Special Landscape Qualities - Guidance on assessing effects

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Background

This guidance sets out how to assess effects on the Special Landscape Qualities (SLQs) of Scotland's National Scenic Areas (NSAs) and National Parks. It has been prepared by NatureScot, the Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA) and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA).

Contents

Scope

1 This guidance applies to **Special Landscape Qualities** (SLQs) identified for National Scenic Areas (NSA) and National Parks in Scotland. These are highly valued areas that represent the country's finest landscapes. The importance of their SLQs is reflected in national planning policy and legislation.

2 An assessment of effects on SLQs is carried out where a proposed development or other land use change (referred to as 'proposal' from now on) is likely to result in significant adverse effects on one or more SLQs within a NSA or National Park. Landscapes will continue to evolve and change needs to be managed carefully to ensure the SLQs are conserved and enhanced so they can be enjoyed by future generations.

3 The scope of the assessment should be discussed and agreed with the relevant decision-making authority and/or consultee. They will ultimately require sufficient information within the SLQ assessment to inform their judgement on whether a proposal would meet or be contrary to relevant policy tests, including those set out at a national level and the National Park Partnership Plans (NPPP). Judgement of whether a proposal meets these policy tests will be made by the decision-maker.

4 All NSAs and National Parks are recognised by their designation as being of high value and all parts contribute to the value of the designation. The susceptibility of the SLQs to different proposals will vary, so the assessment of effects needs to focus on the specific aspects of SLQs which are sensitive to the particular type of change being proposed.

5 In some instances, proposals outside NSAs or National Parks may result in significant effects on their SLQs and these proposals will require a SLQ assessment. The study area for the assessment should not extend beyond the boundary of the designation. The distance of the proposal from the boundary will be a useful consideration, but this should not be used as a proxy for the predicted magnitude of change or significance of effects, as it is the effects on the SLQs and where these qualities are experienced that are important.

6 The detail required for an assessment will differ according to circumstances, including the nature and scale of the proposal. The SLQ assessment should therefore be tailored to reflect the location, scale and type of proposal and the potential significance of effects arising. Consultation with the relevant decision-making authority and/or consultees especially during the early stages of an assessment (at pre-application and scoping) is encouraged. Topics to discuss and agree include whether an assessment is necessary (and, if so, how it relates to other assessment methodologies), scoping of which SLQs are likely to be included in the assessment, definition of the study area, and selection of assessment viewpoints.

7 It is important that the findings of other assessment processes complement and do not duplicate each other (which could lead to a double counting of some effects, see paragraph 14 for more detail). Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) differs from a SLQ assessment as it assesses the effects on

landscape character and visual amenity. If a proposal requires a LVIA, the SLQ assessment can be an additional section within the LVIA. If there is no need for a LVIA, a SLQ assessment will be a stand-alone assessment.

8 This guidance has been prepared to assist people in three ways:

- by describing the sequence of steps to follow in a SLQ assessment
- by demonstrating how the SLQs can be used to influence the siting and design of a proposal
- by explaining why and how this information is required to inform judgements on effects in relation to planning and land use policies.

The steps which need to be taken to assess the effects of a proposal on the Special Landscape Qualities are set out in this guidance, with a checklist provided in **Annex 1**.

Special Landscape Qualities (SLQs)

9 SLQs are defined as the characteristics that make a designated landscape special in terms of landscape and scenery, both individually or combined. They are qualities that are perceived and experienced by people, affecting the sense of place.

10 Reports detailing the SLQs for each of the NSAs and both the Cairngorms and the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Parks were published in 2010 and are available on **NatureScots website**. The reports vary in their detail, and some describe SLQs generically across the area while others distinguish SLQs geographically. All the SLQs identified and described within the reports are important.

11 NSAs that lie wholly within National Parks are subsumed within them. Therefore in National Parks, SLQ assessments will only use the National Park SLQ descriptions.

Using this guidance

12 This technical guidance describes the approach to take when assessing the effects of a proposal on the SLQs of a NSA or National Park.

13 The SLQ assessment will usually be carried out by a Chartered Landscape Architect, although other suitably qualified and experienced landscape, planning or other environmental professional(s) may be able to undertake the process.

14 A SLQ assessment is likely to draw on baseline information that forms part of a landscape/ seascape character assessment, LVIA or Wild Land Area (WLA) descriptions but it should not duplicate information within any of these. This is because it specifically concerns the SLQs of a NSA or National Park, not the wider range of landscape and visual sensitivities that may be affected by a proposal.

Assessment process

15 The following section sets out the four steps of the assessment process. A Checklist covering these steps is included as **Annex 1** to this guidance, including markers for what needs to be produced by the end of each step. These four steps are:

Step 1 – Review and describe the proposal
Step 2 – Identify the SLQs that may be affected by the proposal
Step 3 – Assessment of effects on SLQs and design objectives
Step 4 – Summary of significant effects on SLQs

16 The assessment should:

- focus on likely significant effects on relevant SLQs
- be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal
- provide a clear explanation of the reasoning underpinning judgements so they can be understood

Step 1 - Review and describe the proposal

17 The aim in this step is to gain a full understanding of the nature of the proposal and draw out relevant information to inform the SLQ assessment. Where possible, direct reference should be made to the project description within the application, Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), LVIA or related documents to avoid duplication of material. The drawing-out and summarising of just the key components relevant to potential effects on the SLQs will help to focus the assessment.

18 Aspects to consider include the design of all the components of the proposal (including associated elements such as access routes, borrow pits, lighting, drainage and planting) as well as its location and siting. This can include its scale and extent, colours, and materials. Referring to relevant supporting material, e.g. design statement and/or visualisations and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) maps will enable the full effects on the SLQs to be assessed in **Step 3**, as well as the scope for design, mitigation and enhancement options.

Step 2 - Identify the SLQs that may be affected by the proposal

19 This stage establishes the scope of the assessment including the extent of the study area and the specific SLQs likely to be sensitive to the proposal.

Step 2a: Refer to relevant information

20 Reference should be made to relevant information which may underpin the SLQs including:

- the **SLQ descriptions**
- the landscape and coastal characteristics (informed by **Scottish Landscape Character Assessment** and **Coastal Character Assessment**, **National Park**

landscape character areas or seascape character assessments where available) and visual amenity

- wildness and wild land attributes and qualities, informed by **wildness mapping and WLA descriptions** where available
- sites of **historic significance** in terms of how they contribute to SLQs

Step 2b: Site visit and identify key SLQs

21 SLQs should be considered in relation to the site location and the proposal, and informed by site visits, map data and discussion with consultees as appropriate. While some of the information required can be obtained from a desk study review of existing information, site visits are essential to provide both a robust understanding of the nature and extent of relevant SLQs and assess of predicted effects on these. SLQs also need to be assessed on site to fully understand how individual or groups of SLQs come together and are expressed and experienced (including while moving through the landscape along distinct routes and from key locations).

22 Identification of SLQs will include review of the key landscape character, coastal characteristics, visual amenity and wildness attributes and responses. Although some of this information may be available in published reports, additional information is likely to need to be gathered through site assessment to provide a full understanding of the SLQs most relevant to the proposal. It is emphasised that, when referring to landscape character, it is the key landscape characteristics that need to be drawn out in relation to SLQs, not individual landscape character types or areas (which would be assessed as part of a LVIA).

23 Assessment points which represent the range of locations from where the relevant SLQs are experienced should be identified and selected. Locations could include, for example: hill tops and landmarks, along access routes, glens or the coast, or across a river or watershed. Some LVIA representative viewpoints may be suitable to double-up for SLQ assessment, but they will not necessarily represent the best locations to assess SLQs (for example, because of being selected for their extent of visibility rather than experience of SLQs). These assessment points may require visualisations (such as wirelines and photomontages) to inform the assessment.

Step 2c: Identify the study area

24 The study area should relate to the location and type of the proposal and an initial prediction of likely significant effects. It may be a part or the whole of the NSA or National Park, but won't extend beyond the designation boundary. Fieldwork should be used to define the study area and then this should be mapped to show its boundary, location of all elements of the proposal and the assessment points. The study area should be agreed with the relevant decision-making authority and/or consultee as it may be different to the study area for a LVIA for the same proposal. This is because the SLQ assessment relates specifically to the SLQs and how these are experienced, and not the wider landscape characteristics or visual amenity.

Step 2d: Assess the sensitivity of the key SLQs to the proposal

25 Assessing the sensitivity of the SLQs is required to understand how they may be affected by the specific nature and components of the proposal. The basis for these judgements must be clear and linked back to evidence developed during Step 2. Assigning simple levels of sensitivity such as low, medium or high will be useful.

26 SLQs can be considered individually or grouped. Where the SLQs interact with each other, contributing to the experience of these within the study area, they are best assessed and reported together as a group. Some SLQs may have a definite physical location, such as a 'named' view or a settlement, whereas others incorporate greater perceptual responses, including sense of history or place. Other SLQs recur and are experienced together, such as mature pine woods within an incised glen. Another example of a SLQ grouping would be an SLQ which recognises mature specimen trees contributing to wider diversity and the rich mosaic of a farmland SLQ along a strath. A brief justification for why SLQs are grouped should be given. It may be useful to agree these groupings with the relevant decision-making authority and/or consultee during the pre-application process.

27 At the end of Step 2 only those SLQs which are considered to be sensitive to the proposal and are likely to be significantly affected by it are taken forward to the next stage of assessment (**Step 3**). This is so the scope of the assessment is proportionate and focuses on what is most important.

Step 2e: Consult relevant organisations

28 It will be useful at this point to share the findings of Step 2 with the relevant decision-making authority and/or consultees.

Step 3 - Assessment of effects on SLQs and design objectives

29 The assessment steps suggest a linear sequence, but the process of assessment is iterative. It is expected that the assessor will move back and forth through the steps, considering design alternatives, potential effects, mitigation to reduce effects, and so on until a solution is found which maximises positive effects and minimises adverse effects on the SLQs.

Step 3a: Design objectives in direct response to SLQs

30 SLQ design objectives should be developed which directly respond to and where possible enhance the SLQs, to build on but not duplicate those identified for the project as a whole. These objectives will provide the basis for proposals to maximise positive effects on SLQs and minimise negative effects within the constraints of the proposal. There can be multiple potential design options for any specific proposal, therefore establishing clear design and enhancement objectives provides the basis on which options can be reviewed methodically. The recording of this process also helps people to understand the approach and reasoning for the final design proposal, including the relative balance of SLQ design and enhancement objectives together with other project objectives. Some

examples of design objectives developed in direct response to SLQs are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Examples of design objectives in direct response to SLQs	
SLQ	**Example design objective**
Views along distinct glens, their landscape pattern emphasised, and space contained by simple backdrop of adjacent hills	The proposal should be within either the glens or backdrop hills but should avoid spreading across both and thus eroding the distinction between these
Enclosure, intricacy, diversity and distinct pattern of light within native woodland	Ensure design (extent, density and species) and tailored management of new woodland reflects SLQ of existing woodland even if slightly different in some aspects, eg species
The spatial containment of local hills and / or distinctive local buildings create 'gateway' features	The proposal should avoid obscuring or distracting from the gateway features or its scale seeming to diminish the focal importance of this / these
Successive layers of landform horizons seen receding over far distances	The proposal should not interrupt views over the successive horizons, nor seem to diminish the perceived extent of the landscape by its position or scale in relation to the visible layers
Dark, rural skies	Lighting should be designed to avoid illumination of dark skies or the creation of point light features that are incongruous or distract from the experience of dark skies
Sequence of SLQs experienced through journeys, e.g. from lowlands to highlands, from developed coast to undeveloped coast, and between settlements and open countryside	The proposal should reflect distinction of SLQs when travelling through landscape, eg avoiding introduction of unifying feature or characteristic such as roadside development, consistent land cover or repetition that has collective effects such as houses or wind farms
Wildness, displaying an absence of human artefacts	Reduce the influence of development on the wildness attributes experienced, eg siting the structure closer to settled elements and at lower elevation, also reducing prominence.
Historic buildings create prominent landmarks and convey sense of history and place	The proposal should avoid seeming to intrude upon the space around the historic building (visually, spatially and by disturbance) and should complement the scale and materials

Step 3b: Assessment of effects on SLQs

31 This step requires assessment of the predicted effects of all the key components of the proposal (including embedded primary (embedded) mitigation, and cumulative effects). This includes an assessment of the magnitude of change, including the scale and extent of effects, their reversibility, and their duration. Overly quantitative or formulaic approaches are to be avoided because the intention is that SLQ assessment takes a more descriptive, qualitative approach that focuses on SLQs and their experience. Nonetheless, levels of magnitude may be useful, e.g. low, medium and high if these are clearly defined.

32 Both landscape character and visual amenity influence SLQs. This means that the assessment needs to consider both these aspects, but these do not need be assessed and reported separately. The focus and value of the SLQ assessment is to draw out how landscape and visual aspects combine as SLQs, and how these are experienced and valued by people in a NSA or National Park.

33 ZTVs, visualisations, wirelines and/ or photomontages may inform the assessment of effects on SLQs. 'Visibility' refers to something being seen, but being visible doesn't necessarily mean that a landscape change will have a notable effect on SLQs as it depends on what can be seen and how this relates to its context and how it is viewed.

34 When assessing effects on SLQs, it is useful to distinguish between the following:

- Visibility of the proposal.
- Night time and seasonal effects.
- How the proposal would be seen in relation to the SLQs and affect them. For example, in some cases, a proposal may interrupt views across open moorlands or mountains or introduce a distraction to a distinct local landmark whereas, in other cases, a proposal may be prominent as an isolated feature but not affect views to hill horizons or perception of tranquillity.
- Effects of the proposal which would alter the balance of the SLQs experienced (ie they don't just affect the views of people but change these in a way that would be significant). For example, an extensive new woodland proposed to cover the glen floor, glen sides and open hill summits may change existing SLQs if derived from the combination of a rich mosaic of woodland on the glen sides, open farmed glen floor and open hill summits.
- Potential cumulative effects with other proposals for example contributing to incremental effects on SLQs.

35 This distinction highlights the importance of carefully selecting assessment points to gather a representative range of potential effects on SLQs.

36 Assessing the combination of individual effects on different SLQs can be challenging. Professional judgement is required to consider the potential range of influences on SLQs, for example balancing those that are numerous or affect extensive areas with those that occur singly or affect small areas. The key requirement is to assess the effects, document these in a methodical and

transparent manner, and then assess those that are significant. This highlights that simple conclusions on significance cannot be drawn directly from the numbers, proportions, or area of SLQs affected by a proposal, nor maps such as ZTVs just overlain on NSA or National Park maps.

Step 3c: Further mitigation, design amendment and final assessment of residual effects

37 When potential significant effects on SLQs are identified, further mitigation measures (known as secondary measures) should be considered. While it is recognised that scope for further mitigation may vary with the scale of development, the following questions should frame this consideration:

- Is there potential for further mitigation to avoid or reduce predicted adverse significant effects on the SLQ(s) and their experience (as part of the iterative process) for example, through re-siting, design modifications or management?
- What are realistic timescales for mitigation to become effective in reducing effects on SLQ(s) for example the length of time for native woodland to achieve maturity and restoration of land cover disturbance?
- What is the certainty that mitigation will become effective?
- Has the proposal met the design objective and is there potential for enhancement that benefits SLQs?

38 After all mitigation and enhancement measures have been incorporated, a final assessment of residual effects on SLQs is required (recognising the high value of NSAs and National Parks) based on:

- The sensitivity of the SLQ(s)
- The magnitude of effects
- Predicted residual effects on the SLQ(s)

39 Having considered the factors described above, an assessment of overall significance of residual effects on the SLQs or group(s) of SLQs can be made. For transparency, all effects need to be defined with direct reference to the SLQs, and the consequences on these such as their enhancement, removal, erosion, change or retention.

Step 4 - Summary of significant effects on SLQs

40 This step draws together all the strands of the SLQ assessment to present the predicted significant residual effects on individual and grouped SLQs. This will provide evidence to inform judgements made by decision-makers. This step needs not be lengthy and should not repeat information provided elsewhere but should cover the following issues as relevant:

- The relevant SLQs, i.e. those for which likely significant effects are predicted, both individual and grouped.

- The nature and magnitude of effects on relevant SLQs.
- The location, extent and distribution of effects on the SLQs, for example whether these are localised, extensive, isolated or repeated and how these are encountered. This should also consider different effects during day and night and the seasons. (Assessing extent and distribution of effects is not simply about the percentage of the study area affected but the influence of the extent and distribution of effects on how the SLQs within the study area are experienced.)
- The nature and pattern of effects on the SLQs in relation to both the extent of the SLQ and the wider NSA or National Park.
- An indication of the range of people who will experience the effects on the SLQs.
- How the final proposal reduces adverse effects on the SLQs through design and mitigation or enhancement measures. Where relevant, how it meets the design objectives.
- Potential cumulative effects with other proposals over time, for example contributing to incremental effects on SLQs.

41 Following completion of the assessment of effects on SLQs, the findings will inform the advice of those appraising a proposal such as a Planning Authority, National Park Authority (NPA) and/ or NatureScot. This will also inform their judgement on whether a proposal would meet or be contrary to relevant policy tests.

42 The Checklist provided in **Annex 1** to this guidance should be used to ensure all the steps of the assessment have been followed and sufficient information is provided.

Annex 1 - Checklist for assessment of effects on Special Landscape Qualities (SLQs)

This Checklist includes the steps which need to be taken to assess the effects of a proposal on Special Landscape Qualities (SLQ). Refer to the main guidance, including appendices for more detailed information.

Step 1	Review and describe the proposal
✓	Review and describe the proposal (including associated elements such as access tracks, borrow pits, lighting, drainage and planting), focusing on aspects relevant to potential effects on the SLQs.
✓	Refer to relevant supporting material, e.g. design statement, Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment/Appraisal (LVIA/LVA) and/or visualisations and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) maps.
By the end of Step 1 you should have: • A summary of the proposal that focuses on aspects relevant to the SLQs	

Step 2	Identify the SLQs that may be affected by the proposal
Step 2a	Refer to relevant information
✓	Refer to the SLQ report for the National Scenic Area or National Park and the SLQ descriptions (plus SLQ maps if available).
✓	Refer to other landscape material which may provide more information or context for the SLQs. This may include: • Landscape Character Assessment • Coastal Character Assessment • Wild Land Area description • Sites of historic significance descriptions
Step 2b	Site visit and identify key SLQs
✓	Identify on site the likely key SLQs that are relevant to and might be affected by the proposal.
✓	Consider how the individual key SLQs come together and are experienced by people.
✓	Consider how the SLQs are experienced from different parts of the NSA/ National Park, including whilst moving through the area and from key locations (for example arrival, exit or crossing points, hill tops, or public attractions).

✓	Identify assessment points/routes for assessing potential effects on the key SLQs.
✓	Consider from where the proposal would be visible in relation to the SLQs identified above.
Step 2c	Identify the study area
✓	Identify the area over which the proposal is likely to have effects on the key SLQs.
✓	Produce a map of the study area showing its boundary, location of all elements of the proposal and the assessment points.
Step 2d	Assess the sensitivity of the key SLQs to the proposal
✓	Assess the sensitivity of the key SLQs identified (step 2b) to the proposal within the study area (step 2c).
✓	Consider whether SLQs may be grouped based on being experienced together and having similar sensitivity to the proposal. If SLQ are grouped, explain the reasons behind each of these groups.
Step 2e	Consult relevant organisations
✓	Discuss and agree key SLQs and proposed study area with relevant decision-making authority and/or consultees.
By the end of Step 2 you should have: • A summary of the key SLQs, any groupings of these and their sensitivity • A map of the study area showing its boundary, location of all elements of the proposal and assessment points • Summary of decision-maker and/ or consultees' responses and how these have/ will be considered and addressed	

Step 3	**Assessment of effects on SLQs and design objectives**
Step 3a	Design objectives in direct response to SLQs
✓	Identify design objectives in direct response to the key SLQs identified in Step 2 and the proposal (examples in Table 1 of the main guidance document).
✓	Consider how the proposed design may conserve and enhance the SLQs.

Step 3b	Assessment of effects on SLQs
✓	Assess the effects of all elements of the proposal on the key SLQs (including cumulative effects and primary (embedded) mitigation).
✓	Assess the significance of these effects (assigning defined levels if useful).
Step 3c	Further mitigation, design amendment and final assessment of residual effects
✓	Identify if any further mitigation/ enhancement measures could be implemented to avoid, minimise and/or compensate for any predicted significant effects on key SLQs. Make changes to the design of the proposal as a consequence.
✓	Assess the significance of residual effects of the proposal on the key SLQs after all mitigation has been incorporated
By the end of Step 3 you should have: • Identified design objectives in relation to relevant SLQs • Assessed effects and mitigation measures to reduce predicted significant effects • Assessed residual significant effects on key SLQs within the study area and assessed how the proposal will conserve and enhance the SLQs	

Step 4	**Summary of significant effects on SLQs**
✓	Based on the analysis in Steps 2-3, draw out the type, location, extent, pattern, duration, permanence and level of significant effects on the key SLQs (individual and grouped) in relation to the extent of the SLQs and the study area.
By the end of Step 4 you should have: • A summary of significant effects on key SLQs within the study area	

Glossary

The following glossary describes key terms adopted by this guidance. Where possible, these have been reproduced from the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) produced by the Landscape Institute and IEMA (3rd edition, 2013) or other publications, as noted by an asterisk and referenced at the end.

Term	Description
Baseline	The environmental conditions against which any future changes can be measured or predicted and assessed.*1
Characteristics	Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a contribution to distinctive landscape character.*1
Development	Any proposal that results in a change to the landscape and/or visual environment.*1
Effect	The change resulting from an impact (within LVIA).*1
Impact	The action being taken (within LVIA).*1
Landscape	An area, as perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.*2
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)	A tool used to identify and assess the likely significance of the effects of change resulting from development both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.*1
Landscape character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another (rather than better or worse).*1
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)	The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape, and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment.*1
Landscape Character Types (LCT)	These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of characteristics, including those that are perceptual.*1

Landscape effect	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right*1
Landscape value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.*1
Magnitude (of effect)	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration.*1
Mitigation	Measures which are proposed to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects (to avoid, reduce or if possible remedy identified effects). Depending on when these are incorporated these can be known as primary (embedded) or secondary mitigation. Primary measures are 'developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded into the project design', whereas secondary measures are 'designed to address any residual adverse effects remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme'.*1
Perception	Combines the sensory (that we receive through our senses) with the cognitive (our knowledge and understanding gained from many sources and experiences).*1
Primary mitigation	Following this kind of mitigation is distinguished as primary measures: 'developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded into the project design'.*1
Secondary mitigation	Designed to address any residual adverse effects remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme or proposal.*1
Sensitivity (of landscape or visual resource)	A term applied to specific receptors, combing judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.*1
Significance (of effect)	A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic.*1
Special landscape	Special landscape qualities are defined as the characteristics that individually, or combined, make a designated landscape special in terms of landscape and

qualities and special qualities	scenery.*5 References have been made in different guidance and policy documents to ‘special qualities’ or ‘special landscape qualities’ but, for the purpose of this guidance, these are taken to mean the same.
Susceptibility	The ability of a defined landscape, or visual receptor, or special landscape quality to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.*1
Value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons. Nationally valued landscapes are recognised by the designations of National Parks and National Scenic Areas, which have a formal statutory basis.*1
Viewpoint	Viewpoints refer to specific places from which a view is gained. Representative viewpoints are identified during LVIA to represent the views of visual receptors for which baseline conditions and predicted effects of a proposal are assessed. An assessment of effects on SLQs may be informed by assessment from LVIA representative viewpoints but it will also be informed by assessment from other ‘vantage points’ which act as sample points for assessment of effects on specific SLQs or combinations of SLQs.
Visibility	This refers to an ability to see or for something to be seen. The nature of visibility refers to what can be seen, whilst the extent of visibility refers to from where something can be seen. Importantly, although visibility influences visual effects, there is not a direct correlation between these.
Visual amenity	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.*1
Visual effect	Effect on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.*1
Visualisation	An image such as a computer simulation, photomontage, sketch or drawing that illustrates the appearance of an element or composition.
Wild Land Area	Extensive areas where the quality of wildness (see below) is best expressed. Uninhabited and often relatively

	inaccessible countryside where the influence of human activity on the character and quality of the environment has been minimal.
Wild Land Assessment	Assessment process following guidance published by NatureScot which assess the effects of a proposed development or landscape change on the physical attributes and perceptual responses which contribute to the qualities of Wild Land Areas.
Wildness	Experienced as a continuum, by people resulting from the presence of the physical attributes of: perception of naturalness, a lack of modern artefacts little evidence of contemporary land use, a rugged or physically challenging landform, and remoteness and/or inaccessibility. These result in perceptions of a sense of sanctuary or solitude, risk, or a sense of awe or anxiety, arresting and inspiring qualities, and fulfilment from physical challenge.*4
Wireline/ wireline diagram	A computer-generated visualisation which represents the view from a specific place of the landform, based on a Digital Terrain Model. This is typically illustrated as a line drawing (sometimes forming a framework). It may also show other landscape elements in defined locations and to a defined scale and form. Wireline diagrams are often used as the foundation for a rendered photomontage.
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)	A map (usually produced digitally) showing areas of land from where a development is or would be theoretically visible.

*1Taken from Landscape Institute and IEMA (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*. 3rd ed. Abingdon, Routledge.

*2 Taken from Council of Europe, 2000 *European Landscape Convention.* European Treaty Series No. 176. Florence, Council of Europe.

*3 Taken from SNH (2001) *Landscape Policy Framework: Policy Statement No 05/01*. Redgorton, Scottish Natural Heritage.

*4 Taken from SNH (2002) *Wildness in Scotland's Countryside: A Policy Statement.* Redgorton, Scottish Natural Heritage.

*5 Taken from SNH (2008) *Guidance for identifying the special qualities of*

Scotland's National Scenic Areas. Redgorton, Scottish Natural Heritage.