terrain with occasional bedrock and boulders is perceived as natural although drawdown around the loch edge may be perceived as less natural.	Medium – High	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Location feels remote from other people.	High
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Items generally small and distant including road, bridge and transmission towers seen on opposite side of loch, and small container on near shore.	Medium – High	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Some sense of risk due to remoteness and surrounding steep slopes but not immediate sense of danger.	Medium – High
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Distant artefacts and drawdown around Loch Quoich including small, square plantations suggest some limited contemporary land use within the wider surrounds.	Medium – High	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Expansive views of surrounding mountains likely to evoke arresting qualities.	High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Terrain is rugged and steep.	High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Relatively accessible by boat but generally likely to require a notable level of challenge to reach the location.	High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Access is difficult requiring a very long walk or journey by boat, although an ATV track is present near the location.	High	Strength of Wildness	Location is remote with all perceptual responses present, although human interventions have localised influence in the surrounding landscape.	Medium – High

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Present	Surrounding area of mountains and rocky corries. Some susceptibility relating to the sense of naturalness and lack of artefacts although the arresting qualities and sense of awe are more associated with the surrounding physical topography.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Partially present	The isolated location gives a connection to the remote interior, although the appearance of contemporary land use and artefacts around Loch Cuich leads to a sense of being only on the edge. The WLQ is susceptible to changes in in accessibility and increased constructed artefacts at this WL.	Medium
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Present	Strong association with Loch Quoich which contributes to the remoteness and inaccessibility of the WL. Susceptible to changes in accessibility but less susceptible to changes on the northern side of the loch where artefacts are already present.	Medium

WL7	Western Loch Quoich	Grid Reference: NG 98018 00179
		
Photograph Looking North	Photograph Looking East	
		
Photograph Looking South	Photograph Looking West	

WL7	Western Loch Quoich	Grid Reference: NG 98018 00179
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Nature of Change (Construction)	Construction of the Fearn and Coire Dubh dams would be seen in the easterly context below the summit of Spidean Mialach, looking outwards from the WLA with possible appearance of construction associated with the upper access track. This would be relatively distant but a noticeable concentrated area of constructed artefacts and contemporary land use activity on the hillside above Loch Quoich.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Limited change to perceived naturalness in the distant context outwith the WLA but no changes close to the WL.	Negligible	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Unlikely to be changed due to the distant nature of the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Construction activities would increase the appearance of perceived naturalness in the distant context, although in an area where some small features are already perceived.	Low – Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Unlikely to be changed by the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	There would be increased perception of contemporary land use in distant context, although drawdown and other features already give some impression of this.	Low – Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Construction works would affect easterly views along Loch Quoich but would be quite distant. Surrounding topography would continue to have similar arresting qualities, particularly to the west.	Low – Medium
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	There may be a slight impression of improved accessibility in the area of the dams, but there would be no change to the rugged and challenging terrain around the WL.	Low			
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	There would be no increase to the accessibility of the location.	Negligible	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	The Proposed Development would be unlikely to change any sense of fulfilment from physical challenge.	Negligible

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Construction works would affect the appearance of the mountains Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich in the easterly context with more sense of contemporary land use, but arresting qualities and naturalness of the south-west Loch Quoich area would continue to be associated with other surrounding mountains, particularly to the west.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Construction works would affect the easterly context where existing features of contemporary land use and artefacts are already present, although distant. The closer relationship to the remote interior is to the south and west, particularly when approaching the WL from Loch Quoich and this relationship would continue although there may be a slight sense of being closer to the edge of this interior.	Low
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Construction would feature in views up Loch Quoich but where the loch is outwith the WLA. There would be no change to accessibility to this WL. There would be more activity surrounding the setting of the loch in relation to Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich but this would affect the section of loch which is outwith the WLA boundary.	Low

WL7	Western Loch Quoich	Grid Reference: NG 98018 00179
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Nature of Change (Operation)	The Fearna and Coire Dubh dams would be seen in the easterly context below the summit of Spidean Mialach, looking outwards from the WLA. The dams would be relatively distant within this context but would be perceived as large modern artefacts, affecting a localised part of the context. There may also be some distant appearance of the new track up to the dams.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	There would be unlikely to be any perceived change to perceived naturalness at this location due to the distant appearance of the dams.	Negligible	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Unlikely to be changed due to the distant nature of the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Dams would form large new modern artefacts in easterly context. This context already has some small, distant features, but the developed appearance would increase.	Low – Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Unlikely to be changed by the Proposed Development.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	There would be increased perception of contemporary land use around eastern Loch Quoich, although drawdown and other features already give some impression of this.	Low – Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The Proposed Development would affect views to the east of Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach but would be quite distant. Surrounding topography would continue to have similar arresting qualities, particularly to the west.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	There may be a slight impression of improved accessibility in the area of the dams, but there would be no change to the rugged and challenging terrain around the WL.	Low	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	The Proposed Development would be unlikely to change any sense of fulfilment from physical challenge.	Negligible
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	There would be no increase to the accessibility of the location.	Negligible			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Proposed Development would affect the appearance of the mountains Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich in the easterly context, but arresting qualities and naturalness of the south-west Loch Quoich area would continue to be associated with other surrounding mountains, particularly to the west.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	The Proposed Development would feature within the easterly context where existing features of contemporary land use and artefacts are already present, although distant. The closer relationship to the remote interior is to the south and west, particularly when approaching the WL from Loch Quoich and this relationship would continue although there may be a slight sense of being closer to the edge of this interior.	Low
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The dams would feature in views up Loch Quoich but where the loch is outwith the WLA. There would be no change to accessibility to this WL. The setting of the loch in relation to Spidean Mialach and Gleouraich, which would appear more developed, but this would affect the section of loch which is outwith the WLA boundary.	Low

WL8	Leac nan Gàidhseich	Grid Reference: NG 99241 04349
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Description:	Representative of the area at the western and northwestern end of Loch Cuaich. Rough, hillside knoll situated on the slopes of Sgùrr a' Mhaoraich, around 750m from the WLA boundary at Loch Cuaich to the south, accessible via landrover track or stalkers' path / ATV track, and thereafter across the rough, steep hill slope. This area is visually influenced by the drawdown edges of Loch Cuaich which reduce the surrounding sense of naturalness somewhat, a small scale hydro development and tracks within Coire nan Eincheallach although these features become less influential when moving to higher ground.
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Physical Attributes	Presence	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Presence	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Landcover of heather, boggy grass and rock perceived as natural. Drawdown and small coniferous tree plots appear less natural. Nearby fenced plantation area in Coire Eincheallach but native woodland is perceived as natural.	Medium	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Proximity to the minor public road but general sense of distance from more populated areas.	Medium
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	Small hydro intake within corrie and powerhouse, transmission towers and public road are seen along lochside. Influence decreases with increased height.	Low – Medium	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Steep slopes and rocky areas and surrounding crags give some sense of risk and awe which would be greater on the higher summits and ridge.	Medium
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Small scale hydro, drawdown, tracks and fenced woodland area suggest contemporary land use within the area, although the influence decreases with increased height.	Low – Medium	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Surrounding mountain summits, particularly the summit of Sgùrr a' Mhaoraich to the north-west, and general expansive views are arresting and inspiring.	High
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	Difficult, steep and rugged terrain.	High	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	The steep slopes and mountain summits give fulfilment from physical challenge.	High
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	Tracks and stalkers paths lead into the corrie and increase accessibility although the wider hillside is less accessible. Proximity of modern artefacts reduces remoteness.	Low	Strength of Wildness	Area evokes the perceptual responses but is strongly influence by contemporary land use and artefacts around the loch shore and corrie. Wildness is therefore less pronounced at lower altitudes but increases with height.	Medium

Wild Land Quality (WLQ)	Presence	Sensitivity	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Present	Surrounding slopes of Sgùrr a' Mhaoraich strongly influence the location. Inspiring qualities and awe and accessibility are susceptible to change although aspects of this WLQ are associated with physical landform which is less susceptible.	Medium
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present	This location does not feel associated with the remote interior due to the proximity to contemporary land use and artefacts.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	Present	Loch Cuaich is influential on the location including the physical contrast of mountain and loch and availability of long views. However, the presence of existing access and built artefacts reduces the susceptibility at this WL.	Low

WL8	Leac nan Gàidhseich	Grid Reference: NG 99241 04349
		
Photograph Looking North	Photograph Looking East	
		
Photograph Looking South-east	Photograph Looking South	

WL8	Leac nan Gàidhseich	Grid Reference: NG 99241 04349
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Nature of Change (Construction)	Construction of a part of the Fearnal dam would be seen on the distant skyline to the east above Loch Cuaich. This may be slightly more visible higher on the ridge or with more of the Fearnal and Coire Dubh dam being visible from the ridgeline to the south at Sròn Lice na Fearnal.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Unlikely to be any perceptible change to the perceived naturalness of landcover.	Negligible	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Works would be distant and unlikely to affect this response.	Negligible
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	The dam works would form a new artefact to the east, generally of limited visibility and seen in the context of other features around Loch Cuaich shoreline.	Low	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Unlikely to be any change to this response.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	May slightly increase perception of contemporary land use around the eastern end of the loch but seen in the context of other, closer contemporary land use activities.	Low	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	The construction works seen in the easterly context would affect views along Loch Cuaich but would be relatively distant with arresting qualities remaining present and particularly associated with nearby peaks.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The Fearnal dam may be seen to smooth out a small part of the distant skyline to the east, but the more dominating rugged terrain around the WL would not be affected.	Negligible	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Unlikely to be any change to this response.	Negligible
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	There would be no change to remoteness or accessibility.	Negligible			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Construction)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	Some change to arresting qualities associated with the skyline of Spidean Mialach but generally the mountainous terrain is more influential in the close context and to the north, south and west.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The dam construction works would be seen in the context of the easterly views along Loch Cuaich. This would be seen in the context of other features and contemporary land use around the loch edge, and would reflect the pattern of development on the northern side of the loch. There would be some effect on inspiring qualities but the sense of remoteness would be unlikely to be affected, given the other, closer features in the landscape.	Low

WL8	Leac nan Gàidhseich	Grid Reference: NG 99241 04349
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Nature of Change (Operation)	The Fearna Dam would form a feature on the distant skyline to the east, slightly smoothing out the topography this would not change considerably with more height although from more southern parts of the area around Sròn Lice na Fearna some or all of the Coire Dubh dam would also feature in this context, back-clothed by Spidean Mialach.
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Physical Attributes	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating	Perceptual Responses	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
Perceived Naturalness	Unlikely to be any perceptible change to the perceived naturalness of landcover.	Negligible	Sense of Sanctuary or Solitude	Works would be distant and unlikely to affect this response.	Negligible
Lack of Construction or Other Artefacts	The dam works would form a new artefact to the east, generally of limited visibility and seen in the context of other features around Loch Cuaich shoreline.	Low	Risk, a Sense of Awe or Anxiety	Unlikely to be any change to this response.	Negligible
Evidence of Contemporary Land Uses	Possible distant suggestion of greater contemporary land use around the eastern end of the loch but seen in the context of other, closer contemporary land use activities.	Negligible	Arresting or Inspiring Qualities	Appearance of dams in easterly context would affect views along Loch Cuaich, more so from Sròn Lice na Fearna, but would be relatively distant. Arresting qualities would remain present, more related to nearby peaks.	Low
Rugged or Challenging Terrain	The Fearna dam may be seen to smooth out a small part of the distant skyline to the east, but the more dominating rugged terrain around the WL would not be affected.	Negligible	Fulfilment from Physical Challenge	Unlikely to be any change to this response.	Negligible
Remoteness and Inaccessibility	There would be no change to remoteness or accessibility.	Negligible			

WLQ	Magnitude of Change (Operation)	Rating
High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe – some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some more massive in form	The dams would affect the appearance of Spidean Mialach to the east, but the closer and surrounding mountains infer a greater sense of this WLQ in this area and would be unaffected.	Low
A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers	Not present.	N/A
Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape	The dams within the easterly view along Loch Cuaich would be seen in the context of other features and contemporary land use around the loch edge, and would reflect the pattern of development on the northern side of the loch. There would be some effect on inspiring qualities but the sense of remoteness would be unlikely to be affected, given the other, closer features in the landscape.	Low