

Lewis Hub (AC Substation and HVDC Converter Station)

Supplementary Environmental Information

August 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

Moorland Breeding Bird Surveys (MBBS) and Corncrake Surveys were undertaken for the proposed Lewis Hub ('the Proposed Development') in 2025. This Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) report details the results of these surveys and any potential changes to the impact assessment and mitigation proposed within the EIAR (February 2025). It should be read in conjunction with **Chapter 2: Project Description** and **Chapter 8: Ornithology (EIAR Volume 2)**.

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey approach for the MBBS followed the methods as set out in **Chapter 8: Ornithology (EIAR Volume 2)** and **Technical Appendix 8.1: Ornithology Methodology of Assessment (EIAR Volume 4)**. Surveys were undertaken by Redwing Ecology Surveys Ltd, with four survey visits undertaken in April, May, June and July 2025. The surveys were undertaken to cover the southern half of the Proposed Development, as shown on **Figure 1: SEI MBBS 2025**.

The Corncrake Surveys were undertaken following guidance¹ with two visits undertaken in June 2025. Surveys involved listening for calling male corncrake *Crex crex* from two locations around Macaulay Farm, one to the north and one to the north-east, as this is the area on site for which suitable habitat was identified. Surveys were undertaken between midnight and 3am.

¹ Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W. & Evans, J. (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods*, RSPB/BTO. pp. 394-396.

3. RESULTS

The results of the 2025 MBBS are shown on **Figure 1: SEI MBBS 2025**.

Seventeen confirmed breeding territories of eight species were identified during the surveys. Twelve species were identified as Possibly Breeding and twelve species as Probably Breeding within the extended Moorland Breeding Bird Survey area.

The commonest species recorded during the MBBS were herring gull *Larus argentus* and meadow pipit *Anthus pratensis*. Herring gull were recorded with breeding activity recorded on three occasions, including confirmed and possible breeding. Meadow pipit were recorded as confirmed breeding at three locations, probable breeding at four locations and possible breeding at three locations.

Eight red-listed species of high conservation concern were recorded during the MBBS, these were:

- Common cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*;
- Curlew *Numenius arquata*;
- Grasshopper warbler *Locustella naevia*;
- Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*;
- Herring gull;
- Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*;
- Ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*; and
- Skylark *Alauda arvensis*.

Thirteen amber-listed species of medium conservation concern were recorded during the MBBS, these were:

- Arctic tern *Sterna paradisaea*;
- Common tern *Sterna hirundo*;
- Common sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*;
- Great black-backed gull *Larus marinus*;
- Greylag goose *Anser anser*;
- Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*;
- Meadow pipit;
- Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*;
- Song thrush *Turdus philomelos*;
- Teal *Anas crecca*;
- Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*;
- Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*; and
- Willow warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*.

Within the footprint of the Proposed Development, the species recorded as confirmed breeding are greylag goose, meadow pipit and stonechat (four territories). Species possibly breeding include meadow pipit, skylark, goldcrest and chaffinch. Notably, herring gull and great-black-backed gull were not recorded within the footprint of the Proposed Development, with great black-backed gull recorded to the west on Loch Cnoc a' Choilich and herring gull to the south-east of the red line boundary.

The species recorded, their associated breeding status assessed during surveys and their conservation status are presented in Table 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

Table 8.1 Moorland Bird Survey Results – Confirmed Breeding. Colour depicts listing on Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC)²

Species	Notes	Number of Birds	BoCC Listing
Common cuckoo	Pair	2	Red
Common sandpiper	Alarming	1	Amber
Great black-backed gull	Pair	2	Amber

² Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D., and Win I. 2021. The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds 114: 723-747. available online at <https://britishbirds.co.uk/content/status-our-bird-populations>.

Species	Notes	Number of Birds	BoCC Listing
Great black-backed gull	Alarming	1	Amber
Greylag goose	Pair	2	Amber
Greylag goose	Alarming	1	Amber
Greylag goose	Alarming	1	Amber
Herring gull	Pair	2	Red
Herring gull	Pair	2	Red
Meadow pipit	Pair	2	Amber
Meadow pipit	Alarming	1	Amber
Meadow pipit	Alarming	1	Amber
Red grouse <i>Lagopus lagopus</i>	Alarming	1	Green
Stonechat <i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	Alarming	1	Green
Stonechat	Alarming	1	Green
Stonechat	Alarming	1	Green
Stonechat	Alarming	1	Green

Table 8.2 Moorland Bird Survey Results – Probable Breeding

Species	Notes	Number of Records	BoCC Listing
Chiffchaff	Singing	1	Green
Chaffinch	Singing	1	Green
Common cuckoo	Singing	1	Red
Common cuckoo	Singing	1	Red
Goldcrest	Singing	1	Green
Grasshopper warbler	Singing	1	Red
Redpoll	Singing	1	Red
Mallard	Singing	1	Amber
Meadow pipit	Singing	1	Amber
Meadow pipit	Singing	1	Amber
Meadow pipit	Singing	1	Amber
Meadow pipit	Singing	1	Amber
Skylark	Singing	1	Red
Skylark	Singing	1	Red
Skylark	Singing	1	Red
Skylark	Singing	1	Red
Skylark	Singing	1	Red
Skylark	Singing	1	Red
Snipe	Singing	1	Amber
Song thrush	Singing	1	Amber
Wren	Singing	1	Amber
Willow warbler	Singing	1	Amber
Willow warbler	Singing	1	Amber
Willow warbler	Singing	1	Amber
Willow warbler	Singing	1	Amber
Willow warbler	Singing	1	Amber
Willow warbler	Singing	1	Amber
Willow warbler	Singing	1	Amber

Table 8.3 Moorland Bird Survey Results – Possibly Breeding

Species	Notes	Number of records	BoCC Listing
Chaffinch	Calling	1	Green

Species	Notes	Number of records	BoCC Listing
Common Sandpiper	Calling	1	Amber
Curlew	Calling	1	Amber
Curlew	Calling	1	Amber
Great Black-backed Gull	Calling	1	Amber
Great Black-backed Gull	Calling	1	Amber
Great Black-backed Gull	Calling	1	Amber
Hooded crow	Calling	1	Green
Herring gull	Calling	1	Red
Redpoll	Calling	1	Red
Redpoll	Calling	1	Red
Meadow pipit	Calling	1	Amber
Meadow pipit	Calling	1	Amber
Meadow pipit	Calling	1	Amber
Raven	Calling	1	Green
Raven	Calling	1	Green
Ringed plover	Calling	1	Red
Skylark	Calling	1	Red
Siskin	Calling	1	Green
Siskin	Calling	1	Green

The Corncrake Surveys identified no calling males during the surveys.

The Summary of Sensitive Receptors shown on **Table 8.9** in **Chapter 8: Ornithology (EIAR Volume 2)** does not require updating after incorporating the results of the 2025 MBBS into the baseline. Subsequently, no further update to the Assessment of Likely Effects, Mitigation, Residual Effects or Summary and Conclusion sections.

ANNEX A: FIGURES