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# **Volume 7E Proposed Development (Onshore) Appendices**

## **Appendix 3-3 Bats Survey Report**

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# Volume 7E Appendix 3-3 Bats Survey Report

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>AMSC</b>	Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions
<b>BPpH</b>	Bat Passes per Hour
<b>BSPP</b>	Bat Species Protection Plan
<b>CEMP</b>	Construction Environmental Management Plan
<b>CIEEM</b>	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
<b>CMS</b>	Construction Method Statement
<b>CTMP</b>	Construction Traffic Management Plan
<b>DBW</b>	Daytime Bat Walkover
<b>ECoW</b>	Ecological Clerk of Works
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>EIAR</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
<b>EPS</b>	European Protected Species
<b>FAR</b>	Further assessment required
<b>GLTA</b>	Ground Level Tree Assessment
<b>GPS</b>	Global Positioning System
<b>HDD</b>	Horizontal Directional Drilling
<b>ICCI</b>	In-combination climate change
<b>ID</b>	Identification
<b>JNCC</b>	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
<b>km</b>	Kilometre
<b>m</b>	Metre
<b>LMP</b>	Lighting Management Plan

<b>MLWS</b>	Mean Low Water Springs
<b>MMP</b>	Materials Management Plan
<b>nm</b>	Nanometre
<b>NVA</b>	Night Vision Aid
<b>ONEC</b>	Onshore Export Cable Corridor
<b>OnTI</b>	Onshore Transmission Infrastructure
<b>PPP</b>	Planning Permission in Principle
<b>PRA</b>	Preliminary Roost Assessment
<b>PRF</b>	Potential Roost Feature
<b>PRF-I</b>	Potential Roost Feature – Individual
<b>PRF-M</b>	Potential Roost Feature - Multiple
<b>QI</b>	Qualifying Interest
<b>RLB</b>	Red Line Boundary
<b>TJB</b>	Transition Joint Bay
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>WANE</b>	Wildlife And Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011
<b>WFD</b>	Water Framework Directive



## Executive Summary

This appendix of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) identifies the potential effects on bat populations associated with the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Proposed Development (Onshore).

The suite of bat surveys undertaken confirmed bat activity throughout the OnTI RLB. Preliminary Roost Assessments (PRA) identified six structures and two trees with the potential to support roosting bats. Following emergence surveys, non-breeding common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) roosts were identified in five of the six structures, with a total of 11 roosts identified across these five structures. There was a peak count of three bats emerging from a roost on any one survey. Neither of the trees were found to contain roosts. None of the identified roosts were considered maternity or nursery roosts following emergence surveys.

The hedgerow features that held suitability to be used as foraging and commuting bats were surveyed using static detectors. All of the features were utilised by foraging and commuting bats, with the highest number recorded in the south of the OnTI RLB at D7 and D8.

For the construction phase of the Proposed Development (Onshore), potential impacts include temporary and permanent habitat loss, degradation, or fragmentation. Vegetation clearance and the removal of linear features could impact bat foraging and commuting routes. Disturbance from noise, vibration, and lighting during construction activities could lead to roost abandonment or changes in foraging patterns. There is also a risk of species injury and mortality due to road traffic accidents involving bats as a result of increased vehicle movement.

For the operational phase of the Proposed Development (Onshore), potential impacts include permanent habitat loss or degradation, although the minimal operational activities are expected to have negligible impacts on bats. Disturbance from lighting at the Onshore Substations could affect bats using the surrounding area for roosting, foraging, and commuting. The impacts associated with decommissioning are assumed to be equal to or lesser than those identified for the construction stage.

The assessment has considered embedded mitigation measures for the assessment of potential effects. This includes a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and related pollution avoidance measures, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), avoidance of notable habitats through micro-siting and use of Horizontal Direction Drilling (HDD) technology.

In addition to the implementation of embedded mitigation measures, secondary mitigation measures were proposed to avoid likely significant effects. This includes, but is not limited to, the appointment of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) to oversee ecological protection measures, a detailed Bat Species Protection Plan (BSPP) to ensure compliance with legal protections and minimise impacts on bats, and a Lighting Management Plan (LMP) to reduce light spill and disturbance to bats.

Following the implementation of embedded and secondary mitigation measures, the report concludes that there will be no significant residual effects on bats from the construction,

operation, or decommissioning of the proposed development. The assessment also highlights potential ecological enhancements, such as landscape planting to connect ecological corridors and provide additional foraging and commuting resources for bats.

# 1 Introduction

1.1.1.1 This technical appendix supports Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

1.1.1.2 This technical appendix is supported by:

- Annex 1 – Supporting Figures; and
- Annex 2 – Survey Forms.

1.1.1.3 This technical appendix describes the bat surveys undertaken within the Onshore Transmission Infrastructure (OnTI) Red Line Boundary (RLB). A description of the Proposed Development (Onshore), outlining the components included within the OnTI is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Proposed Development Description (Onshore), and a summary is provided below.

1.1.1.4 Due to the timings of the bat surveys and submission of the EIAR, the evaluation of potential effects to bats that may arise from the Proposed Development (Onshore) are discussed in this report and not within Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity, which was submitted with the rest of the EIAR at an earlier date.

## 1.2 The Proposed Development (Onshore)

1.2.1.1 Within the OnTI RLB, a proposed Landfall Site has been identified along with an Onshore Export Cable Corridor (ONEC) and Onshore Substation Site. The Onshore Export Cable Route (the area where the infrastructure would be located and would be required for construction activities) for the Onshore Export Cable Circuits will be up to 100 metres (m) wide. The Onshore Export Cable Route will be defined at detailed design stage through further technical studies. At this stage, the ONEC is identified to allow for micro-siting of the Onshore Export Cable Circuits at detailed design and allow for flexibility within individual locations for differing construction methodologies such as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD).

1.2.1.2 The OnTI RLB encompasses:

- The Landfall Site: the area from Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) where the Offshore Export Cable Circuits are connected to the Onshore Export Cable Circuits via HDD ducts within Transition Joint Bays (TJBs) (buried box-like structures which house the jointing between the Offshore and Onshore Export Cable Circuits). The Landfall Site is located at a rocky bay named Stake Ness, 1 kilometre (km) west of the village of Whitehills and approximately 5km west of Banff;
- The ONEC: where the Onshore Export Cable Circuits will be located which connects the TJBs at the Landfall Site to the Onshore Substation Site. The ONEC extends approximately 37km from Stake Ness to an area in the vicinity of the existing New Deer Substation;

- The Onshore Substation Site: comprising two co-located Onshore Substations located adjacent to the existing New Deer substation. Each substation aligns with the two project phases; and
- An Onshore Grid Connection Cable Corridor: connecting the Onshore Substation to the Grid Connection Point at the existing New Deer Substation (owned by Scottish Southern Energy Network - Transmission). This connection relates to Phase 1 of the Proposed Development only. The Onshore Grid Connection Cable Corridor for Phase 2 will be subject to a separate planning application.

## 2 Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

2.1.1.1 Volume 1, Chapter 2: Legislation and Policy, of the EIAR sets out the policy and legislation associated with the Proposed Development (Onshore).

2.1.1.2 There is a comprehensive system of legislation, both domestic and international, which aims to protect biodiversity at the landscape, habitat and species level. Much of this legislation exists within, and also independently of, the planning process. The following section details the legislation, policy and guidance relevant to this appendix.

### 2.2 Legislation

2.2.1.1 All bat species are classed as European Protected Species (EPS) and received full protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) (United Kingdom (UK) Parliament, 1994<sup>1</sup>).

2.2.1.2 Other legislation relevant to this appendix includes:

- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (Scottish Parliament, 2004<sup>2</sup>);
- Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (WANE) (Scottish Parliament, 2011<sup>3</sup>);
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (UK Parliament, 1981<sup>4</sup>); and
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (UK Parliament, 2019<sup>5</sup>).

2.2.1.3 In summary, for any wild bat species, it is an offence under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) (UK Parliament, 1994<sup>1</sup>) to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, kill, harass or disturb any bat species, or to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal;
- Disturb a bat while it is migrating or hibernating;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection;
- Disturb a bat in a manner or in circumstances likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; or
- Disturb a bat in a manner or in circumstances likely to impair its ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or otherwise care for its young.

## 2.3 Planning Policy

2.3.1.1 The National Planning Framework 4 (Scottish Government, 2023<sup>6</sup>), adopted in February 2023, outlines under Policy 4f the following in relation to protected species:

*"Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect on species protected by legislation will only be supported where the proposal meets the relevant statutory tests. If there is reasonable evidence to suggest that a protected species is present on a site or may be affected by a proposed development, steps must be taken to establish its presence. The level of protection required by legislation must be factored into the planning and design of development, and potential impacts must be fully considered prior to the determination of any application."*

## 2.4 Guidance

2.4.1.1 The guidance relevant to this appendix comprises:

- Bat Roosts in Trees – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree Care and Ecology Professionals (BTHK, 2018<sup>7</sup>);
- Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines (4<sup>th</sup> edition) (Collins, 2023<sup>8</sup>);
- UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>);
- Bat Calls of Britain and Europe: A Guide to Species Identification (Russ, 2021<sup>10</sup>); and
- Social Calls of the Bats of Britain and Ireland: Expanded and Revised Second Edition (Middleton *et al.*, 2022<sup>11</sup>).

2.4.1.2 This guidance informed the survey methodology, classification of potential bat features and interpretation of the results.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1.1 Biological records covering an earlier design iteration of the OnTI RLB and a 500m buffer were requested from the North East Scotland Biological Records Centre in February 2023.
- 3.1.1.2 Following refinement of the OnTI RLB, the desk study was undertaken to identify any existing ecological information within the OnTI RLB and a 500m buffer.
- 3.1.1.3 Due to the transient nature of bats, records older than ten years are not considered a reliable source of information upon which to inform current baseline conditions.

### 3.2 Field Survey

#### 3.2.1 Daytime Bat Walkover

- 3.2.1.1 Daytime Bat Walkovers (DBW) were undertaken within the OnTI RLB and up to 30m from this boundary where access permitted (Figure 3-3.1 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures). DBW identified structures and trees with potential for use by roosting bats were target noted.
- 3.2.1.2 Extended Phase 1 habitat surveys were undertaken from late May 2023 to early September 2023. If signs of bats were identified during these surveys, they were recorded.
- 3.2.1.3 During the DBW the habitats and features within the OnTI RLB and up to 30m from the OnTI RLB were assessed for their suitability to support bats roosting, foraging and commuting. The potential suitability was considered as outlined in Table 3-1 which is adapted from the Collins, 2023<sup>8</sup> guidelines.

Table 3-1: Guidelines for assessing the suitability of a development site for bats (as adapted from Collins, 2023<sup>8</sup>).

Potential Suitability	Roosting Habitats in Structures	Potential Flight-Paths and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats at any time of the year.	No habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting and foraging bats at any time of the year.
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small amount of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting and foraging bats; however, a small amount of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-specific bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. Such potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or a classic hibernation roost but could be used by individual hibernating bats).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated with poor connectivity to the surrounding habitat.  Suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats e.g., a single tree or a small patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to the size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, not species conservation status).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as tree lines and scrub or linked gardens.  Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.



Potential Suitability	Roosting Habitats in Structures	Potential Flight-Paths and Foraging Habitats
High	<p>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts e.g., maternity or classic hibernation sites.</p>	<p>Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight paths such as river valleys, hedgerows and woodland edge.</p> <p>High quality habitat that is well-connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broad-leaved woodland, tree lined woodland and grazed parkland.</p> <p>Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</p>

3.2.1.4 Dedicated bat surveys were undertaken between September 2023 and September 2024. All surveys were completed and/ or supervised by suitably qualified ecologists with NatureScot bat licences. These surveys are detailed further in the following sections.

### 3.2.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment and Winter Hibernation Assessment

3.2.2.1 A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of structures as well as their suitability to support over-wintering bats within the OnTI RLB and within 30m of the RLB was carried out between 19 September 2023 and 28 November 2023.

3.2.2.2 Survey methods used were in line with relevant best practice guidance (BTHK, 2018<sup>7</sup> and Collins, 2023<sup>8</sup>).

### 3.2.3 Ground Level Tree Assessment

3.2.3.1 Ground Level Tree Assessments (GLTA) were carried out between 1 September 2023 and 10 April 2024.

3.2.3.2 The trees with the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Development (Onshore) were considered to be trees within the OnTI RLB and within 30m of the OnTI RLB. These trees were assessed from the ground, looking for potential roost features (PRFs) which could be used by roosting bats.

3.2.3.3 Binoculars (magnification 8x42) and torches were used to identify PRFs higher above the ground. The trees were then graded as to their level of potential roost suitability as per the definitions in Table 3-2.

- 3.2.3.4 Trees that had PRFs or required further assessment were tagged using round aluminium numbered tree tags and their location was marked using a Global Positioning System (GPS) device.
- 3.2.3.5 All trees assessed as further assessment required (FAR) were inspected for signs of bat usage, including bats, droppings and feeding remains, using a torch and endoscope (Ridgid Micro CA-100 or CA-150 or Magnusson Inspection Camera) where required. Where PRFs could not be fully inspected from ground level, a camera on a pole (SkyVac 'Real-time' High Level Inspection System) was used.

Table 3-2: Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees for a development site for bats (as adapted from Collins, 2023<sup>8</sup>).

Potential Suitability	Description
None	Either no PRFs were identified or it is highly unlikely there will be PRFs in the tree.
FAR	Further assessment required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to establish if PRFs are present (i.e., PRFs cannot be seen to be present from the ground due to dense foliage or access restrictions but may be present); or</li> <li>▪ to determine the suitability of PRF(s) present (i.e., PRF(s) were not fully viewed from the ground).</li> </ul>
Potential Roost Feature – Individual (PRF-I)	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
Potential Roost Feature – Multiple (PRF-M)	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

### 3.2.4 Emergence Surveys

- 3.2.4.1 As per best practice guidance (Collins, 2023<sup>8</sup>), the number of emergence surveys required on structures found to have suitability to support bats is as follows:
  - structures assessed as having low suitability for summer roosting bats require one emergence survey between May and August;
  - moderate suitability structures require two surveys between May and September with at least one between May and August; and
  - high suitability structures require three surveys, two of which must be carried out between May and August.
- 3.2.4.2 As per best practice guidance (Collins, 2023<sup>8</sup>), trees with PRF-M require three emergence surveys between May and September, two of which must be carried out between May and August.

3.2.4.3 Emergence surveys were carried out between 28 May 2024 and 4 September 2024. Details on the dates and features surveyed is provided in Table 3-3. Survey forms are provided in Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 2: Survey Forms.

Table 3-3: Features surveyed including assessment of suitability and survey dates

Feature Reference	Distance to OnTI RLB	Feature Description	Assessment of Summer Roosting Suitability	Emergence Survey Dates
OW-ARP-FID-537	Outside OnTI RLB, but within 30m	Scots pine tree	FAR	28 May 2024, 24 June 2024, 24 July 2024
OW-ARP-FID-574	Within OnTI RLB	Ash tree	FAR	29 May 2024, 25 June 2024, 25 July 2024
No Feature Reference, located in Land Parcel 1056 <sup>i</sup> at grid reference NJ 77050 50943	Within OnTI RLB	L-shaped stone barn	Moderate	25 July 2024, 14 August 2024
OW-ARP-FID-386	Outside OnTI RLB, but within 30m	Stone barn	High	30 May 2024, 22 July 2024, 3 September 2024
OW-ARP-FID-390	Within OnTI RLB	Unoccupied house	High	23 July 2024, 13 August 2024, 4 September 2024
OW-ARP-FID-393	Within OnTI RLB	Occupied detached bungalow	Moderate	23 July 2024, 2 September 2024
OW-ARP-FID-402a	Within OnTI RLB	Stone barn	High	26 June 2024, 24 July 2024, 14 August 2024

<sup>i</sup> Land parcel location is illustrated in Figure 3-3.1 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures.

Feature Reference	Distance to OnTI RLB	Feature Description	Assessment of Summer Roosting Suitability	Emergence Survey Dates
OW-ARP-FID-402b	Within OnTI RLB	Barns with corrugated metal pitched roofs	Low	27 June 2024

3.2.4.4 Bat activity was recorded using Night Vision Aids (NVAs). The NVAs were positioned to capture video of PRFs identified during the PRA. The surveys commenced 20 minutes prior to sunset and lasted until 90 minutes after sunset.

3.2.4.5 The equipment used was Nightfox Whisker Night Vision binoculars mounted on tripods with extra illumination provided by 96-LED infra-red floodlights emitting 850 nanometres (nm) and/ or Canon XA60 camcorders with extra illumination from Dedolight DLOBML-IR860 iRedzilla Infrared Light and/or SANNCE Infrared CCTV system with 1080N cameras with illumination from 96-LED infra-red floodlights emitting 850nm.

3.2.4.6 Full spectrum bat detectors (Anabat Scout, Anabat Express, Anabat Swift or Elekon Batlogger M2) were used to record bat calls and were either paired with an NVA or placed near the PRFs that were being surveyed.

3.2.4.7 Surveyors monitored the NVAs and adjusted lighting to ensure PRFs were visible during the surveys. NVA positioning during the surveys is provided in the survey forms in Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 2: Survey Forms.

3.2.4.8 Analysis and subsequent species identification was carried out using Anabat Insight software (full licence) version 2.0.6-3-g73846db. Any bat roosts identified were graded in accordance with their value as a roost, ranging from Site value to National value, in accordance with best practice guidelines (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>).

### 3.2.5 Static Bat Detector Surveys

3.2.5.1 Static bat detectors (full spectrum Anabat Express or SM4BAT) were left to record between sunset and sunrise for a minimum of 13 nights on linear features such as watercourses, tree-lines and hedgerows that will be bisected by the Proposed Development (Onshore).

3.2.5.2 Species identification was carried out using Anabat Insight software (full licence) version 2.0.6-3-g73846db.

- 3.2.5.3 All recordings were run through Auto ID Bat Classify, applied at a 75% Identification (ID) Tag Certainty Threshold. Of the generated species labels the following amounts were manually checked:
- 25% of all pipistrelle calls;
  - 100% of Myotis species;
  - 100% of Nyctalus species;
  - 100% of any other rare species; and
  - 100% of all multi-species labels for one sound file.
- 3.2.5.4 Twenty-five per cent of the calls in the 'No Species' folder were audited to check for bat calls not identified by Auto ID.
- 3.2.5.5 Once all files containing bat calls were labelled and the appropriate audit had occurred, the data were exported from Insight, per detector location, using the disperse reporting format.
- 3.2.5.6 Guidance on call parameters was taken from Russ (2021<sup>10</sup>) and Middleton *et al.* (2022<sup>11</sup>).
- 3.2.5.7 Table 3-4 shows the location of the static bat detectors, when they recorded and how many nights of data was gathered.

Table 3-4: Locations and durations of recording of static bat detectors

Static Number	Location (Grid Reference)	Dates Installed	Number of Nights of Data
D1	NJ 72775 54801	25.06.2024 - 24.07.2024	30
D2	NJ 82711 45356	25.06.2024 - 24.07.2024	30
D3	NJ 63739 63785	25.07.2024 - 13.08.2024	20
D4	NJ 66040 59584	25.07.2024 - 06.08.2024	13
D5	NJ 70160 57006	25.07.2024 - 13.08.2024	20
D6	NJ 82800 44512	14.08.2024 - 30.08.2024	17
D7	NJ 82253 44858	14.08.2024 - 30.08.2024	17
D8	NJ 79241 45923	29.05.2024 - 24.06.2024	27

## 3.3 EIA Approach and Methodology

### 3.3.1 Overview

3.3.1.1 For the methodology relating to the assessment of likely significant effects on terrestrial ecology and biodiversity from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development (Onshore), please refer to Section 3.5 of Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity.

3.3.1.2 Section 3.5 of Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity includes methodology on:

- Assessment of importance;
- Characterisation of ecological impacts;
- Significance of effect; and
- Approach to cumulative effects.

### 3.3.2 Embedded Mitigation

3.3.2.1 Where possible, mitigation measures will be embedded into the design of the Proposed Development (Onshore).

3.3.2.2 Table 3-5 describes embedded mitigation measures that have been incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development (Onshore) with specific regard to bats. For embedded mitigation measures that relate to terrestrial ecology and biodiversity as a whole, refer to Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity.

3.3.2.3 The impact assessment presented in Section 6 of this document considers these embedded mitigation measures.

Table 3-5: Embedded mitigation

Code	Mitigation Measure	Securing Mechanism
M-39	<p>An Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been produced and included alongside the EIAR to support the Planning Permission in Principle (PPP) (Volume 7, Appendix 10: Outline Construction Environment Management Plan). The Outline CEMP includes measures on pollution prevention, noise control, biosecurity, and waste management. The Outline CEMP will then be developed further through the final design process and this will result in a detailed CEMP being submitted for discharge. The CEMP will be implemented to avoid, minimise or mitigate effects on the environment during the construction and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development (Onshore).</p>	<p>Detailed CEMP secured through a condition attached to the PPP.</p>
M-40	<p>Following construction, agricultural land not required through the operational phase will be reinstated to ensure it can return to existing agricultural use. Once land is no longer required for installation of the Onshore Export Cable Circuits the land will be reinstated to its original use for the remainder of the construction stage (where applicable) and for the operation and maintenance stage. Temporary access infrastructure could be permanently retained where sought by the landowner but would be subject to the required consents being obtained prior to reinstatement activities occurring. Topsoil and sub-soil will be treated and stored appropriately to minimise risk of erosion and/or soil degradation indirectly affecting soil quality.</p>	<p>Design Principles through a Construction Method Statement (CMS) secured through a condition attached to the PPP.  Materials Management Plan (MMP) as part of the detailed CEMP secured through a condition attached to the PPP.</p>
M-52	<p>Trenchless techniques, such as HDD, will be the preferential crossing methodology for all Water Framework Directive (WFD) watercourses and salmonid watercourses.</p>	<p>Outlined within the Outline CEMP and secured by condition attached to the PPP.</p>
M-56	<p>The Onshore Substations are set back at least 10m from the Burn of Asleid to minimise any impact on the watercourse.</p>	<p>The OnTI RLB within the PPP and accordance with mitigation measures identified within the EIAR submitted with the PPP.</p>

Code	Mitigation Measure	Securing Mechanism
M-64	<p>Production of the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), as presented in Volume 7E, Appendix 9-2: Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan. The Outline CTMP will then be developed further with submission of a detailed planning application and supporting CTMP at a later date.</p> <p>The Outline CTMP sets out a basic framework and series of vehicle management actions or principles that will help facilitate the safe operation of construction vehicles to, from and within the limits of the construction boundary. This Outline CTMP is based upon the information available at the time of writing, including but not limited to, an estimation on the location and number of construction compounds (derived from a provisional construction programme).</p> <p>The contents of the Outline CTMP are based upon a 'worst case' scenario whereby the greatest volume of construction traffic has been identified and then routed through the surrounding local road network.</p>	The CTMP will be secured through a condition attached to the PPP.
M-65	<p>Avoidance of high value agricultural and forestry land. The ONEC avoids areas of high value agricultural and forestry value as far as practicable. Agricultural land and other sensitivities were carefully considered as part of the site selection and alternatives process and feedback gathered from public consultation was used to amend the ONEC.</p>	Design Principles through CMS secured through a condition attached to the PPP.
M-67	<p>Temporary land take required for construction will be minimised with the land-take for the OnTI RLB kept to the minimum necessary for safe construction.</p> <p>The OnTI RLB has been established based on identifying the shortest and most economical route from landfall to Grid Connection Point avoiding sensitive environmental constraints.</p>	Design Principles through a CMS secured through a condition attached to the PPP.
M-76	<p>Use of trenchless crossing techniques at key crossing areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Class A roads;</li> <li>▪ Protected woodlands;</li> <li>▪ Drains adjacent to A roads;</li> <li>▪ Major watercourses;</li> <li>▪ WFD Waterbodies;</li> </ul>	Outlined within the Outline CEMP and secured by condition attached to the PPP.



Code	Mitigation Measure	Securing Mechanism
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Salmon Watercourses; and</li> <li>▪ Drainage features (ditches / drains) or minor watercourses adjacent to major watercourses.</li> </ul> <p>The micro-routing of ONEC to avoid loss of hedgerows and trees where practical.</p>	
M-78	Compensatory planting of removed trees and ecologically notable hedgerows within the ONEC is to be implemented during or at end of construction period.	Outlined within the Outline CEMP and secured by condition attached to the PPP.
M-79	Implementation of mitigation planting around the Onshore Substations including native hedgerows, and native deciduous and mixed native woodland planting for screening. Some planting to be implemented in advance of the start of construction activity and some at the end of construction of Phases 1 and 2.	Route design / Design Principles and planting undertaken in accordance with landscape mitigation proposals outlined within the EIAR, secured via PPP condition which requires a Landscape Management Plan to be provided at Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSC) stage.
M-87	The detailed design of the OnTI will be refined after targeted ecological surveys to relocate (micro-site) those works away from the more important or legally protected habitat and species features such as badger setts, otter holts, pine marten dens and red squirrel drey, water vole burrow. These ecological surveys will be undertaken during the appropriate season.	Condition attached to the PPP.
M-87a	The detailed design of the OnTI will be refined after targeted ecological surveys to relocate (micro-site) those works away from the more important or legally protected habitat and species features such as bat roosts.	Condition attached to the PPP.
M-92	Works around Hill of Scatterry woodland strip will adhere to the following principles:	Design Principles through a CMS secured

Code	Mitigation Measure	Securing Mechanism
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish root and tree canopy protection zones for all trees not being removed to minimize soil compaction and impact on trees remaining in situ.</li> <li>▪ Reduction in corridor width: The working corridor width will be reduced to 50m.</li> </ul>	through a condition attached to the PPP.
M-93	Targeted ecological surveys will be undertaken at the preconstruction stage and during the appropriate season (as determined by an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECOW)) with sufficient time in advance of construction to ensure any required licencing can be put in place in time to avoid construction delays.	Outlined within the Outline CEMP and secured by condition attached to the PPP.

3.3.2.4 Dedicated ecological surveys for bats prior to the commencement of works will be completed during the appropriate survey seasons (Table 3-5, M-87).

3.3.2.5 The CEMP, as noted in Table 3-5, M-39 will include such measures as:

- The establishment of buffers to ensure construction plant and workers remain outside of the established disturbance zone; and
- Lighting plans for construction compounds.

3.3.2.6 The CTMP will include requirements such as speed restrictions within construction areas to minimise the potential for bats or bat features to be impacted by moving plant and vehicles, particularly if night-time working is required.

## 3.4 In-combination Climate Change Assessment Methodology

3.4.1.1 Due to the later submission of this appendix, the in-combination climate change (ICCI) assessment completed as part of the EIAR (Volume 7F, Appendix 3-2: In-combination Climate Change Impacts), did not include a fully considered assessment of the potential impact to bats from climate change.

3.4.1.2 The detailed methodology for the ICCI assessment can be found in Volume 6, Chapter 3: Climate Change Resilience and is not repeated here.

## 3.5 Assumptions and Limitations

3.5.1.1 Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect the presence of plants and animals, such as the time of year, migration patterns and behaviour. The absence of evidence of any particular species should not be taken as conclusive proof that the species is not present or that it will not be present

in the future. However, professional judgement allows for the likely presence of these species to be predicted with sufficient certainty as to not significantly limit the validity of these findings.

- 3.5.1.2 Access was not possible to some land parcels in the middle and southern extents of the OnTI RLB. This is illustrated in Figure 3-3.1 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures. Wherever possible, land parcels where access could not be obtained were viewed from adjacent land or publicly accessible roads and footpaths.
- 3.5.1.3 There were no access permissions for surveying inside structures, or for aerially assessing trees.
- 3.5.1.4 During the survey season, the need to undertake hibernation surveys was excluded as access permission did not allow access into structures. The majority of suitable structures were residential properties outwith the OnTI RLB and thus would be avoided. In July 2024, the OnTI RLB was extended in several small areas. In one such area, a structure with a moderate potential for winter hibernation within land parcel 1056 is now within the OnTI RLB. The OnTI RLB was expanded in this area to account for feedback from landowner consultation, to provide additional potential cable routing options to avoid impacting a dual highway and track crossing. As this building is abandoned, avoidance at this stage of the Proposed Development (Onshore) cannot be guaranteed. The assessment of this can be found in Section 6.
- 3.5.1.5 The data gathered for this report was collected between 27 March 2023 and 5 September 2024. As per the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) advice note on the lifespan of surveys (CIEEM, 2019<sup>12</sup>), should works not commence within the 18 months following survey, or paused for the same duration, it will be necessary to repeat the surveys to record any new roosts.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Desk Study

- 4.1.1.1 Desk study data returned three records of bats from the past 10 years within 500m of the OnTI RLB.
- 4.1.1.2 None of the records were within the OnTI RLB. One of these records, identified only as *Pipistrellus* sp. (two individual counts), was recorded in 2020 approximately 130m north of the OnTI RLB.
- 4.1.1.3 One record each of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) was recorded in 2018 approximately 115m north of the OnTI RLB.

### 4.2 Field Surveys

#### 4.2.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment and Winter Hibernation Assessment

- 4.2.1.1 Table 4-1 details the results of the PRA surveys that established the structures within the OnTI RLB and up to 30m from the OnTI RLB with suitability for roosting bats. The location of these roosts and results of the PRA are illustrated in Figure 3-3.2 and Figure 3-3.3 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures.
- 4.2.1.2 Six structures were assessed as having suitability for roosting bats, no evidence of roosting bats was found during the PRA surveys.

Table 4-1: Results of the Preliminary Roost Assessment

Feature Reference	Feature	Description	Assessment of Summer Roosting Potential	Assessment of Winter Roosting Potential
No Feature Reference, located in Land Parcel 1056 at grid reference NJ 77050 50943	Structure	L-shaped barn of stone construction, one section has slate roof and the other was corrugated metal. Gaps in the stonework and occasional missing slates, and gaps at ridge would allow access into barn. Odd gap in sarking inside although could be too small for use by bats. Corrugated metal roof section has wooden joists but is draughty.	Moderate	Moderate
OW-ARP-FID-386	Structure	Stone barn with pitched slate roof, adjoined to others. Only this barn was within 30m of RLB. Barn is approximately 100 years old, 6m height at gable apex and 3m height at eaves. PRFs include cracks in the stonework and gaps under slates, ridge tiles and loose flashing. There was also a boarded window with gaps around it. No internal inspection carried out.	High	Moderate
OW-ARP-FID-390	Structure	Unoccupied house with main house and extension from that. All roofs pitched slate and rendered walls. Hanging slates around dormer windows. PRFs include cracks in the stonework, lifted and missing slates and loose flashing.	High	Moderate
OW-ARP-FID-393	Structure	Occupied, detached bungalow with pitched tiled roof. 4m height at gable end and 2m height at eaves. PRFs include lifted tiles, gaps at the eaves and loose flashing.	Moderate	Low
OW-ARP-FID-402a	Structure	L-shaped stone barn with pitched slate roof. Gable apex is 5m high and eaves are 2m.	High	Low

Feature Reference	Feature	Description	Assessment of Summer Roosting Potential	Assessment of Winter Roosting Potential
OW-ARP-FID-402b	Structure	Two adjoining barns. One constructed from breezeblock with corrugated metal pitched roof (on east) and one with breezeblock lower walls and metal roof (on west). Easterly barn adjoins the stone barn (402a).	Low	Low

### 4.2.2 Ground Level Tree Assessment

4.2.2.1 Table 4-2 details the results of the GLTA and identifies trees within the OnTI RLB with PRFs. Two trees were found with FAR as features could not be fully inspected from the ground.

4.2.2.2 The location of these trees and results of the PRA are illustrated in Figure 3-3.2 and Figure 3-3.3 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures.

Table 4-2: Results of the GLTA and PRF inspection

Feature Reference	Feature	Description	Assessment of Summer Roosting Suitability	Assessment of Winter Roosting Suitability
OW-ARP-FID-537	Scots pine tree (NJ 72235 55253)	Wind-blown tree, split in two, with cavity in deadwood facing west at 5m.	FAR	FAR
OW-ARP-FID-574	Ash tree (NJ 8285 4480)	Tree is 12m height with single stem, 2m circumference at breast height. Three PRFs present which could not be fully inspected from the ground.	FAR	FAR

### 4.2.3 Emergence Surveys

4.2.3.1 The PRA found that six structures and two trees were assessed as having suitability for roosting bats.

4.2.3.2 No bats were seen to be roosting within either tree during the surveys.

4.2.3.3 Of the six structures surveyed, small numbers of roosting pipistrelles (common and soprano) were found in five of those, and in total 11 roosts were recorded. The maximum number of bats using a roost at any time was three. No maternity or nursery roosts were found during the surveys.

4.2.3.4 The non-breeding day roosts of common or soprano pipistrelle bats are assessed as being of Site Value in line with best practice guidance (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>).

4.2.3.5 The results are further detailed in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3: Emergence survey results

Feature Reference	Feature Type	Emergence Survey Dates	Results
OW-ARP-FID-537	Tree	28 May 2024	No roosting bats
		2 June 2024	No roosting bats
		24 July 2024	No roosting bats
OW-ARP-FID-574	Tree	29 May 2024	No roosting bats
		25 June 2024	No roosting bats
		25 July 2024	No roosting bats
No Feature Reference, located in Land Parcel 1056 at grid reference NJ 77050 50943	Structure	25 July 2024	No roosting bats
		14 August 2024	One roosting pipistrelle emerged from wallhead on north-east elevation (Roost A)
OW-ARP-FID-386	Structure	30 May 2024	No roosting bats
		22 July 2024	No roosting bats
		3 September 2024	No roosting bats

Feature Reference	Feature Type	Emergence Survey Dates	Results
OW-ARP-FID-390	Structure	23 July 2024	Three roosting bats emerged from the wallhead close to the east corner on the south elevation (one soprano pipistrelle and two unidentified pipistrelles) (Roost B)
		13 August 2024	Five roosting pipistrelles, three from above the wallhead on north-facing elevation of east wing (Roost C) (two soprano pipistrelle and one common pipistrelle) and two common pipistrelles from the wallhead close to the east corner on the south elevation (Roost B)
		4 September 2024	One common pipistrelle emerged from the west end of the north elevation of porch (Roost D)
OW-ARP-FID-393	Structure	23 July 2024	No roosting bats
		2 September 2024	Three roosting bats; one common pipistrelle emerged from north gable apex (Roost E) and pipistrelles (one common and one unidentified) emerged from the wallhead at the south-west corner (Roost F)
OW-ARP-FID-402a	Structure	26/27 June 2024	One pipistrelle bat possibly emerged from the west end of the north elevation of the barn (Roost G), and one pipistrelle bat entered a roost at the wallhead of the barn's north elevation (Roost H) and then flew out two minutes later
		24 July 2024	No roosting bats
		12 August 2024	Two roosting common pipistrelles; one entered at the wallhead at the south end of the east elevation (Roost I) and one emerged from the



Feature Reference	Feature Type	Emergence Survey Dates	Results
			east corner of the north elevation (Roost J).
OW-ARP-FID-402b	Structure	26/27 June 2024	Two common bats emerged from under roof overhang on south-facing gable, west of the apex (Roost K).

## 4.2.4 Static Bat Detector Surveys

4.2.4.1 Eight detectors were located within the RLB on linear features. A total recording time of 174 nights (almost 1,455 hours) was achieved (see Table 4-4). The locations of these detectors are illustrated in Figure 3-3.4 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures.

Table 4-4: Total survey minutes and hours by detector

Detector	Total Survey Minutes	Total Survey Hours
D1	13,328	222.13
D2	13,328	222.13
D3	10,671	177.85
D4	6,738	112.30
D5	10,671	177.85
D6	10,499	174.98
D7	10,499	174.98
D8	8,635	143.92
Total	84,369	1,406.15

4.2.4.2 In total, four species (or genera in the case of more cryptic species) were recorded on the static detectors: soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) and *Myotis* species.

4.2.4.3 Across all detectors, the total number of passes of all bat species was 62,461, as shown in Table 4.5. The most commonly recorded species was

common pipistrelle (51.11% of all bat passes), followed by soprano pipistrelle which made up 48.75% of all bat passes. 0.10% of all bat passes recorded were from Myotis species, followed by brown long-eared bat (0.04%).

Table 4-5: Total bat passes per detector by species.

Detector	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	Total	(%)
Soprano pipistrelle	4,675	745	3,634	6,485	1,278	3,763	9,552	318	30,450	48.75
Common pipistrelle	1,942	1,984	2,604	824	2,041	8,548	12,271	1,711	31,925	51.11
Brown long-eared bat	8	0	0	0	0	3	0	11	22	0.04
Myotis sp.	1	2	23	2	9	26	1	0	64	0.10
<b>Total Bat Passes</b>	<b>6,626</b>	<b>2,731</b>	<b>6,261</b>	<b>7,311</b>	<b>3,328</b>	<b>12,340</b>	<b>21,824</b>	<b>2,040</b>	<b>62,461</b>	<b>100</b>

4.2.4.4 As outlined in Table 4-6, higher levels of activity were recorded at D7 (34.94%) and D6 (19.76%), with lower levels at D4 (11.70%), D1 (10.61%), D3 (10.02%), D5 (5.33%), D2 (4.37%) and D8 (3.27%). However, true comparisons cannot be made as the detectors were put out at different times of the year at the different locations.

Table 4-6: Species composition at each detector (percentage of bat passes)

Detector/ Species	D1 (%)	D2 (%)	D3 (%)	D4 (%)	D5 (%)	D6 (%)	D7 (%)	D8 (%)	Total (%)
Soprano pipistrelle	15.35	2.45	11.93	21.30	4.20	12.36	31.37	1.04	100
Common pipistrelle	6.08	6.21	8.16	2.58	6.39	26.78	38.44	5.36	100
Brown long-eared bat	36.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.64	0.00	50.00	100
Myotis sp.	1.56	3.13	35.94	3.13	14.06	40.63	1.56	0.00	100
Total % Bat Passes	10.61	4.37	10.02	11.70	5.33	19.76	34.94	3.27	100

4.2.4.5 A summary of bat activity within the OnTI RLB per detector is given in Table 4-7, recorded as Bat Passes per Hour (BPpH). This standard index of activity was used in order that a direct comparison of bat activity between each detector could be made.

4.2.4.6 The bat activity was highest at D7 (124.72 BPpH), with high levels at D6 (70.52 BPpH), D4 (65.10 BPpH) and D3 (35.20 BPpH).

4.2.4.7 Lower levels of activity were recorded at D1 (29.83 BPpH), D5 (18.71 BPpH) and D8 (14.17 BPpH), with the lowest at D2 (12.29 BPpH).

Table 4-7: Total bat passes per hour per detector

Detector	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	Total
Survey Minutes	13,328	13,328	10,671	6,738	10,671	10,499	10,499	8,635	84,369
Total Bat Passes	6,626	2,731	6,261	7,311	3,328	12,340	21,824	2,040	62,461
BPpH per detector	29.83	12.29	35.20	65.10	18.71	70.52	124.72	14.17	44.42

- 4.2.4.8 In summary, small non-breeding soprano and common pipistrelle roosts were found in five of the six structures surveyed. No roosts were found in the surveyed trees. In total, bats were found roosting within 11 roosts with a peak count of three bats emerging from a roost on any one survey.
- 4.2.4.9 Soprano pipistrelle and common pipistrelle bats are commonly occurring and widely distributed throughout the UK (Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), 2019a<sup>13</sup> and 2019b<sup>14</sup>).

## 4.3 EIA Approach

- 4.3.1.1 The baseline results detailed in Section 4 show that bats are present within the OnTI RLB. They utilise linear habitats throughout the OnTI RLB for foraging and commuting that have the potential to be impacted from the Proposed Development (Onshore).
- 4.3.1.2 The bat assemblage within the OnTI RLB consists primarily of common and soprano pipistrelles which are considered to be widespread and common across Northern Scotland (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>). The roosts recorded within the OnTI RLB were found to support only a small number of pipistrelles, both common and soprano.
- 4.3.1.3 *Myotis* and brown long eared bats are also considered to be widespread in most geographies but not as abundant as pipistrelle species (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>). These bats were recorded using linear features to commute and forage within the OnTI RLB but were recorded at a substantially lower level, only accounting for 0.14% of all passes recorded (section 4.2.4.3).
- 4.3.1.4 In accordance with the assessment of importance as outlined in Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity the bat population is considered to be of moderate importance at a local level and is therefore scoped in for further consideration.

## 5 Key Parameters for Assessment

- 5.1.1.1 Volume 1, Chapter 4: Proposed Development Description (Onshore) details the parameters of the Proposed Development (Onshore) using the Rochdale Envelope approach. This section identifies those parameters during construction, operation and decommissioning relevant to potential impacts on bats.
- 5.1.1.2 As described in Volume 1, Chapter 5: Proposed Development Phasing, three possible construction programme scenarios have been identified for the Proposed Development (Onshore).
- 5.1.1.3 The assessment of impacts presented in this report considers the sequential construction scenario. This scenario represents the worst-case for terrestrial ecology and biodiversity including bat species, as it will require a longer construction window and two distinct construction periods (taking up to approximately three and a half years each), with up to 5 years between them.
- 5.1.1.4 While overall construction durations are very similar for sequential and enabling scenarios, the sequential scenario would require all construction processes to be undertaken again in the second phase of works. For example, cable trenching activities would occur during both the first phase and the second phase.
- 5.1.1.5 This has the potential to cumulatively increase the magnitude of potential impacts as the receiving environment will be disturbed, begin to recover, and then experience another disturbance event. Two construction periods also increase the risk of accidental pollution incidents as there will be longer combined length of construction.
- 5.1.1.6 The key assessment parameters representing the worst-case scenario with regard to the construction of the Proposed Development (Onshore) and against which the assessment of bats has been made are summarised in Table 3-21 of Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity.

## 6 Potential Effects

### 6.1 Construction

6.1.1.1 The population of bats within, and in proximity to, the OnTI RLB was assessed as being of moderate importance at a local level (section 4.3.1.4).

6.1.1.2 The construction impacts of relevance to bats are:

- Temporary and/or permanent habitat loss, degradation or fragmentation;
- Disturbance; and
- Species injury and/or mortality.

#### 6.1.2 Temporary and/or permanent habitat loss, degradation, or fragmentation

##### Commuting and foraging features

6.1.2.1 There are suitable bat foraging habitats and commuting features found along the length of the OnTI RLB and in the habitats adjacent to the OnTI RLB.

6.1.2.2 The construction of the Proposed Development (Onshore) has the potential to cause the temporary loss of habitats suitable for foraging and commuting by bats as a result of vegetation clearance of hedgerows and the removal or obstruction of farm walls and other man-made linear features to facilitate works such as excavations, trenching, temporary roads, and construction compounds.

6.1.2.3 Construction will not occur across the whole of the OnTI RLB at one time, but instead will happen in a phased manner with vegetation reinstated following works. The worst-case construction scenario will require construction compounds approximately every 10km with smaller satellite compounds approximately every 2.5km. This is described in more detail within Volume 1, Chapter 4: Proposed Development Description (Onshore). The precise order and timescales in which the Onshore Export Cable Circuits are installed will be determined at a later stage depending on the construction programme and phasing scenario adopted, as described in Volume 1, Chapter 5: Proposed Development Phasing.

6.1.2.4 Embedded mitigation (Table 3-5, M-67) states that the temporary land take required for construction will be minimised and kept to the minimum area necessary for safe construction works. Additionally, the design of the OnTI will be refined after targeted ecological surveys to micro-site works away from legally protected habitats and species such as bats (Table 3-5,

M-87a). It is considered that land take from the construction will not be substantial enough, or located in the only suitable habitat, to notably reduce foraging or commuting opportunities.

- 6.1.2.5 All linear features covered by the eight static detectors will be temporarily fragmented from the construction of the OnTI which has the potential to impact the movement of bats between roosting, foraging and commuting habitat present on either side of the OnTI RLB. This loss of commuting and foraging features is likely to only have a temporary, reversible impact on local bat populations.
- 6.1.2.6 As stated, habitat fragmentation, including habitat used for commuting and foraging, is likely to be temporary during construction, however, could be subject to secondary fragmentation during phase 2 construction works. Although habitats will be replaced following construction, the delay in their growth, especially for habitats such as woodlands and hedgerows, could cause abandonment of territories and foraging areas.
- 6.1.2.7 The only area of permanent habitat loss will be at the Onshore Substation Site and associated site access roads. There is the potential for bats to use the surrounding habitats for foraging, and for bats to commute through or into the Onshore Substation Site from roosts within the OnTI RLB. Habitats within the Onshore Substation Site consist of improved grassland habitats with limited vegetation diversity which will hold some, albeit lower, foraging opportunities for bats in comparison to nearby linear features, watercourses and marshy grassland.
- 6.1.2.8 The potential for habitat degradation through construction related impacts such as noise, aerial emissions and the accidental/unintentional release of pollutants will be controlled through a CEMP which forms part of the embedded mitigation (Table 3-5, M-39).
- 6.1.2.9 One of the more sensitive areas for bats within the OnTI RLB is along the west bank of the River Deveron. As stated in the embedded mitigation (Table 3-5, M-52) as this river is a WFD watercourse and a salmonid watercourse, HDD technology will be used in this location. By using this technique rather than alternative Open Cut Trenching techniques, habitat loss and disturbance to bats is minimised in this area and the impact reduced.
- 6.1.2.10 Landscape planting has been proposed to account for the landscape visual impacts of the Onshore Substation Site. Adjustments to this landscape planting have been made to ensure the proposed planting maximises outcomes for biodiversity. The landscape planting is detailed further in Volume 7E, Appendix 3-1: Biodiversity Enhancement Report and Figure 3-1.4 within Appendix 3-1, Annex 1: Biodiversity Enhancement Supporting Figures.
- 6.1.2.11 In summary, the landscape planting in the Onshore Substation Site will include grassland, hedges, woodland, scrub, ruderal/ephemeral grasslands

and riparian planting. All of these habitats will benefit bats in terms of foraging, commuting and in the long term may provide additional roosting habitat.

6.1.2.12 The magnitude of impact to foraging and commuting features is considered to be low due to the geographic scale of the bat population (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>), duration and reversibility of the potential impact.

6.1.2.13 Taking into consideration the moderate importance of bats and the low magnitude of impact, the overall significance of effect on commuting and foraging features after consideration of the embedded mitigation is minor and not significant in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) terms.

### Summer roosting features

6.1.2.14 Roosts were confirmed within the OnTI RLB at features OW-ARP-FID-390, 393, 402a and 402b which, at the closest point, are located approximately 200m north of the Proposed Onshore Substations and associated infrastructure where the permanent habitat loss will occur (see Figure 3-3.2 and 3-3.3 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures).

6.1.2.15 The habitats immediately surrounding these roosts consist of an active farmyard, improved grassland, the Burn of Asleid, treelines and hedgerows. The habitats present in this area are shown on Figure 3-1.2, Sheet 09 of 09, within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-1, Annex 1: Biodiversity Enhancement Supporting Figures.

6.1.2.16 In accordance with the CIEEM UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>), these non-breeding common or soprano pipistrelle roosts are considered to be of Site value.

6.1.2.17 Bats were recorded at static detector D2, which was deployed directly south of the OW-ARP-FID-390, 393, 402a and 402b roosts (see Figure 3-3.4 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures), however the number of recorded passes at this static detector were relatively low in comparison to other detector locations (Table 4-6).

6.1.2.18 The highest number of passes were recorded at static detectors D7 and D6 located along the Burn of Swanford approximately 750m south of the confirmed roosts and 600m west of the Proposed Onshore Substations (see Figure 3-3.4 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures). It is considered likely that bats are commuting along the Burn of Asleid that runs adjacent to the Proposed Onshore Substations Site, and forage consistently along the Burn of Swanford and the marshy grassland also present in this area (see Figure 3-1.2 Sheet 09 of 09 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-1, Annex 1: Biodiversity Enhancement Supporting Figures).

6.1.2.19 Due to the distance of these roosts from the Proposed Onshore Substations and associated infrastructure, these roosts will not be lost from the



Proposed Development (Onshore). The loss of habitats including commuting and foraging features that support these roosts will be temporary.

- 6.1.2.20 Another roost was confirmed further north within the OnTI RLB. This roost is located in land parcel 1056 at grid reference NJ 77050 50943 (see Figure 3-3.2 and 3-3.3 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-3, Annex 1: Supporting Figures) and was found to support a single pipistrelle. No static detectors were deployed in this area due to a lack of ecologically notable linear features being present.
- 6.1.2.21 In accordance with the CIEEM UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>), this non-breeding pipistrelle roost is considered to be of Site value.
- 6.1.2.22 The habitats immediately surrounding this roost consist of actively farmed arable fields. The Wood of Delgaty is located 118m to the west of the roost and is largely a coniferous plantation woodland with limited foraging, commuting and roosting potential. The field boundaries lack hedgerows or other connective linear features to link into more suitable foraging features, particularly to the east where habitats are largely arable. Suitable habitat may be present further west, away from the OnTI RLB, towards the Delgatie Castle Trust where grassland and woodland habitats are more prevalent. The habitats present in this area are shown on Figure 3-1.2 Sheet 07 of 09 within Volume 7E, Appendix 3-1, Annex 1: Biodiversity Enhancement Supporting Figures.
- 6.1.2.23 Due to the location of this roost and the PPP stage of the Proposed Development Onshore, although efforts to avoid the roost will be made, it cannot be confirmed that this roost will be avoided during construction and the roost may either be disturbed during works or in the worst case has the potential to be lost.
- 6.1.2.24 The roosts located at OW-ARP-FID-390, 393, 402a and 402b are not considered to be negatively impacted from the Proposed Development (Onshore).
- 6.1.2.25 Regarding the roost at land parcel 1056, the habitat surrounding this roost is not considered to be overly suitable for bats and although the potential loss of a roosting structure is still notable, the structure was found to only support a single roosting bat throughout the survey period.
- 6.1.2.26 Taking into consideration the Site value of the roosts, the moderate importance of bats and the low magnitude of impact if the summer roost at land parcel 1056 is disturbed or lost, the overall significance of effects is considered to be minor and not significant in EIA terms.

## Winter roosting features

- 6.1.2.27 Only three structures (feature at land parcel 1056, OW-ARP-FID-386, and OW-ARP-FID-390) were considered to hold moderate potential to support hibernating bats. As detailed in Section 3.5, wintering hibernation surveys were not completed on structures.
- 6.1.2.28 Feature OW-ARP-FID-390 is located at its closest point approximately 200m from the Onshore Substations and feature OW-ARP-FID-386 is located outwith the OnTI RLB. It is therefore considered that neither of these potential hibernation roosts will be lost from the construction of the OnTI.
- 6.1.2.29 The feature at land parcel 1056 is located within the OnTI RLB and due to the location of this roost and the PPP stage of the Proposed Development (Onshore), it cannot be confirmed that this potential hibernation roost will be avoided during construction and may either be disturbed during works or has the potential to be lost. It has therefore been precautionarily assumed that this structure could be a hibernation roost, this is considered the worst-case scenario.
- 6.1.2.30 Hibernation roosts are considered to be more sensitive and tend to support a larger number of bats. Loss of a hibernation roost can therefore have a greater impact on local bat populations. Based on the barn structure and assemblage of bats recorded in this area, it is considered that the barn may support a small number of hibernating pipistrelles but is unlikely to support a large number of hibernating bats. In line with CIEEM UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray<sup>9</sup>), the importance of this potential hibernation roost is considered to be of District/ County value.
- 6.1.2.31 Taking into consideration the District/ County value of the potential hibernation roost, the moderate importance of bats and the moderate magnitude of impact when considering the potential worst-case scenario of losing the roosting structure, the significance of effects is considered to be moderate and significant in EIA terms.

### 6.1.3 Disturbance

- 6.1.3.1 During construction there is potential for works to occur within proximity to bat foraging and commuting features and bat roosts that could cause disturbance to bats leading to roost abandonment, changes in foraging patterns, increased nocturnal activity and/or reduction in breeding success.
- 6.1.3.2 The bat roosts at features OW-ARP-FID-390, 393, 402a and 402b are located within the OnTI RLB. However, based on current designs, these features will be approximately 200m north of the Proposed Onshore Substations and associated infrastructure. Landscaping works will occur in closer proximity to these roosts however it is assumed that landscaping

activities are unlikely to be notably different than agricultural activities already occurring in the surrounding areas.

- 6.1.3.3 The other confirmed roost is located within the OnTI RLB in land parcel 1056 at grid reference NJ 77050 50943. This roost has the potential to be disturbed, if not lost. The loss of this roost is considered in Section 6.1.2.
- 6.1.3.4 During construction the most likely activities to cause disturbance to bats are noise, vibration and lighting. Night-time working at construction compounds could lead to disturbance to bats from lighting of working areas. This could lead to bats avoiding foraging and commuting routes. Within the CEMP, embedded mitigation measure M-39, (Table 3-5), a detailed lighting plan for the construction compounds, including when/ if night-time working is required.
- 6.1.3.5 Under the worst-case scenario, the sequential construction scenario, bats will be exposed to construction-related disturbances for a longer overall period of time which could lead to prolonged disturbance to any affected bats and their roosts. Following the sequential construction scenario, when phase 1 ends there will be a period of time during which no construction works will take place, before the commencement of phase 2. This may result in bats abandoning roosts and/or foraging habitats during phase 1 construction, reestablishing during the lull between phases, then being exposed to the same disturbance again during phase 2, potentially leading to a second abandonment of roosts/habitats.
- 6.1.3.6 Embedded mitigation identifies that the temporary land take required for construction will be kept to the minimum area necessary for safe construction works. Additionally, the detailed design of the OnTI will consider the results of the targeted ecological surveys to move works away from legally protected habitats and species such as bats wherever possible. Construction will also be temporary and in most cases similar in disturbance level to the agricultural activities that occur across the OnTI RLB.
- 6.1.3.7 However, due to the mobile and prolific nature of bats in this region coupled with suitable habitat for this species in this area, it is possible that commuting and foraging features, as well as roosts may be disturbed during construction.
- 6.1.3.8 The roost in land parcel 1056 at grid reference NJ 77050 50943 is surrounded by actively farmed land, with farming activities occurring immediately adjacent to the building. This is pictured in Figure 6-1.
- 6.1.3.9 Construction in this area will be temporary and is unlikely to be notably different from current farming activities, however it is unknown at this time how near the construction activities will need to be to the roost.
- 6.1.3.10 As detailed in Section 6.1.2, the feature at land parcel 1056 has the potential to also be a hibernation roost, which although considered to be

more sensitive than a summer roosting feature, is currently subject to some level of disturbance from farming activity.



Figure 6-1: Farming activity in proximity to the roost located in land parcel 1056.

6.1.3.11 As detailed in Volume 5, Chapter 8: Airborne Noise and Vibration, vibration impacts from construction were scoped out of assessment on the basis that vibration can be limited to within appropriate threshold values at noise sensitive receptors by the implementation of appropriate mitigation. Mitigation within Volume 5, Chapter 8: Airborne Noise and Vibration includes the use of temporary acoustic screening around noisy plant and activities. The implementation of noise mitigation and micro-siting to distance works away from sensitive ecological features will reduce the effects to bats and their roosts.

6.1.3.12 Taking into consideration the moderate importance of bats and the low magnitude of impact, the overall significance of effect from disturbance is minor and not significant in EIA terms.

## 6.1.4 Species injury and/or mortality

6.1.4.1 During the construction phase there is the potential for death or injury to bats due to road traffic accidents resulting from moving plant within the OnTI RLB and on any existing or temporary roads.

6.1.4.2 The implementation of the CEMP and CTMP during construction, as stated in embedded mitigation, will include best practice guidance to avoid, minimise and mitigate effects on the environment during construction and

will include the principles for safe operation of construction vehicles. This will reduce the risk of injury and/ or mortality of bat during construction.

6.1.4.3 Embedded mitigation M-93 (see Table 3-5), also requires targeted ecological surveys to be undertaken at the pre-construction stage. This will include identification of any potentially previously unidentified PRFs. These pre-construction checks will be done in sufficient time to ensure identification of any new roosts and appropriate mitigation (through licencing) will be implemented ahead of construction. This measure will also reduce the risk of accidental injury and/or mortality of bats during construction.

6.1.4.4 Taking into consideration the moderate importance of bats and the negligible magnitude of impact, the overall significance of effect is negligible and not significant in EIA terms.

## **6.2 Operation**

6.2.1.1 The impacts during operation of relevance to bats are permanent habitat loss or degradation and disturbance to bats.

6.2.1.2 The operational impacts of relevance to bats are:

- Permanent habitat loss or degradation; and
- Disturbance; and
- Species injury and/or mortality.

### **6.2.2 Permanent habitat loss or degradation**

6.2.2.1 During the operational phase of the Proposed Development (Onshore), operational activities will be minimal and isolated to the Onshore Substations and localised areas along the route. It is anticipated that the Onshore Substations will be unmanned and operate at all times. No permanent surface structures will be in place to facilitate the Landfall Site or Onshore Export Cable Route as a result of the Proposed Development (Onshore). Monitoring and maintenance will be minimal and create a low number of vehicle trips.

6.2.2.2 The habitats surrounding the Onshore Substation Site and wider area are suitable habitats for bats, however bats were not found to be roosting within, or within 30m, of where the Onshore Substations and associated infrastructure will be located. During operation of the Proposed Development (Onshore) bats will continue to be able to disperse into and around the wider landscape and utilise the suitable habitats surrounding the Onshore Substation Site.

6.2.2.3 The loss of habitat within the Onshore Substation Site is considered within construction effects and no additional habitat loss is expected as part of operational activities.

6.2.2.4 Taking into consideration the moderate importance of bats and negligible magnitude of impact, the overall significance of effect is minor and not significant in EIA terms.

### **6.2.3 Disturbance**

6.2.3.1 The Onshore Substations will be unmanned and operate at all times. Permanent 24 hours 7 days a week emergency lighting will only be required above doorways. Perimeter lighting will be designed to face inwards and will only be turned on during maintenance visits. The emergency above-door lighting is considered to be minimal and is likely to have a very limited light spill

6.2.3.2 As nocturnal species, bats are sensitive to light. Any lighting of the Onshore Substations has the potential to cause permanent or temporary disturbance to bats using the surrounding area for roosting, foraging and commuting.

6.2.3.3 It is likely that the proposed landscaping around the Onshore Substation Site may provide some buffer to light spill however until a detailed lighting plan is developed it cannot be accurately determined how much light spill will occur into suitable bat habitat adjacent to the Onshore Substations.

6.2.3.4 Taking into consideration the moderate importance of bats and their sensitivity to light, there is considered to be a medium, albeit localised magnitude of impact, with the overall significance of effects being moderate and significant in EIA terms.

### **6.2.4 Species injury and/or mortality**

6.2.4.1 The Onshore Substations will be unmanned and operate at all times. A site access road will be located to the south of the Onshore Substation and will fragment a commuting route that may be reestablished by bats following construction.

6.2.4.2 As the Onshore Substation will be unmanned and only visited for maintenance checks, the use of that road will be minimal. Secondly, as a nocturnal species, bats would most likely be moving through this area during night-time. With the potential exception of HGVs and high sided vans, bats will likely be flying above the level of vehicles using the access track, limiting the potential for a collision. Maintenance works will be undertaken during daylight hours unless in emergency situations.

6.2.4.3 The likelihood of road traffic incidents causing injury and/or mortality to bats during operation is considered to be very low.

6.2.4.4 Taking into consideration the moderate importance of bats and negligible magnitude of impact, the overall significance of effect is minor and not significant in EIA terms.

## 6.3 Decommissioning

- 6.3.1.1 In the absence of detailed information regarding decommissioning works, it is assumed that all above ground infrastructure will be removed and all in ground infrastructure will be left in situ. Therefore, the impacts during the decommissioning of the OnTI are considered comparable with, or likely less than, those of the construction stage. The assessment of effects presented in Section 6.1 is assumed to be applicable to the effects caused by decommissioning activities.
- 6.3.1.2 The most appropriate method of decommissioning and the handling and disposal of materials will be undertaken in agreement with the relevant authorities at the time. Any applicable new legislation or guidelines published prior to decommissioning will be taken into account in relation to any design of mitigation prior to decommissioning occurring.

## 7 Cumulative Effects

### 7.1 Overview

7.1.1.1 For assessment relating to the cumulative effects of other developments on terrestrial ecology and biodiversity, please refer to Section 3.8 of Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity.

7.1.1.2 The assessment of cumulative effects in Section 3.8 of Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity considers the potential for significant impacts to ecological features during construction and decommissioning such as:

- Temporary and/or permanent habitat loss, degradation or fragmentation;
- Disturbance; and
- Species injury and/or mortality.

7.1.1.3 The assessment of cumulative effects in Section 3.8 of Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity considers the potential for cumulative impacts from operational lighting.

7.1.1.4 This assessment considers these impacts on ecological features and following a review of this assessment, is considered to cover the potential for these impacts on bats. Therefore, no additional assessment on cumulative effects to bats during construction, operation and decommissioning is required.



## 8 Secondary Mitigation Measures and Monitoring

- 8.1.1.1 General secondary mitigation measures related to all ecological receptors are detailed in Section 3.10 of Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity.
- 8.1.1.2 Embedded mitigation, such as a CEMP, CTMP and micro-siting of works are detailed in Table 3-5.
- 8.1.1.3 The secondary mitigation measures relevant to bats are summarised as follows:
- Appointment of a suitably qualified ECoW prior to commencement of works and employed when/where appropriate during construction phase to deliver:
    - Toolbox talks;
    - Ensure construction activities are kept to clearly defined areas to minimise vegetation clearance and habitat loss; and
    - Maintain and protect habitat connectivity wherever possible, including green corridors and treelines.
- 8.1.1.4 Works that occur within 30m of a bat roost, within 50m of a bat hibernation roost, or that require the removal of a bat roost, will require a EPS licence from NatureScot.
- 8.1.1.5 As EPS, a licence for development works that affect bats is required to demonstrate that three tests are met (NatureScot, 2024<sup>15</sup>). These three tests are:
- There must be a licensable purpose for which licenses are granted;
  - There must be no satisfactory alternative; and
  - The proposed action must not be detrimental to maintaining the species at 'favourable conservation status'.
- 8.1.1.6 A detailed bat species protection plan will be produced following detailed design and provided to NatureScot prior to the commencement of construction. This species protection plan will include mitigation that is approved by NatureScot prior to works commencing.
- 8.1.1.7 If, following the detailed design and micro-siting of the OnTI, the roost identified in land parcel 1056 cannot be avoided and has the potential to be disturbed or lost, wintering hibernation surveys will be completed to determine if bats utilise the structure for hibernation. Should hibernation be confirmed, NatureScot will be consulted with on the next steps to ensure appropriate mitigation and/or compensation is put into place.

- 8.1.1.8 A detailed lighting plan will be produced for the operational phase of the Onshore Substations to ensure emergency lighting and perimeter lighting is sensitive to ecological features. This lighting plan will be prepared in consultation with a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 8.1.1.9 Wherever possible foraging and commuting routes, identified through the updated surveys as outlined in embedded mitigation, will be avoided. Wherever possible, these routes will be maintained as dark corridors with at least a 30m buffer zone from construction areas. Where this is not possible, if deemed necessary temporary routes will be provided around these construction areas.
- 8.1.1.10 Habitat connectivity will be retained wherever possible by maintaining links within and to green corridors such as tree lines, scrub and watercourses. Where effects on connectivity are unavoidable, it may be artificially supplemented (e.g. by the creation of temporary brush hedges).

## **9 Residual Effects**

9.1.1.1 Where effects were assessed as significant, taking into account secondary mitigation to reduce the magnitude of impacts, the residual effects have been assessed.

### **9.2 Construction**

9.2.1.1 It is considered that following the implementation of embedded and secondary mitigation measures as detailed in Table 3-5 and Section 8 respectively, there will be no significant residual effects on bats during construction of the Proposed Development (Onshore).

### **9.3 Operation**

9.3.1.1 It is considered that following the implementation of embedded and secondary mitigation measures as detailed in in Section 3.3.2 and Section 8 respectively, there will be no significant residual effects on bats during operation of the Proposed Development (Onshore).

### **9.4 Decommissioning**

9.4.1.1 The residual effects of decommissioning are considered to be the same, if not less than those at the construction stage as detailed in Section 9.2.

9.4.1.2 Therefore, it is considered that following the implementation of embedded and secondary mitigation measures as detailed in in Section 3.3.2 and Section 8 respectively, there will be no significant residual effects on bats during decommissioning of the Proposed Development (Onshore).

### **9.5 Cumulative Effects**

9.5.1.1 The assessment of residual cumulative effects is provided in Section 3.11.5 in Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity.

## 10 In-combination Climate Change Assessment

- 10.1.1.1 As per Volume 6, Chapter 3: Climate Change Resilience and Volume 7F, Appendix 3-2: In-combination Climate Change Impacts, due to limited information at the time regarding the results of the bat surveys, there was the potential for significant impacts to bats from the permanent habitat loss caused by the Proposed Onshore Substation sites.
- 10.1.1.2 Volume 7F, Appendix 3-2: In-combination Climate Change Impacts, stated that the climate change impacts on bats could become more prevalent in the OnTI RLB and wider Aberdeenshire area due to a warmer and more favourable climate. Though storms could negatively impact upon them, especially extreme winds.
- 10.1.1.3 As detailed in Section 9, there will be no significant impacts to bats following the implementation of embedded and secondary mitigation.
- 10.1.1.4 Based on the current evidence it is unlikely that climate change will exacerbate any current impacts the Proposed Development (Onshore) has on these receptors. Therefore, it is likely that there are no significant ICCIs for this topic.

## 11 Conclusion

- 11.1.1.1 The suite of bat surveys undertaken confirmed bat activity on several linear features throughout the OnTI RLB, with the PRA surveys identifying six structures and two trees with the potential to support roosting bats.
- 11.1.1.2 Non-breeding common and soprano pipistrelle roosts were identified in five of the six structures, with a total of 11 roosts identified across these five structures. The two trees identified with PRF were not found to contain roosting bats. None of the identified roosts were considered maternity or nursery roosts following emergence surveys.
- 11.1.1.3 There was a peak count of three bats emerging from a roost on any one survey.
- 11.1.1.4 The bat assemblage within the OnTI RLB consists primarily of common and soprano pipistrelles which are considered to be widespread and common across Northern Scotland (Reason and Wray, 2023<sup>9</sup>). The roosts recorded within the OnTI RLB were only recorded to support pipistrelle species.
- 11.1.1.5 In accordance with the assessment of importance as outlined in Volume 5, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Biodiversity the bat population is considered to be of moderate importance at a local level.
- 11.1.1.6 One non-breeding pipistrelle roost has the potential to be disturbed or lost as part of the Proposed Development (Onshore). This roost is precautionary assumed to be a wintering hibernation roost. Four other roosts were located in the south of the OnTI RLB approximately 200m from the Onshore Substations and associated infrastructure. These roosts are not considered to be disturbed by the Proposed Development (Onshore).
- 11.1.1.7 The hedgerow features that held suitability to be used as foraging and commuting bats were surveyed using static detectors. All of the features were utilised by foraging and commuting bats, with the highest number recorded in the south of the OnTI RLB at D7 and D8. The highest number recorded were in proximity to areas of watercourses and marshy grassland. Whereas the majority of the land within the OnTI RLB consists of arable fields which hold minimal potential to supporting foraging bats.
- 11.1.1.8 The assessment has considered embedded mitigation measures (Section 3.3.2) for the assessment of potential effects. This includes a CEMP and related pollution avoidance measures, a CTMP, avoidance of notable habitats through micro-siting and use of HDD technology.
- 11.1.1.9 Following the implementation of embedded mitigation measures, secondary mitigation measures (Section 8) were proposed to avoid likely significant effects. This includes, but is not limited to, the appointment of an ECoW to oversee ecological protection measures, a detailed Bat Species Protection Plan to ensure compliance with legal protections and minimise impacts on bats, and a LMP to reduce light spill and disturbance to bats.

- 11.1.1.10      Following implementation of embedded mitigation and secondary mitigation measures, there will be no significant residual effects to bats from the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development (Onshore).

## 12 References

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<sup>15</sup> NatureScot (2024) 'European protected species licensing'. Available at:  
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