



# Hill of Fare Wind Farm

## Technical Appendix 8.6 – Desk Study

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# Contents

<b>Document Information</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Legislation, Policy and Guidelines</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Legislation	4
1.2 Policy Framework	4
1.3 Biodiversity Priorities	4
<b>2. Methodology</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Results</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Nature Conservation Designations	5
<b>4. References</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5. Appendix A: Species Specific Legislation</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1 Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	11
5.2 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	11
<b>6. Appendix B: Policy Framework</b>	<b>12</b>
6.1 National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 (Scottish Government, 2023)	12
6.2 Consideration of the draft Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (Scottish Government, 2022).	14
6.3 Scottish Planning Policy	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.4 Planning Advice Notes (PANs) 60	15
6.5 Aberdeen Local Development Plan	15
6.6 Local Biodiversity Plan	15



# 1. Legislation, Policy and Guidelines

## 1.1 Legislation

Full consideration has been given to all relevant nature conservation legislation when carrying out this assessment. This includes the following:

- The Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the 'Habitats Directive') 1992 (92/43/3EEC), transposed into domestic law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended);
- Directive (2009/147/EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild bird (the 'Birds Directive'), transposed into domestic law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended);
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended); Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA);
- The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended);
- The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) (WANE) Act, 2011 (as amended); and
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992, as amended by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.

Further legislation is detailed fully within **Technical Appendix 8.2**.

## 1.2 Policy Framework

The policies set out in Appendix B are those relevant to nature conservation and include those from the National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 (Scottish Government, 2023), Onshore Wind Planning Framework 2022 (Scottish Government, 2022), Planning Advice Note 60: Planning for Natural Heritage (Scottish Government, 2000) and the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (Aberdeenshire Council, 2023). Consideration of the draft Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (Scottish Government, 2022) is also made.

## 1.3 Biodiversity Priorities

### 1.3.1 Scottish Biodiversity List

Scottish Ministers created the Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) (Scottish Government, 2013) in 2005 to satisfy the requirements under Section 2(4) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and assist public bodies in carrying out conservation of biodiversity, as well as to provide the general public with information regarding conservation within Scotland. The SBL comprises species and habitats listed using both scientific and social criteria. Only scientific criteria are considered relevant to this report. They include the following:

- All UK Priority Species present in Scotland;
- Species which Scotland has an international obligation to safeguard;
- All species defined as nationally rare at a UK level that are present in Scotland;
- Species with populations present (resident, wintering, or breeding) in 5 or fewer 10 km squares or sites in Scotland;
- All species that are endemic to Scotland;
- Any sub-species or race that is widely recognised and accepted by the scientific (or other relevant) community and that is endemic to Scotland, if it also meets one of the other criteria; and



- Natural and semi-natural habitats that are known to be particularly important for supporting assemblages of plant or animal groups that are data deficient, such as fungi, bryophytes, lichens, algae, and invertebrates.

It is important to note that the draft Scottish Biodiversity Strategy is to be finalised and ratified soon and is intended to replace the SBL.

### 1.3.2 Local Biodiversity Reporting

Aberdeenshire Council forms part of the North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership (NESBP) which has produced six broad habitat statements “which give a summary of the habitats found in the area, useful information on habitat status and an outline of some of the species they support” (North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Partnership, 2019). Those of relevance to the Site include:

- Wetlands;
- Woodlands;
- Grasslands; and
- Built environment.

The NESBP also highlight locally important species which includes water shrew (*Neomys fodiens*), 188 plant species and 56 fungi species (North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Partnership, 2022). The NESBP have highlighted five top species to represent wildlife in north east Scotland, those of relevance to the site include:

- Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*); and
- Common toad (*Bufo bufo*).

## 2. Methodology

An ecological desk study was undertaken that included obtaining data from third parties. Further consideration of external bat and fish data were included in **Technical Appendix 8.1** and **8.4** respectively. This data was used to confirm the presence of any statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites, areas of ancient woodland and legally protected or otherwise notable species (i.e. those species of conservation concern, either nationally or specifically listed within the LBAP, ranging to 2 km of the site. The search distance was increased depending upon the specific ecological feature (i.e. up to 10 km in the case of sensitive bat roosts).

The desk study appraised a range of publicly available information to provide an understanding of the ecological context of the Site from the following sources:

- NatureScot SiteLink (NatureScot, 2021);
- Scotland’s Environment Map (Scotland's Environment Map, 2021);
- NBN Atlas (only records suitable for commercial use were reported) (NBN Atlas, 2021); and
- North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC, 2022).

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Nature Conservation Designations

**Table 8.4**, **Table 8.5** and **Table 8.6** detail the nature conservation designations that are considered to be potentially relevant to the Site and Proposed Development. Designations located within their respective search criteria are also presented in **Figure 1**.



### 3.1.1 Statutory and Non-Statutory Nature Conservation Designations

**Table 8.4 - Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within 5 km of the Site**

Name	Designation	Distance from Site	Description
Loch of Park	SSSI	2.8km south-east	The Loch of Park site is one of the best examples of reedbeds and willow/alder woods in Scotland. The site supports extensive willow alder woodland and swamp/fen/reed vegetation. Qualifying features for the designation are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Basin fen habitat; and</li> <li>➤ Wet woodland.</li> </ul>
River Dee	SAC	4.9km south	Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>);</li> <li>➤ Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>); and</li> <li>➤ Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>).</li> </ul>

**Table 8.5 – Non-Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within 5 km of the Site**

Name	Designation	Distance from Site	Description
Candygirach	Aberdeenshire Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS)	1.7 km SE	Extensive area of lowland raised bog, with birch, conifer and wet woodland, acid grassland and rush pasture around the margins.
Barmekin Wood	Aberdeenshire LNCS	2.8 km N	Mosaic of habitats including heathland, rush pasture and birch woodland.
Loch of Park	Aberdeenshire LNCS	2.8 km SE	Fen and wet woodland with acid grassland, heath, rush pasture, bog, swamp, coniferous woodland and reedbed.
Loch of Leys	Aberdeenshire LNCS	2.9 km S	Large area of fen and reedbed habitat with woodlands and wetlands.
Moss Maud	Aberdeenshire LNCS	3.2 km SW	Mosaic of heathland and woodland habitats with lowland raised bog, pine and birch woodland and acid grassland.
Roughhaugh Burn	Aberdeenshire LNCS	4.2 km NW	Wet heathland, fen and rush pasture which supports good diversity of plants.
Crathes	Aberdeenshire LNCS	4.5 km S	The woodlands forming part of the Crathes estate contain a variety of woodland types including seminatural broadleaved woodland, semi natural pine woodland and plantation.
Leuchar Moss	Aberdeenshire LNCS	4.7 km NE	A relatively large area of wet and peatland habitats with species rich rush pasture, wet heathland, willow scrub, dry heathland, and acid grassland. Wet heathland with interesting and diverse flora.



Loch of Skene	Aberdeenshire LNCS	4.8 km NE	Large body of open water surrounded by wet woodland, pine woodland, reedbed and heathland, with smaller patches of fen and bog.
River Dee	Aberdeenshire LNCS	4.9 km S	One of more natural river system. Series of glacial and fluvio-glacial landforms and sediments. Oak, birch and wet woodland, shingle banks and species rich grasslands.

### 3.1.2 Ancient Woodland

Additionally, 41 areas of Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI)-listed woodland were identified within the 2 km desk study search area. For reasons of brevity, only those areas of AWI woodland located within 1 km of the Site boundary are presented here in **Table 8.6**. Please refer to **Technical Appendix 8.6** for the full, specific details of AWI woodland within 2 km of the Site boundary.

*Table 8.6 – Ancient Woodland within 1 km of the Site Boundary*

Name	Distance from Site	Size (ha)	Woodland Type
Unnamed	Within site boundary	54.48	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	Inside site boundary	247.3	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Midmar Forest	Within Site boundary	531.62	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Midmar Forest	200 m NE	33.32	Ancient (of semi-natural origin)
Unnamed	350 m S	15.24	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	380 m SE	32.99	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	500 m W	8.69	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	540 m SW	14.76	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	600 m W	12.08	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	600 m SE	37.61	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	640 m SE	66.3	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	660 m E	3.58	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	720 m NW	454.04	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Unnamed	810 m SW	3.16	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
Birk Wood	830 m SE	6.89	Ancient (of semi-natural origin)
Unnamed	880 m S	10.25	Long-Established (of plantation origin)

### 3.1.3 Species of Conservation Interest

A range of protected or otherwise notable species have been recorded within 2 km of the Site in recent years, extended to 5 km for any low to medium-risk bat species and 10 km for any high-risk bat species. **Table 8.7** lists those (non-avian species) that are likely to utilise habitat features present within the Site and adjacent habitats.



**Table 8.7 – Protected or Otherwise Notable Non-avian Animal Species within 2 km of the Site Boundary**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal/Conservation Status	Records
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	European Protected Species (EPS) listed on Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)	63 records within 2 km of the site, most recent from 2021.
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	EPS listed on Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)	37 records within 2 km of the site, most recent from 2021.
Brown long-eared Bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	EPS listed on Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)	Four records within 2 km of the site, most recent from 2021.
Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive.	18 records within 5 km of the site, most recent from 2021.
Natterer's Bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive.	Eight records within 5 km of the site, most recent from 2021.
Lesser Noctule	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive.	Two records within 10 km of the site, most recent from 2016.
Eurasian Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	EPS listed on Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)	13 records within 2 km of the site, most recent from 2019.





Eurasian Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	Protection of Badgers Act 1992	2015-2022: 35 records within 2 km.
West European Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	Partially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	Nine records within 2 km of the site, most recent from 2020.
Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.	Three records within 2 km of the site, most recent from 2015.
Pine Marten	<i>Martes martes</i>	Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.	17 records within 2 km of the site, most recent from 2022.

#### 3.1.4 Invasive Non-Native Species

The data provided by NESBRE C included records of Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) within 2 km of the Site boundary. Please refer to Technical Appendix 8.6 for the full details on these records.



## 4. References

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# Appendices

## 5. Appendix A: Species Specific Legislation

### 5.1 Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

European Protected Species (EPS) and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 which makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, or kill any such animal or to deliberately take or destroy their eggs;
- Deliberately disturb such an animal; and
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.
- Examples of EPS include bats, otter, and great crested newt.

EPS licenses can be granted by Natural England in respect of development to permit activities that would otherwise be unlawful under the Conservation Regulations, providing that the following 3 tests (set out in the Habitats Directive) are passed, namely:

- The development is for reasons of overriding public interest;
- There is no satisfactory alternative; and
- The favourable conservation status of the species concerned will be maintained and/or enhanced.

Under Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation Regulations, Planning Authorities have a duty to 'have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive' i.e., LPAs must consider the above 3 'tests' when determining whether Planning Permission should be granted for developments likely to cause an offence under the Conservation Regulations.

### 5.2 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Animal species listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended) receive full protection which makes it illegal (subject to certain exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure, or take any such animal;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by any such animal; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb such animals while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection.

Some species receive partial protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which provide protection against intentional killing or injury of any such animal.

All wild birds (as defined by the act) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- Take, damage, or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.

Additional protection is provided to birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). In addition to the offences detailed above relating to all wild birds, it is illegal to:



- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any bird listed on Schedule 1, or their dependent young while nesting.

Plant species listed under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended) are protected from unauthorised intentional picking, uprooting and destruction.

## 6. Appendix B: Policy Framework

### 6.1 National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 (Scottish Government, 2023)

Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) is a long-term planning framework promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth while addressing climate change and environmental challenges until 2050.

Under 'Sustainable Places' within 'Part 2 – National Planning Policy' the framework details the following policies and how they relate to ecological priorities:

#### 6.1.1.1 Tackling Climate and the Nature Crisis: Policy 1

- When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises.
- LDPs must address the global climate emergency and nature crisis by ensuring the spatial strategy will reduce emissions and adapt to current and future risks of climate change by promoting nature recovery and restoration in the area.

#### 6.1.1.2 Climate Mitigation and adaption: Policy 2

- The LDP spatial strategy should be designed to reduce, minimise or avoid greenhouse gas emissions. The six spatial principles should form the basis of the spatial strategy, helping to guide development to, and create, sustainable locations. The strategy should be informed by an understanding of the impacts of the proposals on greenhouse gas emissions.
- LDPs should support adaptation to the current and future impacts of climate change by taking into account climate risks, guiding development away from vulnerable areas, and enabling places to adapt to those risks.

#### 6.1.1.3 Biodiversity: Policy 3

- The intent of this policy is to protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks.
- 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.
- Larger scale developments will only be supported if 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.
- LDPs should protect, conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in line with the mitigation hierarchy. They should also promote nature recovery and nature restoration across the development plan area, including by: facilitating the creation of nature networks and strengthening connections between them to support improved ecological connectivity; restoring degraded habitats or creating new habitats; and incorporating measures to increase biodiversity, including populations of priority species.



#### **6.1.1.4 Natural Places: Policy 4**

- The intent of this policy is to protect, restore and enhance natural assets making best use of nature-based solutions.
- Development proposals which by virtue of type, location or scale will have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment, will not be supported.
- Development proposals that are likely to have a significant effect on an existing or proposed European site (Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Areas) and are not directly connected with or necessary to their conservation management are required to be subject to an “appropriate assessment” of the implications for the conservation objectives.
- Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect on species protected by legislation will only be supported where the proposal meets the relevant statutory tests. If there is reasonable evidence to suggest that a protected species is present on a site or may be affected by a proposed development, steps must be taken to establish its presence. The level of protection required by legislation must be factored into the planning and design of development, and potential impacts must be fully considered prior to the determination of any application.

#### **6.1.1.5 Soils: Policy 5**

- The intent of this policy is to protect carbon-rich soils, restore peatlands and minimise disturbance to soils from development.
- Where development on peatland, carbon-rich soils or priority peatland habitat is proposed, a detailed site specific assessment will be required to identify factors including baseline depth, habitat condition and likely effects on peatland condition and carbon loss.

#### **6.1.1.6 Forestry, Woodland and Trees: Policy 6**

- The intent of this policy is to protect and expand forests, woodland and trees. LDPs should identify and protect existing woodland and the potential for its enhancement or expansion to avoid habitat fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity, helping to support and expand nature networks.
- Development proposals that enhance, expand and improve woodland and tree cover will be supported. Loss of Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, or adverse impacts on ecological condition will not be supported, alongside impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows, trees of high biodiversity value, or fragmentation of woodland habitat.
- Development proposals involving woodland removal will only be supported where they will achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits in accordance with relevant Scottish Government policy on woodland removal. Where woodland is removed, compensatory planting will most likely be expected to be delivered.

#### **6.1.1.7 Historic Assets and Places: Policy 7**

- To protect and enhance historic environment assets and places, and to enable positive change as a catalyst for the regeneration of places. LDPs, including through their spatial strategies, should support the sustainable management of the historic environment. They should identify, protect and enhance valued historic assets and places. These include historic hedgerows, trees and structures.

#### **6.1.1.8 Greenbelts: Policy 8**

- To encourage, promote and facilitate compact urban growth and use the land around our towns and cities sustainably. LDPs should consider using green belts, to support their spatial strategy as a settlement management tool to restrict development around towns and cities and LDPs should identify green belts as part of their preparation.

Other Policies are present within NPF4 which provide importance in regard to nature and conservation, including but not limited to Policy 9 (Brownfield, vacant and derelict land, and empty buildings) and Policy 10 (Coastal Development).



## 6.2 Consideration of the draft Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (Scottish Government, 2022).

The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 sets out priority actions and aims within Scotland to halt biodiversity loss and ensure a nature positive future.

By 2045, Scotland will have restored and regenerated biodiversity across our land, freshwater and seas. Our natural environment, our habitats, ecosystems and species, will be diverse, thriving, resilient and adapting to climate change. Regenerated biodiversity will drive a sustainable economy and support thriving communities and people will play their part in the stewardship of nature for future generations.

The outcomes for this strategy consist of:

### 6.2.1.1 Land and Seascapes

- Ecosystems will be diverse, healthy, resilient and deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. Protected areas will be larger, better connected and in good condition.
- The abundance and distribution of species will have recovered and there will be no loss of diversity within species. Scotland's internationally important species will have increased in numbers and have healthy resilient populations.
- Natural capital will be embedded in policy making T Nature-Based Solutions, such as tree-planting, peatland and blue carbon habitat restoration, will be central to our efforts to deliver NetZero and adapt to climate change.
- Harmful invasive non-native species (INNS) will be managed so that established INNS no longer degrade native habitats and species or impede their restoration and regeneration and new introductions are managed quickly and effectively.
- Biodiversity as a concept will be understood and valued across the population and embedded in educational curriculums.

### 6.2.1.2 On Land

- Nature Networks across our landscapes will underpin the resilience and health of species and habitats.
- Farmland practices will have resulted in a substantial regeneration in biodiversity, ecosystem and soil health and significantly reduced carbon emissions while sustaining high quality food production. Management of deer ranges, grouse moors and upland agriculture will be contributing to the regeneration of biodiversity in upland areas. Soil health will have been improved by tackling loss of organic carbon, erosion, compaction, and the impacts of grazing, air pollution and climate change, and will function as a nature-based solution to flooding, erosion and biodiversity loss
- Forest and woodland management will have led to sustainable natural regeneration; a greater diversity of woodland species; increased woodland cover with a healthy understorey, enhanced woodland connectivity; and improved integration of trees into other land uses.
- The actions we take to improve biodiversity will create new green jobs and economic opportunities to supporting thriving communities. Towns and cities will include nature-rich environments close to all communities, contributing to Nature Networks and measurable increases in urban biodiversity. Multi-functional urban nature-based solutions will enable people and biodiversity to adapt to our changing climate by cooling the urban environment and managing extreme rainfall events, with blue and green infrastructure designed and managed to benefit biodiversity, provide habitats and allow wildlife to move through urban areas.

### 6.2.1.3 Rivers, Lochs and Wetlands

- The extent of restored catchments and improvements in ecological status of rivers, lochs and wetlands will have increased with waterbodies in good condition.



- Riparian woodland will have expanded reducing the average temperature of our rivers and burns, leading to increases in freshwater fish species and other wildlife.
- A substantial, widespread and ongoing programme of peatland restoration will have led to the majority of Scotland's peatlands being in good condition, a net sequester of carbon with thriving wildlife and biodiversity. The extent, condition, connectivity and resilience of wetlands, including floodplain wetlands and pond habitats will have significantly improved.
- Beavers, salmon recovery and riparian woodland will be established as key ecological components of restored rivers and wetlands.

#### 6.2.1.4 Marine and Coastal

- The health, condition, and resilience of pelagic, coastal, shelf, and deep sea marine habitats will have been restored, supporting wider ecosystem function, providing increased benefits to society, and contributing to climate resilience and adaptation through nature-based solutions.

### 6.3 Planning Advice Notes (PANs) 60

National planning policy on landscape and natural heritage is supported by Planning Advice Note (PAN) 60 Planning for Natural Heritage, the key elements include:

- Taking a broader approach to landscape and natural heritage than just conserving designated or protected sites and species, taking into account ecosystems and natural processes.
- Facilitating positive landscape change whilst maintaining and enhancing distinctive character.
- Seeking benefits for species and habitats from new development including the restoration of degraded habitats.
- Siting and design of development should be informed by local landscape character.
- Encouraging connectivity between habitats, through green networks.
- Protecting internationally and nationally designated habitats and species.
- Protecting and enhancing woodland and trees of high nature conservation value.

### 6.4 Aberdeen Local Development Plan

The policies set out below are those relevant to nature conservation and include those from the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. In respect to the above, regard has been made to the following policies, which are summarised below and described in full in Annex A:

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (amended 2020) (Scottish Government, 2014);
- Planning Advice Note 60: Planning for Natural Heritage (Scottish Government, 2000); and
- Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) 2020 (Aberdeenshire Council, 2020).

Proposed Aberdeenshire LDP policies of potential relevance to this Proposed Development are found under Natural Heritage and Landscape:

- Policy E1 Natural Heritage;
- Policy E2 Landscape; and
- Policy E3 Forestry and Woodland.

### 6.5 Local Biodiversity Plan

Aberdeenshire Council forms part of the North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership (NESBiP), which has produced six broad habitat statements "...which give a summary of the habitats found in the area, useful information on habitat status and an outline of some of the species they support. The statements also



illustrate the importance of each habitat group and opportunities to secure and enhance each habitat for the future” (North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Partnership, 2019). Within the habitat statements species of interest are also identified. Those statements and species of potential relevance to the Site include:

#### **6.5.1 Woodlands;**

##### **6.5.1.1 Habitats:**

- Native pine woodland; and
- Planted coniferous woodland.

##### **6.5.1.2 Species:**

- Red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*); and
- Pine martin (*Martes martes*).

#### **6.5.2 Upland heathland;**

##### **6.5.2.1 Habitats:**

- Wet and dry heath; and
- Blanket bog.

#### **6.5.3 Freshwater habitats;**

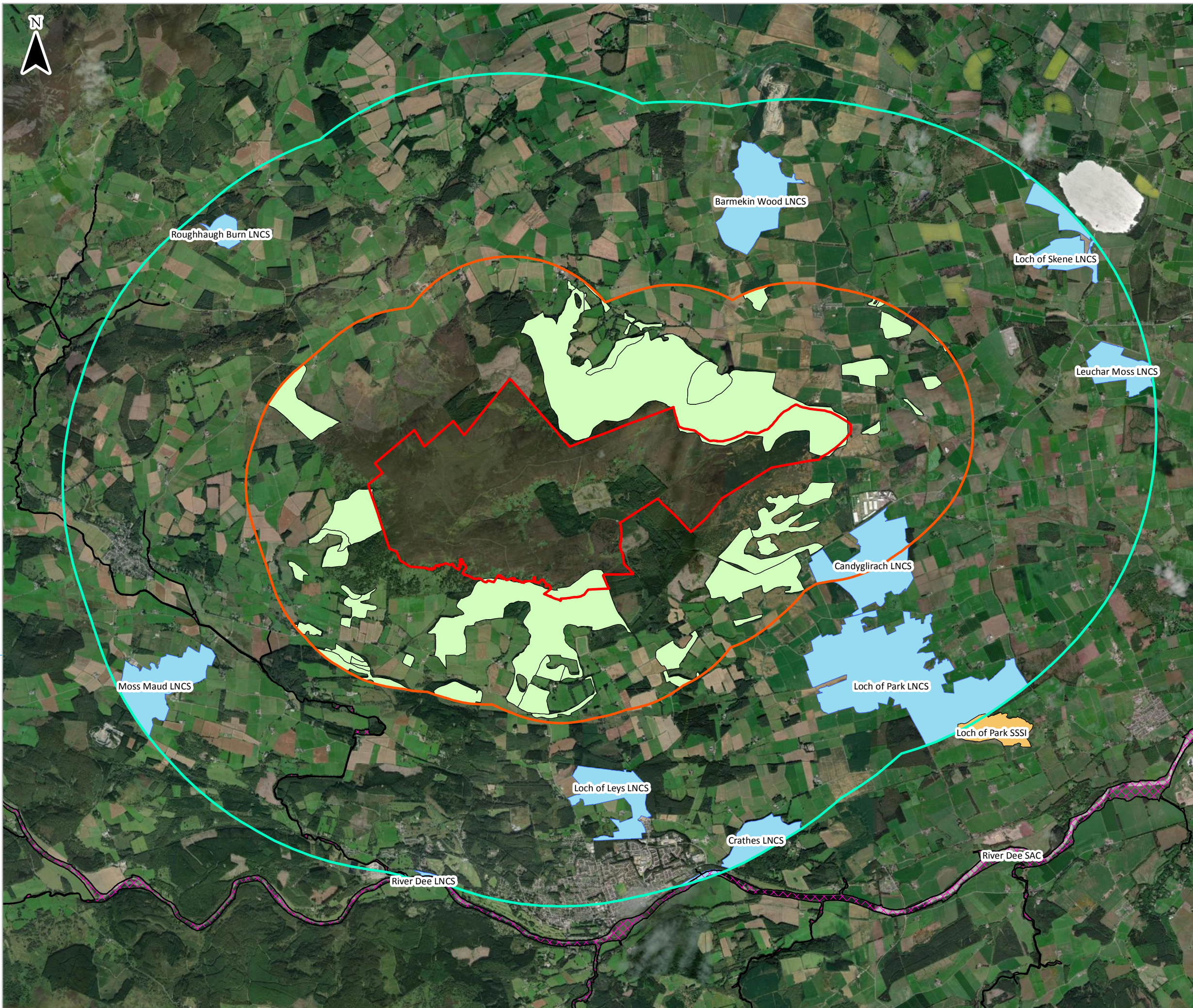
##### **6.5.3.1 Habitats:**

- Rivers and burns



##### **6.5.3.2 Species:**

- Otter (*Lutra lutra*); and
- Water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*).









**KEY**

-  Site Boundary
-  2 km buffer
-  5 km buffer

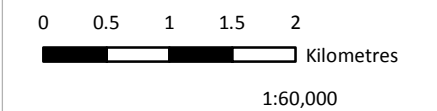
**Designations**

-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
-  Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI)
-  Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS)



Coordinate System: British National Grid  
Projection: Transverse Mercator

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Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community; Historic Environment Scotland and Ordnance Survey data ©



5223/ Hill of Fare  
Technical Appendix 8.6 - Desk Study

**Figure 1**  
**Designated Sites**

Date: 02/10/2023	Lead: JB	Review: SR	Version: 1.0
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