

₩SLR

Technical Appendix 6.5: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan

Cossans Solar & BESS

TRIO POWER Limited

Prepared by: SLR Consulting Limited St. Vincent Place, Glasgow, G1 2EU

1 May 2025

Revision: 2.0

Making Sustainability Happen

Revision Record

Revision	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Authorised By
1.0	3 April 2025	Amy Green	Alison Hood	Alison Hood
2.0	1 May 2025	Amy Green	Alison Hood	Alison Hood
	Click to enter a date.			
	Click to enter a date.			
	Click to enter a date.			

Basis of Report

This document has been prepared by SLR Consulting Limited (SLR) with reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the timescales and resources devoted to it by agreement with TRIO POWER Limited (the Client) as part or all of the services it has been appointed by the Client to carry out. It is subject to the terms and conditions of that appointment.

SLR shall not be liable for the use of or reliance on any information, advice, recommendations and opinions in this document for any purpose by any person other than the Client. Reliance may be granted to a third party only in the event that SLR and the third party have executed a reliance agreement or collateral warranty.

Information reported herein may be based on the interpretation of public domain data collected by SLR, and/or information supplied by the Client and/or its other advisors and associates. These data have been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

The copyright and intellectual property in all drawings, reports, specifications, bills of quantities, calculations and other information set out in this report remain vested in SLR unless the terms of appointment state otherwise.

This document may contain information of a specialised and/or highly technical nature and the Client is advised to seek clarification on any elements which may be unclear to it.

Information, advice, recommendations and opinions in this document should only be relied upon in the context of the whole document and any documents referenced explicitly herein and should then only be used within the context of the appointment.

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	.1
1.2	Scope of Document	.1
1.3	Proposed Development	.1
1.4	Site Description	.2
1.5	Planning Policy	.2
2.0	Methodology	.2
2.1	Approach	.2
3.0	Ecological Baseline and Receptors	.3
3.1	Summary of Surveys Completed	.3
3.2	Baseline Habitat and Species	.3
4.0	Outline Biodiversity, Enhancement and Management Plan	.4
4.1	Aims & Objectives	.4
4.2	Duration of Plan	.5
4.3	Review and Monitoring	.6
4.4	Biodiversity Enhancement Measures	.6

Tables in Text

Table 4.1 OBEMP Objectives and Proposed Measures	6
	0

Appendices

Figures

Figure 1a & 1b - Site Biodiversity Enhancement

Figure 2 - Off-Site Biodiversity Enhancement

Appendix A Planning Policy

- A.1 National Planning Policy
- A.1.1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)
- A.2 Scotland's Environment Strategy
- A.3 Scottish Biodiversity Strategy
- A.4 Local Planning Policy
- A.4.1 Angus Local Development Plan
- A.5 Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BEMP	Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CBC	Common Bird Census
CSM	Common Standards Monitoring
EcIA	Ecological Impact Assessment
ha	hectare
INNS	Invasive Non-Native species
LNCS	Local Nature Conservation Site
NGR	National Grid Reference
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
NVC	National Vegetation Classification
OBEMP	Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan
OS	Ordnance Survey
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SNPP	Scotland's National Peatland Plan
SQE	Suitably qualified ecologist
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
UKHab	UK Habitat Classification

1.0 Introduction

1.1.1 SLR Consulting (SLR) were commissioned to provide an Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (OBEMP) to support a planning application for the proposed Cossans Solar and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (Proposed Development).

1.2 Scope of Document

- 1.2.1 The present document is an OBEMP that will be further refined into a detailed Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) following granting of planning permission for the Proposed Development and in further consultation with Angus Council.
- 1.2.2 The overall purpose of the document is to identify positive land management measures that will be implemented for the benefit of nature conservation. The aim is to not merely compensate for adverse impacts that the Proposed Development may have on habitats and species of conservation interest but to deliver biodiversity enhancement, in line with National Planning Framework 4¹ (NPF4) policies, as part of the Proposed Development.
- 1.2.3 This document has been informed by the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal² (including a targeted suite of botanical and protected/notable species surveys including UKHab Habitat Survey and protected species surveys). The spatial scope of the OBEMP comprises locations within the Proposed Development site (hereby referred to as the 'Site) and off-Site within the land ownership, as shown on Drawing 1 Site Location. The document should be read in conjunction with the Landscape Plan.
- 1.2.4 The measures described herein compliment the mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategies described within Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA). Exact objectives to achieve the set out goals will be determined in the final BEMP post-consent and will be subject to results of pre-construction surveys. Details on specific mitigation measures are outside the scope of this document and are detailed within the EcIA.
- 1.2.5 The anticipated mechanism for taking forward this OBEMP to a Final BEMP would be via a suitably worded planning condition which would request that the programme for and detail of the Final BEMP is finalised and approved prior to the commencement of the Proposed Development.

1.3 **Proposed Development**

1.3.1 It is anticipated the Proposed Development will comprise of ground-mounted solar PV array with associated infrastructure which has an estimated export capacity of 50MW, with a temporary operating period of c.42 years. The Site covers an area of approximately 87 hectares (ha).

¹ National Planning Framework 4 (2023). The Scottish Government. Available online at https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/

² ITPEnergised (2024) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report. Cossans Solar. BLC

1.4 Site Description

- 1.4.1 The Site is located within the Angus council administrative boundary (central Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid Reference (NGR) NO 40042 49608) 2.5 km west of Forfar. The topography of the Site ranges from approximately 53.4 m Above Ordnance Datum. The Site sits within an area of farmland and the wider area comprises arable and pasture fields, with blocks of woodland and small farm steadings. The Dean Water flows to the south of the Site boundary (c.150m) which confluxes with the River Tay. A series of drainage ditches pass along field boundaries and mature trees and a small block of woodland lies along the access track.
- 1.4.2 An area off-Site to the south is also to be incorporated within the OBEMP. This area is currently arable land with an area of scrub and woodland.

1.5 Planning Policy

- 1.5.1 Planning policy of relevance to this OBEMP are listed below. Details can be found in **Appendix A**.
 - National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4);
 - Scotland's Environment Strategy³;
 - Scottish Biodiversity Strategy⁴; and
 - Angus Local Development Plan 2016⁵.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Approach

- 2.1.1 This OBEMP is to be implemented to compliment an EcIA, that together will serve to address the predicted impacts of the Proposed Development. The aim of the OBEMP is to set out measures that will compensate for the loss of biodiversity on the Proposed Development and that will enhance existing biodiversity and aid the recovery of natural habitats and populations in a wider biodiversity and nature networks context to achieve significant biodiversity gains such that they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention.
- 2.1.2 This OBEMP will require to be taken forward by a suitably qualified and experienced biodiversity specialist in the event of planning approval. At that juncture, this OBEMP will be updated with more detail and will be subject to consultation with local stakeholders.

³ GOV.Scot (2024) Environmental Strategy Scotland: Vision and Outcomes. [Online] Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/environment-strategy-scotland-vision-outcomes/

⁴ GOV.Scot (2024) Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045. [Online] Available at:

https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-biodiversity-strategy-2045/

⁵ Angus Council (2016) Local Development Plan. [Online] Available at:

https://www.angus.gov.uk/planning_and_building/environment_and_development_planning/development_plan?p age_id=1147#item-details

3.0 Ecological Baseline and Receptors

3.1 Summary of Surveys Completed

- 3.1.1 The following surveys have been completed on Site to inform the existing ecological baseline:
 - PEA (including Extended UKHabitat Classification, protected/ notable species walkover) – completed June 2024;
 - Breeding bird survey completed July 2024;
 - Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) and Preliminary (bat) Roost Assessment (PRA) completed August 2024;
 - Protected mammal survey (otter, water vole, badger, red squirrel and beaver) completed August 2024; and
 - Camera trap monitoring for protected mammals completed December 2024.
- 3.1.2 The following sections summarise the results of the above surveys carried out on the Site, please refer to the EclA⁶ detailing habitat and species recorded within the Site boundary including their legal protection and conservation status. This section also outlines which of the ecological receptors present on Site are appropriate for enhancement and are therefore included within this OBEMP.
- 3.1.3 This OBEMP is based on habitat suitability, protected/notable species and professional judgement to guide the broad principles for biodiversity enhancement and restoration.

3.2 Baseline Habitat and Species

Designated Sites

3.2.1 One Special Area of Conservation (SAC) statutory designated site, designated for its non-avian ecological qualify features, is located within 200m of the Site boundary. Additionally, there are three Special Protection Area (SPA) located within 20km of the Site boundary. One non-statutory designated site, Captains Pond Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS) is located adjacent to the western Site boundary.

Habitats

- 3.2.2 The Site and wider landscape is largely dominated by crops in active production, native hedgerows, neutral grassland margins, lines of trees, scrub, modified grassland, drainage ditches, a small burn/watercourse on Site and suburban mosaic of developed and natural surfaces.
- 3.2.3 A mixture of woodland types are present adjacent to the Site including AWI-listed woodland immediately west, mixed woodland to the northwest and broadleaved woodland and scrub to the south. A small woodland copse is present on-site.

3.2.4 Of most ecological value is the area of AWI woodland to the west of the Site, with valuable on Site habitats including the ecologically valuable line of trees, woodland copse and watercourse and associated neutral grassland margins. Ditches on-s ite also offer habitat value. The habitats to be impacted include the arable fields/ non-cereal crops and modified grassland.

Species

- 3.2.5 The linear habitats within the Site and wider landscape present moderate suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bat species, though, the arable habitat presents as low suitability. The lines of trees also have many features suitable for roosting bats, of different levels of suitability. The buildings adjacent to the Site boundary and man-made structures (bridge) on Site have features suitable for use by roosting bats. Additionally, watercourses within and directly adjacent to the Site offer a commuting and foraging resource for the local bat population, providing sheltered areas for bats to forage and commuting routes around the Site.
- 3.2.6 Evidence of otter, badger and beaver were recorded on Site and within the surrounding landscape (buffer zones associated) with burrow chambers and holts, foraging signs, prints, paths and latrines recorded. The grassland habitat on Site is considered to be primary foraging habitat for badger with scrub and arable/ non-cereal/cereal land considered secondary foraging habitat. Ballindarg Burn, Dean Water and the ditches throughout the Site were suitable for foraging and commuting otter and a natal holt is present to the north of the Site. Additionally, watercourses within the Site and wider landscape (250m) are suitable for beaver, with a chambered burrow and fresh foraging signs being noted during the surveys. As the species is showing signs of recolonising within the wider area, it must be assumed beavers are present within the Site. Fish including salmonoids and lamprey are also assumed present within the watercourses.
- 3.2.7 No evidence of red squirrel was identified within the Site boundary, though a full survey was not undertaken, red squirrel are presumed present due to data search records in the local area.
- 3.2.8 Numerous bird species also use the Site and surrounding area for breeding, with territories of wading birds including oystercatcher, curlew and lapwing recorded, in addition to other species of including yellowhammer, tree sparrow and whitethroats, with other probable breeders. The Site may also support wintering geese species for foraging and loafing.

4.0 Outline Biodiversity, Enhancement and Management Plan

4.1 Aims & Objectives

4.1.1 The purpose of the OBEMP is to summarise enhancements within the Site and an additional off-Site enhancement area, and how these will be achieved in accordance with NPF4 (Policy 3)**Error! Bookmark not defined.** and local development plan policies and future strategies. The measures are to include:



- Recommendations in relation to habitat enhancement and creation to increase biodiversity on Site and in the local area;
- Improving habitat connectivity on Site and to off-Site habitats; and
- Installation of wildlife friendly features to support locally important species.
- 4.1.2 The focus of the OBEMP will be on creating priority meadow habitat, wetland features and connect existing blocks of woodland providing habitat corridors and enhanced resources for protected and priority species in replacement of the current arable/ cereal/non-cereal habitat which is the predominant across the Site. The enhancement measures will correspond with any required protected species mitigation. The following objectives are proposed:
 - Species-rich meadow creation on and off-Site;
 - Wetland scrapes and wet meadow creation both on and off-Site;
 - Creation of species-rich hedgerows and tree planting;
 - Native woodland and scrub planting, riparian planting and woodland edge enhancement;
 - Wetland features of biodiversity value incorporated into Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS);
 - Installation of bird boxes, and log piles.
- 4.1.3 Species-rich grassland creation along with tree and scrub planting, will improve habitat for flora, and a range of fauna, including bats, otter, badger, bird assemblage, red squirrel, beaver, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates. Additionally, wet meadow habitat will provide foraging and breeding sites for wading birds, bats and small mammals, and enhance nearby aquatic habitats. These factors will improve the ecological and functional diversity⁷ of the habitats on and surrounding the Site.
- 4.1.4 The scope of the habitat restoration and enhancement works proposed in this OBEMP are depicted on **Figure 1a and 1b (on-Site) and Figure 2 (off-Site area)**.
- 4.1.5 The detailed planting schedule, long-term management and maintenance procedures are outside the scope of this OBEMP and are to be included within the final BEMP which is to be produced post consent and in consultation with Angus Council.

4.2 Duration of Plan

4.2.1 The OBEMP (to be superseded by the detailed BEMP once finalised) will be in place for the duration of the operation of the Proposed Development (although some of these measures will commence during the construction period).

⁷ Functional diversity refers to those components of biodiversity that influence how an ecosystem operates or functions.

4.3 Review and Monitoring

- 4.3.1 Long-term habitat management and maintenance will be fully detailed within the subsequent detailed BEP and will include:
 - For the first three years after sowing/planting, and then in years five, seven and ten, a monitoring visit during the peak flowering season (May to August) will be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE) to record plant species diversity with the Site and determine if the management scheme is successful or if additional measures are required. Monitoring of species including otter, beaver and badger will also be conducted during these visits.
 - Where the requirement for remedial measures is identified, the SQE will communicate this to Applicant and / or those responsible for the long-term landscape maintenance contract.
 - A nominated person will keep a record of enhancement measures undertaken under this plan and the results of monitoring visits by the SQE. Any adjustments or changes to the management plan will be noted.
 - On completion of three years monitoring, and again in years five, seven and ten, a monitoring report will be made available to Angus Council. Recommendations will be made for changes to management prescriptions if objectives are not being met, as appropriate.

4.4 Biodiversity Enhancement Measures

4.4.1 This section details the habitat and biodiversity enhancement and creation interventions that be implemented to meet the objectives of the OBEMP (see Table 4.1). Enhancement measures are primarily targeted at those measures that will support a diverse faunal community from invertebrates through to the higher trophic species groups.

Objectives	Description & Proposed Measures
Creation of species- rich meadow	Species-rich grassland (meadows) are generally high in botanical diversity and provide habitat for rare and unique species, as well as providing homes and forage for a variety of invertebrate, bird, bat and small mammal species.
	At present, arable/ non-cereal crops and species-poor grassland is present on Site. Grassland creation amongst the solar array will increase the diversity of habitats present on Site and provide spaces for wildlife. An area to the south of the Site, which will form the off-site enhancement area, will also incorporate meadow creation.
	An appropriate seed mix will be used such as MG5 Meadow Mix.
Wetland scrapes with species-rich wet meadow	Several areas amongst the solar array are naturally wetter and so these will be avoided by the development, and enhanced as a wetland and grassland feature. An area to the south of the Site, which will form the off-site enhancement area, will also incorporate scrapes and meadow creation.
	Areas will be dug to introduce scrapes and create deeper areas that may hold water permanently or seasonally. The areas can also in part be seeded with a species rich grassland mix, such as Wet Meadow Mix
	Wet meadows are SBL priority habitats and included in the Scottish biodiversity strategy.

Table 4.1 OBEMP Objectives and Proposed Measures

Objectives	Description & Proposed Measures
Creation of species- rich hedgerows and tree planting	Species-rich native hedgerows will be created around Site boundaries, in double staggered rows and will be maintained to a height of 3m by year 10. The species composition will include field maple, hazel, blackthorn, dog rose and alder. This will provide enhanced habitat connectivity around the Site for a range of species.
	Native trees will also be planted on Site in groups of 3-5 trees, and will be maintained at approx. 6-8m at year 10. The tree species will include field maple, blackthorn, oak and whitebeam.
Native woodland and scrub planting, riparian planting and	Habitat connectivity plays an important part in maintaining healthy species populations via foraging and commuting as well as genetic exchange that is vital to maintain healthy populations and prevent inbreeding.
woodland edge enhancement	Woodland and riparian corridors are a vital part of a woodland and agricultural landscape, providing wildlife corridors for commuting, foraging and breeding fauna including bats, otter, badger, beaver and red squirrel, herptile, bird and invertebrate species.
	Native woodland planting is proposed to bolster the woodland edge habitat along the western boundary and create a scalloped and scrubby edge to provide ecotone between the adjacent woodland and species rich grassland.
	An area to the south of the Site, which will form the off-site enhancement area, will also incorporate scrub creation to connect an existing pocket of off-Site scrub to the proposed woodland and hedgerows on Site and further increase habitat connectivity. Riparian planting will also take place here along Ballindarg Burn to provide enhancements of the burn corridor.
Wetland features of biodiversity value incorporated into SuDS	The SuDS basin will be designed and created with features of biodiversity value including overdug areas to create deeper areas that may hold water permanently or seasonally. The basin will also in part be seeded with a species rich grassland mix, such as Wet Meadow Mix
	Wet meadows are SBL priority habitats and included in the Scottish biodiversity strategy.
Installation of bird boxes, and log piles	Various bird and bat boxes will be installed around the Site on retained trees to provide additional nesting and roosting habitat. Log piles will also be created around Site boundaries to provide shelter and hibernation habitat for herptiles, invertebrates and small mammals.



Figures

Technical Appendix 6.5: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan

Cossans Solar & BESS

TRIO POWER Limited





340000

750000

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024

LEGEND

N

	Site boundary
\odot	Viewpoints
	Core Paths
	Solar PV modules
	BESS enclosure
	Security fencing
	Operational hardstanding
221	Wildlife Area
	Existing water body

Proposed Mitigation Planting

Native Trees

anted	in	arouns	of 3-1	5 (approx	6-8m	in	heiaht	at vear	10
anteu		groups	01 5	o (appiox	0-0111		neigni	аг усаг	10

Acer campestre 25% (300-350cm RB standard tree

- Crataegus monogyna 25% (300-350cm RB standard tree) Quercus robur 25% (300-350cm RB standard tree) Sorbus aria 25% (300-350m RB standard tree)
- Native Hedgerow

6 plants per metre in double staggered rows (maintained to 3m in height

- Acer campestre 15% (60-80cm BR) Alnus glutinosa 15% (60-80cm BR) Corylus avellana 10% (60-80cm BR) Crataegus monogyna 55% (60-80cm BR)
- Rosa canina 5% (60-80cm BR)

Native Woodland

1 plant per square metre (approx 4-7m inheight at year 10)

I plane per	square meae (approx 1 7 m maight at ye
	Acer campestre 3% (250-300cm feathered stock)
	Cornus sanguinea 15% (60-80cm BR)
	Crataegus monogyna 10% (60-80cm BR)
	Fagus sylvatica 1% (250-300cm feathered stock)
	Malus sylvestris 15% (60-80cm BR)
	Prunus avium 15% (60-80cm BR)
	Prunus spinosa 15% (60-80cm BR)
	Quercus petraea 4% (250-300cm feathered stock)
	Rosa canina 10% (60-80cm BR)
	Sorbus aria 2% (250-300cm feathered stock)
	Viburnum lantana 10% (60-80cm BR)

Meadow Seeding

MG5 Meadow Mix - Scotia Seeds

Wet Meadow Seeding

Wet Meadow Mix - Scotia Seeds

e	area	as
O	mme	ndations

500



₩SLR

COSSANS SOLAR & BESS

OBEMP

INDICATIVE LANDSCAPE PLAN A

FIGURE 1a

Scale 1:5,000 @ A3

Date MAY 2025

© This drawing and its content are the copyright of SLR Consulting Ltd and may not be reproduced or amended except by prior written permission. SLR Consulting Ltd accepts no liability for any amendments made by other persons.



750000

Existing woodland extended New trees and hedgerow at site boundary Existing tree belt retained New woodland and hedgerow at site boundary 0889-LVIA Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024

New trees and hedgerow on southern side of Core Path 272

Meters

300

Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

400

500

100

0

200

LEGEND

	Site boundary
\odot	Viewpoints
	Core Paths
	Solar PV modu
	BESS enclosur
	Security fencir
1111	SuDS basin
	Operational ha
	Wildlife Area

Existing water body

Proposed Mitigation Planting

Native Trees

Planted in groups of 3-5 (approx 6-8m in height at year 10) Acer campestre 25% (300-350cm RB standard tree) Crataegus monogyna 25% (300-350cm RB standard tree)

Quercus robur 25% (300-350cm RB standard tree) Sorbus aria 25% (300-350m RB standard tree)

Native Hedgerow

6 plants per metre in double staggered rows (maintained to 3m in height

5	
	Acer campestre 15% (60-80cm BR)
	Alnus glutinosa 15% (60-80cm BR)
	Corylus avellana 10% (60-80cm BR)
	Crataegus monogyna 55% (60-80cm BR)
	Rosa canina 5% (60-80cm BR)

Native Woodland

New trees, woodland and hedgerow at site boundary

1 plant per square metre (approx 4-7m inheight at year 10)
Acer campestre 3% (250-300cm feathered stock)
Cornus sanguinea 15% (60-80cm BR)
Crataegus monogyna 10% (60-80cm BR)
Fagus sylvatica 1% (250-300cm feathered stock)
Malus sylvestris 15% (60-80cm BR)
Prunus avium 15% (60-80cm BR)
Prunus spinosa 15% (60-80cm BR)
Quercus petraea 4% (250-300cm feathered stock)
Rosa canina 10% (60-80cm BR)
Sorbus aria 2% (250-300cm feathered stock)
Viburnum lantana 10% (60-80cm BR)
Meadow Seeding
MG5 Meadow Mix - Scotia Seeds

Wet Meadow Seeding

Wet Meadow Mix - Scotia Seeds



© This drawing and its content are the copyright of SLR Consulting Ltd and may not be reproduced or amended except by prior written permission. SLR Consulting Ltd accepts no liability for any amendments made by other persons.



© Crown copyright [and database rights] (2025) AC0000808122 OS OpenData

© This drawing and its content are the copyright of SLR Consulting Ltd and may not be reproduced or amended except by prior written permission. SLR Consulting Ltd accepts no liability for any amendments made by other persons.

LEGEND



- Site Boundary
- Off-Site Boundary
- Off-Site Meadow
- Off-Site Scrub & Tree Planting
- Off-Site Scrape
- Off-Site Retained Woodland
- Off-Site Riparian Planting





Date

MAY 2025

100



Appendix A Planning Policy

Technical Appendix 6.5: Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan

Cossans Solar & BESS

TRIO POWER Limited

01 May 2025



A.1 National Planning Policy

A.1.1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by Scottish Ministers on 13 February 2023. In order to accord with the biodiversity provisions of NPF4, development proposals should demonstrate that they contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity. Of particular relevance to this project, Policy 3 of NPF4 states:

'3a) Development proposals will contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including where relevant, restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them. Proposals should also integrate nature-based solutions, where possible.

...

c) Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an EIA will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This will include future management. To inform this, best practice assessment methods should be used. Proposals within these categories will demonstrate how they have met all of the following criteria:

i. the proposal is based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of any irreplaceable habitats;

ii. wherever feasible, nature-based solutions have been integrated and made best use of;

iii. an assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements;

iv. significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. This should include nature networks, linking to and strengthening habitat connectivity within and beyond the development, secured within a reasonable timescale and with reasonable certainty. Management arrangements for their long-term retention and monitoring should be included, wherever appropriate; and

v. local community benefits of the biodiversity and/or nature networks have been considered.

d) Any potential adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts, of development proposals on biodiversity, nature networks and the natural environment will be minimised through careful planning and design. This will take into account the need to reverse biodiversity loss, safeguard the ecosystem services that the natural environment provides, and build resilience by enhancing nature networks and maximising the potential for restoration.'

A.2 Scotland's Environment Strategy

Scotland's Environment Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's vision for tackling the twin climate and nature crises and sits alongside high-level Scottish Government policy frameworks. The Strategy sets out six outcomes to achieve its vision of restoring nature and ending Scotland's contribution to climate change, transforming the country for the better.

A.3 Scottish Biodiversity Strategy

Targets for biodiversity are set out the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (draft). The Strategy sets targets for Scotland to be Nature Positive by 2030 and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity across the country by 2045. The following six objectives have shaped



the development of actions to deliver the high-level goals required to meet the above targets of halting biodiversity loss and being Nature Positive by 2030:

- 1. Accelerate restoration and regeneration;
- 2. Protect nature on land and at sea, across and beyond protected areas;
- 3. Embed nature-positive farming, fishing and forestry;
- 4. Protect and support the recovery of vulnerable and important species and habitats;
- 5. Invest in Nature; and
- 6. Take action on the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

A.4 Local Planning Policy

A.4.1 Angus Local Development Plan

The current local development plan was adopted by Angus Council in 2016 (Angus Council, 2016) and contains policies revenant to the proposed development as listed below.

Policy PV4 Sites Designated for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Value

Angus Council will work with partner agencies and developers to protect and enhance habitats of natural heritage value. Development proposals which are likely to affect protected sites will be assessed to ensure compatibility with the appropriate regulatory regime.

International Designations - Development proposals or land use change which alone or in combination with other proposals could have a significant effect on a Ramsar site or a site designated or proposed under the Birds or Habitats Directive (Special Areas for Conservation and Special Protection Areas) and which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, will only be permitted where:

- an appropriate assessment demonstrates the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the site; or
- there are no alternative solutions;
- there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature; and
- compensatory measures are provided to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura Network is protected.

The Council will seek to protect and enhance the nature conservation interests within the River Tay and River South Esk Catchment areas. In order to ensure no adverse effects on the River Tay SAC or the River South Esk SAC, development proposals should take account of the detailed advice on the types of appropriate information and safeguards to be provided in support of planning applications.

Policy PV5 Protected Species

Angus Council will work with partner agencies and developers to protect and enhance all wildlife including its habitats, important roost or nesting places. Development proposals which are likely to affect protected species will be assessed to ensure compatibility with the appropriate regulatory regime.

European Protected Species

Development proposals that would, either individually or cumulatively, be likely to have an unacceptable adverse impact on European protected species as defined by Annex 1V of the



Habitats Directive (Directive 92/24/EEC) will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of Angus Council as planning authority that:

- there is no satisfactory alternative; and
- there are imperative reasons of overriding public health and/or safety, nature, social or economic interest and beneficial consequences for the environment, and
- the development would not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of a European protected species at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

Other Protected Species

Development proposals that would be likely to have an unacceptable adverse effect on protected species unless justified in accordance with relevant species legislation (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992) subject to any consequent amendment or replacement.

Policy PV7 Woodland, Trees and Hedges

Ancient semi-natural woodland is an irreplaceable resource and should be protected from removal and potential adverse impacts of development. The council will identify and seek to enhance woodlands of high nature conservation value. Individual trees, especially veteran trees or small groups of trees which contribute to landscape and townscape settings may be protected through the application of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). Woodland, trees and hedges that contribute to the nature conservation, heritage, amenity, townscape or landscape value of Angus will be protected and enhanced.

Development and planting proposals should:

- protect and retain woodland, trees and hedges to avoid fragmentation of existing provision;
- be considered within the context of the Angus Woodland and Forestry Framework where woodland planting and management is planned;
- ensure new planting enhances biodiversity and landscape value through integration with and contribution to improving connectivity with existing and proposed green infrastructure and use appropriate species;
- ensure new woodland is established in advance of major developments;
- undertake a Tree Survey where appropriate; and
- identify and agree appropriate mitigation, implementation of an approved woodland management plan and re-instatement or alternative planting. Angus Council will follow the Scottish Government Control of Woodland Removal Policy when considering proposals for the felling of woodland.

A.5 Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2nd Edition 2016-¬2026 (Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, 2016), list the following priority habitats and species of potential relevance to the Site;

Priority Habitats;

- Rivers and Burns
- Lochs and StandingWater
- Ponds and Pools

- Wetlands
- Lowland and Raised Bogs
- Transition Fen
- Lowland Meadows
- Wet Grassland
- Farm Buildings
- Hedgerows and Treelines
- Native conifers: Scottish Pinewoods, Yew and Juniper
- Lowland Mixed Broadleaf (Deciduous)Woodlands
- Planted Coniferous Woodlands (especially the woodland edge/glades)

Key Species;

- Salmonid species
- Riparian mammals
- Wading, wetland and diving birds
- Freshwater invertebrates
- Riparian, peatland and wetland plants
- Bat species
- Farmland birds, including Barn owl, Tree sparrow, Grey partridge, Linnet, Lapwing, Corn bunting and Skylark
- Reptiles, including Common lizard and Slow worm
- Hirundine species (Swallow, House martin, Sand martin) and Swifts
- Woodland mammals, including Red squirrel and Pine marten
- Scottish crossbill and Nightjar
- Woodland invertebrates, inc. Scottish wood ant and moths
- Woodland plants, inc. Juniper, Blaeberry, Small Cow-wheat, Coral-root orchid and Twinflower
- Woodland lower plants and fungi.



Making Sustainability Happen