

Ecology and Ornithology Update

ECOLOGY

Ecological surveys are now complete. Forestry felling plans are currently being considered. No terrestrial protected species were present within the development area

Bat surveys were conducted, and a buffer distance was devised to allow sufficient stand off between trees and turbines (82m) to avoid bat collisions

Habitats are generally low value, with some small pockets of high value ground water dependent terrestrial ecosystems. The design seeks to avoid these. The majority of peaty areas have been avoided, and SEPA are content with the layout.

Comprehensive fisheries surveys were carried out by the Argyll Fisheries Trust

ORNITHOLOGY

Key species: golden eagle, hen harrier, white-tailed eagle, white-fronted goose—taken to collision risk modelling stage

Main surveys undertaken and survey methodology agreed with regulators in line with NatureScot guidance. Supplementary, voluntary 2023 surveys ongoing to add extra data—further targeted breeding raptor and golden eagle surveys.

Black grouse—no records present and no observations of black grouse within the development area.

Coniferous plantation generally unsuitable for lekking. In conjunction with a Bird Protection Plan, further surveys would be undertaken pre-construction and appropriate safeguards such as standoff buffers agreed

Golden eagle—the loss of foraging habitat due to displacement is not expected to result in any significantly reduced foraging opportunities for range-holding golden eagles. Due to the site consisting of largely dense plantation coniferous woodland, it is predicted that measures to be implemented through a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for the Core Site will likely benefit golden eagle by creation of additional foraging habitat via felling. This will be carried out in consultation with NatureScot

