

Appendix to Appropriate Assessment Report

Appendix A5: Otter Fieldwork & Survey Results

The data and descriptions in this appendix have informed the cumulative evaluations in the Appropriate Assessment Report.

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AA5.1 Fieldwork - Otter

AA5.1.1 Fieldwork - Otter

Surveys for all legally protected non-volant mammal species were undertaken within a 50m buffer of the UWF Grid Connection, with the exception of otter as detailed below.

The surveys to inform the first planning application (partially relied on herein) was undertaken on 8th – 11th March, 2016. Additional surveys were undertaken on 29th August 2016, 29th September 2016, 5th/6th April 2017.

Updated surveys of the revised UWF Grid Connection project (subject development) were completed in 17th, 22nd, 23rd January and 30th May 2019.

AA5.1.1.1 Otters

Otter surveys followed the NRA *Guidelines for Treatment of Otters During Construction of National Road Schemes* (NRA, 2008), which state that, although there are no seasonal constraints for otter surveys, any dense vegetation (especially in summer) can reduce success in the identification of otter holts or couches. A total of 26 watercourses were surveyed for Otter (in tandem with Kingfisher), 300m upstream and downstream, which include the Newport River (W7), Clare River (W36) and Bilboa River (53) and 23 other watercourses (W5, W8, W9, W18, W21, W22, W23, W26, W28, W29, W30, W33, W35, W39, W41, W42, W46, W47, W48, W49, W50, W51 and W52). Surveys were conducted in January 2019 in order to optimize detection of otters within the study area. Surveys of watercourses on the section of grid route around Newport where conducted in May, 2019, it is not thought that vegetation in May hampered the survey as vegetation remains low in spring compared to summer vegetation cover.

Guidance on the extent of the study area for otters was taken from the *British Highways Agency's Nature Conservation Advice in Relation to Otters HA8199* (Highways Agency, 1999) which dictates a linear search of 300m upstream and downstream of each watercourse crossing is undertaken.

AA5.2 Survey Results

AA5.2.1 Survey Results - Otter

Table 1: Observations/evidence of otter recorded during 2019 in the UWF Grid Connection Study Area

Species	Evidence	Watercrouse Crossing	Notes
Otter	Otter Print	W33	Underneath W33 bridge structure
Otter	Otter Spraint	W33	45 metres downstream of watercourse crossing W33
Otter	Otter Slide	W36	135 metres upstream of watercourse Crossing W36
Otter	Otter Slide	W53	60 metres downstream of watercourse crossing W53