

A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham

Scheme Number: TR010059

Breeding Bird Verification Survey Report

AFPF Regulation Rule 8(1)(c)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Prescribed Forms and Procedure)

Regulations 2009

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms
and Procedure) Regulations 2009**

**The A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to
Ellingham**

Development Consent Order 20[xx]

Breeding Bird Verification Survey Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) was made by Highways England (Applicant) on 07 July 2020 to the Secretary of State for Transport via the Planning Inspectorate (Inspectorate) under the Planning Act 2008 (2008 Act). If made, the DCO would grant consent for the A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham (Scheme). The Scheme comprises Part A: Morpeth to Felton (Part A) and Part B: Alnwick to Ellingham (Part B). This report relates to Part A only.

Baseline breeding bird surveys were completed in 2016. Due to the age of the original assessment, a verification breeding bird survey was completed in 2020 for Part A to verify the impact assessment and mitigation detailed within **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the ES [APP-048]. The scope of the verification survey has been discussed and agreed with Natural England.

The verification survey aimed to establish the current breeding bird populations adjacent to the Scheme, in order to ensure that the impact assessment and mitigation, informed by the original baseline survey results from 2016, remain relevant. The survey involved undertaking seven breeding bird transects between 19 May and 16 June 2020. Two further transects had been proposed in 2020 but could not be surveyed due to access restrictions. All surveys were carried out in accordance with current good practice guidance survey methodology, namely the British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO's) Common Bird Census (CBC), as summarised by Bibby et al. (2000).

A total of 50 species were recorded on or over the Survey Area (Order Limits plus 100m) during the breeding bird verification surveys. Of these species, 24 are legally protected or species of conservation concern, including one Schedule 1 species (peregrine falcon), 17 Species of Principal Importance (SPI) (such as tree sparrow and skylark) under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, 15 Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) red list species (including yellow wagtail and grey partridge) and seven BoCC amber list species (such as dunnock and willow warbler).

The verification survey recorded fewer bird species and in lower numbers compared to the baseline surveys, although this is expected as a single verification survey was undertaken. Importantly, in comparison to the 2016 surveys, the 2020 verification survey did not record any species of greater conservation concern or species in greater numbers that would increase the importance valuation of breeding birds presented within **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the ES [APP-048]. Birds recorded during the verification survey were those typical of arable, woodland and garden habitats, with a relatively even distribution of records across the Survey Area. The verification survey results align with the results of the 2016 surveys.

Overall, the impact assessment and associated mitigation detailed in **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the ES [APP-048] remains suitable and proportionate.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. SCHEME BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1. An application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) was made by Highways England (Applicant) on 07 July 2020 to the Secretary of State for Transport via the Planning Inspectorate (Inspectorate) under the Planning Act 2008 (the 2008 Act). If made, the DCO would grant consent for the A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham (Scheme). The Scheme comprises:
- a. Part A: Morpeth to Felton (Part A) is located on the A1 between Warrener's House Interchange at Morpeth and the existing dual carriageway at Felton. It is approximately 12.6 km in length.
 - b. Part B: Alnwick to Ellingham (Part B) starts approximately 15 km north of the northern extent of Part A, is located along the A1 between Alnwick and Ellingham and is approximately 8 km in length.
- 1.1.2. A detailed description of the Scheme as a whole can be found in **Chapter 2: The Scheme** of the Environmental Statement (ES) [**APP-037**].
- 1.1.3. Baseline breeding bird surveys were completed in 2016 (refer to **Appendix 9.13: Breeding Bird Survey Report Part A** of the ES [**APP-239**]). Due to the age of the original assessment, a verification breeding bird survey was completed in 2020 for Part A to verify the impact assessment and mitigation detailed within **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the ES [**APP-048**].
- 1.1.4. The verification survey detailed within this report were specific to Part A and did not include an assessment of Part B. An updated desk study was undertaken in 2019 to inform the ecological impact assessment of Part B presented in **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part B** [**APP-049**], considered sufficient and proportionate to the potential impacts of Part B. As such, a verification survey of Part B was not considered necessary. Natural England confirmed during a meeting on 15 December 2020 that the ecological surveys undertaken to date for the Scheme, including those for Part B, were appropriate, including methodologies, timing and extent. This is documented within the Natural England Statement of Common Ground.

1.2. ECOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.2.1. A desk study was undertaken in 2016 (**Appendix 9.1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report Part A** of the ES [**APP-227**]) prior to completion of baseline breeding bird surveys undertaken between mid-March and early July 2016 (**Appendix 9.13: Breeding Bird Survey Report Part A** of the ES [**APP-239**]). The baseline surveys utilised 10 transects, spread evenly across Part A and included land up to 500m from the A1 carriageway. Each transect was surveyed three times across the breeding season in 2016, with results ultimately used to inform the impact assessment included within the Biodiversity Chapter of the ES for Part A (**Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the ES [**APP-048**]).
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1.3. BRIEF AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.3.1. A single breeding bird verification survey was commissioned to provide current baseline data regarding the bird community within, and in proximity to, Part A in 2020 and verify that the mitigation detailed within **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the ES [APP-048] remains suitable and sufficient. The verification survey was to provide information on the following legally protected or notable species:
- a. Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WaCA) 1981, as amended;
 - b. Annex 1 of the European Community (EC) Birds Directive;
 - c. Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 Section 41 species;
 - d. Local Biodiversity Action Plan 'Priority' species;
 - e. Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red or Amber listed species (**Ref. 1**); or
 - f. Other locally notable species, such as those listed in the citations of the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and Longhorsley Moor SSSI.
- 1.3.2. The results of the above survey are contained within this report.
- 1.3.3. The scope of the verification survey was discussed with Natural England, who confirmed in an email dated 30 June 2020 that *"the scope of the verification surveys would appear to be appropriate particularly since there has not been any significant change in land use since the original surveys were undertaken."* This consultation will be documented within the Natural England Statement of Common Ground.

2. METHODS

2.1. BREEDING BIRD SURVEY

- 2.1.1. To inform an updated evaluation of the on-site habitats for bird species, one breeding bird verification survey visit was completed for each transect between 19 May and 16 June 2020. The survey area of the 2016 assessment detailed in **paragraph 1.2.1** allowed for flexibility in the design of Part A and therefore extended up to 500 m from the proposed road alignment at the time of survey. The Survey Area for the 2020 verification survey was refined to be proportionate to the zone of influence of Part A, to account for the refinement of the design of Part A since 2016. The verification surveys were based upon the transect routes used in the baseline surveys but were shortened to cover the Order Limits of Part A plus an additional 100 m buffer (Survey Area). Nine transects were deemed suitable to provide the necessary survey coverage and determine any significant changes in species use of the landscape bounding the A1 carriageway. The surveys were carried out in accordance with current good practice guidance survey methodology, based on British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO's) Common Bird Census (CBC), as summarised by Bibby et al. (2000) (**Ref. 2**). The 2020 verification survey followed the same methodology as the original baseline surveys.
- 2.1.2. Due to the large size of the Survey Area, survey visits were spread over a period of five days. Due to access constraints, surveys could not be undertaken on consecutive days. Two surveyors covered separate transects concurrently on one day, to minimise the time taken to complete surveys. A summary of survey dates, times and weather conditions is provided below in **Table 2-1**.
- 2.1.3. Surveys were timed to commence in the early morning but avoid the first hour after sunrise when bird activity peaks. Survey visits were planned to avoid adverse weather conditions such as heavy rain and strong wind, as this can reduce bird activity and detectability.
- 2.1.4. During each visit, surveyors walked along each pre-determined transect route at a slow walking pace, aided by use of binoculars. All birds heard or seen were recorded. Registrations, which are records of individual birds (identified either by call, song or visually), were recorded on field maps using standard BTO species codes (**Appendix A**). Breeding activity was recorded using the standard BTO coding system and is shown in **Figure 2**.
- 2.1.5. Care was taken to avoid double counting. Longer periods of observations were made in areas of high bird activity. Bird registrations are shown on **Figure 2**.

2.2. DATES OF SURVEY AND PERSONNEL

- 2.2.1. The breeding bird verification survey visits were completed by competent surveyors with eight years' experience of ornithological survey, including breeding bird surveys in arable habitats.
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2.2.2. Dates of survey and weather conditions are provided in **Table 2-1** below.

Table 2-1 - Breeding Bird Survey Weather Conditions

Transect	Date	Start Temperature (°C)	Cloud Cover (0-8 Oktas)	Wind Speed (Beaufort scale)	Wind Direction	Rain	Visibility
1	Not surveyed						
2	Not surveyed						
3	19/05/20	14	7/8	2	South	Light	Good
4	19/05/20	14	8/8	2	South	Light	Good
5	27/05/20	13	6/8	1	North west	None	Good
6	21/05/20	13	6/8	1	North west	None	Good
7	16/06/20	16	2/8	2	North	None	Good
8	27/05/20	13	6/8	1	North west	None	Good
9	19/05/20	16	8/8	3	South east	None	Good

2.3. NOTES AND LIMITATIONS

- 2.3.1. Transects 1 and 2 could not be surveyed in 2020 due to access restrictions. Both these transects comprised similar arable habitats as those found along the surveyed transects. Key species (BoCC red list and UKBAP/LBAP) were identified along the surveyed transects and to an extent, during wintering bird verification surveys (**Appendix 9.14: Wintering Bird Survey Report Part A** of the ES [APP-240], confirming the presence of these species within land parcels of Transects 1 and 2. Therefore, the omission of survey data from Transects 1 and 2 is not thought to have negatively impacted the conclusions of the verification survey report.
- 2.3.2. No further site-specific limitations were applicable to this survey. Whilst every effort has been made to detect all species present some bird species are more difficult to detect due to their shy or secretive nature and therefore may have gone undetected by this survey. As a constraint applicable to all bird surveys this is not considered to place significant constraints upon interpretation of the results.

3. RESULTS AND EVALUATION

3.1. BREEDING BIRD SURVEYS 2016

- 3.1.1. A total of 86 bird species, inclusive of incidental observations, were recorded during the original breeding bird surveys. These included 46 species with additional legal protection or species of conservation concern.
- 3.1.2. The numbers of birds recorded within each category are listed below, it should be noted that categories are not exclusive, and a species can be listed in more than one conservation category (for example listed as both a Species of Principal Importance (SPI) in accordance with the NERC Act 2006 and a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) species and as either a red or amber list BoCC.
- a. Two species listed on Annex 1 of the EC Birds Directive;
 - b. Four species listed on Schedule 1 of the WaCA 1981 (as amended);
 - c. Twenty-one species listed as SPI in accordance with Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 (also UKBAP species);
 - d. Twenty-three BoCC red list species; and
 - e. Twenty species on the BoCC amber list.

3.2. BREEDING BIRD VERIFICATION SURVEY 2020

- 3.2.1. A total of 50 species were recorded on or over the Survey Area during the breeding bird verification surveys. This included 23 species which are legally protected or species of conservation concern and included the following:
- a. One species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
 - b. 17 species listed as SPI in accordance with Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 (also UKBAP species);
 - c. 14 BoCC red list species; and
 - d. Seven BoCC amber list species.
- 3.2.2. It should be noted that bird species can appear on one or more of the schedules/lists identified above.
- 3.2.3. **Table 3-1** details bird species recorded within the Survey Area which are legally protected or of conservation concern (BoCC status). The table indicates the conservation categories in which each species is listed and details any breeding behaviours observed.

Table 3-1 - Results of Protected and/or Notable Species Recorded within the Survey Area

Common Name	Latin Name	WaCA Schedule 1	NERC Section 41	UK BAP	BoCC Status*	Breeding Status	Description of Species Activity, Location/s within the Survey Area where Applicable
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>				A	Non-breeding	Individuals observed flying over the survey area.
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		✓		A	Possible	Calling individuals throughout the scheme in low numbers.
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		✓		A	Probable	Territories spread throughout the survey area.
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>		✓	✓	R	Probable	Pairs observed in suitable breeding habitat.
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		✓		R	Non-breeding	Individuals observed flying over the survey area.
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		✓	✓	R	Probable	Territories localised around farmsteads
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		✓		A	Non-breeding	Individual observed flying over the survey area, no breeding behaviour observed, although it is possible the survey area forms part of a territory.
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		✓	✓	R	Non-breeding	Individuals observed flying over the survey area.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>				A	Non-breeding	Individuals observed flying over the survey area.
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>				R	Possible	Pairs observed in suitable breeding habitat.
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>				A	Non-breeding	Birds observed flying upstream of the River Coquet and over the survey area.
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		✓	✓	R	Probable	Territories located in the River Coquet SSSI Woodlands.
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>				A	Non-breeding	One individual present in arable habitat
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	✓			G	Non-breeding	One individual observed flying over the survey area. (Figure 2) .
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		✓	✓	R	Confirmed	Territories spread throughout the survey area. Adults observed collecting food.
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>			✓	R	Probable	Territories spread throughout the survey area.
Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>				R	Possible	Individuals localised around farmstead (Figure 2) .
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		✓	✓	R	None-breeding	Individuals only observed flying over the survey area. (Figures 2) .
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>		✓	✓	R	Confirmed	Territories localised around farmsteads, individuals observed carrying nesting material (Figure 2)
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>				A	Probable	Territories spread throughout the survey area (Figure 2) .
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		✓	✓	R	Probable	Territories spread throughout the survey area (Figure 2) .

Common Name	Latin Name	WaCA Schedule 1	NERC Section 41	UK BAP	BoCC Status*	Breeding Status	Description of Species Activity, Location/s within the Survey Area where Applicable
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>				R	Probable	Two males observed exhibiting breeding behaviour in the presence of a female Figure 2).

BoCC Status: Red – R, Amber – A, Green – G.

3.3. BREEDING BIRD RESULTS COMPARISON

- 3.3.1. The 2020 verification survey recorded fewer bird species and in lower numbers compared to the baseline surveys of 2016. This was expected given that a single verification survey was undertaken.
- 3.3.2. The variety of species recorded during the verification survey were those typical of arable, woodland and garden habitats, with a relatively even distribution of records across the Survey Area and this accords with the baseline results of 2016. As with the baseline surveys, species of conservation concern recorded during the verification surveys tended to be aggregated around features such as farmsteads and residential properties, patches of woodland, waterbodies, good quality hedgerows and fallows.
- 3.3.3. The baseline surveys recorded a number of bird species associated with nearby designated sites, notably golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, which is a non-qualifying species of interest for the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. The Survey Area was considered of limited importance for this species during spring passage as birds were recorded flying over rather than using the habitats within the Survey Area. The verification surveys were not completed within the early spring passage season and did not record golden plover. However, the reduced geographical scope of the verification survey area did not cover habitats associated with golden plover foraging and it is unlikely this species would have been recorded had surveys been undertaken earlier in the season. Several species associated with the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI were recorded during the verification surveys (namely yellow wagtail, oystercatcher and lapwing), however, relatively few records were within close proximity to the SSSI. These results mirror the original baseline results.
- 3.3.4. Species recorded breeding in notable numbers during the baseline surveys include yellow wagtail (four breeding territories) and willow tit *Poecile montanus* (three breeding territories). Of these species, only yellow wagtail was recorded during the verification survey, with areas previously identified as hosting willow tit not accessible during 2020. Three yellow wagtails (two male and one female) were present foraging on a muck heap with the two males singing/calling. Given the condensed verification survey area, this result accords with that of the baseline.
- 3.3.5. Importantly, in comparison to the 2016 surveys, the 2020 verification survey did not record any species of greater conservation concern or species in greater numbers that would increase the importance valuation of breeding birds presented within **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the ES [APP-048]. A comparison between all species recorded during the 2020 verification surveys and 2016 surveys is presented in **Appendix C**.
- 3.3.6. Overall, the impact assessment and associated mitigation for breeding birds detailed in **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the **ES [APP-048]**, for Part A remains suitable and proportionate. Examples include the following:

- a. Minimising site and vegetation clearance (mitigation reference EM002), and reinstating hedgerows where possible (mitigation reference EM040) will reduce the impacts upon notable farmland breeding bird species such as grey partridge and yellowhammer in arable areas.
- b. Compensatory habitats of high invertebrate value (mitigation reference **EM042**) will benefit all breeding birds during chick provisioning.
- c. Notable woodland specialist species such as marsh tit will also benefit from mitigation **EM002**. Such species will also benefit from further woodland planting to create connectivity between existing areas of woodland and compensatory woodland planting (12:1 ratio), as detailed within the **Ancient Woodland Strategy Part A [APP-247]**.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1. LEGISLATION

CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017 (HABITAT REGULATIONS)

- 4.1.1. The Habitats Regulations Part 1 Regulation 10 (2) & (3) state that local authorities ‘*must take such steps in the exercise of their functions as they consider appropriate to contribute to...the preservation, maintenance and re-establishment of a sufficient diversity and area of habitat for wild birds in the UK including by means of the upkeep, management and creation of such habitat...*’. The legislation continues to state that economic and recreation requirements must be taken into consideration in considering which measures are appropriate.

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

- 4.1.2. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (**Ref. 3**) all wild birds are protected from killing and injury, and their nests and eggs protected from taking, damage and destruction whilst in use; therefore, recommendations to avoid contravention of this legislation are included within Section 5.
- 4.1.3. Additional protection is extended to species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act, meaning it is also an offence to disturb these species at or near the nest, or whilst they have dependent young.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES (NERC) ACT 2006

- 4.1.4. The NERC Act 2006 reinforces the duty upon all public authorities, including planning authorities, to have regard for the conservation of biodiversity when discharging their duties. The Act refines the definition of biodiversity conservation, stating that it includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat. In compliance with Section 41 of the NERC Act (**Ref. 4**) requires the Secretary of State to list habitats and species of principal importance (HPIs and SPIs) for the conservation of biodiversity in England (**Ref. 5, Ref. 6**). The habitats and species listed in accordance with Section 41 largely replicate those listed under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (formerly known as the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) which occur in England (however there are exceptions). These species are ‘material considerations’ in the planning process.
- 4.1.5. BAPs in the UK have no statutory status but provide a framework for implementing conservation requirements. Furthermore, species listed as Priority species in the UK BAP which are also listed as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) are afforded a degree of protection under Section 40 of the NERC Act (2006), which states that local authorities have a duty to conserve biodiversity (see above).

4.2. PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 4.2.1. At the national level, the Scheme is governed by the National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPS NN) (2014) (**Ref. 7**). The NPS NN states that, “*as a general principle, ... development should avoid significant harm to biodiversity ... conservation interests, including through mitigation and consideration of reasonable alternatives... Where significant harm cannot be avoided or mitigated, as a last resort, appropriate compensation measures should be sought*”. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (**Ref. 8**) forms the basis for planning system decisions with respect to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including birds; the ODPM circular 06/2005 (**Ref. 9**) (referenced within the NPS NN) also provides supplementary guidance, including confirmation that ‘*the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal*’.
- 4.2.2. The NPPF sets out, amongst other points, how at an overview level ‘*planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
- ...recognising ... the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services; and
 - minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures...’
- 4.2.3. A list of principles which local planning authorities should follow when determining planning applications is included in the NPPF, and includes the following:
- ‘if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided...adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused; and
 - opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged ...’
- 4.2.4. In addition, the legislative provision described above, planning policy at the local level is informed by the following:
- a.** Northumberland County Council (NCC) Consolidated Planning Policy Framework May 2019 (**Ref. 10**)
 - b.** Northumberland Local Plan – Draft Plan for Regulation 18 Consultation (**Ref. 11**)
 - c.** Northumberland Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) (**Ref. 12**)
- 4.2.5. Under the Northumberland Consolidated Planning Policy Framework, the Former Castle Morpeth District Local Plan (**Ref. 13**) is applicable to Part A.
- 4.2.6. Full details of the local planning policies relevant to Part A are detailed in **Table 9-3 of Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the **ES [APP-048]**.

4.3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN RED AND AMBER LISTS

- 4.3.1. The UK's leading bird conservation organisations reviewed the most up to date information on the status of birds in the UK and elsewhere in their range to produce the third review of the status of birds which occur regularly in the UK. This is presented as the Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (**Ref. 1**), comprising a 'red list' of species of high conservation concern, an 'amber' list of species of moderate conservation concern, with other species that do not qualify under red or amber list criteria on the green list. To qualify on the red list species may be listed as globally threatened by IUCN, have suffered a historical decline without substantial recent recovery, or a decline of more than 50% in breeding or non-breeding populations, or a 50% contraction in breeding range over 25 years (or the longer term). Amber list species can be those listed as Species of European Conservation Concern, those which have suffered a historical decline but shown significant recent recovery, have shown a decline of between 25 and 50% in breeding or non-breeding populations, or a contraction in breeding range of between 25 and 50% over 25 years (or the longer term) or be rare or localised breeders in the UK, or be species for which 20% of the breeding or non-breeding population is found in the UK.
- 4.3.2. Red or amber listing does not confer additional protection under legislation or planning policy, however it provides a basis for informing evaluation of a site and for targeting conservation effort and is a widely used resource for interpreting bird populations.

UK POST-2010 FRAMEWORK BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS

- 4.3.3. The UKBAP has now been replaced by the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (**Ref. 14**), however, it contains useful information on how to characterise important species assemblages and habitats which remains relevant.
- 4.3.4. The national BAP is supplemented by local BAPs which identify habitats and species of particular value or concern at the local level. The Survey Area is covered by the Northumberland LBAP which was revised in 2016 to reflect changes in the conservation statuses of bird species. This revision resulted in the inclusion of a number of species which are not listed as 'species of principal importance' under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, due to declines in the populations of these species since the Act was brought into force. The revised Northumberland list of priority bird species includes a total of 67 species, which are listed in **Appendix B**. Twenty-six of these species are listed as 'species of principal importance' under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

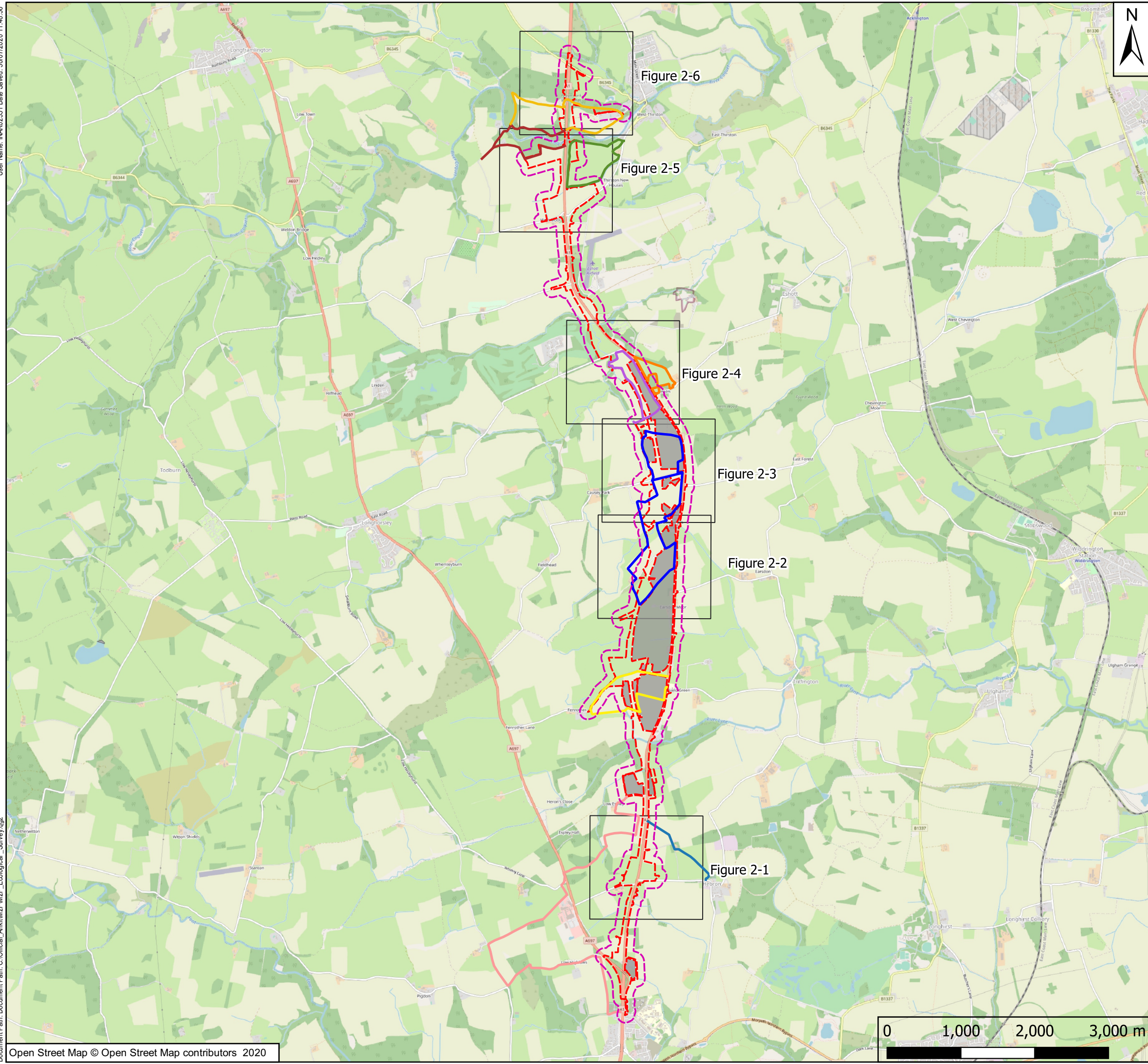
5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1. The 2020 verification surveys recorded fewer bird species and in lower numbers compared to the baseline surveys of 2016, this was expected given that a single verification survey was undertaken. A variety of species recorded during the verification survey were those typical of arable, woodland and garden habitats, with a relatively even distribution of records across the Survey Area which accords with the baseline results of 2016. As with the baseline surveys, species of conservation concern recorded during the verification surveys tended to be aggregated around features such as farmsteads and residential properties, patches of woodland, waterbodies, good quality hedgerows and fallows.
- 5.1.2. However, the verification survey confirmed the continuing presence of several species of elevated conservation importance such as skylark, yellow hammer, house sparrow and tree sparrow (**Table 3-1**) that were noted during the baseline surveys and for which the impact assessment and mitigation within **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the **ES [APP-048]** remains valid. Examples include the following.
- a. Minimising site and vegetation clearance (mitigation reference **EM002**), and reinstating hedgerows where possible (mitigation reference **EM040**) will reduce the impacts upon notable farmland breeding bird species such as grey partridge and yellowhammer in arable areas.
 - b. Compensatory habitats of high invertebrate value (mitigation reference **EM042**) will benefit all breeding birds during chick provisioning.
 - c. Notable woodland specialist species such as marsh tit will also benefit from mitigation **EM002**. Woodland species will also benefit from further woodland planting to create connectivity between existing areas of woodland and compensatory woodland planting (12:1 ratio), as detailed within the **Ancient Woodland Strategy [APP-247]**
- 5.1.3. Importantly, in comparison to the 2016 surveys, the 2020 verification survey did not record any species of greater conservation concern or species in greater numbers that would increase the importance valuation of breeding birds presented within **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the **ES [APP-048]**. Overall, the impact assessment and associated mitigation detailed in **Chapter 9: Biodiversity Part A** of the **ES [APP-048]** remains suitable and proportionate.

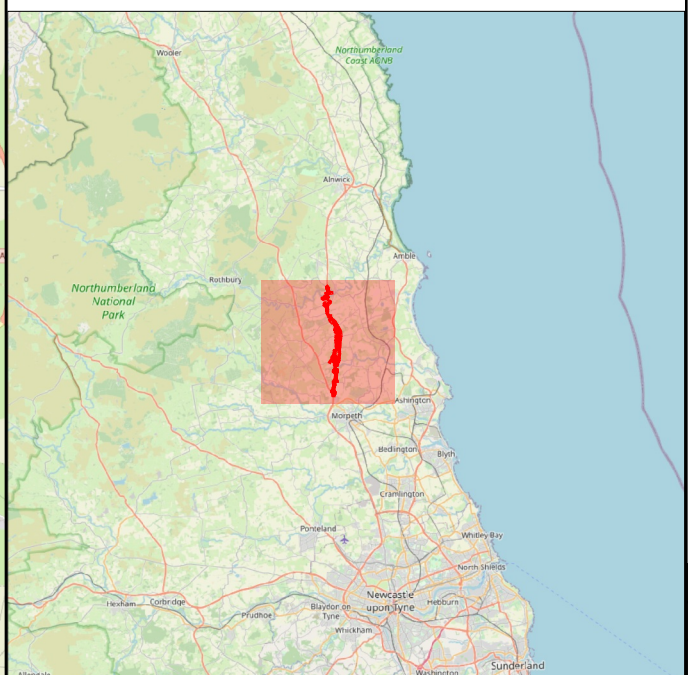
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Figure 1 - Location Overview



Key	
	Order Limits
	Survey Area
	Sheet Extents
	Areas Excluded from Order Limits
	Transect 1
	Transect 2
	Transect 3
	Transect 4
	Transect 5
	Transect 6
	Transect 7
	Transect 8
	Transect 9



P01	27/08/20	First Issue	AR	RP	JF
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Suitability					Status
Suitable for Information					S1

Client

Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

Drawing Title
FIGURE 1: LOCATION OVERVIEW

Scale	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Authorised
1:50,000	AR	RP	JF	DC
Original Size	Date	Date	Date	Date
A3	27/08/20	27/08/20	27/08/20	27/08/20

Drawing Number	Originator		Volume		Revision
HE551459	WSP		6.8		01
M2F	RP	LE	1942	Project Ref. No.	
Location	Type	Role	Number	70036004	

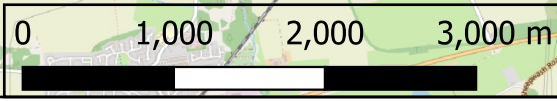
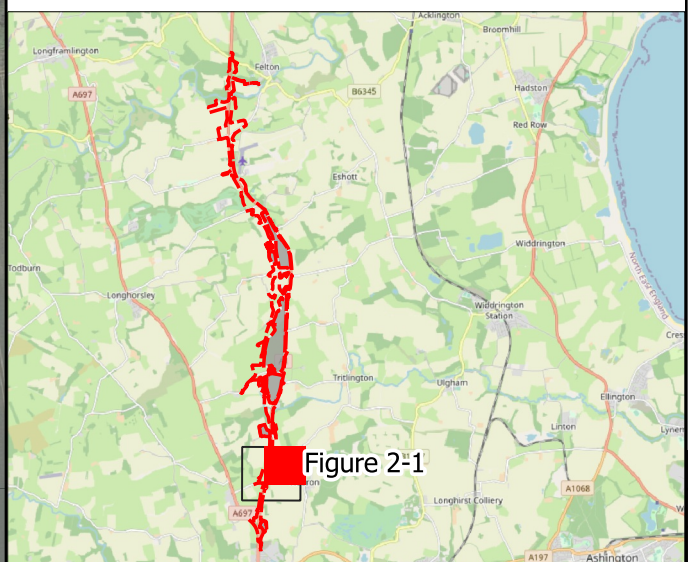


Figure 2 - Bird Registrations and Activity Recorded



Key	
	Order Limits
	Study Area
	Transect 1
	Transect 9
Bird activities	
	Calling
	Calling and Flying
	Flying
	Singing
Conservation status (BoCC)	
B.	Blackbird
BT.	Blue tit
C.	Carrion crow
CH.	Chaffinch
CC.	Chiffchaff
GO.	Goldfinch
GT.	Great tit
HM.	House martin
LB.	Lesser lack backed gull
OC.	Oystercatcher
R.	Robin
S.	Skylark
SL.	Swallow
WH.	Whitethroat
WR.	Wren



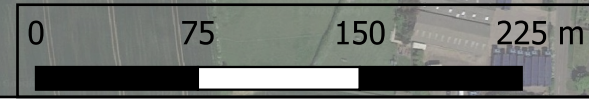
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Rev	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Suitability: Suitable for Information					Status: 01

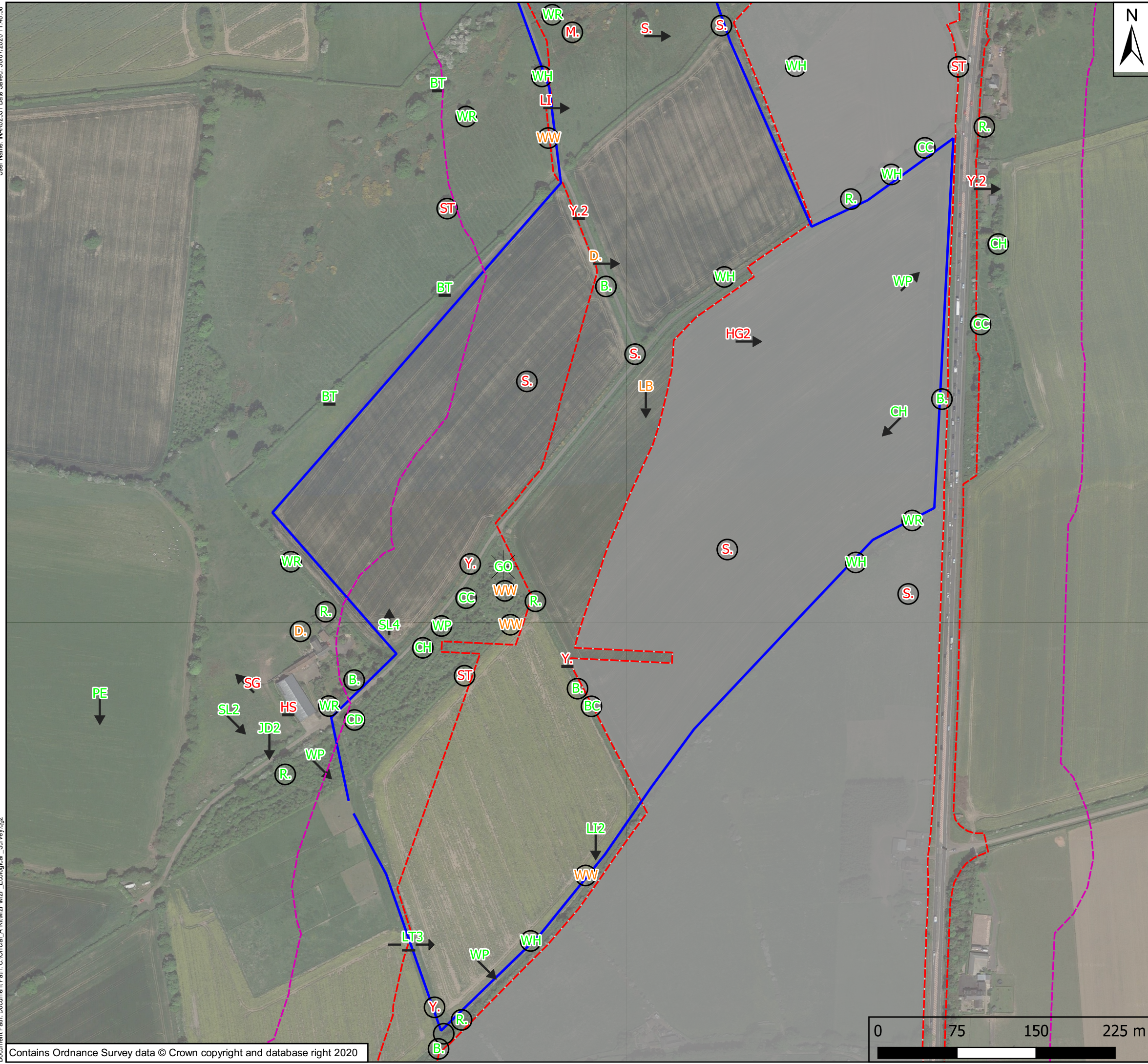
Client

Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

Drawing Title
FIGURE 2-1: BIRD REGISTRATIONS AND ACTIVITY RECORDED

Scale	1:3,500	Drawn	AR	Checked	RP	Approved	JF	Authorised	DC
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Location	M2F	Type	RP	Role	LE	1942	Project Ref. No. 70036004		





Key

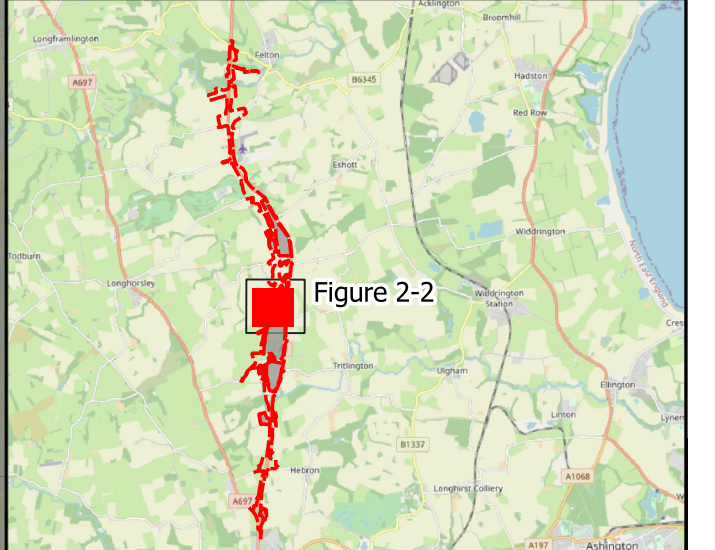
- Order Limits
- Study Area
- Areas Excluded from Order Limits
- Transect 3

Bird activities

- Calling and Flying
- Calling
- Flying
- Singing
- Aggressive encounter

Conservation status (BoCC)

- B.- Blackbird
- BC- Blackcap
- BT- Blue tit
- CC- Chiffchaff
- CH- Chaffinch
- CD- Eurasian Collared Dove
- GO- Goldfinch
- GR- Greenfinch
- P.- Grey partridge
- HG- Herring gull
- HS- House sparrow
- JD- Jackdaw
- LB- Lesser lack backed gull
- LI- Linnet
- LT- Long-tailed tit
- MT- Mistle Thrush
- PE- Peregrine falcon
- PW- Pied wagtail
- R.- Robin
- S.- Skylark
- ST- Song thrush
- SG- Starling
- SL- Swallow
- TS- Tree sparrow
- WH- Whitethroat
- WW- Willow warbler
- WP- Woodpigeon
- WR- Wren
- Y.- Yellowhammer



P001	27/08/20	First Issue	AR	RP	JF
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Suitability				Status	
Suitable for Information				S1	

Client

Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

Drawing Title
FIGURE 2-2: BIRD REGISTRATIONS AND ACTIVITY RECORDED

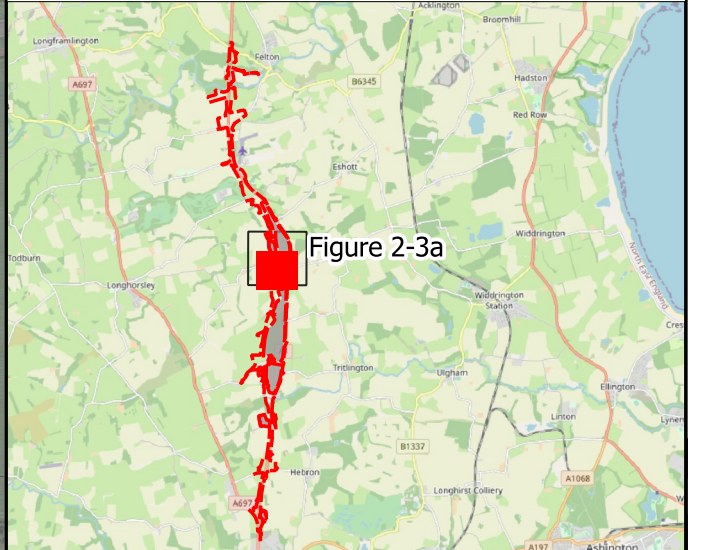
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Drawing Number	HE551459	Originator	WSP	Volume	6.8	Revision	01		
Location	M2F	Type	RP	Role	LE	Number	1942	Project Ref. No.	70036004



Key	
	Order Limits
	Study Area
	Areas Excluded from Order Limits
	Transect 3

Bird activities	
	Alarm call
	Calling
	Flying
	Singing

Conservation status (BoCC)	
B.	Blackbird
BC	Blackcap
BT	Blue tit
C.	Carrion crow
CC	Chiffchaff
CH	Chaffinch
K.	Common Kestrel
CD	Eurasian Collared Dove
GT	Great tit
HG	Herring gull
HM	House martin
HS	House sparrow
JD	Jackdaw
L.	Lapwing
LW	Lesser whitethroat
LI	Linnet
MT	Mistle Thrush
PH	Pheasant
R.	Robin
S.	Skylark
ST	Song thrush
SG	Starling
SL	Swallow
WH	Whitethroat
WW	Willow warbler
WP	Woodpigeon
WR	Wren
Y.	Yellowhammer



P001	27/08/20	First Issue	AR	RP	JF
Rev	Date	Description	By	Ch'k'd	App'd
Suitability: Suitable for Information					Status: S1

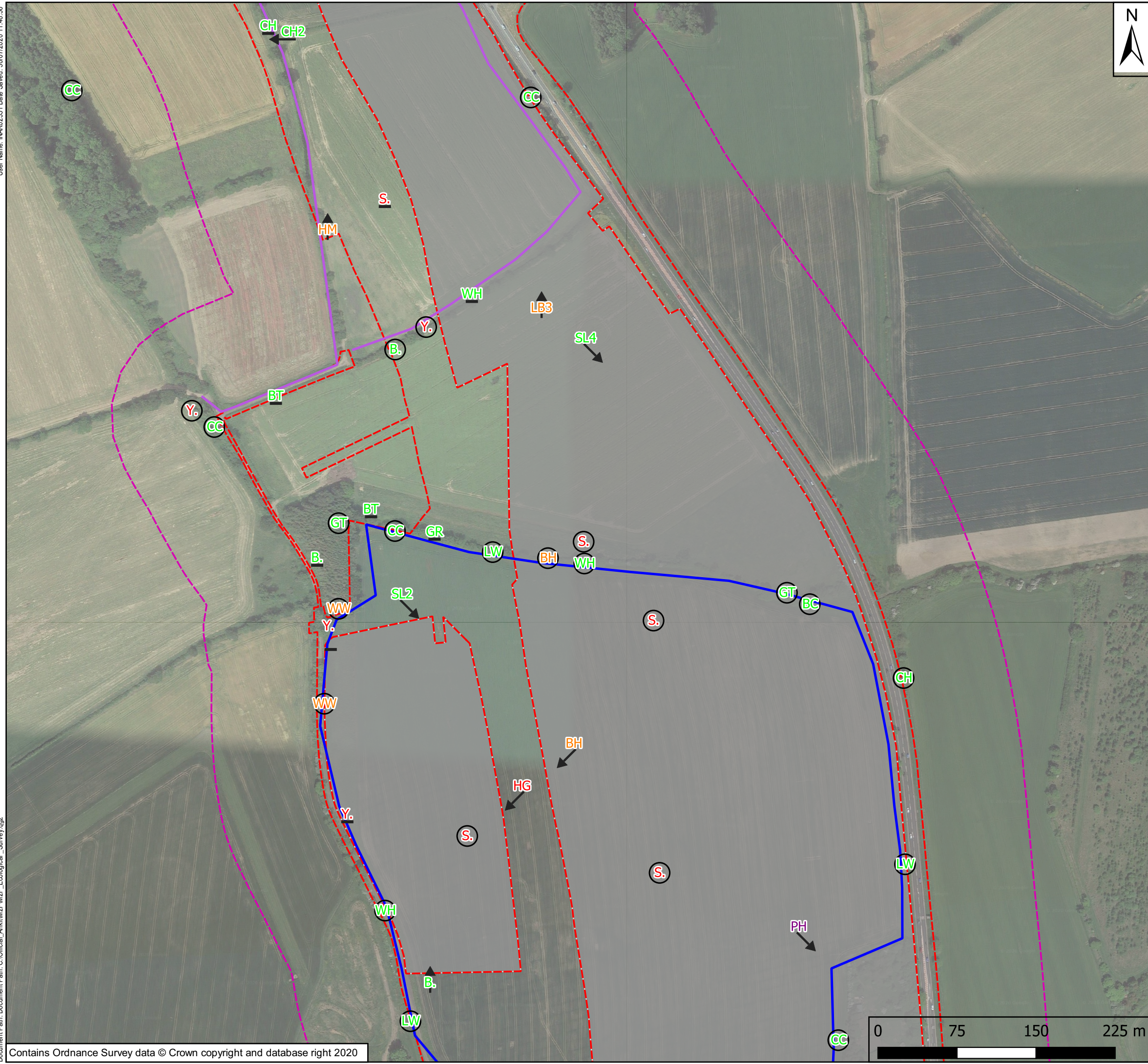


Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

Drawing Title
FIGURE 2-3a: BIRD REGISTRATIONS AND ACTIVITY RECORDED

Scale	1:3,500	Drawn	AR	Checked	RP	Approved	JF	Authorised	DC
Original Size	A3	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20
Drawing Number	HE551459	Originator	WSP	Volume	6.8	Revision	01		
Location	M2F	Type	RP	Role	LE	Number	1942	Project Ref. No.	70036004





Key	
	Order Limits
	Study Area
	Areas Excluded from Order Limits
	Transect 8
	Transect 3
	Transect 4
Bird activities	
	Calling
	Flying
	Singing
Conservation status (BoCC)	
BH	Black headed gull
B.	Blackbird
BC	Blackcap
BT	Blue tit
C.	Carrion crow
CC	Chiffchaff
CH	Chaffinch
GO	Goldfinch
GT	Great tit
GR	Greenfinch
HG	Herring gull
HM	House martin
LB	Lesser black backed gull
LW	Lesser whitethroat
PH	Pheasant
S.	Skylark
SL	Swallow
WH	Whitethroat
WW	Willow warbler
Y.	Yellowhammer



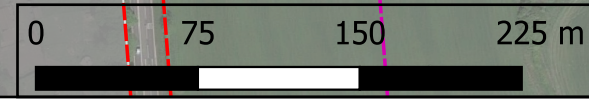
P001	27/08/20	First Issue	AR	RP	JF
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Suitability				Status	
Suitable for Information				S1	

Client

Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

Drawing Title
FIGURE 2-3b: BIRD REGISTRATIONS AND ACTIVITY RECORDED

Scale	1:3,500	Drawn	AR	Checked	RP	Approved	JF	Authorised	DC
Original Size	A3	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20
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Location	M2F	Type	RP	Role	LE	Number	1942	Project Ref. No.	70036004





Key

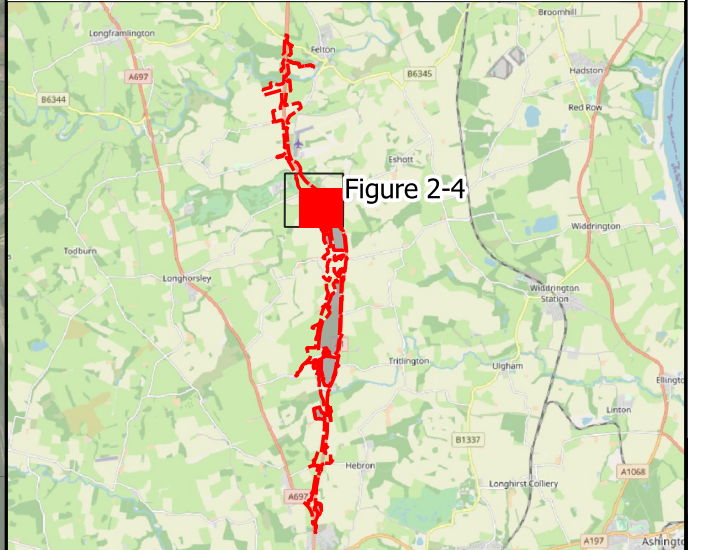
- Order Limits (Red dashed line)
- Study Area (Purple dashed line)
- Areas Excluded from Order Limits (Grey shaded area)
- Transect 8 (Orange line)
- Transect 4 (Purple line)

Bird activities

- Calling (Black line)
- Flying (Black arrow)
- Singing (Black circle)

Conservation status (BoCC)

- B. - Blackbird
- BC - Blackcap
- BT - Blue tit
- BZ - Buzzard
- CG - Canada goose
- CC - Chiffchaff
- CH - Chaffinch
- K. - Common Kestrel
- GO - Goldfinch
- GS - Great spotted wood
- GT - Great tit
- D. - Hedge Accentor
- HM - House martin
- JD - Jackdaw
- LB- Lesser lack backed g
- LI- Linnet
- MA - Mallard
- PH - Pheasant
- PW- Pied wagtail
- R. - Robin
- S. - Skylark
- ST - Song thrush
- SL- Swallow
- WH - Whitethroat
- WP - Woodpigeon
- WR - Wren
- Y. - Yellowhammer



P001	27/08/20	First Issue	AR	RP	JF
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Suitability: Suitable for Information					Status: S1

Client

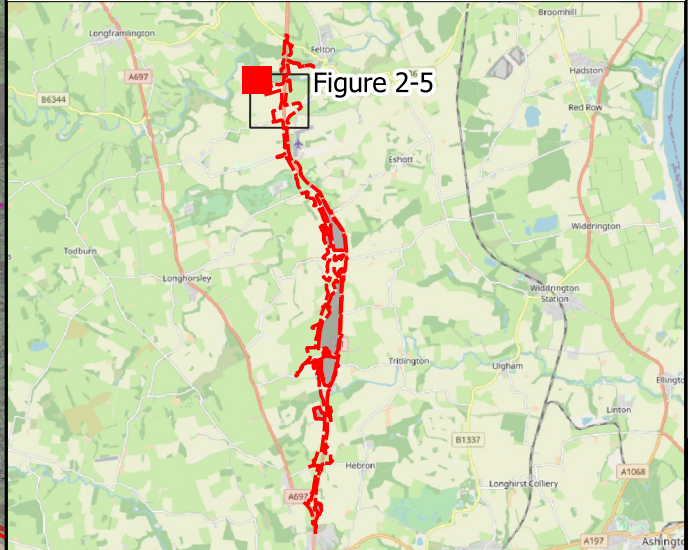
Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

Drawing Title
FIGURE 2-4: BIRD REGISTRATIONS AND ACTIVITY RECORDED

Scale	1:3,650	Drawn	AR	Checked	RP	Approved	JF	Authorised	DC
Original Size	A3	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20
Drawing Number	HE551459	Originator	WSP	Volume	6.8	Revision	01		
Location	M2F	Type	RP	Role	LE	Number	1924	Project Ref. No.	70036004



Key	
	Order Limits
	Study Area
	Transect 5
	Transect 6
Bird activities	
	Alarm call
	Calling
	Flying
	Singing
Conservation status (BoCC)	
BH - Black headed gull	R. - Robin
B. - Blackbird	S. - Skylark
BC - Blackcap	ST - Song thrush
BT - Blue tit	SF - Spotted flycatcher
CG - Canada goose	SL - Swallow
CC - Chiffchaff	TS - Tree sparrow
CH - Chaffinch	WW - Willow warbler
CT - Coal tit	WR - Wren
GC - Goldcrest	Y. - Yellowhammer
GO - Goldfinch	
GS - Great spotted woodpecker	
GT - Great tit	
GR - Greenfinch	
P. - Grey partridge	
L. - Lapwing	
LB- Lesser lack backed gull	
MA - Mallard	
MT - Marsh tit	
NH - Nuthatch	
CF - Red-billed Chough	



P001	27/08/20	First Issue	AR	RP	JF
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Suitability: Suitable for Information					Status: S1

Client

Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

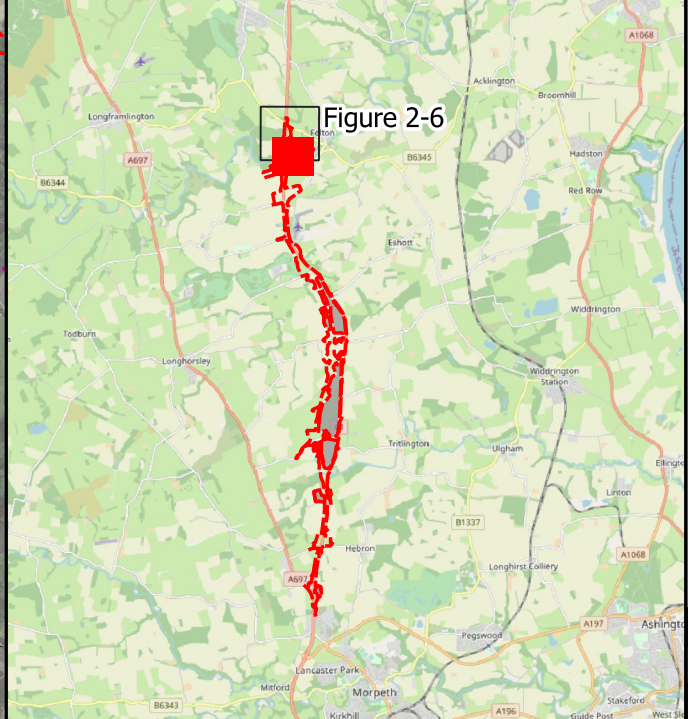
Drawing Title
FIGURE 2-5: BIRD REGISTRATIONS AND ACTIVITY RECORDED

Scale	1:2,500	Drawn	AR	Checked	RP	Approved	JF	Authorised	DC
Original Size	A3	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20
Drawing Number	HE551459	Originator	WSP	Volume		Revision	01	Project Ref. No. 70036004	
Location	M2F	Type	RP	Role	LE	Number	1942		





Key	
	Order Limits
	Study Area
	Transect 5
	Transect 6
	Transect 7
Bird activities	
	Calling
	Flying
	Singing
Conservation status (BoCC)	
BH - Black headed gull	B. - Blackbird
BT - Blue tit	BF - Bullfinch
C. - Carrion crow	CC - Chiffchaff
CH - Chaffinch	GT - Great tit
JD - Jackdaw	LT - Long-tailed tit
NH - Nuthatch	PH - Pheasant
PW - Pied wagtail	R. - Robin
RO - Rook	S. - Skylark
ST - Song thrush	SL - Swallow
WR - Wren	



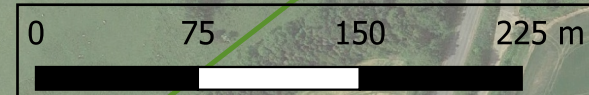
P001	27/08/20	First Issue	AR	RP	JF
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Suitability				Status	
Suitable for Information				S1	

Client

Project Title
A1 IN NORTHUMBERLAND, PART A: MORPETH TO FELTON

Drawing Title
FIGURE 2-6: BIRD REGISTRATIONS AND ACTIVITY RECORDED

Scale	1:3,500	Drawn	AR	Checked	RP	Approved	JF	Authorised	DC
Original Size	A3	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20	Date	27/08/20
Drawing Number	HE PIN	Originator	WSP	Volume	6.8	Revision	01		
HE551459		RP	LE	1942		Project Ref. No.	70036004		
M2F		Type		Role					



Appendix A

BTO BIRD SPECIES CODES



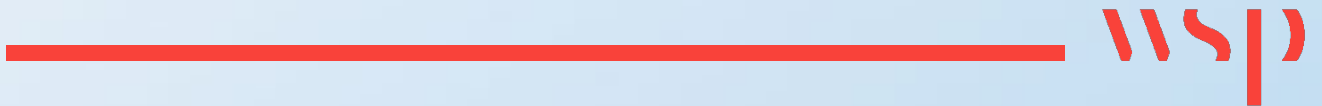
BTO Bird Species Codes

Code	Species	Code	Species
B.	Blackbird	MG	Magpie
BH	Black-headed Gull	MA`	Mallard
BT	Blue Tit	MT	Marsh Tit
BF	Bullfinch	M.	Mistle Thrush
BZ	Buzzard	MH	Moorhen
CG	Canada Goose	MS	Mute Swan
C.	Carrion Crow	NH	Nuthatch
CH	Chaffinch	OC	Oystercatcher
CT	Coal Tit	PE	Peregrine Falcon
CM	Common Gull	PW	Pied Wagtail
CO	Coot	PG	Pink-footed Goose
CU	Curlew	PO	Pochard
D.	Dunnock	KT	Red Kite
FF	Fieldfare	RE	Redwing
GC	Goldcrest	RB	Reed Bunting
GS	Great Spotted Woodpecker	R.	Robin
GT	Great Tit	RV	Raven
H.	Grey Heron	RO	Rook
GJ	Greylag Goose`	S.	Skylark
GO	Golden Plover	SH	Sparrowhawk
HG	Herring Gull	T.	Teal
JD	Jackdaw	TC	Treecreeper
J.	Jay	TS	Tree Sparrow

Code	Species	Code	Species
L.	Lapwing	TU	Tufted Duck
LB	Lesser Black-backed Gull	WN	Wigeon
LT	Long-tailed Tit	WP	Woodpigeon

Appendix B

REVISED NORTHUMBERLAND PRIORITY BIRD SPECIES LIST



Species	Species of Principle Importance	Species	Species of Principle Importance
Arctic tern		Merlin	
Avocet		Mistle thrush	
Barn owl		Peregrine	
Bar-tailed godwit		Pied flycatcher	
Bittern	Y	Pink-footed goose	
Black grouse	Y	Pochard	
Back-necked grebe		Puffin	
Brent goose (pale-bellied)		Purple sandpiper	
Common tern		Razorbill	
Cormorant		Red kite	
Corn bunting	Y	Redshank	
Cuckoo	Y	Reed bunting	Y
Curlew	Y	Ringed plover	
Dunlin		Roseate tern	Y
Eider		Sanderling	
Fulmar		Sandwich tern	
Golden plover		Shag	
Goldeneye		Shelduck	
Grasshopper warbler	Y	Skylark	Y
Grey partridge		Snipe	
Guillemot	Y	Song thrush	Y
Hen harrier		Spotted flycatcher	Y
House martin	Y	Starling	Y

Species	Species of Principle Importance	Species	Species of Principle Importance
House sparrow		Swallow	
Kestrel	Y	Swift	
Kittiwake		Tree pipit	Y
Lapwing	Y	Tree sparrow	Y
Lesser redpoll	Y	Turnstone	
Linnet	Y	Twite	Y
Little ringed plover		Willow tit	Y
Little tern		Willow warbler	
Marsh harrier		Yellow wagtail	Y
Marsh tit	Y		
Marsh warbler	Y		

Appendix C

**COMPARISON OF SPECIES
RECORDED IN 2016 AND 2020**

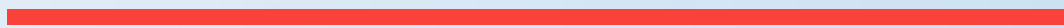


Table C-1 - Protected and/or notable species recorded during the 2016 and 2020 surveys.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Recorded in 2016	Recorded in 2020
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	✓	✓
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	✓	✓
Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	✓	
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	✓	
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	✓	
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	✓	
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	✓	✓
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	✓	
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	✓	
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	✓	✓
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	✓	
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	✓	✓
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	✓	
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	✓	✓

Common Name	Scientific Name	Recorded in 2016	Recorded in 2020
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	✓	✓
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	✓	
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	✓	✓
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	✓	✓
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	✓	
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	✓	
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	✓	
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	✓	✓
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		✓
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	✓	
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	✓	
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	✓	
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	✓	
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	✓	
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	✓	✓
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	✓	✓

Common Name	Scientific Name	Recorded in 2016	Recorded in 2020
Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	✓	✓
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	✓	
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	✓	
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	✓	✓
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montana</i>	✓	
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	✓	✓
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	✓	
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	✓	✓
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	✓	✓

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