

XLINKS' MOROCCO-UK POWER PROJECT

Environmental Statement

Volume 2, Appendix 1.8: Breeding, Wintering and Migratory Bird Survey

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XLINKS' MOROCCO – UK POWER PROJECT

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Glossary

Term	Meaning
Alverdiscott Substation Site	The National Grid Electricity Transmission site within which the Alverdiscott Substation sits.
Converter Site	The Converter Site is proposed to be located to the immediate west of the existing Alverdiscott Substation Site in north Devon. The Converter Site would contain two converter stations (known as Bipole 1 and Bipole 2) and associated infrastructure, buildings and landscaping.
Environmental Impact Assessment	The process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a project. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of a project, through comparison with the existing and projected future baseline conditions.
Environmental Statement	The document presenting the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.
Landfall	The proposed area in which the offshore cables make landfall in the United Kingdom (come on shore) and the transitional area between the offshore cabling and the onshore cabling. This term applies to the entire landfall area at Cornborough Range, Devon, between Mean Low Water Springs and the transition joint bays inclusive of all construction works, including the offshore and onshore cable routes, and landfall compound(s).
Migratory Birds	Birds that travel to different places, usually when the season changes, to find the best conditions and habitats for feeding, breeding and raising their young.
Onshore HVDC Cable Corridor	The proposed corridor within which the onshore High Voltage Direct Current cables would be located.
Proposed Development	The element of Xlinks' Morocco-UK Power Project within the UK. The Proposed Development covers all works required to construct and operate the offshore cables (from the UK Exclusive Economic Zone to Landfall), Landfall, onshore Direct Current and Alternating Current cables, converter stations, and highways improvements.
Study area	This is an area which is defined for each environmental topic which includes the Order Limits as well as potential spatial and temporal considerations of the impacts on relevant receptors. The study area for each topic is intended to cover the area within which an impact can be reasonably expected.
Survey area	The area within which each survey has been undertaken. This may differ from the study area as a survey area will be based on species or survey-specific guidance on the extent of survey required, which may be limited by, for example, habitat conditions, or be defined in terms of buffer areas around an area of potential impact.
Wintering Birds	Birds that spend the winter in a particular place.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BOCC 5	Birds of Conservation Concern 5
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
ES	Environmental Statement
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HVDC	High Voltage Direct Current
NERC	Natural Environments and Rural Communities
NERC S41	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act Species of Principal Importance
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
UK	United Kingdom
ZoI	Zone of Influence

Units

Units	Meaning
km	Kilometre
ha	Hectares
m	Metre

1 BREEDING, WINTERING AND MIGRATORY BIRD SURVEY

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document forms Volume 2, Appendix 1.8: Breeding, Wintering and Migratory Bird Survey of the Environmental Statement (ES) prepared for the United Kingdom (UK) elements of Xlinks' Morocco-UK Power Project (the 'Project'). For ease of reference, the UK elements of the Project are referred to as the 'Proposed Development, which is the focus of the ES. The ES presents the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment process for the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.2 This document presents the results of the species-specific surveys relating to the potential presence of breeding, wintering and migratory bird species of conservation concern. This baseline information is intended to feed information into Volume 2, Chapter 1: Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES.
- 1.1.3 The surveys and desk-based assessments undertaken as part of this review and subsequent report including the Ecological Appraisal Notes are prepared in accordance with the British Standard for Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BS42020:2013).

Site Location

- 1.1.4 The Onshore Infrastructure Area is located in north Devon and includes the Landfall, Onshore HVDC Cable Corridor, HVAC Cable Corridors and Converter Site. The Onshore HVDC Cable Corridor is approximately 14.5 km in length and the Converter Site is approximately 39.5 ha. The HVAC Cable Corridors are situated within the boundaries of the Converter Site and Alverdiscott Substation Site.
- 1.1.5 The Onshore HVDC Cable Corridor passes through a mixture of pastoral and arable farmland, with fields bounded by Devon hedgerows, and occasionally crossing small watercourses in wooded valleys. The route also crosses the tidal Torridge estuary.
- 1.1.6 The site location is shown on **Figure 1.1**. Aerial imaging available via Google Earth Pro was also reviewed to assess the site in relation to its context in the wider landscape.
- 1.1.7 The design of the Proposed Development has changed since these surveys were undertaken. Updated surveys are currently ongoing and will continue into 2025. However, although the design of the Proposed Development has been modified, the general findings of the survey remain relevant.

1.2 Study Area

- 1.2.1 The onshore ecology and nature conservation study area is detailed within Volume 2, Chapter 1: Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES. The study area includes the following.

- Locally designated sites, including Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites, and less mobile species located within 2 km of the Onshore Infrastructure Area.
- Nationally designated sites, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves, and records of particularly mobile protected or otherwise notable species (e.g. bats and otters) located within 5 km of the Onshore Infrastructure Area.
- Internationally designated sites located within 12 km of the Onshore Infrastructure Area.

1.2.2 The onshore ecology and nature conservation study area is presented in Volume 2, Figure 1.1 of the ES (see Volume 2, Figures).

1.3 Survey Area

1.3.1 The survey area is defined as the area within which each survey has been undertaken and is based on species or site-specific guidance on the extent of survey required.

1.3.2 The term Zone of Influence (Zoi) is used to describe the geographic extent of potential impacts of a proposed development. The Zoi is determined by the nature of the development and also in relation to designated sites, habitats or species which might be affected by the proposals.

1.3.3 For this scheme, in addition to the landscape-based appraisal discussed above, a corridor of 200 m to either side of the Onshore Infrastructure Area was surveyed in detail, the Zoi is considered to be land within this corridor and linked to it through hedgerow networks or other linear features along with more distant sites which could be affected by disturbance or contamination issues during construction or operation. Therefore, the survey area is defined as areas within 200 m of the Onshore Infrastructure Area.

Contextual Data

1.3.4 Owing to the iterative design process of the Proposed Development, some surveys were undertaken further than 200 m from the Onshore Infrastructure Area. These surveys may have been located within, or within the buffer of, previous iterations of the Onshore Infrastructure Area boundaries. Nevertheless, information from these surveys have been included in this technical report because they provide context regarding the ecological sensitivity of the wider area and to inform Volume 2, Chapter 1: Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES (where relevant). Any contextual information (based on survey data collected from outside the survey area) is shown on **Figure 1.1** and **Figure 1.2**.

1.4 Relevant Legislation

1.4.1 All birds, their nests and eggs are afforded protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as updated by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. It is an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;

- intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; and
- intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

1.4.2 Schedule 1 birds cannot be intentionally or recklessly disturbed when nesting and there are increased penalties for doing so. Licences can be issued to visit the nests of such birds for conservation, scientific or photographic purposes but not to allow disturbance during a development even in circumstances where that development is fully authorised by consents such as a valid planning permission.

1.5 Methodology

Breeding Bird Survey

- 1.5.1 The survey methodology comprised an abridged five-visit standard territory (registration) mapping techniques as detailed in Bibby et al., (2000) and Gilbert et al., (1998). This method is based on the observation that many species are territorial during the breeding season. This is found particularly amongst passerines, where territories are often marked by conspicuous song, display and periodic disputes with neighbouring individuals.
- 1.5.2 All bird locations were mapped using standard British Trust for Ornithology one and two letter species codes on appropriate field maps. Specific diagrammatic codes were also used for singing, calling, movements between areas, flying, carrying food, nest building, aggressive encounters and other behaviour. In addition, any occupied nests were plotted. The expected outcome of this technique is that mapped registrations fall into clusters, approximately coinciding with territories.
- 1.5.3 Surveyors walked the route at a slow and methodical pace in suitably fine weather in order to locate and identify all individual birds by sound and/or sight; visits were undertaken early in the morning, generally between 5am and 11am, commencing as close to sunrise as possible. Surveys were not conducted prior to sunrise, in order to avoid the dawn chorus (Bibby et al., 2000).
- 1.5.4 Suitable optical equipment was used to observe bird behaviour. The start and finish points along the route were alternated on each visit to ensure that different parts of the site were visited at different times of day. This enabled a thorough representation of ornithological activity to be assessed.
- 1.5.5 Visits were undertaken as follows:
- Visit 1: 5, 7 and 8 April 2022;
 - Visit 2: 27 and 28 April 2022;
 - Visit 3: 18 and 19 May 2022;
 - Visit 4: 8 and 9 June 2022; and
 - Visit 5: 28 and 29 June 2022.
- 1.5.6 On each visit, registrations were recorded directly into ESRI Arcpad Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software loaded onto handheld devices, with a 1:10,000 scale Ordnance Survey base map of the study area (and adjacent land). A fresh map was used for each survey. The data from the five visits were then used to create a territory master map, following procedures detailed in Gilbert et al., (1998). From this master map, the number of territories for each species was

assessed. The following definitions have been used to identify the breeding status of the species recorded.

- **Confirmed Breeding:** includes species for which territories were positively identified as a result of the number of registrations (i.e., three or more), the location of an active nest, the carrying of food or nesting material and the presence of recently fledged young or downy young.
- **Probable Breeding:** includes a pair observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season, or agitated behaviour/anxiety calls from adults suggesting probable presence of nest or young nearby. Behaviour was observed on insufficient occasions to confirm the presence of a territory.
- **Possible Breeding:** includes species observed or heard in suitable nesting habitat and exhibiting behaviour indicative of breeding, such as a singing male (or breeding calls heard).
- **Non-breeding:** either fly-overs or no site interaction, species considered to be on migration or post-breeding flocks/family groups observed but considered to be non-breeding. In addition, species flying over the site but where habitat was not considered suitable for that species to breed were also excluded. For example, swallows flying over fields but not breeding, or peregrine falcon hunting but no actual breeding potential occurred within the areas surveyed.

1.5.7 For late flying migrants (e.g., spotted flycatcher and hobby), for which fewer potential contacts are possible, one registration has been used to suggest a territory. This can also be applied to inconspicuous species.

Wintering and Migratory Bird Survey

1.5.8 The wintering and migratory bird surveys focussed on two key areas:

- the point at which the Onshore HVDC Cable Corridor crosses beneath the Torridge Estuary; and
- the area of the coast at the Landfall at Cornborough Range.

1.5.9 The surveys were based on the Wetland Bird Survey methodology (Bibby et al., 2000) and included vantage point inspections at suitable stages of tide along the crossing point. A walked transect was undertaken for the coastal route.

1.5.10 The aim of the tidal surveys was to undertake one survey at low tide and one survey at high tide each month. Each survey covered a four hour period (two hours either side of high/low tide). For the purposes of the analysis, the tidal cycle is divided into two periods. The term 'low tide' is used to indicate the period two hours either side of low tide, 'high tide' the period two hours either side of high tide.

1.5.11 Observations during the tidal surveys were made from a layby and publicly accessible platform adjacent to the river, off the A386 opposite Coach Drive. This location provided a suitable vantage point to observe all birds without causing undue disturbance. An experienced ornithologist, equipped with binoculars and telescope of appropriate magnification, observed the entire survey area on an hourly basis. As the site was a linear area with good visibility, birds could be observed from distance to avoid disturbance and minimise risk of double-counting.

1.5.12 The coastal transect route was selected to include the coast near the Landfall and all accessible features within 200 m of the Landfall, where possible. The survey

commenced at dawn and thus covered a range of different tidal states. Observations from the transect route were made from highways and public footpaths, including the South West Coast Path. As described above, the footpaths in general provided suitable vantage points to observe all birds without causing undue disturbance.

- 1.5.13 The location and extent of flocks and individual waterbirds were recorded directly into ESRI Arcpad GIS Software on handheld PDA devices, with a 1:10,000 scale Ordnance Survey base map with a redline boundary included. The distance from the recorder to birds was assessed through the use of landmarks present in the landscape and on the base map, which could be scaled as desired in the field. Birds were either plotted as individual counts at a location or as a flock, the extent of which could be plotted electronically directly onto the base map on the handheld PDAs. The observers were proficient in the use of this method and equipment having undertaken such surveys on numerous occasions previously across the UK at coastal, estuarine and inland wetland sites. This is considered to be a robust and reliable method for recording birds and plotting their distribution.
- 1.5.14 The collected data were then downloaded into ESRI ArcGIS software and distribution maps produced.
- 1.5.15 In addition to the waterbirds recorded along the intertidal and coastal areas, any observations of songbirds (of conservation concern), high tide wader roosts or raptors on the surrounding terrestrial areas were also recorded.
- 1.5.16 A total of 15 survey visits were undertaken between October 2021 and February 2022 to cover the autumn passage and the winter period across the coastal Landfall and estuarine area. The survey dates and tide details are shown in **Table 1.1** below.

Table 1.1: Wintering and Migratory Bird Survey Dates and Tide Times

Date	Survey Location	Time of low tide (hh:mm)	Tide height (m)	Time of high tide (hh:mm)	Tide height (m)
14/10/21	Coastal – Landfall	-	-	-	-
14/10/21	Torrige Estuary	-	-	13:11	3.90
15/10/21	Torrige Estuary	09:03	0.05	-	-
08/11/21	Torrige Estuary	14:31	0.10	-	-
09/11/21	Coastal – Landfall	-	-	-	-
10/11/21	Torrige Estuary	-	-	09:29	5.00
13/12/21	Torrige Estuary	-	-	13:37	4.36
14/12/21	Coastal – Landfall	-	-	-	-
15/12/21	Torrige Estuary	09:50	0.10	-	-
12/01/22	Torrige Estuary	-	-	13:43	3.93
13/01/22	Coastal – Landfall	-	-	-	-
14/01/22	Torrige Estuary	10:05	0.06	-	-
10/02/22	Torrige Estuary	-	-	12:38	3.38
11/02/22	Coastal – Landfall	-	-	-	-
12/02/22	Torrige Estuary	09:38	0.00	-	-

Assessment Criteria

- 1.5.17 The assessment of the breeding, wintering and migratory bird community included a focus on species that are afforded special statutory protection or those included on one, or more, of the lists of species of conservation interest. These include:
- species listed on Annex 1 of the EC Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC);
 - species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (applicable to breeding season only);
 - species included in the Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BOCC 5) Red and Amber Lists (Stanbury et al., 2021);
 - priority species within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP);
 - local BAP species; and
 - those occurring in nationally, regionally or locally important numbers.
- 1.5.18 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) list of Species of Principal Importance is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the Act; under section 40 every public authority (e.g. a local authority or local planning authority) must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. In addition, with regard to those species on the list of Species of Principal Importance prepared under section 41, the Secretary of State must:
- Take such steps as appear to the Secretary of State to be reasonably practicable to further the conservation of the living organisms and types of habitats included in any list published under this section; or
 - Promote the taking by others of such steps.
- 1.5.19 Standard registration mapping techniques were also used to record non-breeding species.
- 1.5.20 Species listed on the BOCC 5 Red List are those that have declined in numbers by 50% over the last 25 years, those that have shown an historical population decline between 1800 and 1995 and species that are of global conservation concern. The 67 species on the Red List are of the most urgent conservation concern.
- 1.5.21 Species listed on the BOCC 5 Amber List, of which there are currently 96, include those that have shown a moderate decline in numbers (25%-49%) over the last 25 years and those with total populations of less than 300 breeding pairs. Also included are those species which represent a significant proportion (greater than 20%) of the European breeding or wintering population, those for which at least 50% of the British population is limited to 10 sites or less, and those of unfavourable conservation status in Europe.
- 1.5.22 The remaining species are placed on the Green List, indicating that they are of low conservation priority. These species still receive full protection through the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 1.5.23 The UK BAP was launched in 1994 and established a framework and criteria for identifying species and habitat types of conservation concern. From this list,

action plans for priority species of conservation concern were published and have subsequently been amended and updated.

- 1.5.24 A category of 'Local importance' was used for species that did not reach regional importance but were still of some ecological value. This included all species on the red list of BOCC 5.
- 1.5.25 The breeding bird assemblage of the site was also evaluated against the standard Joint Nature Conservation Committee guidelines for the selection of biological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).
- 1.5.26 Finally, an additional evaluation method was used to establish species richness. Species richness is a simple and effective measure of diversity that can be used to describe conservation value separately for breeding, passage and wintering bird communities. Fuller (1980) provides the following criteria for breeding bird diversity criteria which are presented in **Table 1.2** below.

Table 1.2: Wintering and Migratory Bird Survey Dates and Tide Times

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

- 1.5.27 The following geographical frames of reference and selection criteria (based on the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), 2022)) are used to describe the nature conservation value or potential value to the bird populations within the survey area.
 - International importance – a species which is cited as part of the designated interest of a Special Protection Area with connectivity to the site and occurs in internationally or nationally important numbers.
 - National importance – a species which is cited as part of the designated interest of a SSSI and occurs in nationally important numbers.
 - Regional importance – NERC Species or BOCC 5 Red List species that regularly occur in regionally important numbers.
 - County importance – NERC Species or BOCC 5 Red List species that regularly occur in numbers that are important on a county basis.
 - Local importance – BOCC 5 Red or Amber List species which occur regularly in locally sustainable populations.
 - Site – all common and widespread species.

Limitations

Survey

- 1.5.28 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation can ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.
- 1.5.29 In some areas, potentially suitable habitats appear to occur where no landowner access was available to undertake surveys. In these areas, survey was limited to visual inspection from recognised Public Rights of Ways.

- 1.5.30 The breeding bird survey was undertaken on a previous iteration of the Onshore Infrastructure Area. At this stage, survey access at the Converter Site has not been possible. As detailed in **paragraph 1.1.7**, bird surveys are currently ongoing and will cover all parts of the Onshore Infrastructure Area.
- 1.5.31 Where site access has not been possible prior to submission of the ES, habitats have been attributed based on visual inspection from nearby Public Rights of Ways and also by reviewing aerial photography. The habitats and features present have been assessed for their likelihood to support species known to be present in the wider area. Where it has not been possible to exclude this presence, it is appropriate to assume that the presence of such species is likely and assess the Proposed Development on this precautionary basis.

Accurate Lifespan of Ecological Data

- 1.5.32 The majority of ecological data remains valid for only short periods due to the inherently transient nature of the subject. The survey results contained in this report are considered accurate for two years, assuming no significant considerable changes to the site conditions.
- 1.5.33 Site specific surveys used to inform Volume 2, Chapter 1: Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES were undertaken between 2021 and 2024. CIEEMs Advice Note: On the lifespan of ecological reports and surveys (CIEEM, 2019) recommends that surveys exceeding three years in age are likely to require updating, whilst surveys undertaken between 18 months and three years prior to application may require site visits pre-construction to review the validity of survey findings. Therefore, in accordance with CIEEM guidance, site specific surveys undertaken over 18 months prior to the submission will be updated, where required (following a site review to confirm the validity of survey findings by a suitably qualified ecologist). Those surveys undertaken over three years will be supplemented by further surveys (if Development Consent Order is granted) to be completed pre-construction.

1.6 Site-specific Surveys

Breeding Bird Survey

- 1.6.1 A total of 70 species were recorded within the survey area, during the breeding bird surveys undertaken in 2022. Of these, 24 were confirmed to be breeding, three probably breeding and four possibly breeding. The remaining 39 species were of non-breeding status, either passing through the site or using the site for foraging.
- 1.6.2 Included within the species confirmed as breeding within the site were greenfinch, linnet, and skylark, which are Red-list species and dunnock, song thrush, and wren, which are Amber-list species.
- 1.6.3 Kingfisher, which is listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was frequently recorded along the River Torridge during the winter surveys, however, was absent during the breeding surveys. There were no other Schedule 1 species recorded during the surveys undertaken in 2022.
- 1.6.4 A summary of the breeding and conservation status of the bird species recorded, with the numbers of territories identified is provided in **Table 1.3** below. The locations of territories of selected species confirmed as breeding on site and

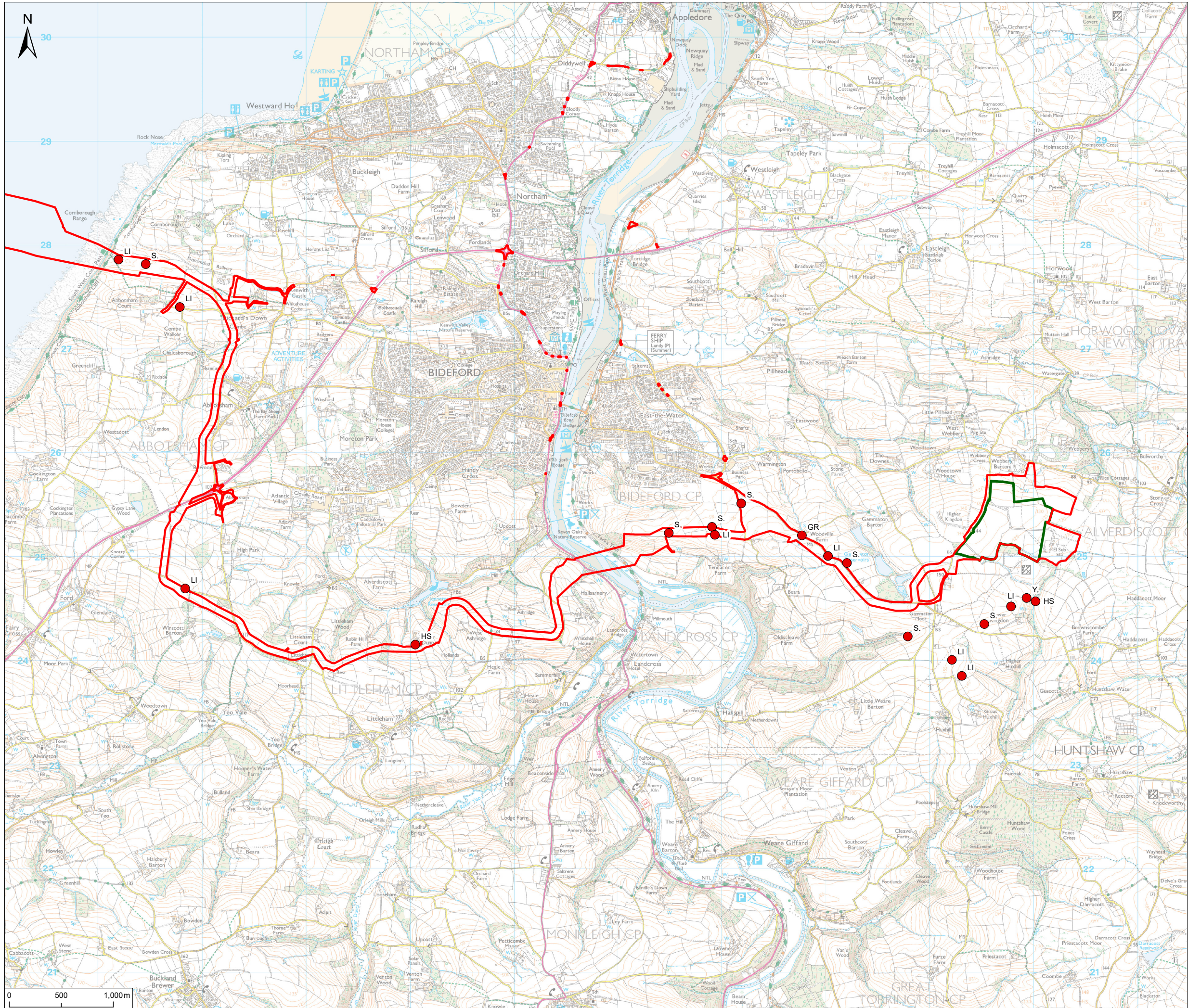
which are listed as protected or notable species are shown on **Figure 1.1** and **Figure 1.2**.

Table 1.3: Breeding and Conservation Status of Birds Recorded in 2022

Species	Breeding Status	Number of Territories	Annex 1 EU Birds Directive	Schedule 1 WCA	NERC Species of Principle Importance	BOCC 5 Red and Amber Species
Blackbird	Confirmed	15	-	-	-	-
Blackcap	Confirmed	6	-	-	-	-
Black-headed gull	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Blue tit	Confirmed	15	-	-	-	-
Bullfinch	Probable	2	-	-	✓	Amber
Buzzard	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Canada Goose	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Carrion crow	Confirmed	1	-	-	-	-
Chaffinch	Confirmed	5	-	-	-	-
Chiffchaff	Confirmed	14	-	-	-	-
Coal tit	Confirmed	1	-	-	-	-
Collared dove	Possible	2	-	-	-	-
Cormorant	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Cuckoo	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	✓	Red
Curlew	Non-breeding	N/A	-	✓	✓	Red
Dunnock	Confirmed	7	-	✓	✓	Amber
Garden warbler	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Goldcrest	Confirmed	3	-	-	-	-
Goldfinch	Confirmed	4	-	-	-	-
Great spotted woodpecker	Possible	2	-	-	-	-
Great tit	Confirmed	9	-	-	-	-
Green woodpecker	Possible	1	-	-	-	-
Greenfinch	Confirmed	2	-	-	-	Red
Grey heron	Non-breeding	0	-	-	-	-
Grey partridge	Non-breeding	N/A	-	✓	✓	Red
Herring gull	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Red
House martin	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Red
House sparrow	Confirmed	1	-	-	✓	Red
Jackdaw	Confirmed	2	-	-	-	-
Jay	Possible	1	-	-	-	-
Kestrel	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Lesser black-backed gull	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Linnet	Confirmed	8	-	-	✓	Red
Long-tailed tit	Confirmed	4	-	-	-	-
Magpie	Confirmed	2	-	-	-	-
Mallard	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Marsh tit	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	✓	Red
Meadow pipit	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber

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Species	Breeding Status	Number of Territories	Annex 1 EU Birds Directive	Schedule 1 WCA	NERC Species of Principle Importance	BOCC 5 Red and Amber Species
Mistle thrush	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Red
Moorhen	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Nuthatch	Probable	3	-	-	-	-
Oystercatcher	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Pheasant	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Pied wagtail	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Raven	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Red-legged partridge	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Reed bunting	Non-breeding	N/A	-	✓	✓	Amber
Reed warbler	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Robin	Confirmed	29	-	-	-	-
Rock pipit	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Rook	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Sand martin	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Shelduck	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Skylark	Confirmed	7	-	-	✓	Red
Song thrush	Confirmed	9	-	-	✓	Amber
Sparrowhawk	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Spotted flycatcher	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	✓	Red
Starling	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	✓	Red
Stock dove	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Stonechat	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Swallow	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	-
Swift	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Red
Treecreeper	Probable	1	-	-	-	-
Turnstone	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Wheatear	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Whitethroat	Confirmed	3	-	-	-	-
Willow warbler	Non-breeding	N/A	-	-	-	Amber
Woodpigeon	Confirmed	4	-	-	-	Amber
Wren	Confirmed	47	-	-	-	Amber
Yellowhammer	Confirmed	1	-	-	✓	Red



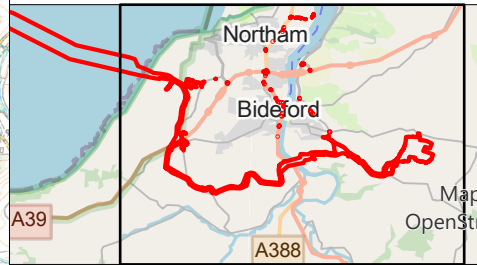
Notes
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Legend

- Order Limits
- Converter Site
- Red Listed Species Record

Species

- GR Greenfinch (1)
- HS House Sparrow (2)
- LI Linnet (8)
- S Skylark (7)
- Y Yellowhammer (1)



Map data © OpenStreetMap

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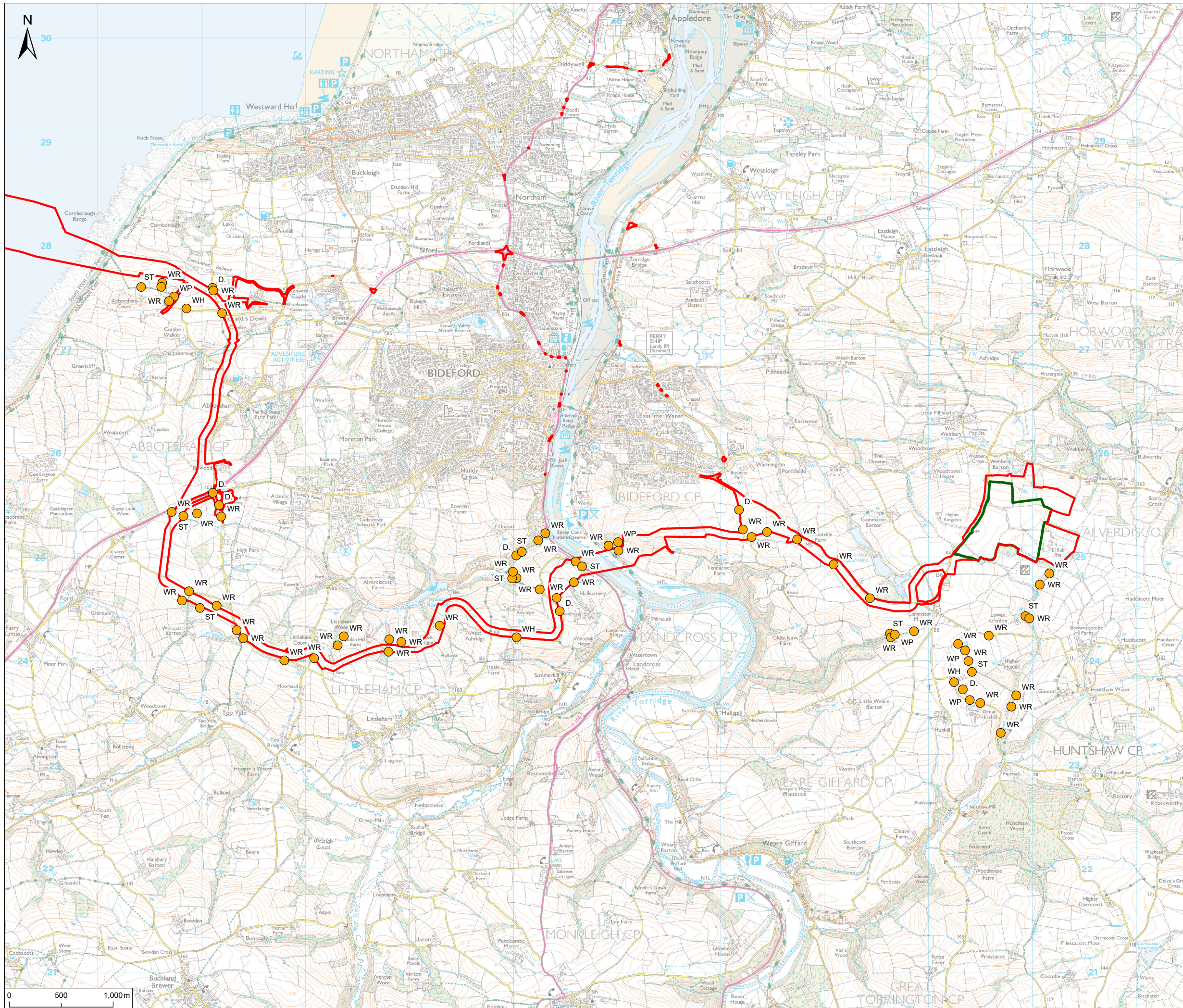


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Title Breeding Bird Survey Results: Red Listed Species

Status FINAL **Scale @ A3** 1:35,000 **Date Created** Nov 2024
Figure Number 1.1 **Rev** P01

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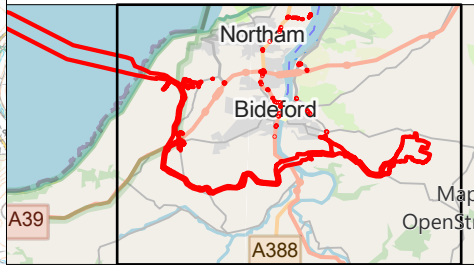
Notes
 1. This plan is scaled at paper size A3. If received electronically it is the recipient's responsibility to print to the correct scale. Only written dimensions should be used.

Legend

- Order Limits
- Converter Site
- Amber Listed Species Record

Species

- D• Dunnock (7)
- WP Woodpigeon (6)
- ST Song Thrush (9)
- WR Wren (48)
- WH Whitethroat (3)



P01	FINAL	MP	NH	15.10.24
Rev	Description	By	CB	Date



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Title Breeding Bird Survey Results: Amber Listed Species

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Figure Number 1.2 **Rev** P01

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Wintering and Migratory Bird Survey

Coastal Site

- 1.6.5 The wintering and migratory bird surveys undertaken between October 2021 and February 2022 recorded 12 species of conservation interest at the Landfall at Cornborough Range. These included little egret, an Annex 1 species under the Birds Directive, and curlew and herring gull, which are Red-list species. Also recorded were black-headed gull, bullfinch, common gull, dunnoek, lesser black-backed gull, meadow pipit, oystercatcher, rook and turnstone, which are Amber-list species. Curlew is also listed as a Devon BAP Priority Species. The birds were identified flying over the route, and some were also found to be feeding in the area, in particular on areas exposed at high tide.
- 1.6.6 Summaries of the counts of each species recorded during the coastal surveys are provided in **Table 1.4** below. For the purposes of this report only those of conservation interest have been included in the results tables and assessment of impacts.
- 1.6.7 The locations of all birds recorded on each of the survey visits are shown on **Figure 1.3** to **Figure 1.7**.

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Table 1.4: Abundance of wintering birds of conservation interest recorded during coastal surveys in between October 2021 and February 2022

Species	Date					Peak Count	Mean Count	Conservation Status
	14/10/21	09/11/21	14/12/21	27/01/2022	11/02/2022			
Black-headed gull	-	2	-	71	90	90	32.6	BOCC 5 Amber
Bullfinch	-	-	-	2	-	2	0.4	BOCC 5 Amber, NERC S41, UK BAP
Common gull	7	-	-	-	-	7	1.4	BOCC 5 Amber
Curlew	3	-	35	2	2	35	8.4	BOCC 5 Red, NERC S41, UK BAP, Devon BAP
Dunnock	1	-	-	-	-	1	0.2	BOCC 5 Amber, NERC S41, UK BAP
Herring gull	12	-	-	5	6	12	4.6	BOCC 5 Red, NERC S41, UK BAP
Lesser black-backed gull	4	-	-	-	1	4	1.0	BOCC 5 Amber
Little egret	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.2	BDIR
Meadow pipit	3	2	1	-	-	3	1.2	BOCC 5 Amber
Oystercatcher	20	-	7	6	8	20	8.2	BOCC 5 Amber
Rook	2	-	4	-	-	4	1.2	BOCC 5 Amber
Turnstone	-	-	-	2	7	7	1.8	BOCC 5 Amber



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Legend

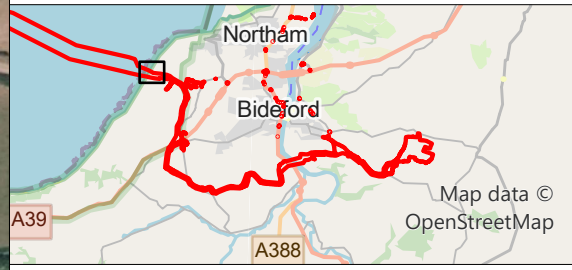
- Order Limits
- Buffer 200m
- Footpath

Status

- Red Listed Species Record
- Amber Listed Species Record
- Annex 1 Species Record

Species

- | | |
|--|--|
| ● CM Common Gull | ● LB Lesser Black-backed Gull |
| ● CU Curlew | ● MP Meadow Pipit |
| ● D- Dunnock | ● OC Oystercatcher |
| ● ET Little Egret | ● RO Rook |
| ● HG Herring Gull | |



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Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

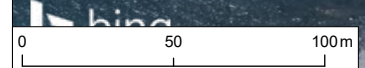


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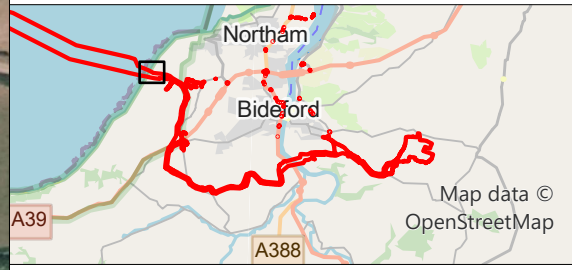
- Order Limits
- Buffer 200m
- Footpath

Status

- Amber Listed Species Record
- Annex 1 Species Record

Species

- BH Black-headed Gull
- MP Meadow Pipit
- ET Little Egret



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Rev	Description	By	CB	Date



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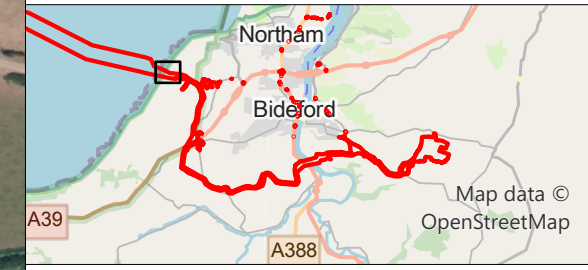
- Order Limits
- Buffer 200m
- Footpath

Status

- Red Listed Species Record
- Amber Listed Species Record

Species

- CU Curlew
- OC Oystercatcher
- MP Meadow Pipit
- RO Rook



P01	FINAL	MP	NH	15.10.24
Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

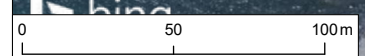


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Status FINAL Scale @ A3 1:2,500 Date Created Nov 2024
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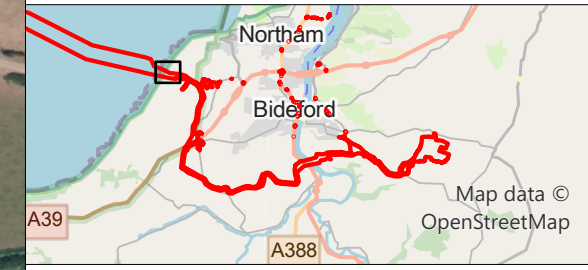
- Order Limits
- Buffer 200m
- Footpath

Status

- Red Listed Species Record
- Amber Listed Species Record

Species

- | | |
|--|--|
| BF Bullfinch | HG Herring Gull |
| BH Black-headed Gull | OC Oystercatcher |
| CU Curlew | TT Turnstone |



P01	FINAL	MP	NH	15.10.24
Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

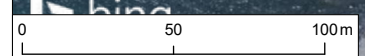


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Status	Scale @ A3	Date Created
FINAL	1:2,500	Nov 2024
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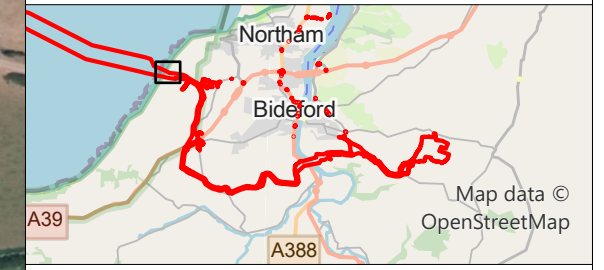
- Order Limits
- Buffer 200m
- Footpath

Status

- Red Listed Species Record
- Amber Listed Species Record

Species

- | | |
|---|--|
| BH Black-headed Gull | LB Lesser Black-backed Gull |
| CU Curlew | OC Oystercatcher |
| HG Herring Gull | TT Turnstone |



P01	FINAL	MP	NH	15.10.24
Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

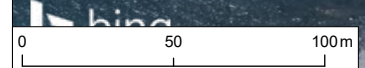


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Status	Scale @ A3	Date Created
FINAL	1:2,500	Nov 2024
Figure Number		Rev
1.7		P01

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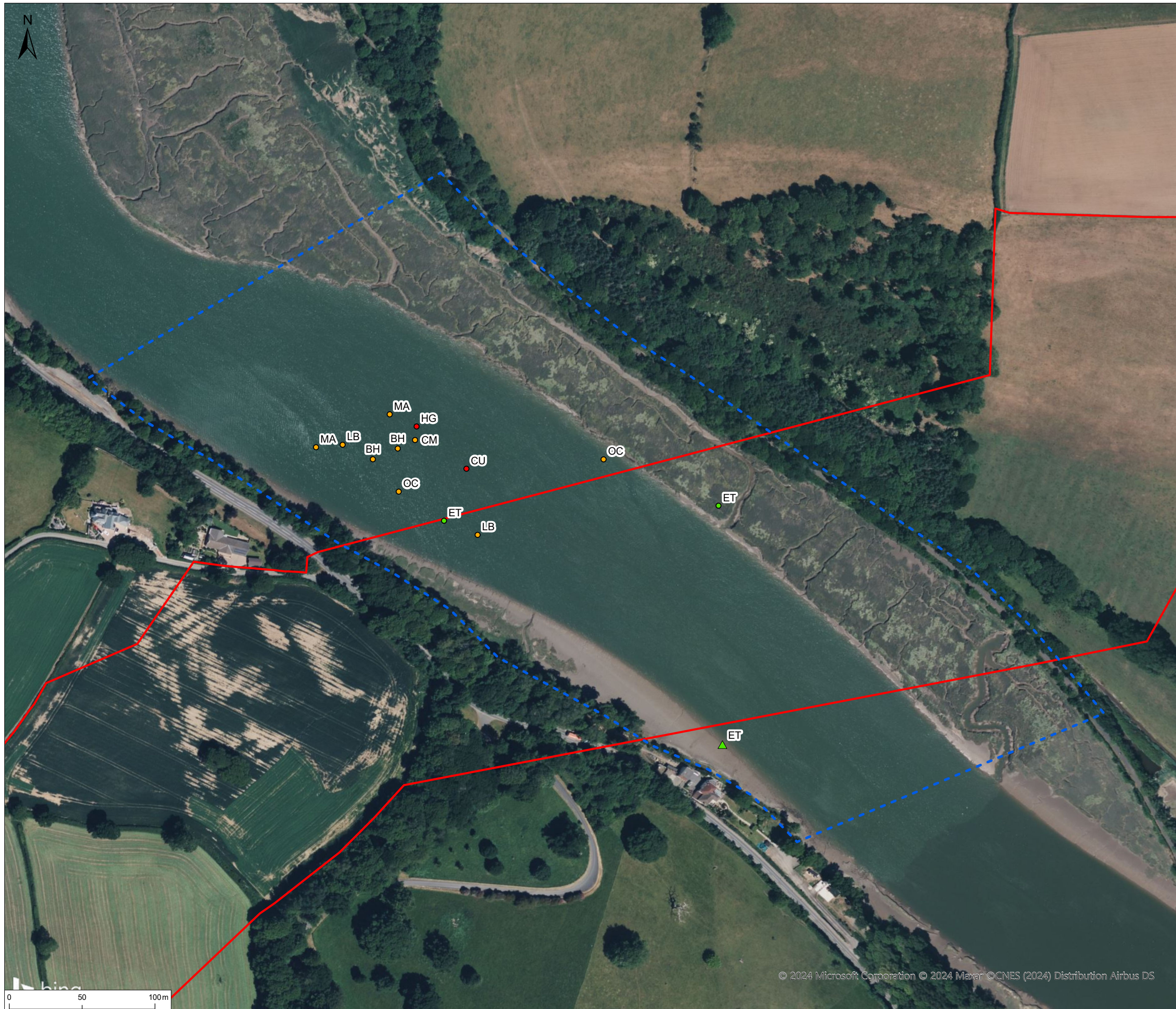
Estuary Site

- 1.6.8 At the Torridge Estuary survey location, 13 species of conservation interest were recorded between October 2021 and February 2022. These included little egret and kingfisher, both Annex 1 species under the Birds Directive and curlew, herring gull and lapwing, which are Red-list species. Eight amber-listed species, including black-headed gull, common gull, common sandpiper, lesser black-backed gull, mallard, oystercatcher, redshank and shelduck, were recorded flying over the survey area and using the estuary for foraging.
- 1.6.9 For the purposes of this report only those of conservation interest have been included in the results tables and assessment of impacts.
- 1.6.10 The survey did not identify any species which appeared to be particularly dependent specifically on this area of the estuary. The use of this area fell within a wider pattern of use of the estuarine environment, indicating that the specific value of the survey site was limited for the species present.
- 1.1.1 Peak counts across the tidal surveys for each species are provided in **Table 1.5**, along with the conservation status of each species (as defined in **section 1.5**). The locations of all birds recorded on each of the survey visits are shown on **Figure 1.8** to **Figure 1.12**.

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Table 1.5: Abundance of wintering birds of conservation interest recorded during coastal surveys in between October 2021 and February 2022

Species	Date										Peak Count	Mean Count	Conservation Status
	14/10/21 (HT)	15/10/21 (LT)	08/11/21 (LT)	10/11/21 (HT)	13/12/21 (HT)	15/12/21 (LT)	12/01/22 (LT)	14/01/22 (HT)	10/02/22 (LT)	12/02/22 (HT)			
Black-headed gull	-	85	52	18	23	53	36	169	3	93	169	53.2	BOCC 5 Amber
Common gull	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.2	BOCC 5 Amber
Common sandpiper	-	4	3	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	4	1.1	BOCC 5 Amber
Curlew	-	3	6	-	14	2	-	3	1	2	14	3.1	BOCC 5 Red, NERC S41, UK BAP, Devon BAP
Herring gull	-	3	-	-	26	-	1	22	-	6	26	5.8	BOCC 5 Red, NERC S41, UK BAP
Kingfisher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	0.1	BDIR
Lapwing	-	-	39	32	137	-	1	4	1	-	137	21.4	BOCC 5 Red
Lesser black-backed gull	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	0.8	BOCC 5 Amber
Little egret	1	8	2	-	1	2	2	1	-	1	8	1.8	BDIR
Mallard	-	21	-	2	-	1	6	4	2	2	21	3.8	BOCC 5 Amber
Oystercatcher	-	5	3	-	-	2	1	-	3	1	5	1.5	BOCC 5 Amber
Redshank	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	2	2	1	3	1.0	BOCC 5 Amber
Shelduck	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	2	0.3	BOCC 5 Amber



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Legend

- Order Limits
- Survey Buffer 200m
- Status, Record Date - Tide
- Red, 15/10/2021 - Low tide
- Amber, 15/10/2021 - Low tide
- ▲ Annex 1, 14/10/2021 - High tide
- Annex 1, 15/10/2021 - Low tide

Species

- BH Black-headed Gull
- CM Common Gull
- CU Curlew
- ET Little Egret
- HG Herring Gull
- LB Lesser Black-backed Gull
- MA Mallard
- OC Oystercatcher



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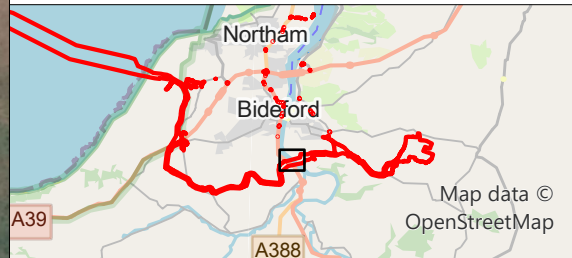
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Legend

- Order Limits
- Survey Buffer 200m
- Status, Record Date - Tide
- Red, 08/11/2021 - Low tide
- ▲ Red, 10/11/2021 - High tide
- Amber, 08/11/2021 - Low tide
- ▲ Amber, 10/11/2021 - High tide
- Annex 1, 08/11/2021 - Low tide

Species

- BH Black-headed Gull
- CM Common Gull
- CS Common Sandpiper
- CU Curlew
- ET Little Egret
- L Lapwing
- LB Lesser Black-backed Gull
- MA Mallard
- OC Oystercatcher



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- Legend**
- Order Limits
 - Survey Buffer 200m
- Status, Record Date - Tide
- ▲ Red, 13/12/2021 - High tide
 - Red, 15/12/2021 - Low tide
 - ▲ Amber, 13/12/2021 - High tide
 - Amber, 15/12/2021 - Low tide
 - ▲ Annex 1, 13/12/2021 - High tide
 - Annex 1, 15/12/2021 - Low tide

- Species**
- | | |
|---|---|
| BH Black-headed Gull | L Lapwing |
| CS Common Sandpiper | MA Mallard |
| CU Curlew | OC Oystercatcher |
| ET Little Egret | RK Redshank |
| HG Herring Gull | |



P01	FINAL	MP	NH	15.10.24
Rev	Description	By	CB	Date



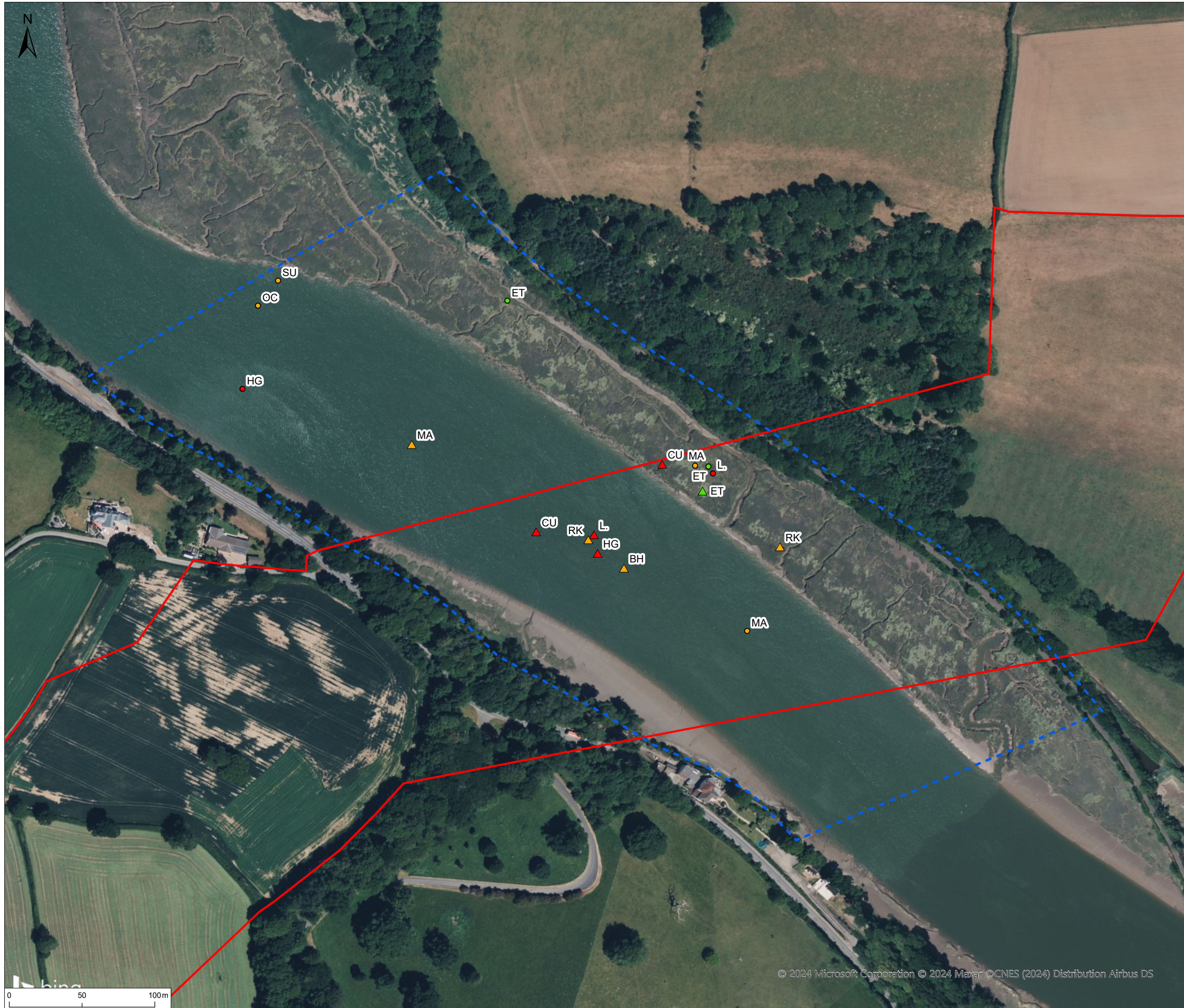
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 Title Wintering Bird Survey Results: December 2021

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 Figure Number 1.10 Rev P01

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Legend

- Order Limits
- Survey Buffer 200m
- Status, Record Date - Tide
- Red, 12/01/2022 - Low tide
- ▲ Red, 14/01/2022 - High tide
- Amber, 12/01/2022 - Low tide
- ▲ Amber, 14/01/2022 - High tide
- Annex 1, 12/01/2022 - Low tide
- ▲ Annex 1, 14/01/2022 - High tide

Species

- BH Black-headed Gull
- CU Curlew
- ET Little Egret
- HG Herring Gull
- L Lapwing
- MA Mallard
- OC Oystercatcher
- RK Redshank
- SU Shelduck



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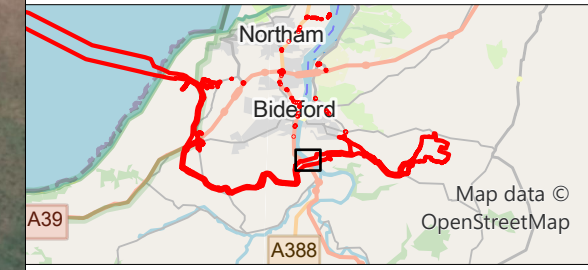
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- Legend**
- Order Limits
 - Survey Buffer 200m
- Status, Record Date - Tide
- Red, 10/02/2022 - Low tide
 - ▲ Red, 12/02/2022 - High tide
 - Amber, 10/02/2022 - Low tide
 - ▲ Amber, 12/02/2022 - High tide
 - Annex 1, 10/02/2022 - Low tide
 - ▲ Annex 1, 12/02/2022 - High tide

- Species**
- | | |
|---|--|
| BH Black-headed Gull | LB Lesser Black-backed Gull |
| CU Curlew | MA Mallard |
| ET Little Egret | OC Oystercatcher |
| HG Herring Gull | RK Redshank |
| KF Kingfisher | SU Shelduck |
| L Lapwing | |



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Rev	Description	By	CB	Date



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1.7 Results

Breeding Bird Survey

- 1.7.1 A total of 70 species were recorded within the site boundary, during the breeding bird surveys undertaken in 2022. Of these, 24 were confirmed to be breeding, three probably breeding and four possibly breeding. The remaining 39 species were of non-breeding status, either passing through the site or using the site for foraging.
- 1.7.2 It is recommended that features with potential to support nesting birds are removed outside of the breeding bird season. It should be noted that whilst the main bird breeding season runs between March and September some birds can nest at any time of year.
- 1.7.3 If any clearance was required during the breeding season, the relevant areas should be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist within 48 hours prior to clearance to check for the presence of nesting birds. If an active nest was present, the nest and vegetation within 5 m of it would need to be retained until the young birds had fledged.
- 1.7.4 If a nest proved to be of a species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), advice from the inspecting ecologist regarding suitable distances to avoid disturbance of the nest and any birds using it would need to be sought and agreed with clearance contractors. Such buffers would need to remain in place until the young birds had fledged and left the nest.
- 1.7.5 There were no observations of peregrine falcon recorded during the surveys undertaken in 2022, although their presence is known in the local area. Any proposed works near Cornborough Range should consider the potential presence of nesting peregrine falcons. It is understood that the Landfall works area will be located in the field beyond the coastal path. Given the absence of cliff face at Cornborough Range, it is considered unlikely that peregrine falcons would nest in this location. It is understood that the nearest known peregrine nesting site is located approximately 1.5 km to 2 km away.
- 1.7.6 Prior to commencing works, the Landfall should be surveyed for nesting peregrine falcon. If peregrines are found to be nesting within 200 m of the Landfall works area, a risk assessment would be undertaken to assess the likelihood of the birds being affected by the works. Intervisibility is unlikely given the work site location behind the coastal path and the proposed screening of the work site. Peregrine falcons typically raise one brood, occupying a nest between March to July inclusive, although, depending on the geographical area and the weather conditions, nesting can extend outside this period.
- 1.7.7 Kingfisher were regularly recorded at the estuary crossing during the 2021/2022 winter bird surveys. Therefore, any proposed works near watercourses should consider the potential presence of nesting kingfisher. It is understood that all works will be located outside of the floodplain and therefore at a distance from the river and would be screened with solid fencing to reduce any disturbance. Prior to undertaking any proposed trenched watercourse crossings, a nesting kingfisher survey should be undertaken. If kingfishers are found to be nesting within 200 m of the construction site, a risk assessment would be undertaken to assess the likelihood of the birds being affected by the works.

- 1.7.8 Skylarks nest and feed within open expanses of grassland and arable fields. Where it is not possible to complete topsoil stripping outside of the nesting season (March to September), it is recommended that habitat management is considered, in order to make the area affected by the scheme unfavourable for nesting skylarks. This could include maintaining a short sward through mowing regimes. In addition, a survey should be undertaken to identify the locations of active nests. These areas should remain undisturbed until the young have fledged. Habitat in each area affected will be restored prior to the following nesting season.
- 1.7.9 Overall considering the habitats present and abundance / diversity of species recorded, the site is considered to be of no more than local value for breeding birds.

Wintering and Migratory Birds

- 1.7.10 For the coastal site, 12 species of conservation importance were recorded flying over and feeding within the survey area during the course of the site visits. This included a significant number of oystercatchers, curlews, black-headed gull, turnstone and herring gull feeding on exposed seaweed during low tide.
- 1.7.11 For the estuary site, 13 species of conservation importance were identified flying over and feeding within the survey area during the course of the site visits. These included lapwing and herring gull which are red list species. It is considered likely that the importance of this estuary site in isolation is limited, as it is utilised by foraging birds only as part of the wider estuarine environment; the majority of species were recorded foraging outside, or passing through, the survey area. In addition, the area is located outside of the SSSI.
- 1.7.12 No wetland and wildfowl species were observed roosting within the sites and therefore it can be considered unlikely that the coastal or estuarine survey areas form important roosting areas at high tide. Therefore, it is considered that the site is of no more than local value for wintering and migratory birds.

1.8 References

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