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## APPENDIX 6-1

### BOTANICAL STUDY

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

MKO were commissioned to undertake detailed botanical surveys to provide an evaluation and assessments of the habitats occurring on site at the proposed Seskin Wind Farm, Co. Carlow. The detailed assessments focused on the habitats occurring under or immediately adjacent to the Proposed Project footprint. Botanical surveys were undertaken on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2022, 14<sup>th</sup> of September 2022, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2023, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 with additional information on habitat mapping undertaken on numerous other dates in 2022 and 2023.

## 1.2 Survey Methods

A total of 9 detailed relevés were undertaken within the construction footprint or representative habitats within the EIAR Site Boundary. The location of each is provided on Figure 1.1.

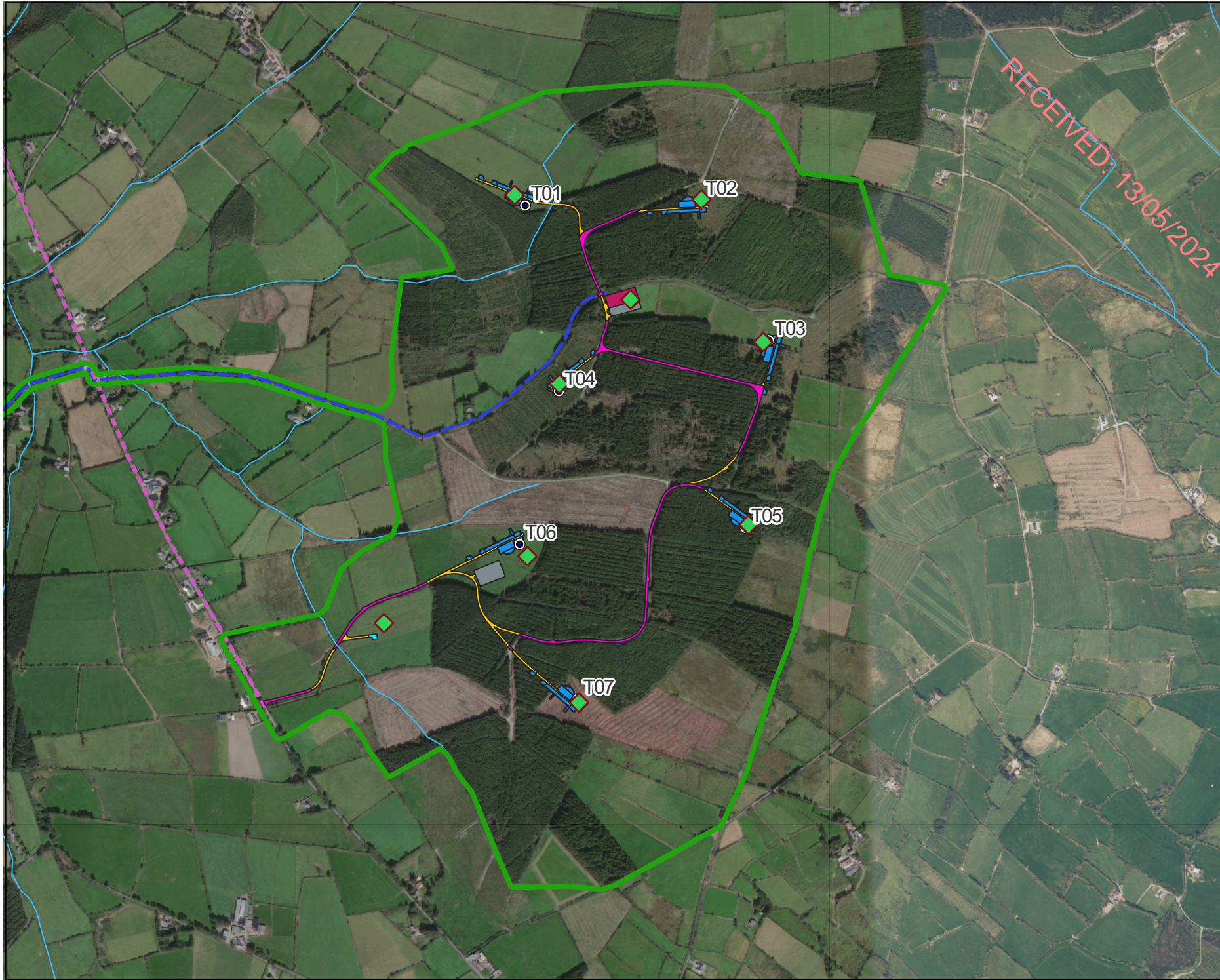
Habitats were assessed and described using both Fossitt (Fossitt, 2000) and the Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC) (Perrin et al., 2018) system. Where habitats had a potential to correspond to Annex 1 habitat type further detailed assessment of Annex I habitats was also undertaken in line with the condition assessment methods outlined in Martin et al. (2018), while reference was also made to the EU interpretation manual (EC, 2013).

Plant nomenclature for vascular plants follows ‘*New Flora of the British Isles*’ (Stace, 2010), while mosses and liverworts nomenclature follow ‘*Mosses and Liverworts of Britain and Ireland - a field guide*’ (British Bryological Society, 2010).

## 1.3 Statement of Authority

Field surveys were undertaken by Cathal Bergin (BSc. Wildlife Biology), Bronagh Boylan (B.Sc Environmental Science), Cora Twomey (B.Sc. Ecology) and Valerie Kendall (B.Sc(H)., M.Env.Sc.). Cathal has over 2 years’ professional experience in ecological surveys and assessment. Valerie has over 10 years of relevant experience in environmental consultancy and ecological assessments. Bronagh and Cora are qualified ecologists with experience and assessment in ecological surveys and monitoring. This report has been prepared by Cora Twomey (BSc. Eco) and reviewed by Corey Cannon (BSc., MSc., MCIEEM, CEcol) who has over 10 years’ experience working in ecological consultancy.





Map Legend

- EIAR Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbine Layout
- Proposed Turbine Hardstands
- Proposed Turbine Foundation
- Proposed New Roads
- Proposed Temporary Construction Compounds
- Proposed Onsite Substation
- Proposed Met Mast
- Proposed Grid Connection Cable Route
- Relieve Locations
- Watercourses



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Drawing Title	
Relieve Locations	
Project Title	
Seskin, Co. Carlow	
Drawn By	Checked By
CH	CC
Project No.	Drawing No.
220246	Figure 1-1
Scale	Date
1:15,000	30/04/2024



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2.

## RESULTS

2.1

### Turbine 1

Turbine 1 will be located on improved agricultural grassland (GA1) habitat which is surrounded by conifer plantation (WD4) to the south and west, more improved agricultural grasslands to the north.

Table 2-1 Botanical Survey Results – Turbine 1

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 663403 669672	Date 29/11/2022
Species	Common Name	% Cover
<b>Vascular Plants</b>		
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial ryegrass	80
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red clover	5
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White clover	5
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup	5
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear thistle	5
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	2
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	2
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification	Improved agricultural grassland (GA1)	
IVC (Irish Vegetation Community classification)	GL2C- <i>Holcus lanatus</i> – <i>Lolium perenne</i> grassland	
Affinity to Annex I habitat	No	

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Plate 2-1 Example of the receiving habitat at Turbine 1

## 2.2

## Turbine 2

Turbine 2 will be located within an area of conifer plantation (WD4).

Table 2-2 Botanical Survey Results – Turbine 2

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 664002 669678	Date 29/11/2022
Species	Common Name	% Cover
<b>Vascular Plants</b>		
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	20
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	Marsh thistle	10
<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	Sitka spruce	10
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat willow	10
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove	5
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common vetch	10
<i>Verbascum blattaria</i>	Moths mullein	2
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	Cinquefoil	2



<i>Galium palustre</i>	Marsh bedstraw	5
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common bent grass	5
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted hairgrass	2
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	5
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification	Conifer Plantation (WD4) with encroachment of Scrub (WS1)	
IVC (Irish Vegetation Community classification)	SC1E – <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. – <i>Holcus lanatus</i>	
Affinity to Annex I habitat	No	



Plate 2-2 Example of the receiving habitat at Turbine 2

## 2.3

## Turbine 3

Turbine 3 is within an area of wet grassland (GS4), that is bordered to the east and south by recently felled woodland (WS5) and wet grasslands (GS4) to the west .



Table 2-3 Botanical Survey Results – Turbine 3

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 664181 669229	Date 14/09/2022
Species	Common Name	% Cover
Vascular Plants		
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	40
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	40
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	Purple Moor Grass	10
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	Marsh Thistle	3
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent Grass	2
<i>Galium palustre</i>	Marsh Bedstraw	2
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Bitter Dock	1
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification	Wet Grassland (GS4)	
IVC community classification	GL2D – <i>Juncus effusus</i> – <i>Rumex acetosa</i>	
Affinity to Annex I habitat	No	



Plate 2-3 Example of the receiving habitat at Turbine 3

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Plate 2-4 Example of recently felled conifer woodland habitat in the vicinity of Turbine 3

2.4

## Turbine 4

Turbine 4 is located within an area of conifer woodland (WD4).

Table 2-4 Botanical Survey Results – Turbine 4

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 663571 669074	Date 30/11/2022
Species	Common Name	% Cover
<b>Vascular Plants</b>		
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	60
<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	Sitka spruce	65
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	10
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	5
<b>Non Vascular Plants</b>		
<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	Glittering Wood-moss	90
<i>Pleurozium schreberi</i>	Red-stemmed Feather-moss	15



Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification	Conifer plantation (WD4)
IVC classification	SC1C – <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> – <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.
Affinity to Annex I habitat	No



Plate 2-5 Example of receiving habitat at Turbine 4

## 2.5 Turbine 5

Turbine 5 is located within an area of recently felled conifer plantation woodland (WS5) and drainage ditches (FW4). It is surrounded by conifer plantation (WD4) and wet grasslands (GS4).

Table 2-5 Botanical Survey Results – Turbine 5

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 664149 668659	Date 19/07/2023
Species	Common Name	% Cover
<b>Vascular Plants</b>		
<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>	Lesser spearwort	0.5



<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	3
<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	Sitka spruce	40
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat willow	10
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Mouse-ear chickweed	1
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	1
<i>Glyceria fluitans</i>	Floating grass	2
<i>Galium rotundifolium</i>	Round-leaved bedstraw	2
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Broad buckler-fern	25
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	5
Bare peat		60
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification		Recently Felled Woodland (WS5)
IVC classification		None – did not correspond to any community type
Affinity to Annex I habitat		No

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Plate 2-6 Example of receiving habitat at Turbine 5





Plate 2-7 Example of receiving habitat in the vicinity of Turbine 5



Plate 2-8 Example of receiving habitat in the vicinity of Turbine 5

## 2.6

### Turbine 6/Temporary Construction Compound

Turbine 6 is located within an area of wet grasslands (GS4) and is bordered by lowland depositing river (FW2) to the north, conifer plantation (WD4) to the west and south, with more wet grasslands to the west of the turbine location. The temporary construction compound is located adjacent to Turbine 6. One relevé was completed for both the temporary construction compound and Turbine 6 as both site infrastructure are located within the same field/habitat.



Table 2-6 Botanical Survey Results – Turbine 6

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 663473 668546	Date 15/02/2023
Species	Common Name	% Cover
<b>Vascular Plants</b>		
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial ryegrass	90
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	80
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft rush	40
<i>Taraxacum officinale agg</i>	Dandelion	5
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup	40
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification	Wet grassland (GS4)	
IVC classification	GL2C – <i>Holcus lanatus</i> – <i>Lolium perenne</i>	
Affinity to Annex I habitat	No	



Plate 2-9 Example of receiving habitat at Turbine 6





Plate 2-10 habitat in the vicinity of Turbine 6

2.7 Turbine 7

Turbine 7 is located within an area of recently felled conifer plantation (WS5). This location is surrounded by conifer plantation (WD4) to the north, south and west.

Table 2-7 Botanical Survey Results – Turbine 7

Relevé T7	Grid reference: ITM 663630 668116	Date 20/07/2023
Species	Common Name	% Cover
Vascular Plants		
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	40
<i>Galium saxatile</i>	Heath Bedstraw	30
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Common Heather	25
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Bramble	10
<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	Sitka spruce	5
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent	5
<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb	3
<i>Juncus bulbosus</i>	Bulbous Rush	2

<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup	2
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	Tormentil	2
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Bilberry	5
Bare soil		5
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification	Recently Felled Woodland (WS5)	
IVC classification	None – did not correspond to any community type	
Affinity to Annex I habitat	No	

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Plate 2-11 Example of receiving habitat at Turbine 7





Plate 2-12 Habitat in the vicinity of Turbine 7

2.8

## Proposed Onsite Substation and Battery Energy Storage System/Temporary Construction Compound

The proposed onsite substation and battery energy storage system (BESS) compound, and temporary construction compound are within an area of wet grassland (GS4). The field is delineated by treelines (WL1) to the west and earth banks (BL2) overgrown scrub to the north, east and south.

Table 2-8 Botanical Survey Results – Proposed Onsite Substation, BESS and temporary construction compound

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 663764 669340	Date 24/08/2022
Species	Common Name	% Cover
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye Grass	80
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	80
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	25
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup	80
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow buttercup	20
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> Sheep's sorrel10 <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> Creeping bent grass10		
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification		Wet grassland (GS4)
IVC classification		GL2C - <i>Holcus lanatus</i> – <i>Lolium perenne</i>



Affinity to Annex I habitat	No
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Plate 2-13 Example of receiving habitat in the footprint of the proposed onsite substation, BESS and temporary construction compound

## Met Mast

The proposed met mast will be located within a field comprising of wet grassland (GS4). Conifer plantation (WD4) borders the field to the east, with drainage ditches (FW4) to the east and south, and lowland depositing rivers (FW2) to the west, with spoil and bare ground (ED2) farm tracks that are heavily poached to the north.

Table 2-9 Botanical Survey Results – Met Mast

Relevé 1	Grid reference: ITM 663054 668385	Date 19/07/2023
Species	Common Name	% Cover
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	80
<i>Jacobaea aquatica</i>	Water ragwort	20
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	15
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup	60
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted hairgrass	60
<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	Ragwort	10
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow buttercup	25
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common bent grass	2
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	Purple Moor Grass	15
Fossitt (2000) Habitat Classification	Wet grassland (GS4)	
IVC classification	GL2D – <i>Juncus effusus</i> – <i>Rumex acetosa</i>	
Affinity to Annex I habitat	No	

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