

Leak Hall Road, Denby Dale

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



HABITAT WORKS

March 2026



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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

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Executive Summary

Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned by Castlehill Damage Restoration LTD to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land off Leak Hall Road, Denby Dale, Huddersfield, HD8 8RY (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 23001 08669), hereafter referred to as 'the Site' and as displayed in Figure 1.

The PEA was required to inform proposals for the construction of a residential building with associated landscaping and parking. These proposals are detailed within the Castlehill Damage Restoration LTD '*Proposed Housing Development*' (DWG No. 694-A02, dated 07/2025).

Recommendations are made regarding impacts of the proposed development through habitat losses/potential gains on the Site post-development and the retention and protection of key ecological features. These include:

- Implementation of pollution prevention measures throughout the works;
- Implementation of Best Practice Measures (BPM) for:
 - Common amphibians,
 - Badgers,
 - Reptiles,
- Consideration of enhancement opportunities for local species, including:
 - Installation of bat and bird boxes,
 - Installation of bee bricks

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned by Castlehill Damage Restoration LTD to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land off Leak Hall Road, Denby Dale, Huddersfield, HD8 8RY (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 23001 08669), hereafter referred to as 'the Site' and as displayed in Figure 1.
- 1.1.2 The PEA was required to inform proposals for the construction of a residential building with associated landscaping and parking. These proposals are detailed within the Castlehill Damage Restoration LTD '*Proposed Housing Development*' (DWG No. 694-A02, dated 07/2025).
- 1.1.3 This report details the findings of a PEA, including a data consultation and UK Habitat Classification survey undertaken in February 2026. Methodologies employed during the surveys are described along with the survey findings, evaluation, assessment and recommendations for any further survey work and/or mitigation/enhancement as required.
- 1.1.4 Recommendations are made regarding impacts of the proposed development through habitat losses/potential gains on the Site post-development including the retention and protection of key ecological features. The provision of species-specific enhancements are outlined where appropriate.

2. Methodology

2.1 Data Consultation

- 2.1.1 Data consultation was undertaken by Habitat Works with the local records centre; West Yorkshire Ecological Service (WYES) and Barnsley Biological Records Centre (BBRC) in February 2026 as part of the ecological appraisal process, to determine whether any ecological features of note had previously been recorded within 2 km of the Site. Data requested included:
- Records of protected species;
 - Records of national or local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species;
 - Details of any statutory sites of ecological interest e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) etc.; and,
 - Details of any non-statutory sites of ecological interest e.g. Local Wildlife Site (LWS).
- 2.1.2 The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (<http://www.magic.defra.gov.uk>) was consulted in February 2026 for information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites of conservation interest, and for the presence of European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) and bats within 2 km of the Site. MAGIC was also used to search for information relating to GCN Class Survey Licence Returns and Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017- 2019 within 500 m of the Site.
- 2.1.3 Information returned from MAGIC, WYES and BBRC with relevant assessments will be incorporated into the report as appropriate. All records will be reviewed, however particular interest will be placed on records within the past 10 years, with records prior to these considered historic.

2.2 Ecological Walkover Survey

- 2.2.1 An ecological walkover survey was undertaken 27th February 2026 by Consultant Ecologist Ashleigh Brentnall BSc (Hons) ACIEEM following best practice guidelines (UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab) (UKHab Working Group (UKHCWG) 2018)). This survey method aims to define habitats and vegetation types present and provide an indication of their relative abundance. This survey method aims to characterise habitats and communities present and is not intended to provide a complete list of all species occurring across the Site.
- 2.2.2 The UKHab survey covered land within the Site (as illustrated by the red line site boundary in Figure 1).
- 2.2.3 Habitats and vegetation types present inside the Site were recorded onto a field map and notable, rare or scarce plant species, including other features of ecological interest, were highlighted using Target Notes (TN). The current management of habitats and associated features were noted and assigned UKHab secondary codes where relevant.
- 2.2.4 Evidence of protected species or species of nature conservation importance were recorded where present at the time of survey. Habitats or species present that are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 or the Local BAP were also noted.
- 2.2.5 Survey findings are detailed in Section 3 and annotated on Figure 1, Target Notes are provided in Appendix 1, while site photographs are provided in Appendix 2.
- 2.2.6 Plant species recorded were classified according to the subjective method of DAFOR abundance ratings. The standardised terms are as follows:

- D Dominant
- A Abundant
- F Frequent
- O Occasional
- R Rare

2.3 Protected and Key Species

- 2.3.1 Any evidence of protected species or groups encountered during the survey was recorded. This included observations of field signs and an assessment of the suitability of the habitats present to support protected species. For full details of legislation relating to all habitats and species discussed within this report visit <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>.

Amphibians

- 2.3.2 The Site was assessed for its potential to support amphibians, including a detailed GCN assessment. A desk-based search for ponds within 500 m of the Site, which are not separated by a significant barrier to amphibian dispersal, was made using 1:10,000 OS mapping. Habitats within the Site were assessed for their suitability to support amphibians during their terrestrial and aquatic stages where applicable.

Bats

- 2.3.8 Trees within the Site were subject to a ground-based assessment for their suitability to support roosting bats during the survey.
- 2.3.9 An individual structure may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats associated with it and it is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats due to their transient nature. Consequently, it is customary when undertaking such surveys to assign each feature to a defined category of roosting potential as follows: negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed (Collins, 2023).
- 2.3.10 Similar to structures, an individual tree may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats associated with it and it is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats during a single daytime

visit, given their highly transient natures. Consequently, it is customary when undertaking such surveys to assign each feature to a defined category of None, Further Assessment Required (FAR), Potential Roosting Feature – Individual (PRF – I) and Potential Roosting Feature – Multiple (PRF – M) (Collins, 2023).

- 2.3.11 The Site was also assessed for its suitability for foraging and commuting bats in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Birds

- 2.3.12 In 2021, a re-assessment of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) was published by Stanbury et al. (2021), which defined rare and threatened bird species on two lists (Red and Amber) describing the level of threat to each species of concern. “Red” is the highest conservation priority, with species needing urgent action through to “Green”, indicating that the species are relatively unthreatened.
- 2.3.13 Data consultation data was filtered for WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 bird species and those species protected under Annex 1 of the EU Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, also known as the Birds Directive. Priority species (NERC Act 2006, LBAP) were likewise highlighted and the UK Red List for birds, also known as the BoCC as described above, was also referred to.
- 2.3.14 During the Site survey any species of birds encountered were recorded. Habitats were assessed for their potential value to nesting, wintering and foraging birds.

Invertebrates

- 2.3.15 The habitats present on the Site were assessed for their suitability to support invertebrates and incidental observations of invertebrates at and adjacent to the Site were noted.

Reptiles

- 2.3.16 The habitats present on Site were assessed for their suitability to support reptiles, particularly with reference to their connectivity with other areas of suitable habitat within the wider landscape.

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

- 2.3.17 A desk-based search for watercourses on or within 30 m of the Site, which are not separated by a significant barrier to dispersal, was undertaken using OS 1:10,000 mapping.
- 2.3.18 Where access was possible, watercourses were subsequently assessed for their suitability to support otter *Lutra lutra*, water vole *Arvicola amphibius* and white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*.

Other Key and Notable Species

- 2.3.19 Whilst on Site habitats were assessed for their potential to support any other nationally, locally scarce or notable species, with particular reference to LBAP species.

2.4 Invasive Species

- 2.4.1 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and/or The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (2019) were recorded and mapped as seen during the survey.

2.5 Assumptions and Limitations

- 2.5.1 In line with CIEEM guidance, this report is valid for a period of 24 months. In the event that works have not commenced by March 2028, an update assessment should be undertaken.
- 2.5.2 A UKHab survey is intended to provide a rapid assessment of habitats present within a site and is not

intended to replace detailed vegetation or targeted protected species surveys, where deemed necessary.

- 2.5.3 The survey was undertaken outside of the peak botanical season, meaning some species may not have been visibly present during the visit. However, due to the habitats present on the Site as well as the land use, it is considered unlikely that any significant species were missed.
- 2.5.4 A UKHab survey is intended to provide a rapid assessment of habitats present within a site and is not intended to replace detailed vegetation or targeted protected species surveys, where deemed necessary.

3. Findings and Evaluation

3.1 Site Description

- 3.1.1 The Site is located off Leak Hall Road, Denby Dale, Huddersfield and overall, the Site is dominated by modified grassland, as detailed in Figure 1.
- 3.1.2 The Site is located within the village of Denby Dale, with much of the immediate surrounding land comprising residential properties and associated gardens and hardstanding,
- 3.1.3 In the wider landscape, particularly to the north, is dominated by pastoral land with pockets of small deciduous woodland. Much of the field boundaries are dry-stone walls, however some mature hedgerows are present in the local landscape which provide connectivity across the landscape.

3.2 Designated Sites

- 3.2.1 No statutory designated sites were identified for locations within 2 km of the Site through a search of MAGIC.
- 3.2.2 WYES returned four non-statutory designated sites for locations within 2 km of the Site, all of which are Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).
- 3.2.3 BBRC returned no non-statutory designated sites for locations within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.2.4 Table 1 below details the designated sites within 2 km of the Site, with Figure 2 displaying their locations.

Table 1 - Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Designated Site	Description from Citation	Approx. Distance & Direction from Site
Non-Statutory		
Hob Royd Shrogg and Miry Graves Shrogg LWS	Two areas of plantation woodland sloping down towards a stream, Thorpe Dyke. Surrounding land use is mainly arable and semi-improved neutral grassland, with a quarried area to the south, some areas of scrub to the south and west and High Bridge Wood to the east. There are stone walls and fences along most of the boundaries. A public footpath runs along part of the southern boundary of the site, and there is a track north of the stream.	1.3 km northeast
Turpin Hill LWS	Turpin Hill is a single field which slopes down towards the A635 road on its southwest boundary. There is an arable field to the north of the site and scrub to the east and west. Stone walls run along the north and south boundaries, and fences to the east and west.	1.6 km west
Denby Delf LWS	Denby Delf is an area of acid and neutral grassland and heath with scattered scrub and areas of dense scrub and woodland. The surrounding land is mainly improved and semi-improved grassland and arable. There are stone walls or fences along the field	1.7 km southwest

	boundaries and public footpaths and tracks through most of the site.	
High Bridge Wood LWS	High Bridge Wood is an area of plantation woodland with improved grassland and arable to the northwest, Wakefield Road to the east, and plantation woodland Hob Royd Shrogg to the southwest. There are stone walls along the boundaries and pigs are kept in the woodland. There is a public footpath to the south of the woodland.	1.7 km northeast

- 3.2.5 The Site lies within the SSSI Impact Risk Zones for Peak District Dark Peak SSSI. The Impact Risk Zone for Dark Peak SSSI indicates that at the Site's location, the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on the SSSI, and therefore, will not be mentioned further within this report.
- 3.2.6 Three Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) were identified using MAGIC within 10 km of the Site. These were Denby Grange Colliery Ponds (SAC), Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1 SPA), and South Pennine Moors Phase (SAC). These are located approximately 7 km north (Denby Grange Colliery Ponds), and 9 km south (both South Pennine Moors Phase 1 and South Pennine Moors Phase) of the Site. Given that the proposals are confined to the Site and the distance between the Site and the designated sites, it is not considered that the proposals will have an impact upon the designated sites, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

3.3 Habitats

- 3.3.1 No priority habitat are present within 30 m of the Site.
- 3.3.2 Habitats recorded on the Site, their distribution and composition are discussed in order of dominance below. Habitat locations are annotated on Figure 1.

g4 Modified grassland (Secondary Codes (SC): 32, 81, 114)

- 3.3.3 The Site is mostly comprised of modified grassland, which is short-sward. Species recorded within the grassland included lawn species such as perennial rye grasses *Lolium perenne* (F), Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* (F) and timothy *Phleum pratense* (O).
- 3.3.4 Ruderal or ephemeral (81) species are present throughout this habitat, particularly at the boundaries of the Site. Species present include including locally dominant bramble *Rubus fruticosus agg.* (LD), common nettle *Urtica dioica* (F), cleavers *Galium aparine* (O), cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* (O), holly *Ilex aquifolium* (R), and thistle sp. *Cirsium* (R).
- 3.3.5 A dry-stone wall is present at the eastern boundary of the Site (SC:114).
- 3.3.6 Several young elder trees *Sambucus nigra* are present at the northeast boundary of the Site (32).
- 3.3.7 Modified grassland is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor is it listed within the LBAP. Given that the habitat is common both locally and nationally, the habitat is considered to be of no greater than site level importance to nature conservation.

u1b Developed land; sealed surface

- 3.3.8 A small area of Developed land; sealed surface is present within the centre of the Site. The habitat consists of concrete slabs, which has an absence of vegetation and overall, presents no botanical interest.

- 3.3.9 Developed land, sealed surface is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor is it listed within the LBAP. This habitat is considered to be of no greater than site level importance to nature conservation.

3.4 Species

Amphibians

- 3.4.1 WYES returned a total of 128 records of amphibians, 120 of which are historic (outwith the last 10 years), for locations within 2 km of the Site, comprising of 106 records of common frog *Rana temporaria*, nine record of common toad *Bufo bufo*, four records of smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* and a single record of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*. All eight non-historic records pertain to the same area, located 1.9 km north of the Site. The most recent of these records is a great crested newt in 2017.
- 3.4.2 BBRC returned no records relating to amphibians for locations within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.3 No EPS licences relating to GCN were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.4 The Site location is not eligible in the Natural England GCN District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme.
- 3.4.5 No waterbodies are present within 500 m of the Site from a search of OS Maps.
- 3.4.6 Overall, terrestrial habitats on the Site offer some limited suitability for amphibians, with log and brash piles (TN1 and TN2) providing areas for amphibians to shelter within. Much of the Site is short-sward modified grassland, offering extremely limited foraging and sheltering opportunities for GCN, which is also limited in extent and of inferior quality when compared to other habitats in the wider local area.
- 3.4.7 Given the limited suitability of terrestrial habitats present on the Site, albeit of inferior quality to adjacent habitats, and the absence of waterbodies within 500 m of the Site, it is considered extremely unlikely that GCN will be a receptor to the proposals, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.
- 3.4.8 It should be noted that unidentified ponds/water features may be exist within local gardens. In general, such water features are usually relatively small and are more likely to be used by common amphibians i.e. smooth newt, and/or common frog (albeit GCN and common toad may use them in certain circumstances; for example, if there is a larger waterbody close by that supports either of these species).
- 3.4.9 The presence of common amphibian species cannot be ruled out from the Site. Overall, the Site habitats are of no greater than site level value for common amphibians in their terrestrial stage. This is based on the availability of similar and higher quality habitat (including potentially more suitable aquatic habitat) in the wider area.

Badger

- 3.4.10 WYES returned no records of badgers *Meles meles* for locations within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.11 BBRC returned a total of 12 records pertaining to badgers, all of which are historic. The closest of these records was located 1.1 km southeast of the Site, recorded in 1996.
- 3.4.12 No evidence of badger was recorded throughout the survey, and the Site offers limited sett building potential, such as denser areas of vegetation. The Site also lacks significant suitable foraging/commuting habitat comprising solely of modified grassland. Given the absence of commuting and foraging habitat present, it is considered that any local badgers would not be reliant on the habitats present on the Site.
- 3.4.13 Badgers are not considered to be resident on the Site, however badgers are highly mobile and as such the habitats on the Site may form part of their wider territories.

- 3.4.14 Given the lack of field signs from walkover survey and the limited suitable habitats present on the Site, it is considered that the Site is of conservation value to badger at no greater than the site level.

Bats

- 3.4.15 WYES returned a total of 234 records of bats within 2 km, of which 217 are historic. Of these records, 186 pertain to roosts, 179 of which are historic. The roost records comprise of a total of 165 records of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* roosts, two soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* roosts and two whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus* roosts in addition to 22 unidentified bat roosts. The closest roost record pertains to a count of 18 unidentified bats appropriately 230 m northeast of the Site, recorded in 2000. The closest identified bat species is of a common pipistrelle roost located approximately 250 m east of the Site in 2011. The closest recent record pertains to a common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and whiskered bat roost located approximately 1.2 km west of the site, recorded in 2020.
- 3.4.16 The remaining records pertain to foraging, grounded bats, aural bat detectors and unidentified bat activities which include common pipistrelle, noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula*, soprano pipistrelle and unidentified bats. The closest of these records pertains to both common and soprano pipistrelle bats, located approximately 260 m east of the Site in 2015. The closest records pertain to common and soprano pipistrelle approximately 100 m east of the Site, recorded in 2015. The most recent record is of noctule and common pipistrelle approximately 280 m east of the Site, recorded in 2025.
- 3.4.17 BBRC returned no records relating to bats for locations within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.18 A single EPS license relating to bats were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site. This relates to the destruction of a common pipistrelle roost. This license was active between 2015 and 2020, located approximately 1.7 km west of the Site (2014-5044-EPS-MIT).

Roosting Bats

- 3.4.19 Mature trees and buildings are absent from the Site, and as such, the Site does not offer any suitability for roosting bats and will therefore not be discussed further within this report.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

- 3.4.20 The Site offers limited potential for foraging and commuting bats, due to the limited scale of the habitats present on the Site in conjunction with the lack of mature vegetation that bats typically utilise for foraging and commuting. The wider local landscape contains habitats of superior quality for commuting and roosting bats, such as woodland the woodland areas to the north and south, as well as the pastoral fields immediately west of the Site.
- 3.4.21 Overall, the Site is considered to be of negligible suitability for commuting and foraging bats (Collins, 2023), and therefore will not be discussed further within this report.

Birds

- 3.4.22 WBRC and BBRC returned a combined total of 473 records comprising 66 bird species for locations within 2 km of the Site. Species returned include four Schedule 1 species as listed within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981), in addition to 18 Red, 19 Amber and 22 Green listed BoCC species. Bird species recorded within 2 km of the Site are summarised in Appendix 2.
- 3.4.23 The Site offers some opportunities for nesting birds, however these are limited to scrub and trees scattered around the Site boundary. No active bird nests were located within these during the Site visit. These are limited in size and scale in comparison to the common and widespread availability of nesting habitat in the

wider local area, particularly within the woodland areas to the north and south of the Site.

- 3.4.24 Overall, due to the nature of habitats present on the Site, it is considered that the Site is of importance to nesting birds at no greater than the site level.

Invertebrates

- 3.4.25 WYES returned a total of 38 records for invertebrates comprising of 10 species of beetle, two species of butterfly and two species of ant, all of which are historic. The closest record pertains to *Lebia chlorocephala* and Lesser Silver Water Beetle *Hydrochara caraboides* located approximately 650 m south of the Site with an unknown date. The closest dated record pertains to small heath butterfly *Coenonympha pamphilus* and wall butterfly *Lasiommata megera* located approximately 1.6 km southwest of the Site, dated 1997. The closest most recent record pertains to hair wood ant located approximately 1.7 km from the Site, dated 2003-2004.
- 3.4.26 The habitats on the Site are unlikely to offer a range of opportunities for invertebrates, with the Site comprising mostly short-sward modified grassland, therefore they are not considered to offer the variety in plant species, structural diversity and habitat interfaces that would be necessary to support diverse communities of terrestrial invertebrates. The variety of plant species and habitat structures present are of limited diversity and generally sub-optimal for invertebrates and considered unlikely to support notable species or large invertebrate populations but may contribute to foraging opportunities for common species.
- 3.4.27 Given the limited suitable habitat present on the Site, and the presence of more suitable habitat at a larger scale in the wider area, the Site is considered of importance to invertebrate species at no greater than the site level.

Reptiles

- 3.4.28 WYES returned two records of reptiles within 2km of the Site, both of which are from 2014. Both records pertain to grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, with the closest record located approximately 1.6 km north of the Site.
- 3.4.29 Overall habitats on the Site are not considered to offer any significant suitability for reptiles, with the dominant habitat on the Site being modified grassland which is short-sward, offering limited sheltering and foraging opportunities for reptile species. A dry-stone wall (SC: 32) is present at the eastern boundary of the Site, which could offer some suitability for basking and sheltering reptiles. In addition to this, log and brash piles (TN1 and TN2) are present throughout the Site. These offer some suitability for basking and sheltering reptiles, however this is considered unlikely due to more suitable habitat being available within the wider local area, in particular the woodland areas located to the north and south of the Site. In addition to this, there is evidence that these have been placed here recently, and therefore less likely to be utilised.
- 3.4.30 Given the limited suitable habitat present on the Site, and the presence of habitats of greater quality and at a larger scale in the wider area, the Site is considered of importance to reptile species at no greater than the site level.

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

- 3.4.31 WYES returned no records of European otter *Lutra lutra* within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.32 WYES returned a single record of European water vole *Arvicola amphibius* for locations within 2 km of the Site, which is historic. This was located approximately 1.9 km southwest of the site in 2003.
- 3.4.33 WYES a single record of white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* for locations with 2 km of the

Site, which is historic. This was located approximately 1.45 km northeast from the site, dated 2003.

- 3.4.34 No evidence of these species was recorded during the walkover survey. No watercourses are located within 30 m of the Site and as such, it is not considered that riparian mammals or white-clawed crayfish are a receptor to the proposals, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

3.5 Invasive Species

- 3.5.1 WYES returned 59 records of invasive plant species, 43 of which are historic, for locations within 2 km of the Site. Invasive plants included Canadian waterweed *Elodea canadensis*, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzia*, rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* and New Zealand pigmyweed *Crasula helmsii*. The closest record pertains to Himalayan balsam located approximately 40 m east of the Site in 2015.
- 3.5.2 No Schedule 9 listed species were observed within the Site during the survey, and as such will not be considered further within this report.

4. Impact Assessment, Mitigation and Enhancements

4.1 Proposals

- 4.1.1 Proposals for the Site comprise the loss of the habitats on the Site to allow for the construction of a residential building. These proposals are detailed within the Castlehill Damage Restoration LTD '*Proposed Housing Development*' (Dwg No. 694-A02 Dated 07/2025).

4.2 Habitats

- 4.2.1 Given that the habitats present on the Site are common and widespread in the local landscape, it is anticipated that the loss of habitat at the Site is of importance to nature conservation at no greater than the Site level.
- 4.2.2 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) is not required for the proposals as it is considered that the proposals will be exempt from BNG under the self-build exemption.

4.3 Protected Species

Amphibians

- 4.3.1 Common amphibians are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) against sale, barter or exchange of captive animals.
- 4.3.2 The presence of GCN is considered unlikely due to the absence of ponds within 500m of the site.
- 4.3.3 As the presence of common amphibians on the Site cannot be ruled out, it is recommended that Best Practice Measures (BPM) are implemented during the proposed development works. The log and brash piles (TN1 and TN2) should be dismantled with care, with contractors operating with vigilance for potentially present common amphibians to minimise the potential for harm to common amphibians should they be sheltering within such features. If common amphibians i.e. smooth newt or palmate newt, common frog or common toad are encountered on Site during the works they should be allowed to move away of their own volition. If in immediate danger of injury, they should be carefully moved in gloved hands to an area of safe shelter away from the footprint of works.

Badger

- 4.3.4 Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence under the act to kill, injure or take a badger. It is also an offence to destroy, damage or obstruct a currently active badger sett, or to disturb animals within the sett.
- 4.3.5 Badgers are not considered to be resident on the Site, however they are highly mobile species and have the potential to disperse on to areas of the Site and into working areas. As such it is recommended that, BPM be implemented throughout the works to protect badgers, should they subsequently pass through these areas of the Site. The BPM should include:
- Any excavations deeper than 1 m required during the works should be covered overnight. Shallow excavations less than 1 m should have a roughened scaffold board or equivalent placed in them overnight to allow any animals which may become trapped to exit. Trenches will also be inspected each morning to ensure that no animals have become trapped overnight;
 - Food/litter will not be left on Site;

- If in the unlikely event that badgers are encountered during works, then works will cease temporarily and the animal allowed to move away off its own volition. The ecologist will be contacted for advice; and,
- If badgers are suspected to be associated with the Site once works have commenced, including a suspected badger sett found on or within 30 m of the Site during the works by a contractor, works should cease and an appropriately experienced ecologist should be contacted for advice before continuing.

4.3.6 Additionally, any lighting implemented during the construction stage and upon completion of the development should be directed away from retained vegetated habitats, particularly off-site habitats to allow badgers to continue to use such habitats for foraging and commuting where present locally.

Bats

- 4.3.7 All species of bat occurring within the UK are included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Under regulation 41 bats are protected from deliberate capture, injury or killing, from deliberate disturbance and from deliberate damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place (roost).
- 4.3.8 All UK bats are also included on Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). However, their protection is limited to certain offences. Under the 1981 Act (as amended) it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb bats while they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection, or to obstruct access to any such place.
- 4.3.9 Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared bat, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule and soprano pipistrelle bats are included as priority species under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Roosting Bats

- 4.3.10 The Site is not considered to offer any suitability for roosting bats.
- 4.3.11 As an enhancement for local bats, it is recommended that as compensation for the loss of PRFs across the Site, a minimum of a single bat box should be incorporated into the new house as part of the development proposals. The model of boxes used should be suitable for crevice dwelling bat species, such as the Schwegler 1FR Bat Tube. The bat boxes should be placed at a minimum of 4 m above the ground on the houses, facing southern aspects to maximise chances of occupation.

Birds

- 4.3.12 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the 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). Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act receive additional protection against disturbance whilst occupying a nest site.
- 4.3.13 The habitats on Site were considered to be of no more than site level importance to local bird populations given the quality of habitat recorded on the Site and the extensive availability of similar to higher quality habitat for nesting birds in the wider area.
- 4.3.14 Nesting birds could be present at the Site due to the presence of trees at the Site boundary. To minimise the risk of committing an offence in relation to nesting birds, clearance of these habitats (if required) should be programmed to be between September and February inclusive, i.e. to avoid the bird breeding season. If

this is not possible, then a nesting bird check (to be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist) will be required within 48 hours of vegetation removal. 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 for periods of at least up to a month dependent on nesting stage. Repeat visits will be required if vegetation removal is not completed within the 48-hour timeframe after the initial nesting bird check.

- 4.3.15 It is recommended that a minimum of a single integrated bird nest box should be incorporated into the proposed building as a positive enhancement for nature conservation. Schwegler Brick Box Type 25 boxes are recommended as they have been shown to achieve good uptake by a range of species and not just swifts. The bird boxes should be placed at a minimum height of 3 m (near eaves level when placed on buildings) facing different aspects to maximise chances of occupation. Full south aspects present a risk of overheating and should therefore be avoided.

Invertebrates

- 4.3.16 Many invertebrate species are listed under Section 41 of NERC act (2006) designating them as Species of Principal Importance in England.
- 4.3.17 Several species of invertebrate and their habitat are afforded full protection under Schedule 5 (Section 9) of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Several species are also EPS. These are afforded strict protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019 under Schedule 2.
- 4.3.18 The loss of the vegetated habitats on the Site is not considered likely to impact any notable populations of invertebrates. Habitats on Site are considered of no more than site level importance for invertebrates and impacts from proposals are therefore likely to be insignificant to invertebrates resident in the local area. Common invertebrate species that may be resident in the wider area would benefit through the provision of seasonal nectar resources and consideration should be given to inclusion of native woody and flowering species in and planting schemes.
- 4.3.19 Further enhancements for the Site with regards to invertebrates would be to incorporate bee bricks into the new building. Bee bricks provide sheltering opportunities for solitary bees, which are pollinator species and are vital to local ecosystems. Solitary bees do not have queens or honey to protect, meaning they are non-aggressive and extremely unlikely sting.

Reptiles

- 4.3.20 Common reptile species including grass snake, common lizard and slow worm are protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) against intentional killing or injury.
- 4.3.21 Due to the limited suitable habitats present the Site is considered unlikely to support reptiles, and the loss of habitats present is considered unlikely to impact reptiles at greater than the Site level.
- 4.3.22 The following BPM are recommended with regards to reptiles (these will also help to protect common amphibians):
- All Site personnel to keep a high level of vigilance for reptiles (and amphibians) during works;
 - Good general housekeeping of the Site will be employed. All materials (construction materials/arising) on Site will be stored in a suitable location at least 5 m away from suitable reptile habitat, e.g woodland edge habitats, ideally risen off the ground (e.g. on pallets) or on hard stand/bare ground away from vegetation. Materials arising from the works should be removed

from the Site as quickly as possible or placed in a skip or other sealed container immediately if stored on Site. This will avoid colonisation by reptiles and other wildlife and will ensure there is no build-up of debris or other waste which may create suitable habitats for protected species that then has to be removed at a later date; and,

- Should reptiles be encountered works in the area will cease and an ecologist contacted immediately for advice.

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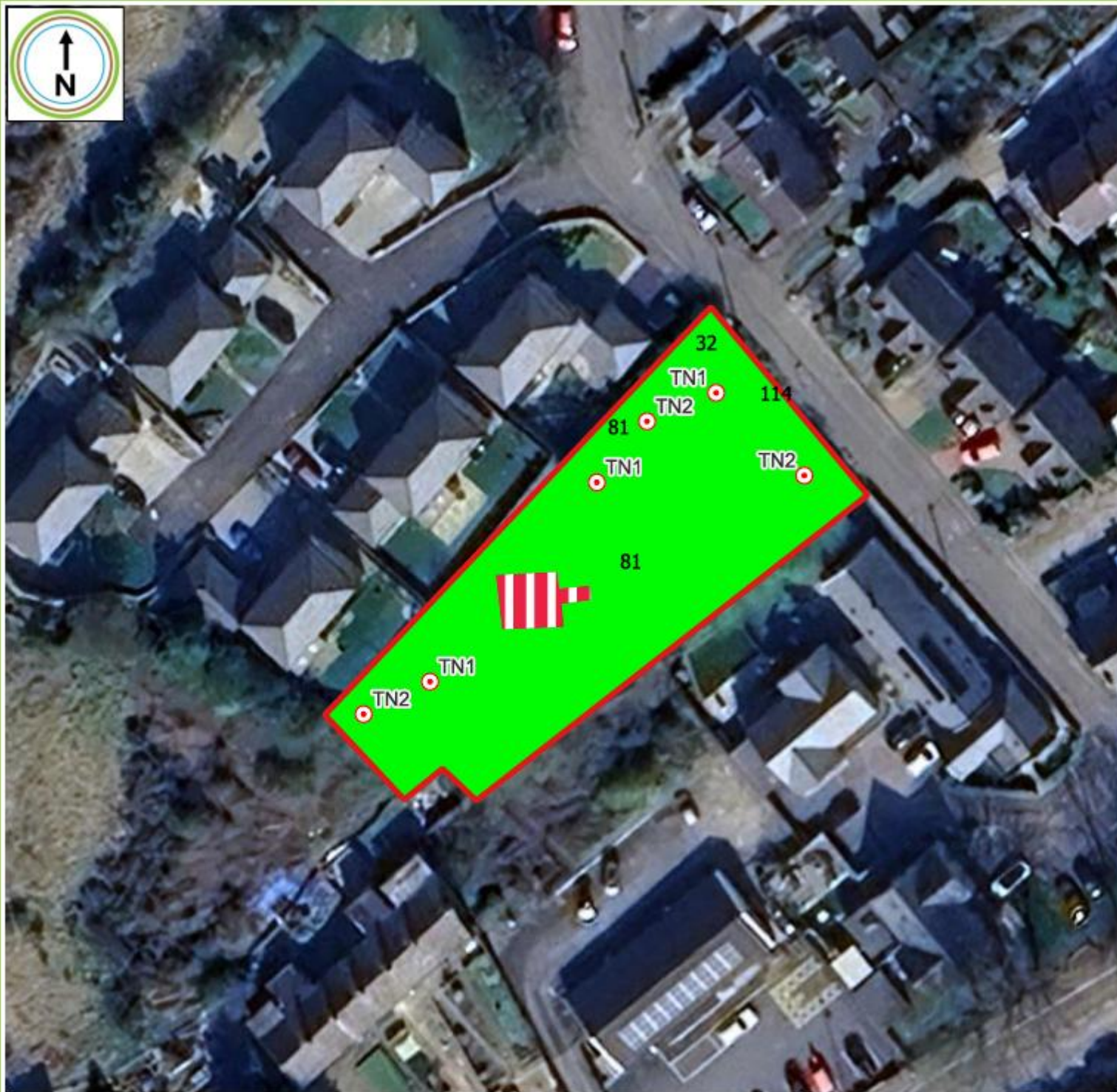
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Figure 1. UK Habitat Classification Map

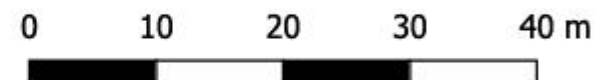


Legend

-  Site Boundary
-  Target Notes
-  g4 - Modified grassland
-  u1b - Developed land, sealed surface

Secondary Codes:

- 32 - Scattered trees
- 81 - Ruderal or ephemeral
- 114 - Dry stone wall



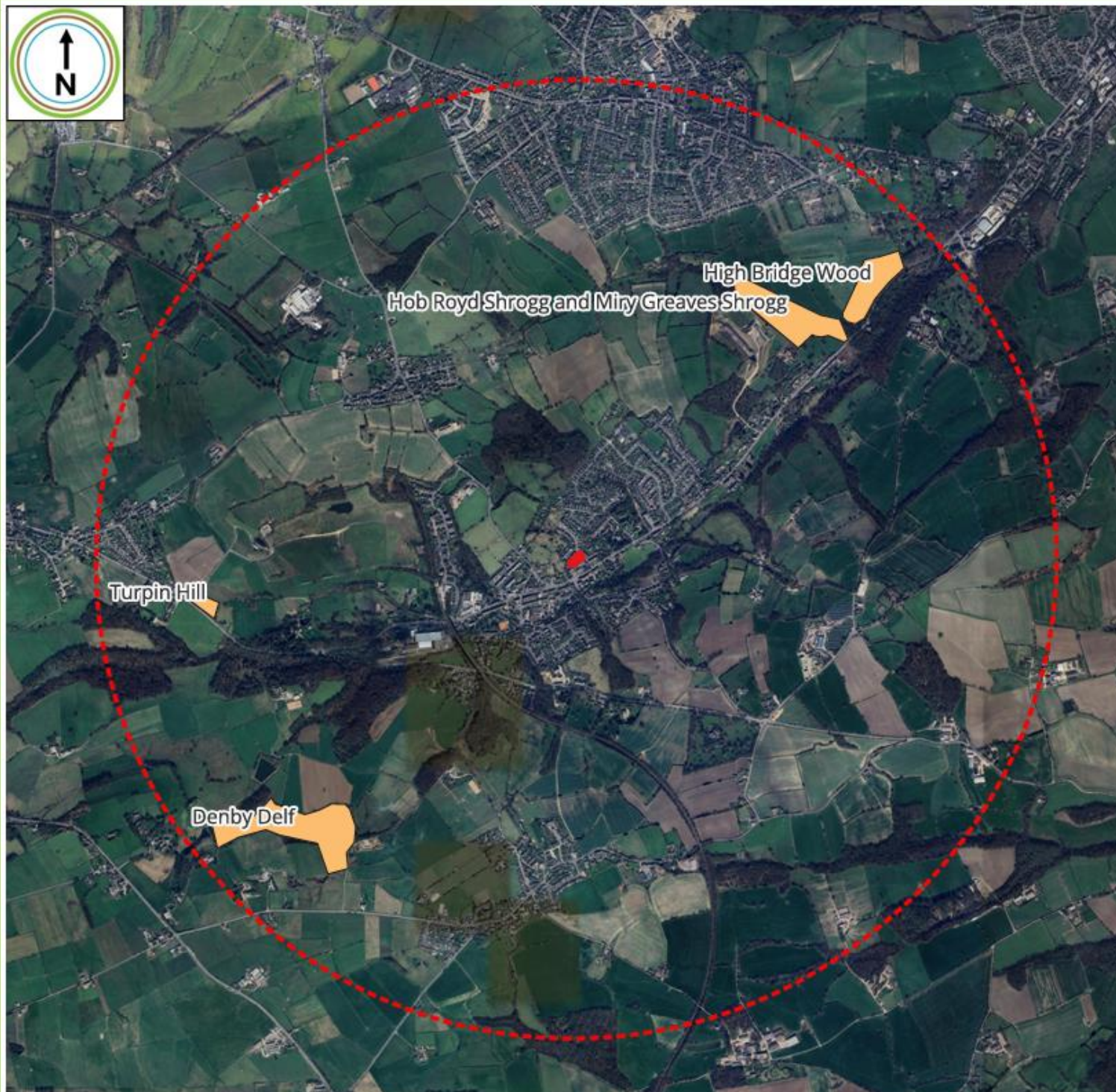
HABITAT WORKS

Castle Hill Restoration

Leak Hall, Denby Dale

Figure 1
Baseline Habitats Map

Figure 2. Designated sites within 2 km of the Site



Legend

-  Site Boundary
-  2 km buffer
-  Designated sites

0 500 1,000 1,500 m



HABITAT WORKS

Castle Hill Restoration

Leak Hall, Denby Dale

Figure 2
Designated sites within 2 km of the Site

Appendix 1. Target Notes

TN1 – Log pile

TN2 – Brash pile

Appendix 2. Site Photographs



Photograph 1. Brash piles.



Photograph 2. Modified grassland.



Photograph 3. Log and brash piles.



Photograph 4. Sealed surface.



Photograph 5. Eastern extent of the Site.



Photograph 6. Young elder trees on northeast border.

Appendix 3. Bird Species Records Summary

Common Name	Scientific Name	BoCC Status
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Schedule 1, Red
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Schedule 1, Amber
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Schedule 1, Green
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Schedule 1, Green
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Red
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Red
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Red
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Red
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Red
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Red
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Red
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Red
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Red
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Red
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Red
Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>	Red
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>	Red
Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Red
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Red
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	Amber
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Amber
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Amber
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Amber
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Amber
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Amber
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Amber
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Amber
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Amber
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Amber
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Amber
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Amber
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Green
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Green

Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	Green
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	Green
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Green
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Green
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	Green
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Green
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	Green
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Green
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Green
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	Green
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Green
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Green
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	Green
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	Green
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Green
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Green
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Green
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Green
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Green
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Green
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	Not assessed
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Not assessed
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	Not assessed
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Not Assessed
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Schedule 9