

the existing road categorised as Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3). This is not significant at any geographic scale.

The construction of the Proposed Project will however result in the loss of approx. 540m of Hedgerow (WL1) and associated stone walls (BL1) and 82m of Treeline (WL2) habitat, these habitats were assessed as being of Local Importance (higher value) and the loss of such habitats were considered to be significant at the local geographic scale. Measure to mitigate for this loss of habitat are incorporated into the Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Plan (BMEP) for the Proposed Project, this includes the planting of up to 3,350 linear metres of new hedgerow, treeline and shrub planting. The BMEP will commence during the construction phase of the Proposed Project. These measures included will provide a biodiversity net gain as part of the Proposed Project.

Bat species composition and abundance within the Proposed Wind Farm site was considered to be typical of the geographic location of the site and the habitats which it supports. No bat roosts were identified within the Proposed Project site. All bat species (excluding *Myotis spp.*) recorded within the Proposed Project site were considered to be part of bat populations of Local Importance (Higher Value). The *Myotis spp.* population recorded within the site is considered likely to include bats of National and International Importance, as the Proposed Project site is located within 1.1km of Mothel Church, Moycullen proposed National Heritage Area (pNHA) which supports one of the largest Natterer bat nursery roost in the country. The Proposed Project site consists primarily of conifer plantation which does not provide roosting habitat of significance for bats. The habitats on the Proposed Wind Farm site will remain suitable for bats and no significant displacement of individuals or populations is anticipated. Taking into consideration the sensitive design of the Proposed Project, the proposed best practice and adaptive mitigation measures, significant residual effects on bats as a result of loss or damage to commuting and foraging habitat, loss of, or damage to, roosts, displacement of individuals or populations, and disturbance, are not anticipated. In relation to potential collision risk and injury with operational turbines, detailed mitigation measures in relation to bats is provided in the Bat Report (Appendix 6-2) and summarised in Chapter 6.

All watercourses within the Proposed Wind Farm site, and along the Proposed Grid Connection Route were identified as providing potential habitat for otter and were subject to targeted surveys for this species. No signs of otter were recorded within any of the watercourses within the Proposed Wind Farm site or along the Proposed Grid Connection Route. Given the nature of the Proposed Project and the findings of the baseline surveys for otter, there is no potential for direct loss or fragmentation of otter habitat including loss of breeding or resting places and no direct mortality related impacts on this species are anticipated. Therefore, there is no potential for the Proposed Project to result in any direct impacts on otter. Any potential for indirect effects on otter was identified in the form of habitat degradation/loss of prey resource through water pollution during construction, however, with the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to the protection of water quality during construction no significant residual effects on otter are anticipated.

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