



Appendix 9E

Scoping of Assessment



Appendix 9E

Scoping of the Assessment - Summary

This appendix provides the rationale for the scope of the assessment and comprises two tables. **Table 9E.1** describes and justifies the level of importance assigned to the ecological features identified during the data gathering exercise carried out to inform this assessment. **Table 9E.2** determines and justifies whether those ecological features require further assessment as they have either sufficient legal protection for a breach in legislation to occur or are of sufficient importance that a significant effect may occur as a result of the Proposed Development.

Within **Table 9E.1**, consideration is given to both the importance of ecological features based on legislation and policy (refer to paragraphs 9.7.1 to 9.7.3) and importance with regard to the Proposed Development (refer to paragraphs 9.7.2 to 9.7.5 and **Table 9.7**). The justification provided for the decision to scope in or out each ecological feature is based on information on its status both with regard to the Proposed Development, and the local, county, regional, national or international context, where available.

Table 9E.1 Importance of Ecological Features

Ecological Feature	Importance – Legislation & Policy	Importance – Proposed Development	Justification	Scoped Out of Assessment (Y/N)
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with <i>vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or of the <i>Isoëto-Nanojuncetea</i>	European	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds	European	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Blanket Bogs	European	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	European	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N

Ecological Feature	Importance – Legislation & Policy	Importance – Proposed Development	Justification	Scoped Out of Assessment (Y/N)
Lewis Peatlands SAC Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>	European	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Otter	European	National	See Table 9E.2	N
Lewis Peatlands Ramsar: Ramsar criterion 1 – Blanket bog	European	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N
Lewis Peatlands Ramsar: Ramsar criterion 2 – Rare breeding wildfowl	European	n/a	These features are assessed within Chapter 8: Ornithology.	Y
Lewis Peatlands Ramsar: Ramsar criterion 6 - species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.	European	n/a	These features are assessed within Chapter 8: Ornithology.	Y
Lewis Peatlands SPA: Article 4.1 and Article 4.2 species during the breeding season	European	n/a	These features are assessed within Chapter 8: Ornithology.	Y
Tong Saltings SSSI	National	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Achmore Bog SSSI	National	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N
Loch Orosay SSSI	National	Negligible	The SSSI has been de-notified and therefore scoped out of further assessment.	Y
Stornoway Castle SSSI	National	Negligible	The SSSI has been de-notified and therefore scoped out of further assessment.	Y
Blanket bog/mire habitats (M1, M3, M17a, M17b, M17mod & M19a)	European	National	See Table 9E.2	N
Wet heath (M15b & M15c)	European	Regional	See Table 9E.2	N

Ecological Feature	Importance – Legislation & Policy	Importance – Proposed Development	Justification	Scoped Out of Assessment (Y/N)
Wet heath/acid grassland mosaic	European	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Dry heath (H10a & H10b)	European	Regional	See Table 9E.2	N
Semi-improved acid grassland (U4b)	Local	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Basic flush (M10)	European	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Acid flush communities (M6ci & M6di)	National	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Marshy grassland, rush pasture communities (M23b & M25a)	National	County	See Table 9E.2	N
Mesotrophic grassland communities (MG10)	Local	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Dense scrub	Local	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Planted broadleaf woodland	Local	Local	No broadleaf woodland is recorded within the Proposed Development site boundary.	Y
Planted coniferous woodland	Local	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Waterbodies (Rivers and lochs)	National	National	See Table 9E.2	N
Bats	European	Negligible	See Table 9E.2	N
Common frog	National	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Slow worm	National	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Mountain hare	National	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Invertebrates (of conservation interest)	Local - National	Local	See Table 9E.2	N

Ecological Feature	Importance – Legislation & Policy	Importance – Proposed Development	Justification	Scoped Out of Assessment (Y/N)
Lichens (of conservation interest)	Local	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Atlantic salmon	European	Regional	See Table 9E.2	N
Sea/Brown trout	National	Regional	See Table 9E.2	N
Lamprey (sea, river and/or brook lamprey).	European	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Eel	European	Regional	See Table 9E.2	N
Three-Spined stickleback	Local	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Freshwater pearl mussel	National	Local	See Table 9E.2	N
Freshwater invertebrates	National (certain species)	Local	See Table 9E.2	N

For those ecological features that remain scoped in following the process as described in **Table 9E.1**, the following are provided in **Table 9E.2**: description of the potential environmental change and associated effect (refer to paragraphs 9.7.6 – 9.7.9); a description of the zone of influence for each ecological feature (refer to paragraphs 9.7.6 – 9.7.9 and **Table 9.8**); justification of the decision to scope in or out each ecological feature based on the likely scale of the potential effect, general working measures (i.e. those covered within the Code of Construction Practice) that negate the effect and relevant information on the features status within the local, county, regional, national or international context where that is available.

Table 9E.2 Scoping of Ecological Features of Local or Above Importance and those Receiving Legal Protection

Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with <i>vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or of the <i>Isoëto-Nanojuncetea</i>	Reduction in habitat quality as a result of hydrological connectivity and pollution incidents	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	Y	Lewis Peatlands SAC is upstream from the development site, approximately 900m from the site boundary and approximately 1,065m to the nearest site infrastructure. On this basis, there are considered to be no hydrological effect pathways and has been scoped out of further assessment.
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds			Y	
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Blanket Bogs			Y	
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>			Y	
Lewis Peatlands SAC Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>			Y	
Lewis Peatlands SAC: Otter	Population level effect within SAC relating to disturbance and displacement effects within the Proposed Development.	32km beyond the Proposed Development	N	The Proposed Development footprint is outwith all areas specifically designated for otter populations; however, the Development site is within the home range (up to 32km) of otters from this designated site and therefore construction activity may give rise to the disturbance of otters and there may be impacts to their prey species – either from the placement of infrastructure or due to indirect effects such as noise.

Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
	Direct damage to resting sites and disturbance to individuals using resting sites due to elevated levels of disturbance (such as increased noise, lighting, and human presence) during construction/operation and decommissioning related works.	<u>Non-breeding resting sites</u> : 30m from the proposed construction/maintenance/decommissioning area (based on SNH protected species advice)	N	<p>The Development Site as assessed as being of National importance for otter for the reasons noted below.</p> <p>Otter is a European protected species (EPS), an SBL Priority species and a designated feature of the Lewis Peatlands SAC. Otter resting sites and signs were recorded within the Study Area, along the majority of watercourses in all four catchments.</p> <p>Thirty two resting sites were recorded within the Study Area. Of these, 25 were identified as 'low' status and seven were identified as 'moderate' status. All recorded non-breeding holts were recorded at least 30m from proposed activities; however, one 'low status' resting place and another moderate status resting place were identified within a potential disturbance threshold (within 30m of proposed works areas).</p> <p>An EPS Licence would be required should proposed works occur within a threshold of disturbance within 30m of a resting site.</p>
		<u>Breeding resting sites</u> : 200m from the proposed construction/maintenance/decommissioning area (based on SNH protected species advice)	N	No 'high status' resting sites were recorded within the Study Area and no evidence of breeding was recorded; nonetheless, pre-construction surveys have the potential to identify a breeding site, which would require appropriate measures to avoid contravention of legislation.
	Temporary severance of otter habitat and commuting routes	Within the construction/maintenance/decommissioning area	N	Evidence of otter activity was recorded along a number of watercourses and waterbodies within the Study Area, in the form of spraints, paths, prints, feeding remains, and resting sites. The Proposed Development could therefore lead to temporary habitat severance and fragmentation of territories during construction or decommissioning phases, particularly during the construction of water crossings.

Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
	Direct mortality due to construction related activities	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	N	Evidence of otter activity was recorded along a number of watercourses and waterbodies within the Study Area, in the form of spraints, paths, prints, feeding remains, and resting sites. The Proposed Development could lead to an increase in mortality as a result of traffic collision during construction or decommissioning phases.
Lewis Peatlands Ramsar: Ramsar criterion 1 – Blanket bog	Reduction in habitat quality as a result of hydrological connectivity and pollution incidents	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	Y	The Ramsar site is adjacent to, but does not extend onto, the Development Site in the north, west and south. The area of qualifying blanket bog however, is coincident with that of Lewis Peatlands SAC, which is upstream from the development site, approximately 900m from the site boundary and approximately 1,065m to the nearest site infrastructure. On this basis, there are considered to be no hydrological pathways and has been scoped out of further assessment.
Tong Saltings SSSI	As above	As above	N	Tongs Saltings SSSI is located approximately 3.5km downstream of the from the site boundary. The Site is designated for its breeding bird assemblage, maritime cliffs, mudflats, saltmarsh and sand dunes. There is a potential effect pathway along the catchment of the River Laxdale, which could lead to reduction in habitat quality of SSSI features.
Achmore Bog SSSI	As above	As above	Y	Achmore Bog SSSI is located approximately 3.8km beyond the site boundary and is not located downstream of one of the catchments that intersect the development site. In their scoping response (Appendix 2B), SNH confirmed that the site was located at a distance beyond which they would not expect there to be connectivity with the development. On this basis, there are considered to be no hydrological effect pathways and has been scoped out of further assessment.

Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Blanket bog/mire habitats (M1, M3, M17a, M17b, M17mod & M19a)	Direct loss and temporary damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	N	Blanket bog communities are the most abundant habitat within the Study Area and in good condition. These are a restricted and declining habitat in the UK and Europe. Blanket bog is a Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) Priority habitat and includes habitats / vegetation communities listed on Annex I to the EC Habitats Directive. Almost all blanket bog within the Development site is assessed as being actively peat-forming and in good condition with good cover values of typical species. There are substantial areas that have been assessed as being of high sensitivity, particularly where M17a forms a mosaic with pool systems or wet hollows. <i>Sphagnum austinii</i> is an important indicator species of undisturbed blanket bog and was mapped in M17a blanket mire vegetation. Three hummocks were recorded in a single location in M17a blanket bog. However, there are frequent peat cuttings and areas of planted coniferous woodland, which have had detrimental impacts upon the condition of blanket mire plant communities within these areas. As a result, the the Development Site is assessed as being of National importance for blanket bog. Land take and land use during construction is likely to lead to the loss/disturbance of this habitat or within a 50m ZoI of the construction zone.
Rare bog species: <i>Sphagnum austinii</i> ,	Indirect disturbance and changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	50m ¹ beyond construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning areas	N	

¹ The permeability of peat is generally low, and the effect of a ditch on groundwater levels is limited at distances exceeding about 50m. See NERC (1992). Hydrology and Wetland Conservation. Report to MAFF. Natural Environment Research Council.

Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Wet heath (M15b & M15c)	Temporary and permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/maintenance/decommissioning area	N	Wet heath contains vegetation communities listed on Annex I of the Habitats Directive and is an SBL Priority habitat. This habitat is found on peat that is less than 50cm deep and generally considered to be in good condition supporting a typical range of species and with no, or very light, grazing. More frequently found in the north of the Development Site, which is assessed as being of Regional importance for this habitat. Land take and land use during construction may lead to the loss/disturbance of this habitat. It also contains GWDTE NVC communities (including M15 wet heath), which may be sensitive to damage during construction works within a 250m ZoI.
	Indirect disturbance and changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	250m beyond construction/maintenance/decommissioning areas	N	
Wet heath / acid grassland mosaic (M15b/ M15c/ U4b)	Temporary and permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/maintenance/decommissioning area	Y	Wet heath/acid grassland mosaic contains vegetation communities listed on Annex I of the Habitats Directive and wet heath is an SBL Priority habitat. This habitat contains GWDTE NVC communities (including a mosaic of M15 wet heath), which may be sensitive to damage during construction works within a 250m ZoI. GWDTEs supporting M15b/M15c communities with any potential for transition between wet heath and acid grassland have been assessed under wet heath communities. However, evidence of this habitat was recorded outside the site boundary and outside the ZoI. The Development Site is assessed as being of Local importance for wet heath/acid grassland mosaic. Given the likely negligible effects on this habitat, it has been scoped out of further assessment.
	Indirect disturbance and changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	250m beyond construction/maintenance/decommissioning areas	Y	
Dry heath (H10a & H10b)	Temporary and permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/maintenance/decommissioning area	Y	Dry heath is an SBL Priority habitat and includes habitats / vegetation communities listed on Annex I to the EC Habitats Directive. Dry heath is always dominated by heather and localised but not extensive within the Development Site. It is generally in good condition supporting a typical range of species and with no, or very light, grazing. The Development Site is assessed as being of Regional importance for Dry heath. This habitat type was not recorded within proposed working areas during all phases of development. However, it contains GWDTE NVC communities (including H10 dry heath), which may be sensitive to damage during construction works within a 250m ZoI.
	Changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	250m beyond construction/maintenance/decommissioning areas	N	

Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Semi-improved acid grassland (U4b)	Temporary and permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	Semi-improved acid grassland is of limited conservation interest, due to its limited extent in the Study Area and relatively low species diversity. It occurs where the effects of grazing have been more intense, mainly around the periphery of the survey area but also as small fragments along the sides of watercourses. The Development Site is assessed as being of Local importance for acid grassland. This habitat was not recorded within the construction zone and is not dependent on groundwater. Given the likely negligible effects on this habitat, it has been scoped out of further assessment.
	Changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	50m beyond construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning areas	Y	
Basic flush (M10)	Permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	Basic flush is a Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) Priority habitat (Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps) and overlaps with the annex 1 habitat calcium-rich springwater-fed fens. A single basic flush (NVC community M10a) was recorded during NVC surveys in 2011 and labelled as polygon 101 in Appendix 9B: Phase 1 Habitat and NVC Survey (p57 and p64 of Section 7 Appendix 1 Target Notes). The Development Site is assessed as being of Local importance for basic flushes. The habitat is located outside any construction zone and given the location of the stand on the western side of the Airigh a Chreagain tributary of the River Creed, is outside a potential groundwater catchment ZoI. This feature has been scoped out of further assessment.
	Changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	250m beyond construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning areas	Y	
Acid flush communities (M6ci & M6di)	Permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	Acid flush is an SBL Priority habitat (Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps). Acid flushes are frequent throughout the Study Area along linear soakways, drains and the sides of watercourses, often in fragmentary small amounts. These habitats are common throughout Scotland, although usually of low diversity and composed of a few very common species. The Development Site is assessed as being of Local importance for acid flush habitats. This habitat type was not recorded within proposed working areas during all phases of development. Whilst it contains GWDTE NVC communities (M6 mires), which may be sensitive to damage during construction works within a 250m ZoI, anticipated temporary changes to the local hydrology regime with some potential change in the composition of vegetation would not have a significant effect on the conservation status of these communities. This feature has therefore been scoped out of further assessment.
	Indirect disturbance and changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	250m beyond construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning areas	Y	



Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Marshy grassland and rush pasture communities (M23b & M25a)	Temporary and permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	N	<p>Certain types of marshy grassland are SBL Priority habitat (Purple moor grass and rush pasture), M23 is a rush pasture common throughout Scotland on circum-neutral damp ground, with variable in species diversity and botanical value, which can look like acid flush but is more neutral and lacks the Sphagnum carpet.. M23 can be rich but all occurrences in the survey area consist of a few very common species. M25 is common throughout large parts of Scotland. It is dominated by purple moor-grass (M25a), dense with dead litter and with only a few sparse associates and generally regarded as of low botanical value except where it is fed by base-enriched waters or is wet enough to be transitional to swamp. All occurrences in the survey area are very poor in species and tends to be common around the areas of bog that have been drained for tree planting. Both communities are generally impoverished and of low species diversity. The Development Site is therefore assessed as being of County importance for marshy grassland given the generally low quality but intrinsic value of this habitat. Land take and land use during construction may lead to the loss/disturbance of this habitat. It also contains GWDTE NVC communities (including M25 mires and M23 rush pasture), which may be sensitive to damage during construction works within a 250m ZoI.</p>
	Indirect disturbance and changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	250m beyond construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning areas	N	
Mesotrophic grassland (MG10)	Temporary and permanent loss and damage to terrestrial habitats	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	<p>Mesotrophic grassland (MG10) is common in farmland/upland fringes throughout Scotland and is composed of very common species, usually regarded as of limited botanical value. Within the Development site it occurs in a few locations around the edges where previous grazing levels have been high and the ground improved. Where land is more improved and rushes are prominent the vegetation is classed as mesotrophic, alongside roads and other areas where the acid grassland is rank it could be considered as transitional to mesotrophic grassland. There is no loss of this habitat due to land take or land use during construction. Whilst it contains a GWDTE NVC community (including MG10), anticipated temporary change to the local hydrology regime with some potential change in the composition of vegetation would not have a significant effect on the conservation status of this community. This feature has therefore been scoped out of further assessment.</p>
	Indirect disturbance and changes to composition of plant communities resulting from hydrological change	250m beyond construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning areas	Y	
Dense scrub	Direct habitat loss	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	A species-poor habitat recorded outside the Development Site, which would not be subject to habitat loss. This feature has been scoped out of further assessment.



Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Planted coniferous woodland	Direct habitat loss	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	Planted coniferous woodland is of limited conservation interest (its ornithological value is discussed in Chapter 8). Some forestry plantation is present on site, but the trees are generally in poor condition. Permanent or temporary habitat loss is likely as a result of the Proposed Development and compensatory planting may be necessary on a like for like basis, in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) and The Scottish Government’s Policy on Control of Woodland Removal. This feature has therefore been scoped out of further assessment.
Waterbodies (Rivers and Lochs)	Disturbance of river habitats and pollution to watercourses and downstream waterbodies during construction, operation and decommissioning. Includes silt/sediment and pollutant release, damaging fish habitats (inc. spawning habitat), potentially harming fish and associated adverse effects on fish and otter populations.	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	Rivers and lochs that meet certain criteria are Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL) habitats and those within the Development Site also support SBL species and otter which is a European Protected Species (EPS). The Development Site is assessed as being of National importance for waterbodies (rivers and lochs). The Proposed Development includes a number of bridge and culvert river crossings. Works on these crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases would disturb in-stream and bank habitats and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is also likely to have associated pollution risk.
Bats	Disturbance to foraging, commuting bats Potential disturbance to roosts Kill/injure and destroy habitat	Within 10km of the Proposed Development	Y	The recorded distribution of bats on the Western Isles is restricted to Stornoway (National Biodiversity Network web-site link) where they are confined to the Stornoway Castle grounds and are not known to travel significantly and unlikely to find shelter or food sources on the open moorland (SNH personal communication). No incidental observations of bats were made during other surveys or during a driven transect through the Development Site (on 12 August 2018) and the Development Site is therefore assessed as being of Negligible importance for bats. In the Scoping Report (Appendix 2A) it was proposed that potential effects upon bats would be scoped out due to the lack of suitable habitat features within the Development Site to support bat activity. In their response (Appendix 2B), SNH in a letter dated 22 August 2018 stated that “we agree with the identification of habitats and species of conservation concern to be scoped in”. Bats have therefore been scoped out of further assessment.



Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Common frog	Disturbance, kill/injure/destroy habitat, affect distribution.	Within 50m of the Proposed Development	Y	Common frog, slow worm and mountain hare are all likely to frequent the Development Site together with a range of common moorland invertebrates. No rare or notable lichens were recorded during botanical survey. According to the previous ES for the earlier consented scheme, through consultation with SNH, an impact assessment was not required for amphibians, reptiles and other terrestrial taxa. In the absence of any substantial change in the land management during the intervening period, each species group has therefore been scoped out of further assessment.
Slow worm	As above	Within 50m of the Proposed Development	Y	
Mountain hare	As above	Within 250m of the Proposed Development	Y	
Invertebrates (of conservation interest)	Kill/destroy habitat	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	
Lichens (of conservation interest)	Destroy habitat	Within the construction/ maintenance/ decommissioning area	Y	
Atlantic salmon	Deterioration in fish populations due to: loss of, or damage to, juvenile salmonid habitat at watercourse crossings; obstruction of spawning migration; harm to fish (direct physical harm/noise); degradation of fish habitats due to pollution/siltation; and harm to fish during operation (electromagnetic emissions).	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	The site supports comparatively high densities of salmon fry/parr, within the context of the Outer Hebrides Region. Atlantic salmon is a SBL species and has been subject to population declines on many rivers throughout Scotland. The Proposed Development includes a number of watercourse crossings. Works on these crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases have the potential to disturb instream habitats, create a temporary barrier to fish movement and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is likely to have associated electromagnetic emissions and limited pollution risk.



Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Sea/Brown trout	Deterioration in fish populations due to: loss of, or damage to, juvenile salmonid habitat at watercourse crossings; obstruction of spawning migration; harm to fish (direct physical harm/noise); degradation of fish habitats due to pollution/siltation; and harm to fish during operation (electromagnetic emissions).	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	The Development Site supports comparatively high densities of sea/brown trout fry/parr, within the context of the Outer Hebrides Region. Sea/brown trout is a SBL species and sea trout in particular have been subject to population declines on many rivers throughout Scotland. The Proposed Development includes a number of watercourse crossings. Works on these crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases have the potential to disturb instream habitats, create a temporary barrier to fish movement and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is likely to have associated electromagnetic emissions and limited pollution risk.
Lamprey (sea lamprey, river lamprey or brook lamprey)	Deterioration in fish populations due to: loss of, or damage to, juvenile/spawning habitat at watercourse crossings; disruption/obstruction of migration; harm to fish (direct physical harm/noise); degradation of fish habitats due to pollution/siltation; and harm to fish during operation (electromagnetic emissions).	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	No lamprey species were recorded during the fish survey however the catchments potentially support lamprey. All three UK lamprey species are SBL species. Lamprey have been assigned 'Regional' importance on a precautionary basis. The Proposed Development includes a number of watercourse crossings. Works on these crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases have the potential to disturb instream habitats, create a temporary barrier to fish movement and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is likely to have associated electromagnetic emissions and limited pollution risk.



Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Eel	Deterioration in fish populations due to: loss of, or damage to, habitat at watercourse crossings; disruption/obstruction of migration; harm to fish (direct physical harm/noise); degradation of fish habitats due to pollution/siltation; and harm to fish during operation (electromagnetic emissions).	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	This SBL species has been recorded in watercourses on the Development Site and has been assigned as being of Regional Importance on a precautionary basis, also recognising that it has been subject to steep declines nationally and in Europe. The Proposed Development includes a number of watercourse crossings. Works on these crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases have the potential to disturb instream habitats, create a temporary barrier to fish movement and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is likely to have associated electromagnetic emissions and limited pollution risk.
Three-Spined Stickleback	Deterioration in fish populations due to: loss of, or damage to, habitat at watercourse crossings; harm to fish (direct physical harm/noise); degradation of fish habitats due to pollution/siltation; and harm to fish during operation (electromagnetic emissions).	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	This species is common, abundant and widespread. The Proposed Development includes a number of watercourse crossings. Works on these crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases will disturb instream habitats and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is likely to have associated electromagnetic emissions and limited pollution risk.
Freshwater pearl mussel	Indirect effects due to effects on host fish species (salmonids) as set out above; and degradation of habitats due to pollution/siltation.	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	This SBL species has not been recorded within the Development Site. It is included in the assessment as it could occur within the catchments and has been assigned up to National importance on a precautionary basis. Works on watercourse crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases will disturb river habitats/substrates and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is also likely to have limited pollution risk. The effects on salmonids outlined above could also have adverse effects on freshwater pearl mussels indirectly because salmonids are host vectors of juvenile mussels and have an important role in mussel reproduction/recruitment.



Ecological Feature	Environmental Change and potential effect	Zone of Influence	Scoped Out (Y/N)	Justification
Freshwater invertebrates	Deterioration in species populations and diversity of invertebrate assemblages due to loss of, or damage to, habitat at watercourse crossings and degradation of habitats due to pollution/siltation.	River catchments (River Laxdale, Glen River, River Creed) that intersect the Development Site	N	The freshwater invertebrate assemblages at the Development Site are characterised by common and widespread freshwater invertebrate species. There is limited scope for localised effects on aquatic invertebrates. Works on watercourse crossings during the construction and decommissioning phases will disturb instream habitats and associated freshwater invertebrate assemblages and have associated risks of silt/pollutant discharges to watercourses. The operational development is also likely to have limited pollution risk.

