



FARM: WINTERING BIRD SURVEYS 2022-23

Report to Renewable Energy Systems Ltd



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Cover photos © Steve Percival:

Top left – Greenland White-fronted Goose

Top right – Golden Eagle

KILLEAN PROPOSED WIND FARM:WINTERING BIRD SURVEYS 2022-23

INTRODUCTION

- 1. This report describes the wintering bird survey work carried out for a proposed wind farm at Killean, Argyll. It provides a second wintering season's baseline data on the bird populations, activity and flight paths within the vicinity of the proposed wind farm site, to inform subsequent ornithological impact assessment.
- 2. The surveys have been designed with reference to current NatureScot survey guidance on bird surveys for wind farms (SNH 2017). The surveys were undertaken by Tom Lowe, a highly experienced bird surveyor.

STUDY AREA

3. The site is located about 22km north from Campbeltown in Argyll. The wintering bird survey areas were chosen to include all areas within the possible zone of ornithological influence of the proposed wind farm plus a wider area to provide additional data on the ecological connectivity between the site and the Kintyre Goose Roosts SPA. This included the proposed wind farm site, plus a 500m buffer for the main winter walkover surveys (the core survey area, following NatureScot guidance, SNH 2017) and a 2km buffer for the wider wintering waterfowl surveys (the wider survey area), where access/viewing was possible and where there was potentially suitable habitat (Figure 1). The main core survey area is a mix of open moorland and conifer plantation, covering a total area of 10.9km². The wider waterfowl survey area covered an additional 9.8km², and was predominantly agriculturally-improved grassland. The site lies within the 'Argyll West and Islands' NatureScot Natural Heritage Zone (NHZ 14).

WINTERING BIRD SURVEY METHODS

4. The aim of the autumn/winter field survey work was to obtain data on the ornithological importance of the wind farm site and its surrounds at that time of year, and on the flight lines of key target species. It included walkover surveys of the site, wider area waterfowl surveys and vantage point surveys of bird flight activity. These followed the same survey methodologies used in the previous 2021-22 winter (Percival et al. 2022a).

Autumn/Winter Walkover Surveys

- 5. Walkover mapping surveys of the wintering birds within the site and a 500m buffer took place in accordance with NatureScot guidance (SNH 2017). The survey focused on key target species, which included all EU Birds Directive Annex 1 species, Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) Schedule 1 species and Red-listed birds of Conservation Concern (Stanbury *et al.* 2021), as per NatureScot guidance (SNH 2017).
- 6. As well as counting and mapping each species, the behaviour of each flock was also recorded, e.g. feeding/roosting. The surveys included work at dawn and dusk to check the area specifically for roosting hen harriers and other important raptors. A total of seven surveys were undertaken at approximately monthly intervals between September 2022 and March 2023.

Waterfowl Feeding Distribution Surveys

- 7. Additional surveys were undertaken twice-monthly of all possible habitats that could be used by wintering waterfowl as feeding/roosting sites within up to 5km of the site (to include all of the main Tayinloan/Rhunahaorine goose feeding area, i.e. the feeding area from which geese may move to/from across the proposed wind farm site). These wider surveys gave contextual information about where goose feeding flocks were located, and provide further information the linkage to the Kintyre Goose Roosts SPA. The site lies within the potential SPA connectivity zone from this SPA (for which Greenland white-fronted geese are a qualifying feature) and within an area known to be used by the geese (SNH 2016).
- 8. The counts were carried out as instantaneous 'look-see' counts, recording a snapshot of the birds present in each field/count sector when it was surveyed (Gilbert *et al.* 1998). One such count of each field was made each survey day, recording the numbers of all the key species present. Any additional records made outside this time were noted as supplementary records. These snapshot counts were organised to ensure that the full range of times of day was covered in each part of the survey area.

Vantage point surveys

- 9. Vantage Point surveys were carried out to determine bird flight activity within the wind farm site to assess collision risk. The surveys quantified the bird numbers that could potentially be at risk of collision (including roost flight observations at dawn/dusk). All flight lines of target species were mapped, and the flight height of each flock was recorded. Target species were the same as those for the walkover surveys.
- 10. The specific aim of the VP surveys was to collect data on key target species flight activity to enable estimates to be made of:
 - The time spent flying over the survey area
 - The relative use made of different parts of the survey area
 - The proportion of flying time spent at different elevations above the ground.
- 11. Two vantage points were used to cover the potential wind farm site. The computer-generated viewsheds (using Global Mapper v21) are shown in Figure 2. For each VP, a basic 36 hours' VP surveys during the autumn/winter from each VP were carried out (as set out in NatureScot guidance), spread evenly across the winter season.
- 12. As the site lies within the potential SPA connectivity distance from the Kintyre Goose Roosts SPA and within a known goose roosting area (from the previous application's baseline surveys), additional VP

- surveys were carried out. For each VP, the basic 36 hours VP surveys was extended to give 4.5 hours surveys per VP per visit over 13 visits (giving 58 hours in total from each of the two VPs), in line with NatureScot guidance. This extra survey effort enabled more data to be collected to cover dawn/dusk roost flights through the site (which are likely to key period of risk at this time of year). Details of survey dates, times and conditions are given in Appendix 1.
- 13. All key target species flights (and any other species of specific nature conservation interest) were recorded, irrespective of their distance from the vantage point. Observations were carried out throughout daylight hours but not in periods of severely reduced visibility (<3km).
- 14. During the VP surveys, all key target species flights were mapped and cross-referenced to a standard recording form using a numbering system, and the flight height of each was recorded. To estimate flight height as accurately as possible available reference structures (e.g. pylon lines) were used. Heights were estimated as accurately as possible and recorded as a raw estimate rather than being summarised into height classes. Below 10m estimates were made to 1m, between 10m and 20m to 2m, between 20m and 50m to 5m, and above 50m to 10m. When birds were observed over an extended period, estimates of flight height were recorded every 30 seconds. The activity during each flight was also recorded. Particular attention was paid to any observations of birds at rotor height.

WINTERING BIRD SURVEY RESULTS

Walkover Surveys

15. The bird populations found within the survey area during each of the monthly walkover surveys are summarised in Table 1. The Table shows the peak numbers recorded during each month and the overall peak counts. The peaks recorded in 2021-22 are given for comparison.

Table 1. Autumn/winter bird populations recorded in the Killean survey area during the September 2022 - March 2023 walkover surveys (monthly peak counts).

Species	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Peak 2022-23	PEAK 2021-22
Whooper Swan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Pink-footed Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Greenland White- fronted Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Greylag Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Teal	0	126	8	0	15	0	0	126	22
Mallard	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Goldeneye	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	3	3
Red Grouse	0	5	4	4	2	4	2	5	18

Species	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Peak 2022-23	PEAK 2021-22
Black Grouse	0	2	0	0	0	6	4	6	2
Little Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Grey Heron	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Red Kite	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
White-tailed Eagle	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
Marsh Harrier	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hen Harrier	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	2	1
Sparrowhawk	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	1
Buzzard	4	0	0	2	3	2	5	5	5
Golden Eagle	4	1	2	0	4	0	0	4	1
Kestrel	2	2	2	1	1	2	0	2	0
Golden Plover	0	26	10	0	29	0	0	29	55
Snipe	0	3	2	0	0	2	0	3	7
Woodcock	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	2
Tawny Owl	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	1
Common Crossbill	3	13	10	4	28	16	16	28	2
Snow Bunting	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0

Autumn/Winter Wider Area Waterfowl Survey Results

16. The bird populations found within the survey area during each of the fortnightly goose distribution surveys are summarised in Table 2. The Table shows the numbers recorded during each survey and the overall peak counts. Greenland white-fronted geese were the most abundant target species and were seen frequently during the surveys from late October onwards (peak count 477 in 2022-23, compared with 575 in 2021-22).

Table 2. Autumn/winter bird populations recorded in the wider (2km buffer) Killean survey area during the September 2022 - March 2023 waterfowl feeding distribution surveys (daily peak counts).

Species	27/09/22	04/10/22	17/10/22	07/11/22	21/11/22	03/12/22	16/12/22	10/01/23	23/01/23	06/02/23	13/02/23	06/03/23	21/03/23	Peak 2022- 23	Peak 2021- 22
Mute Swan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	4	2	0	4	3
Whooper Swan	0	0	0	1	5	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	13
Pink-footed Goose	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Greenland White- fronted Goose	0	0	11	357	460	477	463	421	415	437	382	426	420	477	575
European White- fronted Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Greylag Goose	40	96	271	298	81	126	218	35	82	142	2	74	104	298	368
Canada Goose	6	0	0	40	23	47	53	20	0	0	0	20	8	53	66
Barnacle Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	7	5
Shelduck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Wigeon	0	0	0	2	0	32	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	14
Teal	4	2	0	2	25	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	104
Mallard	0	16	20	15	0	0	0	9	6	6	2	0	10	20	53
Grey Heron	2	3	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
White-tailed Eagle	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hen Harrier	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Species	27/09/22	04/10/22	17/10/22	07/11/22	21/11/22	03/12/22	16/12/22	10/01/23	23/01/23	06/02/23	13/02/23	06/03/23	21/03/23	Peak 2022- 23	Peak 2021- 22
Sparrowhawk	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Buzzard	3	1	2	1	3	4	7	2	6	5	3	1	2	7	10
Golden Eagle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Kestrel	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Peregrine	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Oystercatcher	0	0	0	0	22	26	29	18	15	0	3	0	2	29	35
Lapwing	0	0	0	65	66	90	143	0	64	72	68	33	28	143	102
Snipe	1	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	6
Woodcock	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Curlew	3	1	11	32	115	36	16	34	4	2	5	0	3	115	90
Redshank	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mediterranean Gull	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Common Gull	73	34	68	42	190	304	184	153	342	182	245	18	6	342	257
Herring Gull	29	27	170	257	251	352	485	204	306	294	284	302	38	485	799
Great Black-backed Gull	5	0	6	0	0	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	0	6	6
Black-headed Gull	5	0	85	76	59	17	42	42	111	13	37	0	1	111	169

Vantage Point Survey Results: Autumn/Winter 2022-23

- 17. The rates of bird flight movement observed across the survey area during the vantage point surveys in 2022-23 are summarised in Table 3. This gives the flight rate per hour recorded in each month and the total number of flights recorded. As in 2021-22, Greenland white-fronted goose was the most frequently recorded target species, with movements between feeding areas and to/from their night roosts. Lochs recorded being used for night roosts included Loch Ulagadale (adjacent to the northern edge of the core survey area), Loch Dirigadale (on the northwestern edge of the core survey area), and Loch Luireach, Loch Fionn-Ghleann and Loch a' Ghlinn Bhig (all within the site).
- 18. There was also a small amount of whooper swan and pink-footed goose migration over the site during September-November. A range of raptor species used the site, including red kite, white-tailed eagle, hen harrier, golden eagle and merlin. Further details of key species' flights are given in Appendix 1.
- 19. Table 4 gives the results from the previous 2021-22 surveys for comparison. Similar levels of flight activity were recorded then too (Percival *et al.* 2022a), though several scarce raptors (particularly golden eagle and hen harrier) were recorded more frequently in 2022-23.
- 20. Tables 3 and 4 also give the percentage of flights of each species that were recorded at rotor height (taking rotor height as between 25m and 180m above ground level). The percentage of flights at rotor height was generally similar between the two years.

Table 3. Bird flight rates (number per hour) recorded over the Killean survey area during the September 2022 - March 2023 vantage point surveys. N = 58 hours total observation from each of the two VPs.

Species	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total over- flying	% at rotor height
Whooper Swan	-	0.11	0.78	-	-	-	-	16	33%
Pink-footed Goose	36.44	-	-	-	-	-	-	328	0%
Greenland White- fronted Goose	-	-	0.39	-	9.67	9.69	8.25	501	100%
Greylag Goose	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.40	8	100%
Teal	-	-	-	-	1.00	-	-	18	0%
Red Grouse	-	0.33	0.22	-	0.06	0.25	0.20	19	0%
Black Grouse	-	0.11	-	0.06	-	-	0.40	11	40%
Grey Heron	-	0.06	-	-	-	-	0.05	2	50%
Red Kite	-	0.56	-	-	-	-	-	10	100%
White-tailed Eagle	-	-	0.11	-	0.17	0.06	0.15	9	89%
Hen Harrier	1.00	0.44	0.22	0.11	0.17	-	0.05	27	32%
Sparrowhawk	0.11	0.17	0.06	-	-	-	0.15	8	29%
Buzzard	0.22	0.06	0.22	0.28	0.44	0.56	1.10	51	55%
Golden Eagle	0.56	0.17	0.78	0.33	0.61	0.13	0.75	56	93%
Kestrel	0.11	0.28	0.28	0.22	0.11	0.19	0.10	22	9%

Species	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total over- flying	% at rotor height
Merlin	-	0.11	-	-	-	-	-	2	50%
Golden Plover	-	1.78	2.56	-	3.22	-	20.45	545	91%
Snipe	-	0.06	0.22	-	-	0.13	0.05	8	60%
Woodcock	-	-	0.11	0.11	0.11	-	0.05	7	0%
Great Black- backed Gull	-	-	-	0.06	-	-	0.05	2	50%
Tawny Owl	-	-	-	-	0.06	-	-	1	0%
Long-eared Owl	-	-	0.06	0.06	-	0.06	-	3	0%

Table 4. Bird flight rates (number per hour) recorded over the Killean survey area during the September 2021 - March 2022 vantage point surveys. N = 58 hours total observation from each of the two VPs.

Species	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total over- flying	% at rotor height
Whooper Swan	-	0.72	0.11	0.39	-	-	-	22	75%
Pink-footed Goose	-	0.39	-	-	-	-	1.03	24	50%
White-fronted Goose	-	1.06	26.21	-	-	19.17	10.79	1040	74%
Greylag Goose	-	-	-	-	-	0.11	0.42	9	100%
Canada Goose	-	-	0.47	-	-	-	0.24	13	0%
Teal	-	-	-	-	0.33	-	-	6	0%
Red Grouse	-	0.06	-	-	0.06	-	-	2	0%
White-tailed Eagle	-	-	-	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.18	6	100%
Hen Harrier	-	-	0.32	-	0.11	0.11	0.06	11	27%
Sparrowhawk	0.22	-	0.05	-	0.06	0.06	0.06	6	40%
Buzzard	0.22	0.50	0.68	0.22	0.28	0.17	0.42	43	49%
Golden Eagle	0.22	0.06	0.53	0.06	0.33	0.28	0.06	26	83%
Kestrel	-	0.06	-	0.22	0.06	-	0.06	7	14%
Merlin	-	0.06	-	-	-	-	-	1	0%
Golden Plover	1.44	2.44	1.74	-	5.22	0.33	-	190	70%
Snipe	-	-	-	-	0.06	-	-	1	0%
Woodcock	-	-	0.05	0.11	0.11	0.17	0.06	9	0%
Common Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.06	1	100%
Long-eared Owl	-	-	0.05	-	-	-	-	1	0%

Conservation Evaluation of Wintering Bird Populations

21. The conservation value of the wintering bird populations was determined using the criteria specified in Table 5 (from Percival 2007) and is summarised in Table 6. This includes the criteria adopted by NatureScot in the Guidelines for Selection of Biological SSSIs (Drewitt et al. 2020), using 1% of the resource to define international and national importance (Austin et al. 2023). An additional category of regional importance was assigned for species approaching the threshold for national importance and those for which the survey area held a notable concentration in a county context. A further category of 'local importance' was used for species that did not reach regional importance but were still of some ecological value. This included all species on the red or amber lists of the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' (Stanbury et al. 2021) that did not reach national or regional importance at the development site. National (GB) and international wintering waterfowl baseline populations have been taken from the most recently published population figures (Austin et al. 2023) from the national Wetland Birds Survey and other species from Woodward et al. (2020). Regional (Natural Heritage Zone, NHZ) populations were taken from Wilson et al. (2015). The site lies within the 'Argyll West and Islands' NatureScot Natural Heritage Zone (NHZ 14). In addition, listing on Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive, Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside, UK BAP priority species and Scottish BAP species were all considered in the evaluation process.

Table 5. Definition of terms relating to the sensitivity of the ornithological receptors at the site.

Conservation Value	Definition
VERY HIGH	Cited interest of SPAs, SACs and SSSIs. Cited means mentioned in the citation text for the site as a species for which the site is designated (SPAs/SACs) or notified (SSSIs).
HIGH	Other species that contribute to the integrity of a SPA or SSSI. A local population of more than 1% of the national population of a species. EU Birds Directive Annex 1, EU Habitats Directive priority habitat/species and/or W&C Act Schedule 1 species. Ecologically sensitive species, e.g. large birds of prey or rare birds (<300 breeding pairs in the UK).
MEDIUM	Regionally important population of a species, either because of population size or distributional context. UK BAP priority species (if not covered above).
LOW	Any other species of conservation interest, e.g. species listed on the Birds of Conservation Concern not covered above. Scottish BAP species (if not covered above).

22. The conservation value of the wintering bird populations observed in the Killean survey area during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 winter surveys has been summarised in Table 5 below. This included one very high sensitivity species (Greenland white-fronted goose – the birds seen are ecologically linked to the Kintyre Goose Roosts SPA), 11 high sensitivity species (whooper swan, barnacle goose, goldeneye, little egret, white-tailed eagle, hen harrier, golden eagle, red kite, peregrine, merlin and golden plover) that are EU Birds Directive Annex 1/Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedule 1 species, 10 medium sensitivity species (UK BAP priority/ red listed

species of conservation concern and/or species present in regionally important numbers; greylag goose, European white-fronted goose, teal, mallard, red grouse, black grouse, lapwing, curlew, herring gull and long-eared owl), and 13 low sensitivity species.

Table 6. Conservation evaluation of the wintering bird populations in the Killean survey area, September – March 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Species	Peak (core)	Peak (wider)	>1% region	EU Birds Dir Ann 1	W and C Act Sch 1	Red [R]/ Amber [A] List	UK BAP priority sp	Scottis h BAP sp	Conservation Value
Mute Swan	0	4							Nil
Whooper Swan	7	13	✓	✓	✓	Α		✓	High
Pink-footed Goose	328	1				Α			Low
Greenland White- fronted Goose	155	575	✓			R	√	✓	Very high
European White- fronted Goose	0	1	✓			R	√	✓	Medium
Greylag Goose	0	368	✓			А			Medium
Canada Goose	0	66							Nil
Barnacle Goose	0	7		✓		А		✓	High
Shelduck	0	1				А			Low
Wigeon	0	32				Α			Low
Teal	22	104	✓			А			Medium
Mallard	4	53	✓			А			Medium
Tufted Duck	1	0							Nil
Goldeneye	3	0			✓	R			High
Red Grouse	18	0					✓		Medium
Black Grouse	2	0	✓			R	✓	✓	Medium
Little Grebe	1	0							Nil
Little Egret	0	1		✓					High
Grey Heron	1	3							Nil
Red Kite	10	0	✓	✓	✓			✓	High
White-tailed Eagle	1	1	√	√	√	А		√	High
Marsh Harrier	1	0	✓	✓	✓	А		✓	High
Hen Harrier	1	1	✓	✓	✓	R		✓	High
Sparrowhawk	1	1				Α			Low
Buzzard	5	10							Nil
Golden Eagle	2	1	✓	✓	✓			✓	High

Species	Peak (core)	Peak (wider)	>1% region	EU Birds Dir Ann 1	W and C Act Sch 1	Red [R]/ Amber [A] List	UK BAP priority sp	Scottis h BAP sp	Conservation Value
Kestrel	1	1				Α		✓	Low
Merlin	1	0	✓	✓	✓	R		✓	High
Peregrine	0	1	✓	✓	✓			✓	High
Oystercatcher	0	35				Α			Low
Golden Plover	55	5		✓				✓	High
Lapwing	0	143				R	✓	✓	Medium
Snipe	7	6				Α			Low
Woodcock	2	2				R		✓	Low
Curlew	0	115				R	✓	✓	Medium
Mediterranean Gull	0	1	√	✓	✓				High
Common Gull	0	342				Α			Low
Lesser Black- backed Gull	0	1				А			Low
Herring Gull	0	799	✓			R	✓	✓	Medium
Great Black- backed Gull	0	6				Α			Low
Black-headed Gull	0	169				А			Low
Tawny Owl	1	0				Α			Low
Long-eared Owl	1	0	✓						Medium

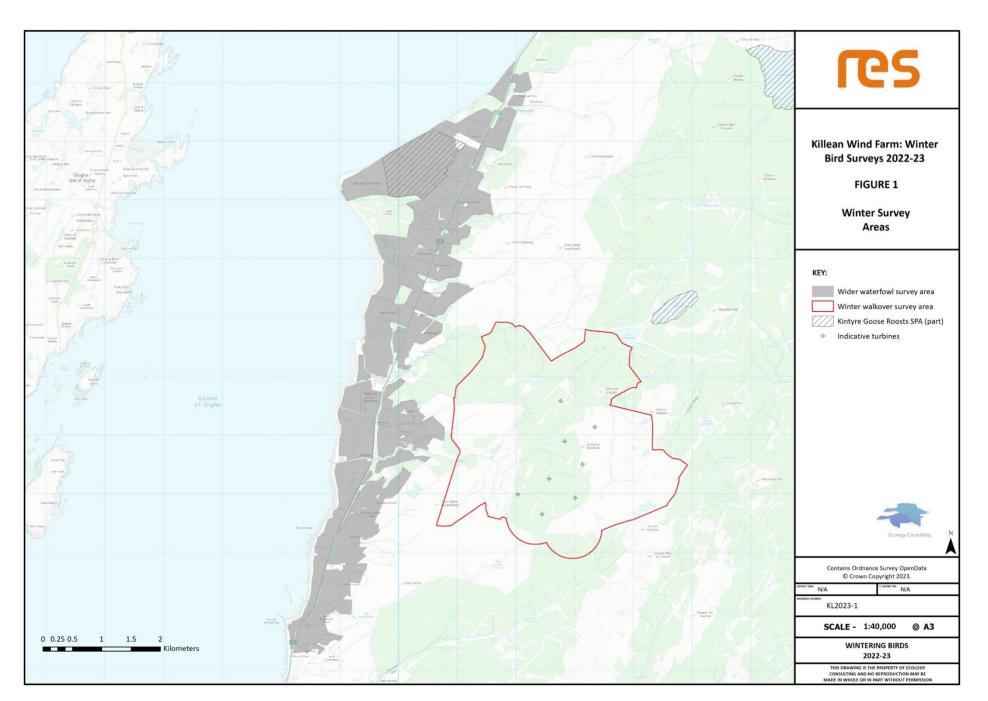
23. The key autumn/wintering bird populations recorded were as follows:

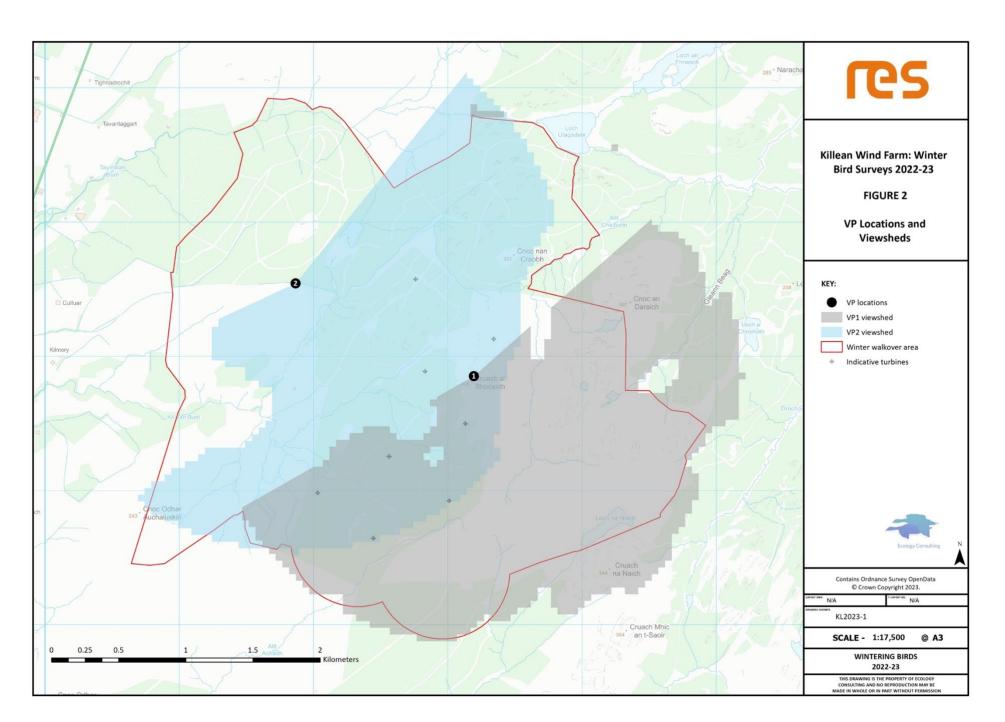
■ Greenland white-fronted goose — the daytime feeding distribution of this species is summarised in Figure 3, which shows the peak count recorded in each count field. It was generally very similar to that recorded in the previous winter. The geese were widely distributed across the survey area, though with fewer records in the southern part (including the fields closer to the Killean site). Their flight lines (Figure 4) were mostly over the northern part of the proposed wind farm site. They roosted at night occasionally on the small lochs in the north-eastern part of the core survey area: Loch Luireach — 92 on 25/1/23, Loch Fionn-Ghleann - 64 on 7/3/23, Loch a' Ghlinn Bhig —155 on 14/2/23.

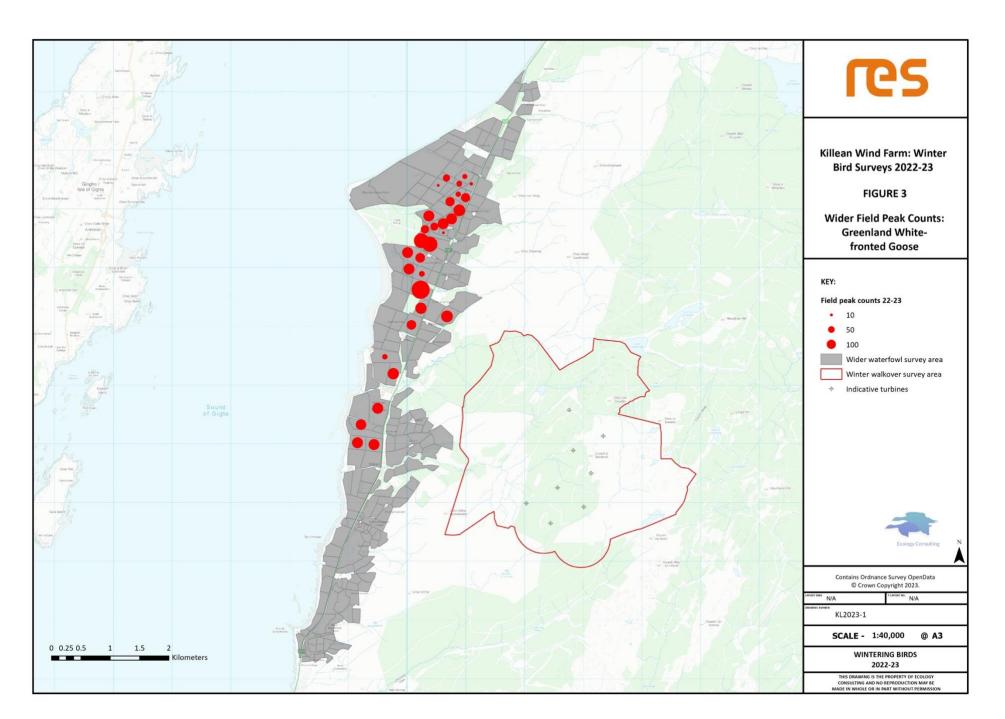
Other high conservation value waterfowl:

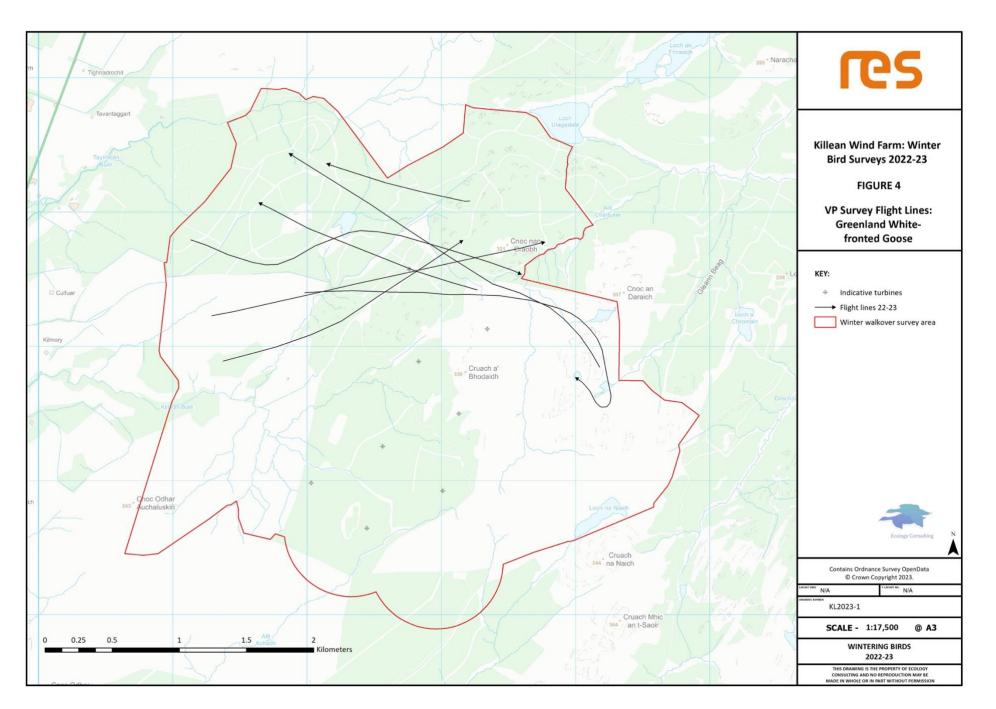
- Whooper Swan there were three flights recorded over the site during the 2022-23 VP surveys (Figure 5), including a flock of 7 that flew in to land on Loch a' Ghlinn Bhig on 8/11/22. Seven further flocks of up to 12 birds were seen over-flying during the wider surveys.
- **Barnacle Goose** none were recorded on/over the site or in the wider survey area in 2022-23, but a small flock of up to 5 birds was seen in the previous winter (mixed with Greenland white-fronted geese int eh wider survey area).

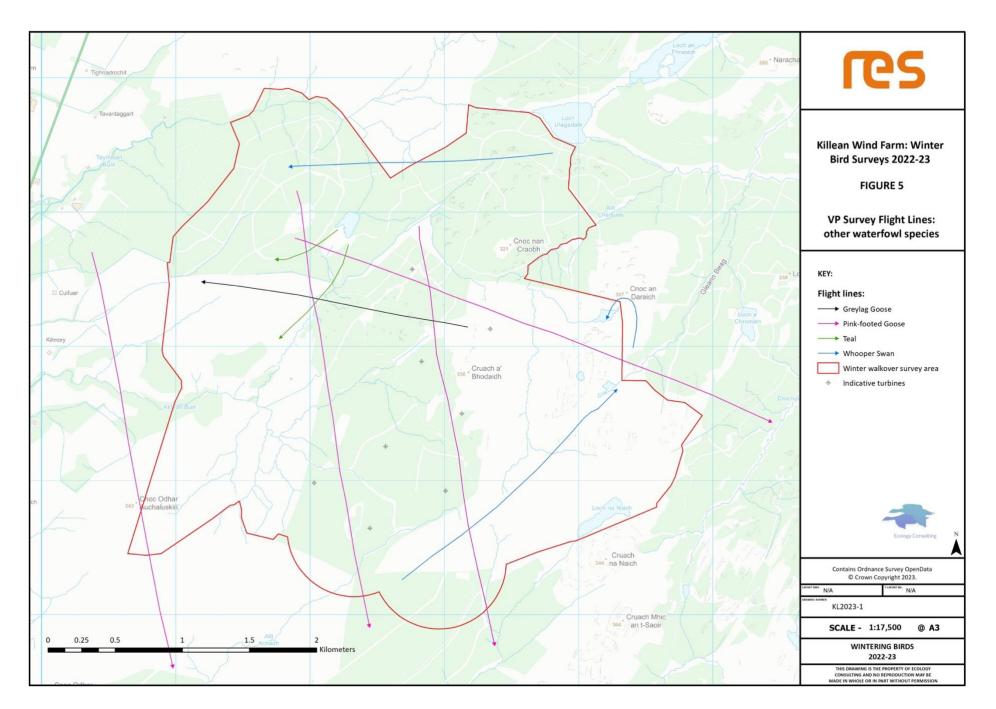
- Goldeneye this species was seen occasionally on Loch na Naich within the site in small numbers (up to 2 birds), with one additional record of a bird on Loch a' Ghlinn Bhig.
- Other wintering wildfowl greylag geese, teal and mallard were all recorded in the wider waterfowl survey area in regionally important numbers, but the wind farm site itself was not important for any of them, with only occasional flights recorded (Figure 5). Greylag goose distribution across the wider survey area is shown in Figure 11, and had a similar pattern to the Greenland white-fronted geese. Small numbers of migrant pink-footed geese were also recorded over-flying during the VP surveys (Figure 5).
- Red and Black Grouse the distribution of these two species during the 2022-23 winter surveys is shown in Figure 6. Red grouse were widely distributed over the open moorland in the higher eastern part of the survey area. Black grouse were seen more frequently that they had been in the previous winter, in the central and western parts of the survey area.
- Hen harrier this species was regularly seen hunting over the site through the winter, with 27 flights in total (see Figure 7), compared with 11 in the previous winter. No evidence was found, though, of any night roosts in the survey area, and most flights seen were below rotor height (so collision risk would be low). There were not any notable concentrations of flight activity in any particular part of the survey area, though most were seen in the central and western part of the survey area, with few in the eastern part.
- Golden Eagle this species was observed more regularly over-flying the site during the VP surveys in 2022-23 than in the previous winter, with a total of 56 records (compared with 26 in 2021-22). The flight lines are shown in Figure 8. Most flights were recorded in the central and western parts of the site, mostly over the forestry. There were few flights over the flatter open moorland in the eastern part of the site (as was also found in the previous winter).
- Other scarce raptors and owls white-tailed eagle, red kite, marsh harrier, merlin and long-eared owl were all recorded during the winter surveys, but only infrequently in low numbers (Figure 9). There was no indication that the survey area was important to any of these species at this time of year.
- Golden Plover small numbers (peak 55 in 2021-22 and 29 in 2022-23) of golden plover were seen regularly through the winter using the site during the walkover and VP surveys. Most birds in both winters were seen on the flatter open moorland in the eastern part of the survey area (Figure 10).

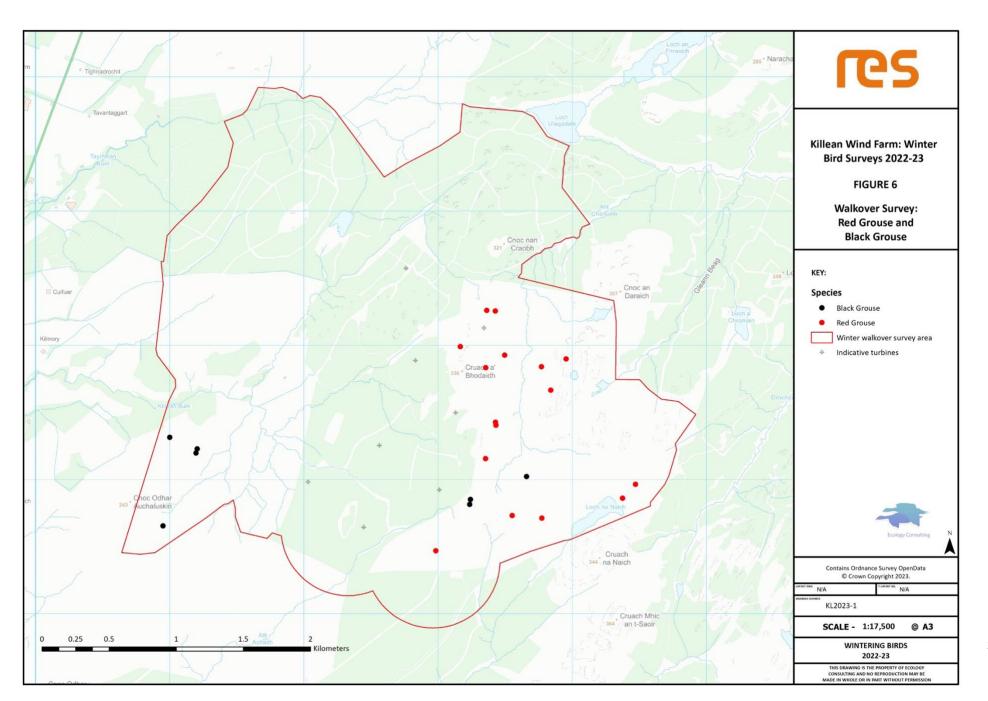


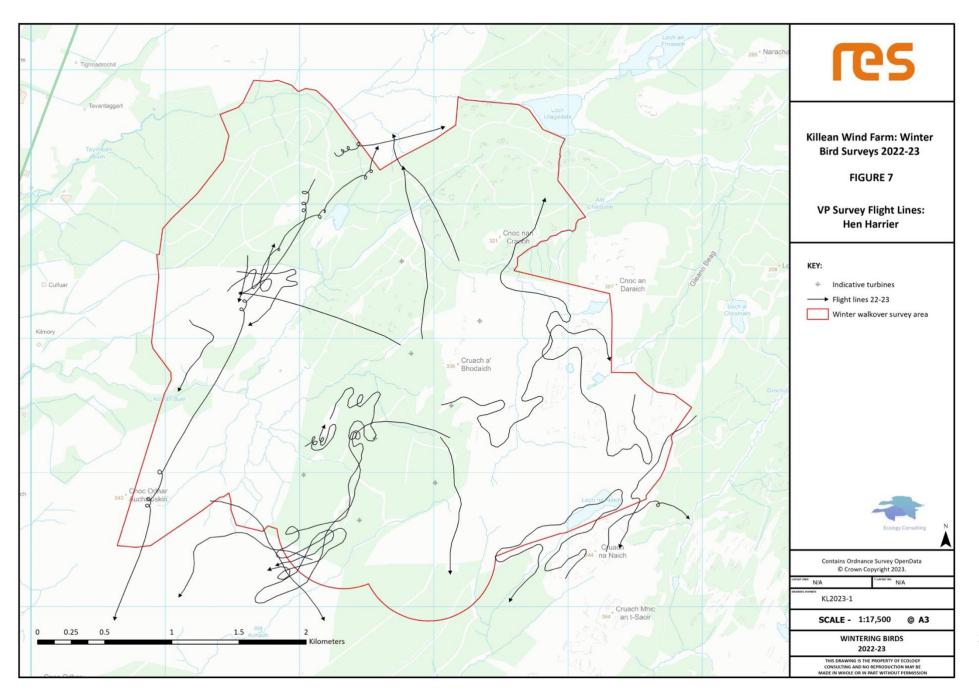


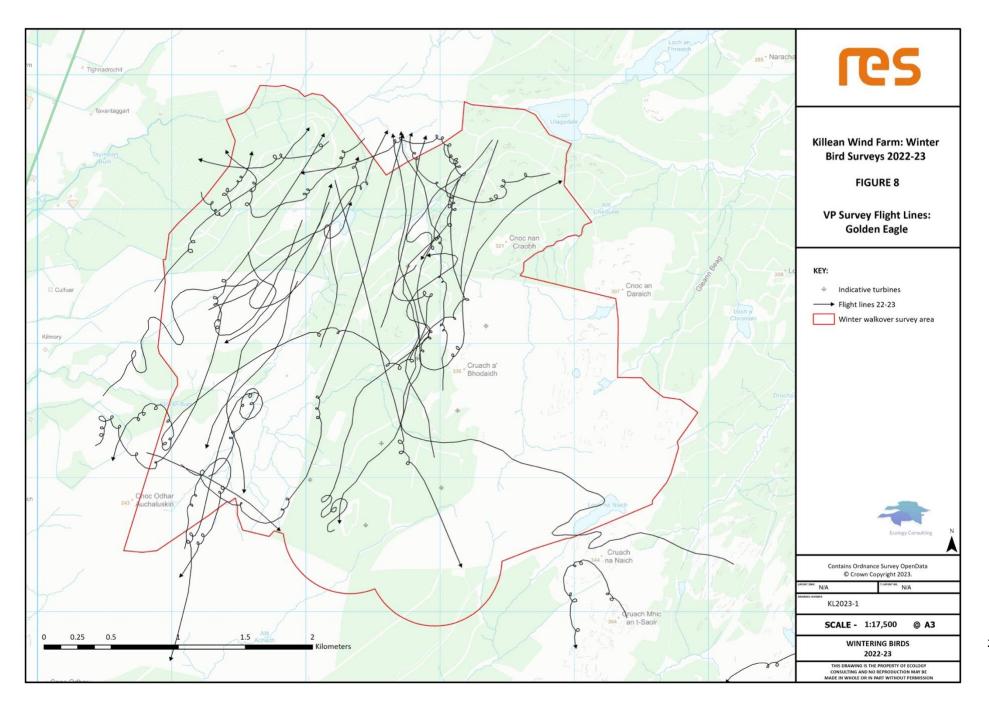


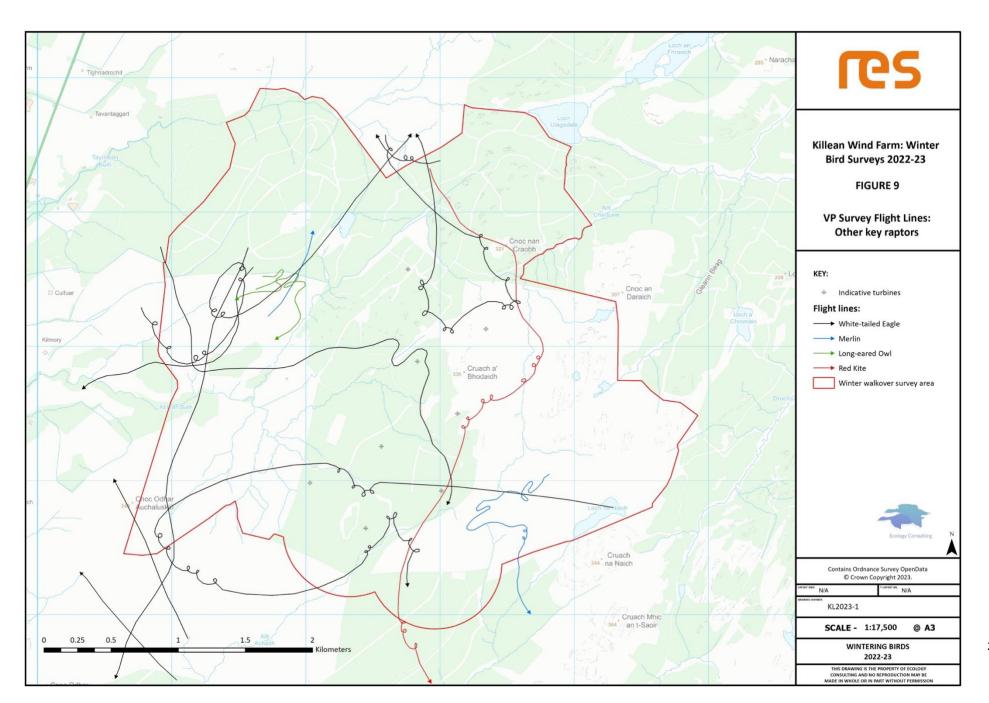


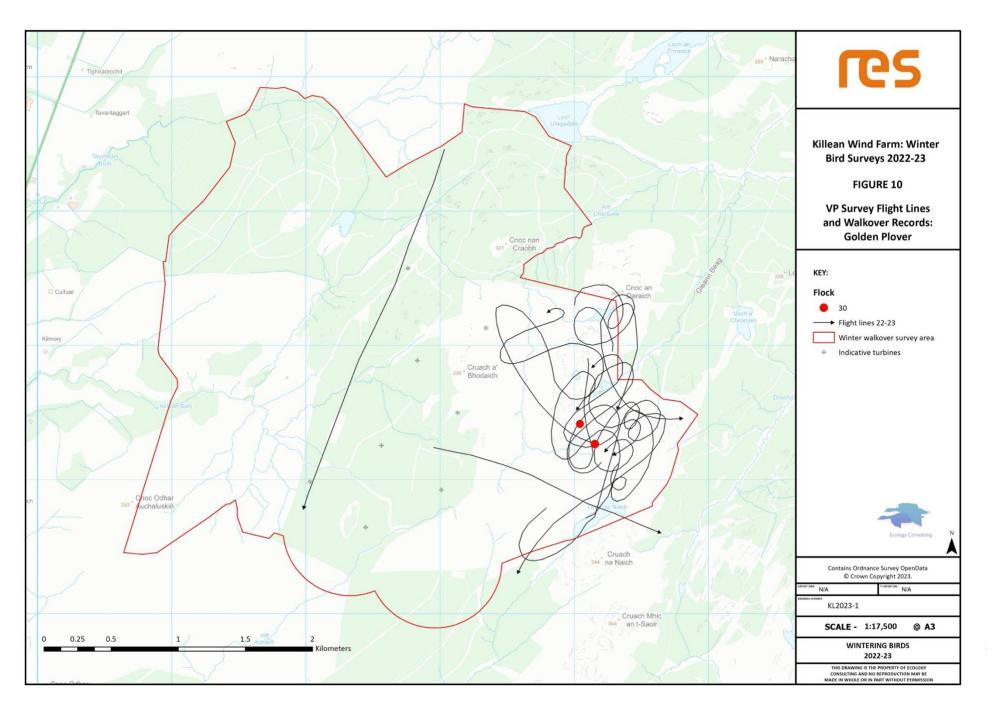


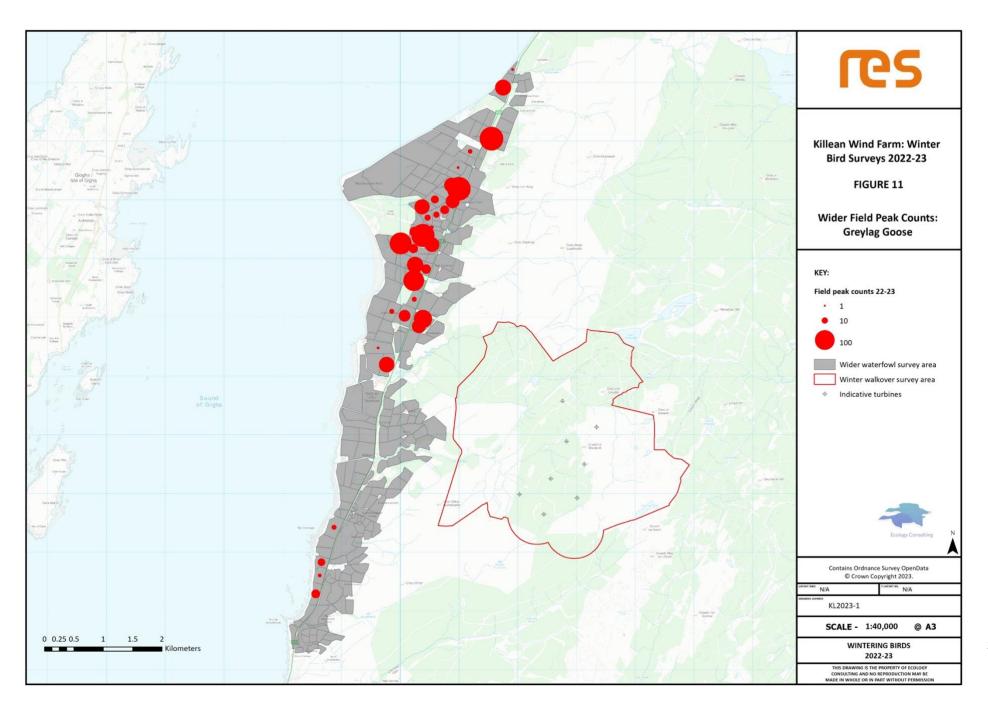












CONCLUSIONS

- 24. The 2022-23 wintering bird surveys found a range of wintering bird populations of conservation importance using the survey area, very similar to those recorded in the previous winter. The highest conservation importance was the wintering Greenland white-fronted goose population, for which there was a clear ecological link between the site and the Kintyre Goose Roosts SPA. The wind farm ornithological assessment will require Habitats Regulations Assessment (including Appropriate Assessment). As the proposed wind farm site is not itself within an important goose feeding area, the main potential impacts of on this species would be (a) collision risk, which will require modelling to determine the magnitude of this risk, and (b) potential disturbance to roosting birds at night (especially during construction of the wind farm). Avoidance of the main goose flight routes would reduce collision risk to this species collision risk modelling will help define the extent of this avoidance zone more precisely. The northernmost turbine of the current layout lies closer to that main flight corridor, so will have a higher collision risk (but the magnitude of this risk will need to be determined by collision risk modelling).
- 25. Other wintering waterfowl of importance included whooper swan, barnacle goose, and goldeneye, though the overall numbers of these species were low, and therefore unlikely to result in significant collision risk (though this will need to be confirmed with collision risk modelling) or other impacts. The wider waterfowl survey area supported a range of regionally important waterfowl populations, including greylag goose, teal, and mallard, but give the separation from the proposed wind farm site these would not be likely to be significantly affected by it.
- 26. Red and black grouse were both resident within the survey area. Design mitigation may be needed for black grouse but that will be informed by the results of the 2022 breeding bird surveys and the surveys that are being carried out during the 2023 breeding season.
- 27. Hen harrier and golden eagle were seen regularly hunting over the survey area, though no areas of particular importance were identified for either species. Collision risk modelling will help inform the impacts of the proposed wind farm on these species, but no specific spatial constraints for them have been identified.
- 28. Other raptor species, including white-tailed eagle, red kite, marsh harrier, merlin and long-eared owl, were recorded in lower numbers and less frequently, so no design or other mitigation would be likely to be required for them at this stage.
- 29. Golden plover were recorded regularly using the site through the winter (primarily the open moorland in the eastern part of the site) but only in small numbers, so no design or other mitigation would be likely to be required for them at this stage.

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Survey Information

Date	Vantage Point No	Start time	Finish time	Weather
14/09/2022	1	13:10		cloud 4/8, wind NW 3, 13C, vis very good (cloud base lifted off hill at 12:30)
14/09/2022	2	18:00		cloud 5/8, wind NW 3, 13C, vis very good
26/09/2022	1	17:00		cloud 5/8, wind NW 4, 9C, vis excellent, few showers
27/09/2022	2	15:00		cloud 7/8, wind NW 4, 11C, vis excellent
28/09/2022	2	06:30		cloud 1/8, wind N 2, 3C, vis very good
04/10/2022	2	14:10		cloud 8/8, wind W 2, 13C, vis very good
04/10/2022	2	16:45		cloud 8/8, wind W 3, 13C, vis very good
05/10/2022	1	08:05		cloud 8/8, wind WSW 3, 11C, vis very good
05/10/2022	1	10:05		cloud 8/8, wind WSW 4, 10C, vis very good, showers
18/10/2022	2	06:55		cloud 4/8, wind 0, 6C, vis very good, mist in valleys
18/10/2022	2	12:05		cloud 4/8, wind E 3, 12C, vis very good
18/10/2022	1	14:05		cloud 7/8, wind E 2, 11C, vis very good
18/10/2022	1	17:35		cloud 1/8, wind ENE 4, 10C, vis very good
08/11/2022	1	06:50		cloud 4/8, wind S 3, 7C, vis very good
08/11/2022	1	09:20		cloud 8/8, wind S 3, 9C, vis very good, rain
08/11/2022	2	12:20		cloud 3/8, wind S 4, 9C, vis excellent
08/11/2022	2	14:50		cloud 6/8, wind S 3, 9C, vis excellent
22/11/2022	2	07:10		cloud 2/8, wind NE 3, 6C, vis excellent
22/11/2022	2	09:10		cloud 1/8, wind NE 2, 6C, vis very good
	1	12:00		cloud 1/8, wind NE 2, 8C, vis very good
22/11/2022				
22/11/2022	1	15:30		cloud 5/8, wind SSE 1, 6C, vis very good
24/11/2022	2	14:40		cloud 1/8, wind S 4, 7C, vis very good
03/12/2022	2	14:00		cloud 8/8, wind SE 3, 6C, vis excellent
04/12/2022	1	07:30		cloud 3/8, wind ENE 4, 3C, vis very good
04/12/2022	1	11:00		cloud 7/8, wind ENE 4, 5C, vis very good
04/12/2022	2	13:00		cloud 4/8, wind ENE 4, 5C, vis very good
15/12/2022	1	11:50		cloud 3/8, wind N 2, 0C, vis excellent
15/12/2022	1	12:20		cloud 3/8, wind N 2, 0C, vis excellent
15/12/2022	1	15:20		cloud 2/8, wind N 2, 0C, vis excellent
16/12/2022	2	07:45		cloud 8/8, wind SW 3, 3C, vis very good, rain until 08:00
16/12/2022	2	10:15		cloud 8/8, wind SW 4, 4C, vis very good
09/01/2023	2	12:10		cloud 8/8, wind WSW 4, 5C, vis good, rain/hail shower
09/01/2023	2	15:40		cloud 7/8, wind W 3, 5C, vis very good
12/01/2023	1	07:45		cloud 8/8, wind S 3, 5C, vis good, mist 08:00 - 08:15
12/01/2023	1	10:45		cloud 4/8, wind SW 4, 5C, vis very good
24/01/2023	2	07:30	10:00	cloud 8/8, wind SSW 1, 8C, vis good
24/01/2023	2	11:40		cloud 8/8, wind SSW 1, 9C, vis good
25/01/2023	1	12:30	14:30	cloud 2/8, wind 3, 8C, vis excellent
25/01/2023	1	15:00	17:30	cloud 7/8, wind NW 4, 7C, vis excellent, brief shower
06/02/2023	2	12:35	15:05	cloud 8/8, wind SSW 3, 7C, vis excellent
06/02/2023	2	15:35	18:05	cloud 8/8, wind S 3, 7C, vis excellent
07/02/2023	1	07:05	09:05	cloud 8/8, wind SSW 2, 7C, vis very good
07/02/2023	1	09:35		cloud 8/8, wind WNW 2, 7C, vis very good
08/02/2023	1	16:05	17:35	cloud 8/8, wind SSW 4, 7C, vis very good
14/02/2023	2	06:55		cloud 7/8, wind SSE 4, 7C, vis very good
14/02/2023	2	09:30	12:30	cloud 8/8, wind SSE 4, 7C, vis good, cloud base on VP1
14/02/2023		13:05		cloud 8/8, wind SSE 4, 7C, vis good
14/02/2023	1	16:30		cloud 8/8, wind SSE 4, 7C, vis good, cloud suddenly lifted
06/03/2023	2	17:05		cloud 6/8, wind NNW 3, 6C, vis very good
07/03/2023		06:00		cloud 0, wind N!, -4C, vis excellent, visible lochs frozen
07/03/2023		09:30		cloud 0, wind N 1, 2C, vis excellent
07/03/2023	2	13:05		cloud 4/8, wind NNW 3, 4C, vis very good
22/03/2023	2	05:20		cloud 1/8, wind SW 5, 6C, vis excellent
22/03/2023	2	03:20		cloud 0, wind SW 5, 7C, vis excellent
22/03/2023		14:00		cloud 2/8, wind SSW 4, 10C, vis very good
~~/00/~023	1	14.00	10.00	Tologu 270, Willia 33 W 4, 100, Via Very good



VP	Date	Time	Species	Count	Direction	Flight height (m)	Activity	Time observed (s)	Notes
2	14/09/22	18:00	EA	2	NNE	80	hunt/soar	620	ad pair
2	14/09/22	18:34	HH	2	SSW	18	hunt/roost	30	male and juv
2	14/09/22	18:43	НН		circle	5	hunt/chase	480	3 grey males chasing around over clearfell, mobbing K and ther landed on edge of heather clearing
									same as 4, chasing each other, chasing HC, eventually dropped
2	14/09/22	19:20	HH	2	NNE	30	hunt/chase/rc	1320	into marsh
2	14/09/22	19:30	HH	1	WNW	30	hunt/roost	720	juv, joined 6 chasing, then dropped into marsh
2	14/09/22	19:38	HH	1	NNE	25	hunt/roost	170	male, same as 4, the 3rd male
1	26/09/22	18:09	PG	37	SSE	400	migrating	120	
1	26/09/22	18:23	EA	2	SE	35	soar	500	ad pair
1	26/09/22	18:28	PG	155	SSE	500	migrating	120	
1	26/09/22			54	ESE	700	migrating	100	
1	26/09/22	19:18	PG	82	SSE	500	migrating	120	
2	27/09/22	15:10	EA	1	NNW	104	hunt	440	ad male
2	04/10/22	14:28	EA	1	SW	29	hunt	130	ad male, landed in tree
2	04/10/22	14:33	BK	1	WSW	33		80	male
2	04/10/22	14:43	HH	1	ESE	5	hunt	140	male
2	04/10/22	15:00	EA	1	SW	45	hunt	310	ad male, same as 1, landed in tree
2	04/10/22	15:14	EA	1	NNE	33	hunt	500	ad male, same as 4, landed in tree
	04/10/22			1	NNE	20	hunt		juv
	04/10/22				WNW		hunt		male
	04/10/22				SSW	25			male, same as 2
1	05/10/22			21		40			landed
	18/10/22				WSW		migrating	120	landed
	18/10/22				WNW		hunt		male
1					SW		hunt		male
	18/10/22				SE		migrating	470	male
							hunt		female
	18/10/22				SW				
	18/10/22				NE		hunt		male, prob same as 8
	18/10/22				SSE		hunt		second male
1					ENE		hunt		third male
	18/10/22			10			flushed	70	
1					NNE		hunt		female
1					ESE	50		90	
	08/11/22				WSW		hunt		ad male
1					NE		roost		family group, landed out of sight
1					NW		hunt	50	
1					SW	65		450	
1	08/11/22	10:15	EA	1	SW	43	hunt	170	2cy
1	08/11/22	10:24	EA	1	NNE	45	soar/hunt	150	ad female, met up with ad male 1000m N of map, pair carried or NNE
1	08/11/22	11:18	EA	1	ESE	40	hunt	130	
1	08/11/22	11:21	GP	4	NNE	35	roost	120	landed out of sight
1	08/11/22	11:35	WS	7	NNE	5	feed		same as 2, landed on loch
	08/11/22				wsw		soar		ad pair
	08/11/22				SSW		soar		ads, same as 14
	08/11/22				SW		hunt	200	
	08/11/22				ESE		roost	120	
	22/11/22			1		50		.20	on VP in headlights on arrival, flew off SE after few minutes
	22/11/22				NNW	30	roost	80	2
	22/11/22				NNW		hunt	100	
	22/11/22				SSW		migrating		females
	22/11/22				ESE		hunt		ad female, landed in tree, remained there throughout
1					NNW	40	···aiit		landed
		12.20	J.	+ '		+0		230	off map, had been on summit of Beinn Bhreac throughout,
1	22/11/22	14.30	FΔ	1	E		hunt	20	dropped out of sight
	22/11/22				NNW	11	mant	270	
	24/11/22				ENE		hunt		ad female
	24/11/22				SSE		hunt		ad female, same as 14
	24/11/22				ENE		hunt/soar		female
	24/11/22				SSW		hunt/soar		ad male
	03/12/22				NE		hunt		female
	03/12/22				E		hunt		female
2	03/12/22	16:46	ILE	1	ENE	3	hunt	130	in bins and thermal

KILLEAN WIND FARM: WINTERING BIRD SURVEYS 2022-23

1 04	4/12/22	00.3E	FΔ	2	SW	40	hunt/soar	270	ads, same as 14
							nuni/soar		
	4/12/22				SSW	9			male
	1/12/22				N		hunt		ad female
	4/12/22			1	SSW	50		130	ad female, full crop
2 04	1/12/22	13:51	EA	2	NNE	50	hunt/soar	750	ads, same as 11 + 12
2 09	9/01/23	14:38	WE	1	SSW	60	hunt	170	imm, possibly transmitter
2 09	9/01/23	15:55	HH	1	NNE	13		80	
2 09	9/01/23	17:02	NW	82	ENE	55	roost	110	
2 09	9/01/23	17:08	T	7	WSW	8	roost	20	in thermal imager, calling
	9/01/23			11	SSW	7	roost		in thermal imager, calling
	2/01/23			_	SSE		hunt		male
	2/01/23				NE		hunt		ad, lost to view in valley
									imm, sat-tagged and wing-tagged green/purple X. Taken as a chick from Norway in 2021 and released on Shannon Estuary ir Ireland. 9 months in western Scotland up to Mull. Prob same as
	2/01/23				SSE		hunt		seen on 9/1 from VP2
	2/01/23				SE		hunt		female
1 12	2/01/23	12:40	WE	1	SSW	30	hunt	200	juv
1 25	5/01/23	12:33	EA	2	NNE	35	hunt	190	pair ads, dropped out of sight 500m N of map, flushed RN4 - possible dead sheep? Pair in that area yesterday on walkover too
1 25	5/01/23	13:35	EA	1	NE	40	hunt	120	ad, off map
1 25	5/01/23	13:51	EA	1	WNW	43	hunt		2cy, usual occasional visitor, headed off north
1 25	5/01/23	13:56	EA	1	NNE	40	territorial	540	ad male, off map, same as 7, seeing off 8, eventually dropped into valley N of Cnoc Airigh Luachraich
1 25	5/01/23	14:01	EA	2	circle	75	soar	720	ads, new pair soaring, male sky-dancing briefly
1 25	5/01/23	14:05	EA	1	N	75	soar	520	ad female, off map, same as 7
1 25	5/01/23	15:45	GP	29	circle	45	flushed		landed
	5/01/23				SW		soar		ads
_	5/01/23				SW		flushed		same as 10, landed
	5/01/23			92			roost		landed on Loch Luireach
	5/02/23				E		hunt	110	
	4/02/23				WNW		roost	30	
2 14	4/02/23	07:29	NW	95	WNW	80	roost	50	
1 14	4/02/23	17:04	WE	1	SSE	55	hunt/roost	380	imm, just off map, dropped towards forest edge
1 14	4/02/23	17:13	EA	2	SSW	40	hunt/roost	840	off map - ad pair eventually dropped N of Cnoc Airigh Luachraic
2 06	5/03/23	18:52	NW	8	ENE	45	roost	110	
2 06	5/03/23	18:53	NW	57	ESE	60	roost	140	counted from photo
	7/03/23			64	NNW	33	roost	150	
	7/03/23				WNW		roost		off map
_	7/03/23				WNW		feed		males, flew from lek
_									
	7/03/23				circle		soar		pair off map
1 07	7/03/23	10:47	EA	1	SSW	160	soar/display	1380	ad female, initially displaying 3500m N of VP, off map
									ad male, joined 3, soaring over forestry, then both plummeted t
1 07	7/03/23	10:54	EA	1	S	175	soar/display	1260	west of site
1 07	7/03/23	11:20	WE	1	WNW		soar	960	ad
	7/03/23				SE		soar		ad male, same as 4, in response to WE
	7/03/23				NNE		soar/display		ad female, same as 3, west to display over Cnoc Airigh L. off map
									ad male, same as 8, initially sky dancing over Cnoc Airigh then
1 07	7/03/23	11:49	EA	1	S	125	soar/display	960	came south but returned following female
2 07	7/03/23	13:38	EA	1	SSE	400		230	imm
	7/03/23				W	60	hunt		imm
	7/03/23				ESE		soar		ad female, off map, same as 9
	7/03/23				SE		soar		imm, same as 16
	7/03/23				NNW		soar		ads, neighbouring pair (Blary)
	2/03/23				WNW			140	
							roost		
	2/03/23				ENE	35			female imm female, unfamiliar imm, very similar to one on Rathlin on
	2/03/23				NE		hunt		18/3
	2/03/23				ENE		mobbing EA		ad male, off map, usual male
	2/03/23			9	SSW	100		150	
1 22	2/03/23	16:59	EA	1	circle	25	hunt/soar	130	ad female, off map
	2/03/23				W	65	hunt	400	ad, off map
	2/03/23				circle		flushed		off map. Beinn on Tuirc area
1 22				700		100			
	2/03/23	18-17	RK	ာ	WSW	a	roost	30	females