

Denny to Wishaw Network Upgrade

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Volume 3 Appendices

Appendix 6.2: Additional Landscape Baseline



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Appendix 6.2

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This appendix provides supplementary baseline information as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). It provides identification and the published description of Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) defined by Falkirk Council (FC) and Local Landscape Units (LLUs) defined by North Lanarkshire (NLC) within the Study Area (Figure 6.6, Volume 2).
- 1.1.2 Each LLCA and LLU has been associated with each of the LCTs which overlap in area. The LCTs form the basis of the landscape assessment as detailed within Volume 1, Chapter 6 Landscape and Visual. This has been carried out to ensure consistency with national guidance and to clarify how local characteristics influence sensitivity and likely magnitude of effect.
- 1.1.3 Table 1 Relationship between NatureScot Landscape Character Types (LCTs), Falkirk Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs), and North Lanarkshire Local Landscape Units (LLUs) summarises these associations for the scoped in landscape character receptors, showing how the LLCAs and LLUs relate to the overarching NatureScot LCT framework and how they have been considered in establishing the baseline for assessment. This approach ensures that both strategic and local landscape qualities are fully reflected in the evaluation of likely effects on landscape character and visual amenity.

Table 1 Relationship between NatureScot Landscape Character Types (LCTs), Falkirk Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs), and North Lanarkshire Local Landscape Units (LLUs)

LCT (NatureScot)	LLCA (FC)	LLU (NLC)
LCT 151 Lowland Plateaux - Central	LLCA 3: Lowland Plateau LLCA 3 (ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland LLCA 3 (iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland	
LCT 152 Lowland River Valleys - Central	LLCA 4: Lowland River Valleys LLCA 4 (iii) Bonny Water LLCA 4 (iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water	
LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley		5 - Fragmented Farmland 6 - Plateau Farmland 7 - Plateau Moorlands
LCT 203 Urban Fringe Farmland		5 - Fragmented Farmland 6 - Plateau Farmland
LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands - Glasgow & Clyde Valley		5 - Fragmented Farmland 6 - Plateau Farmland 7 - Plateau Moorlands

- 1.1.4 LLU 8: Urban Greenspace has not been included above as this LLU is situated entirely within the area classified as 'Urban' in the NatureScot Landscape Character Types (LCTs). Since

urban areas are typically not considered landscape receptors within the LVIA process and are not scoped into the LVIA, LLU 8 is not considered further for the purposes of this assessment.

1.2 Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA)

LLCA 3 (ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland

1.2.1 The LLCA is located in the northern part of the Study Area, immediately south of LLCA3 (iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland. It is bounded on the east by the settlement edge of Falkirk at California, extending south to Slamannan, and on the west by the administrative boundary separating Falkirk and North Lanarkshire at Jawhills. The key characteristics of the LLCA as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *“Occupying the generally featureless, wetter, poorer soils on the central plateau, in between the more undulating and complex Slamannan Plateau to the south and the terraced slopes of the north-facing, well wooded farmland to the north;*
- *Large-scale, open, featureless plateau centred on the Darnrig Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and extending westwards to Garbethill Muir and Fannyside Muir (into North Lanarkshire) and eastwards to Gardrum Moss;*
- *A landscape well-managed to retain these important habitats, including acidic grassland management at California Wildlife Site;*
- *Areas of peatland and rough and improved grassland are of national and international importance for rare overwintering flocks of Bean Geese;*
- *Generally few trees or field boundaries, and large areas of standing waterlogged ground;*
- *Small woodland copses, coniferous and other wind-blown shelterbelts, are uncharacteristic;*
- *A low knoll of slightly higher ground to the north of Wester Jaw is also uncharacteristic;*
- *Sparsely settled, with isolated cottages and small farmsteads;*
- *From the higher ground the open character allows extensive views out to the south towards the Pentland Hills, and to the southwest into North Lanarkshire where the two wind turbines at Greendykeside are visible together with the major radio and TV transmitter masts at Kirk o’Shotts (one mast) and Black Hill (two masts).”*

LLCA3 (iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland

1.2.2 The LLCA is located in the northern part of the Study Area, immediately south of LLCA 4(iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water at High Bonnybridge, and north of LLCA3 (ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland. It is bounded on the east by the settlement edge of Falkirk at Glen Village, and on the west by the settlement edge of Cumbernauld at Wardpark Industrial Estate. The key characteristics of the LLCA as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *“Gently undulating farmland, characterised by the transitional location between the sheltered, largely urbanised lowland river valley and the exposed moorland plateau;*
- *Mixed farming with improved grassland for sheep and horse grazing and arable fields on the lower, more sheltered ground;*
- *Much less exposed or remote in character than LLCAs 3(i) and 3(ii);*

- *Due to this location, there are extensive views northwards and the northern plateau farmlands are very evident in views from the urban edge and are important to its setting;*
- *Network of Core Paths provide important outdoor recreation including circular walking and cycle routes to a large number of people living close by;*
- *Underlying geology of predominantly Carboniferous millstone grit with glacial tills and moderate quality soils to the west, with some Westphalia coal measures in the central and eastern parts;*
- *Drained by a series of mostly inconspicuous tributaries of the River Carron and River Avon; small waterbodies dot the landscape;*
- *Land cover is predominantly uniform, with regular rectilinear and evenly spaced fields associated with large estates including the Callendar Estate, with a maintained, well managed character including clipped hedges of beech, hawthorn and gorse, and well maintained stone dykes;*
- *This estate feel gradually weakens further south on the higher ground, where field boundaries are increasingly defined by post and wire fences, with some gappy stone dykes and gappy hedges;*
- *Well-wooded character, with an extensive coniferous plantation and numerous broadleaved or mixed woods, and roadside shelterbelts, provides a medium scale, semi-open character to the landscape;*
- *Sparsely settled, with a scatter of regularly spaced farmstead's and isolated cottages linked by a few minor roads running grid-like in either a north-south or east-west direction;*
- *Overhead power lines and pylons zigzag across the area, where the tall mast of the Westerglen Transmitting Station are also conspicuous features on the north-facing ridge;*
- *Some evidence of past coal mining with disused workings and associated infrastructure."*

LLCA 4 (iii) Bonny Water

1.2.3 The LLCA is located in the northern part of the Study Area, immediately south of Dennyloanhead and north of LLCA3 (iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland at Allandale. It is bounded on the east by Bonnybridge Industrial Estate, and on the west by the administrative boundary separating Falkirk and North Lanarkshire at Banknock. The key characteristics of the LLCA as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *"Open, medium-large scale valley of the Bonny Water closely follows the southern edge of the urban conurbation comprising Banknock, Haggs, Longcroft, Parkfoot and Dennyloanhead, including the roadside settlement of Allandale, and extends eastwards to Bonnybridge/Greenhill;*
- *Underlain by a variety of rocks, principally millstone grits and limestones, proving less resistant to erosion than the surrounding harder basalts;*
- *South of Banknock, the Bonny Water follows the same narrow course through a steep sided, tree lined valley as the Forth & Clyde Canal, before separating and opening out in to the wider, flatter, larger scale valley;*

- *Historically an important route for communication, with roads, railway lines and associated infrastructure, the canal and locks, river and the Antonine Wall, with Roman forts and camps, all within the river valley;*
- *Urban influences, including warehousing and an industrial estate south of Dennyloanhead, have a significant influence on the character of the landscape - however there are small areas of pasture and arable fields on the floodplain, with small clumps of riverside deciduous woodland, and there is an important area of wooded open space between Dennyloanhead and Bonnyfield."*

LLCA 4 (iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water

1.2.4 The LLCA is located in the northern part of the Study Area, immediately south of Forth Valley Royal Hospital and north of LLCA3 (iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland at High Bonnybridge. It is bounded on the east by Larbert, Carron, Bainsford and Camelon, and on the west by Denny and Bonnybridge. The key characteristics of the LLCA as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *"A wide swathe of low, very gently rolling land where the Bonny Water meets the lower stretches of the River Carron between Denny, Bonnybridge, Larbert and Falkirk, and continues eastwards in a narrow, shallow valley between Carron and Bainsford/Langlees;*
- *The LLCA lies between the rising ground of the Lowland Hill Fringes to the north and the elevated Lowland Plateau to the south;*
- *An area of raised ground beyond a ridgeline lies above the floodplain carselands to the north and east of Stenhousemuir/ Antonshill, representing an area of 'raised beach' landscape characterised by its relatively level, raised platform historically used for settlement (Kinnaird House is located here) and communication (the M9 including Junctions 7 & 8, and the A88 pass through the area) which have a considerable influence on the urban edge, transitional area;*
- *Urban influences have a significant influence on the character of the area, with major transport routes, associated structures and other infrastructure and development impacting on the openness of the valley;*
- *Numerous power lines and pylons branch out from the electricity sub-station, with other land uses within the densely settled, industrialised valley including housing, business parks, factories and other industrial buildings, hospitals and a sewage works, although golf courses maintain some openness;*
- *The expansion of development creates an inharmonious landscape, with much fertile farmland being lost and the setting of the Antonine Wall and Roman Fort remains at Rough Castle being compromised;*
- *The Falkirk Wheel is now a major tourist attraction, with panoramic views to the north, east and west;*
- *Urban influences have less of an impact on the character of the River Carron valley east of Denny where mixed farming, riverside and roadside tree belts and deciduous*

woodland (for example at Headswood House) provide an attractive, more intimate valley landscape with views northwards into the wooded hill fringes;

- *Tree belts, avenues and policy woodland at Kinnaird House, with boundary stone dykes, give a designed-landscape feel to this part of the LLCA.*
- *To the east the well-wooded meanders of the River Carron, and the Carron Dams SSSI, are features of landscape interest in contrast to the surrounding residential development;*
- *Maintaining the open, undeveloped nature of these parts of the LLCA is recognised by the Local Plan Green Belt designation;*
- *Grangemouth petrochemical developments and the Ochil Hills form important backdrops in many views.”*

1.3 Local Landscape Units (LLU)

LLU 5. Fragmented Farmlands

1.3.1 LLU5 comprises three separated areas within NLC. Two of the three areas of Fragmented Farmlands are within the Study Area which comprise:

- 5a. Area either side of M73 Road Corridor, south of the A80; and
- 5b. Area east of Airdrie.

5a. Area either side of M73 Road Corridor, south of the A80

1.3.2 This LLU extends across the NLC administrative boundary, and covers the area south from the A80, towards the west side of Coatbridge. There are a number of water bodies and man-made features that disrupt the character of the area, deteriorating an already fragmented field pattern and any rhythm. Key characteristics as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- **“Topographical characteristics:** *Within this LLU, the topography is generally undulating, with hummocky structures in the north, around Gartcosh and Glenboig. There are small valleys, some isolated hillocks, and open flat areas.*
- **Openness and inter-visibility:** *There is a lack of visibility within the character area, excepting from locations atop the numerous small hills and higher undulation ridges.*
- *Views are further disrupted by the numerous plantations and road and rail corridors within the LLU. Views into and out of the LLU are similarly disrupted due to the unevenness of the topography and the presence of visually disruptive features such as settlements and road/rail corridors, which form many of its boundaries.*
- **Settlement and man-made influences:** *A number of settlements border and are wholly within the LLU. There is an extensive road and rail network, including major motorway corridors, which have a strong influence on the character of the area. Road and rail corridors also serve to isolate island areas, and although some of the rail network is now disused, they still have an influence on the landscape structure.*
- *There are a number of overhead transmission lines, whose pylons are prominent within the landscape, in addition to telecommunications masts in the north of the character area. Many of these transmission lines and telecommunication masts are sky-lined and*

are therefore prominent features in the landscape, the impact of which varies depending upon lighting conditions.

- **Land use:** *The land use pattern across this character area can be confused and disjointed. There are isolated areas of farmland, plantations, golf courses, urban settlements and industry and also larger areas of more consistent farmland, exhibiting a strong rural character. There are a number of water bodies, some of which have recreational uses, both artificial (disused quarries) and natural in origin.*
- *The many scattered farmsteads vary considerably in size, many of which also incorporate alternative uses in addition to agriculture. There is considerable evidence of former light industry, including stretches of disused railway and redundant quarries.*
- *The LLU contains a complex and unplanned road network, which is a combination of local roads and tracks to large scale motorway corridors, disrupting the land use pattern across the area.*
- **Landscape pattern and field boundaries:** *The fragmented farmlands differ from the plateau farmlands because they lack structure and uniformity. The size and shape and the boundary treatments of fields are irregular. All of this serves to break up cohesion within the landscape and results in a complex and disjointed pattern.*
- **Landscape quality and condition:** *The quality and condition of this LLU varies considerably, from well managed farmland to abandoned and unmanaged former industrial land. The variable nature of this landscape results in areas of both good and poor landscape quality and condition.*
- **Value of the landscape:** *The often fragmented, incoherent pattern of parts of this landscape reduces its value. However, there is some value as a recreational resource and as a setting to and division between the adjacent settlements.*
- **Sensitivity to future development:** *The variable nature of this landscape, with locally strong influence of existing development and infrastructure and areas of more consistent rural character results in a low to medium sensitivity to development. Care should be taken to ensure development is carefully sited and designed to fit with the local character and not result in further fragmentation.”*

5b – Area east of Airdrie

- 1.3.3 This area is bounded on the west by the settlement boundary of Airdrie, on the north by Plains and Airdriehill, east by Lilly Loch, and south by LLU 6. Plateau Farmlands. This is an irregular LLU, heavily disrupted by man-made influences that have resulted in a landscape which consists of elements typical to a number of other Landscape Character Types, but lacking a coherent structure. Key characteristics as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- **“Topographical characteristics:** *Rolling landscape, with valleys and small hummocks. The area is mostly formed through glacial action and this has resulted in the smooth landform, with areas of aggregate and soil deposits, through which water action has produced localised valleys and cuttings.*

- **Openness and inter-visibility:** *The adjacent LLUs are mostly elevated and afford views into the fragmented landscape, although these views are often disrupted by plantations and other features. Within the LLU, there are short and medium distance views, although these are also disrupted by plantations and other features.*
- **Settlement and man-made influences:** *There are numerous small developments and farms within this LLU, although they are generally isolated and small scale. There is extensive evidence of former light industry throughout the landscape, which manifests in derelict sites and dismantled infrastructure such as the remains of the rail network. An overhead power line also passes through the west of this area and is locally prominent. The adjacent urban area of Airdrie has a local influence on the impression of this landscape.*
- **Land use:** *The dominant land use is farming, although the field system is very disjointed and inconsistent due to the topographic and human influences such as the various former quarries, railways and other legacy features. There are plantations in the eastern portion of this area and due to rotational felling programmes these are also disjointed and inconsistent.*
- **Landscape pattern and field boundaries:** *The field pattern lacks cohesion and is a mixture of post and timber rail, post and wire fences and hedgerows. Many of the hedgerows have trees, though the lack of consistency is sometimes confusing to the observer. The many (now disused and dismantled) railway corridors that cross the character area, in addition to the live railway corridor, serve to further compartmentalise the landscape in a pattern unsympathetic with the field system, and also introduce an additional boundary fencing type.*
- **Landscape quality and condition:** *Inconsistency within the landscape and general confusion within the field pattern has resulted in a lack of structure, lacking natural features, and instead showing a dominant character of dereliction and decline. This is particularly noticeable in the disjointed field pattern and the proliferation of disused industrial sites and railways. The area south east of the railway is generally more actively managed and in better condition than the area to the north.*
- **Value of the landscape:** *The fragmented, incoherent pattern of this landscape reduces its value. However, there is some value as a recreational resource and as a setting to the adjacent urban areas of Airdrie and Plains.*
- **Sensitivity to future development:** *The fragmented nature and influence from past and present development, adjacent urban areas and infrastructure elements results in a low sensitivity to change. There may be scope for future development to help improve the structure and quality of the landscape.”*

LLU6. Plateau Farmlands

1.3.4 LLU6 is identified by two separated areas within the NLC boundary and they comprise:

- 6a. Northern Plateau Farmland; and
- 6b. Southern Plateau Farmland.

6a. Northern Plateau Farmland

- 1.3.5 This area is bounded on the west by 5. Fragmented Farmlands at Glenboig, on the north by urban settlement boundary of Cumbernauld, east by 7. Plateau Moorlands at Riggend, and Lilly Loch, and south by the settlement boundaries of Coatbridge and Airdrie. Key characteristics as set out within the published study are included as follows:
- **“Topographical characteristics;** *The plateau farmland is located within a flat or gently undulating topography, the frequency of the low hills and shallow valleys varying from gently undulating to almost flat. As the topography becomes flatter, the openness of the landscape generally also increases, resulting in a more open landscape to the east of the LLU. Within the western parts of this area, the undulating nature of the landscape becomes more pronounced and this is reflected in the complexity of the landscape and land use (as illustrated by the increasingly complex field pattern).*
 - **Openness and inter-visibility:** *The underlying topography is undulating, which results in open views from elevated areas within the LLU, thereby enabling medium to long distance views both across the LLU and into adjacent character areas. Within the lower elevations and troughs, the views remain open, but of reduced visibility. Many of these troughs and their land-uses are not visible from adjacent LLUs. Generally the road pattern does not follow the contours, and therefore road users experience changing openness and views as they pass through the LLU. In addition, the frequent plantations and groups of trees impact upon inter-visibility by reducing the available views.*
 - **Settlement and man-made influences:** *Settlement within this area is largely limited to scattered farms and houses, although there are also a number of small settlements. However, this landscape shows considerable human influence, including extensive field patterns, road network and farmsteads that cover the entire character area. The well-defined field pattern includes a number of plantations and woodlands that serve as boundary features, enhancing the perception of management and human influence.*
 - *The road pattern within this LLU is both extensive and complex, linking the various developments, farmsteads and settlements both within this area and to those in adjacent character areas. Field accesses are generally directly onto the roads, resulting in a disjointed and complex road network. The impact of transport networks is increased by the rail track that bisects the northern part of the character area, and a formerly more extensive, but now disused, railway network, the infrastructure for which remains as a feature within the landscape.*
 - *The perception of human influence is further increased by the numerous overhead lines and pylons that cross the landscape, in both north-south and east-west alignments. The area also includes evidence of former quarrying, with numerous small to medium sized disused quarries in the northern section of the area, and opencast workings near the A73 at Pinwinnie and Stand.*
 - **Land use:** *The dominant land use is farming, both arable and pastoral. There is a nature reserve at Luggiebank Wood, south west of Greenfaulds, and a number of former quarries that have become recreation opportunities for angling. The well-established field pattern also incorporates an extensive footpath network that links the woodlands and follows the numerous water courses within the LLU.*

- **Landscape pattern and field boundaries:** *The field pattern is well established, derived from a combination of topography and the existing road network. The field boundaries are mostly post and wire fencing, with hedgerows and hedgerow trees.*
- **Landscape quality and condition:** *This landscape is generally well managed and cared for with a consistent rural character. There are some former industrial and open cast sites which can locally reduce the quality of the landscape.*
- **Value of the landscape:** *There is some local value for recreation and also as a setting to the adjacent urban areas of Cumbernauld, Coatbridge and Airdrie. This landscape also provides a transition between the Fragmented Farmland and Urban LCTs and the Plateau Moorland LCT.*
- **Sensitivity to future development:** *Human influence and development is found across this landscape and can be locally prominent, with evidence of former large scale industrial and opencast mining.*
- *However, the overall rural, agricultural nature of the landscape results in a medium sensitivity.”*

6b. Southern Plateau Farmland

1.3.6 The LLU is bisected by the Coatbridge/Airdrie urban settlement and is bounded east by 7. Plateau Moorlands on the east at Roughrigg Reservoir. Key characteristics as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- **“Topographical characteristics:** *The landform is flat and slightly undulating. The scale of the landscape is large and the shallow valleys are broad. The undulations are minor in height, with shallow valleys and low, rounded ridges.*
- **Openness and inter-visibility:** *Although the landscape is large scale and generally shallow in undulation, the lack of elevation within the area prevents large scale views and vistas. This is also combined with the considerable afforestation, both commercial forestry, and as tree belts along the field pattern boundaries.*
- *This is particularly the case in the area between Newmains and Shotts, where there are numerous woods and plantations, including Heatherland Plantation, Mossband Wood, Penty Wood, Muiredge Wood and Newmill Wood.*
- *Inter-visibility with adjacent LLUs is also limited, excepting locations within adjacent LLUs, where hills provide more elevated views across the Plateau Farmlands.*
- **Settlement and man-made influences:** *The Southern Plateau Farmlands LLU covers an extensive area, within which there are a number of small settlements and many farmsteads, light industrial areas, prominent evidence of former heavier industry, numerous bings and open cast workings.*
- *Much of the LLU boundary is urban fringe, where the extent and boundaries of the plateau farmland is defined by adjacent settlement boundaries.*
- *Transport and telecommunications networks are also particularly prominent. The character area includes major east-west transport links, both rail and road, such as the M8 road corridor, A775/B7066 and the A71. This east-west network is complemented by north-south routes such as the A73, A723 and A725.*

- *These major road links are further enhanced by an extensive network of interconnecting access routes resulting in an easily penetrated landscape, though they also enhance the man-made influence upon the landscape. In addition to the rail corridors, there is an extensive network of (now disused) railway linkages, probably as a direct result of the extensive former quarrying, open cast extraction and industrial heritage.*
- *The settled and well-defined field pattern within the farming areas, extensive commercial woodlands, settlements, and industrial evidence, combined with the transport and telecommunications/transmission lines, all result in a heavily man influenced landscape character.*
- **Land use:** *The present land use of this area centres upon arable and pastoral farming, depending upon the degree of exposure, landscape condition and quality. There are numerous commercial plantations within the character area and evidence of former industry, although modern day industry has declined to largely isolated minor light industry. There are a number of associated semi-rural uses, such as the presence of HMP Shotts, reservoirs and golf driving ranges, open cast workings and quarries, some of which are still in operation. This LLU also includes some shallow wooded valleys with public access, and restored open cast workings that have been developed into Community Nature Parks (such as at Greenhead Moss).*
- **Landscape pattern and field boundaries:** *The field pattern is well defined by predominately post and wire fencing. The post and wire fences are often strengthened with hedgerows and in many instances, stretches of shelterbelt tree planting. The use of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland belts improves the quality of the farmland appearance, in contrast to the adjacent Plateau Moorland LCT.*
- **Landscape quality and condition:** *The quality and condition of this landscape varies locally as a result of differing levels of land management. However, the overall impression is of a well-managed and cared for landscape.*
- **Value of the landscape:** *There is some local value for recreation and as a setting to adjacent settlements. In some areas this LLU forms an important division and buffer between adjacent urban areas.*
- **Sensitivity to future development:** *The well-defined landscape pattern and predominantly agricultural land use can be susceptible to development. However, prominent telecommunication and transport infrastructure, existing and previous industrial development and the influence from adjacent urban areas results in a low to medium sensitivity to development. Sensitivity to change is locally increased where the LLU provides a division between different urban settlements.”*

LLU7. Plateau Moorland

- 1.3.7 The LLU extends over much of the eastern part of the NLC area, which is bounded on the north by the settlement boundary of Cumbernauld, west by LLU 6a Northern Plateau Farmland and LLU 5b. Area east of Airdrie, and on the east by the administrative boundary of Falkirk within the Study Area. Key characteristics as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- **“Topographical characteristics:** This LLU is defined by an elevated, large scale flat or gently undulating topography. There is a strong sense of exposure and openness throughout. Soils are variable, from areas of wet peatland to thinner soils with exposed rock outcrops. However, the land cover is relatively simple and uniform.
- **Openness and inter-visibility:** Much of the Plateau Moorlands LLU is open and gently rolling or relatively flat. Therefore, there is considerable inter-visibility with adjacent LLUs. The occasional more elevated areas within this landscape enable medium to long distance views over adjacent areas and into neighbouring Local Authority areas.
- **Settlement and man-made influences:** There are a number of small to medium sized settlements, in addition to a considerable number of farmsteads and small light-industrial developments within this LLU.
- **There is considerable evidence of past industrial use with numerous former open cast sites, quarries and the presence of many bings and spoil heaps**
- **There are extensive areas of commercial plantation, which in North Lanarkshire is almost exclusively coniferous. Rotational cropping and replanting of the plantation areas has led to a changing landscape, of varying ages and maturity. These commercial woodlands differ considerably from the mixed and deciduous natural woodlands that occur sparsely within this LLU.**
- **A number of wind farms within this LLU and in adjacent areas have a locally strong influence on this landscape.**
- **Land use:** This landscape is crossed by major transport links, including the M8 and A71, the corridors of which form a considerable division within the LLU. Rough grassland, mostly sheep grazing with limited and localised cattle grazing is the principal land use. There is also some minor existing light industry, including mineral extraction and quarrying. The LLU includes extensive telecommunications and overhead transmission connections, incorporating National Grid connections for the various small and medium sized wind farms within the character area.
- **Landscape pattern and field boundaries:** There is a network of irregular field boundaries, largely post and wire fencing, with occasional lengths of hedgerow, incorporating hedgerow trees. The diversity of field boundaries is reflected in the varied nature of the field pattern, the irregular field size and shape, and the presence of many plantations. The landscape pattern is large scale with large areas of rough grassland and large forestry plantations.
- **Landscape quality and condition:** The quality and condition of this landscape varies considerably, from areas of well managed farmland to former abandoned industrial and open cast sites. The predominance of former opencast sites and bings and existing quarries has a strong influence on the landscape quality of this LLU.
- **Value of the landscape:** The upland, exposed and generally less settled nature of this landscape provides a contrast to much of the wider North Lanarkshire landscape. There is also some value as a setting to the adjacent urban area to the north.
- **Sensitivity to future development:** The large scale nature of this landscape and the prevalence of existing and former industrial development, wind farms and other structures results in a low sensitivity to some types of development (e.g. wind farms and small scale residential). However, not all development will be appropriate and it will be

important to ensure that any future development relates well to the upland nature of the landscape.”