

**Land off Blackmoorfoot Road,
Huddersfield**

Breeding Bird Survey Report

**Vistry Yorkshire, Miller
Homes & Countryside
Partnerships
Limited**

September 2024

Ecus Ltd

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Executive Summary

Ecus Ltd was commissioned in March 2024 by Vistry Yorkshire, Miller Homes and Countryside Partnerships Limited to undertake breeding bird surveys for an area of land to the north of Blackmoorfoot Road, Huddersfield, centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 11370 14757 (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). The Site boundary is displayed in Figure 1.

The Site totals approximately 29 ha and habitats at the Site consisted of other neutral grassland and modified grassland, areas of lowland heathland, blackthorn scrub, mixed scrub, hazel scrub, bramble scrub and willow scrub, other broadleaved woodland types, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface, buildings and individual trees.

Breeding bird surveys have been undertaken at the Site following good practice guidelines (Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group, 2023) between March and July 2024. The surveys have recorded 43 bird species either directly using the Site or flying over the Site during the breeding bird season. This included six Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC5) Red listed species, 14 Amber listed species and 23 Green listed species. No WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 bird species were recorded on Site. Six of the bird species recorded on Site are also included as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Birds have mainly been recorded using habitats within the centre of the Site which are largely due to be lost following development. All species were recorded in low numbers at the Site, and similar habitats are available in the local area surrounding the Site.

Overall, impacts as a result of the proposed development are of site level importance to breeding birds and it is anticipated that the proposed mitigation and compensation measures including protection of retained habitats, clearance of vegetation outside of the nesting bird season (i.e. undertaken between September and February), creation of new habitats including grassland, scrub and trees as part of detailed soft landscaping proposals, and long-term nesting provision across 25% of new residential properties will provide appropriate compensation and mitigation for breeding birds at the Site post-development.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Ecus Ltd was commissioned in March 2024 by Vistry Yorkshire, Miller Homes and Countryside Partnerships Limited to undertake breeding bird surveys for an area of land to the north of Blackmoorfoot Road, Huddersfield, centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 11370 14757 (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). The Site boundary is displayed in Figure 1.
- 1.1.2 The Site totals approximately 29 ha and habitats at the Site consisted of other neutral grassland and modified grassland, areas of lowland heathland, blackthorn scrub, mixed scrub, hazel scrub, bramble scrub and willow scrub, other broadleaved woodland types, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface, buildings and individual trees.
- 1.1.3 The breeding bird surveys were recommended following a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) undertaken at the Site by Ecus (*'Land off Blackmoorfoot Road, Huddersfield – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal'*, Reference: 20899 V1.0, Dated August 2023) which identified that the Site provided suitable habitats for a diversity of breeding birds.
- 1.1.4 The red line boundary and proposals for the Site are taken from the nineteen47 *'Land Use Plan'* drawing (drawing reference: n2214-413A, dated August 2023) which details the development of 700 residential properties, a care home and local centre along with associated access and landscaping. Some areas of existing woodland, heathland and individual trees will be retained following development.
- 1.1.5 This report details the findings of breeding bird surveys undertaken between March and July 2024. Methodologies employed during the surveys are described in full, along with survey findings, evaluation and assessment. The requirement for any further survey and recommendations for mitigation and compensation measures are also provided.

2. Methodology

2.1 Legislation and Conservation Status

European Legislation

2.1.1 A total of 194 bird species and sub-species are listed under Annex I of the European Union (EU) Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (also known as the Birds Directive). Under the Birds Directive EU Member States must conserve these species' most suitable territories in number and size by designating sites as Special Protection Areas (SPA). This is for the survival of these species and all migratory bird species.

UK Legislation

2.1.2 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) while a nest is in use or occupied. The nesting bird season is typically considered to fall between March and August (inclusive). At least 79 bird species are listed under Part I of Schedule 1 of the Act and these species receive additional protection against disturbance whilst occupying a nest site.

2.1.3 A total of 49 bird species are listed as species of principal importance on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Under the Act, these species are of principal importance for the purposes of conserving biodiversity and the Secretary of State must take steps or promote others to further the conservation of living organisms within this list. A total of 31 bird species are also listed as species of principal importance in the Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

Birds of Conservation Concern

2.1.4 In 2021 a re-assessment of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC5) was published by the BTO, RSPB, UK Government and others (Stanbury *et al.* 2021), which assigned bird species to one of three conservation status lists (Red, Amber or Green). These lists are based on standardised assessment criteria, describing the level of conservation threat to each species. In addition, some species have no BoCC5 status which applies to species which are not native to the UK and have no specific UK conservation status.

2.1.5 "Red" is the highest conservation priority, with species needing urgent action due to either a historical decline in breeding population, severe (>50%) decline in breeding or non-breeding population, or severe decline in breeding range over 50 years or more. "Amber" is the second most critical group, with species qualifying for this status as a result of either recovery from red list criterion, being classed as rare breeders in the UK, moderate (>25%) decline in breeding or non-breeding population, moderate decline in breeding range over 25 years or more, or where the UK

holds over 20% of the European population of either a breeding or wintering population of a species. These categories are followed by “Green”, indicating that the species are currently relatively unthreatened.

2.2 Breeding Bird Survey

2.2.1 Breeding bird surveys were undertaken following the methodology outlined by the Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group (2023). These were undertaken by Senior Ecologist Katie Smith BSc (Hons) ACIEEM and Saffra Wright BSc (Hons), MSc, CEnv, MCIEEM who are both experienced ornithologists.

2.2.2 A total of six visits were undertaken between late March and early July 2024, including five morning visits and one evening visit. The morning visits started between half an hour before sunrise and approximately an hour after sunrise and were finished by mid-morning. The evening visit started approximately two hours before sunset and finished one hour after sunset. Surveys were carried out in good weather conditions, avoiding heavy rain, strong winds and avoiding any other scenarios where visibility/detection was negatively affected. The dates and weather conditions during the breeding bird surveys are detailed in Table 1 below.

2.2.3 A survey transect was walked at a slow pace ensuring full coverage of the Site to a minimum distance of 50 m and including stopping points at priority habitat/features (e.g. scrub/hedgerows/woodland) where appropriate. Land off-Site but immediately surrounding the Site was also surveyed during the transect. The transect route was alternated between survey visits and was either walked in a clockwise or anticlockwise direction to ensure coverage of the Site at different times of the morning.

2.2.4 All species encountered were recorded onto a field map. The locations, species and behaviour of priority bird species (those listed within Section 2.1) in particular were mapped and recorded using the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) standard species codes (Appendix 1) and activity/breeding status codes (Appendix 2). Observations of breeding activity such as singing, territorial behaviour, and carrying food or nest material were recorded.

Table 1. Survey Details

Survey	Date	Time	Surveyor	Start-End Weather
Visit 1	27/03/2024	05:50 hrs – 08:50 hrs Sunrise: 05:52 hrs	Katie Smith and Toby Haenfling	4-6°C, 100-60% cloud cover, Beaufort Scale (BS) 0-2 wind speed dry throughout,

Survey	Date	Time	Surveyor	Start-End Weather
Visit 2	16/04/2024	06:10 hrs – 10:00 hrs Sunrise: 06:04 hrs	Katie Smith	6-9°C, 10-50% cloud cover, BS 3-4 wind speed, dry throughout.
Visit 3	16/05/2024	04:55 hrs – 0800 hrs Sunrise: 05:04 hrs	Katie Smith	13-12°C, 100% cloud cover, BS 1 wind speed, dry (misty throughout).
Visit 4	31/05/2024	04:44 hrs – 08:30 hrs Sunrise: 04:45 hrs	Katie Smith	10-12°C, 20-90% cloud cover, BS 0-2 wind speed, dry.
Visit 5	20/06/2024	19:35 hrs – 22:41 hrs Sunset: 21:41 hrs	Katie Smith and Arleya Baxter	21-16°C, 40% cloud cover, BS 1-0 wind speed, dry.
Visit 6	05/07/2024	06:06 hrs – 08:22 hrs Sunrise: 04:45 hrs	Saffra Wright and Toby Haenfling	11-13°C, 70-30% cloud cover, BS 1-0 wind speed, mostly dry throughout (light drizzle at start).

2.3 Assessment

- 2.3.1 Bird behaviour was recorded during the breeding bird surveys and each behaviour type was assigned as evidence of confirmed, probable, possible or non-breeding status of each species within the Site. This was categorised in accordance with the BTO Breeding Status Codes which are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 2.3.2 The number of breeding territories for any given species was estimated based on the number of observations of birds exhibiting any of the confirmed, probable or possible breeding behaviours as listed in the BTO Breeding Status Codes. This was estimated for behaviour recorded per survey visit and collectively across all six visits.
- 2.3.3 The value of the Site and sensitivity of bird species present within the Site was determined based on the guidance provided in '*Guidelines on Ecological Impact Assessment*' (CIEEM, 2018). Individual ecological receptors (i.e. breeding birds and the habitats which support these) that could

be affected by the proposed development were assigned levels of importance for nature conservation. The highest level is international, then decreasing in order of importance through national, regional, county, local, and site level (within the zone of influence).

2.4 Survey Limitations

2.4.1 House sparrows *Passer domesticus* were recorded calling from within hedgerows and scrub during the surveys and it was not always possible to count an exact number of house sparrows as this species often perches within dense scrub or shrubs and are difficult to count. The actual number of birds was recorded however this may not be an exact count where birds may have been perched further within the vegetation and out of sight.

3. Results and Evaluation

3.1 Site Description

3.1.1 The Site is an old factory complex, including surrounding land, and totals approximately 45 ha. The interior old factory area of the Site comprised a mosaic of habitats including other neutral grassland and modified grassland, areas of heathland, mixed scrub, blackthorn scrub, hazel scrub, bramble scrub and willow scrub, woodland, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface, buildings and individual trees. Surrounding the old factory grassland fields were present on the east and west of the Site.

3.1.2 The areas adjacent to the Site to the north, west and south comprise open fields and arable land as well as a golf course. Residential housing and industrial development border the Site to the east. The Site is located to the southwest of Huddersfield although the wider area is semi-rural, with open fields, woodland and former quarries to the north, Crosland Heath Golf Club to the west, Wellfield Quarry and Crosland Moor Airfield to the south-west and the built environs of Crosland Moor to the east.

3.2 Breeding Bird Survey Findings

3.2.1 A total of 43 different bird species were recorded during the breeding bird surveys. Figures 2.1 to 2.6 illustrate the survey results from each of the six visits, with a BTO species code key provided in Appendix 1 and a detailed list of species recorded provided in Appendix 3.

3.2.2 Six Red listed species, 14 Amber listed species and 23 Green listed species were recorded on Site across the six survey visits. No WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 bird species were recorded on Site. Six of the bird species recorded on Site are included as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

3.2.3 A list of the species recorded during each of the breeding bird survey visits is provided in Appendix 3 which also details the conservation status of each species recorded, whether the species are confirmed, probable, possible or non-breeding birds within the Site and the number of estimated territories of each species based on the findings of the surveys.

WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 Bird Species

3.2.4 No WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 bird species were recorded during the breeding bird surveys.

BoCC5 Red Listed Species

3.2.5 Six Red listed species were recorded during the surveys, which are detailed below.

House Sparrow

3.2.6 House sparrow *Passer domesticus* was recorded at the Site during one of the six surveys and was a possible breeding bird at the Site based on the observation of the species in suitable nesting habitat in the breeding season. Three possible territories were identified for this species. During visit 2, five house sparrows were recorded along the eastern boundary of the Site adjacent to residential housing. A further two were recorded within scrub towards the centre of the Site. The scrub, hedgerows, and buildings around the Site have suitability for nesting house sparrow.

Linnet

3.2.7 Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* was recorded at the Site during three of the six surveys and was a probable breeding bird at the Site based on the observation of a breeding pair in suitable nesting habitat in the breeding season. Two possible territories were identified for this species. During visit two, two individuals were recorded within scrub at the northern boundary of the Site, one singing and one alarm-calling. Another individual was recorded flying overhead alarm-calling in the centre of the Site. On visit four, an individual was recorded flying overhead in the centre of the Site and a pair were recorded within the fields to the east of the Site. On visit five, two individuals were recorded alarm-calling in the same location and were considered likely to have been the same pair. The scrub around the Site is has suitability for nesting linnet.

Starling

3.2.8 Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* was recorded at the Site during all six visits with nine possible territories identified and was a confirmed breeding bird at the Site based on the direct observation of nests. Starlings were recorded calling and singing across the Site especially concentrated around buildings in the centre of the Site and along the treeline between the old factory and the fields to the west of the Site. On visit three, three nests were identified within two different buildings. Additionally, two pairs were recorded carrying food to nests around the centre of the Site. The building, scrub and treelines around the Site have suitability for nesting starling.

Greenfinch

3.2.9 Greenfinch *Chloris chloris* was recorded at the Site during two of the six visits and was a possible breeding bird at the Site based on the observation of the species in suitable nesting habitat in the breeding season. Three possible territories were identified for this species. During visit three two individuals were recorded with one recorded within scrub in the centre of the Site and the other recorded flying overhead alarm-calling towards the northern boundary of the Site. During visit five, six individuals were recorded with four individuals observed flying overhead in the centre of the Site. Additionally, one individual was observed flying overhead alarm-calling within scrub to the south of the Site and another individual singing within the treeline at the western boundary of the

Site. The scrub, treelines and hedgerows across the Site have suitability for nesting greenfinch.

House Martin

3.2.10 A single house martin *Delichon urbica* was recorded flying adjacent to the Site at the northwestern boundary during visit two. This species was not recorded directly using Site habitats. As such it is considered that house martin is a non-breeding bird at the Site. However, as suitable nesting habitat is present at the Site in the form of buildings, it is possible that house martin may nest at the Site in the future.

Swift

3.2.11 Two swifts *Apus apus* were recorded flying over the Site with one on both visit five and six. This species was not recorded directly using Site habitats. As such it is considered that swift is a non-breeding bird at the Site. However, as suitable nesting habitat is present at the Site in the form of buildings, it is possible that swift may nest at the Site in the future.

BoCC5 Amber Listed Species

3.2.12 A total of 14 Amber listed species were recorded during the surveys. Detailed information for each Amber listed species is provided in Appendix 3 and species recorded at the Site are summarised below based on whether they were confirmed, probable, possible or non-breeding birds at the Site based on the survey findings.

Confirmed Breeding Birds

3.2.13 Six Amber listed bird species recorded during the surveys were confirmed breeding species at the Site based on survey findings. This included bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, dunnock *Prunella modularis*, song thrush *Turdus philomelos*, common whitethroat *Sylvia communis*, meadow pipit *Anthus pratensis* and woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*. For song thrush, common whitethroat and meadow pipit this was based on the observation of adults carrying food to nests alongside singing males in suitable habitat within the breeding season. An estimated three, two and one territories were identified in the Site for song thrush, common whitethroat and meadow pipit respectively. For bullfinch, dunnock and woodpigeon this was based on the observation of recently fledged young within the Site. Additionally on visit two a pair of bullfinches were recorded within suitable nesting habitat to the north of the Site. Incidental observations of woodpigeon nests with young have also been recorded during other ecological surveys at the Site. For bullfinch, dunnock and woodpigeon and estimated two, four, and 29 territories respectively were identified within the Site. The scrub, tree and hedgerow habitats on Site provide suitable breeding habitat for these species.

Probable Breeding Birds

3.2.14 Three Amber listed bird species recorded during the surveys were probable breeding bird species

at the Site based on survey findings. This was stock dove *Columba oenas*, willow warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* and wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*. For stock dove this was based on the observation, during visit two, of a pair in suitable breeding habitat within the breeding season. Two estimated territories were identified in the Site for stock dove. For willow warbler and wren this was based on the maintenance of territories across the Site for at least five days. An estimated eight territories were identified for willow warbler in the Site and nine for wren. The scrub, tree and hedgerow habitats on Site provide suitable breeding habitat for these species.

Non-breeding Birds

3.2.15 Five Amber listed bird species recorded during the surveys were considered to be non-breeding birds at the Site based on survey findings. This included oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* and lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*. These species were all recorded flying over the Site and not directly using Site habitats. Therefore, it is considered unlikely for these species to be nesting at the Site. However, some suitable nesting habitat is present in the Site for all these species excluding lesser black-backed gull and so it is possible that these species may nest at the Site in future.

BoCC5 Green Listed Species

3.2.16 A total of 23 Green listed species were recorded during the surveys. Detailed information for each Green listed species is provided in Appendix 3 and species recorded at the Site are summarised below based on whether they were confirmed, probable, possible or non-breeding birds at the Site based on the survey findings.

Confirmed Breeding Birds

3.2.17 Eight Green listed bird species recorded during the surveys were confirmed breeding bird species within the Site. This included blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*, blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, carrion crow *Corvus corone*, goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*, great tit *Parus major*, magpie *Pica pica*, robin *Erithacus rubecula* and swallow *Hirundo rustica*. For blackcap, carrion crow, goldfinch, robin and swallow this was based on the observation of recently fledged young in the Site. Additionally carrion crows were observed carrying food and nesting material around the Site on multiple occasions. A swallow nest was also identified within a building in the centre of the Site. Blue tit and great tit nests were also observed around the central area of the Site. A magpie was observed carrying food to a nest in the Site and therefore was also considered to be a confirmed breeding bird at the Site. The trees, hedgerows and scrub at the Site provide suitable nesting habitats for these species.

Probable Breeding Birds

3.2.18 Five green listed bird species recorded during the surveys were probable breeding bird species at

the Site based on survey findings. This included blackbird *Turdus merula*, chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*, chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*, long-tailed tit *Aegithalos caudatus* and jackdaw *Corvus monedula*. For blackbird and chiffchaff this was based on the observation of males singing in suitable breeding habitat and territories maintained for more than five days. An estimated nine blackbird territories were identified in the Site as well as an estimated five chiffchaff territories. Additionally, a pair of chaffinch and family groups of long-tailed tit were observed in suitable breeding habitat at the Site. Jackdaw were also observed carrying nesting material around the centre of the Site on multiple occasions. The trees, hedgerows and scrub at the Site provide suitable nesting habitats for these species.

Possible Breeding Birds

3.2.19 Seven Green listed bird species recorded during the surveys were possible breeding birds at the Site based on observations during the surveys. This included coal tit *Periparus ater*, collared dove *Streptopelia decaocto*, garden warbler *Sylvia borin*, goldcrest *Regulus regulus*, jay *Garrulus glandarius*, pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*, pied wagtail *Motacilla alba* and great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*. For all species this was based on the observation of either a singing male present in suitable nesting habitat in the breeding season, or the species being only observed in suitable nesting habitat in the breeding season. The trees, hedgerows and scrub, and for pheasant, grassland fields at the Site provide suitable nesting habitats for these species.

Non-breeding Birds

3.2.20 Two Green listed bird species recorded during the surveys were considered to be non-breeding birds at the Site. This included grey heron *Ardea cinerea* and common buzzard *Buteo buteo*. These species were recorded flying over the Site on a single occasion each and were not directly using habitats within the Site. Common buzzard may use the fields to the west of the Site for foraging although no breeding behaviour was recorded. The Site habitats are largely unsuitable for breeding grey heron and common buzzard.

Species of Principal Importance

3.2.21 A total of six birds recorded during the surveys are listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. These include three bird species which are also BoCC5 Red listed species (house sparrow, linnet and starling) and three bird species which are also BoCC5 Amber listed species (bullfinch, dunnoek and song thrush). All six species are discussed above where they are BoCC5 Red or Amber listed species respectively. All of these species excluding dunnoek are also listed within the Kirklees BAP as species of principal importance.

4. Assessment and Mitigation

4.1 Proposals

- 4.1.1 Proposals at the Site are taken from the nineteen47 'Land Use Plan' (drawing reference: n2214-413A, dated August 2023) which involve the development of 700 residential properties, a care home and local centre along with associated access and landscaping.
- 4.1.2 It is understood that approximately 1.5 ha of existing woodland habitat at the northern extent, which also includes an area of lowland heathland, and southern extents of the Site, and some of the existing trees along the western and eastern boundaries of the Site, will be retained. All other habitats will be lost as part of the development.

4.2 Assessment

WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 Bird Species

- 4.2.1 Based on the findings of the breeding bird surveys, no WCA 1981 (as amended) bird species have been identified as breeding on Site. As such WCA 1981 (as amended) bird species are not considered to be present at the Site during the breeding season therefore no impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposals to WCA 1981 (as amended) species.

BoCC5 Red and Amber Listed Species

- 4.2.2 Based on the findings of the breeding bird surveys, of the six Red listed bird species recorded during the surveys, one species is a confirmed breeding bird at the Site (starling), one species is a probable breeding bird (linnet) at the Site, two species are possible breeding birds (house sparrow and greenfinch) at the Site and two Red listed species have not been recorded as breeding birds at the Site (house martin and swift). Starling has been recorded as a confirmed breeding bird at the Site and loss of buildings as well as scrub habitats will result in loss of suitable nesting habitat for this species at the Site. However, as up to nine estimated territories have been recorded at the Site and suitable habitat is present in the wider area of the Site, habitat changes and impacts because of the proposed development are of no greater than site level importance to breeding starling.
- 4.2.3 Linnet has been recorded as a probable breeding bird at the Site and loss of scrub habitats will result in loss of suitable nesting habitat for this species at the Site. However, as one possible territory was identified at the Site and suitable habitat is present in the wider area of the Site, habitat changes and impacts because of the proposed development are of no greater than site level importance to breeding linnet.
- 4.2.4 House sparrow and greenfinch have been recorded as possible breeding birds at the Site and loss

of scrub, hedgerow and building habitats will result in loss of suitable nesting habitat for these species at the Site. However, as three possible territories for each species were identified at the Site and suitable habitat is present in the wider area of the Site, habitat changes and impacts because of the proposed development are of no greater than site level importance to breeding house sparrow and greenfinch.

4.2.5 House martin and swift have been recorded as likely non-breeding birds at the Site. However, while these species were not recorded directly using Site habitats, suitable nesting habitat is present in the Site in the form of buildings. Therefore, it is possible that these species may breed at the Site in future. Due to these species being recorded in low numbers and the availability of similar habitat in surrounding residential areas the Site is of no higher than site level importance for breeding house martin and swift.

4.2.6 Based on the findings of the breeding bird surveys, of the 14 Amber listed bird species recorded during the surveys, six species are confirmed breeding birds at the Site (bullfinch, dunnock, song thrush, common whitethroat, meadow pipit and woodpigeon), three are probable breeding birds at the Site (stock dove, willow warbler and wren) and five have not been recorded as breeding birds at the Site (oystercatcher, kestrel, mallard, sparrowhawk and lesser black-backed gull). While several Amber listed species were recorded as likely non-breeding species at the Site, suitable breeding habitat was present for all of these excluding lesser black-backed gull. Therefore, it is possible that these species may nest at the Site in the future. Suitable nesting habitat was also present in the Site for all other Amber listed species in the form of scrub, tree and hedgerow habitats. However, due to the availability of suitable habitat in the surrounding area the Site and impacts from the proposed development are considered to be of site level importance for all recorded Amber listed species excluding lesser black-back gull for which the Site is considered to be of negligible importance for breeding.

BoCC5 Green Listed Species

4.2.7 21 Green listed species were recorded as confirmed, probable or possible breeding birds at the Site. These were generally recorded in low numbers and were typically associated with scrub, tree and hedgerow habitats in the centre of the Site. Due to the availability of similar habitat in the surrounding area impacts as a result of the proposed development are of no greater than site level importance to Green listed species which may be breeding at the Site.

4.3 Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures

Protection of Existing and Retained Ecological Features

4.3.1 The habitats which support a greater assemblage of breeding birds at the Site have been identified as being the woodlands, scrub, and tree lines in the centre, the north and the south of the Site.

Most of these habitats on Site will be lost following development. Ecus have recommended that more of these habitats are ideally retained and protected, however it is understood that this will not be possible at this stage in the planning process due to several other development considerations. It is recommended that any off-site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) delivery includes a range of opportunities for breeding birds wherever possible (e.g. tree planting, hedgerow /scrub /woodland creation/enhancement).

- 4.3.2 Small areas of woodland and scrub habitat to the north and south of the Site will be retained following development which should be protected from damage during the construction phase. This may be through the use of fencing to create Biodiversity Protection Zones (BPZ). This will ensure continued presence and functionality of these habitats for birds and other species during the construction phase of the development and also post-development.

Nesting Bird Checks

- 4.3.3 To minimise the risk of committing an offence in relation to nesting birds, it is recommended that clearance of hedgerows, scrub, treelines and grassland fields (where grass is tall depending on the time of year) and demolition of buildings is programmed to be undertaken between September and February, i.e. to avoid the bird breeding season. If this is not possible, then nesting bird checks (to be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist) will be required with vegetation removal or ground clearance completed within the subsequent 24-hour period (providing that no active nests are identified). Repeat visits will be required if vegetation removal is not completed within the 24-hour timeframe after go ahead has been confirmed.
- 4.3.4 If an active nest is found during a nesting bird check, there will be a requirement to establish an exclusion zone around the nest (in consultation with the ecologist) which should be maintained until it has been demonstrated that all fledglings have left the nest, and the nest is no longer active. This may require monitoring by an ecologist for periods of at least up to a month dependent on nesting stage.

Long-term Compensation and Enhancement Measures

Habitat Creation

- 4.3.5 Soft landscaping proposals for the proposed development include creation of grassland, scattered trees and hedgerows within areas of. These will provide some long-term suitable nesting and foraging habitat for a range of bird species including those recorded on-Site during the breeding bird surveys. It is considered that the soft landscaping will form appropriate long-term compensation for breeding birds at the Site.

Nesting Provision

- 4.3.6 It is recommended that bird nesting provision is included within the development. Suitable provision should include boxes incorporated within at least 25% of the newly built properties. Integrated boxes are preferred options as they are robust and are less susceptible to damage however external boxes of a woodcrete material are also considered suitable.
- 4.3.7 Recommendations include boxes suitable for swifts such as the '*Ibstock Eco-habitat for Swifts*'. These are suitable for swifts but can also be used by other bird species such as house sparrow. The bird boxes should be placed at a minimum height of 3 m in a number of locations facing different aspects to maximise the chances of occupation, although full south aspects which receive full sun all day during the summer months present a risk of overheating and should therefore be avoided.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 Breeding bird surveys have been undertaken at the Site following good practice guidelines between March and July 2024. The surveys have recorded 43 bird species either directly using the Site or flying over the Site. Birds have mainly been recorded using habitats in the centre of the Site which are largely due to be lost as part of the development proposals. Ecus have recommended that more of these habitats are ideally retained and protected, however it is understood that this will not be possible at this stage in the planning process due to several other development considerations. It is recommended that any off-site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) delivery includes a range of opportunities for breeding birds wherever possible (e.g. tree planting, hedgerow /scrub /woodland creation/enhancement).
- 4.4.2 Overall, impacts as a result of the proposed development are of site level importance to breeding birds and it is anticipated that the proposed mitigation and compensation measures including protection of retained habitats, creation of new habitats as part of detailed soft landscaping proposals, and long-term nesting provision will provide appropriate compensation and mitigation for breeding birds at the Site post-development.

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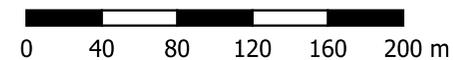
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Figure 1. Site Boundary and Breeding Bird Survey Transect



Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Transect route (part 1)
-  Transect route (part 2)



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Figure 1
Site boundary and transect route

Rev	Date	Drawn by	Checked by	Revision Comments
A	19.08.2024	TH	SW	XXX
Site centred on:		SE 11370 14757		

Figure 2.1 – 2.6. Breeding Bird Survey Findings (Visits 1 – 6)



Key

- Site Boundary
- Commute
- Different
- Call
- Alarm
- Song
- ♀ Pair
- ♂ Male
- ♀ Female bird
- Confirmed breeding (Nest)



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Figure 2.3
Survey Findings - Visit 3 (16.05.2024)

Rev	Date	Drawn by	Checked by	Revision Comments
A	19.08.2024	TH	SW	XXX
Site centred on:		SE 11370 14757		

Appendix 1. Key to Bird Species Recorded using BTO Species Codes

BTO Species Code	Common Name	Scientific Name
B.	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
BC	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
BT	Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
BF	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
C.	Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
CH	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
CC	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
CT	Coal tit	<i>Parus ater</i>
CD	Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
BZ	Common buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
WH	Common whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
D.	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
GW	Garden warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
GC	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
GO	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
GS	Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
GT	Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>
GR	Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
H.	Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
HM	House martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
HS	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
JD	Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
J.	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
K.	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
LB	Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
LI	Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
LT	Long tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
MG	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
MA	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
MP	Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
OC	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
PH	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
PW	Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
R.	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
ST	Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
SH	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
SG	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
SD	Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
SL	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
SI	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
WW	Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
WP	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
WR	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>

Appendix 2. BTO Breeding Status Codes

Code	Breeding Status
Non-Breeding	
F	Flying over
M	Species observed but suspected to be still on migration
U	Species observed but suspected to be summering non-breeder
Possible Breeder	
H	Species observed in breeding season in suitable nesting habitat
S	Singing male present (or breeding calls heard) in breeding season in suitable breeding habitat
Probable Breeding	
P	Pair observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season
T	Permanent territory presumed through registration of territorial behaviour (song etc) on at least two different days a week or more part at the same place or many individuals on one day
D	Courtship and display (judged to be in or near potential breeding habitat; be cautious with wildfowl)
N	Visiting probable nest site
A	Agitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults, suggesting probable presence of nest or young nearby
I	Brood patch on adult examined in the hand, suggesting incubation
B	Nest building or excavating nest-hole
Confirmed Breeding	
DD	Distraction-display or injury feigning
UN	Used nest or eggshells found (occupied or laid within period of survey)
FL	Recently fledged young
ON	Adults entering or leaving nest-site in circumstances indicating occupied nest (including high nests or nest holes, the contents of which cannot be seen) or adults seen incubating
FF	Adult carrying faecal sac or food for young
NE	Nest containing eggs
NY	Nest with young seen or heard

Appendix 3. Bird Species Recorded During the Breeding Bird Survey – Conservation Status & Breeding Status

Common Name	Scientific Name	WCA 1981, NERC s.41 & BoCC 5 Conservation Status	No. of Individuals Recorded per Survey						Breeding Status on Site based on survey results	Estimated No. of Territories (where breeding possible)	Justification/BTO Breeding Status Code
			V1 27.03.2024	V2 16.04.2024	V3 16.05.2024	V4 31.05.2024	V5 20.06.2024	V6 05.07.2023			
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Red, NERC S41	0	7	0	0	0	0	Possible	3	H
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Red, NERC S41	0	3	0	3	2	0	Probable	1	P
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red, NERC S41	15	8	14	19	1	4	Confirmed	9	NY
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Red	0	0	2	0	6	0	Possible	3	H
House martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Red	0	1	0	0	0	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Red	0	0	0	1	1	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber, NERC S41	1	4	4	3	2	3	Confirmed	2	FL
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber, NERC S41	8	3	0	6	3	6	Confirmed	4	FL
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Amber, NERC S41	3	1	2	2	5	6	Confirmed	3	FF
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Amber	0	0	0	0	4	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Common whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Amber	0	0	3	5	4	2	Confirmed	2	FF
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber	0	0	0	2	1	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber	2	0	0	0	0	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber	2	1	1	0	2	0	Confirmed	1	FF
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Amber	0	1	0	0	0	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber	3	2	4	3	1	0	Probable	2	P
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Amber	0	13	11	16	5	1	Probable	8	T
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Amber	58	57	47	23	28	34	Confirmed	29	FL
Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Amber	0	0	0	0	0	1	Non-breeding	0	F
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Amber	8	18	17	16	8	11	Probable	9	T
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Green	10	12	18	18	14	7	Probable	9	T
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Green	0	7	5	8	4	6	Confirmed	4	FL
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Green	9	19	12	12	1	4	Confirmed	9	NY
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	Green	11	11	4	4	2	4	Confirmed	5	FL/FF
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Green	0	2	3	0	1	0	Probable	1	P
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Green	11	11	6	8	5	3	Probable	5	T
Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	Green	0	1	0	0	0	2	Possible	1	H/S
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Green	0	0	2	0	0	0	Possible	1	H
Common buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Green	1	0	0	0	0	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Garden warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	Green	0	0	3	1	2	0	Possible	1	S
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Green	1	1	1	0	0	0	Possible	1	S
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Green	4	11	18	14	8	4	Confirmed	9	FL
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Green	1	0	0	0	0	0	Possible	1	S
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	Green	11	9	4	5	0	0	Confirmed	5	NY
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Green	0	1	0	0	0	0	Non-breeding	0	F
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Green	4	4	7	5	4	0	Probable	3	B
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Green	3	4	0	0	7	2	Possible	3	H
Long tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	Green	3	2	5	0	4	8	Probable	4	P
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Green	10	9	8	11	4	7	Confirmed	5	FF
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Green	1	1	0	2	0	1	Possible	1	H
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Green	3	2	1	2	1	0	Possible	2	H
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Green	10	9	12	12	1	1	Confirmed	6	FL
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Green	0	0	0	6	7	2	Confirmed	3	NY/FL

