

16 ECOLOGY AND NATURE CONSERVATION

16.1 Introduction

16.1.1 This chapter on ecological impacts aims to:

- Describe the ecological baseline conditions within the proposed development;
- Identify and evaluate the ecological receptors;
- Identify any potential impacts (during the site preparation, construction activities, and operational phase);
- Establish the magnitude and significance of those identified impacts;
- Identify the mitigation measures to address significant impacts; and
- Assess any residual impacts and the need for any compensation.

16.2 Definition of Terms

16.2.1 The proposed development site boundary is defined by the red line on Drawing Number PL01. This chapter considers habitats and species within the site and adjacent 30m zone of influence, or those which are functionally linked to it.

16.3 Site Description

16.3.1 The site covers an area of approximately 8.1 hectares and is located within a rural setting approximately 2.5km south west from the village of Ochiltree in East Ayrshire. The site contains existing development associated with past coal mining activities and current asphalt processing. The site is adjacent to an industrial site to the north and west which is owned by Hargreaves for the processing and storage of coal. To the south the site is bound by the A70 with agricultural land beyond. Agricultural land is adjacent to the east of the site.

16.4 The Development Proposals

16.4.1 The proposal is to build and operate an energy recovery park on the existing brownfield site which has historically been used as a coal mining and processing facility. It is proposed to build a facility with the capability to process, recycle and re-use residual waste which until now has been destined for landfill, to generate energy in the form of heat and electricity. This includes the following activities which may have impacts on the ecology of the site:

- Site Preparation;
- Construction Activities; and

- Operational Phase (lighting, vehicle movements and pollution).

16.4.2 Details of the above are provided within Chapter 4 of this ES.

16.5 Methodology

16.5.1 The desk study and assessment methods have been undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance on Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA). The ecological impact assessment was carried out by an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist¹.

Desk Study

16.5.2 A desk study was undertaken which involved conducting database searches for statutory and non-statutory designated sites, legally protected species and features of interest within and immediately surrounding the site within a 2km radius (5km radius for internationally designated sites). The central grid reference of the site (NS 47994 20384) was used as the central point of all searches. The baseline conditions were based on a review of existing available information including:

- Scottish National Heritage (SNH) Interactive Mapping website;
- Ordnance Survey mapping (to identify potentially notable habitats);
- Aerial photography (e.g. Google mapping);
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP);
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP); and
- Scottish Wildlife Trust.

¹ All ecologists are members of, or acted under the supervision of, CIEEM and are bound by its code of professional conduct.

Field Surveys

16.5.3 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken in December 2014 following guidance set out in the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a Technique for Environmental Audit (JNCC, 2010) and in accordance with guidelines on ecological Appraisal (IEEM, 2015). Habitats were mapped and observations recorded of protected and BAP species along with signs or features. As part of the survey, all the buildings on site expected to be lost to the development were assessed for their bat roost potential through internal and external inspections in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines.

Caveat

16.5.4 Desk study data is not likely to be exhaustive and it is therefore possible that protected species not identified during the data search do in fact occur within the vicinity of the site.

16.5.5 At the time of writing East Ayrshire did not have a local biological records centre in which to gain ecological data of species and habitats within the surrounding area. Consultation with the Scottish Wildlife Trust provided limited desk study information in the form of non-statutory sites.

16.5.6 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. Natural environments may change and the survey results reported here will therefore become less reliable as time progresses.

16.5.7 The above limitations are not considered likely to significantly affect the conclusions drawn in this report.

Presentation of Results

16.5.8 This section follows the guidance presented in Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (CIEEM 2006). Significance of impacts has been determined by identifying ecological features, evaluating their importance and defining the impacts. The CIEEM guidelines define a significant impact as:

“an impact (adverse or positive) on the integrity of a defined site or ecosystem(s) and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographical area, including cumulative impacts.”

Determining Value of Ecological Features

- 16.5.9 In order to objectively assess impacts arising from a particular development it is essential to establish the nature conservation value of each ecological feature/receptor likely to be affected by the development.
- 16.5.10 The importance of each ecological feature identified through consultation and desk study analysis is evaluated according to its importance in a geographical context, each falling into one (or more) of the following categories:
- International (in this case within the EU, unless stated otherwise);
 - National (within the UK or Scotland, depending on legislative scope);
 - Regional (Ayrshire);
 - District (East Ayrshire);
 - Local (Ochiltree);
 - Within the Zone of Influence; and
 - Of negligible importance.
- 16.5.11 The 'Zone of influence' is defined by IEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2006) as:
- 'The areas/resources that may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by activities associated with a project'.*
- 16.5.12 The zone of ecological influence for the site occupies the development boundary and also extends 30m to include areas which may be indirectly impacted as a result of the proposed development.
- 16.5.13 When a feature falls into more than one value category, it is considered within the highest level. Some features can be readily assigned to one of the above categories, particularly statutory designated sites. For example, a feature with a designation assigned through European legislation, such as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) would be considered of International value and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated by UK statute would be of National value.
- 16.5.14 Individual species may be protected under European or National legislation, such protection is relevant to the assignment of value to such species, but additional factors, such as population size and the nature of the distribution of the species are also considered.
- 16.5.15 The assignment of undesignated features such as Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species, trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or areas of ancient

woodland may not fall clearly into the designations as described above. Therefore a number of other criteria are used to assess the nature conservation value of a defined area of land. Accepted criteria are set out in *A Nature Conservation Review* (Ratcliffe, 1977) and include diversity, rarity, naturalness, intrinsic appeal, typicalness and recorded history.

16.5.16 Some features that are currently of no particular ecological interest in themselves may nevertheless perform an ecological function. For example they may act as a buffer against negative impacts.

16.5.17 Each ecological feature is described and evaluated in the 'Baseline Conditions' section of this chapter.

Magnitude of Impact

16.5.18 Likely impacts on the ecological features occurring within the survey area were identified through consideration of the development proposals. The impacts have been characterised with reference to the following:

- levels of certainty in the prediction of an impact occurring;
- the extent of the impact;
- its magnitude;
- duration of the impact;
- whether the impact is reversible;
- its timing and frequency; and
- whether any of the impacts are cumulative in effect.

Confidence in Predictions

16.5.19 The likelihood of change or an activity occurring as predicted has been determined based on the fact that the 5% confidence level is conventionally chosen as the lowest limit for acceptable statistical significance in common scientific practice, the following four-point scale has been employed:

- Certain/near-Certain: probability estimated at 95% chance or higher.
- Probable: probability estimated above 50% but below 95%.
- Unlikely: probability estimated above 5% but less than 50%.
- Extremely Unlikely: probability estimated at less than 5%.

Evaluation of Significance

16.5.20 This comprises analysis of the interaction between the value of the ecological features and the nature and duration of impact. However, this is a complex process because, as indicated in the IEEM guidance, the impact may influence the conservation status and integrity of ecological features.

16.5.21 The definition of significance in relation to habitats is:

“conservation status is determined by the sum of the influences acting on the habitat and its typical species, which may affect its long term distribution, structure and functions as well as the long term survival of its typical species within a given geographical area.

For species, conservation status is ‘determined by the sum of influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long term distribution and abundance of its populations within a given geographical area’.”

16.6 Legislative Framework and Planning Policy

16.6.1 Nature conservation policy is implemented through a series of areas, habitats and species designated under legislation from a local to an international level. The key pieces of legislation relevant to the proposed activities are listed below.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna (“Habitats Directive”);
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended);
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended);
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2011;
- Scottish Planning Policy; and
- Planning Advice Note (PAN) 60 Planning for Natural Heritage 2000.
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)
- Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan

16.6.2 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) remains the primary UK mechanism for statutory site designation and protection, and the protection of individual species. Through it, areas of national or regional conservation value (in terms of their biological or geological interest) can be designated as SSSIs. This affords protection by way of limiting the activities which can be carried out on such

sites, and imposing penalties for damage or destruction of the special interest. The Wildlife and Countryside Act also contains a number of schedules listing species subject to varying levels of protection. The provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act are modified and in some cases replaced by subsequent legislation contained within the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amended) Regulations 2012.

- 16.6.3 EC Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna ('the Habitats Directive') was adopted in May 1992. The Annexes to this Directive list species and habitats identified as of 'community interest' and for which the Commission requires the establishment of a network of sites to protect examples of value at European level. These sites, called Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), in conjunction with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive, form a network of protected sites across Europe referred to as Natura 2000 Network.
- 16.6.4 The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) implement the species protection requirements of the Habitats Directive in Scotland on land and inshore waters (0-12 nautical miles). The Schedules to this list the species to be afforded protection, part II details the protection of certain habitats within European sites describing how SACs are selected and designated, and part III details the protection given to European protected species describing the licensing system.
- 16.6.5 The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 strengthens the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act with regards to SSSIs and protected species. It also places duties on public bodies in relation to the conservation of biodiversity.
- 16.6.6 Biodiversity Action Plans – The British Government was one of over 150 signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan in 1994 and a subsequent UK Steering Group Report established a national framework for biodiversity but also emphasises the importance of action through biodiversity action plans at a local level. Practical measures to safeguard biodiversity are described in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).
- 16.6.7 To help deliver the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy, Scotland is split into 25 local biodiversity plan areas. Each area has a local plan to stimulate effective local action for priorities identified in the UK plan, as well as for

species and habitats which are particularly cherished or valued in local areas of Scotland. The local plan for the site is covered by the Ayrshire Local BAP.

16.6.8 A summary of the legislation protecting relevant taxa/species relevant to this site is provided in Table 16-1 below.

| Table 16-1: Protected Species Legislation | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Species | Key legal protection |
| Great Crested Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i> | These animals and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. It is illegal to deliberately disturb, capture, injure or kill any such animal or destroy their eggs. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such animal. They are also protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). |
| Bats <i>Chiroptera</i> | All bat species are protected in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended). This protection extends to both the bats themselves and roost sites. Bat roosts are protected at all times of the year regardless of whether bats are present at the time. In addition, all bats are listed under Annex II of the European Unions Habitats Directive. |
| Birds | All wild birds, their nests and eggs are, with few exceptions, fully protected by law. In addition, over eighty species or groups of species are listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. These species are specially protected by increased penalties and cannot be intentionally disturbed when nesting, with additional protection also provided to species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive. |
| WCA Schedule 9 listed animals (Part 1) and plants (part 2) | Certain species of plants and animals that do not naturally occur in Great Britain have become established in the wild and represent a threat to the natural fauna and flora. Section 14 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act prohibits the release of any animal species that are: “not ordinarily resident in and is not a regular visitor to Great Britain in a wild state”. |

Planning Policy Context

16.6.9 This section outlines the planning policies relating to nature conservation, at a local and national level. These policies guide the planning process and as such the context of this proposed development.

National Planning Policy

16.6.10 National planning policy on landscape and natural heritage is set out in the SPP and is supported by Planning Advice Note PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage. SPP is the statement of Scottish Government policy on nationally important land use planning matters. SPP is the Scottish Government's strategy for Scotland's long term spatial development.

16.6.11 The key elements of the SPP include:

- *“Taking a broader approach to landscape and natural heritage than just conserving designated or protected sites and species, taking into account ecosystems and natural processes;*
- *Facilitating positive landscape change whilst maintaining and enhancing distinctive character;*
- *Seeking benefits for species and habitats from new development including the restoration of degraded habitats;*
- *Siting and design of development should be informed by local landscape character.*
- *Encouraging connectivity between habitats, through green networks;*
- *Protecting internationally and nationally designated habitats and species;*
- *Protecting and enhancing woodland and trees of high nature conservation value.*

16.6.12 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (EIA Regulations) and The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 have also been taken into account in this Chapter.

Local Policy

16.6.13 East Ayrshire Council have prepared a Local Development Plan (LDP). The following policies are of relevance to the proposed development:

- Policy ENV 13 - The protection and enhancement of areas of nature conservation interest;

16.6.14 The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan has also been taken into account. The joint structure plan and Local plan will be superseded by the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan (EALDP). A proposed draft of the EALDP is currently at the consultation stage.

16.7 Baseline Conditions

16.7.1 This section describes the existing conditions within the site and relevant adjacent features that are considered to be within the area of search.

Desk Study

Statutory Designated Sites

16.7.2 One statutory designated site lies within 5km of the site as described below in Table 16-2.

| Table 16-2 Statutory Nature Conservation Designations | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Site name | Designation | Location at closest point to the proposed site | Description |
| Barlosh Moss | SSSI (Also a Local Wildlife Site (LWS)) | 1.7KM South | The site is divided into two, hydrologically linked sections. The western section comprises a hydromorphological mire range, a complex of wetland habitats which includes reedswamp, poor fen, marshy grassland and birch/willow carr. The eastern section comprises raised bog, typified by the presence of Sphagnum mosses and higher plants such as cranberry and bog rosemary. In some areas of the bog the hummock and hollow topography is evident. |

Non-statutory Designated Sites

16.7.3 There are no additional Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within 2km of the site however, there is a potential LWS which is Burnock water, approximately 1.7km south east at its nearest point. There was no available information on this provisional designation at the time of this report.

Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)

16.7.4 The Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan which applies to East Ayrshire, provides Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) for key habitats of conservation interest within the

county and Species Action Plans (SAPs) for species that have shown a marked decline in the UK. None of the HAPs or SAPs are relevant to the site as it's a brownfield site surrounded by farmland.

Protected/Notable Species Records

- 16.7.5 There are no available species records within the site or surrounding area as there is currently no local records centre within East Ayrshire.

Site walkover

- 16.7.6 The majority of the site consisted of hardstanding and existing buildings/infrastructure. At the time of the survey the buildings were assessed for their bat roost potential as some were potentially going to be demolished. The existing buildings and infrastructure were all assessed as having negligible bat roost potential and are now expected to be retained as part of the proposed development. There were small patches of poor semi-improved grassland, improved grassland, ephemeral vegetation, intact hedgerow, drainage ditch and scattered trees located primarily around the site boundaries. Species present included perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*, clover species *Trifolium sp.*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effuses*, broom *Cytisus scoparius*, cocks-foot grass *Dactylis glomerata*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, willowherb species *Epilobium sp.*, willow species *Salix sp.*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, beech *Fagus sylvatica* and cherry species *Prunus sp.*

16.8 Nature Conservation Evaluation

- 16.8.1 This section provides an evaluation of the Nature Conservation importance of key ecological receptors identified on site or within the area of search. Such key receptors are defined as habitats or species recorded on site or, in the absence of detailed survey, have the potential to occur based on habitats and habitat features recorded on site.

Designated Sites

Statutory Sites

- 16.8.2 In accordance with its designated status, the Barlosh Moss SSSI/LWS is of ***national importance***.

Non-Statutory Sites of Nature Conservation Designation

- 16.8.3 There were no additional LWS's within 2km of the site. The provisional LWS cannot

be assessed due to the lack of information available to make a definitive decision.

Habitats

Hardstanding, Buildings and Infrastructure

- 16.8.4 The site contained four main buildings as well as smaller vacant buildings and infrastructure relating to past and present industrial activities. The buildings were assessed as having negligible bat roost potential. The hardstanding provided no ecological value to the site. Such habitats are therefore considered to be of **negligible importance** for nature conservation

Scattered trees

- 16.8.5 Scattered trees were located along the site boundaries, particularly adjacent to the road, which were dominated by locally and nationally common, and widespread, floral species and are therefore considered to be of low ecological value. Such habitats are therefore considered to be of **negligible importance** for nature conservation.

Improved and poor semi-improved grassland

- 16.8.6 There were patches of poor semi-improved and improved grassland habitat within the western side of the site, particularly around a bund and at the site entrance. Species present were dominated by locally and nationally common, and widespread, floral species and are therefore considered to be of low ecological value. Such habitats are therefore considered to be of **negligible importance** for nature conservation.

Ephemeral vegetation

- 16.8.7 Ephemeral vegetation was present throughout the site within gaps and cracks of the hardstanding, as well as in the east of the site on previously disturbed land no longer being utilised. Species present were dominated by locally and nationally common, and widespread, floral species and are therefore considered to be of low ecological value. Such habitats are therefore considered to be of **negligible importance** for nature conservation.

Standing open water

- 16.8.8 There were ten ponds within 500m of the site, nine were assessed as poor (<0.5) and one as below average (0.59) habitat suitability to support great crested newts. It is considered very unlikely that great crested newts are within the area based on the

poor terrestrial habitat on site and in the surrounding area; and only a single pond having below average suitability. A single drainage ditch was present on site containing a low level of water with no flow. The ditch had steep banks and was heavily shaded by scattered trees. The bank vegetation consisted of floral species which are common and widespread throughout lowland habitats in the UK. The ditch is not considered suitable to support any European protected species. However, the drain potentially supports common toad *Bufo bufo* and common frog *Rana temporaria* which are UKBAP priority species. To avoid negatively impacting upon these species the vegetation and infilling of the drainage ditch will be completed under precautionary working methods. Such habitats are therefore considered to be of important ***within the zone of influence*** for nature conservation.

Species

Bats

- 16.8.9 None of the buildings on site were considered to have bat roost potential and there is very limited bat foraging habitat on site in the form of scattered trees and a small section of hedgerow, which are expected to be retained as part of the development. A small number of scattered trees are expected to be lost to the proposed development however this is not considered to significantly impact upon bat foraging habitat or existing wildlife corridors. Additional tree planting as part of the proposed landscaping around the site will provide foraging habitat for bats. The site is considered to be of ***negligible importance*** for bats.

Nesting birds

- 16.8.10 No detailed survey has been undertaken for nesting birds on site; however the scattered trees and hedgerow habitat have the potential to support common bird species. The majority of the scattered trees along the site boundaries are to be retained. Some of the scattered trees within the west of the site and the small section of species poor hedgerow are expected to be lost to the development. In order to avoid committing an offence under the relevant wildlife legislation, all vegetation clearance works aim to avoid the breeding bird season (March – September). Should it prove necessary to carry out vegetation clearance works within the breeding bird season then a nesting bird check will be undertaken within 24 hours of works commencing. In the event that nesting birds are recorded within the works area, appropriate mitigation will need to be designed and implemented

prior to start of works. Additional tree planting will provide nesting habitat for bird species and compensate for the minor loss of the scattered trees. The site is considered to be of ***negligible importance*** for birds.

Amphibians

- 16.8.11 There were ten ponds within 500m of the site, nine were assessed as poor (<0.5) and one as below average (0.59) habitat suitability to support great crested newts. It is considered extremely unlikely that great crested newts are within the area based on the poor terrestrial habitat on site (only small areas of semi-improved neutral grassland around the site boundaries) and in the surrounding area; and only a single pond having below average suitability. The majority of suitable habitat is restricted to the site boundaries or in areas which are to be retained as part of the development. The onsite drain and the ponds surrounding the site are not considered suitable to support great crested newts. The drainage ditch on site and the ponds surrounding the site have the potential to support breeding amphibians such as common toad and common frog. The site is considered to be of importance for amphibians ***within the zone of influence***.

16.9 Impact Assessment

- 16.9.1 The potential impacts of the proposed development upon designated sites, habitats and species evaluated as having conservation importance within the zone of influence or above are discussed in the following section.
- 16.9.2 Habitats and species which have been evaluated as having negligible conservation importance are not considered likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development due to their absence from the proposed development site or poor conservation value. Such species or habitats have therefore been scoped out of the following sections.

Statutory Designated Sites

- 16.9.3 The designated site, Barlosh Moss SSSI, is approximately 1.7km south of the site and has no obvious ecological connectivity to the site. It is considered that the statutory designated site will not be subject to direct effects of the works (i.e. loss or disturbance to habitats and species of conservation interest within the site). The distance between the site and the proposed development also indicates that indirect effects such as dust deposition and noise are highly unlikely to have any impact upon their conservation value. The air quality assessment, (Appendix 10.1) concluded that

the proposed development would have no significant effects on air quality or deposition at the designated habitat site. Full details are provided in Appendix 10.1: Air Quality.

Standing open water (drainage ditch)/Amphibians

16.9.4 The drainage ditch and bank vegetation is to be lost to the proposed development. The ditch has the potential to support common frog and common toad which are recognised as UKBAP priority species. There is suitable amphibian habitat adjacent to site for these species. To avoid impacting upon these amphibian species the vegetation and infilling of the drainage ditch will be completed under precautionary working methods as summarised below. With precautionary measures in place it is considered that the proposed development will not significantly impact upon the conservation status of common frog or common toad.

16.10 Mitigation & Enhancement

16.10.1 Precautionary working methods will be implemented for the infilling of the drainage ditch and the vegetation clearance of the embankments to avoid negatively impacting upon amphibian UKBAP priority species. These measures will include:

- Timing – vegetation clearance and the infilling of the ditch will be undertaken outside of the amphibian breeding season (March- June);
- Hand Searching and Supervision of vegetation clearance, and infilling of the ditch – Immediately prior to (no more than 24hrs before) commencement of works the proposed footprint will be searched by a suitable qualified ecologist for any potential refuges. Works shall not commence until the ecologist is satisfied that the working footprint contains no suitable refuges. The ecologist will be required to remain on site during all site clearance works and infilling; and
- Toolbox talk

16.10.2 With these measure in place, the proposed development is not considered to significantly impact upon the areas ecology.

16.11 Residual impacts

- 16.11.1 There will be no significant residual adverse effects as the development proposals will result in a no net loss in biodiversity within the site.

16.12 Summary and Conclusions

- 16.12.1 The site is an active industrial facility with very limited habitat on site. The proposed development is concentrated around the western side of the site upon the existing hardstanding with minimal disruption to the limited habitat on site. All the buildings on site are to be retained as part of the development. This ecological assessment has identified and evaluated the elements that make-up the local ecosystems and has considered how the impacts of the development may affect each of these in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy and the IEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2006).
- 16.12.2 The application site has been assessed and does not affect the nature conservation of a site of national importance.
- 16.12.3 With the implementation of precautionary working methods, the proposed development does not affect the nature conservation status of UKBAP priority amphibian species.
- 16.12.4 In terms of protected and notable species the proposed development will result in no significant loss of habitat. There will be additional tree planting as part of the site landscaping which will provide additional nesting and foraging habitat for birds, and bats. No further ecological survey work is deemed necessary and it is considered the development will have no significant ecological impact on site or the surrounding area.

References

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