



WHITESTONE
solar farm

WHITESTONE SOLAR FARM

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6.20 Appendix 6.6: Breeding Bird Survey Report (Clean)

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ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

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Glossary

Term	Meaning
<i>Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) Area</i>	This is an area which is defined for breeding birds which includes the as well as potential spatial and temporal considerations of the impacts on relevant receptors.
<i>Cable Corridors</i>	Corridors within which the high voltage cables would be constructed.
<i>Development Consent Order (DCO)</i>	A statutory order made by the relevant Secretary of State pursuant to The Planning Act 2008 to authorise a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project which provides consent for the project and means that a range of other consents, such as planning permission and listed building consent, will not be required. A DCO can also include rights of compulsory acquisition.
<i>Environment Statement (ES)</i>	Environmental Statement which presents the environmental information relating to the Proposed Development and assessment of potential effects. The ES has been prepared as part of the Application.
<i>Long Lane 400kV Substation</i>	The new 400 kilovolt National Grid substation proposed on land immediately east of Long Lane, Brinsworth, S60 4JJ.
<i>Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)</i>	NSIPs are large scale major development projects in England or Wales which fall into the following categories: • Energy; • Transport; • Waste; • Waste Water; and • Water. The primary legislation which applies to NSIPs is called the Planning Act 2008. When these types of development meet the threshold described in the Planning Act 2008, they need a Development Consent Order before they can be built.
<i>Order Limits</i>	Total area comprising the Site and Cable Corridors.
<i>The Applicant</i>	Whitestone Net Zero Ltd
<i>The Proposed Development</i>	The proposed Whitestone Solar Farm.
<i>The Site</i>	The land planned to be used for solar PV array and associated infrastructure, BESS, substations, and landscaping and habitat enhancement. The Site is split into W1, W2, and W3.
<i>Whitestone 1 (W1)</i>	The northern parcels of the Whitestone Solar Farm.
<i>Whitestone 2 (W2)</i>	The middle parcels of the Whitestone Solar Farm.
<i>Whitestone 3 (W3)</i>	The southern parcels of the Whitestone Solar Farm.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
<i>AIL</i>	Abnormal Indivisible Load

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Acronym	Meaning
<i>BBS</i>	Breeding Bird Survey
<i>BESS</i>	Battery Energy Storage System
<i>BoCC</i>	Birds of Conservation Concern
<i>BOU</i>	British Ornithologists' Union
<i>DCO</i>	Development Consent Order
<i>E</i>	East
<i>ERM</i>	Environmental Resources Management Ltd
<i>ES</i>	Environmental Statement
<i>LWS</i>	Local Wildlife Site
<i>N</i>	North
<i>NE</i>	North East
<i>NERC</i>	Natural Environment and Rural Communities
<i>NNW</i>	North North West
<i>NSIP</i>	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
<i>NW</i>	North West
<i>PRoW</i>	Public Right of Way
<i>PV</i>	Photovoltaic
<i>S</i>	South
<i>SE</i>	South East
<i>SPI</i>	Species of Principal Importance
<i>SSE</i>	South South East
<i>SSW</i>	South South West
<i>SW</i>	South West
<i>W</i>	West
<i>W1</i>	Whitestone 1
<i>W2</i>	Whitestone 2
<i>W3</i>	Whitestone 3
<i>WNW</i>	West North West
<i>WSW</i>	West South West

Units of Measurement

Acronym	Meaning
<i>ha</i>	Hectares
<i>km</i>	Kilometres
<i>kV</i>	Kilovolts
<i>m</i>	Metres
<i>MW</i>	Megawatt

6.6 Breeding Bird Survey Report

Introduction

- 6.6.1 This Appendix has been prepared on behalf of Whitestone Net Zero Ltd ('the Applicant') to set out the survey methodology and results of breeding bird surveys undertaken to inform the Development Consent Order (DCO) Application for the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of Whitestone Solar Farm (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development').
- 6.6.2 This Appendix is supported by **ES Volume 3, Appendix 6.7: Confidential Ornithology Confidential Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**.
- 6.6.3 This Appendix is supported by the following figures in **Volume 3, Figures [EN0110020/APP/6.19]** of this Environmental Statement (ES):
- **Figure 6.1: Land Parcel Reference**
 - **Figure 6.6.1: Site Boundary and BBS Parcels**
 - **Figure 6.6.2: Access Limitations**
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 - **Figure 6.6.5: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Skylark: W3**
 - **Figure 6.6.6: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Lapwing, Grey Partridge and Yellow Wagtail: W1**
 - **Figure 6.6.7: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Lapwing, Grey Partridge and Yellow Wagtail: W2; and**
 - **Figure 6.6.8: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Lapwing, Grey Partridge and Yellow Wagtail: W3.**
- 6.6.4 This Appendix is supported by the following annexes:
- **Annex 6.6A: Bird Species Names and Conservation Designations**
 - **Annex 6.6B: Weather Summary; and**
 - **Annex 6.6C: Access Summary.**

The Order Limits

- 6.6.1 The extent of the Order Limits are described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: The Site and Surrounding Area [EN0110020/APP/6.3]** and shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 3.1: Order Limits [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**. The Proposed Development is described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 5: The Proposed Development [EN0110020/APP/6.5]** and shown spatially on the **Works Plans [EN0110020/APP/2.3.1]**.

The Proposed Development

- 6.6.2 The Proposed Development involves the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of more than 100MW of solar photovoltaic (PV) array, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), onsite substations and

supporting infrastructure, and grid connection infrastructure. The grid connection infrastructure would connect the Proposed Development to the new National Grid substation at Brinsworth (Long Lane 400kV Substation).

- 6.6.3 As the Proposed Development would have a generating capacity in excess of 100MW, it is considered to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.
- 6.6.4 The Proposed Development would be located within the Order Limits. The Order Limits encompass the total area of the Proposed Development comprising the Site and Cable Corridors. The Site is specifically the land that is planned to be used for solar PV array and associated infrastructure, BESS, substations, landscaping and habitat enhancement. The Site is split into Whitestone 1 (W1), Whitestone 2 (W2) and Whitestone 3 (W3).
- 6.6.5 Highway Works are sections of the highway network that will contain localised improvements, such as improvements to road edge where it is deteriorated, or temporary highway and traffic works required to safely accommodate the Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) deliveries. These areas will support the movement of construction vehicles on narrower sections of the local highway network within parts of the construction vehicle routes to the Site, see **Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13.1]**.

Methods

Survey Methodology

- 6.6.6 A Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) was carried out between April and June 2025 to quantify the breeding bird assemblage within the Site. The survey followed a reduced version of the Bird Survey and Assessment Steering Group guidance¹. Surveyors walked slowly around the BBS Area (the Site at the time of the survey and 200m buffer) recording and mapping all species of conservation importance, defined as species meeting one or more of the following criteria:
- 6.6.7 Amber- and red-listed species of conservation importance²;
- Species listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive³
 - Schedule 1-listed species on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)⁴; and / or
 - Species of Principal Importance (SPI) listed on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006⁵.
- 6.6.8 Behavioural observations were also recorded when applicable. The BBS Area was split into seven BBS parcels, each surveyed during one morning by two surveyors. Therefore, each visit to the Site consisted of seven survey days. The BBS Parcels are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 6.6.1: Site Boundary and BBS Parcels [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**.
- 6.6.9 Species names used in this report follow the British List maintained by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU), and a full list of species referred to in this report is provided in **Annex 6.6A**.
- 6.6.10 A Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designated for skylark lies within and adjacent to BBS Parcel 6. Where possible, fields within this LWS but outside the Site were surveyed from public rights of way (PROWs).

- 6.6.11 Four visits were completed between April and June 2025. Full adoption of the method would require six visits; however, this is recommended to identify the breeding assemblage within complex habitats, such as lowland deciduous woodland, which is present within the BBS Area, but only in small, fragmented areas. Much of the Site is intensive arable farmland, which is more open, and bird species are more easily detected. A four-visit survey exceeds or is comparable to recommended methods for farmland species key to the assessment, such as lapwing, skylark, and yellow wagtail⁶.
- 6.6.12 Surveys were carried out in good weather conditions and lasted for up to four hours. A summary of weather conditions recorded during the surveys can be found in **Annex 6.6B**.

Data Analysis

- 6.6.13 Data analysis focussed on identifying the breeding territory locations of four target species: lapwing, grey partridge, skylark and yellow wagtail. These species are considered more likely to be displaced by the Proposed Development as they nest in open habitats where solar panels would be situated.
- 6.6.14 To analyse the data, all registrations of these species were transferred from the field maps to produce 'species summary maps' from which the number and distribution of likely breeding territories for each species could be determined by identifying clusters of activity in the same area on separate visits. This method was based on that described by Bibby *et al.*, (2000)⁷, with an element of professional judgement.
- 6.6.15 For each species, a precautionary approach was taken but the threshold for whether a species was deemed to be holding territory varied, based on the species' ecology and territories were classified as either 'confirmed' or 'possible':
- Lapwing: a territory was deemed to be 'confirmed' if a bird was seen on a nest, or if birds were displaying or demonstrating other breeding behaviour on two or more occasions. If birds were seen in suitable breeding habitat on one occasion, then a territory was classed as 'possible'
 - Grey partridge: a territory was deemed to be 'confirmed' if chicks, or another definitive sign of breeding (such as a nest, or distraction display) was recorded. If birds were seen in suitable habitat on at least one occasion, a territory was deemed to be 'possible'; and
 - Skylark and yellow wagtail: if birds were recorded singing or demonstrating other breeding behaviour in the same area on three visits a territory was deemed 'confirmed'. If birds were recorded singing or demonstrating other breeding behaviour on two visits a territory was deemed 'possible'.
- 6.6.16 To provide a measure of abundance and breeding activity across the BBS Area for other species of conservation importance, the maximum number of singing males (or birds showing other definitive signs of breeding such as carrying food), during a single visit to the Site is provided. Additionally, the average maximum number of singing males across all four visits has been calculated. These species typically nest within or close to boundary features and, while they may forage in some arable crops or fields, potential effects are reduced compared to the target species reliant on more open habitats.

Survey Limitations

- 6.6.17 All surveys sampled diurnal periods in the morning. The habitats within the BBS Area are unsuitable or suboptimal for many species that are typically more active at dusk.
- 6.6.18 Methodology recommends that surveys start within 30 minutes of sunrise. Many of the surveys started later in the morning (up to an hour and 15 minutes after sunrise) but mostly finished before 10:00. Three surveys finished later than this, all at BBS Parcel 7: 11:45 for the first visit, 11:50 for the third and 10:15 for the last.
- 6.6.19 Weather during surveys was generally fine, with low winds, no rain and normal temperatures for the time of year. One survey in BBS Parcels 3 and 7 started late to avoid heavy rain early in the morning. Weather conditions are summarised for each BBS visit in **Annex 6.6B**.
- 6.6.20 There were some access limitations, for example, when access was not granted in time before the survey date or for safety reasons, e.g. shooting activities. Where possible, such land was surveyed from public rights of way or from adjacent land where access was agreed. In some cases, this was not possible, and some fields were not visited during one or more of the four survey visits. A summary of access to the BBS Area during BBS can be found in **Table 6.6.1**, whilst a detailed review of access limitations to each land parcel during each survey visit can be found in **Annex 6.6C**. In some cases, land parcels consisted of a single field, and in others they consisted of clusters of fields (see **ES Volume 3, Figures 6.6.1: Site Boundary and BBS Parcels [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**). The number of fields within each land parcel is summarised in **Table 6.6.9**. Access to an individual land parcel was classified as:
- Full: no access limitations or, in some cases, small fields with no access that were covered completely from public rights of way
 - Partial: no access to some of the fields within the land parcel or, fields with no access were covered in part from public rights of ways or scanned from adjacent fields for which access was granted; and
 - None: No access to fields within the land parcel, as such fields could not be surveyed.
- 6.6.21 BBS Parcel 6 was not surveyed in April due to access limitations; however, two visits were made in June to complete the four visits.

Table 6.6.1: Access to Land Parcels During BBS Surveys

Access	Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4
Full	46	49	50	49
Partial	14	14	9	6
None	4	1	2	6

- 6.6.22 Fields for which there were access limitations are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 6.6.2: Access Limitations [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**.
- 6.6.23 Despite the limitations identified, the BBS results are considered an accurate reflection of the breeding season ornithology interests within the BBS Area. Any territories missed due to access limitations are likely to represent a low proportion

of territories within the wider area. Additionally, the habitats present in fields that were not visited were comparative with fields nearby that were visited and the breeding bird assemblage is assumed to be similar.

Data Analysis Limitations

- 6.6.24 The maximum number of singing males during a single visit and average maximum number of singing males across all four visits was used to summarise territories for non-target passerine species. Not all species lend themselves to this approach based on their ecology and / or behaviour.
- 6.6.25 Some fields had access constraints (e.g. limited to PROWs) during some or all visits, whilst other fields had no direct access during any visits. This may have resulted in an under-estimate of key target species. To account for this limitation, results have been reviewed and, where relevant, extrapolated to provide an estimate of territories across the whole Site including areas that, based on habitat suitability, species may have been missed. The results include a review of habitat use (see **ES Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: UK Habitat Survey Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**) to determine if a species was likely to be under-recorded. Where fields were surveyed in full, the number of territories per hectare was calculated for different habitat types (e.g. Cereal crops, Non-cereal crops, Modified grassland). Territory densities were calculated using the sum of confirmed and possible territories. These values were then be used to estimate an approximate number of territories that may have been missed in 17 fields with limited or no access.

Results

- 6.6.26 A total of 80 bird species were recorded during the BBS, including 44 species of conservation importance. The assemblage and territory densities are considered typical of the habitats present within the BBS Area and geographic location of the Site. All four target species showed evidence of breeding or holding territory within the BBS Area.

Target Species

Lapwing

- 6.6.27 A total of eight confirmed and 16 possible lapwing pairs were identified within the BBS Area. An additional confirmed pair and eight possible pairs were identified outside the BBS Area in the immediate surroundings (**Table 6.6.2**). Successful breeding was not observed at any territories. Approximate territory centres for lapwing are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figures 6.6.6 to 6.6.8: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Lapwing, Grey Partridge and Yellow Wagtail [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**.
- 6.6.28 A post-breeding flock of 21 was also observed in BBS Parcel 1 during the third visit.

Table 6.6.2: Lapwing Territories Identified Within the BBS Area

BBS Parcel	Area	Confirmed pairs	Possible pairs	Notes / nearby territories
1	Whitestone 1	1	5	The confirmed territory was located in field 34F. Possible territories were identified in fields 34A, 34F and 35F.
2	Whitestone 1	2	2	The two confirmed territories were located in field 34D. One of the possible territories was also located in this field, with a second in 34E. An additional four possible territories in the buffer: two between 36A and 162G, and two in the field west of 162B
3	Whitestone 2	0	4	All in parcel 3a
4	Whitestone 2	5	2	Confirmed territories were identified in fields 90 and 112C. Possible territories were identified in fields 90, 105 and 101C. An additional confirmed territory in the buffer in the field north of 165A
5	Whitestone 2	0	0	None recorded.
6	Whitestone 2	0	0	Three confirmed territories in the buffer in the field adjacent to 125A / 133C and another north of 128 A/B
7	Whitestone 3	0	3	One possible territory in field 189 and two in field 191
Total		8	16	

6.6.29 All lapwing pairs were recorded in cropland. Eight fields (62%) were Cereal crops, with the remaining five fields comprising: Non-cereal crops, Modified grassland/non-cereal crops, Legume-rich Ley, Arable/horticulture, and Other cereal crops, respectively.

6.6.30 Of the 16 fields not surveyed in full, only one contained a cereal crop. While it is possible a very small number of pairs may have bred in that field, the number of pairs recorded across the Site was so small (approx. 0.025 pairs per hectare of Cereal crop) extrapolating the density equates to less than one pair in the un-surveyed field. It is therefore assumed the 24 lapwing territories identified during the BBS is an accurate reflection of the population within the BBS Area during 2025.

Grey Partridge

6.6.31 One grey partridge territory was confirmed when an adult was seen with young chicks. Other observations across the BBS Area in suitable habitat suggest breeding may be more widespread, but the ecology of the species means confirming breeding is often outside the scope of standard BBS methods. The origin of the birds is unknown and it is possible that some or all observations relate to local releases. Approximate territory centres for grey partridge are shown

in **ES Volume 3, Figures 6.6.6 to 6.6.8: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Lapwing, Grey Partridge and Yellow Wagtail [EN0110020/APP/6.19].**

Table 6.6.3: Grey Partridge Territories Identified within the BBS Area

BBS Parcel	Area	Confirmed territories	Possible territories	Notes / nearby territories
1	Whitestone 1	1	2	Adult with small chicks seen in field 34A. Possible territories were identified around fields 34F and 33.
2	Whitestone 1	0	1	A possible territory was identified in field 162D.
3	Whitestone 2	0	2	Possible territories were identified in fields 210 and 153A.
4	Whitestone 2	0	1	A possible territory was identified in field 112C.
5	Whitestone 2	0	1	A possible territory was identified in field 120. Another possible territory was located in the buffer west of 135A.
6	Whitestone 2	0	0	None recorded
7	Whitestone 3	0	0	None recorded
Total		1	7	

6.6.32 The confirmed breeding was in Cereal crop field. All but one of the possible territories were in Cereal crop, with one in a Modified grassland field. Only one of the fields with access limitations was a Cereal crop, and the number of territories identified was so small, that it is not possible to extrapolate results as it would result in less than one additional territory.

Skylark

6.6.33 A total of 90 confirmed skylark territories were identified within the BBS Area, along with a further 97 possible territories. Approximate territory centres for skylark are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figures 6.6.3 to 6.6.5: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Skylark [EN0110020/APP/6.19].**

Table 6.6.4: Skylark Territories Identified Within the BBS Area

BBS Parcel	Area	Confirmed territories	Possible territories	Notes / nearby territories
1	Whitestone 1	18	14	Additional one possible territory in the buffer.
2	Whitestone 1	20	14	Additional one confirmed and three possible territories in the buffer.
3	Whitestone 2	11	15	Additional four possible and one confirmed territory in the buffer.
4	Whitestone 2	11	17	An additional four possible and six confirmed territories in the buffer.

BBS Parcel	Area	Confirmed territories	Possible territories	Notes / nearby territories
5	Whitestone 2	4	18	An additional three possible territories in the buffer.
6	Whitestone 2	6	5	Additional four confirmed and three possible territories identified in the buffer.
7	Whitestone 3	20	14	An additional one possible territory in the buffer.
Total		90	97	

6.6.34 Skylark territories were found in most agricultural habitats across the Site, with territory density generally higher in arable fields. Based on observations in areas with good access, approximate territory densities within the Site were:

- Cereal crop (including habitats classified as stubble or arable): 0.16 territories/ha;
- Legume-rich ley and similar habitat: 0.14 territories/ha; and
- Modified grassland: 0.09 territories/ha.

6.6.35 Fields with limited access included 11 Modified Grassland, four Cereal crop, and one Legume-rich ley. Applying these densities to the respective areas of these habitats not surveyed results in an additional 18 skylark territories. This assumption increases the total skylark population in the BBS Area to 205 territories in total.

Yellow Wagtail

6.6.36 Yellow wagtail were present at low densities within the BBS Area: a small number of confirmed and possible territories were identified, mostly in the northern part of the Site. Approximate territory centres for yellow wagtail are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figures 6.6.6 to 6.6.8: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Lapwing, Grey Partridge and Yellow Wagtail [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**.

Table 6.6.5: Yellow Wagtail Territories Identified Within The BBS Area

BBS Parcel	Area	Confirmed Territories	Possible Territories	Notes / Nearby Territories
1	Whitestone 1	0	1	A possible territory was identified in field 30.
2	Whitestone 1	1	3	A territory was confirmed in 162B and possible territories were identified in fields 162A, and 162H.
3	Whitestone 2	0	1	A possible territory was identified in field 82D.
4	Whitestone 2	0	0	Two males were seen fighting during the first visit, but there were no further sightings.

BBS Parcel	Area	Confirmed Territories	Possible Territories	Notes / Nearby Territories
5	Whitestone 2	0	0	None recorded.
6	Whitestone 2	0	0	None recorded.
7	Whitestone 3	0	0	None recorded.
	Total	1	5	

6.6.37 Of the six territories, five were in Cereal crops and one in Non-cereal crop. Only one of the fields with access limitations was a Cereal crop (8.7ha in size), and one a Non-cereal crop (1.9ha) and the number of territories identified was so small, it is not possible to extrapolate results as it would result in less than one additional territory. It is therefore assumed the six territories identified during the BBS is an accurate reflection of the population within the BBS Area during 2025.

Non-Target Species

6.6.38 A total of 38 other species of conservation importance were recorded, of which 20 showed evidence of breeding or holding territory within the BBS Area. Passerine species of conservation importance are summarised in **Table 6.6.6**, which shows the maximum number of singing males (or individuals showing other definitive signs of breeding) recorded during a single visit and the average maximum number across all four visits.

Table 6.6.6: Non-Target Passerine Species of Conservation Importance Recorded Within the BBS Area Thought to be Holding Territories

Species	Maximum (Visit Number in Parentheses)	Average	Notes
Marsh Tit	1 (1/2)	0.8	Two records from BBS Parcel 7: a single singing male was recorded in woodland by field 190B in during visit one and another was recorded during visit two on the edge of Woodall north of field 196.
Willow warbler	13 (2)	9.3	Mostly recorded in the first two visits. Some individuals may have been migrants passing through the Site, but all were recorded singing in apparently suitable breeding habitat.
Sedge warbler	5 (4)	3.3	Most records were from BBS Parcel 3a, in the habitats along Ulley Brook. An additional single singing males recorded in BBS Parcel 2 and 3b.
Whitethroat	115 (2)	87.0	Widespread in hedgerow and scrub habitats across the Site and immediate surrounds,

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Species	Maximum (Visit Number in Parentheses)	Average	Notes
			recorded in all Parcels except 3b. The maximum count of 115 singing males recorded during visit 2 may have included some migrants, but all individuals were singing in suitable habitat.
Cetti's warbler	2 (2)	0.5	There was a single singing male in BBS Parcel 1 by Firsby Reservoir during the fourth visit and two singing males in BBS Parcel 3a along Ulley Brook during the second visit.
Song thrush	36 (3)	30.8	Common across woodland and scrub habitats within the Site and immediate surrounds.
Mistle thrush	5 (1/2)	3.5	Up to five singing males during the first two visits, mostly on the edges of the Site or within the buffer. Most records were from BBS Parcels 1 and 2, at the north end of the Site.
House sparrow ⁱ	N/A	N/A	Small colonies present around farms and houses within and adjacent to the Site.
Dunnock	80 (2)	75.0	Common in hedgerow and scrub habitats across the Site and immediate surrounds.
Meadow pipit	6 (1)	3.3	Recorded in BBS Parcels 3c, 5 and 7 in low numbers.
Bullfinch ⁱⁱ	1 (3/4)	0.5	This species may have been under-recorded during the BBS. For this species a more precautionary approach was taken and the two breeding records relate to pairs seen in suitable habitat.
Greenfinch	17 (2)	11.0	Mostly recorded in the southern part of the Site including eight singing males in and around BBS Parcel 7 during the second visit.

ⁱ House sparrow breed in colonies, usually around areas of human habitation. The method used to establish the number of non-target passerine species territories cannot estimate the number of house sparrow territories. Generally, house sparrows were found around farms and villages on / outside the Site boundary and were not recorded in areas likely to be impacted by The Proposed Development

ⁱⁱ Due to their secretive nature and difficulty to detect singing, bullfinch may have been under-recorded during the BBS. Therefore, for this species a more precautionary approach was taken and breeding records related to pairs seen in suitable habitat. Even so, this species was likely a more widespread breeder throughout the area than the BBS analysis suggests.

Species	Maximum (Visit Number in Parentheses)	Average	Notes
Linnet ⁱⁱⁱ	21 (2/4)	17.5	Recorded across the whole Site in suitable habitats, with the most records coming from BBS Parcel 2. No singing males were recorded in BBS Parcel 6, though the species was present, and likely breeding in the immediate surrounds. The number of territories present may be under-represented by the maximum number of singing males.
Yellowhammer	38 (3)	32.8	Common in hedgerow and scrub habitats across the Site and immediate surrounds. Most singing males were recorded from BBS Parcels 1, 2 and 4.
Reed bunting	13 (4)	9.5	Common at low densities across the whole Site and immediate surrounds. This species was recorded most in BBS Parcel 2.

- 6.6.39 Whilst woodpigeon and wren are species of conservation importance, both are common and widespread in the UK and their inclusion on Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) is based on the high UK population in the context of their wider European populations. Both species are common and widespread breeders throughout the Site.
- 6.6.40 Three non-passerine species of conservation importance showed evidence of breeding within / adjacent to the BBS Area: tawny owl, kestrel and stock dove. Stock dove pairs were seen in woodlands and around farms / villages across the Site and were likely breeding at low densities across throughout. Recently fledged kestrel chicks were seen at Penny Hill Wind Farm near BBS Parcels 4 / 5. Tawny owl chicks were observed on the edge of Clifton village by BBS Parcel 2 and at Slacks Farm by BBS Parcel 3b.
- 6.6.41 The remaining 18 species of conservation importance recorded related to birds overflying the BBS Area and, in most cases, the Site lacks suitable breeding resources for these species: greylag goose, mallard, swift, moorhen, oystercatcher, curlew, golden plover, common gull, black-headed gull, herring gull, lesser black-backed gull, little egret, sparrowhawk, marsh harrier, red kite, rook, house martin, starling and corn bunting.
- 6.6.42 An additional 35 common and widespread bird species (i.e. not of conservation importance^{iv}) were recorded, many of which were considered likely to be breeding or holding territory within the BBS Area: Canada goose, pheasant, red-legged partridge, feral pigeon, collared dove, cormorant, grey heron, buzzard, little owl, great spotted woodpecker, jay, magpie, jackdaw, carrion crow, raven, coal tit, blue

ⁱⁱⁱ Linnet are a semi-colonial breeder, and therefore the number of territories identified through counting the number of singing males may be under-representative of the true breeding population within the area.

^{iv} Green-listed or not assessed Birds of Conservation Concern

tit, great tit, sand martin, swallow, long-tailed tit, chiffchaff, reed warbler, blackcap, garden warbler, lesser whitethroat, goldcrest, nuthatch, treecreeper, blackbird, robin, stonechat, pied wagtail, chaffinch and goldfinch.

Summary

- 6.6.43 A BBS has been carried out to determine the breeding bird assemblage of the Site and its immediate surrounds (the BBS Area) to inform an impact assessment of potential effects for the Proposed Development.
- 6.6.44 Three schedule one species were considered to be breeding / holding territory within the Site, including Cetti's warbler and two species summarised in the Confidential Annex. Four target species, namely lapwing, grey partridge, skylark and yellow wagtail were recorded holding territory / breeding within the Site as well as a further 18 non-target species.
- 6.6.45 It is considered that the results of the BBS are an accurate representation of the breeding bird assemblage within and around the footprint of The Proposed Development.

References

- ¹ Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group (2025) Breeding bird survey methodology. Bird Survey Guidelines. Available at: <https://birdsurveyguidelines.org/methods/survey-method/> (Accessed: March 2026).
- ² Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D. and Win, I. (2021) The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List Assessment of Extinction Risk for Great Britain. *British Birds* 114, 723–747
- ³ The Birds Directive - European Commission (2025). Available online at [REDACTED] (Accessed March 2026)
- ⁴ UK Government (1981). Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>. (Accessed March 2026)
- ⁵ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>. (Accessed March 2026)
- ⁶ Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W., & Evans, J. (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods: A Manual of Techniques for UK Key Species*. The Royal Society for the protection of Birds, Sandy, Bedfordshire, England
- ⁷ Bibby, Burgess, Hill & Mustoe (2000) *Bird Census Techniques*, Second Edition. Academic Press, London

Annex 6.6 A: Bird Species Names and Conservation Designations

6.6.46 **Table 6.6.7** provides English vernacular and scientific names for all bird species mentioned in this report, together with relevant legislation and conservation listings.

6.6.47 Nomenclature and taxonomic order are based on the BOU 'British List'⁸.

Table 6.6.7: List of English Vernacular and Scientific Names of Bird Species Mentioned within this Report, and Relevant Legislation and Conservation Listings

English (British) Vernacular Name	Scientific Name	Schedule 1 / Annex I Listings	SPI and/or BoCC Listing*
Canada goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>		Amber
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		Amber
Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>		Red, SPI
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		
Red-legged partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>		Red
Feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>		
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		Amber
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		Amber
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		Amber
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		Amber
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		Red, SPI
Golden plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	Annex I	
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		Red, SPI
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		Amber
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>		Red
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		Red, SPI
Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		Amber
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		
Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Annex I	
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		Amber

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English (British) Vernacular Name	Scientific Name	Schedule 1 / Annex I Listings	SPI and/or BoCC Listing*
Marsh harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Sch1.1, Annex I	Amber
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Sch1.1 & 1A, Annex I	
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		
Little owl	<i>Athene Noctua</i>		
Tawny owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>		Amber
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		Amber
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>		
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>		
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		
Coal tit	<i>Parus ater</i>		
Marsh tit	<i>Parus palustris</i>		Red, SPI
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>		
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		Red, SPI
Sand martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>		
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		
House martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		Red
Cetti's warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	Sch1.1	
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		Amber
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		
Sedge warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>		Amber
Reed warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		
Garden warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>		
Lesser whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>		
Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>		Amber
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		

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English (British) Vernacular Name	Scientific Name	Schedule 1 / Annex I Listings	SPI and/or BoCC Listing*
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		Amber
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		Red, SPI
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		Amber, SPI
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		Red
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		Red, SPI
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		Amber, SPI
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		Red, SPI
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		Amber
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		Amber, SPI
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		Red
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		Red, SPI
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		
Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>		Red, SPI
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		Red, SPI
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		Amber, SPI
*Where no BoCC is listed, the species is either classified as Green (common and widespread) or is not listed (e.g. introduced species, such as pheasant)			

Annex 6.6 B: Weather Summary

6.6.48 A summary of weather conditions recorded at the start and end of each BBS shown in **Table 6.6.8**.

Table 6.6.8: Weather Summary During BBS

Date	Parcel	Start / End Time	Wind Speed*	Wind Direction*	Rain*	Cloud*	Visibility*	Notes
21 April 2025	7 / 3c	05:15	2	NW	0	8	2	
		11:45	2	NW	2	8	2	
24 April 2025	1	06:00	2	NE	0	8	2	
		08:30	2	NE	0	7	2	
25 April 2025	4 / 3b	06:00	1	E	0	7	2	
		09:00	1	E	0	7	2	
28 April 2025	2	06:00	1	S	0	2	2	
		08:30	1	S	0	1	2	
30 April 2025	5	06:00	1	SSW	0	2	2	
		09:00	1	SSW	0	3	2	
08 May 2025	1	05:45	1	NE	0	8	2	
		08:45	1	NE	0	8	2	
09 May 2025	4	05:40	0	N/A	0	1	2	
		08:45	0	N/A	0	1	2	
12 May 2025	7	04:45	3	S	0	3	2	
		09:15	2	S	0	2	2	
13 May 2025	5	05:00	1	SE	0	0	2	
		09:45	0	N/A	0	0	2	
13 May 2025	2	05:45	1	NE	0	0	2	
		08:45	1	NE	0	0	2	
15 May 2025	6	05:45	2	NNW	0	8	2	
		08:45	2	NNW	0	8	2	
19 May 2025	3	05:45	1	NE	0	8	2	
		09:30	1	NE	0	8	2	
	1	05:40	2	NNW	0-1	8	2-1	Light drizzle

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Date	Parcel	Start / End Time	Wind Speed*	Wind Direction*	Rain*	Cloud*	Visibility*	Notes
20 May 2025		08:45	2	NNW	0	8	2	
22 May 2025	2	05:45	1	N	0	8	2	
		08:45	2	N	0	8	2	
23 May 2025	4	05:45	0	N/A	0	0	2	
		08:45	0-1	WSW	0	0	2	
28 May 2025	5	04:50	2	SE	2	7	2	
		09:30	3	SE	1	2	2	
29 May 2025	7	07:00	7	SE	3	8	2	Late start to avoid rain
		11:50	5	SE	1	8	2	
29 May 2025	3	07:00	3	SW	1	8	1	Late start to avoid rain
		10:15	5	SW	0	8	2	
06 June 2025	6	05:45	4	WSW	4-5	8	2	
		08:45	3	W	0	7	2	
13 June 2025	6	05:45	2	SE	0	3	2	
		08:45	4	S	0	4	2	
16 June 2025	1	05:45	1	SW	0	0	2	
		08:45	1	SW	0	0	2	
17 June 2025	2	05:45	1	SW	0	6	2	
		08:45	2	SW	0	6	2	
19 June 2025	3	05:45	1	NW	0	2	2	
		08:45	1	WNW	0	2	2	Hot (22c)
19 June 2025	5	04:50	1	SE	0	2	2	
		09:15	1	SSE	0	2	2	Hot (22c)
20 June 2025	7	05:00	0	N/A	0	5	2	
		10:15	0	N/A	0	4	2	Hot (22c)
23 June 2025	4	05:45	2-5	W	0-2	6	2	
		08:45	3	W	0	5	2	

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Date	Parcel	Start / End Time	Wind Speed*	Wind Direction*	Rain*	Cloud*	Visibility*	Notes
24 June 2025	6	05:45	3	SW	2	8	2	
		08:45	3	SW	2	8	2	
*Wind speed (Beaufort); Wind direction per 16-point compass; Rain = 0 (none), 1 (drizzle / mist), 2 (light showers), 3 (heavy showers), 4 (light rain), 5 (heavy rain); Cloud cover in oktas (eighths); Visibility = 0 (<1 km), 2 (1-2 km) and 3 (>2 km).								

Annex 6.6 C: Access Summary

6.6.49 Access to an individual land parcel during a BBS survey visit was classified as:

- Full: no access limitations, or small fields with no access that were completely visible from public rights of way (PRoWs) and highlighted green;
- Partial: no access to some of the fields within the land parcel or, fields with no access were covered partially from PRoWs or scanned from adjacent fields. These land parcels are highlighted yellow; and
- None: no access to fields within the land parcel, as such fields could not be surveyed and are highlighted red.

6.6.50 Land parcel references are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 6.1: Land Parcel Reference [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**.

Table 6.6.9: Access Summary to each Land Parcel

Land Parcel	BBS Parcel	Number of Fields within Land Parcel	Access and Date Accessed				Notes
			Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	
29	1	1	24 April 2025	08 May 2025	20 May 2025	16 June 2025	
30	1	1	24 April 2025	08 May 2025	20 May 2025	16 June 2025	
31	1	1	24 April 2025	08 May 2025	20 May 2025	16 June 2025	
33	1	1	24 April 2025	08 May 2025	20 May 2025	16 June 2025	
34	1/2	6	24 April 2025+ 28 April 2025	08 May 2025+ 13 May 2025	20 May 2025+ 22 May 2025	16 June 2025+ 17 June 2025	
35	1/2	9	24 April 2025+ 28 April 2025	08 May 2025+ 13 May 2025	20 May 2025+ 22 May 2025	16 June 2025+ 17 June 2025	No access but scanned from PRoWs during visit 1. No access during visit 2. No access to field 35J during any visits.
162	2	8	28 April 2025	13 May 2025	22 May 2025	17 June 2025	Covered well from PRoWs during visit 1. No access to field 162F during visit 3.
36	2	2	28 April 2025	13 May 2025	22 May 2025	17 June 2025	No access. Field 36B covered from PRoWs during visit 1. Route along PRoW blocked

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Land Parcel	BBS Parcel	Number of Fields within Land Parcel	Access and Date Accessed				Notes
			Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	
							by horses during other visits.
38	2	1	28 April 2025	13 May 2025	22 May 2025	17 June 2025	
39	2	1	28 April 2025	13 May 2025	22 May 2025	17 June 2025	
40	2	1	28 April 2025	13 May 2025	22 May 2025	17 June 2025	
82	3a	5	30 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	No access for first visit
232	3a	1	30 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	No access for first visit
208	3b	1	25 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	Covered well from PRowS during visit 2
209	3b	1	25 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	Covered well from PRowS during visit 2
210	3b	1	25 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	Covered well from PRowS during visit 2
153	3c	2	21 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	
149	3c	1	21 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	No access during visit 1 but surveyed from adjacent field
156	3c	1	21 April 2025	19 May 2025	29 May 2025	19 June 2025	
85	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
89	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
90	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
165	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
97	4	2	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
99	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	No access, but viewed well from adjacent parcels

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Land Parcel	BBS Parcel	Number of Fields within Land Parcel	Access and Date Accessed				Notes
			Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	
104	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
105	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
100	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
101	4	2	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	No access, viewed from PRowS / adjacent fields when possible
102	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
106	4	1	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	
112	4	2	25 April 2025	09 May 2025	23 May 2025	23 June 2025	112B surveyed from adjacent fields, covered well
110	5	1	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	28 May 2025	19 June 2025	
111	5	2	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	28 May 2025	19 June 2025	
113	5	5	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	N/A	N/A	Removed from scheme
114	5	1	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	N/A	N/A	Removed from scheme
115	5	1	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	N/A	N/A	Removed from scheme
135	5	2	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	28 May 2025	19 June 2025	
119	5	3	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	28 May 2025	19 June 2025	
122	5	1	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	28 May 2025	19 June 2025	122C not accessed
120	5	1	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	28 May 2025	19 June 2025	
121	5	2	30 April 2025	13 May 2025	28 May 2025	19 June 2025	
123	6	4	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	123C not accessed

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Land Parcel	BBS Parcel	Number of Fields within Land Parcel	Access and Date Accessed				Notes
			Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	
124	6	1	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
125	6	4	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
133	6	3	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
141	6	8	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
126	6	3	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
127	6	2	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
132	6	1	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
128	6	2	15 May 2025	06 June 2025	13 June 2025	24 June 2025	
167	7	3	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
172	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
173	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
177	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
174	7	3	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
195	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
196	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
197	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
200	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
188	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
189	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	

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Land Parcel	BBS Parcel	Number of Fields within Land Parcel	Access and Date Accessed				Notes
			Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	
190	7	2	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	
191	7	1	21 April 2025	12 May 2025	29 May 2025	20 June 2025	

⁸ British Ornithologist's Union (2025) *The British List*. Available at <https://bou.org.uk/british-list/> (Accessed May 2026)



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