

Appendix B – Glossary of physical attributes and perceptual responses

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

Physical attributes	Explanation
	of rounded massif, or the seemingly infinite expanse of open peatland or seas.
Fulfilment from the physical challenge required to penetrate into these places	The satisfaction and sense of accomplishment that arises from the physical effort required to traverse these settings, tackling their scale, topography, ground and weather conditions.

Source: NatureScot, Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas, Technical Guidance, Sept 2020.