

Wylfa Newydd Project

**6.5.19 ES Volume E - Off-Site Power Station
Facilities: AECC, ESL and MEEG App E10-1 -
Published sources of landscape character**

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1 Published sources of landscape character

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Extracts of relevant published sources of landscape character are set out below under the title of the relevant documents, and should be read in conjunction with figure E10-4 (Application Reference Number: 6.5.27).
- 1.1.2 The extracts include descriptions of published Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the study area defined for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), based on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site, where there is potential for landscape effects resulting from intervisibility.
- 1.1.3 Extracts are also included from published *LANDMAP* [RD1] aspect areas within approximately 2km of the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site, as this is the area where theoretical intervisibility is principally concentrated and where there is therefore greater potential for landscape effects.

1.2 National Landscape Character Areas

- 1.2.1 National Landscape Character Areas (NLCA) are defined by NRW. The following documents describe the landscape character within the study area for the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site:
 - National Landscape Character, NLCA01: Anglesey Coast [RD2]; and
 - National Landscape Character, NLCA02: Central Anglesey [RD3].

NLCA01: Anglesey Coast

- 1.2.2 The relevant key characteristics listed below for NLCA01: Anglesey Coast have been extracted from the character profile:
 - **The coastal zone** - of by far the largest island in Wales [Anglesey] (720km²) ...”
 - **Much of the highest land** - on the island falls within the coastal area, including Parys Mountain (147m) ...”
 - **Strong geological orientation** - There is a south west to north east geological orientation, resulting in corrugated topography, which is manifest along the coastline in places as rocky headlands and sandy bays.”
 - **Great variety of coastal types** - The coastline has great variety, from sheer coastal cliffs and dramatic rocky headlands, to small sandy coves and extensive low lying dunes and sandy estuaries.”
 - **Wind exposure but some shelter** - The striking and windswept heathland landscapes of the wild coastline ... together with the barren, mined landscape of Parys Mountain, contrast markedly with the gentler, green, pastoral landscapes inland, away from the immediate coastal edge.”

- “**Pasture** - Soils include deep loams supporting predominantly pastoral land cover with occasional hay meadows, away from the coastline.”
- “**Heather and heath** - a feature of the thin soils in the more elevated areas such as... the coastline near Amlwch.”
- “**Clodd[i]au** - or earth bank field boundaries feature in the north and west with occasional stone walls, whereas hedges are more common in the south and east.”
- “**Prehistoric and funerary sites** - including standing stones ...”
- “**Coastal Settlements** - often relating to former industry, such as the mining town of Amlwch at the foot of Parys Mountain ... Much C20th coastal development relates to tourism and retirement property.”
- “**A number of prominent man-made landmarks** – including ... Parys Mountain (distinctive industrial quarry landscape), Wylfa Nuclear Power Station ...” [RD2]

NLCA02: Central Anglesey

1.2.3 The relevant key characteristics listed below for NLCA02: Central Anglesey have been extracted from the character profile:

- “**The land-locked central part of Anglesey** - part of the largest island in Wales (720km²).”
- “**Rock outcrops and a distinct geological grain** - the gentle topography, low lying and near flat in places, follows a northeast to southwest 'grain' imposed by major faults ... In various places there are many craggy rock outcrops.”
- “**Extensive drumlin fields** - thick layers of glacial boulder clays, especially in northwest Anglesey, result in a classic 'basket of eggs' rolling drumlin landscape.”
- “**Lowland pastures and mixed field patterns** - silty and peat soils underlie lowland pastoral grazing land bounded by a strongly geometric pattern of medium to large scale and, more occasionally, small scale fields.”
- “**Minor rivers and fens** - A number of minor rivers and streams cross the landscape, whose alignment is influenced by the northeast to southwest trend. There are many shallow hollows and fens with wetland features including rush pasture and valley mires...”
- “**Hedgerows and cloddiau** - This is generally a rolling, open landscape with a well-established pattern of field boundaries, predominantly of hedgerows but with cloddiau in some areas.”
- “**Few woodlands** - Woodlands larger than a small copse are an exception, [including] ...estate woodlands at Presaddfed (Bodedern). Except in sheltered areas, individual trees are few.”

- “**Generally rural settlement patterns** - The only urban settlement is the county town of Llangefni, in the centre of the island. Its nucleated historic core contrasts with modern peripheral housing and expanding light industrial and business park developments. There are only a few villages, but numerous scattered hamlets and farms throughout the area...”
- “**Prehistoric and funerary sites** - ritual and funerary monuments including cairns and round barrows, Iron Age hill forts and Early Christian churches, burial grounds and inscribed stones.”
- “**Historic windmill towers** - including some restored examples, form local features.”
- “**Modern wind farms** - generally limited to an area north of Llanddeusant, but are seen in longer distance views from a much wider area.”
- “**Llyn Alaw** - a large reservoir, nearly 3 miles long and a notable visual feature, providing significant over wintering habitat for wildfowl...” [RD3]

1.3 The Isle of Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan Review 2015 – 2020

- 1.3.1 The Isle of Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan Review 2015 – 2020, aims “... *to take account of the natural resources within and outside of its boundaries [of the AONB] and understand how using an ecosystem approach can better manage the natural resources of the AONB.*” (se Executive summary, chapter 1, section 1.2, page 1 [RD4])
- 1.3.2 Chapter 3, section 3.2, (page 6) of [RD4] describes the AONB as a:
- 1.3.3 “... predominantly a coastal designation, covering most of Anglesey’s 201 kilometre coastline but also encompassing Holyhead Mountain and Mynydd Bodafon along with substantial areas of land which form the essential backdrop to the coast. The total coverage of the AONB on Anglesey is approximately 221sq kms (21,500 hectares).
- 1.3.4 The landscape of the AONB reflects the varied underlying geology and is a diverse mixture of marine and terrestrial habitats, including rugged cliffs, heathland, sand dunes, salt marshes and mud flats. Holyhead Mountain, the cliffs of North and South Stack and rocky coves are the dominant features of the island’s northern coastline ...”
- 1.3.5 Section 3.5 (page 6) of [RD4] states:
- 1.3.6 “There are many distinctive features to the unique landscape of the AONB. The coastline is undoubtedly a defining feature; however, the character of the landscape has been influenced by centuries of farming and also traditional industries such as quarrying. Agriculture is the main land use in the AONB, and stone walls, hedgerows and field patterns are an integral part of the landscape.”
- 1.3.7 Section 3.11 (page 7) of [RD4] recognises the focus on Anglesey for energy development including nuclear power and states:

1.3.8 "...The proximity of these industries to the AONB and the need to bring the energy ashore highlights their influence on both the landscape and the seascape of the AONB, and also the pressure from development in close proximity to the countryside and coast."

1.3.9 Table 4 in chapter 4 (Guiding Principles and Forces for Change) (page 13) of [RD4] lists the features and special qualities of the Anglesey AONB.

1.3.10 AONB features listed comprise:

- coastal landscape/seascape features;
- traditional agricultural landscape features; and
- geological and geomorphological features

1.3.11 Special qualities are listed as:

- expansive views/seascapes;
- peace and tranquillity;
- islands around Anglesey;
- broadleaved woodlands;
- lowland coastal heath;
- species rich roadside verges;
- ecologically important coastal and wetland habitats (including rocky shores, ...estuaries, saltmarshes and beaches...);
- built environment including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings;
- archaeology and ancient monuments/historic landscapes, parks and gardens;
- rural agricultural/coastal communities;
- Welsh language;
- soil air and water quality;
- Public Rights of Way network; and
- accessible land and water.

1.3.12 Section 4.2 (page 16) of [RD4] includes the definition of an 'ecosystem approach' from the *Convention on Biological Diversity* [RD5]:

1.3.13 "A strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way."

1.3.14 Furthermore, it is explained that:

1.3.15 "On Anglesey, adopting an ecosystem approach would mean a full recognition of the values the AONB's special qualities offer to people and if maintained and enhanced, to future generations."

1.3.16 Section 4.3 (page 16) of [RD4] states that "The AONB has a relatively open, rolling, undulating landscape."

- 1.3.17 Section 4.4 (page 18) of [RD4] describes AONB seascapes as a “... highly valued part of the Welsh scenery, they can also be some of our last ‘wild’ landscape areas and support a wealth of natural heritage.”
- 1.3.18 Section 4.10 (pages 21 and 22) of [RD4] states that:
- 1.3.19 “It is clear that the AONB faces some major developmental pressures over this plan period and further into the future. By gaining a better understanding of the AONB’s special qualities and features and improving our understanding of the ecosystem approach and its implications, it will be possible to prepare clear policies to help manage these pressures.”
- 1.3.20 Chapter 5, (page 24) of [RD4] provides the vision for the future of the AONB:
- 1.3.21 “The unique landscape/seascape, natural beauty and special qualities of the Isle of Anglesey AONB are conserved and enhanced for the benefit of present and future generations. Communities within the AONB are dynamic and vibrant and can relate to their local environment whilst sustainable activities contribute positively to a healthy rural and coastal economy.”
- 1.3.22 In section 5 (page 25) of [RD4] the vision and strategy for the AONB is categorised in six themes as follows:
 - enhancing countryside and coastal character (CCC);
 - maintaining nature and the environment (NE);
 - supporting opportunities for visiting and enjoying the AONB (VE);
 - maintaining the living and working landscape (LWL);
 - raising awareness and appreciation (AA) and;
 - developing the ecosystem approach (TEA).
- 1.3.23 Section 5.1 of [RD4] specifies policies which seek to fulfil management objectives for enhancing countryside and coastal character, the overall aim of which is to conserve and enhance the *“natural beauty, special qualities and distinctiveness of the landscape of the Isle of Anglesey AONB, including its natural, cultural and historical features ... for the benefit of present and future generations.”*
- 1.3.24 Policies relevant to the assessment of landscape and visual effects in relation to the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site are presented in table 1-1 to table 1-4 below.

Table 1-1 AONB management objective 1: Landscape/seascape policies

Enhancing countryside and coastal character (CCC) Management objective 1: Landscape/seascape (extracts from [RD4]) “The coastal landscape/seascape will be actively conserved through appropriated management”	
Policy code	Policy
CCC1.1	“LANDMAP is used as the process by which the landscape character of the AONB is valued and assessed”
CCC1.2	“The Anglesey Seascapes Character Assessment is used to determine the likely impacts of marine developments on the special qualities and features of the AONB”
CCC1.3	“There is a need to maintain the accessibility and conservation interest of sites of geological and geomorphological importance”
CCC1.4	“Elements of the landscape that have been degraded and lost their character will be restored and enhanced to safeguard the quality of the landscape”

Table 1-2 AONB management objective 2: Historic landscape and culture policies

Enhancing countryside and coastal character (CCC) Management objective 2: Historic landscape and culture (extracts from [RD4]) “Historic, archaeological and cultural sites are important features of the Isle of Anglesey AONB. Strong planning policies will protect such sites from development that degrades the special qualities of the AONB.”	
Policy code	Policy
CCC2.1	“Identify, protect and actively conserve the historic, archaeological and cultural resources of the AONB with relevant agencies”
CCC2.2	“Support the use of traditional skills and practices during restoration of the AONB’s special” qualities”
CCC2.3	“Ensure that high quality, co-ordinated and consistent interpretation material is provided to inform people about the rich history of the AONB”

Table 1-3 AONB management objective 3: Development policies

Enhancing countryside and coastal character (CCC) Management objective 3: Development (extracts from [RD4]) “Planning Policies will ensure that all development within and adjacent to the boundary of the AONB is compatible with the aims and objectives of the designation and that new developments enhance local character.”	
Policy code	Policy
CCC3.1	“Identify, protect and actively conserve the historic, archaeological and cultural resources of the AONB with relevant agencies”
CCC3.2	“All new developments and re-developments within and up to 2km adjacent to the AONB will be expected to adopt the highest standard of design, materials and landscaping in order to enhance the special qualities and features of the AONB. Proposals of an appropriate scale and nature, embodying the principles of sustainable development, will be supported”
CCC3.3	“Ensure that the planning policies reflect the statutory duty of the Council to conserve and enhance the special qualities and features of the AONB”
CCC3.4	“Continue to encourage the under grounding of existing and proposed power and telephone lines”

Table 1-4 AONB management objective 4: Peace and tranquillity

Enhancing countryside and coastal character (CCC) Management objective 4: Peace and tranquillity (extracts from [RD4]) “Unspoilt panoramic views and tranquil atmosphere are safeguarded from improvement that would degrade the special quality of the AONB.”	
Policy code	Policy
CCC4.1	“Work to maintain the solitude and natural beauty of the AONB”
CCC4.2	“Work towards securing Dark Skies status for Anglesey”
CCC4.3	“Ensure noise intrusion into the AONB is within acceptable limits”

1.4 Special Landscape Areas

1.4.1 Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (2011-2026) [RD6] defines six Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) on Anglesey. The closest SLA to the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site is Mynydd Mechell SLA, located approximately 3km to the north-east of the site, which has been scoped out of this assessment.

1.5 Anglesey Landscape Strategy Update 2011

- 1.5.1 At county level there are two Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) identified in the *Anglesey Landscape Strategy Update 2011* [RD7], within the study area for the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site.
- 1.5.2 There is a landscape relationship to the Off-Site Power Station Facilities and related works, with potential for landscape effects for one of the LCAs within the overarching study area. The key characteristics for this LCA - LCA 5 North West Anglesey - are set out below.

LCA 5: North West Anglesey

- 1.5.3 The relevant key characteristics for the LCA 5: North West Anglesey are described as follows:
- 1.5.4 "...It covers the north- west of the island from Amlwch down to the A5/A55 corridor between Valley and Caergeiliog. The key feature of its character is the extensive drumlin field. This has resulted in the classic 'basket of eggs' description for the landscape. The extent of this deposit is important in the Welsh context. The hillocks trend in a south- west to north- east direction and closely abut LCA 4 on the coast. In places they even run right down to the coastal edge... Interspersed with this landform are a number of hard rocky features such as Mynydd y Garn and Mynydd Mechell.
- 1.5.5 The majority of the landscape is characterised by improved grassland, especially in the drumlin field. However, there are a number of marshy grasslands amongst the drumlins as well as small scattered areas of scrub. There are also extensive areas of scattered rocky outcrops ... Here dry ericaceous heath and acid grasslands are found, interspersed with low lying marshy areas...
- 1.5.6 ... Another, more distinctive feature of the landscape is the development of wind farms, particularly to the north of Llyn Alaw. Ironically windmills have long been found on Anglesey and this interrelationship with wind energy continues." [RD7]
- 1.5.7 Key issues relevant to the assessment of landscape effects for the Off-Site Power Station Facilities comprise:

Coastal Landscapes

- 1.5.8 "Abutting LCA 4, any development or management proposals should:
 - Have regard to the AONB Management Plan.." [RD7]
- 1.5.9 "Any proposals for development or landscape management should reflect:
 - The development pattern of the area
 - Seek to use landform, vegetation patterns to mitigate impacts
 - Ensure scale, form and materials respect the local vernacular.
 - Utilise and retain local field boundary patterns – cloddiau, fences, hedgerows..." [RD7]

Energy Landscapes

1.5.10 “The area is characterised by a number of windfarms. In considering any further developments particular emphasis should be given to cumulative effects upon the landscape character.” [RD7]

1.6 LANDMAP, Level 3

1.6.1 *LANDMAP* is a data source for landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape, published by NRW (2011[RD1] and 2013a-d [RD2-5]) (formerly Countryside Council for Wales). A number of aspect layers are categorised, including the *LANDMAP Visual and Sensory Aspect, Level 3* [RD1] which provides the primary appraisal relevant to informing landscape character assessments. However, the other aspects areas provide relevant information about the geology, habitats, historic and cultural influences on the landscape, which also is relevant in relation to landscape characterisation.

1.6.2 Extracts of summary descriptions from the ‘collector surveys’ for the different *LANDMAP* aspect areas, are quoted in table 1-5 below. The summary descriptions for the visual and sensory aspect areas, include all aspect areas located within approximately 2km of the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site, within which theoretical intervisibility is principally concentrated.

Table 1-5 Summary description of LANDMAP Level 3 visual and sensory aspect areas

LANDMAP Level 3 visual and sensory aspect areas	LANDMAP collector survey summary description/extracts [RD1]
North-west Drumlins (encompassing the Off-Site Power Station Facilities site)	“This extensive area, covering most of eastern part of north Anglesey, stretches from Cemaes and Lyn Alaw in the east to the north-west coast and the A55 in the west. The ‘basket of eggs’ glacial landscape of smooth oval hillocks and damp hollows is typically covered with regular medium-sized fields with hedges, mainly pasture for sheep and cattle, with some arable land. There are numerous small villages, hamlets and scattered farms, linked with small roads, giving a settled character to this quiet, unremarkable but pleasant landscape, seen from the busy A55...”

LANDMAP Level 3 visual and sensory aspect areas	LANDMAP collector survey summary description/extracts [RD1]
Drumlins with Windfarms	<p>“Groups of wind turbines dominate the landscape in the north part of Anglesey, south of the A5025 and Amlwch, to Llyn Alaw, and west to around Mynydd Mechell. The basket of eggs glacial landscape of smooth oval hillocks and damp hollows is typically covered with regular large fields with hedges, mainly pasture for sheep and cattle, with some arable land. There are scattered farms, linked with small roads, all within close sight of wind turbines which appear incongruous on this lowland farmland.”</p>
North-west Coast	<p>“From the Alaw Estuary northward to Carmel Point, this length of coast faces west. It consists mainly of sandy bays and coves interspersed with stretches of rocky coast and small headlands, backed by shallow low slopes. Along the northern third, where the land is higher, there are only rocks with steeply rising slopes behind, giving a wild feeling to this part. For much of its length the coastal footpath runs alongside and there are a few access points for bathing. On the whole it is a quiet unspoilt stretch of coastline with fine views west to Holy Island and along the rugged coast itself.”</p>

1.7 References

Table 1-6 Schedule of references

ID	Reference
RD1	Natural Resources Wales (NRW). 2013. <i>LANDMAP. Visual and Sensory dataset</i> . [Online]. [Accessed June 2017]. Available from: http://landmap-maps.naturalresources.wales/
RD2	Natural Resources Wales. 2014a. <i>National Landscape Character, NLCA01: Anglesey Coast</i> . Available by request from NRW, Maes y Ffynnon, Ffordd Penrhos, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2DW, contact: John.briggs@cyfoethnaturiol.cymru.
RD3	Natural Resources Wales. 2014b. <i>National Landscape Character, NLCA02: Central Anglesey</i> . Available by request from NRW, Maes y Ffynnon, Ffordd Penrhos, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2DW, contact: John.briggs@cyfoethnaturiol.cymru
RD4	Isle of Anglesey County Council. 2015. The Isle of Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan Review 2015 – 2020. [Online]. [Accessed: June 2017]. Available from: http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/Journals/w/x/m/Anglesey-AONB-Management-Plan-2015_20.pdf
RD5	United Nations. 1992. Convention on Biological Diversity.
RD6	Isle of Anglesey County Council (IACC) and Gwynedd Council. 2017. <i>Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (2011-2026) Written Statement</i> . 31 July 2017. [Online] [Accessed September 2017]. Available from: http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/Journals/j/v/e/Anglesey-and-Gwynedd-Joint-Local-Development-Plan---Written-Statement.pdf
RD7	Isle of Anglesey County Council and TACP. 2011. <i>Anglesey Landscape Strategy Update</i> (Document No. DC.011). [Online]. [Accessed June 2017]. Available from: https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Environment-and-planning/Planning-policy/Supporting-documents/Angesey-Landscape-Strategy---Update-2011-(DC.011).pdf