

# Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route

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## Part D: Fastlink

### Appendix A41.1 Landscape Area Descriptions, Sensitivity, Magnitude of Change and Impact Significance

## 1 Landscape Area Descriptions, Sensitivity, Magnitude of Change and Impact Significance

### 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This appendix sets out the baseline landscape character using Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA) to describe the Fastlink Study Area. For each LLCA the description includes location, topography, drainage, landuse, settlement, views, key characteristics, positive and negative attributes, designations, condition and scenic quality. Where an LLCA will be directly affected by the Fastlink proposals there is a statement of the landscape and visual aims with regard to mitigating the proposals.
- 1.1.2 The location of the Local Landscape Character Areas and landscape designations are shown on Figures 41.2a-b.
- 1.1.3 Photographs illustrating the characteristics of each Local Landscape Character Area are shown on Figures 41.4a-g.
- 1.1.4 In Table 41.1.15 the main elements of each LLCA, both directly and indirectly affected, are described and a judgement made of the value and susceptibility. The sensitivity of each element is then evaluated.
- 1.1.5 Both Landscape sensitivity and the magnitude of change are combined in Table A41.1.16. The framework given in Chapter 41 (Landscape), Table 41.4 was then used to help determine impact significance, taking into account mitigation proposals, for winter year of opening and in the summer after fifteen years.

### 1.2 Baseline Conditions

- 1.2.1 The LLCAs within the Fastlink Study Area are listed and described below in order of character type.

#### Hill Landscape Character Type

##### *Curlethney (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.2 The area is located to northwest of Stonehaven across the high ridgeline of upland moors formed by the foothills of the Grampian Mountains.
- 1.2.3 The hills within the Curlethney character area are higher than the topography of the neighbouring areas, with the majority of the summits over 200mAOD. The ridge rises as it runs to the northwest, with the highest peaks at Meikle Carewe Hill (267mAOD) and Bawdy Craig (268mAOD). The slopes of the hills are relatively steep, particularly on the southern and western slopes of Campstone Hill and the valley from Meikle Carewe Hill towards the Small Burn. Numerous burns run down the hillsides and the poor drainage of the moorland that covers much of the hillside has led to the formation of a marshy basin (the Moss of Blackpots) between two of the hills.

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- 1.2.4 The exposed upland moors of the area contrast with the surrounding open or wooded farmland. Much of the higher ground of the area is covered in heath and rough grassland, while the lower slopes and valleys tend to be open fields. The fields tend to be regular shapes running down the slopes of the hillside, with boundaries generally marked by drystone walls and mature hedgerows. On the southern side of the area, blocks of plantation and shelterbelt woodland are established in many of the valleys around the burns that flow from the moorland. The northwest corner of the area is covered by the coniferous plantation woodland of Bruntyairds and Strathgyle Woods, which are part of the larger Durris Forest.
- 1.2.5 There is very little settlement within the area, with a few isolated properties and farms on the lower slopes and in the valleys. Scheduled Ancient Monuments portray historical settlement in several places, with the remains of a field system and ring cairns on Campstone and White Hills and evidence of Roman camps on Garrison Hill. Union Cottage and Cowton Bridge on the western side of the area are both listed buildings.
- 1.2.6 The main road through the character area is the A957 from Stonehaven to the River Dee, with several other minor road and tracks providing access to the scattered properties. A line of electricity pylons crosses the south eastern corner of this LCA and several OHTL traverse the hillsides to most properties.
- 1.2.7 The moorland area is wild, open and exposed, while the fields on the lower slopes are smaller in scale, well managed and more sheltered from the woodland areas. There are open views in most directions, particularly across the low-lying farmland to the north and west and the moorland hills provide a backdrop to many views from the surrounding areas.

**Table 41.1.1 - Landscape Character Summary for Curlethney**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Upland moor, which is wild, open and exposed forming high ridgeline with valleys. Dense forestry to north. Blocks of plantation and shelterbelt woodland in many of the valleys. Well-managed, sheltered farmland on lower slopes and valleys with drystone wall field boundaries. Scattered farm settlements.
Positive Character Attributes	Mature woodland areas and shelterbelts. Dominant ridgeline provides backdrop to views. Wild, unspoilt moorland. Rolling farmland in good condition.
Negative Character Attributes	None
Landscape Designations	None
Landscape Condition	The farmland on the lower slopes is generally in good condition, with well maintained boundary walls in many places. Limited access conserves the wild, unspoilt moorland.
Scenic Quality	The high ground allows for open views in most directions over the surrounding areas, with views to the north limited by the dense woodland of Durris Forest. Within the valleys and across the low-lying farmland the scenic and intimate views are contained by mature woodland and surrounding landform.  The ridgeline of moor-covered hills provides a backdrop to many views westwards from the surrounding areas.

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##### *Stranog Hill (Directly Affected)*

- 1.2.8 This LCA is an area of higher ground located approximately 4km south of the River Dee and covers a curving ridgeline of nine hills and the rolling ground between them.
- 1.2.9 Seven of the hills are clustered together to form a prominent, undulating ridge above the relatively flat land surrounding Red Moss and the farmland around Blaikiwell farm. The different hills feature as high points on the ridge rather than individual hills. The highest hills of the ridge, Berry Top (approximately 170mAOD) and Stranog Hill (164mAOD), have steep north-facing slopes, with gentler south-facing slopes running into the back of the ridge. The five unnamed hills on the ridge are smaller and less prominent, while the two remaining hills at either end of the main ridge are prominent features in the landscape.
- 1.2.10 The unnamed hill at the southern end of the ridge, upon which the settlement of Cookney is built, has a regular elongated shape with steep slopes on its northern and southern slopes and is approximately 160mAOD. This landform contrasts sharply with the flat ground of the adjacent Red Moss. At the northeastern end of the ridge is the Hill of Auchlea, which has an irregular form with a small, elongated summit at 153mAOD. While it is one of the smaller hills in the ridgeline, it remains a visually prominent landmark and is discernable as an individual hill. The ridge offers extensive views over the relatively flat surrounding land towards the Dee Valley to the north and the North Sea to the east.
- 1.2.11 The land across the LCA is generally open farmland, divided into regularly shaped fields of small to medium size, arranged around the hillside and the lower eastern slopes of the ridge. The land is generally used for rough grazing, with field boundaries defined by post and wire fencing, hedgerows and drystone walls, many of which have been lost, reflecting the degraded condition of the adjacent land. Vegetation generally consists of small stands and shelterbelts of mature coniferous and broadleaf trees, particularly across the Hill of Auchlea and the unnamed hill to the south of Berry Top. There is also a belt of mature mixed woodland that extends out from the Birch woodland covering Red Moss across the lower slopes of the ridge around West Stoneyhill. The woodland stands provide visual enclosure and shelter locally to some of the scattered properties, but their impact is limited, with the majority of the area remaining open and exposed in nature.
- 1.2.12 The small community of Cookney sits on the prominent hill at the southern tip of the LCA, with a small parish church, which is a category C(S) listed building, serving the surrounding farms and dwellings. Further historic features in the area include two SAMs at East Crossley (the remains of a field system, houses and a cairn) and Craigentath (site of a field system and houses) and the category C(S) listed Boswell's Monument at the top of the Hill of Auchlea. The site of a former quarry in the hollow between Berry Top and Stranog Hill has been allowed to fill to form a small fishing pond with open views across low-lying farmland to the north.
- 1.2.13 With the exception of Cookney, settlement is generally limited to isolated farms and dwellings accessed by a network of minor roads. A line of pylons crosses the lower slopes of the Cookney hill and the back of the ridge, continuing through the valley between the main ridge and the Hill of Auchlea. In the northeastern corner of the character area, a cluster of telegraph poles for a telephone maintenance training facility forms a prominent landmark, but the general absence of significant development ensures that, overall, the area remains remote and peaceful.

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**Table 41.1.2 - Landscape Character Summary for Stranog Hill**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Nine hill summits, seven forming a prominent ridgeline. Small stands of mature broadleaf and coniferous woodland. Rough pasture across gentle slopes with occasional steep slopes. Scattered farms and dwellings across area with a small cluster of properties at Cookney.
Positive Character Attributes	Hills provide prominent landmarks within the surrounding area. Extensive views to the Dee Valley and North Sea from the ridgeline.
Negative Character Attributes	Power lines across the back of the ridgeline. Many stone wall field boundaries have been lost.
Landscape Designations	None
Landscape Condition	Coniferous and broadleaf shelterbelts are generally in good condition. Loss of drystone walls on many field boundaries reflects degraded condition of some agricultural land.
Scenic Quality	Many open views across surrounding low lying land towards the Dee Valley and the North Sea to the north and east. The high ground of the ridgeline provides a contrasting backdrop to views from the west across the relatively flat farmland and Red Moss.

#### *Craigingles (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.14 This LCA is located to the south of the Dee Valley, the B9077 and opposite the settlement of Milltimber.
- 1.2.15 Forming part of the southern ridge of the Dee Valley, the area features three summits (137m, 139m and 159mAOD) divided by an unnamed valley running northwest towards the River Dee. The gentle slopes in the south rise to 104mAOD and form a boundary with the rolling upland plateau where several rocky outcrops occur. The Blaikiewell Burn defines the western edge of the character area.
- 1.2.16 The dominant landcover for the area is mixed-age woodland, which occurs in two distinct stands and is generally well-managed. Craigingles Wood is a large coniferous plantation in the north east and Cleanhill Wood is an area of mixed woodland which extends to Hill of Blairs in the south. The northern edges of both woodlands converge north of Kingcausie House before becoming fragmented on lower slopes as they merge with the agricultural landscape of the lower valley where individual fields occur in 'pockets' surrounded by woodland. Drystone walls feature as field and access road boundaries, although circulation within the wooded areas is limited to a network of tracks.
- 1.2.17 The small settlement of Craigend in the south of the character area is located on a local road and comprises several dwellings and a school. Elsewhere, settlement is sparse and comprises Kingcausie House, which overlooks the River Dee, scattered dwellings generally around the edge of the character area and Story Book Glen, a theme park on the western boundary. Local roads form the southern boundary of this LCA and the busy B9077 runs east to west along the northern boundary, parallel with the River Dee.
- 1.2.18 The area is generally self-contained and enclosed by woodland with the only notable outward views being the Kingcausie Farm vista across the Dee Valley.

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**Table 41.1.3 - Landscape Character Summary for Craigingles**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Mature, dense woodland; Scattered settlement; Fields occurring in 'pockets' surrounded by trees; Drystone walls; and Seclusion.
Positive Character Attributes	Secluded and enclosed wooded character with sparse settlement; and Well-managed, mixed-age woodland.
Negative Character Attributes	Dark and drab areas close to and within coniferous woodlands.
Landscape Designations	'Green Belt' (The Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2002); and 'Area of Landscape Significance' (The Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2002) (Not directly affected by Fastlink.)
Landscape Condition	The woodland is generally well managed.
Scenic Quality	A densely wooded hill landscape with limited views to the surrounding area and a notable view from Kingcausie Farm across the Dee Valley.

#### Open Farmland Character Type

##### *Megray (Directly Affected)*

- 1.2.19 This LCA is located immediately to the north of the settlement of Stonehaven and the A90(T) route.
- 1.2.20 This area consists of two coastal hills overlooking the harbour area of Stonehaven, divided by a shallow valley. The eastern hill, the Hill of Megray (approximately 123mAOD) is a regular almost triangular shape with relatively steep slopes on the southern and western faces and more gentle slopes to the north. The unnamed hill to the west (approximately 121mAOD) is more rounded in shape, with steeper slopes on the southern and western sides. The northern slopes merge with the ridgeline that crosses the edge of the Curlethney moorland. The Megray Burn flows through the valley between the hills, defining several field boundaries on the hillside.
- 1.2.21 The primary land use in the character area is agriculture, with the hillside divided by relatively large, regular fields, which appear to be fertile and productive and are used for arable land or improved pasture. Field boundaries are marked by post and wire fences with the occasional remains of hedgerows. Several of the fields on the unnamed western hill occur within the former Ury House estate, where a stone wall provides the boundary beside the B979 road. A belt of broadleaf woodland provides screening and strengthening of this former estate boundary, running north to meet the edge of Megray Wood. From Megray Wood, a coniferous woodland plantation extends around the Megray Burn as it enters the shallow valley between the two hills, with patches of mixed woodland adjacent to the burn further downstream.
- 1.2.22 Settlement consists of two small farms, a small group of dwellings associated with Ury House estate, the lodge house for the estate and two isolated properties on the hillside.

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- 1.2.23 A junction with the A90(T) is located at the edge of character area from which the B979 road branches off, providing a well-used alternative route between Stonehaven and South Deeside Road (B9077), while the heavily trafficked A90(T) continues around the southern edge of the area. Further infrastructure consists of a small covered reservoir near Megray Farm, triangulation masts on both hills and an OHTL, which runs east-west through the area.
- 1.2.24 The proximity to the coast and the exposed aspect and elevation of the topography enables open views across the farmland towards the settlement at Stonehaven and the North Sea, while views to the north are limited by the hillside topography and woodland. The generally exposed nature of the area is compounded by disturbance from the busy B979 road through the area and the A90(T) to the south.

**Table 41.1.4 – Landscape Character Summary for Megray**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Two coastal hills overlooking the harbour area of Stonehaven, divided by a shallow valley. Fertile and productive pastoral and arable land. Scattered settlement predominantly associated with the former Ury House estate. Small shelterbelts, coniferous plantation and estate woodland associated with Megray Burn or Ury Estate. Open, exposed outlook to the south while enclosed to the north.
Positive Character Attributes	Hillside agricultural land provides strong landscape setting to the north of Stonehaven. Limited development which is predominantly vernacular. Scenic views across to historic harbour area of Stonehaven and the North Sea.
Negative Character Attributes	Busy local B979 and adjacent A90(T) roads. Triangulation masts and OHTL.
Landscape Designations	None.
Landscape Condition	This area is in good condition, with fertile agricultural land and small stands of established woodland.
Scenic Quality	Impressive open views towards the town of Stonehaven and across the North Sea and provides important landscape backdrop for Stonehaven.

#### *Muchalls (Directly Affected)*

- 1.2.25 This is an open area of gently rolling countryside across an elevated plateau midway between Stonehaven and the River Dee.
- 1.2.26 The highest ground within the LCA is along the western edge of the region where the lower slopes of the Hill of Allochie and Craggie Cat form part of the boundary with Curlethney moorland. The terrain is generally undulating with occasional knolls or areas of higher ground, the most significant of these being a small, regular hill (126mAOD) to the north of Bridge of Muchalls and beside the A90(T).
- 1.2.27 The Burn of Muchalls flows eastwards through the centre of the character area, along which a sequence of small ponds has formed within the floodplain. Extensive field drainage features across the farmland here, to improve the waterlogged mossy ground to the west.

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- 1.2.28 The dominant land use in the area is a mix of arable land and improved pasture, with small to medium sized fields laid out in regular patterns across the undulating landform. Most of the fields are perpendicular to the local access road that crosses the area and field boundaries generally consist of drystone walls and hedgerows. Vegetation across the area tends to be in the form of broadleaved shelterbelts and copses of trees at field corners or around farmsteads, with several of the copses providing distinctive focal points within the area.
- 1.2.29 The B979 is the primary road running through the area from north to south, with several minor roads providing local access to the scattered farms and dwellings. There is a cluster of listed buildings at Muchalls Castle to the east of the area, although most are screened by broadleaf woodland. A line of pylons crosses the LCA from southwest to northeast, including the lower slopes of the hill at Cookney.
- 1.2.30 The character feels enclosed and peaceful, since the majority of views are contained by ridges to the north and west and Kempstone Hill to the south, with limited views towards the coast from the eastern section of the area.

**Table 41.1.5 - Landscape Character Summary for Muchalls**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Undulating, rural landscape. Well-ordered fields with drystone walls and hedgerows. Scattered dwellings with no significant development within the area. Busy road corridor runs along the western edge and has minimal impact on the wider area.
Positive Character Attributes	Smooth, undulating landform. Mature copses of trees form interesting focal points within open fields. Well-ordered fields with drystone walls. Open rural character.
Negative Character Attributes	Road corridor is visible from a distance when traffic volume is high. Pylon line.
Landscape Designations	None.
Landscape Condition	Agricultural landscape and field boundaries generally productive and well-maintained.
Scenic Quality	Rural views across farmland to the north, west and south, contained by surrounding hills with occasional coastal views to the east. Lack of development within the area enhances scenic quality.  This rural area features in views from Cookney.

#### *Cleanhill (Directly Affected)*

- 1.2.31 This area lies south of Cleanhill Wood and Durris Forest to the south of the Dee Valley and covers the relatively flat plateau above the valley.
- 1.2.32 This open expanse is contained by Cleanhill to the North and Stranog Hill to the south. The land rises gently around Burnside and around Crynoch Burn where it flows north to meet the Blaikiewell Burn. In spite of extensive field drainage across the area, permanent ponds remain due to the poor drainage inherent with the mossy ground that extends across much of this raised basin.

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- 1.2.33 The land is generally in used as improved pasture land with some arable crops. The regular fields are bordered by post and wire fences or drystone walls, with several belts of hedgerow trees and more substantial shelterbelts. Small, scattered stands of mixed woodland provide screening for properties around the site, with most significant blocks around the clusters of properties at Burnside and Invercrynock.
- 1.2.34 Settlement within the area consists of isolated farms and small clusters of properties adjacent to the roads. The small group of buildings at Invercrynock, in the heart of the LCA, is centred around the listed buildings of Crynoch Mill and an associated bridge. There is also a listed structure at the southern edge of the area at Lairhillock Bridge. The primary road to the west of the area is the B979, with a network of local roads providing access to the scattered farms. Several OHTLs cross the farmland.
- 1.2.35 Views within the area are limited by the surrounding topography and the woodland of Durris Forest and Cleanhill Wood to the north, but the relatively flat land allows extensive views across this open, rural area and west to the Grampian Mountains.

**Table 41.1.6 - Landscape Character Summary for Cleanhill**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Upland plateau contained by Cleanhill to the North and Stranog Hill to the south. Permanent ponds remain due to the poor drainage inherent with the mossy ground that extends across much of this raised basin. Several belts of hedgerow trees and more substantial shelterbelts. Relatively flat land allows open views across the area and west to the Grampian Mountains. Busy road corridor along western edge.
Positive Character Attributes	Regular field pattern with drystone walls, several belts of hedgerow trees and more substantial shelterbelts. Relatively flat land allows extensive views across this open, rural area and west to the Grampian Mountains.
Negative Character Attributes	Permanent ponds remain due to the poor drainage inherent with the mossy ground that extends across much of this raised basin. Several OHTLs running across the farmland. Busy road corridor at the western side.
Landscape Designations	'Green Belt' (Finalised Aberdeen City Local Plan, 2004) (Not directly affected by Fastlink).
Landscape Condition	Good overall condition, with productive agricultural landscape despite drainage issues. Field boundaries generally intact.
Scenic Quality	Scenic views across open farmland and west to the Grampian Mountains with adjacent ridgelines and woodland to the north and south providing contrasting backdrops. This rural area features in views from surrounding high ground, with clear views across the relatively flat farmland.

#### *Craiglug (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.36 This area is situated immediately south of the River Dee Valley and north of the Hill of Montsnaught.



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- 1.2.37 The area is characterised by large open fields defined by coniferous forestry plantations to the north and west. Fields are defined by drystone walls and post with wire fencing. Scrub and gorse characterise the high ground alongside improved pasture and rough grazing. To the east of the area arable crops have been planted. A knoll of mature Scots Pine is an attractive feature at Ashentilly. Some degraded land exists immediately north of Nether Muirskie.
- 1.2.38 Minor roads traverse the area and settlements consist of isolated farms. The area is also traversed from north to south by an overhead power line.
- 1.2.39 Views from Upper Ashentilly and from the minor road through Ashentilly are panoramic and include distant views north east to Peterculter.

**Table 41.1.7 - Landscape Character Summary for Craiglug**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Gently undulating ground falling steeply in the north toward the Dee Valley Land forming a gentle valley in the east towards Tilbouries Burn with the valley becoming steeper and narrower further east towards East Tilbouries. Blocks of coniferous forestry plantation to the north and west of the area. Gorse scrub on high ground with improved pasture and rough grazing. Arable crops in the gentle valley to the east of the area. Large open grazing fields with drystone walls and post/wire fencing. OHTL crossing the area from north to south. Contrast of exposure on the high ground and enclosure in lower valley areas.
Positive Character Attributes	Panoramic views from Ashentilly Knoll of pine trees on Ashentilly hill Gentle valley with arable crops
Negative Character Attributes	Overhead transmission line north-south across the area Degraded land at Nether Muirskie with fly tipping
Landscape Designations	Area of Landscape Significance in north adjacent to the River Dee. (Not directly affected by Fastlink.)
Landscape Condition	Good overall condition. Woodlands and fields well managed with some productive agricultural land.
Scenic Quality	Panoramic views from Ashentilly northeast across the Dee Valley towards Peterculter, west to the Grampians, south and east over undulating farmland.

#### *Merchants Croft (Directly Affected)*

- 1.2.40 This area is located between Clochandighter Hill and Hill of Blairs in the south of the study area.
- 1.2.41 The land slopes south west and is strongly undulating and irregular.
- 1.2.42 The land is primarily used for sheep grazing and fields are divided by drystone walls. There are large areas of gorse and occasional scrubby trees. The small crofts and farmhouses, scattered through the area, are linked by stony tracks.
- 1.2.43 Scenic, distant views are obtained west to the distant hills and south to the Durris Forest

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**Table 41.1.8 - Landscape Character Summary for Merchants Croft**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Enclosed small scale upland landscape with scattered small crofts and farms; Remote and isolated linked by network of stony tracks; and Enclosed by higher wooded grounds to the north and east and with long views west and south.
Positive Character Attributes	Strongly rural upland character.
Negative Character Attributes	Areas of gorse.
Landscape Designations	'Green Belt' (The Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2002).
Landscape Condition	Productive and maintained agricultural landscape.
Scenic Quality	Good scenic quality. Small scale upland landscape with scenic, distant views to the south and west.

#### **Wooded Farmland Character Type**

##### *Kempstone (Directly Affected)*

- 1.2.44 This character area is located approximately 1km to the north of Stonehaven across the small cluster of hills that mark the south edge of the upland plateau around Red Moss.
- 1.2.45 The majority of the character area is occupied by Kempstone Hill, a regular elongated hill with a summit of approximately 132m AOD. To the west of Kempstone Hill the land begins to rise up the slopes of White Hill, while to the south it includes the northern slopes of the Hill of Megray and the unnamed hill adjacent to it. The land falls steeply to the southwest towards the valley around Ury Burn close to Ury House and also southwards from Kempstone Hill across Limpet Burn, which flows east towards the North Sea.
- 1.2.46 There are several areas of woodland of varying quality across the area. There is valuable mixed riparian woodland adjacent to the Limpet Burn, with a larger mixed woodland area on the lower eastern slopes of White Hill to either side B979 road.
- 1.2.47 Megray Wood is a large established and semi-mature woodland across the hillside to the south of the character area comprising medium to large sized coniferous and broadleaved plantations of varying quality. A new coniferous plantation has also been introduced on the northern side of Kempstone Hill. The remainder of the area is used for agriculture, with a mixture of rough and improved pasture and arable land in the former Ury House estate. Fields are generally of medium to large size with regular shapes that fit the landform. The boundaries are defined by a mix of hedgerows and drystone walls with occasional post and wire fencing. The fields on Kempstone Hill are smaller, with the hilltop and much of its northern slope covered in rough grassland and scrub without field boundaries.
- 1.2.48 There are a few scattered farms and isolated dwellings across the character area, with no significant clusters of dwellings. The busy B979 provides the primary route through the area with a few roads and tracks providing local access to the properties, while the heavily trafficked A90(T) is located to the east, close to the coast.

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- 1.2.49 There is evidence of historic land use across the area, with a number of cairns, standing stones, prehistoric field systems and stone dykes across the hills, including one Scheduled Ancient Monument on Kempstone Hill (a cairn at Cantlayhills) and another on White Hill. The North Lodge of the Ury House estate is a Category B listed building. An OHTL runs across Kempstone Hill and there is a triangulation mast on the eastern side of the area near Auquorthies.
- 1.2.50 The surrounding topography and density of the woodland provides some shelter and enclosure, but the area generally feels exposed due to the proximity of the coast and the open hillside that allows filtered views out over the surrounding areas to the north from Kempstone Hill across the low-lying farmland and the Burn of Muchalls valley and eastwards to the coast.

**Table 41.1.9 - Landscape Character Summary for Kempstone**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Cluster of rolling hills. Large areas of mixed woodland enclosing the main road and along riparian valley. Regular field pattern of arable and rough grazing land with varied boundary treatments. Scattered dwellings. Busy B797 road corridor through centre of area and A90 (T) to the east.
Positive Character Attributes	Valuable woodland along Limpet Burn and around White Hill. Varied topography. Scattered dwellings. Dense woodland encloses and screens the B797 road.
Negative Character Attributes	Monoculture conifer plantations. OHTL running across Kempstone Hill.
Landscape Designations	None.
Landscape Condition	This wooded farmland area is generally in good condition. The hillside of Kempstone Hill and some of the smaller fields are exposed and in a more degraded condition.
Scenic Quality	Wooded farmland provides contrast between areas of open farmland to the north and south. Open views available from higher ground, while woodland provides enclosure on lower ground.

#### *Netherley/ Altries (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.51 This LCA runs incorporates all the wooded farmland on the southern slopes of the Dee Valley within the study area and extends due south of the Dee throughout the rolling farmland to the woodland basin of Red Moss SSSI.
- 1.2.52 Agriculture is the dominant land use within the area, with arable and pasture divided by dry stone walls or hedgerows. The field pattern along the slopes of the valley tend to have a regular, linear layout, while further south they are more irregular as dictated by the undulating landform. The fields are used for a mixture of arable crops and improved pasture land.

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- 1.2.53 The southern section of the area is dominated by the mixed woodland and scrub that covers Red Moss SSSI and the mixed woodland around the small settlement at Netherley. Muirskie Wood and several smaller blocks of woodland lie to the north around Altries, creating a sense of enclosure for the properties across the hillside leading down to the River Dee. Further east, a system of large deciduous and Pine shelterbelts partition the formal and historic field pattern associated with Blairs College, with more extensive woodland areas around Banchory-Devenick House.
- 1.2.54 Settlement consists of scattered farms and dwellings, with a small concentration of properties at Netherley, to the south of the area and a more widespread area of settlement around Altries to the northwest. The B979 from Stonehaven and the B9077 South Deeside Road provide the main access through the area, with a further network of minor roads.
- 1.2.55 The church and burial ground at Maryculter House is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and there are a number of listed buildings, including Blairs College and its associated buildings, Kingcausie House and Netherley House. A line of electricity pylons runs across the hillside near Blairs College, with several OHTL crossing the character area.
- 1.2.56 There are extensive, scenic views across the River Dee from the wooded farmland adjacent to the Dee Valley, while views within the southern areas are more enclosed and framed by the surrounding topography and local woodland.

**Table 41.1.10 - Landscape Character Summary for Netherley/Altries**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Generally well-ordered field pattern in the north of the area, with irregular layout across undulating western and southern areas. Rolling, wooded agricultural land. Drystone walls and hedgerows. Red Moss conservation area covered in mixed woodland and scrub. Woodland clumps and belts. Busy road corridors and OHTL.
Positive Character Attributes	Mature woodland areas help to create a strong sense of enclosure for most areas, enhanced in the south by surrounding ridgelines. Mature mixed woodland across Red Moss. Views into the Dee Valley. Well-ordered field pattern along the relatively smooth valley hillside contrasts with the irregular layout of the undulating land of the plateau. Drystone walls and Consumption dykes.
Negative Character Attributes	Busy roads intrusive. Electricity pylons and OHTL.
Landscape Designations	'Green Belt' (Finalised Aberdeen City Local Plan, 2004) (Not directly affected by Fastlink). 'Area of Landscape Significance' (Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan, 2002). (Not directly affected by Fastlink.); and Red Moss is a SSSI and SAC (Not directly affected by Fastlink).
Landscape Condition	This area is in good condition with drystone wall field boundaries, mature mixed woodland shelterbelts, and rolling arable and pastoral fields.
Scenic Quality	Highly scenic views within the southern side of the area and across the Dee Valley to the north.

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##### *Cammachmore (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.57 This character area covers the rolling farmland to the west of the A90(T) between Newtonhill and Portlethen, approximately 5km to the south of Aberdeen.
- 1.2.58 The gently undulating topography of this wooded farmland area generally rises west towards the hills and ridgeline of the Stranog Hill and falls more steeply to the south within the valley around the Burn of Elsick, which is the primary watercourse, supplied by extensive field drainage across the adjacent farmland. The highest point within the area is Cairnwell Hill to the northeast, which reaches 133mAOD.
- 1.2.59 The majority of the land is used for agriculture, with medium to large fields of irregular shape and pattern, used for crops and pastoral grazing. The fields are generally defined by drystone walls or post and wire fencing, with a number of mature beech and pine shelterbelts strengthening the boundaries. There are several large woodland plantations across the area, the most significant of which are on the slopes of Cairnwell Hill and near to Berryhill House, with further recently planted screen woodland adjacent to Portlethen Golf Course in the north east.
- 1.2.60 Settlement across the area generally consists of scattered farms and dwellings, with a small cluster of properties at Cammachmore. Berryhill House is a Category B listed building, sheltered by mature woodland, with a stone wall along the northern boundary of the former estate. Four minor roads cross the area and join the A90(T) located along the eastern edge of the character area, with additional access tracks to the isolated properties. There are also several OHTL running across the farmland.
- 1.2.61 The gently rolling topography and stands of woodland contain and limit many views within the area, creating localised areas that are scenic and secluded, although the higher ground to the north allows open views across the surrounding farmland towards Cookney. Views into the area are possible from the higher ground to the west and from the A90(T) along the eastern boundary, fragmented by the woodland.

**Table 41.1.11 - Landscape Character Summary for Cammachmore**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Gently undulating ground with steeper ground around shallow valley of the Burn of Elsick. Dense mature shelterbelts and woodland. Scattered dwellings and farms with small community adjacent to A90(T) at Cannachmore. Arable and pasture fields defined by drystone walls and post and wire fencing.
Positive Character Attributes	Mature woodland and shelterbelts. Farmland in good condition with maintained drystone walls across area.
Negative Character Attributes	Views from higher ground down to the busy A90(T) road running along eastern boundary.
Landscape Designations	None.
Landscape Condition	Landscape generally in good condition with most areas well maintained. Minor roads can be busy during rush hours but are quiet for the majority of the time which helps to minimise their impact on the area.
Scenic Quality	None

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##### Valley Landscape Character Type

###### *Glen Ury (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.62 The area is located to the north of the town of Stonehaven and covers part of the valley around Cowie Water as it meanders from the foothills of the Grampians towards the North Sea.
- 1.2.63 Inland, the Cowie Water valley is relatively narrow beneath the steep slopes of the adjacent hills in Curlethney moorland and surrounding hills. The watercourse twists gently through the valley until it passes Rickarton House, where the widening of the valley floor allows it to meander more extensively across the floodplain. The valley continues to widen as it passes Ury House, before being channelled under the A90(T) and flowing through a shallow gorge to the north of Mackie Academy in Stonehaven. Smaller burns and field drains flow into the watercourse along the valley, the most significant of which is the Ury Burn.
- 1.2.64 Much of the area is covered in mature plantation and policy woodland on the hillsides. The majority of the woodland is coniferous, with part of the large Fetteresso Forest running into the western end of the valley and smaller blocks of coniferous woodland on Cheyne Hill and around the former Ury House estate.
- 1.2.65 The productive farmland extends from the valley to the lower slopes of Curlethney moorland, divided by well-maintained drystone walls or woodland shelterbelts. The former Ury House estate occupies the eastern end of the valley, with much of the landscaped adjacent to the Ury Burn converted to farmland. Part of the grounds has also been used for sand and gravel extraction, which detracts from the rural character of the valley.
- 1.2.66 Settlement throughout most of the valley is sparse, with isolated dwellings, several buildings associated with the Ury House estate and the ruins of Ury House remaining prominent on the open floodplain. A new housing development has been built at the edge of Stonehaven but is screened from the valley by Glenury Viaduct railway line. There are a number of Category B and C(S) listed buildings along the valley, with the majority associated with Ury House estate or Rickarton House and military pill boxes also feature along the watercourse that are designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The main road within the area is the A90(T), which cuts across the eastern end of the valley, while the A957 follows the course of the valley, providing access to the scattered properties. Two pylon lines cross the valley and an OHTL runs along part of the valley.
- 1.2.67 The dense woodland and topography of the valley makes the area feel enclosed, secluded and peaceful. Views are generally contained, with limited views east towards the North Sea across the wider floodplain and west, beyond the woodland at the western end of the valley, towards the adjacent hillsides.

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**Table 41.1.12 - Landscape Character Summary for Glen Ury**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Narrow valley around Cowie Water that widens into open floodplain. Mature plantation and policy woodland. Majority of settlement associated with Ury House estate.
Positive Character Attributes	Mature woodland areas along much of the valley. Remains of Ury House and the former estate are historic landmarks on the floodplain. Enclosed valley feels secluded and peaceful.
Negative Character Attributes	Sand and gravel pit on the floodplain in front of Ury House. Busy A90(T) cuts across the eastern end of the valley. Two lines of electricity pylons and OHTL.
Landscape Designations	None.
Landscape Condition	Majority of area in good condition and well-maintained, although the eastern floodplain has been adversely affected by the sand and gravel pit at Ury House and the A90(T) corrido also detracts from the rural the landscape.
Scenic Quality	Mature Woodland and valley landform restrict views for most of the area, with occasional views to the surrounding hillside from woodland clearings. The open floodplain at the eastern end of the LCA has open views along the valley and across the surrounding hillside of Megray open farmland and Kempstone wooded farmland, with additional views towards the North Sea.

#### *Burn of Muchalls (Directly Affected)*

- 1.2.68 The area covers the agricultural valley around the Burn of Muchalls between Cookney and the A90(T) at the Bridge of Muchalls.
- 1.2.69 This shallow valley is open and undulating, becoming more tightly enclosed by steeper, sweeping slopes near Montgatehead. The Burn of Muchalls is fed by minor hillside tributaries and drainage from the surrounding farmland with small ponds and temporary areas of standing water formed on the floodplain at the western end of the valley.
- 1.2.70 The area features a number of small woodland blocks, with some of the mature stands forming distinctive landscape features within the valley and beyond, particularly a copse of mature conifers, near the dwelling at Burnside. The deciduous Pityot Wood and the trees around the settlement at Bridge of Muchalls frame views of the valley from the A90(T) and riparian scrub woodland upstream contrasts with the smooth texture and undulating topography of the valley.
- 1.2.71 The farmland is productive and well-managed, with a field pattern which reflects the topography. The fields are defined by drystone walls, with a large consumption dyke along the road that runs from Bridge of Muchalls to Cookney. Occasional hedgerows and shelterbelt trees help to screen properties and define the minor road that crosses the valley near Burnside.
- 1.2.72 Settlement within the area tends to be scattered dwellings and farms adjacent to the road that runs along the northern side of the valley. There is also a small cluster of properties at Bridge of Muchalls, adjacent to the junction with the A90(T). A minor road follows the northern edge of the valley from Bridge of Muchalls towards Cookney and a second road crosses the valley further inland. An OHTL runs across the centre of the valley.

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- 1.2.73 The area is predominantly open, unspoilt and peaceful, with impacts from the A90(T) becoming screened as the valley changes direction. Open, scenic views along the valley are available from some roads, including the southbound A90(T) and high surrounding ground.

**Table 41.1.13 - Landscape Character Summary for Burn of Muchalls**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Shallow agricultural valley is open and undulating, becoming more tightly enclosed by sweeping slopes near Montgatehead.  Small woodland blocks including a distinctive and riparian scrub woodland upstream which contrasts with the smooth texture and undulating topography of the valley.  Drystone walls and a consumption dyke.  Scattered dwellings with a small settlement at eastern end of valley.
Positive Character Attributes	Mature woodland copse and riparian scrub woodland upstream which contrasts with the smooth texture and undulating topography of the valley.  Open, scenic views along the valley.  Well-managed and productive farmland.
Negative Character Attributes	Busy A90(T) impacts on east end of valley.  An OHTL crosses the centre of the valley.
Landscape Designations	None.
Landscape Condition	The area is in good condition, with productive farmland and well maintained drystone walls and consumption dyke.
Scenic Quality	The higher ground of the surrounding areas allows open views into the valley. The copse of mature conifers is a distinctive landscape feature on the ridge of the valley, while the riparian scrub woodland upstream contrasts with the smooth texture and undulating topography of the valley.

### Coast Landscape Character Type

#### *Kincardine Cliffs (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.74 This LCA covers the rocky coastline that runs from the south of Aberdeen down to the small settlement at Catterline.
- 1.2.75 Much of the coastline is marked by steep rugged slopes and cliffs, with numerous coves and bays due to coastal erosion. Small raised beaches have formed in some of the coves above the rocky outcrops, with a more significant beach found in Stonehaven Bay, where a natural harbour has been developed with a breakwater to protect a small fishing industry. The land above most of the cliffs has quite steep undulating slopes with several small hills and rises across the area, the most significant of which are Black Hill (approximately 99mAOD) and Cran Hill (86mAOD). Several burns cross the area as they run down to the coast to enter the North Sea, the most significant of which are the Carron Water and Cowie Water, which flow through Stonehaven. Waterfalls are found along the coast where the burns run down the steep slopes.
- 1.2.76 The land within the LCA tends to be used as rough pasture across the sloping ground above the cliffs. The majority of the area is too exposed for arable crops to be grown, although the fields set further back from the coastline are more sheltered and allow greater diversity in land use. Fields tend to be laid out in irregular shapes dictated by the topography of the area and the coastline, and are generally defined by post and wire fences. Immediately to the north of Stonehaven part of the coastline is covered in a golf course. There are few woodland areas along the coastline, and they tend to be relatively small and in sheltered areas. The Den of



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Cowie at the edge of the golf course is the largest and most significant area, with mature mixed woodland on the steep lower slope of the Hill of Megray.

1.2.77 Most of the older settlements in the area, such as Findon, Portlethen Village, Muchalls and Catterline, are former fishing villages built in the proximity of natural harbours. The larger settlement areas at the edge of the LCA, such as Newtonhill and Portlethen, are built on the cliff tops and hills above the coast and are based around the transport links of the railway and A90(T) rather than any historical industry. Stonehaven is a mixture of the two settlement types, having developed across the hillside above its historical harbour area. There are all isolated farms and dwellings across the area. There are many listed buildings along the coast, with a concentration of buildings around the harbour area of Stonehaven, while the remains of Dunnottar Castle to the south of Stonehaven is a Scheduled Ancient Monument Settlement. The A90(T) runs through the character area to the north of Stonehaven as it heads towards Aberdeen, with part of the A92 coastal road running through the area to the south of Stonehaven. The railway line to Aberdeen also passes through the northern part of the area, with embankments and deep cuttings causing significant visual impact to the area. There are a number of OHTL running to the settlement areas, and to the west of Dunnottar Castle there is a cluster of radio and communication masts on the hillside.

1.2.78 Views to the west are sometimes limited by the higher ground of the western side of the region, but the hills of the surrounding character areas create an attractive backdrop to available views across the farmland. The undulating ground allows attractive views within the character area along the coastline. While most of the character area is overlooked by the surrounding areas, most of the cliffs and beaches are hidden from view by the sloping topography of the region.

**Table 41.1.14 - Landscape Character Summary for Kincardine Cliffs**

Landscape Attributes	Description
Key Characteristics	Rocky coastline with steep weathered cliffs above inlets and raised beaches; Older settlements built around natural harbours with newer settlements on cliff tops near transport corridors; and Exposed farmland on rolling slopes above cliffs.
Positive Character Attributes	Attractive views along coastline; Remains of Dunnottar Castle to the south of Stonehaven; and Historic harbour and beach at Stonehaven.
Negative Character Attributes	Busy road corridors of A90(T) and A92 run through the area, with railway line running on embankments and in deep cuttings; and OHTL running across farmland to settlements and isolated properties.
Landscape Designations	Area of Landscape Significance designation. (Not directly affected by Fastlink.); SSSI designations east of Cove and at the northern tip of the area. (Not directly affected by Fastlink.); and 'Greenbelt' and 'Greenspace Network' designations and 'District Wildlife' designation. (Not directly affected by Fastlink.)
Landscape Condition	Farmland in relatively good condition for exposed location. Coastal erosion makes some of the clifftop areas unstable, particularly on the sandstone cliffs to the south of Stonehaven. Road and rail corridors in poorer condition due to impacts from traffic.
Scenic Quality	Ordinary scenic quality. Views within the area are attractive with open views of the rocky coastline, with some views to the west across the higher ground of the surrounding hills. The rising topography within the area restricts some views to the west. Most of the surrounding areas can see into and across the area towards the North Sea, although much of the coastline is too low to be seen in views.

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### **Urban Area Landscape Character Type**

#### *Stonehaven (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.79 Stonehaven is a large coastal town located beside the rocky shore of the North Sea approximately 19km to the south of Aberdeen.
- 1.2.80 This Scottish market town is a popular place of residence and holiday resort which continues to spread inland from its historic centre around the Harbour and the High Street. The traditional commercial and residential buildings, built from local sandstone and granite, reflect past prosperity from the local agricultural and fishing industries and the status of Stonehaven as a County Town. Recent development is multi-use and more modern and generic in style.

#### *Newtonhill (Indirectly Affected)*

- 1.2.81 This medium-sized community is located approximately 11km to the south of Aberdeen, adjacent to the A90(T).
- 1.2.82 This high-density housing development, with minimal community facilities, has been built on the coastal hillside between the rocky cliffs above Newtonhill Bay coast and the A90(T), immediately south of the steep gorge where the Burn of Elsick flows into the North Sea. The community is bisected by the main east-coast railway line to Aberdeen. The majority of the houses are bungalows, with a recent development of two-storey houses adjacent to the A90(T). The housing on the hillside is generally orientated to maximise views towards the North Sea.

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**Table 41.1.15 - Landscape Sensitivity Evaluation**

Landscape Character Type and Area/ Settlement Character Area	Factors Considered	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
<b>Directly Affected Areas</b>				
Open Farmland : Megray Open Farmland (ch0 -1200)				
B979 road corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong influence of traffic on road detracts from the rural setting.</li> <li>- Views generally enclosed by dense woodland and shelterbelts.</li> </ul>	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Low to Medium
Open hillside farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coastal hills with scenic views across to historic harbour area of Stonehaven and the North Sea.</li> <li>- Productive farmland with limited development which is predominantly vernacular.</li> <li>- Hillside limits views north and provides strong landscape setting to Stonehaven.</li> <li>- Busy local B979 and adjacent A90(T) roads.</li> <li>- Triangulation masts and OHTL.</li> </ul>	High	Medium	Medium to High
Edge of former Ury Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scattered settlement associated with former Ury House estate.</li> <li>- Small shelterbelts and estate woodland associated with Ury Estate.</li> </ul>	Medium to High	Low to Medium	Medium
<b>OVERALL SENSITIVITY</b>				Medium
Wooded Farmland : Kempstone (ch1200 – 3100)				
Limpet Burn Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valuable woodland and riparian corridor.</li> </ul>	High	High	High
Open farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Productive farmland.</li> <li>- Views to the North Sea.</li> </ul>	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High
Areas of gorse and scrub woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prolific and easily regenerated.</li> <li>- Exposed areas.</li> <li>- Scrub vegetation provides localised screening and shelter.</li> </ul>	Low	Medium	Medium to Low
B979 road corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generally enclosed by woodland.</li> <li>-Views are focussed eastwards by topography and woodland.</li> </ul>	Low	Medium	Low to Medium

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Landscape Character Type and Area/ Settlement Character Area	Factors Considered	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Medium
Open Farmland : Muchalls (south of Burn of Muchalls: ch3100-4500, north of Burn of Muchalls: ch5000-5800)				
Open farmland basin around Burn of Muchalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimal presence of traffic.</li> <li>- Views west to B979 and east to North Sea, but otherwise focussed towards open, simple, rural valley.</li> <li>- Contained by ridges.</li> </ul>	Low	High	Medium
Hillside farmland between Cookney and the A90 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Views of A90 (T) limited to eastern edge of area and minimal presence of traffic elsewhere.</li> <li>- Distant views west across basin of Burn of Muchalls to B979 and east to North Sea.</li> <li>- Feature copses and shelter belts.</li> </ul>	Medium	High	Medium to High
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Medium
Valley : Burn of Muchalls (ch4500-5000)				
Narrow valley and floodplain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Burn channel, and associated ponds.</li> <li>- Valuable riparian woodland edges which form distinct linear feature across farmland basin.</li> <li>- Visually enclosed by woodland and scrub with limited views to surrounding farmland basin.</li> </ul>	High	High	High
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				High
Hill : Stranog (ch5800 -10100)				
Gorse and scrub covered ridges and hilltops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Panoramic views east from Cookney, and north and east from Rothnick.</li> <li>- Peaceful and rugged with intimate and enclosed areas.</li> </ul>	Medium	High	Medium to High
Open pasture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shelterbelts provide local screening and shelter.</li> <li>- Very open, remote and peaceful.</li> </ul>	Medium	High	Medium to High
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Medium to High
Open Farmland : Blaikiewell (ch10100-11500 Fastlink)				
All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extensive views northwest.</li> </ul>	Medium	High	Medium to High

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Landscape Character Type and Area/ Settlement Character Area	Factors Considered	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
	- Open fields and wetland areas with occasional shelterbelts and hedgerows.			
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Medium to High
<b>Indirectly Affected Areas</b>				
Urban Area : Stonehaven				
All areas	- Remote from proposed route so only susceptible to indirect impacts.	Medium	Low	Low to Medium
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Low to Medium
Valley : Glen Ury				
All areas	- Remote from proposed route so only susceptible to indirect impacts. - Narrow valley around Cowie Water that widens into open floodplain. - Mature plantation and policy woodland. - Majority of settlement associated with Ury House estate.	Medium	Low	Low to Medium
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Low to Medium
Coast : Kincardine Cliffs				
All areas	- Remote from proposed route so only susceptible to indirect impacts. Views to the AWPR at Cookney from the A90 between Muchalls and Newtonhill settlements. - Area of Landscape Significance designation. - SSSI designations east of Cove and at the northern tip of the area. - 'Greenbelt' and 'Greenspace Network' designations and 'District Wildlife' designation.	High	Low	Medium
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Medium

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Landscape Character Type and Area/ Settlement Character Area	Factors Considered	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Hill : Curlethney				
All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remote from proposed route so only susceptible to indirect impacts.</li> <li>- Upland moor, which is wild, open and exposed forming high ridgeline with valleys.</li> <li>- Dense forestry to north.</li> <li>- Blocks of plantation and shelterbelt woodland in many of the valleys.</li> <li>- Well-managed, sheltered farmland on lower slopes and valleys with drystone wall field boundaries.</li> <li>- Scattered farm settlements.</li> </ul>	Medium	Low	Low to Medium
OVERALL SENSITIVITY (Curlethney)				Low to Medium
Urban Area : Newtonhill				
All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remote from proposed route so only susceptible to indirect impacts.</li> <li>- Settlement on a coastal hillside.</li> <li>- High density of predominantly one and two storey housing.</li> <li>- Housing generally oriented to the east to maximise views to the North Sea.</li> </ul>	Medium	Low	Low to Medium
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Low to Medium
Wooded Farmland : Cammachmore				
All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remote from proposed route so only susceptible to indirect impacts.</li> <li>- Gently undulating ground with steeper ground around shallow valley of the Burn of Elsick.</li> <li>- Dense mature shelterbelts and woodland.</li> <li>- Scattered dwellings and farms with small community adjacent to A90(T) at Cammachmore.</li> <li>- Arable and pasture fields defined by drystone walls and post and wire fencing.</li> </ul>	Low to Medium	Low	Low to Medium
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Low to Medium

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Landscape Character Type and Area/ Settlement Character Area	Factors Considered	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Wooded Farmland : Netherly / Altres				
All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Well-ordered field pattern along the relatively smooth valley hillside contrasts with the irregular layout of the undulating land of the southern plateau.</li> <li>- Rolling, wooded agricultural land.</li> <li>- Drystone walls, hedgerows, and consumption dykes.</li> <li>- Red Moss conservation area covered in mixed woodland and scrub.</li> <li>- Mature woodland areas help to create a strong sense of enclosure for most areas, enhanced in the south by surrounding ridgelines.</li> <li>- Busy road corridors and OHTL.</li> <li>- 'Green Belt' (Finalised Aberdeen City Local Plan, 2004).</li> <li>- The north of the area adjacent to the River Dee is designated an 'Area of Landscape Significance' (Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan, 2002).</li> <li>- Red Moss has SSSI and SAC/DWS status.</li> <li>- Highly scenic views within the southern side of the area and across the Dee Valley to the north.</li> </ul>	High	High	High
All areas		as above	as above	as above
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				High
Open Farmland : Craiglug				
All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remote from proposed route so only susceptible to indirect impacts</li> <li>- Panoramic views at Upper Ashentilly – distant view north east towards AWPR blocked by settlement of Peterculter</li> <li>- Gently undulating ground falling steeply in the north toward the Dee Valley</li> <li>- Land forming a gentle valley in the east becoming steeper and narrower further east towards East Tilbouries.</li> <li>- Blocks of coniferous forestry plantation to the north and west of the area. Gorse scrub on high ground with improved pasture and rough grazing. Arable crops in the gentle valley to the east of the area.</li> <li>- Large open grazing fields with drystone walls and post/wire fencing.</li> <li>- OHTL crossing the area from north to south.</li> </ul>	Medium to High	Low	Low to Medium

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Landscape Character Type and Area/ Settlement Character Area	Factors Considered	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contrast of exposure on the high ground and enclosure in lower valley areas.</li> <li>- 'Area of Landscape Significance' designation.</li> </ul>			
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				Low to Medium
Hill : Craingles				
All areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mature dense woodland.</li> <li>- Fields occurring in 'pockets' surrounded by trees.</li> <li>- Scattered Settlement.</li> <li>- Drystone walls.</li> <li>- 'Greenbelt' designation in north half of the area (Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2002).</li> </ul>	High	High	High
OVERALL SENSITIVITY				High



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**Table 41.1.16 - Landscape Impact Assessment**

Landscape Character Type and Area/ Settlement Character Area	Landscape Sensitivity	Details of Change Winter, Year of Opening	Summary of Mitigation Proposals  Magnitude of Change, Winter Year of Opening  (taking into account the mitigation proposals)	Impact – Winter Year of Opening	Details of change Summer 15 years after opening  Magnitude of change Summer 15 years after opening	Impact – Summer 15 years after opening
<b>Directly Affected Areas</b>						
Open Farmland : Megray (ch0 -1200)						
B979 road corridor	Low to Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of junction (Stonehaven Junction) for B979 and A90 with Fastlink at ch50.</li> <li>- introduction of new A90(T) off-ramp and on/ramp.</li> <li>- introduction of street lighting associated with the new junction.</li> <li>- introduction of views east to Fastlink in cutting across west slope of Hill of Megray.</li> <li>- introduction of views to flood attenuation ponds southwest of new Stonehaven junction.</li> <li>- further detracton from rural setting with existing strong influence of traffic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mixed and scrub woodland to screen and soften views of junctions and bridge abutments at new Stonehaven Junction, A90(T) junction and new link road.</li> <li>.riparian woodland for landscape and habitat enhancement along Megray Burn diversion.and to screen views to Fastlink</li> <li>- riparian woodland for landscape and habitat enhancement around ponds,</li> <li>- low drystone wall detail to tie in with apron on bridge and feathered trees along slip way and B979 junction to determine 'Gateway' to Stonehaven</li> <li>- grade out cuttings to integrate with existing landform.</li> <li>- treatment of rock cutting to ensure natural appearance</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p>	Moderate adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> <li>- vegetation on rock cutting matured to soften the cut into the landscape</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p> <p>Medium Magnitude.</p> <p>Positive/ beneficial due to reduction in traffic using B979.</p>	Moderate to Slight adverse impact

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			Medium to High Magnitude			
Open hillside farmland	Medium to High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of junction (Stonehaven Junction) for B979 and A90 with Fastlink in farmland.</li> <li>- introduction of new A90(T) off-ramp and on/ramp.</li> <li>- introduction of street lighting associated with the new junction.</li> <li>- introduction of Fastlink in cutting up to 16.7m across west slope of Hill of Megray</li> <li>- introduction of flood attenuation ponds southwest of new Stonehaven junction.</li> <li>- introduction of Megray Burn diversion.</li> <li>- interruption of scenic views across to historic harbour area of Stonehaven and the North Sea.</li> <li>- further effects on rural setting in addition to existing strong influence of traffic from busy local B979 and adjacent A90(T) roads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mixed and scrub woodland to screen and soften views of new slip road and junctions.</li> <li>- grade out cutting to west of Fastlink to integrate with existing landform, enable views of coastline .</li> <li>- sensitively grade out cutting to east of Fastlink to 1:3 to integrate with landform.</li> <li>- treatment of rock cutting to ensure natural appearance</li> <li>- riparian woodland for landscape and habitat enhancement along Megray Burn diversion and around ponds along with dry stone wall to determine 'Gateway' to Stonehaven.</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p> <p>High Magnitude</p>	Severe to Substantial adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> <li>- vegetation on rock cutting matured to soften the cut into the landscape</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p> <p>Medium to High Magnitude</p>	Substantial adverse impact
Edge of former Ury estate	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- views to Fastlink and Stonehaven junction at foot of Hill of Megray from dwellings associated with former Ury House estate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- riparian woodland along Megray Burn diversion and around ponds and dry stone wall to provide landscape and habitat enhancement and screening.</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p>	Slight to Moderate adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p> <p>Low Magnitude</p>	Slight adverse impact

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			Low to Medium Magnitude			
Wooded Farmland : Kempstone (ch1200 – 3100)						
Limpet Burn Valley	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of Fastlink road on a low embankment with underbridge crossing at Chainage 1400.</li> <li>- loss of riparian woodland.</li> <li>- visual and aural impact of new road on rural setting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- riparian woodland introduced to replace and enhance lost vegetation</li> <li>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</li> <li>High Magnitude</li> </ul>	Severe adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> <li>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</li> <li>Medium Magnitude.</li> </ul>	Substantial adverse impact
Open farmland	Medium to High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of Fastlink road at grade at chainage1550- 2150 and on embankment up to 8m at chainage 2400-3150.</li> <li>- loss of mixed woodland and section of wall at eastern edge of Megray Wood.</li> <li>-introduction of new link road linking minor roads to the east of the Fastlink north of Limpet Burn to Howieshill running parallel to the Fastlink chainage1550-2950.</li> <li>- introduction of pedestrian / cyclist underpass ( Coneyhatch NMU Underpass) at chainage 1550.</li> <li>- loss and severance of fields and field boundaries.</li> <li>- interruption of views to North Sea.</li> <li>- introduction of Fishermyre-Hill of Muchalls underbridge at chainage 2950 and realignment of minor road linking Howieshill to the B979.</li> <li>- visual and aural impact of new road on rural</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dry stone wall to replace section of wall removed to link into remaining wall chainage 1570 to 1750</li> <li>- mixed woodland strip and clumps to the east of Fastlink (minimum width 15m) to visually separate Fastlink from slip road</li> <li>- noise bund 0.5m in height and noise barrier 1m in height (total 1.5m) southbound between chainage 2350 and 2470 to provide noise attenuation for property (Kempstone Hill)</li> <li>-mixed woodland block at Kemptone Hill to screen views towards access road from property</li> <li>- grade out embankment west of the fastlink to at least 1:5 to tie into existing levels and</li> </ul>	Substantial to Severe impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> <li>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</li> <li>Medium Magnitude.</li> </ul>	Moderate to Substantial impact

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		setting.	planted with scrub and mixed woodland to reflect existing character.and screen views.  - Mixed and broadleaved woodland introduced east of the Fastlink to visually separate Fastlink from slip road at chainage 2300-3000 and tie in with surrounding vegetation. .  Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.  High Magnitude.			
Areas of gorse and scrub woodland  Areas pf gorse and scrub woodland	Medium to Low	- introduction of Fastlink road along eastern edge of the area at chainage 2950-3150 on embankment.  - Interruption of localised screening and shelter.  - Visual and aural impact of new road on rural setting.	- mixed and broadleaf woodland strip introduced to the on the embankment of the Fastlink.  Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.  Medium Magnitude.	Moderate adverse impact	- - planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments  Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.  Beneficial; long term.  Low to Medium Magnitude.	Slight to Moderate adverse impact
B979 road corridor	Low to Medium	- introduction of underbridge at chainage 2950 and realignment of minor road linking Howieshill to the B979.  - Glimpses of Fastlink to the east through vegetation.  - Aural impact of new road on B979 corridor.	- scrub, mixed and broadleaved woodland strip introduced to the western embankment of the Fastlink  - scrub woodland clumps along realigned minor road for ecological enhancement and landscape integration  Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent  Low Magnitude.	Slight adverse impact	- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments  Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.  Beneficial due to reduction in traffic using B979.  Low Magnitude	Slight adverse impact

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Open Farmland : Muchalls (south of Burn of Muchalls: chainage 3100-4500, north of Burn of Muchalls: chainage 5000-5800)						
Open farmland basin around Burn of Muchalls	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of Fastlink on embankment at chainage 3050-3450 and chainage 4350 to 4550, in cutting at chainage 4950 to 5300 and at grade across open, simple, rural valley.</li> <li>- introduction of Allochie Underpass at chainage 4625</li> <li>- introduction of Elrick Overbridge at chainage 5040</li> <li>- Severance of fields and boundaries.</li> <li>- Aural and visual effects on rural area with minimal presence of traffic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mixed and scrub woodland strips and sections of dry stone wall (chainages 3500 to 3680) on east side of Fastlink to provide screening, tie in with existing vegetation and integrate with landscape pattern, chainage 3100 to 4400</li> <li>- noise barrier 1.5m in height to provide screening and noise attenuation for properties (Strathgyle Cottage)</li> <li>- broadleaved and scrub woodland strips and sections of dry stone wall (Chainages 4160 to 4325) on west side of Fastlink to provide screening and tie in with existing vegetation, chainage 3100 to 4500</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent High magnitude</p>	Substantial adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent High Magnitude</p>	Substantial adverse impact

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Hillside farmland between Cookney and the A90 (T)	Medium to High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of Fastlink in cutting and at grade across agricultural land on southeastern slopes of the hill at Cookney.</li> <li>- introduction of Cookney (C12K) Overbridge for realigned road from Bridge of Muchalls to Cookney.</li> <li>- aural and visual effects on rural area with minimal presence of traffic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- existing drystone walls to tie into stone apron for underbridge.</li> <li>- drystone walls at top of embankments on east of Fastlink (chainages 5600 to 6200). and west of Fastlink (chainages 5900 to 6325) to screen road and integrate with landscape pattern,</li> <li>- treatment of rock cutting to ensure natural appearance chainage 5000 to 5250 southbound, and chainage 5950 and 6100 northbound</li> <li>- dry stone wall and mixed woodland strip Westside chainage 5050 to 5750 to screen sheds</li> <li>- scrub woodland eas of Fastlink to provide screening for properties and soften views to cutting slopes and embankments chainage 6030 to 6200</li> <li>- mixed woodland and scrub on graded out embankments south and north of realigned minor road. Embankments eased to integrate with surrounding landform, planting provided to screen views and integrate with existing vegetation.</li> </ul>	Substantial to Severe adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> <li>- vegetation on rock cutting matured to soften the cut into the landscape</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent</p> <p>High Magnitude</p>	Substantial to Severe adverse impact

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			Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent. High magnitude			
Valley : Burn of Muchalls (ch4500-5000)						
Narrow valley and floodplain	High As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of Fastlink on embankment (chainages 4350-4800) and in cutting (chainage 4850-5250).</li> <li>- introduction of Allochie Underpass at chainage 4625</li> <li>- introduction of Burn of Muchalls Underbridge at chainage 4700.</li> <li>- introduction of flood attenuation ponds.</li> <li>- loss and fragmentation of fields.</li> <li>- rural setting affected by visual and aural impact of new road.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- scrub woodland to provide screening.</li> <li>- riparian woodland planting to replace and enhance lost vegetation.</li> <li>- ponds to be designed as positive landscape features with wildlife habitats , naturalistic shape and contours. Riparian woodland planting carried out to soften the visual impact and improve biodiversity.</li> <li>- existing drystone walls to tie into stone apron under overbridge.</li> </ul> <p>Adverse;large-scale; long-term; permanent. High Magnitude.</p>	Severe adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent. Medium Magnitude</p>	Substantial adverse impact
Hill : Stranog (ch5800-10100)						
Gorse and scrub covered ridges and hilltops	Medium to High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of Fastlink in cutting across east side of hills at Cookney, Rothnick and Stranog Hill.</li> <li>- introduction of C25K overbridge at Cookney, chainage 6340 and C13K Rothnik Overbridge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- existing drystone walls to tie into stone apron under bridges.</li> <li>- treatment of rock cutting to ensure natural appearance</li> </ul>	Substantial to Severe adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> <li>- vegetation on rock cutting matured to soften the cut into the landscape</li> </ul>	Moderate to Substantial adverse impact

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Gorse and scrub covered ridges and hilltops	As above	<p>at hill at Rothnick, chainage 8540 with associated closure and realignment of existing local roads.</p> <p>- severance of young woodland on slopes of Stranog Hill</p> <p>- rural setting affected by visual and aural impact of new road.</p>	<p>- dry stone wall on west side of Fastlink across hill at Cookney ch6000-6350 to provide screening and integrate with existing landscape pattern.</p> <p>- 3m high noise barrier, chainage 6380 to chainage 6550 northbound, to provide screening and noise attenuation for property (North Cookney Croft)</p> <p>- mixed woodland on east side of Fastlink at Cookney ch6200-6450 to provide screening and soften views</p> <p>- 1m high dry stone wall chaingage 6200 to chainage 6260 southbound to act as noise barrier to provide noise attenuation for property (North Cookney Cottage)</p> <p>- embankments east of C25k overbridge to be graded out to tie into existing levels and to enable for potential return to agriculture</p> <p>- treatment of rock cutting to ensure natural appearance (chainage 8200 to chainage 8700)</p> <p>- mixed woodland, scrub woodland, standard trees and hedgerows to soften</p>		<p>- land returned to agricultural use between chainage 6450 and 6700</p> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p> <p>Medium to High Magnitude</p>	



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			<p>appearance of cuttings and reinforce field pattern including severed fields and grubbed up roads and integrate with surrounding vegetation on west side of Fastlink ch8200 to 8750 and on east side of Fastlink ch8300 to 8750 and realigned road</p> <p>-treatment of rock cutting to ensure natural appearance (chainage 9450 to chainage 9950)</p> <p>- mixed woodland planting to east and west embankments of Fastlink between chainages 9950 to 10100 to reduce fragmentation of woodland</p> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p> <p>High Magnitude</p>			
<p>Open pasture</p> <p>Open pasture</p>	<p>Medium to High</p> <p>As above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction of Fastlink at grade and on embankment across open fields.</li> <li>- introduction of C5K Stranog underbridge at Lochton-Auchlunies-Nigg Road, ch10200.</li> <li>- loss and severance of fields and stone walls.</li> <li>- introduction of attenuation ponds at ch7850 and 10000.</li> <li>- rural setting affected by visual and aural impact of new road.</li> <li>- introduction of attenuation ponds at ch7850</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- scrub woodland along realigned road and west of Fastlink, north west of Cookney to soften appearance of embankments, integrate realignment and grubbed up road. Provide drystone wall to replace section of wall removed along realigned minor road.chainage 650 to 850</li> <li>- scrub and mixed woodland west of the fastlink to screen views towards carriageway from</li> </ul>	<p>Substantial to Severe adverse impact</p>	<p>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</p> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.</p> <p>High Magnitude.</p>	<p>Substantial to Severe adverse impact</p>

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		and 10000.	surrounding properties ch 6500 to 7200  - scrub woodland strip west of Fastlink to provide screening of carriageway from adjacent properties ch 7550 to 7900  - drystone walls at back of verge on the east and west side of the Fastlink ch7975 to 8200 to tie into field pattern.  - existing drystone walls to tie into stone apron under bridge.  - mixed woodland strip on east side of Fastlink ch6950 to 7250 with scrub woodland closer to properties screen views  - 1m dry stone wall to act as noise barrier (chainage 7000 to chainage 7070) to provide noise attenuation for property (Meadowbank)  Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.  High Magnitude			
Open Farmland : Blaikiewell (ch10100-11500)						
All areas	Medium to High	- introduction of Fastlink on embankment across open agricultural basin.  -introduction of roundabout junction and focal	- Embankments on west and east graded out to 1:5+ to tie smoothly into existing levels to	Substantial to Severe adverse impact	- land returned to agricultural use between chainages 10230 and 11150 south bound	Moderate to Substantial adverse impact

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		<p>point (Cleanhill Junction) connecting Fastlink with Southern Leg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Introduction of street lighting associated with the new junction.</li> <li>- new access road to Blaikiewell farm.</li> <li>- Severance of fields and field boundaries</li> <li>- Aural and visual effects on rural area with limited presence of traffic.</li> <li>- new C5K overbridge for access to Burnhead Cottages from Lochton-Auchlunies-Rigg road, with associated diversion and closure of local roads. (Details given within Southern Leg)</li> <li>-introduction of flood attenuation ponds to southwest of proposed Cleanhill Junction. (Details given within Southern Leg)</li> </ul>	<p>allow for potential return to agriculture to the east of fastlink, ch10,200 to 11150. Species rich grassland seeding west of the Fastlink.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- scrub and mixed woodland to screen and integrate Fastlink, Southern Leg and Cleanhill Junction with Cleanhill Wood.</li> <li>- scrub and riparian planting for landscape and habitat enhancement around ponds, Blaikiewell Burn diversion and existing habitat management at Blaikiewell Burn.(Discussed further within Southern Leg Section)</li> <li>- mixed woodland to link with existing woodland and screen and soften views of the Cleanhill junction</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent High Magnitude</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments</li> <li>-scrub and mixed woodland matured to effectively screen and integrate Fastlink, Southern Leg and Cleanhill Junction with Cleanhill Wood.</li> <li>- scrub and ecological planting established to achieve landscape and habitat enhancement around ponds, Blaikiewell Burn diversion and existing habitat management at Blaikiewell Burn.</li> <li>- mixed woodland matured to effectively replace lost vegetation, link with existing woodland and screen views of overbridge at Burnhead Cottages (including existing sections of road to be grubbed up and planted.</li> </ul> <p>Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent. Medium to High Magnitude</p>	
<b>Indirectly Affected Areas</b>						
Urban Area : Stonehaven						
All areas	Low to Medium	- no direct impact but perception and views north from harbour, bay and northeast areas of Stonehaven from to Fastlink across Megray Hill will be affected by landscape and visual	- mitigation planting and earthworks to assist integration of the road corridor into surroundings in distant and	Slight to Moderate adverse impact	- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments Adverse; medium-scale; long-term;	Slight adverse impact

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		impact of the Stonehaven Junction and Fastlink	intermittent views. Adverse; medium-scale; long-term; permanent. Medium Magnitude		permanent. Low to Medium Magnitude	
Valley : Glen Ury						
All areas	Low to Medium	- No change	- None			
Coast : Kincardine Cliifs						
	Medium	- no direct impact but perception and views from northeast of Stonehaven may be marginally affected by landscape and visual impact of the Southern Leg.	- mitigation planting and earthworks to assist integration of the road corridor into surroundings in distant and intermittent views. Adverse; medium-scale; medium-term; permanent. Low Magnitude.	Slight adverse impact	- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments. Adverse; medium-scale; medium-term; permanent. Low Magnitude.	Slight adverse impact
Hill : Curlethney						
All areas	Low to Medium	- No direct impact but perception and views east and north from ridgeline may be marginally affected by landscape and visual impact of the Fastlink.	- mitigation planting to north. - mitigation planting and earthworks to the east assist integration of the road corridor into surroundings in distant and intermittent views Adverse; medium-scale; medium-term; permanent Low Magnitude	Negligible to Slight adverse impact	- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments Adverse; medium-scale; medium-term; permanent. Low Magnitude	Negligible to Slight adverse impact

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Urban Area: Newtonhill						
All areas	Low to Medium	- No change	- None			
Wooded Farmland: Cammachmore						
All areas	Low to Medium	- no direct impact but perception and views west from southwest boundary Muchalls LCA may be marginally affected by landscape and visual impact of the Fastlink.	- mitigation planting and earthworks to assist integration of the road corridor into surroundings in distant and intermittent views.  Adverse; medium-scale; medium-term; permanent.  Low Magnitude	Slight adverse impact	- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments.  Adverse; medium-scale; medium-term; permanent.  Low Magnitude	Negligible to Slight adverse impact
Wooded Farmland: Netherly / Altres						
All areas	High	- No change	- None			
Open Farmland : Craiglug						
All areas	Low to Medium	- No change	- None			
Hill : Craingles						
All areas	High	- Distant to medium range views to Fastlink and Cleanhill Junction from woodland edge southwest  - Rural setting affected by visual and aural impact of new road and junction	- scrub and mixed woodland to screen and integrate Fastlink with surrounding woodland.  - road embankment graded out to encourage integration with existing landform and allow for potential return to agriculture.  Adverse; large-scale; medium-term; permanent.	Slight to Moderate adverse impact	- planting matured to reduce impact and screen views of road corridor and embankments  - land returned to agricultural use  Adverse; large-scale; long-term; permanent.  Low Magnitude	Slight adverse impact

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			Low Magnitude			