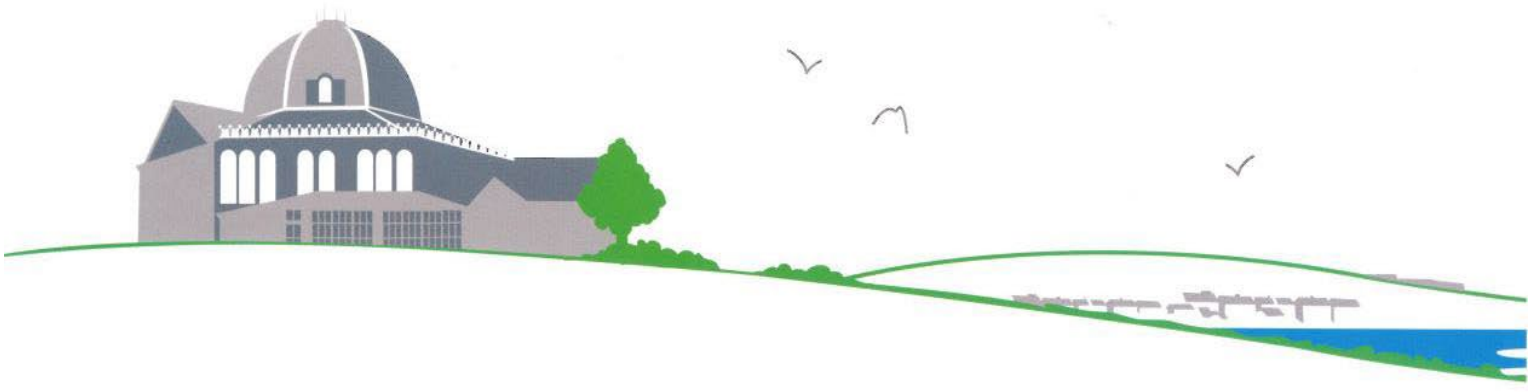
Penny Anderson Associates Ltd
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

BURO HAPPOLD

DEWSBURY

WINTERING BIRD SURVEY REPORT



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DEWSBURY

WINTERING BIRD SURVEY REPORT

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April 2022

This project has been undertaken in accordance with PAA policies and procedures on quality assurance.

Signed:_____

Penny Anderson Associates Ltd
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

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1 Breeding Bird Survey Results

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Penny Anderson Associates (PAA) Ltd was commissioned by Buro Happold to carry out wintering bird surveys at a site in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, where there is a proposal for development (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). This follows breeding bird surveys completed during the 2021 breeding season (PAA 2021).

1.2 The wintering bird survey is one of a number of surveys designed to establish species present on site and any mitigation and further survey requirements.

Site Description

1.3 The site is in Dewsbury, centred on grid reference SE 22882 19553. It is bordered to the north-east by residential housing and Wharfedale Road and to the north-west by a railway line and a waste recycling centre beyond. Open farmland borders the east and south and mature woodland to the west,

1.4 The survey area comprises large open fields under cereal and silage with hedgerows and banked field boundaries and plantation and mature natural woodland. No wetland habitats were present. As such the wintering bird assemblage was considered likely to be restricted to farmland/woodland species that are likely to use habitats during the core winter period only (December to February) as a foraging resource. The site was not anticipated to be used by any significant number of waders or other passage/migrant species on passage during the autumn/early spring period.

Aims

1.5 The aim of the wintering bird survey was to:

- Describe and evaluate the site's wintering bird assemblage with a particular focus on the farmland/woodland bird assemblage likely to be present; and
- Highlight species which may require mitigation as part of development proposals to avoid negative impacts on local populations.

2. METHODS

Field Survey

2.1 The wintering bird survey was undertaken by Principal Ecologist Paul Fisher. Paul is an experienced ornithologist who has carried out wintering, breeding, passage and species-specific bird surveys in many different habitats over the last 20 years.

2.2 The survey methodology followed the wintering bird survey methodology devised jointly by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Joint Nature Conservancy Council (JNCC) (Gilbert *et al.* 1998). This methodology typically requires six visits to be made between October and March. The start and finish dates for a particular site will vary depending upon latitude and altitude.

2.3 On each of the survey visits the following details were recorded:

- Bird numbers, species, age and sex;
- Habitats being used; and
- Bird behaviour, e.g. feeding, loafing or roosting.

2.4 In keeping with the methodology, surveys began early in the morning, avoiding heavy rain, poor visibility and strong winds which can reduce visibility and suppress bird activity.

2.5 The area was surveyed using a combination of a walked transect and point observations. This involved following a pre-determined route at a slow walking pace with longer periods of observations made at strategic points. Sightings were registered on a basemap using standard BTO codes.

2.6 The results are shown in Figures 1 to 4 and encompass all land within the site boundary.

2.7 The dates, survey times and weather conditions during each survey visit are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Survey Visit Dates

Visit No.	Date	Start Time	Weather Conditions
1	6th January 2022	08.00	Overcast, 6 degrees, (BF1)
2	19th January 2022	08.15	Clear, bright & overcast, 5 degrees (BF2)
3	8th February 2022	08.00	Cold & frosty 0 degrees – stiff cold wind (BF3)
4	1st March 2022	07.15	Clear & sunny, 2 degrees, (BF1)

Limitations

2.8 The survey was commissioned in late December 2021 and site access was agreed in January 2022. Therefore, the full survey season (October to March) was not sampled. Four visits were made to the site between January and March 2022. The dates of the visits were chosen to avoid unsuitable conditions such as heavy rain and high winds.

Evaluation Methodology

2.9 Evaluation of the wintering bird survey results was undertaken in accordance with the following criteria.

Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (Stanbury et al. 2021)

2.10 Under this approach bird populations are assessed using quantitative criteria to determine the population status of each species, and then placed on one of three lists: red; amber; or green. Red list species are of high conservation concern, having declined by 50% or more in population or breeding range in the last 25 years. Amber listed species are of medium conservation concern, having suffered between 25% and 49% reduction in breeding or non-breeding populations, breeding or wintering ranges. Green list species have a favourable conservation status.

Section 41 Species of Principal Importance (Priority Species)

2.11 Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists certain species, also referred to as Priority Species, for which actions and targets have been devised to help safeguard the most threatened species, including bird species.

Schedule 1 Species

2.12 Schedule 1 species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981 as amended) by the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is an offence to intentionally disturb any of these species during the breeding season without a valid licence.

3. RESULTS

Wintering Bird Assemblage

3.1 The full survey results are presented in Appendix 1 and the locations of all bird registrations are presented in Figures 1 to 4.

3.2 An assemblage of 41 species was recorded from within or immediately adjacent to the site over the four survey visits. Barn owl[1], included in the total was not directly observed, however its presence was confirmed, using a box in a field immediately adjacent to the site.

Evaluation

3.3 Of the 41 species recorded, 17 (43%) are in general decline and listed as Red or Amber Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) or are listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (as amended). The results table in Appendix 1 summarises the conservations status of the bird species recorded.

3.4 The Red listed species are linnet, skylark, starling, greenfinch, herring gull, house sparrow, marsh tit, mistle thrush and yellowhammer.

3.5 The Amber listed species are, bullfinch, kestrel, hedge accentor, woodpigeon, meadow pipit, song thrush and wren.

3.6 Barn owl (Schedule 1) was confirmed as using a box on a pole in an adjacent field (see Figure 2). Whilst the Schedule 1 listing protects barn owl from disturbance during the breeding season and not the winter, it is very likely that any barn owls observed during the winter will be resident and will breed in the locations recorded.

[1] *The scientific names for the bird species specified in this report can be found in Appendix 1.*

4. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The survey area comprises open farmland; at the start of the survey in January fields within the survey area were either stubble, ploughed or under silage. The survey area also contains mature woodland and younger plantation woodland and some hedgerows and banked field boundaries.

4.2 The assemblage recorded is relatively large and diverse and reflects the close association of open farmland, mature and plantation woodland and residential gardens and dwellings. The surveyor noted that the woodland was relatively quiet during Visit 1. Arable fields and hedgerows had sparse records but were generally in more active use by birds.

4.3 The assemblage comprises species which are typical of these habitats, including, as well as farmland generalists, a number of farmland specialists such as linnet, skylark, goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), starling and yellowhammer, which appear to use the site year-round based on the findings of this wintering bird survey and the previously completed breeding bird survey (PAA 2021).

4.4 As anticipated, there were no wader species, and no evidence of use of the site by passage/migrant species.

4.5 A notable aggregation of linnet and relatively high numbers of skylark were recorded on the last survey visit in March. Skylark, linnet and yellowhammer were also regularly recorded throughout the survey visits.

4.6 In addition to the woodland generalists recorded on site, woodland specialists such as marsh tit (recorded only once), chiffchaff, coal tit, nuthatch, jay, treecreeper and great spotted woodpecker were recorded from the mature, semi-ancient woodland and plantation woodland within the survey area. These species would require mitigation to avoid negative impacts on the local population if any part of the wooded compartment in the west of the site is to be removed or subject to increased levels of disturbance.

4.7 The close association of residential housing, school and industry helps to support further species of conservation concern such as house sparrow and starling, species that are more generally associated with human dwellings/buildings for roosting and foraging as well as nest sites in the breeding season. Such species are able to adapt well to, or be tolerant of, urban and suburban development and would require lower levels of mitigation in order to maintain or enhance local breeding populations.

Barn owl

4.1 Barn owl (Schedule 1) was confirmed as using a box on a pole in an adjacent field (see Figure 2). Whilst the Schedule 1 listing protects barn owl from disturbance during the breeding season and not the winter, it is very likely that any barn owls observed during the winter will be resident and will breed in the locations recorded. However, conditions for breeding were not present within the site boundary.

Validity

4.2 The survey period comprised four surveys over the period January to March. Best practice methodology recommends six visits between October and March (Gilbert, et al. 1998). This limitation is not considered to be significant in this case due to the lack of suitable habitat within the site to support wading birds, and an absence of any waders recorded during the four surveys completed.

5. REFERENCES

Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W. and Evans, J., 1998. *Bird Monitoring Methods*. RSPB.

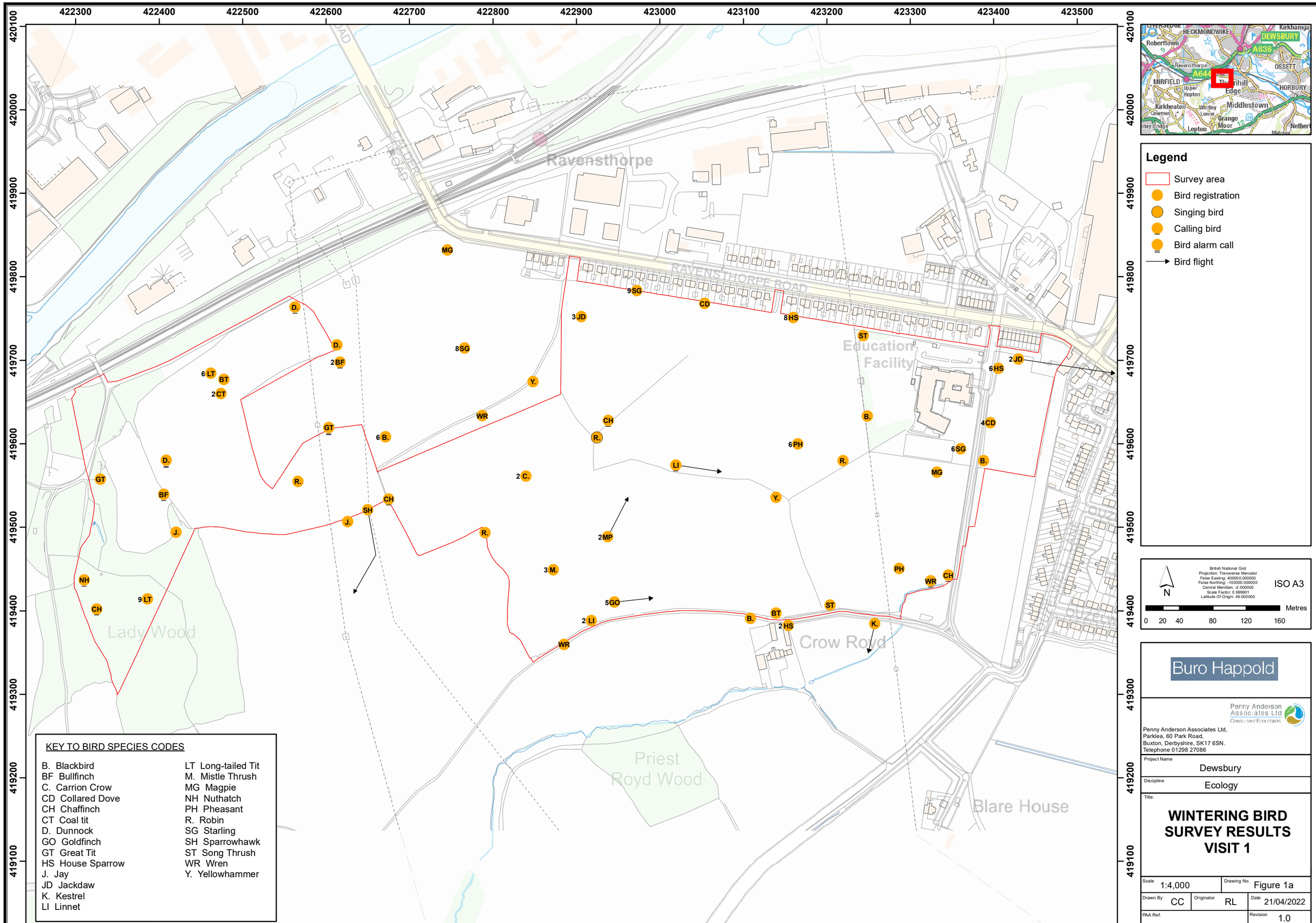
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6. ABBREVIATIONS

BoCC	Birds of Conservation Concern
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities
PAA	Penny Anderson Associates Ltd
RSPB	Royal Society for Protection of Birds
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act

FIGURES



Legend

- Survey area
- Bird registration
- Singing bird
- Calling bird
- Bird alarm call
- Bird flight

KEY TO BIRD SPECIES CODES

B. Blackbird	LT Long-tailed Tit
BF Bullfinch	M. Mistle Thrush
C. Carrion Crow	MG Magpie
CD Collared Dove	NH Nuthatch
CH Chaffinch	PH Pheasant
CT Coal tit	R. Robin
D. Dunnock	SG Starling
GO Goldfinch	SH Sparrowhawk
GT Great Tit	ST Song Thrush
HS House Sparrow	WR Wren
J. Jay	Y. Yellowhammer
JD Jackdaw	
K. Kestrel	
LI Linnet	

British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
False Easting: 400000.000000
False Northing: -100000.000000
Central Meridian: -2.000000
Scale Factor: 0.999601
Latitude Of Origin: 49.000000

N

ISO A3

Metres

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Discipline: Ecology

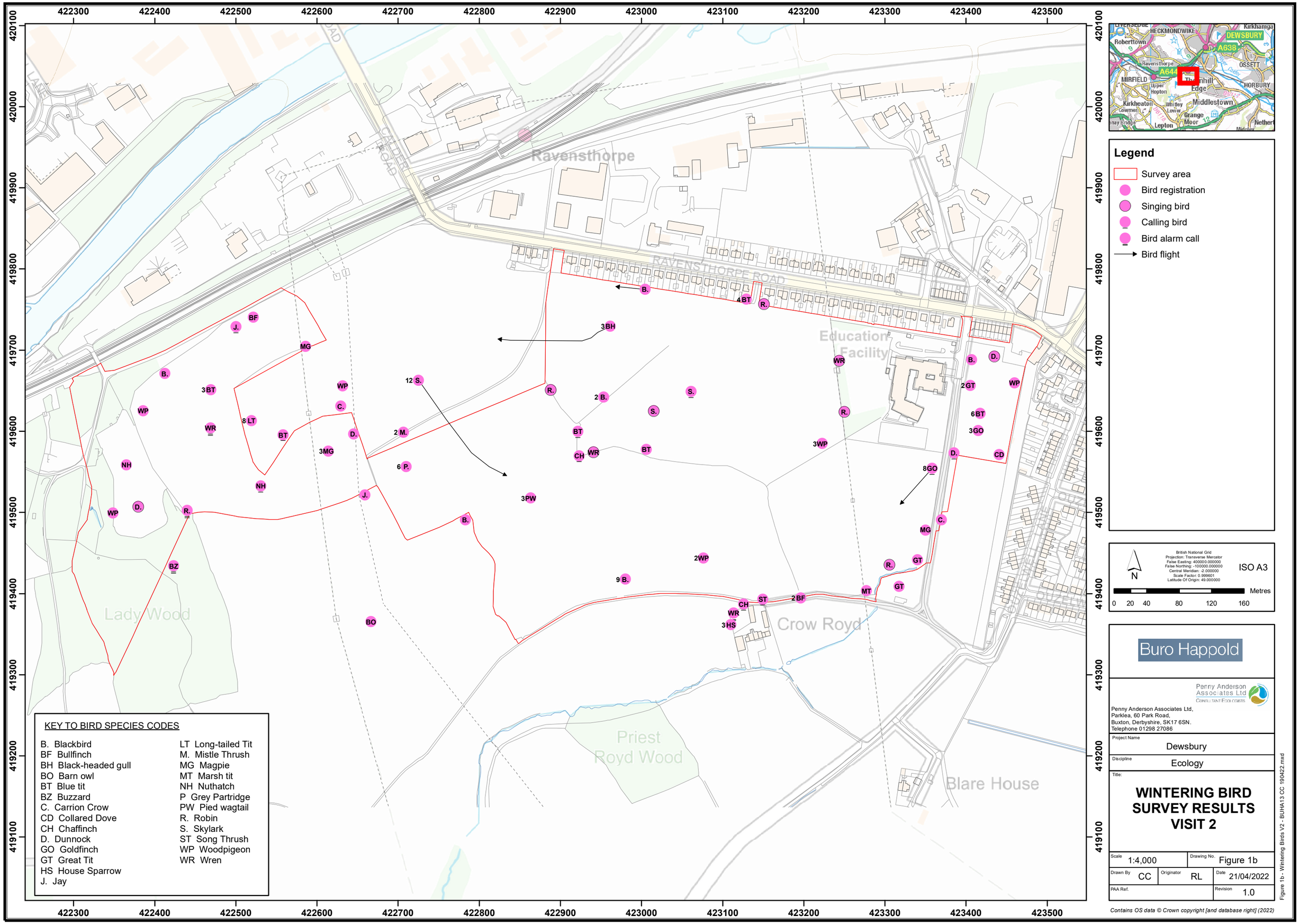
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WINTERING BIRD SURVEY RESULTS VISIT 1

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Drawn By: CC	Originator: RL	Date: 21/04/2022	
PAA Ref.		Revision: 1.0	

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Figure 1a - Wintering Birds V1 - BUHA13 CC 190422.mxd



Legend

- Survey area
- Bird registration
- Singing bird
- Calling bird
- Bird alarm call
- Bird flight

KEY TO BIRD SPECIES CODES

B. Blackbird	LT Long-tailed Tit
BF Bullfinch	M. Mistle Thrush
BH Black-headed gull	MG Magpie
BO Barn owl	MT Marsh tit
BT Blue tit	NH Nuthatch
BZ Buzzard	P Grey Partridge
C. Carrion Crow	PW Pied wagtail
CD Collared Dove	R. Robin
CH Chaffinch	S. Skylark
D. Dunnock	ST Song Thrush
GO Goldfinch	WP Woodpigeon
GT Great Tit	WR Wren
HS House Sparrow	
J. Jay	

British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
False Easting: 400000.000000
False Northing: -100000.000000
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Title:

WINTERING BIRD SURVEY RESULTS VISIT 2

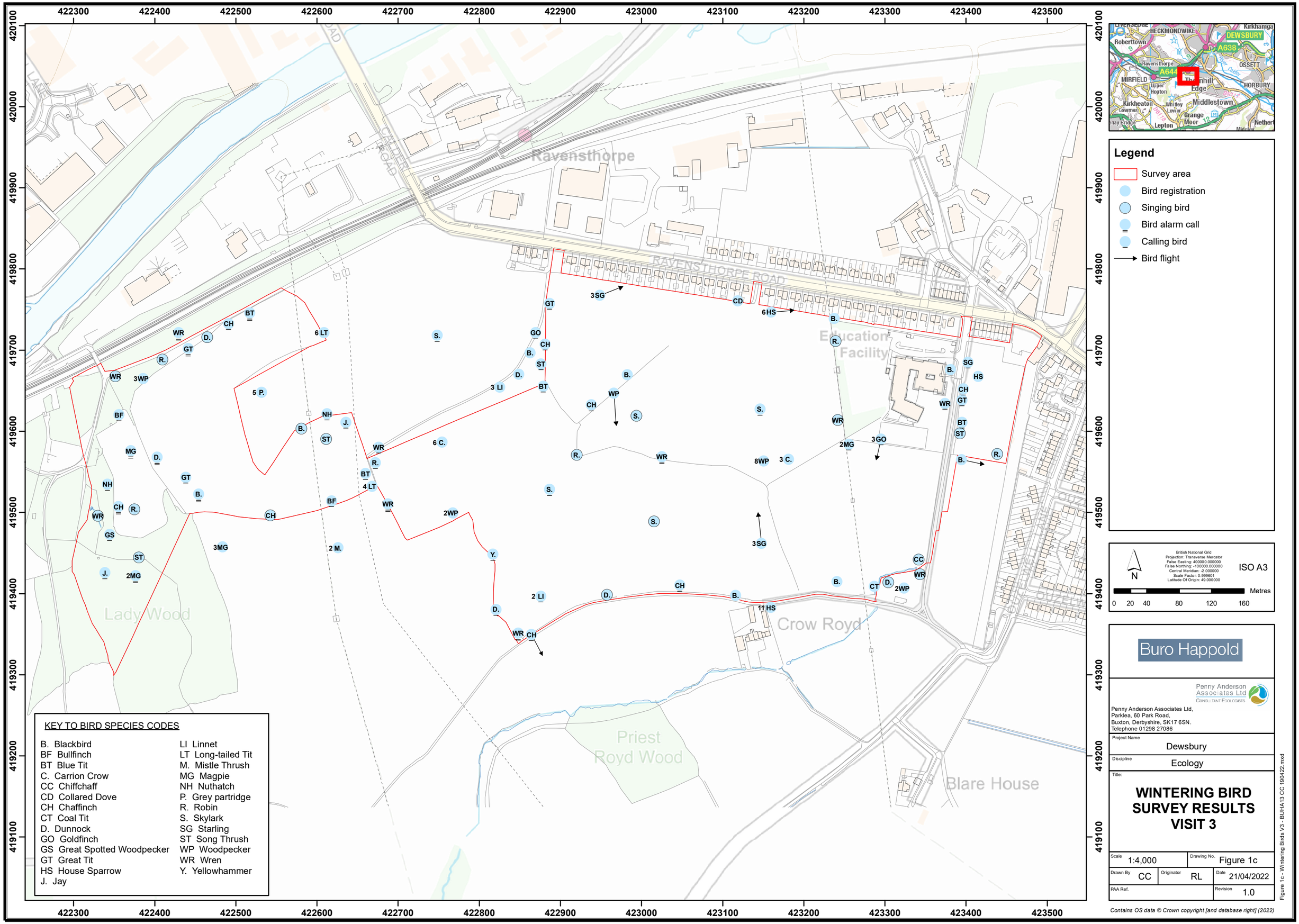
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Drawn By	Originator	Date
CC	RL	21/04/2022

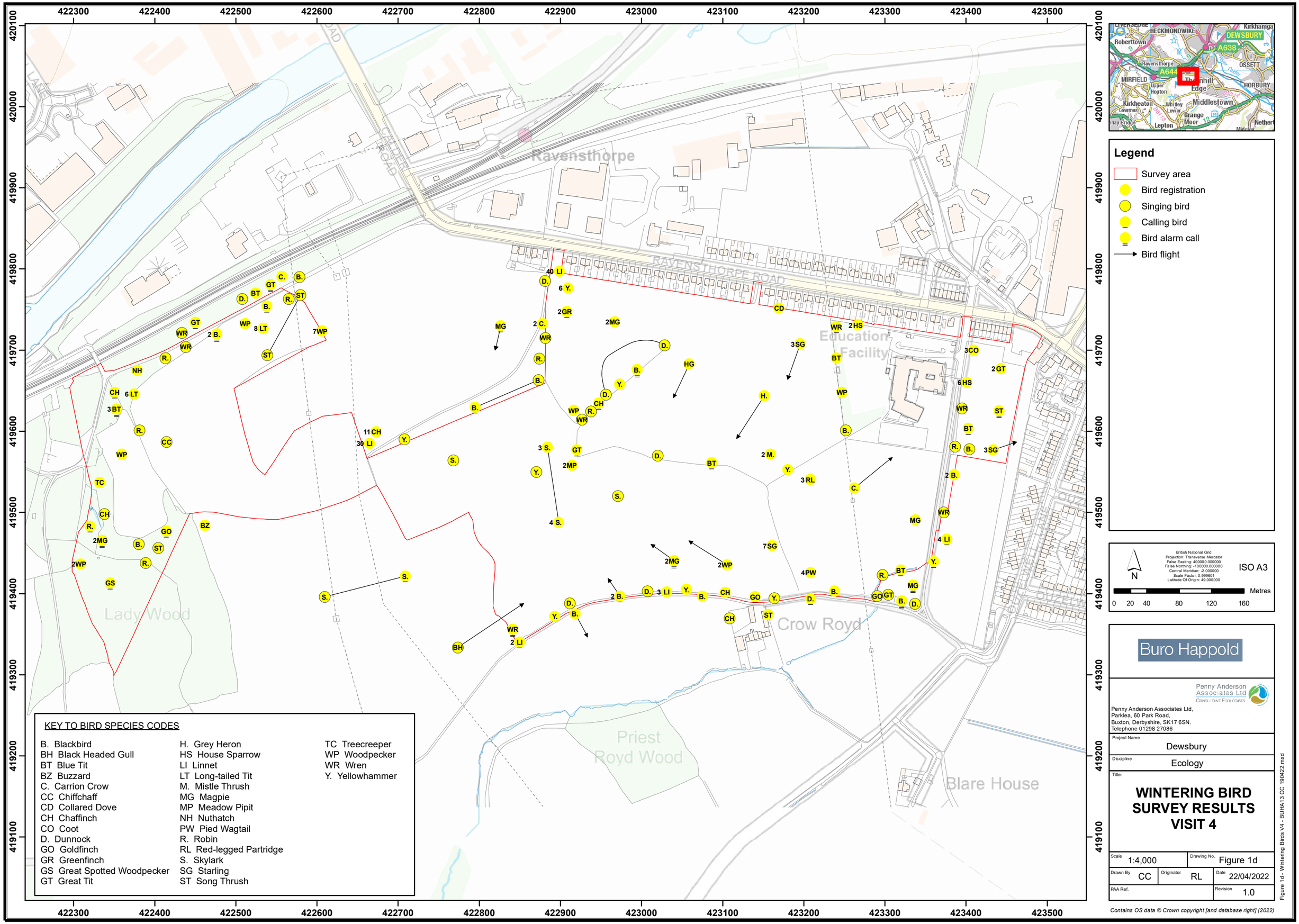
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Figure 1b - Wintering Birds V2 - BUHA13 CC 190422.mxd



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KEY TO BIRD SPECIES CODES

B. Blackbird	H. Grey Heron	TC Treecreeper
BH Black Headed Gull	HS House Sparrow	WP Woodpecker
BT Blue Tit	LI Linnet	WR Wren
BZ Buzzard	LT Long-tailed Tit	Y. Yellowhammer
C. Carrion Crow	M. Mistle Thrush	
CC Chiffchaff	MG Magpie	
CD Collared Dove	MP Meadow Pipit	
CH Chaffinch	NH Nuthatch	
CO Coot	PW Pied Wagtail	
D. Dunnock	R. Robin	
GO Goldfinch	RL Red-legged Partridge	
GR Greenfinch	S. Skylark	
GS Great Spotted Woodpecker	SG Starling	
GT Great Tit	ST Song Thrush	

Legend

- Survey area
- Bird registration
- Singing bird
- Calling bird
- Bird alarm call
- Bird flight

N

British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
False Easting: 400000.000000
False Northing: -100000.000000
Central Meridian: -2.000000
Scale Factor: 0.999601
Latitude Of Origin: 49.000000

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Discipline: Ecology

Title:

WINTERING BIRD SURVEY RESULTS VISIT 4

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Drawn By: CC	Originator: RL	Date: 22/04/2022	
PAA Ref.		Revision: 1.0	

Figure 1d - Wintering Birds V4 - BUHA13 CC 190422.mxd

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APPENDIX 1

Breeding Bird Survey Results

Appendix 1 Breeding Bird Survey Results

Common Name	Scientific Name	Visit 1 06/01/22	Visit 2 19/01/22	Visit 3 02/08/22	Visit 4 01/03/2022
Black-headed gull	*Larus ridibundus*		2 flyovers		1 flyover
Blue tit	*Cyanistes caeruleus*	4	8	4	
Carrion crow	*Corvus corone*	2	2	9	2
Chaffinch	*Fringilla coelebs*	4 calling	2 calling	6	2 singing & 15 foraging
Coal tit	*Periparus ater*	2 calling		1 calling	1 calling
Common blackbird	*Turdus merula*	10	12	2 singing & 8 foraging	5 singing & 10 calling & foraging
Common bullfinch*	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	3 calling	3 calling	1 singing & 1	
Common buzzard	*Buteo buteo*		1 calling in flight		1 calling in flight
Common chiffchaff	*Phylloscopus collybita*			1 singing	1 singing
Common kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus*	1	1		
Common linnet	*Carduelis cannabina*	5		5 in flight	78
Common starling*	*Sturnus vulgaris*	23		4	10
Common wood pigeon	*Columba palumbus*		34	16	13
Eurasian collared dove	*Streptopelia decaocta*	5		1	5
Eurasian jackdaw	*Corvus monedula*	5			
Eurasian Jay	*Garrulus glanarius*	2	2	2	
Eurasian magpie	*Pica pica*	8 foraging	2	8	9
Eurasian nuthatch	*Sitta europaea*	1 calling	2 calling	2 calling	1 calling
Eurasian skylark*	*Alauda arvensis*		1 singing & 13 calling, loafing & foraging	2 singing & 2 calling	3 singing & 8 calling & foraging
Eurasian sparrowhawk	*Accipiter nisus*	1			
Eurasian treecreeper	*Certhia familiaris*				1
European goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis*	5	13	4	1 singing & 2 calling
European greenfinch	*Carduelis chloris*				2 calling
European robin	*Erithacus rubecula*	1 singing & 2 foraging	3 singing & 1 alarm calling	4 singing & 1 calling	7 singing
Great spotted woodpeck	*Dendrocopos major*			1 calling	1 calling
Great tit	*Parus major*	1 alarm calling & 1 foraging	4	4	1 singing & 3 calling
Grey heron	*Ardea cinerea*				1 flyover
Hedge accentor*	*Prunella modularis*	4	2 singing & 2 calling	3 singing & 3 alarming	7 singing & 2 calling
Herring gull	*Larus argentatus*				1 flyover
House sparrow*	*Passer domesticus*	16	3	20	8
Long-tailed tit	*Aegithalos caudatus*	15	8	10	14
Marsh tit	*Peocile palustris*		1 calling		
Meadow pipit	*Anthus pratensis*	2			2 calling
Mistle thrush	*Turdus viscivorus*	3	2 foraging	2 foraging	2 foraging
Pheasant	*Phasianus colchicus*	1			
Pied wagtail	*Motacilla alba*	1	3 foraging		4
Red legged partridge	*Alectoris rufa*		6	5	3
Song thrush*	*Turdus philomelos*	2	1	2 singing & 1 foraging	3 singing & 3 foraging
Winter wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes*	3	2 singing & 1 alarming	4 singing & 5 alarm calling	5 singing
Yellowhammer*	*Emberiza citrinella*	1	1	1	3 singing & 19 foraging

KEY

Amber text = Amber List

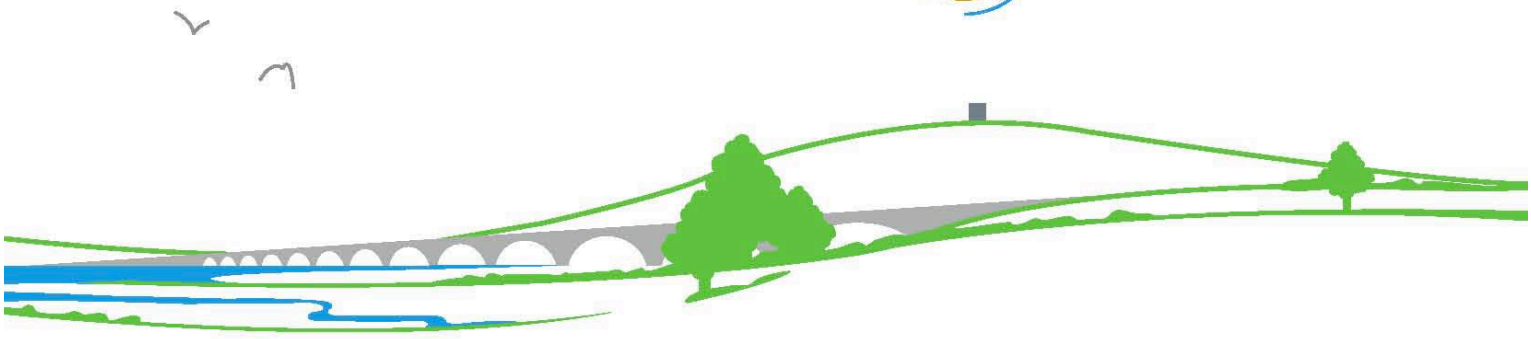
Red Text - Red List

Blue Text - Sch. 1

* = UKBAP

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