
FENWICK SOLAR FARM

Fenwick Solar Farm
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Executive Summary

- ES1 The objective of this assessment for breeding birds was to determine the presence and assemblage of breeding bird species within the Study Area, with an emphasis on species of conservation concern.
- ES2 A desk study was undertaken as part of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) to gather records of protected and notable bird species occurring within a 2 km radius of the Order limits, through the Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC). Only records up to ten years old from the request date (2024) were considered within the assessment, as any records older than ten years are unlikely to be still representative of bird species in the local area. This desk study returned records of 128 specially protected or notable bird species.
- ES3 Field surveys were undertaken between March and July 2023 (five survey visits), supplemented by additional surveys to previously inaccessible areas between April and July 2024. These surveys recorded 77 species and a breeding assemblage of 54 species. From the breeding assemblage of 54 bird species, 25 species meet at least one of a range of criteria relating to conservation importance. The breeding assemblage of 54 species would place the value of the Order limits as being of County importance for breeding birds.
- ES4 Confidential information regarding the abundance of and distribution of any sensitive breeding species recorded are reported separately (in Annex B (Confidential)) and will be provided to key stakeholders only.
- ES5 Eleven species, recorded during field surveys are listed as a priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and as a species of principal importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act; nine species are included on the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red list; and 16 species are included on the BoCC Amber list.
- ES6 No species were present within the Survey Area in numbers of national significance, i.e. 1% or more of the UK population, when compared to national population estimates.
- ES7 No species recorded in the Survey Area were recorded such that the number of breeding territories approached 1% of the county breeding population estimates as the numbers of individuals recorded were all relatively low and did not represent significant proportions (i.e. 1% or more) of the county populations.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This report forms a technical appendix to **Environmental Statement (ES) Volume I Chapter 8: Ecology [EN010152/APP/6.1]**. This report provides information on the presence, distribution and abundance of breeding bird species, relevant to the Fenwick Solar Farm (hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme'), including the results of surveys undertaken within the Order limits.
- 1.1.2 Breeding territory locations and information for bird species that are included on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (Ref. 1) or Annex 1 of the Birds Directive (Ref. 2) is not included within this report. This information is confidential and therefore a confidential annex (Annex B (Confidential)) will be provided to key stakeholders with a legitimate need to view the information.

1.2 The Scheme

- 1.2.1 The Scheme includes three locations (collectively referred to as the 'Order limits'):
- a. The land located east of Fenwick and immediately south of the River Went (hereafter referred to as the 'Solar PV Site');
 - b. The land between the Solar PV Site and the existing compound for Thorpe Marsh Substation (hereafter referred to as the 'Grid Connection Corridor'); and
 - c. The land located within the existing compound for Thorpe Marsh Substation (hereafter referred to as the 'Existing National Grid Thorpe Marsh Substation').
- 1.2.2 The Scheme comprises the installation of Solar PV Panels, On-Site Cables, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Area, On-Site Substation, Grid Connection Line Drop, Grid Connection Cables, and other supporting infrastructure including fencing, access tracks, drainage, and biodiversity and landscaping enhancements.

1.3 The Order Limits

- 1.3.1 The Solar PV Site is located near the village of Fenwick, approximately 12 kilometres (km) north of Doncaster. It is approximately 407 hectares (ha) in size, centred on the approximate National Grid Reference (NGR) SE 60549 16313.
- 1.3.2 The Grid Connection Corridor is approximately 95 ha in size and 6.3 km in length, stretching from NGR SE 60264 14924 to the Existing National Grid Thorpe Marsh Substation at NGR SE 60605 10009.
- 1.3.3 The Existing National Grid Thorpe Marsh Substation is approximately 6 ha in size and centred on the approximate NGR SE 60537 09736.
- 1.3.4 The Solar PV Site comprises arable and pasture fields with small patches of broadleaved woodlands. The River Went delineates the northern boundary and two large drains running through the eastern part of the Solar PV Site (Fenwick Common Drain and Fleet Drain).

- 1.3.5 The Grid Connection Corridor comprises arable and modified grassland with patches of woodland and Thorpe Marsh Drain crossing at Thorpe in Balne.
- 1.3.6 The Existing National Grid Thorpe Marsh Substation comprises existing substation infrastructure and Open Mosaic Habitat on previously developed land. This area is bound by a railway line to the north and a series of waterbodies and woodland which is part of Thorpe Marsh Nature Reserve to the south and west.
- 1.3.7 The Order limits also includes a section of highway at the junction of the A19 and Station Road in the town of Askern to allow for abnormal indivisible load (AIL) vehicle access and escort. As the works would be limited to temporary traffic signal and banksman control for the period of AIL delivery, no impacts on breeding birds are anticipated, and therefore this area is not assessed further.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The aim of this report is to determine the presence, assemblage and distribution of breeding bird species within the Survey Area (see Section 3.1).
- 1.4.2 The objectives, therefore, are to:
 - a. Review existing ecological data to identify any records of breeding birds occurring within the Study Area (see Section 3.1); and
 - b. Undertake surveys of breeding birds to confirm the presence, assemblage and distribution of breeding bird species within the Survey Area (see Section 3.1).
- 1.4.3 Combined, this is being used to:
 - a. Determine the biodiversity importance of the Order limits for breeding birds; and
 - b. Identify potential impacts of the Scheme on breeding birds and any required mitigation (as presented in **ES Volume I Chapter 8: Ecology [EN010152/APP/6.1]**).

2. Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

2.1 Legislation

Wildlife and Countryside Act

- 2.1.1 The legislative provisions for the protection of all wild birds in the United Kingdom (UK) are contained primarily in Sections 1 to 7 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) (Ref. 1). Under the WCA, a wild bird is defined as any bird of a species that occurs in a wild state as a resident or a visitor to the European Territory of any member state but does not include poultry or (except in relation to the power to grant licences and prohibition on certain methods of killing) any game bird.
- 2.1.2 When breeding, all birds, their nest, eggs and nestlings are afforded protection under the WCA, as updated by the 'Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000' (Ref. 3). Therefore, during the bird breeding season it is an offence to:
- a. Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
 - b. Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; and
 - c. Intentionally take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird.
- 2.1.3 Typically, the breeding season is defined as between March and August, inclusive, although it is important to note that for some species, breeding can occur outside of these months.
- 2.1.4 Additionally, special penalties exist for offences related to species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA, 1981 (as amended) (Ref. 1), for which there are additional offences for intentionally or recklessly disturbing these birds while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young, and of disturbing their dependent young.
- 2.1.5 No licences are available for disturbance during a development even in circumstances where that development is fully authorised by consents such as a valid Development Consent Order (DCO).

Directive of the Conservation of Wild Birds

- 2.1.6 A number of bird species recorded within the UK (including those that are resident, overwintering and migratory) are protected under European legislation through the Directive of the Conservation of Wild Birds (European Union (EU) Birds Directive) (Ref. 2), which lists 193 species, or sub-species, of birds in Annex 1 which are:
- a. In danger of extinction;
 - b. Are rare, or have restricted local distribution;
 - c. Are vulnerable to specific changes in their habitat; or
 - d. Require particular attention for reasons of the specific nature of habitat.
- 2.1.7 The Birds Directive was most recently transposed into English law by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Ref. 4). Although the UK is no longer a member state of the EU, the 2019 amendments (Ref. 5) to The Conservation of Habitats and Species

Regulations 2017 (Ref. 4) make it clear that provisions regarding the protection and designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are maintained. Species listed in Annex 1 are those for which the UK government takes special conservation measures, including the designation of land as SPAs to ensure the survival and reproduction of these species throughout their distributions. These sites are automatically included within the National Site Network which is a network of core breeding and resting sites that are protected for rare and threatened species.

2.2 Species of Principal Importance (SPI)

- 2.2.1 In England, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (Ref. 6) requires the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to publish and maintain a list of habitats and species that are of ‘principal importance’ for the purpose of conserving biodiversity and are regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Biodiversity Framework (Ref. 7), which supersedes the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) (Ref. 8). The UKBAP was launched in 1994 and established a framework and criteria for identifying species (and habitat types) of conservation concern.
- 2.2.2 There are 49 bird species listed as being Species of Principal Importance (SPI) for conservation in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act (Ref. 6). These species are of material consideration during the planning process and are used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies (including local and regional authorities) in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act (Ref. 6).

2.3 Local Priority Species

- 2.3.1 The Scheme is located within the county of South Yorkshire and district of the City of Doncaster. Formerly, the Doncaster Local Biodiversity Action Plan (DoBAP) (Ref. 9) provided context to inform identification of threatened or uncommon species of local relevance, alongside priorities for conservation and enhancement targeted at a local level in Doncaster. However, under the Environment Act 2021 (Ref. 10), local biodiversity action plans are being replaced by Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs), which are a system of spatial strategies for nature which will support delivery of biodiversity net gain (BNG) and provide more focussed action for nature recovery. Whilst this is still being developed within South Yorkshire, this report references those species included on the DoBAP species audit list (Ref. 9) where there is proposed local action by the Doncaster Biodiversity Action Partnership (DBAP). Details of these species, of which there are 24, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Birds listed on the DoBAP Species Audit for Which Local Action is Proposed by DBAP

English (vernacular) name	Scientific name
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>

English (vernacular) name	Scientific name
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>
Lesser-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europea</i>
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>

2.4 Birds of Conservation Concern

- 2.4.1 The Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) is an assessment of the conservation status of all regularly occurring British birds. The lists (Red, Amber and Green) that indicate the level of conservation importance for each species are derived from quantitative assessments from standardised criteria and are drawn together by the UK's leading bird conservation organisations, including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and British Trust for Ornithology (BTO).
- 2.4.2 The most recent assessment, BoCC 5 (Ref. 11), was published in December 2021 and is based on the most up-to-date evidence available and includes conservation status at global and European levels and, within the UK: historical decline, trends in population and range, rarity, localised distribution and international importance. The BoCC list was further updated by BoCC 5a (Ref. 12), which updates the assessment for seabirds. Collectively within this report, these are referred to as BoCC species.
- 2.4.3 The criteria for birds being included in the BoCC lists, relevant to the breeding season, are as follows:

Red List

- a. Species that are globally threatened (Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable, but not Near Threatened) under International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List guidelines (Ref. 13);
- b. Species that have shown a historical decline in breeding populations, declining severely between 1800 and 1995 and have subsequently not recovered;
- c. Species that have suffered a severe (>50%) breeding population decline within the UK in either the last 25 years or the longer-term (since 1969);
or
- d. Species whose UK range in the breeding season has declined by more than 50% between respective breeding atlases.

Amber List

- a. Species that are threatened in Europe (Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable, but not Near Threatened as per IUCN Red List Guidelines (Ref. 13));
- b. Species that were previously red-listed for historical population decline, followed by an increase of at least 100% over 25 years or the longer-term period;
- c. Species that have suffered a moderate (>25% but <50%) breeding population decline within the UK in either the last 25 years or the longer-term (since 1969);
- d. Species whose UK range in the breeding season has declined by more than 25% but less than 50% between respective breeding atlases;
- e. Breeding rarities (UK population <300 breeding pairs individuals);
- f. Breeding localisation whereby more than 50% of the UK population was found at ten or fewer sites in the breeding season; or
- g. Breeding international importance whereby the UK holds at least 20% of the European population in the breeding season of a particular species.

Green List

- a. Species that are not showing moderate or severe declines and do not qualify under any of the above criteria.

2.4.4 Although the BoCC lists confer no legal status in themselves, they are useful in evaluating the conservation significance of bird assemblages, and for assessing the potential significance of impacts and informing appropriate levels of mitigation with respect to bird populations that may be affected by a plan or project.

3. Methods

3.1 Characterising the Baseline

3.1.1 Within this report, the following terminology is used when referring to the geographic areas within which assessments were made:

- a. Study Area – the area within the Order limits and a 2 km radius which was subject to collection of background information e.g. desk study records for birds to supplement the findings of the survey work;
- b. Zone of Influence (Zoi) - the area over which breeding birds may be affected by the Scheme which, using the criteria below and proportionate to the Scheme's impacts, is up to 200 m from the Order limits (dependent on the sensitivity of the species). Through review of likely impacts of the Scheme and results of the desk study, the scope of field surveys was then defined; and
- c. Survey Area – this is the area within which survey work was undertaken. The Survey Area to record the general breeding bird assemblage included all habitats within the Order limits and a minimum 50 m survey buffer around the Order limits. For species of greater conservation value and/or higher sensitivity, e.g. those listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (Ref. 1) and sensitive to potential noise or visual disturbance, where any such species were recorded, the Survey Area was extended up to 200 m from the Order limits.

3.1.2 The Zoi is based on:

- a. The nature of the Scheme, proposed activities and the potential for effects at all phases of development (construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning);
- b. The nature of the land use, their connectivity within and outside of the Order limits and how they may be used by breeding birds;
- c. The presence and assemblages of breeding bird species in the wider area, based on the location of the Order limits and desk study data; and
- d. The habits, behaviours and preferences of different bird species during the breeding season and whether these could be affected both spatially and temporally.

3.1.3 Whilst standardised survey buffers for assessing the impacts of development on bird populations do not exist, the geographic areas described above provide information on breeding birds both within the Order limits and the area immediately surrounding the Order limits, including areas contiguous with the Order limits, where birds may potentially be adversely affected. Therefore, these are sufficient to determine the likely impacts of the Scheme on breeding bird species occurring or likely to occur within the vicinity of the Order limits.

3.2 Desk Study

3.2.1 A desk study was undertaken as part of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in Spring 2023 (Ref. 14). Records of protected and notable bird species within a 2 km radius of the Order limits were obtained through Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC). Only records up to ten years old were

considered within the assessment, as any records older than ten years are unlikely to be still representative of bird species in the local area.

3.3 Field Survey

Territory Mapping Survey

- 3.3.1 The survey was undertaken based on standard territory mapping methods for surveying breeding birds as detailed in 'Bird Monitoring Methods' (Ref. 15) and 'Bird Census Techniques' (Ref. 16). This method is based on the principle that many species during the breeding season are territorial. This is found particularly amongst passerines, where territories are often marked by conspicuous song, display and periodic disputes with neighbouring individuals. Territory mapping methods produce analysis maps of non-overlapping ellipses encircling clusters of records thought to relate to separate pairs of breeding birds. These ellipses may not show the entire extent of the pairs' actual breeding territory which may be significantly larger; however, they are likely to show those areas in which the pair is most active.
- 3.3.2 Five survey visits were undertaken between March and July 2023. Given the size of the Survey Area, each survey visit took up to three days to complete. In addition, further survey visits were undertaken between April and July 2024 of areas not accessible during 2023 to ensure suitable coverage of the Survey Area. These surveys concentrated on locating species of conservation concern, as defined in Section 2 of this appendix.
- 3.3.3 Survey routes followed the majority of hedgerows, fence lines and field margins (including paths, tracks and roads). Deviations into areas of set-aside, stubble fields, scrub, woodland and other uncultivated habitats were made, where practicable. The routes did not include walking through ploughed or cultivated fields, due to the possibility of trampling and damaging crops. Fields containing livestock were avoided for safety reasons but could be surveyed from the field boundary.
- 3.3.4 On each survey visit, the route was walked at a slow pace with start and finish times noted. Prior to approaching a field, the observer undertook an initial scan to determine the presence of any species already present. Regular stopping points were included at various locations around the Survey Area to record any species that may be passing through the Survey Area and to survey birds that were audible or visible within any inaccessible areas.
- 3.3.5 Each survey was undertaken during appropriate conditions for surveying when the weather was dry, warm and with little to no wind. Surveys were undertaken in the morning, commencing just after sunrise and finishing before midday. Survey Metadata is detailed in Annex C. During these times, breeding birds are more active and can be detected in song more frequently. Survey routes were mapped, and the direction walked alternated on each visit, to ensure that all areas were covered at various times of the morning across the duration of the survey.
- 3.3.6 All birds seen and heard were recorded directly onto paper maps and then later digitised onto a 1:10,000 scale Ordnance Survey (OS) base map of the Survey Area. All bird species were recorded and mapped across the entire survey area. Specific codes were used to record bird behaviour, including

singing, calling, flights and movements between areas, carrying food, nest building, aggressive encounters and other bird behaviour.

- 3.3.7 The expected outcome from the surveys is that mapped registrations fall into clusters, approximately coinciding with territories. A cluster is generally a spatially distinct group of registrations that represent the activity of not more than one pair. Ideally, clusters include registrations of territorial behaviour across all visits and are clearly demarcated from adjacent clusters by simultaneous recording of neighbouring birds. Therefore, territory boundaries are assumed to be between such birds.
- 3.3.8 On completion of the surveys, analysis maps were produced for each species, consisting of all registrations recorded during surveys. From these species maps, the number of territories was calculated by identifying the number of clusters present.
- 3.3.9 For late-arriving (to the UK) trans-Saharan migrants, e.g. Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*, for which fewer potential contacts are possible, only one registration is required to form a territory cluster. A number of species are not territorial and are dealt with appropriately, e.g. Linnet *Linaria cannabina*, where data represent aggregations or loose colonies.
- 3.3.10 Territory analysis focussed on those species of highest conservation concern i.e. specially protected species (those listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (Ref. 1) or Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive (Ref. 2)); SPI (Ref. 6) and BoCC Red-listed species (Ref. 11, Ref. 12); or BoCC Amber-listed species (but only where impacts were predicted on specific species). Therefore, for species which are widespread throughout the Survey Area (e.g. Robin *Erithacus rubecula*), and/or are common within South Yorkshire (and Doncaster) and the UK, and are not of conservation concern (i.e. not listed on one or more of the lists of conservation concern as detailed in this report), the number of breeding territories of these species (including probable or possible) have not been calculated although these are referred to in the results section as having breeding territories present (P) within the Survey Area.
- 3.3.11 The following definitions were used to identify the breeding territory status of each species recorded:
- a. Confirmed: includes species for which territories were positively identified as a result of the number of registrations recorded; the location of an active nest; or the presence of recently fledged/downy young;
 - b. Probable: includes a species pair observed in suitable nesting habitat during surveys; or agitated behaviour/anxiety calls from adults (suggesting the presence of a nest or young nearby). Behaviour was observed on insufficient occasions to confirm the presence of a territory;
 - c. Possible: includes species observed during surveys in suitable nesting habitat; or a singing male present (or breeding calls heard) in suitable breeding habitat; or
 - d. Non-breeding: species-specific information was used to determine fly-over species, or species suspected to be summering non-breeder.
- 3.3.12 For non-passerines, including waterbirds, e.g. wildfowl, waders and birds of prey, the behaviour or number of individuals including the sex ratio, present in suitable breeding habitat, was used to determine the potential presence of likely breeding territories and/or estimated number of breeding individuals.

This was made with reference to the specific species group methods, as presented in 'Bird Monitoring Methods' (Ref. 15).

Determination of Roosting and Nesting Sites for Barn Owl

- 3.3.13 A survey to determine nesting and roosting sites for Barn Owl *Tyto alba* was undertaken within the Order limits based on the guidance presented in '*Barn Owl Tyto alba Survey Methodology and Techniques for use in Ecological Assessment*' (Ref. 17).
- 3.3.14 Prior to surveys being undertaken, a desk-top review of the high-level tree constraints report (included as **ES Volume III Appendix 10-7: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010152/APP/6.3]**) and accompanying figures was made to identify any trees within the Order limits that were potentially suitable to support Barn Owl (i.e. those of a suitable size (see Paragraph 3.3.16), where cavities were recorded or where signs of Barn Owl were recorded). All such trees were then surveyed to determine their suitability to support roosting or nesting Barn Owl.
- 3.3.15 Mature trees with a trunk diameter of sufficient girth and with a cavity of sufficient quality to support barn owl (e.g. provide a roosting or nesting platform), were highlighted for field survey.
- 3.3.16 As a reference, the trunk diameters detailed by Shawyer (Ref. 17) were used as a guide to determine potentially suitable trees for barn owl. These were:
- Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and Crack Willow *Salix fragilis*: 0.5 m diameter or more (>80 years old);
 - Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* and Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, 0.75 m diameter or more (>150 years); and
 - Oak *Quercus robur*, 1.5 m diameter or more (>250 years).
- 3.3.17 However, only mature trees that stand prominently in fields, hedgerows or are on/near woodland edge were considered for survey as the susceptibility of trees to decay (and hence reduce their suitability as a roosting or nesting site) varies with tree species and age.
- 3.3.18 On determination of suitable trees for survey, these trees were then surveyed on multiple dates in July 2024, during daylight hours. The surveys were undertaken by an appropriately licensed ecologist, holding a CL29 class licence, which permits registered persons to disturb nesting Barn Owl by observation in the course of undertaking presence or absence surveys, nest monitoring and/or, to monitor the effectiveness of conservation efforts.
- 3.3.19 Buildings with features that could support roosting or breeding Barn Owl, such as agricultural buildings and structures, were also recorded during the field survey, along with any signs of Barn Owl (e.g. pellets, droppings, sightings). Any Barn Owl nest boxes within the Survey Area were also recorded.
- 3.3.20 Where signs of Barn Owl were found, these were recorded directly onto a base map of the Survey Area.
- 3.3.21 Signs of Barn Owl, that indicate occupation, or potential occupation, typically include:
- Presence of adult birds;

- b. Nests, eggs, or young (during the breeding season);
 - c. Pellets;
 - d. White 'splashing' caused by droppings;
 - e. Feathers; or
 - f. Small mammal remains.
- 3.3.22 Furthermore, any sightings of Barn Owl that were observed during the course of other ecological surveys (such as during bat activity surveys) were also recorded.
- 3.3.23 The survey information was used to determine known or likely roosting and nesting sites for Barn Owl to inform on any required mitigation, with regards to potential construction-related disturbance or loss of habitat, for this species.

3.4 Assessment of Biodiversity Importance

- 3.4.1 The biodiversity importance of the Survey Area for breeding birds was assessed by evaluating any species afforded special statutory protection or those included on one, or more, of the lists of species of conservation interest, as detailed in Section 2 of this report. These include:
- a. Species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA, 1981 (as amended) (Ref. 1);
 - b. Species listed in Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive (Ref. 2);
 - c. SPI bird species in the UK (Ref. 6) or Doncaster (see Table 1); or
 - d. Species included in the BoCC Red or Amber Lists (Ref. 11, Ref. 12).

Species Abundance

- 3.4.2 In addition to evaluating a site based on its populations of breeding birds in relation to legal status, rarity and biodiversity importance, consideration has to be given to the value of the Survey Area for the population of individual species that it supports. This can be done by comparing the population present within the Survey Area with the national and county breeding population for certain species. National estimates for breeding birds are published in a paper: 'Population estimates of birds in Great Britain and the United Kingdom' (Ref. 17). The BTO Bird Atlas 2007-2011 (Ref. 19) was also reviewed for species information on a national level.
- 3.4.3 Information on populations of any nationally rare species was sourced from the most recently published paper by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (RBBP) (Ref. 20).
- 3.4.4 County-level estimates on the breeding bird populations of the majority of species in Doncaster and South Yorkshire were obtained from online resources and county avifauna publications, where this information was available. However, professional judgement was applied when determining the geographic importance of species where population estimates were not available.

Species Diversity

- 3.4.5 The number of species recorded in an area is a simple measure of diversity that can indicate its importance at each season of the year.

3.4.6 Table 2 presents the breeding species diversity criteria as outlined in Fuller (1980) (Ref. 21), which provided a method for assessing the ornithological interest of sites for conservation during the bird breeding season, based on the number of species present.

Table 2: Breeding Species Diversity Criteria (Fuller, 1980)

Local	County	Regional	National
25-49 species	50-69 species	70-84 species	85+ species

3.4.7 It should be noted that Fuller’s analysis was developed in the 1970s and, since then, species diversity has declined significantly. As a result, Fuller’s thresholds are, in most circumstances, too high for today’s breeding bird populations. However, it is not considered that the differences would be sufficient to increase the geographical scale at which the assemblages are considered to have value.

3.4.8 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) (or County Wildlife Sites (CWS)) are among the most important places for wildlife in South Yorkshire together with legally protected land such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

3.4.9 LWSs are selected for their habitats and can also be designated for particular species and taxonomic groups, including birds. The Doncaster Local Plan (Ref. 22) includes selection criteria for birds and state that an LWS in Doncaster can be selected based on the following specific criteria for birds:

- a. B1 - any cliff, crag or sand bank that supports a breeding bird species present on the Doncaster Species Audit;
- b. B2 - wet meadows that support at least three species, or six pairs of breeding wader; and
- c. MS2 - any site that supports a good population of a species that has undergone a significant decline, documented at a national, regional or local level.

Importance of the Breeding Bird Population

3.4.10 An essential prerequisite step to allow ecological impact assessment of the Scheme was an evaluation of the relative biodiversity importance of the Survey Area for breeding birds. This is necessary to set the terms of reference for the subsequent ecological impact assessment (as presented in **ES Volume I Chapter 8: Ecology [EN010152/APP/6.1]**).

3.4.11 The method of evaluation that was utilised has been developed with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines (Ref. 23). This gives guidance on scoping and carrying out environmental assessments and places appraisal in the context of relevant policies and at a geographical scale at which feature matters (i.e. international, national, regional, county, district, local or site). Data received through desk study and field-based surveys were used and evaluated on species rarity, abundance and diversity within the Survey Area to assess the biodiversity importance of the breeding bird populations recorded during the field surveys. Professional judgement was also applied where necessary. Relevant published national and local guidance and

criteria can be used, where available, to inform the assessment of biodiversity importance and to assist consistency in evaluation.

3.5 Assumptions and limitations

- 3.5.1 There were a number of modifications to the Order limits, which in turn resulted in minor modifications to the Survey Area used during the course of the survey for breeding birds. The zone around the Order limits, forming the Survey Area, was such that it allowed for minor modifications to the Scheme without reducing efficacy of the survey. Whilst it is acknowledged that individual territories of some species may have been missed, due to small areas of the Order limits not being surveyed (<1%), such modifications to the Scheme did not significantly alter the conclusions drawn within this report. Sufficient representatives of all habitat types have been covered within the entirety of the optimal survey period, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of bird species and assemblages present.
- 3.5.2 Therefore, sufficient information was gathered during the assessment to provide a representative sample of the breeding bird population present within the Order limits.
- 3.5.3 No territory mapping surveys of the Grid Connection Corridor were undertaken, however, the Grid Connection Corridor was visited by experienced ornithologists in conjunction with other ecological surveys visits and species of conservation interest, i.e. as per Paragraph 3.4.1 were recorded, where present.

4. Results

4.1 Desk study

- 4.1.1 The data search, undertaken through DLRC, returned over 1,000 records of 128 bird species, including specially protected or notable bird species (see Section 2) from within the Study Area and from the preceding ten years from the request date. A list of the 128 species recorded during the desk study is included in Annex B (Confidential).
- 4.1.2 Of these 128 bird species (some of which are on more than one list):
- a. 16 specially protected species that are listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (Ref. 1);
 - b. 11 specially protected species that are listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive (Ref. 2);
 - c. 23 species are listed as a SPI in the UK (Ref. 6);
 - d. 18 species have action plans proposed on the species audit for Doncaster (see Table 1);
 - e. 30 species are included on the BoCC Red List (Ref. 11, Ref. 12); and
 - f. 43 species are included on the BoCC Amber List (Ref. 11, Ref. 12).

4.2 Field Survey

- 4.2.1 Seventy-seven species (including species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (Ref. 1) and Annex 1 of the Birds Directive (Ref. 2) as presented in Annex B (Confidential)) were recorded during surveys of breeding birds between March and July 2023, and April and July 2024. A summary of the breeding and conservation status of the 77 species recorded during the survey, with the numbers of territories identified (or thought likely in the case of probable and possible records) is provided in Table 3.
- 4.2.2 Of the 77 species recorded within the Survey Area, territories of 40 species were confirmed and probable or possible territories of a further 14 species were also identified within the Survey Area, resulting in a breeding bird assemblage of 54 species. Records relating to the remaining 23 species were of non-breeding species.
- 4.2.3 From the breeding assemblage of 54 species, recorded during field surveys (some species are on more than one list):
- a. No species are listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA, 1981 (as amended) (Ref. 1); or listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive (Ref. 2);
 - b. 11 species are listed as SPI in the UK (Ref. 6);
 - c. Seven species are listed as a priority Species in Doncaster (see Table 1);
 - d. Nine species are included on the BoCC Red List (Ref. 11, Ref. 12); and
 - e. 16 species are included on the BoCC Amber List (Ref. 11, Ref. 12).
- 4.2.4 As discussed in Paragraph 3.3.10 of this report, for species that are widespread throughout the Survey Area, common within South Yorkshire (and Doncaster) and the UK and are not species of conservation concern

(i.e. not listed on one or more of the lists of conservation concern as detailed in this report), the number of breeding territories of such species (including probable or possible) has not been calculated and these are referred to in Table 3 as being present (P).

Table 3: Breeding status, number of territories and conservation designations of birds recorded within the Survey Area

Species (English name) and scientific name	Conservation designation applicable)	Breeding Territory Status (where applicable)	Number of territories of breeding species (where applicable)	Supporting Notes
Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>	-	Confirmed	2	-
Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i>	-	Non-breeding	-	-
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	BoCC Amber	Non-breeding	-	-
Gadwall <i>Mareca strapera</i>	BoCC Amber	Confirmed	1	One pair in suitable habitat on river/floodwater near to Topham Ferry Bridge on the River Went.
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	BoCC Amber	Confirmed	5	Associated with the River Went and wet ditches.
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	BoCC Amber	Non-breeding	-	-
Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>	-	Probable	(1)	Single pair in suitable habitat around Topham Ferry Bridge.
Red-legged Partridge <i>Alectoris rufa</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-
Grey Partridge <i>Perdix perdix</i>	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	Confirmed	4	Associated with arable and fallow land.
Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-

Species (English name) and scientific name	Conservation designation (where applicable)	Breeding Territory (where applicable)	Breeding Status	Number of territories of breeding species (where applicable)	Supporting Notes
Spoonbill <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber		Non-breeding	-	Single bird seen on a flooded area to the north of the survey area in April 2024.
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	-		Non-breeding	-	-
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Annex 1		Non-breeding	-	-
Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	BoCC Amber		Possible	(1)	Encountered occasionally hunting throughout Survey Area.
Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1		Non-breeding	-	-
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	-		Probable	(1)	-
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	BoCC Amber		Confirmed	1	Associated with the River Went.
Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	-		Confirmed	P	Nests located in the vicinity of Topham Ferry Bridge.
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	-		Possible	(1)	Pair present in suitable habitat around Topham Ferry Bridge, on the River Went.
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	SPI, BoCC Red		Confirmed	4	Associated with large, open fields.

Species (English name) and scientific name	Conservation designation applicable)	Breeding Territory (where Status applicable)	Number of territories of breeding species (where applicable)	Supporting Notes
Green Sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber	Non-breeding	-	-
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	Non-breeding	-	Curlew was recorded on the Solar PV Site in April 2023, but no subsequent evidence of breeding within the Order limits was identified.
Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	BoCC Amber	Non-breeding	-	-
Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	BoCC Amber	Non-breeding	-	-
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	BoCC Red	Non-breeding	-	-
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	SPI, BoCC Red	Non-breeding	-	-
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	BoCC Amber	Non-breeding	-	-
Stock Dove <i>Columba oenas</i>	BoCC Amber	Confirmed	2	-
Wood Pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	BoCC Amber	Confirmed	14	Recorded in hedgerows and scrub
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	-	Probable	P	-
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	SPI, BoCC Red	Non-breeding	-	-

Species (English name) and scientific name	Conservation designation (where applicable)	Breeding Territory Status (where applicable)	Number of territories of breeding species (where applicable)	Supporting Notes
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	WCA Sch. 1, DoBAP	Non-breeding	-	See Annex B (Confidential).
Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	BoCC Red	Non-breeding	-	-
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1	Non-breeding	-	Recorded along the River Went. Although no breeding behaviour was recorded.
Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos major</i>	-	Probable	P	-
Hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i>	WCA Sch. 1	Non-breeding	-	-
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	BoCC Amber	Confirmed	1	-
Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1	Non-breeding	-	-
Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	-	Possible	P	-
Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-
Jackdaw <i>Coloeus monedula</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	BoCC Amber	Non-breeding	-	-
Carrion Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-

Species (English name) and scientific name	Conservation designation applicable	Breeding Territory (where applicable)	Breeding Status	Number of territories of breeding species (where applicable)	Supporting Notes
Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP		Confirmed	43	Recorded in arable and ungrazed grassland fields.
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>	-		Non-breeding	-	-
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	-		Possible	P	-
House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>	BoCC Red		Non-breeding	-	-
Long-tailed Tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	-		Confirmed	P	-
Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	BoCC Amber		Confirmed	5	Associated with scrub, woodland and hedgerows.
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	-		Confirmed	P	-
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	BoCC Amber		Confirmed	7	Recorded close to the River Went.
Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	-		Confirmed	P	-
Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	-		Confirmed	P	-
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia curruca</i>	-		Probable	P	-
Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>	BoCC Amber		Confirmed	18	Associated with scrub and hedgerows.
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>	-		Probable	P	-

Species (English name) and Conservation scientific name	Conservation designation (where applicable)	Breeding Territory (where applicable)	Breeding Status	Number of territories of breeding species (where applicable)	Supporting Notes
Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	BoCC Amber		Confirmed	43	Associated with scrub and hedgerows.
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	SPI, BoCC Red		Non-breeding	-	-
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	-		Confirmed	P	-
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP		Confirmed	11	Recorded near woodland, scrub and hedgerows.
Redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber		Non-breeding	-	-
Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	BoCC Red		Possible	(1)	-
Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	-		Confirmed	P	-
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	SPI, BoCC Red		Confirmed	Minimum 5 colonies	Colonial species, with large numbers present around agricultural buildings with suitable nesting opportunities.
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i>	SPI, BoCC Amber		Confirmed	16	Associated with scrub and hedgerows across the Order limits
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP		Confirmed	5	Associated with arable land.
Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	-		Confirmed	P	-

Species (English name) and Conservation scientific name	Conservation designation applicable)	Breeding Territory (where Status	Number of territories of breeding species (where applicable)	Supporting Notes
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	BoCC Amber	Confirmed	12	Recorded in land close to the River Went and in fallow/uncropped land.
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP	Possible	(1)	-
Greenfinch <i>Chloris chloris</i>	BoCC Red	Confirmed	4	Associated with mature trees and scrub.
Linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i>	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	Confirmed	Minimum 5 colonies	Colonial species, associated with dense scrub and hedgerows
Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	-	Confirmed	P	-
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	SPI, BoCC Red	Confirmed	8	Associated with scrub and hedgerows bordering arable land.
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP	Confirmed	11	Associated with watercourses and scrub.

4.3 Determination of Roosting and Nesting Sites for Barn Owl

- 4.3.1 Surveys to determine likely roosting or nesting sites for Barn Owl identified numerous features (e.g. trees and buildings) that could potentially support Barn Owl (using the methods detailed in Paragraphs 3.3.13 to 3.3.23), but no evidence of nesting was recorded. More details of these surveys are presented in Annex B (Confidential).

5. Evaluation

- 5.1.1 The desk study and field surveys were used to determine the importance of the Order limits for breeding birds, and this is presented in the following sections.
- 5.1.2 In combination, the desk study and field surveys identified 129 bird species within 2 km of the Order limits, of which 77 species were recorded within the Order limits and 54 of those formed the breeding assemblage.
- 5.1.3 Details of each of the 129 species recorded within the Study Area are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Desk Study and Field Survey Data of Birds Recorded within the 2 km Study Area

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Barn Owl	WCA Sch. 1, DoBAP	✓	✓	X	See Annex B (Confidential).
Barnacle Goose	Annex 1, BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Bittern	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP	✓	X	X	No suitable breeding habitat (large reedbed) is within the Order limits for this species.
Blackbird	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Blackcap	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Black-headed Gull	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	Not recorded as a breeding species.
Blue Tit	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Brambling	WCA Sch. 1	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Bullfinch	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Buzzard	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Canada Goose	-	✓	✓	X	-
Carrion Crow	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Cetti's Warbler	WCA Sch. 1	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Chaffinch	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Chiffchaff	-	✓	✓	✓	-

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Coal Tit	-	✓	X	X	-
Collared Dove	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Common Gull	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	Not recorded as a breeding species.
Common Sandpiper	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	-
Common Tern	Annex 1, BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	No suitable breeding habitat (large water bodies) is within the Order limits for this species.
Coot	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Cormorant	-	✓	X	X	-
Crane	Annex 1, BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the restricted breeding range for this species.
Cuckoo	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	✓	X	Not recorded as a breeding species.
Curlew	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	✓	X	Curlew was recorded on the Solar PV Site in April 2023, but no subsequent evidence of breeding was identified. The species is present and likely to be breeding (or attempting to breed) within the wider landscape but not the Order limits itself.
Dunlin	BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Dunnock	SPI, BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Fieldfare	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Firecrest	WCA Sch. 1	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Gadwall	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Garden Warbler	-	✓	X	X	-
Goldcrest	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Goldeneye	BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Goosander	-	✓	X	X	-
Grasshopper Warbler	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Great Black-backed Gull	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Great Crested Grebe	-	✓	X	X	-
Great Spotted Woodpecker	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Great Tit	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Green Sandpiper	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Green Woodpecker	DoBAP	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Greenfinch	BoCC Red	✓	✓	✓	
Greenshank	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Grey Heron	-	✓	✓	X	-
Grey Partridge	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Grey Wagtail	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Greylag Goose	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	-
Hawfinch	BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Herring Gull	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	✓	X	Not recorded as a breeding species.
Hobby	WCA Sch. 1	✓	✓	X	Not recorded as a breeding species.
House Martin	BoCC Red	✓	✓	X	Not recorded as a breeding species.
House Sparrow	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Jackdaw	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Jay	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Kestrel	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Kingfisher	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1	✓	✓	X	Recorded along the River Went. Although no breeding behaviour was recorded.
Lapwing	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Lesser Black-backed Gull	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	Not recorded as a breeding species.
Lesser Redpoll	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Lesser Whitethroat	-	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Linnet	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Little Egret	Annex 1	✓	✓	X	Species recorded infrequently foraging along the River Went, but no evidence of breeding recorded.
Little Grebe	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Little Owl	-	✓	X	X	Not recorded during surveys of breeding birds.
Little Ringed Plover	WCA Sch. 1, DoBAP	✓	X	X	Not recorded during surveys of breeding birds.
Long-eared Owl	-	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Long-tailed Tit	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Magpie	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Mallard	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	Associated with the River Went and wet ditches.
Mandarin Duck	-	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Marsh Harrier	Annex 1, BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Marsh Tit	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Meadow Pipit	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Merlin	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Mistle Thrush	BoCC Red	✓	✓	✓	See Table 2.
Moorhen	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 2.
Mute Swan	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Nuthatch	DoBAP	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Oystercatcher	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Peregrine	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1	✓	✓	X	An adult male in flight to the north of the Order limits was the only record.
Pheasant	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Pied Wagtail	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Pink-footed Goose	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Pintail	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Pochard	BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Red Kite	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1	✓	✓	X	Species encountered very infrequently in flight to the north of the Survey Area, outside the Order limits.
Red-legged Partridge	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Redshank	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Redstart	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Redwing	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Reed Bunting	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Reed Warbler	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Robin	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Rook	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	Rookeries noted outside of the Order limits.
Sand Martin	-	✓	✓	X	-
Sedge Warbler	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Shelduck	-	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Shoveler	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Siskin	-	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Skylark	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Snipe	BoCC Amber, DoBAP	✓	✓	X	Recorded near the River Went during early spring surveys, likely late returning non-breeding birds.
Song Thrush	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Sparrowhawk	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Spoonbill	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber	X	✓	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Spotted Flycatcher	BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Starling	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	✓	X	Not a breeding species within the Order limits.
Stock Dove	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Swallow	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Swift	BoCC Red	✓	✓	X	Not a breeding species within the Order limits.
Tawny Owl	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Teal	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	X	Not a breeding species within the Order limits.
Tree Pipit	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Tree Sparrow	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Treecreeper	-	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.

Common (English) name	Conservation designation	Within Study Area?	Within Survey Area?	Breeding territories?	Supporting Notes
Tufted Duck	-	✓	✓	✓	Single pair in suitable habitat around Topham Ferry Bridge.
Turtle Dove	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Water Rail	-	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Wheatear	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Whitethroat	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Whooper Swan	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Order limits are outside of the geographical breeding range for this species.
Wigeon	BoCC Amber	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Willow Tit	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Willow Warbler	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Woodcock	BoCC Red	✓	X	X	Not recorded within the Order limits.
Woodpigeon	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Wren	BoCC Amber	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Yellow Wagtail	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.
Yellowhammer	SPI, BoCC Red	✓	✓	✓	See Table 3.

5.2 Species Abundance

- 5.2.1 In addition to evaluating a site based on its populations of breeding birds in relation to legal status, rarity and conservation value, consideration has to be given to the value of a site for the population of individual species that it supports. This can be done by comparing the population present within the Order limits with the national and county breeding populations for that species.
- 5.2.2 No species are present within the Order limits in numbers of national significance, i.e. 1% or more of the UK population, when compared to national population estimates as presented in Woodward et al. (Ref. 17).
- 5.2.3 County population estimates for some of the species afforded special statutory protection and/or of conservation importance are not available. However, whilst the majority of species of conservation importance that were recorded within the Order limits are declining in the UK, most remain widespread.
- 5.2.4 The populations of species occurring within the Survey Area are low and do not approach 1% of the county populations and are considered to be of no more than Local importance.

5.3 Species Diversity

- 5.3.1 To measure species diversity, the breeding assemblage (54) recorded in the Survey Area was evaluated against the criteria developed by Fuller (Ref. 21) (see Table 2) and taking into consideration that species diversity has declined significantly since the criteria were developed. Evaluation was also made of the species assemblage and numbers recorded during surveys in the Order limits with respect to relevant criteria (i.e. for breeding birds) for selection of LWSs in Doncaster (as detailed in Paragraph 3.4.9 of this appendix).
- 5.3.2 The overall breeding assemblage of 54 species recorded during the breeding bird survey reflects the extent of the Survey Area and the diverse range of habitats present. To inform a focussed impact assessment the following breeding bird assemblages are considered:
- An overall breeding bird assemblage approaching county importance, with particular emphasis on species of elevated conservation value forming a breeding farmland bird assemblage of district importance. These species are associated with areas of arable farmland within the Order limits with a range of species including Grey Partridge, Skylark, Yellow Wagtail and Linnet. The number of recorded territories for species, may not be of importance within the Doncaster area, but in recognition of the number of species, this may also fulfil the classification for the criteria for LWS selection within Doncaster – *MS2 – Any site that supports a good population of a species that has undergone a significant decline, documented at a national, regional or local level.*

5.4 Species Distribution

- 5.4.1 The locations of SPI and BoCC Red-listed species within the Order limits (see Table 3) and locations of specially protected species are presented in Figure 8-7-1 (Annex A) and Figure 8-7-2 (Annex B (Confidential)) which will

be presented to key stakeholders only. In general, concentrations of species were found within the most suitable habitats to support each individual species' needs (i.e. species reliant on woodland habitat were found within or close to woodland habitat in the Order limits).

6. Conclusions

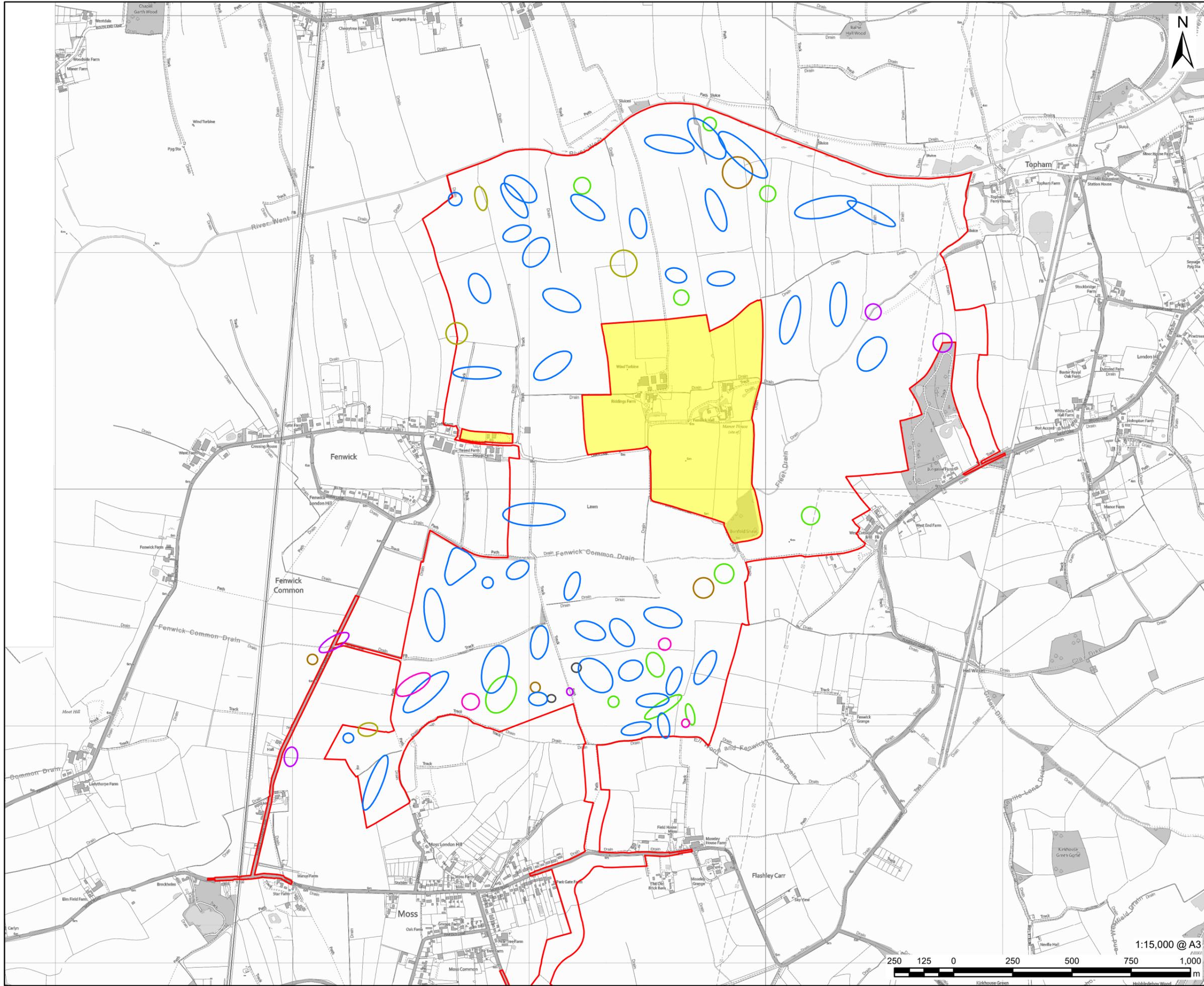
- 6.1.1 A total of 77 bird species were recorded within the Order limits, of which 40 were confirmed as holding breeding territories and a further 14 species were holding probable/possible breeding territories, resulting in a breeding assemblage of 54 species.
- 6.1.2 From the breeding assemblage of 54 species, no species are listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA; eleven species are listed as SPI in the UK; nine species are included on the BoCC Red List; sixteen species are included on the BoCC Amber List; and nine species are listed as a priority species in Doncaster.
- 6.1.3 No species are present within the Order limits in numbers of national significance, i.e. 1% or more of the UK breeding population.
- 6.1.4 Species breeding assemblage and territories of individual species are of Local importance, but the overall breeding bird assemblage is approaching county importance, with particular emphasis on species of elevated conservation value forming a breeding farmland bird assemblage of district importance.

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Annex A Figures

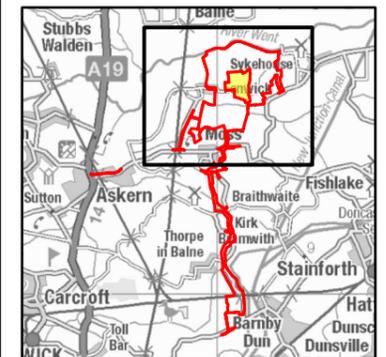


LEGEND

- Order limits
- Land not included in the Order limits

Farmland Bird Species of Conservation Concern

- L. Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)
- LI Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*)
- MP Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)
- P. Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)
- S. Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)
- Y. Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*)
- YW Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)



NOTES

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ISSUE PURPOSE
Environmental Statement

PROJECT NUMBER
60698207

FIGURE TITLE
Territory Distribution of Farmland Bird Species that are of Conservation Concern within the Order limits

FIGURE NUMBER
Figure 8-7-1



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Annex B Barn Owl Survey Results (Confidential)

Annex C Data Search Records from Within 2 km of the Order limits

Common (English) Name	Scientific Name	Year of Most Recent Record	Conservation Designation
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	2014	WCA Sch. 1, DoBAP
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	2015	Annex 1, BoCC Amber
Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	2017	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	2018	-
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	2017	-
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	2018	-
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	2017	WCA Sch. 1
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	2018	-
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	2018	-
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	2018	-
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	2021	WCA Sch. 1
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	2018	-
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	2018	-
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	2018	-
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	2018	-
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	2017	Annex 1, BoCC Amber
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	2017	-
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	2018	-
Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	2015	Annex 1, BoCC Amber
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	2023	SPI, BoCC Red
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP

Common (English) Name	Scientific Name	Year of Most Recent Record	Conservation Designation
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	2014	BoCC Red
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Amber
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	2018	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Red
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	2015	WCA Sch. 1
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	2021	-
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	2017	-
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	2017	-
Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	2015	BoCC Red
Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	2016	-
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	2021	SPI, BoCC Red
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	2017	-
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	2018	-
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	2018	-
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	2017	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	2018	DoBAP
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	2018	BoCC Red
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	2017	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	2018	-
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	2017	BoCC Red
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	2017	WCA Sch. 1

Common (English) Name	Scientific Name	Year of Most Recent Record	Conservation Designation
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	2018	BoCC Red
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	2018	-
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	2017	-
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	2017	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	2021	SPI, BoCC Red
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>	2014	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>	2017	-
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	2021	Annex 1
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	2021	-
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	2018	-
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	2017	WCA Sch. 1, DoBAP
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	2018	-
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	2017	-
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2018	-
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	2015	-
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	2017	Annex 1, BoCC Amber
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	2017	SPI, BoCC Red
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	2018	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Red

Common (English) Name	Scientific Name	Year of Most Recent Record	Conservation Designation
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	2018	BoCC Red
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	2018	-
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	2018	DoBAP
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	2016	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	2018	-
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	2018	-
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	2015	BoCC Amber
Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	2017	BoCC Red
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	2017	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	2017	-
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	2018	WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	2017	-
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	2018	-
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	2017	-
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	2021	BoCC Amber
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	2017	-
Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	2017	-
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	2017	BoCC Amber, DoBAP
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Amber, DoBAP

Common (English) Name	Scientific Name	Year of Most Recent Record	Conservation Designation
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	2017	BoCC Red, DoBAP
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	2018	-
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	2018	-
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	2018	BoCC Red
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	2017	SPI, BoCC Red
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	2017	-
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	2018	-
Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	2011	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	2018	-
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	2017	BoCC Amber
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	2017	Annex 1, WCA Sch. 1, BoCC Amber
Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	2020	BoCC Amber
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	2017	BoCC Red
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	2018	BoCC Amber
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	2021	SPI, BoCC Red, DoBAP
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	2018	SPI, BoCC Red

An aerial photograph of a vast solar farm at sunset. The rows of solar panels stretch across the landscape, creating a strong sense of perspective. The sky is a deep, dark orange, and the sun is low on the horizon, casting long, dark shadows across the panels. The overall mood is serene and powerful.

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