

Supplementary Ecology Report Birds

November 2024

Land North-East of Humber Doucy Lane,
Ipswich

Prepared by
CSA Environmental

On behalf of
Barratt David Wilson Homes & Hopkins Homes

Report No: CSA/6675/12

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Report Reference	Revision	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Comments
CSA/6675/12	-	05/11/2024	CH	JW	



1.0 Legislation

- 1.1 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under subsection 1(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to kill or injure any wild bird, to take or destroy their eggs, or to take, damage or destroy their nests while in use or being built.
- 1.2 In addition, certain species of wild bird, listed within Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, receive additional protection under subsection 1(5) of the Act. This makes it an offence to disturb any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young. It is also an offence to disturb the dependent young of such a bird.
- 1.3 Consideration is also taken of Birds of Conservation Concern ('BoCC 5') (Stanbury *et al.*, 2021) which assigns bird species to a Red, Amber or Green list depending on factors such as their rarity, importance in an international context and severity of declines in population or range. Species on the Red list are of greatest conservation concern whilst those on the Green list do not fulfil any of the BoCC assessment criteria and are not currently of conservation interest. Full details can be found in Stanbury *et al.* (2021).

2.0 Methods

Wintering Birds

- 2.1 A total of two wintering bird survey visits were carried out at the Site in November and December 2023 to provide an assessment of the Site's importance for birds during the winter. During this time there is reduced territoriality and the formation of wide-ranging, mixed-species flocks that can cause significant variation in species diversity and bird numbers on a daily basis. In addition, weather factors such as snow cover can also result in the movement of birds to or from an area.
- 2.2 The surveys were completed by experienced surveyors from Skopeo Ltd and the conduct of the fieldwork was commensurate with good ornithological practice. The survey area comprised the Site (as shown by the red line boundary on the Wintering Bird Survey Plan CSA/6675/115), plus adjacent areas of land which could be surveyed from the Site boundaries. The purpose of the survey was to assess the composition of the wintering bird community, and the distribution and abundance of its constituent bird species within the survey area.
- 2.3 Survey work also focused on determining the presence/likely absence of any protected or notable species of National, Regional or Local conservation importance, and to determine whether any populations of such species are significant at a local or wider level. Data provided on the distribution of species within the survey area indicates the

importance of parts of the site to each bird species and to birds in general.

- The survey methodology was based upon the approach for non-breeding walkover surveys set out in the Bird Survey Guidelines (Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group. (2023)), and comprised an adapted version of the standard Common Birds Census method to: Identification of all birds seen and heard within the survey area, with their locations mapped on a large-scale plan; and
- Record the total numbers of birds encountered.

2.4 On each survey the surveyor walked a slow route across the whole Site which ensured that both species of open and boundary habitats would be detected. Alternative versions of the route were taken on each visit so that different parts of the Site would be surveyed at different times of the morning, to minimise the likelihood of temporal bias associated with bird activity or other factors such as increasing traffic noise. Surveys commenced in the early morning and continued for approximately two hours. Birds were detected by sound or sight, using a pair of 10 x 42 binoculars.

2.5 All birds seen or heard within the survey area were recorded using the British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO) standardised codes to map species distribution, abundance, to denote activity and to differentiate between individuals (where possible). Birds flying over the Site were recorded; however, any flight recordings that were not considered to be directly associated with the survey area were not taken into consideration when assessing the nature conservation importance of the Site for wintering birds (e.g. high-flying gulls commuting overhead).

2.6 Particular consideration was given to 'priority species', which were classified using the following hierarchy:

- 1) The Qualifying Species for the following statutory designated sites: the Deben Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) & Ramsar site; and the Stour and Orwell SSSI, SPA & Ramsar site.
- 2) Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- 3) Species listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006;
- 4) Red & Amber listed by the 5th Birds of Conservation Concern Review (Stanbury *et al*, 2021).
- 5) Priority bird species in Suffolk, as defined by the Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (SBIS) (suffolkbis.org.uk);
- 6) Localised or highly specialised species regardless of inclusion above (e.g. birds found only in farmland habitats);
- 7) Nationally- or locally-declining species regardless of inclusion above

- 8) Colonial nests or roost sites containing more than one individual of any species; or,
- 9) Exceptional counts or aggregations of any species.

Limitations

- 2.7 Only a proportion of individuals of each species will be detected on each visit, and some particularly secretive or low-density species, can be elusive and require several visits to detect. Furthermore, the importance of a site for birds can change depending on factors such as food availability, presence of roosting/nesting features and weather conditions.

Evaluation

- 2.8 The importance of the wintering bird species and assemblage on the Site was assessed using the criteria suggested by Fuller (1980) (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Assessment criteria for the wintering bird assemblage at the site

Importance	Number of Wintering Bird Species
Local	25-54
County	55-84
Regional	85-114
National	115+

Breeding Birds

- 2.9 A total of four breeding bird surveys were completed monthly between March and June 2024.
- 2.10 The breeding bird surveys were carried out by Skopeo Ltd to gain an understanding of the breeding bird assemblage at the site. Surveys were conducted with the following aims:
 - To determine the potential for breeding species of birds across the survey area;
 - To review the rarity and conservation status of each species found;
 - To review the likely breeding potential within the habitats present;
 - To assess the impacts of the proposed developments with regards to the species/ likely species determined; and
 - To recommend appropriate mitigation and protection measures where necessary.
- 2.11 The survey area included all accessible areas of the Site (as shown by the red line boundary on the Breeding Bird Survey Plan CSA/6675/124) and immediately adjacent land visible from the Site. On each survey the surveyor walked a slow route across the whole site which ensured that both species of open and boundary habitats would be detected. Alternative versions of the route were taken on each visit so that different parts of the site would be surveyed at different parts of the morning, thus avoiding temporal bias associated with bird activity. Each survey

commenced shortly after dawn, when birds are most active, and continued for approximately two hours during suitable weather conditions. Birds were detected by sound or sight, using appropriately powered binoculars.

2.12 The survey methodology used considers the recommended mapping conventions given within the Bird Survey Guidelines published by the Bird Steering and Assessment Group (2022). All birds detected at the site were recorded using standardised codes to map their distribution and behaviour, and to differentiate between individuals for the purposes of territory mapping (adapted from the standard Common Birds Census method). A full map of all species is created for each survey visit, with a consolidated map of priority species created for all survey visits combined.

2.13 Priority species are classified using the following hierarchy:

- 1) Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- 2) Species listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006;
- 3) Red & Amber listed by the 5th Birds of Conservation Concern Review (Stanbury *et al*, 2021).
- 4) Localised or highly specialised species regardless of inclusion above (e.g. crossbill in coniferous woodland);
- 5) Nationally- or locally-declining species regardless of inclusion above
- 6) Colonial nests or roost sites containing more than one individual of any species; or,
- 7) Exceptional counts or aggregations of any species.

2.14 On each survey visit the following objectives were met:

- Identification of potential breeding species within the habitats present;
- Identification of all birds seen and heard;
- Breeding status of each bird seen and heard;
- Total numbers of birds, including juveniles recorded.

2.15 The criteria used during the 'Bird Atlas' surveys of 2007-2011 were used to ascertain the breeding status of birds at the Site (as given in Table 2 below).

Table 2. Categories of Breeding Bird Evidence

Breeding Status Categories	Evidence Criteria
Confirmed breeding:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distraction display or injury feigning• Used nests or eggshells found (occupied or laid within the survey period)• Recently fledged young or downy young• Adults entering or leaving a nest site in circumstances indicating occupied• Nest or an adult sitting on nest• Adults carrying food for young or faecal sacs• Nest containing eggs• Nest with young seen or heard
Probable breeding:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pairs observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season• Permanent territory presumed through registration or territorial behaviour (song etc.) on at least two different days, a week apart, at the same place• Display and courtship• Visiting probable nest site• Agitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults• Building nest or excavating nest hole
Possible breeding:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Species observed in breeding season in possible nesting habitat• Singing male(s) present or breeding calls heard in breeding season

Limitations

- 2.16 Only a proportion of individuals of each species will be detected on each visit, and some particularly secretive or low-density species, can be elusive and require several visits to detect. Furthermore, the importance of a site for birds can change depending on factors such as food availability, presence of roosting/nesting features and weather conditions.

Evaluation

- 2.17 The importance of the breeding bird assemblage at the Site was assessed using the criteria suggested by Fuller (1980) (see Table 3 below).

Table 3. Assessment criteria for breeding bird assemblage at a Site

Importance	Number of Breeding Species
Local	25-49
County	50-69
Regional	70-84
National	85+

3.0 Results

Wintering Birds

- 3.1 The results of the winter bird surveys are described in the following paragraphs, with a summary of survey conditions presented in Table 4, below. The Wintering Bird Survey Plan (CSA/6675/115) shows the locations of priority species recorded during the surveys.

Table 4. Weather conditions for wintering bird surveys

Date	Start time	End time	Temp (°C)		Cloud (Oktas)	Rain (mm)	Wind (Beaufort scale)	Visibility
			Start	End				
11/11/23	07:00	09:00	3	5	6/6	None	3/3	Good
13/12/23	07:38	09:20	7	7	8/8	Light drizzle	3/4	Good

- 3.2 A total of 39 bird species were recorded on or adjacent to the Site during the surveys, of which 18 were classified as 'priority species'. These are listed in Table 5 (below) and comprised a range of waterfowl and passerines. 21 secondary species were recorded (as listed in Table 6).

Table 5. Priority bird species recorded at the Site during the wintering bird surveys

Species	BoCC Red List	BoCC Amber List	Section 41	Sch 1	Suffolk Priority Species
Black-headed gull		•			
Common gull		•			
Duncock		•	•		•
Fieldfare	•			•*	
Greenfinch	•				
Greylag goose		•			
House sparrow	•		•		•
Lesser Redpoll	•				•
Linnet	•		•		•
Meadow pipit		•			
Mistle thrush	•				
Skylark	•		•		•
Song thrush		•	•		•
Starling	•		•		•
Woodcock	•				
Woodpigeon		•			
Wren		•			
Yellowhammer	•		•		•

Abbreviations: BOCC Red List: Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern 5

Section 41: Listed as a priority species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Sch1: Schedule 1 (Part 1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Suffolk Priority Species: as defined by the Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (SBIS) (suffolkbis.org.uk)

Notes: * although fieldfare is afforded full legal protection during the breeding season due to its inclusion on Schedule 1 (Part 1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, its typical breeding range does not encompass Suffolk.

Table 6. Secondary bird species recorded at the Site during the wintering bird surveys

Species
Blackbird
Blue tit
Buzzard
Canada goose
Carrion crow
Chaffinch
Collared dove
Feral pigeon
Goldcrest
Goldfinch
Great spotted woodpecker
Great tit
Green woodpecker
Jackdaw
Jay
Long-tailed tit
Magpie
Pheasant
Pied wagtail
Robin
Siskin

- 3.3 None of the Qualifying Species for the Deben Estuary SSSI, SPA & Ramsar site, or the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SSSI, SPA & Ramsar site were recorded during the winter bird surveys.
- 3.4 The winter bird surveys recorded a limited number of priority waterfowl species. A single woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* was 'flushed' from a field margin in the north of the Site. Eight individual greylag goose *Anser anser*; two black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*; and a single common gull *Larus canus*, were all recorded as flyovers, seen on a single occasion each.
- 3.5 The Site and its surroundings were found to support a range wintering passerines that was considered to be typical of farmland and urban fringe habitats. This included the following priority species: Dunnock *Prunella modularis*; fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*; greenfinch *Chloris chloris*; house sparrow *Passer domesticus*; lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*; linnet *Linaria cannabina*; meadow pipit *Anthus pratensis*; mistle thrush *Turdus viscivorus*; skylark *Alauda arvensis*; song thrush *Turdus philomelos*; starling *Sturnus vulgaris*; woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*; Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*; and yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*.
- 3.6 In all cases, the priority species of passerine were found to be present at relatively low densities. Total counts of just single birds were recorded for linnet, skylark and yellowhammer (all of which tend to show strong habitat preferences for arable farmland during the winter months). Whilst slightly higher counts were recorded for the remaining passerine

species, they were considered to be present at densities that were typical for a site such as this.

- 3.7 In accordance with Fuller (1980), the wintering bird assemblage is considered to be of ecological importance at the Local level.

Breeding birds

- 3.8 The results of the breeding bird surveys are described in the following paragraphs, with a summary of survey conditions presented in Table 7, below. The Breeding Bird Survey Plan (CSA/6675/124) shows the locations of priority species recorded during the surveys.

Table 7. Weather conditions for breeding bird surveys

Date	Start time	End time	Temp (°C)		Cloud (Oktas)	Rain (mm)	Wind (Beaufort scale)	Visibility
			Start	End				
29/03/24	06:00	08:00	8	10	6/6	None	3/4	Good
20/04/24	05:15	07:10	6	7	5/6	Light drizzle	4/4	Good
25/05/24	20:40	22:30	14	13	7/8	None	2/1	Good
23/06/24	04:30	06:30	11	14	1/1	None	2/1	Good

- 3.9 A total of 43 bird species were recorded on or adjacent to the Site during the surveys, of which 19 were classified as 'priority species'. These are listed in Table 8 (below). 24 secondary species were also recorded (as listed in Table 9).

Table 8. Priority bird species recorded at the Site during the breeding bird surveys

Species	BoCC Red List	BoCC Amber List	Section 41	Suffolk Priority Species
Black-headed gull		•		
Buzzard*				
Dunnock		•	•	•
Greenfinch	•			
Herring gull	•		•	•
House sparrow	•		•	•
Kestrel		•		
Lesser black-backed gull		•		
Linnet	•		•	•
Mallard		•		
Skylark	•		•	•
Song thrush		•	•	•
Starling	•		•	•
Stock dove		•		
Swift	•			•
Whitethroat		•		
Woodpigeon		•		
Wren		•		
Yellowhammer	•		•	•

*Green listed species on BoCC list

Table 9. Secondary bird species recorded at the Site during the breeding bird surveys

Species
Blackbird
Blackcap
Blue tit
Carrion crow
Chaffinch
Chiffchaff
Collared dove
Feral pigeon
Goldcrest
Goldfinch
Great spotted woodpecker
Great tit
Green woodpecker
Grey heron
Jackdaw
Jay
Lesser whitethroat
Long-tailed tit
Magpie
Pheasant
Pied wagtail
Red-legged partridge
Robin
Swallow

- 3.10 The breeding bird survey results indicate that the site has a relatively straightforward assemblage of breeding birds. There is a range of common breeding birds on-site, and an expected assemblage of farmland indicator species typical for this agricultural habitat type.
- 3.11 The fields provide potential cover for nesting species, e.g. skylark, as well as shelter and foraging opportunities. The peripheral hedgerow habitat provides similar opportunities for other species such as woodpigeon and whitethroat *Sylvia communis*.
- 3.12 A modest number of farmland specialist species were found on site, including skylark, yellowhammer and whitethroat. Other generalist farmland species were recorded on site, such as greenfinch, kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, and woodpigeon. The open grassland habitat is likely to support foraging kestrel even if they are not nesting on-site.
- 3.13 The majority of the species were recorded away from the peripheral urban habitat to the south-west of the Site.
- 3.14 In accordance with Fuller (1980), the breeding bird assemblage is considered to be of ecological importance at the Local level.

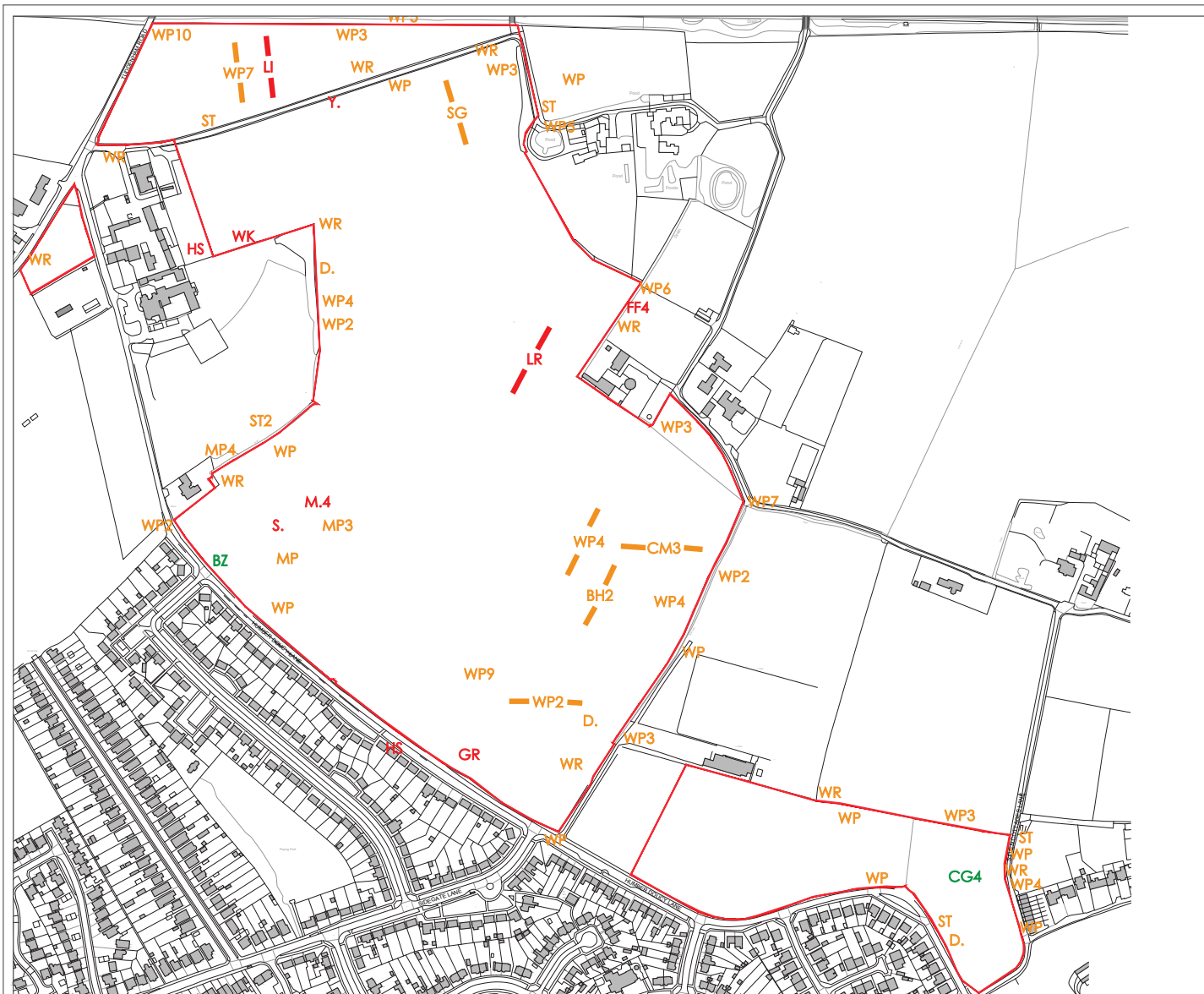
4.0 References

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- Redline boundary
- Singing
- Observation
- Calling
- Flight path/observed in flight
- Xn Number of individuals

Primary Species List

Red List

FF - Fieldfare*
GR - Greenfinch
HS - House sparrow
LI - Linnet
M. - Mistle thrush
LR - Redpoll
S. - Skylark
SG - Starling
WK - Woodcock
Y. - Yellowhammer

Amber List

BG - Black-headed gull
CM - Common gull
D. - Dunnock
GJ - Greylag goose*
MP - Meadow pipit
ST - Song thrush
WP - Wood pigeon
WR - Wren

Green List

BZ - Common buzzard
CG - Canada goose

Secondary Species List

Blackbird
Blue tit
Buzzard
Canada goose**
Carrion crow
Chaffinch
Collared dove
Feral pigeon
Goldcrest
Goldfinch
Great spotted woodpecker
Great tit
Green woodpecker
Jackdaw
Jay
Long-tailed tit
Magpie
Pheasant
Pied wagtail
Robin
Siskin

* Schedule 1
** fly-over only



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Project Land North-East of Humber Doucy Lane, Ipswich

Drawing Title Wintering Bird Survey Plan

Client Barratt David Wilson Homes & Hopkins Homes

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Scale Refer to scale

Drawn LF

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