# Glendye Wind Farm Overhead Line Grid Connection

# Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

# Volume 4 | Appendix 7.5

# Protected Species Report

# October 2025

# APPENDIX 7.5: PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEY REPORT

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**Figures**

There are no figures associated with this appendix.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 ITPEnergised (now part of SLR) was appointed by Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission) to undertake habitat surveys of lands between the consented Glendye Wind Farm and the existing Fetteresso substation, situated near the Kirktown of Fetteresso, Aberdeenshire (central grid reference NO 71275 81895) as shown on **Figure 3.1**.

1.1.2 Protected species surveys were undertaken during optioneering and design stages of the Proposed Development during the weeks commencing 13 May 2024, 16 September 2024, 16 December 2024, 3 March 2025, and 24 March 2025. The focus of the survey was on identifying potential places of shelter for the focal species and assess the level of use of the habitats for commuting and foraging.

1.1.3 This Technical Appendix contains the results of the protected species survey including methods, results, discussion, and conclusions.

# 2. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

## 2.1 Badger

2.1.1 Badgers *Meles meles* and their setts are protected in Scotland by The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011)[1]. The Act makes it an offence to, or attempt to:

- Wilfully take, injure or kill a badger;
- Inflict cruelty to a badger;
- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a badger sett;
- Sell or possess a badger; and/or
- Mark or ring a badger.

2.1.2 The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as '*any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger*'. Interfering with a badger sett includes:

- Damaging or destroying a sett or any part of it;
- Obstructing access to a sett;
- Disturbing a badger while it is in a sett; and/or
- Causing or allowing a dog to enter a badger sett.

2.1.3 It is also an offence to knowingly cause or permit any of the above acts to be carried out.

- Badger licensing is the responsibility of NatureScot. Licences can be provided for certain circumstances if planned activities, including for development where appropriate, could interfere with a badger sett or disturb/cause harm to badger, at the discretion of NatureScot.

## 2.2 Otter

2.2.1 Otter *Lutra lutra* is a European Protected Species (EPS)[2], of which receives full protection under Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) (the "Habitats Regulations") [3] and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) [4]. They are also fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [5]. As such, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly:

- Capture, injure or kill an otter;
- Harass an otter or group of otters;
- Disturb an otter while it is occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection;
- Disturb an otter while it is rearing or otherwise caring for its young;
- Obstruct access to a holt or other structure or place otters use for shelter or protection, or otherwise deny the animal use of that place;
- Disturb an otter in a manner or in circumstances likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; and
- Disturb an otter in a manner or in circumstances likely to impair its ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or otherwise care for its young.

2.2.2 It is also an offence to:

[1] Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/6/contents
[2] NatureScot (2019) Protected Species List – Habitats Regulations 1994: Schedules 2, 3, and 4. Available at: Protected Species List - Habitats Regulations 1994 | NatureScot
[3] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1992/43/oj/eng
[4] Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/6/contents
[5] Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents

- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (whether or not deliberately or recklessly). This applies at all times, whether or not the breeding site or resting place currently being used by an otter; and
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any wild otter (or any part or derivative of one) obtained after 10 June 1994.

2.2.3 The otter is also detailed within the SBL, of which is a list of animals, habitats and plants that Scottish Ministers consider to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland.

### 2.3 Water Vole

2.3.1 Water vole *Arvicola amphibius* receives partial protection through its listing on Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)[6] and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended)[7]. In Scotland, this legal protection is currently restricted only to the water vole places of shelter or protection; it does not extend to the animal itself. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that water voles use for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb a water vole while it is using any such place of shelter or protection.

2.3.2 Water vole is listed within the SBL as a species of principle importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland.

### 2.4 Bats

2.4.1 All bat species found in Scotland are classed as EPS. They receive full protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended in Scotland)[8]. This legislation makes it an offence to deliberately or recklessly:

- Capture, injure or kill a wild bat;
- Harass a wild bat or group of bats;
- Disturb a wild bat in a roost (any structure or place it uses for shelter or protection);
- Disturb a wild bat while it is rearing or otherwise caring for its young (this would be a 'maternity' roost);
- Obstruct access to a bat roost or to otherwise deny the animal use of the roost;
- Disturb such a wild bat in a manner that is, or in circumstances which are, likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of that species; and to
- Disturb a wild bat in a manner that is, or in circumstances which are, likely to impair its ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or otherwise care for its young.

2.4.2 It is also an offence to:

- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (whether or not deliberately or recklessly); and to
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any wild bat (or any part or derivative of one) obtained after 10 June 1994.

2.4.3 The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004[9] places a duty on public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity in Scotland. Under this Act, Scottish Ministers must designate one or more strategies for biodiversity conservation, as defined within the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. They are also required publish

[6] ibid 5
[7] Ibid 4
[8] Habitats listed on Annex 1 of the Council Directive EEC of 21 May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive).
NatureScot (2020). The Scottish Biodiversity List. Available online from: https://www.nature.scot/doc/scottish-biodiversity-list [Accessed July2025].
[9] ibid 4

lists of species of flora and fauna and habitats considered to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland.

2.4.4 The Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) [10] is a list of plants, animals and habitats that Scottish ministers consider to be of principle importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland. The following bat species are identified as a conservation priority through their listing on the SBL:

- Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*;
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*;
- Nathusius pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*;
- Daubentons' bat *Myotis daubentonii*;
- Natterers bat *Myotis nattereri*;
- Whiskered bat *Myotis mystancinus*;
- Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*;
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*; and
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*.

## 2.5 Pine marten

2.5.1 Pine marten *Martes martes* receive full protection under Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [11] and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) [12]. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Kill, injure or take a pine marten;
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place a pine marten uses for shelter or protection;
- Disturb a pine marten when it is occupying a nest or den for shelter or protection (except when this is inside a dwelling house); and
- Possess or control, sell, offer for sale or possess or transport for the purpose of sale any living or dead pine marten or any derivative of such an animal.

2.5.2 The pine marten is also listed within the SBL as a species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland.

## 2.6 Red squirrel

2.6.1 Red squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris* and their dreys receive full protection under Schedules 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [13] and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) [14]. In short, it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

[10] NatureScot (2025). Scottish Biodiversity List. Available online at: https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scottish-biodiversity-list (accessed July 2025).
[11] Ibid 5
[12] Ibid 4
[13] Ibid 5
[14] Ibid 4

- Kill, injure or take a red squirrel;
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to a drey or any other structure or place which a red squirrel uses for shelter or protection;
- Disturb a red squirrel when it is occupying a structure or place for shelter or protection;
- Possess or control, sell or offer for sale, or possess or transport for the purpose of sale any living or dead red squirrel or any derivative of such an animal; and
- Knowingly causing or permitting any of the above acts to be carried out.

2.6.2 The red squirrel is also listed within the SBL as a species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland.

## 2.7 Herptiles

2.7.1 Great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* and natterjack toads *Epidalea calamita* are EPS. They receive full protection under Schedule 5 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended in Scotland)[15]. For any of these species, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly:

- Capture, injure or kill a wild animal
- Disturb an animal while using any structure or place it uses for shelter or protection – e.g. breeding pond, hibernation site
- Obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place of an animal, or otherwise deny the animal use of that site
- Disturb an animal in a manner or in circumstances likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Disturb an animal in a manner or in circumstances likely to impair its ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or otherwise care for its young

2.7.2 It's also an offence to:

- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any such animal (whether or not deliberately or recklessly)
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any such animal (or any part or derivative of one) obtained after May 1994

2.7.3 All other amphibian and reptile species found naturally in Scotland are given limited protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)[16]. These include:

- Common frog *Rana temporaria*
- Common toad *Bufo bufo*
- Palmate newt *Lissotriton helveticus*
- Smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*
- Adder *Vipera berus*
- Common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*
- Slow worm *Anguis fragilis*

2.7.4 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)[17], common lizard, slow worm, and adder are protected against:

[15] Ibid 3
[16] Ibid 5
[17] Ibid 5

- Intentional or reckless killing and injury
- Trade – i.e. Sale, barter, exchange, transport for sale, or advertise for sale or to buy

2.7.5 Smooth newts, palmate newts, common frog and coming toad are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)[18], but only against trade (i.e. sale, barter, exchange, transport for sale, or advertise for sale or to buy).

2.7.6 It's not an offence to possess these species.

[18] Ibid 5

# 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 The following buffers were applied to define this Survey Area:

- A 100 m buffer around the proposed OHL alignment and the associated Limit of Deviation (LoD) (defined as 50 m either side of the proposed OHL alignment); and
- A 50 m buffer around access track areas.

3.1.2 In addition, species observations were recorded during the extended habitat surveys.

## 3.2 Preliminary bat Roost Assessment (PRA) and Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)

3.2.1 An initial Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) of the trees was carried out to assess their suitability for supporting roosting bats informed by Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidance[19]. A Preliminary (bat) Roost Assessment (PRA) was also conducted to assess the suitability of potential roost features (PRFs) for bat species. All trees and built structures within the Survey Area were inspected from ground level (using binoculars, where appropriate) searching for features with potential suitability to support roosting bats (e.g. woodpecker holes, rot holes, tear-outs, cankers and knot holes in trees; and gaps in brickwork, eaves, loose roof tiles etc in buildings and other structures). Additionally, physical evidence of presence was searched for (e.g., droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks, and urine and grease staining).

The potential for the trees and structures to support roosting bats was ranked in accordance with the criteria set out in the BCT guidelines[19].

## 3.3 Daytime Bat Walkover

3.3.1 A daytime bat walkover was conducted of the Survey Area to observe, assess and record any habitats suitable for bats to roost, commute and forage both on Site and in the surrounding area (it is important that connectivity within the landscape is also considered at this stage). The aim is to determine the suitability of a site for bats, to assess whether further bat surveys will be needed and how those surveys should safely be carried out.

## 3.4 Protected Mammals Surveys

*Badger*

Specific survey methods for badger are detailed within **Confidential Technical Appendix 7.3**

*Otter and Water Vole*

Specific survey methods for otter and water vole and are detailed within **Confidential Technical Appendix 7.4.**

*Pine marten*

3.4.1 The methodology employed during the survey follows that detailed within Cresswell *et al.* (2012)[20]. Active searches were conducted for pine marten signs, including scats, prints, and possible den sites.

*Red Squirrel*

3.4.2 Surveys were undertaken following guidance within Cresswell *et al.* (2012)[20] across the Survey Area with an emphasis on woodland. Active searches were conducted for red squirrel signs including dreys, feeding signs and animal sightings. In addition, woodland habitats were assessed for their suitability to support the species.

[19] Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition).* The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
[20] Cresswell, W., Birks, J., Dean, M. D., Pacheco, M., Trewhella, W., Wells, D., & Wray, S. (Eds.). (2012). *UK BAP Mammals; Interim Guidance for Survey Methodologies, Impact Assessment and Mitigation.* The Mammal Society.

*Other species*

An assessment of habitat suitability and an active search of evidence for other protected species known to be within the wider area included but was not limited to Scottish wildcat *Felis sylvestris,* herptiles, and brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, and mountain hare *Lepus timidus*.

## 3.5 Limitations

3.5.1 The Survey Area was largely accessible however in certain areas surveys could not be undertaken fully due to access issues and health and safety concerns. These issues included dense areas of gorse scrub and juvenile plantation, steep cliffs, and areas of clearfell. In addition, gardens of residential properties or active construction / operational facilities (i.e. Fetteresso substation) were not surveyed. This was overcome to best effort by focussing on finding paths leading into such areas and walking along the boundaries of no-access zones to determine potential usage, and characterising the suitability of the habitat. These limitations are taken into account during impact assessment and mitigation stages.

3.5.2 It should be noted that an ecological survey provides only a “snapshot” of the conditions prevailing at the time of survey. Given the Site context and the types of habitats present, the level of survey is considered to be sufficient to meet the objectives of this study.

# 4. SURVEY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1.1 The results of the protected species survey are presented below. Target Notes (TNs) are detailed in **Annex A** and field signs are shown on **Figures 7.4 a-m**.

## 4.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

4.2.1 The PRA identified two structures with high suitability for summer roosting bats, and moderate suitability for hibernating bats, internal surveys were not conducted. Structure 1 is a concrete tunnel within an agricultural field. The structure consisted of a large chamber with a large access entry point at the southern wall. Structure 2 is a derelict house with multiple entry points via a partially collapsed roof and unglazed windows.

**Plate 1: PRA Structure 1 (left) and Structure 2 (right)**

## 4.3 Ground Level Tree Assessment

4.3.1 The GLTA recorded 33 trees with suitability to support roosting bats. A summary of bat roost suitability is shown in **Table 1**, and detailed results are in **Annex A, Table A-1.**

**Table 1: Suitability for roosting bats of trees recorded during the PRA**

| Suitability | Number of trees recorded within the Survey Area |
|---|---|
| PRF-I | 15 |
| PRF-M | 11 |
| FAR | 6 |
| PRF | 1 |

4.3.2 PRFs were identified on conifers, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, and beech *Fagus sylvatica* trees. Target Note T7 is a semi-mature beech woodland of plantation origin and densely planted. The woodland area is approximately 1.89ha bordered by conifer plantation to the north and agricultural land to the south, its south-western extend overlaps with the operational area of the Proposed Development. PRF-I trees are present within this woodland, those overlapping the proposed LoD include T2, T3, T4, & T6.

## 4.4 Daytime Bat Walkover

4.4.1 The Survey Area stretches across an array of habitats, with acid grassland, heathland and moorland in the west, to coniferous plantation, broadleaved woodland, and grasslands in the centre and east.

4.4.2 The open moorland habitat dominating the western reaches of the Survey Area is generally unsuitable for foraging and commuting bats due to lack of linear features, and so is unlikely to support significant numbers of foraging and/or commuting bats. In addition, this area is void of trees and structures that may offer potential roosting opportunities. There are several small watercourses and narrow drainage channels which run through the Survey Area supporting both pool and riffle habitats, but these offer limited suitability for use by bats as no riparian woodland is present and the features are highly exposed. The Water of Charr is slow flowing and offers a range of habitats likely to support invertebrates for food sources, however offers limited riparian woodland as commuting features. Although the open bog habitats are generally unsuitable, it should be recognised that on calm mild nights the insect biomass across open upland habitats can be significant and records of bats using such areas are not uncommon.

4.4.3 The coniferous plantation dominating the central and northern reaches of the Survey Area is generally considered to offer limited potential for roosting bats due to the presence of densely planted coniferous trees, that largely lack maturity to support PRFs. However, where stands are less densely packed and where trees are of greater maturity, thus offering greater potential for damage / decay roosting features, and a greater amount of open space for invertebrate foraging, there is considered to be greater suitability for bat usage. In addition, bats are considered to use forestry for commuting and foraging as forestry blocks are well connected to wider habitats. As such, it is considered that bats are likely to utilise the forestry rides and forestry edge habitats.

4.4.4 Agricultural lands within the south and eastern reaches of the Survey Area, offer suitable habitat of bats. There are a number of hedgerows, broadleaf woodlands, and water courses intersecting the Survey Area, which offer commuting and foraging habitat for bats. This area provides the greatest potential for roosting bats, with several mature trees with features considered suitable to support roosting bats.

### 4.5 Badger

4.5.1 The badger survey methods and results have been detailed in **Confidential Technical Appendix 7.3**.

### 4.6 Otter and Water vole

4.6.1 The otter and water vole survey methods and results have been detailed in **Confidential Technical Appendix 7.4.**

### 4.7 Pine marten

4.7.1 The Survey Area contains a mixture of open moorland, plantation forestry and grassland habitats. The forestry habitat is suitable for pine marten, allowing arboreal movement, with the grassland and moorland providing ample prey resource.

4.7.2 Evidence of pine marten was recorded across the eastern half of the Survey Area, within or near to plantation forestry. Detailed results are in **Annex A, Table A.2.** A mammal hole beneath a fallen tree was identified within a forest ride during the protected species surveys, no other evidence was identified nearby however this was considered suitable for pine marten den (PM4 / M8). Fourteen observations of what was assessed in the field as being pine marten scat was recorded along forestry tracks or in woodland blocks. One scat (PM1) recorded within forestry was tested using DNA analysis, this was confirmed as pine marten.

### 4.8 Red Squirrel

4.8.1 The Survey Area contains a mixture of open moorland, plantation forestry and grassland habitats. The forestry habitat is suitable for red squirrel, providing ample drey suitability and food sources. The woodland within the Survey Area is well connected to woodland parcels in the wider landscape.

4.8.2 Red squirrel survey evidence is detailed in **Annex A, Table A.3.** There were two live observations recorded of red squirrel during the surveys; in the centre of the Survey Area along a forestry access track (RS1) and in the north east of the Survey Area also along a forestry track (RS3). A potential red squirrel drey was recorded in the centre of the Survey Area, near one of the live sighting locations (RS2).

4.8.3 Red squirrel feeding remains were also recorded near woodland in the centre (RS4) and east (RS5) of the Survey Area.

### 4.9 Scottish Wildcat

4.9.1 The Survey Area contains a mixture of open moorland, plantation forestry, grassland and scrub habitats which is considered suitable for Scottish wildcat as animals often prefer woodland edge habitats in upland areas. The forestry habitat is considered suitable for wildcat, providing den / resting site suitability and food sources. The woodland within the Survey Area is well connected to woodland parcels in the wider landscape.

4.9.2 No evidence of Scottish wildcat was recorded during the surveys. However, wildcats are highly elusive animals, often burying their scat, and can have large territories, using numerous above ground resting sites as well as underground burrows, cavities within boulders, as well as dense woodland and areas of brash. Recent studies suggest that wildcat home ranges may be between 5 and 30 km[21]

4.9.3 It should be noted that scats / foraging signs alone cannot be relied upon to determine presence as signs are not distinguishable from feral / domestic cats or hybrids (excluding the use of DNA scat analysis).

4.9.4 Wildcat records are known from the wider area, as informed by desk study results (see **Technical Appendix 7.1**). Wildcat priority area Angus Glens is located 21.73 km south-west of the Proposed Development, however an area within Drumtochty Forest within the Survey Area was included in the scoping stages of defining priority areas[22]. Whilst the report did not recommend this region as a priority area due to a lack of sufficient evidence of wildcat in the area, it was acknowledged that "*future surveys may reveal more Wildcats or hybrids within the extensive commercial forestry plantations of Fetteresso or Drumtochty or further afield into Glen Dye or Durris forest.*" As such, it is considered possible that wildcat are present within the wider area.

### 4.10 Other Mammals

4.10.1 Multiple mammal records were collected incidentally throughout the Survey Area during the survey work. These included live sightings of red deer *Cervus elaphus*, roe deer *Capreolus capreolus*, brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, and field vole *Microtus agrestis*. Presence of deer pressure was noted throughout, with red deer herds observed within the western reaches of the Survey Area, and evidence of roe deer prevalent within forestry areas.

4.10.2 Brown hare were observed within agricultural grassland to the centre and east of the Survey Area. The agricultural lands and forestry edge habitats within the Survey Area are considered to provide optimal habitat for this species. Evidence of mountain hare was not recorded during surveys. However, open moorland within the western reaches of the Survey Area is considered to provide suitable habitat for this species.

4.10.3 Fox *Vulpes vulpes* scat and prints were recorded and are assumed to be present throughout the Survey Area, however, are not offered legal protection or are of conservation importance.

4.10.4 Several unknown species burrows, scat, and feeding remains were recorded during surveys. In these instances, surveyors could not attribute this to a species as evidence was obscured or aged, or may be attributed to several species. M5-M7 included scats 3-5cm in length recorded on existing forestry tracks, M6

[21] Kilshaw, K., Campbell, R.D., Kortland, K. and Macdonald, D.W. (2023). Scottish Wildcat Action final report: Ecology. NatureScot, Inverness.
[22] Littlewood, N.A., Campbell, R.D., Dinnie, L., Gilbert, L., Hooper, R., Iason, G., Irvine, J., Kilshaw, K., Kitchener, A., Lackova, P., Newey, S., Ogden, R. & Ross, A. 2014. Survey and scoping of wildcat priority areas. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 768.

was green in colour containing bones, whereas M6 and M7 were darker in colour with berries within. It is possible these are pine marten, however, are not confirmed. M17 consisted of a larger scatt (8 cm in length), soft in nature but void of berries or bones. M9, M16 and M22 consisted of mammal trails with snuffling evident. M12, M19 were partial prints along a mammal path, prints were obscured limiting species identification.

### 4.11 Herptiles

4.11.1 The habitat across the Survey Area is suitable for herptiles, with moorland, grassland and forestry rides present. Moorland areas within the west of the Survey Area in particular offer good suitability for hibernating reptiles. Drainage ditches and ponds were observed throughout the Survey Area offering suitable habitat for amphibians.

4.11.2 Multiple herptile observations were recorded incidentally during the surveys. Adder *Vipera berus* were noted in two locations. A single juvenile was recorded on a moorland track (H1) and three female and one male adder (H6) was observed basking in a dry ditch in the same location on multiple days.

4.11.3 Seven sightings of common lizard were recorded, within moorland habitat, on a forestry ride, and by the Water of Charr.

4.11.4 The common frog was recorded three times, and frogspawn was recorded at multiple locations across the Survey Area.

# 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 Targeted surveys conducted in 2024-2025 has identified evidence of protected species utilising habitats across much of the Survey Area. Western reaches of the Survey Area were observed to support herptiles and red deer across open moorland where heather is plentiful offering suitable foraging habitat.

5.1.2 Forested areas in the eastern reaches of the Survey Area are also confirmed to support roe deer and small mammals, including pine marten and red squirrel. The dense coniferous plantation within the Survey Area is suitable for pine marten, allowing arboreal movement and hunting. Similarly, the forested woodland blocks provides abundant food sources and suitable drey locations for red squirrel. Scottish wildcat are known to be present within the wider area and may be present in the Survey Area, despite no evidence being recorded during the surveys.

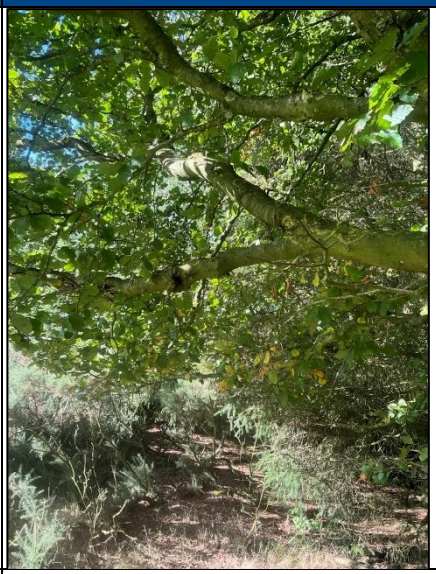
5.1.3 Forested and agricultural areas provide suitable habitat for roosting, foraging and commuting bats. There are two structures along the OHL routewith potential suitability for summer roosting and/or hibernating bats, and 20 trees with PRF features are present within 30 m of the Proposed Development.

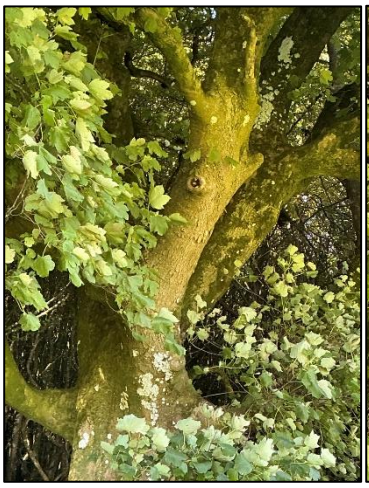
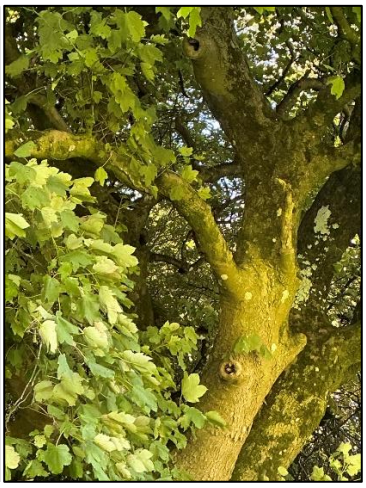
5.1.4 Due to the presence of protected species within / bordering the Proposed Development, mitigation (including pre-construction surveys and suitably robust Species Protection Plans (SPPs) will be required to avoid negatively impacting protected species and their resting places.

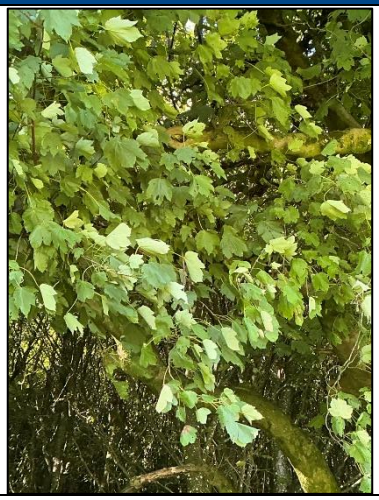
# ANNEX A: SURVEY EVIDENCE

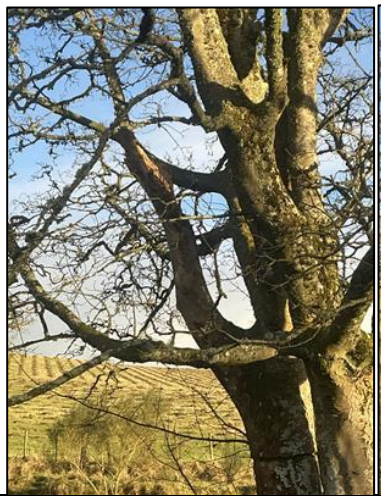
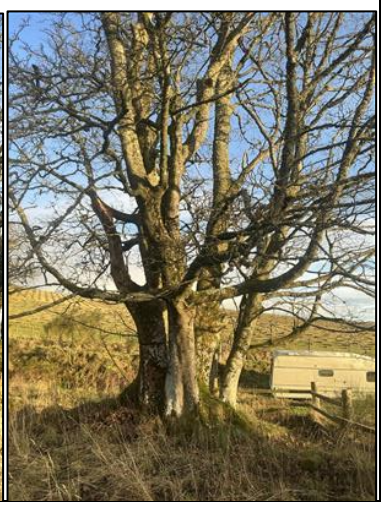
**Table A.1: Ground Level Tree Assessment Results**

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T1 | NO 70311 81940 | Unspecified conifer | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Two large woodpecker holes c. 4 m height on north aspect, third smaller hole adjacent, appears hollow. Large fissure on east aspect c. 5 m height,<br>Desiccation-fissure, Woodpecker-hole. Lifting bark. Desiccation-fissure.<br>Woodpecker holes also provide suitability for red squirrel dreys<br>  |
| T2 | NO 71270 81897 | Beech | PRF-I (individual bats) | Knot-hole on limb |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| T3 | NO 71274 81895 | Beech | PRF-I (individual bats) | Compression-fork on stem   |
| T4 | NO 71278 81914 | Beech | PRF-I (individual bats) | Fluting on stem   |
| T5 | NO 71291 | Beech | PRF-I (individual bats) | Compression-fork. |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 81923 | | | |
| T6 | NO 71288 81894 | Beech | FAR (further assessment required) | FAR (further assessment required). Mature beech tree of suitable size to contain PRFs. Full survey obscured by foliage.   |
| T7 | NO 71347 81976 | Beech | PRF | Beach woodland with PRF potential, recomended 30m buffer. |
| T8 | NO 71363 81980 | Sycamore | FAR (further assessment required) | Three knot holes along southern aspect of tree near fence line. Knotholes at 4 m and 7 m height on main trunk and along limb at 5 m height.   |

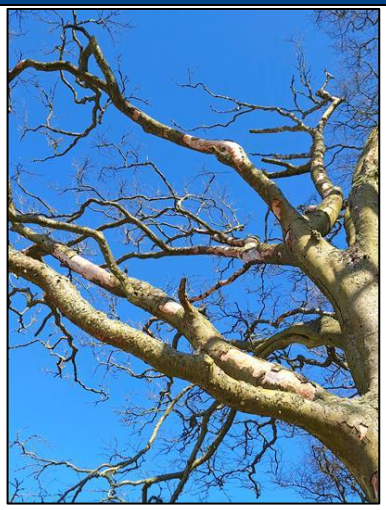
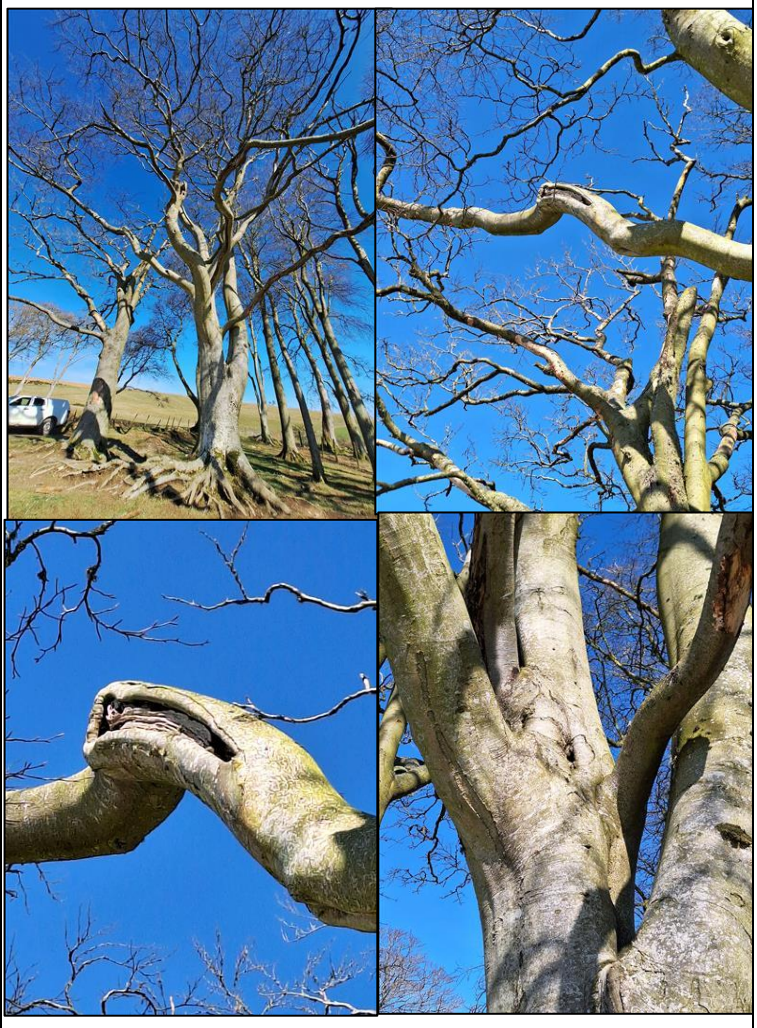
| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| T9 | NO 71807 82327 | Unspecified conifer | PRF-I (individual bats) | Rot-hole, Lifting-bark   |
| T10 | NO 72243 82853 | Ash | PRF-I (individual bats) | Desiccation-fissure, Tear-out, Crack/split, Desiccation-fissure   |

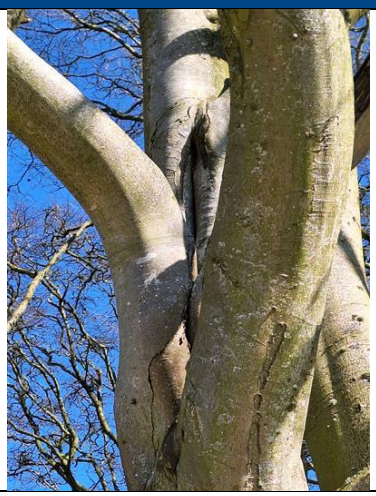
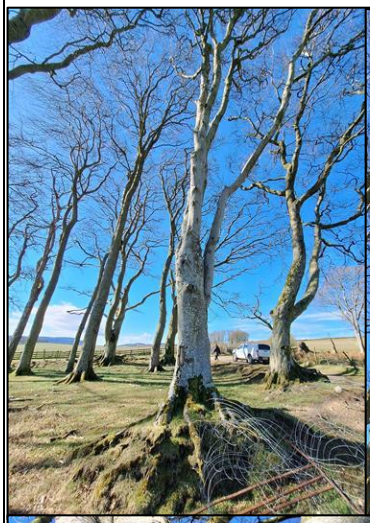
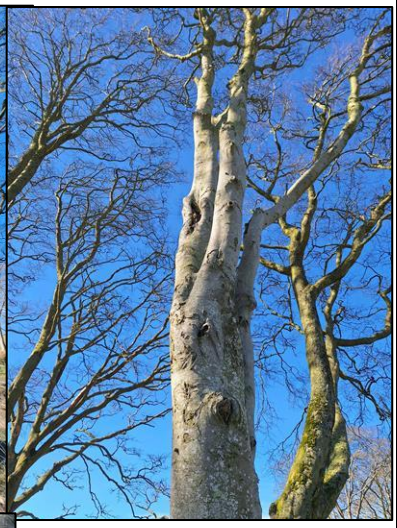
| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T11 | NO 72246 82883 | Ash | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Mature tree within agricultural field. Hollow main truck, Tear-out on limb, Crack/split, Knot-hole   |
| T12 | NO 72254 82902 | Ash | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Hollow, Tear-out, Butt-rot, Crack/split   |
| T13 | NO 72272 82887 | Sycamore | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Branch end cavity/cracks, Rot-hole   |

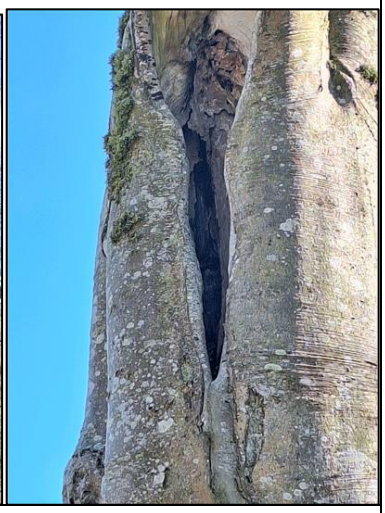
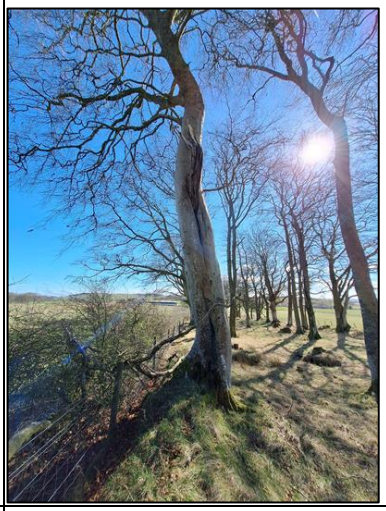
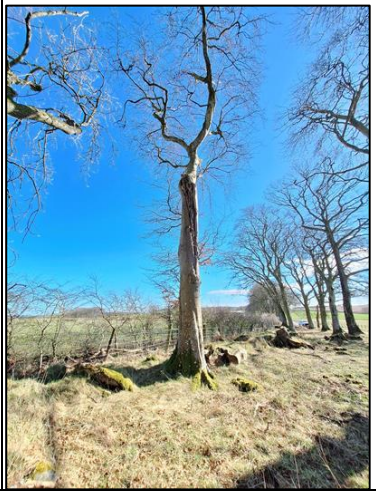
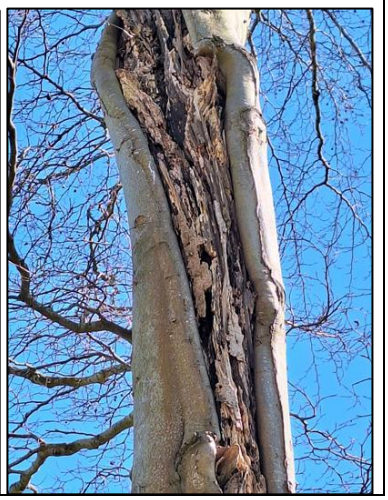
| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T14 | NO 72285 82894 | Sycamore | PRF-I (individual bats) | Rot-hole, Knot-hole  |
| T15 | NO 72472 82498 | Unspecified | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Cavity at 2m height; south facing large tear out; cavity and woodpecker hole.  |
| T16 | NO 72564 82314 | Unspecified | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Multiple tear outs  |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T17 | NO 74518 83990 | Ash | PRF-I (individual bats) | 13m tall ash. Two PRFs that lead to main cavity of tree. One PRF 2m high, south east aspect. Second PRF 3m high, east aspect.  |
| T18 | NO 74625 84385 | Beech | FAR (further assessment required) | Branch end cavity/cracks.<br>2 x cracked limbs on north aspect approx. 4m height, fluting on east aspect approx. 4m height. Cracks facing upward, PRF not fully visible. Likely PRF-I as upward facing so will fill with rain. Large section of trunk obscured by leaves. |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| T19 | NO 74810 84057 | Beech | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Two hollows and a broken branch, some peeling bark on branches. South facing, 7-9m.  |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| T20 | NO 74813 84050 | Beech | PRF-I (individual bats) | Multiple small PRFs. Tear out and compression fork. South facing, 8m height.  |

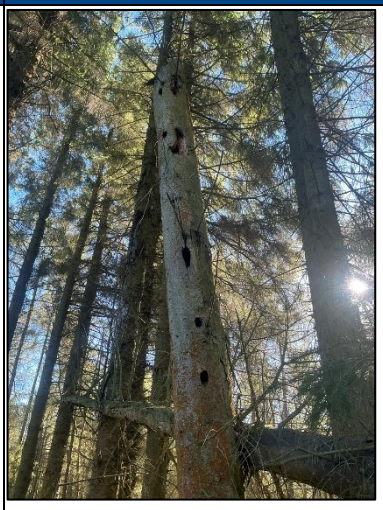
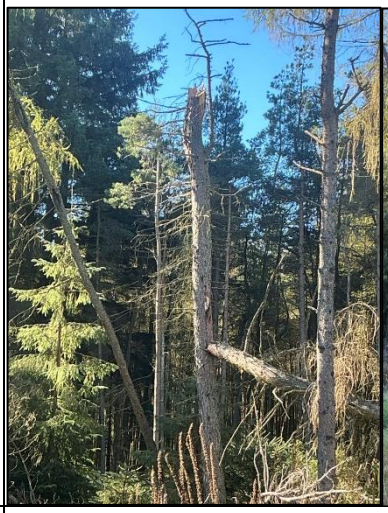
| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| T21 | NO 74833 84061 | Beech | PRF-M | Multiple know holes/tear outs. One tear out could contain multiple bats. 15m tree. PRF south east aspect 4-5m Height.    |
| T22 | NO 74839 84046 | Beech | FAR (further assessment required) | Tree too tall for full GLTA. Requires further survey. |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Tear out on trunk, north east aspect at 1m height. May be additional PRFs on branches.<br>   |
| T23 | NO 74876 84002 | Beech | PRF-I | Tear out on trunk at 5m height, north east aspect.<br>   |
| T24 | NO 74919 83936 | Beech | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Large tear out on trunk with heartwood visible.<br>   |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T25 | NO 74927 83914 | Ash | PRF-I | Tear out on trunk at 6m height, north aspect.  |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T26 | NO 74935 83902 | Beech | FAR (further assessment required) | North aspect tear out at 6m height.<br>  |
| T27 | NO 74932 83898 | Ash | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | South aspect, exposed heartwood/hollow at 1m height.<br>  |
| T28 | NO 75544 84669 | Unspecified | PRF-I (individual bats) | Small hollow in trunk, doesn't appear to extend far into tree. Another gap in tree branch goes right through to other side of branch.<br>  |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| T29 | NO 75646 84701 | Scots pine | PRF-I (individual bats) | Branch end cavity/cracks.  |
| T30 | NO 78914 85789 | Unspecified conifer | PRF-M (multiple bats/maternity) | Rot-hole. Standing dead wood. Six small but enlarged (rot) woodpecker holes on north aspect. One large cavity west aspect about 4m up appears to open out internally. Similar about 5m up. One small woodpecker hole on east aspect. Trunk broken at top but not clear. |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |   |
| T31 | NO 79030 85802 | Unspecified conifer | FAR (further assessment required) | Transverse-snap. Snapped trunk at top 10m up, probable PRF-I but needs inspection. Lifted bark approx. 5m up.   |
| T32 | NO 79056 85812 | Unspecified conifer | PRF-I (individual bats) | Lifted bark in several places including approx. 5m height and approx. 2m height on east aspect.   |

| ID | NGR | Species | Tree Classification | Photograph and PRF type(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T33 | NO 79146 85831 | Other | PRF-I (individual bats) | Tear out and snapped at top difficult to see if feature goes anywhere, but possibly used by one or two bats.<br>  |

**Table A.2: Pine Marten Survey Results**

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PM1 | NO 69733 79908 | Woodland – near buildings/car park | Scat | Pine marten scat, no smell. DNA sample tested: confirmed.  |
| PM2 | NO 69245 82144 | Forestry ride | Scat | Pine marten scat – fresh.  |
| PM3 | NO 69661 82245 | Forestry ride | Scat | Potential pine marten scat next to berry remains.  |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PM4/M8 | NO 69951 82003 | Forestry plantation | Den (unconfirmed) | Permanent residence, Mammal hole under root of fallen pine tree. In suitable pine marten habitat but no scats etc found nearby.  |
| PM5 | NO 70163 81669 | Forestry ride | Scat | Potential pine marten scat. |
| PM6 | NO 70165 81412 | Forestry ride | Scat | Potential pine marten scat. |
| PM7 | NO 70257 81313 | Forestry ride | Scat | Potential pine marten scat. |
| PM8 | NO 70203 81218 | Forestry ride | Scat | Potential pine marten scat. |
| PM9 | NO 72908 83428 | Forestry ride | Scat | Potential pine marten scat.  |
| PM10 | NO 73198 83701 | Forestry ride | Scat | Old mammal scat 1-2cm in diameter. Potential pine marten.  |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PM11 | NO 73499 84016 | Forestry ride | Scat | Potential pine marten scat.<br>  |
| PM12 | NO 76155 85259 | Forestry ride | Scat | Field sign, Pine marten scat, others nearby but more likely fox<br>  |
| PM13 | NO 77852 85732 | Forestry plantation | Scat | Potential pine marten scat - top end size wise, signs if twisted but too old to be certain<br>  |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PM14 | NO 79060 85819 | Forestry ride | Scat |  |
| PM15 | NO 79173 85900 | Forestry ride | Scat |  |

**Table A.3: Red Squirrel Survey Results**

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| RS1 | NO 70042 81652 | Forestry plantation | Live observation | Red squirrel sighting. |
| RS2 | NO 70310 81600 | Forestry plantation | Drey (unconfirmed) | Potential drey in larch plantation. |
| RS3 | NO 73198 83703 | Forestry ride | Live observation | Red squirrel sighting. |
| RS4 | NO 73511 84046 | Forestry plantation | Feeding sign | Red squirrel feeding spot. Droppings and eaten pinecone.  |
| RS5 | NO 78715 85841 | Forestry plantation | Feeding sign | Squirrel feeding signs   |

**Table A.4: Other Mammal Survey Results**

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| M1 | NO 62886 81335 | Moorland | Red deer – live sighting | Herd of red deer. |
| M2 | NO 64449 81638 | Moorland track | Fox – scat and prints | Fox scat and print. |
| M3 | NO 65952 81342 | Moorland | Roe deer – live sighting | Live sighting. |
| M4 | NO 67961 81709 | Moorland | Unknown - Pathway | Mammal track and print – Potential fox  |
| M5 | NO 69254 82162 | Forestry ride | Unknown – Scat, small in size (approx. 4cm) | Green scat on path, contains small bones.  |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| M6 | NO 69649 82238 | Forestry ride | Unknown - Scat | Remains of scat on path, full of berries.  |
| M7 | NO 69644 82237 | Forestry ride | Unknown - Scat | Scat on path, full of berries.  |
| M8/ PM 4 | NO 69950 82003 | Forestry plantation | Unknown - Burrow | Mammal hole under root of fallen pine tree. In suitable pine marten habitat but no scats etc found nearby.   |
| M9 | NO 69530 81389 | Forestry ride | Unknown - Pathway | Mammal trail down from possible badger hole. |
| M11 | NO 69616 80613 | Forestry ride | Unknown - print | Potential fox print. Single print only. |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| M12 | NO 70555 82953 | Forestry ride | Unknown - Pathway | Partial mammal prints – obscured evidence.  |
| M13 | NO 70969 82878 | Forestry ride | Roe deer – live sighting | Roe deer crossroad. |
| M14 | NO 72047 83023 | Forestry | Fox – scat | Scat. |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| M15 | NO 72147 82529 | Tipperty Farm | Brown hare | Brown hare – live sighting |
| M16 | NO 72188 82584 | Tipperty Farm | Unknown - Burrow | Mammal foraging sign near dense gorse containing multiple trails. Multiple forage holes in same clearing  |
| M17 | NO 71811 81913 | Burn of Bankhead | Unknown - Dropping | 8cm soft scat. No defined mammal trail nearby |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| M19 | NO 72528 82407 | Bervie Water | Unknown - Pathway | Partial footprints- species unconfirmed  |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| M20 | NO 75445 84648 | Brawliemuir Farm | Fox – burrow | Fox den with old fox scat above hole  |
| M21 | NO 76879 85221 | Nether Quithel Farm | Field vole | Live sighting. |
| M22 | NO 77091 85110 | Nether Quithel Farm | Unknown - Feeding Remains | Mammal forage signs, possibly snuffle holes, along trail leading into gorse.  |
| M23 | NO 77532 85308 | Nether Quithel Farm | Brown hare | Live sighting. |

**Table A.5: Herptile Survey Results**

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 (R1) | NO 60788 79879 | Moorland track | Adder | One adder juvenile, unknown sex. |
| H2 (R2) | NO 61226 79893 | Moorland | Common lizard | One adult, unknown sex. |
| H3 (R3) | NO 61363 80199 | Water of Charr | Common lizard | One adult lizard basking, unknown sex.  |
| H4 (R4) | NO 61501 80177 | Moorland track | Common lizard | One adult, unknown sex. |
| H5 (A1) | NO 63492 80900 | Moorland | Frog | Live sighting |
| H6 (R5) | NO 64770 81596 | Moorland | Adder |  Four adders (three female one male) basking in dry ditch adjacent to refuge, seen on multiple days. |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| H7 (R6) | NO 65446 81746 | Moorland | Common lizard | One adult, unknown sex. |
| H8 (A2) | NO 69338 80364 | Woodland pond | Frog spawn | Frog spawn in high quantity.  |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H9 (A3) | NO 70035 81641 | Forestry ride | Frog spawn | Frog tadpoles in standing water.  |
| H10 (R7) | NO 70203 81683 | Forestry ride | Common lizard | One adult, unknown sex. |
| H11 (A4) | NO 70345 82526 | Forestry ride | Frog spawn | Frog spawn in standing water.  |
| H12 (R8) | NO 70383 82564 | Forestry ride | Common lizard | One adult basking, unknown sex. |
| H13 (R9) | NO 70387 82571 | Forestry ride | Common lizard | One adult basking, unknown sex. |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| H14 (A5) | NO 70553 82958 | Forestry ride | Frog spawn | Frog spawn in standing water.  |
| H15 (A6) | NO 70558 82947 | Forestry ride | Frog spawn | Frog spawn in standing water.  |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H16 (A7) | NO 70559 82942 | Forestry ride | Frog spawn | Frog spawn in standing water.  |
| H17 (A8) | NO 71710 81871 | Burn of Bankhead | Frog spawn | Frog spawn in standing water.  |
| H18 (A9) | NO 73413 83842 | Forestry | Frog | Live sighting |
| H19 (A10) | NO 74534 84001 | Brawliemuir Farms | Frog spawn | Frog spawn in standing water. |

| ID | NGR | Habitat | Record Type | Photograph and Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |  |
| H20 (A11) | NO 78661 85786 | Whiting burn | Frog | Live sighting |