

M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange

TR010064

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT APPENDICES

APPENDIX 8.6 BREEDING BIRD SURVEY REPORT

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

Planning Act 2008

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



Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

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

M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange

Development Consent Order 202[]

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT APPENDICES APPENDIX 8.6 BREEDING BIRD SURVEY REPORT

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Appendix 8.6 Breeding bird survey report

Executive summary

This report should not be made publicly available in any form that would allow the location of breeding bird nests to be identified. Requests for such information should not be met, except where the request is from a person or organisation with a legitimate interest in bird conservation in the study area.

This technical report presents the findings of breeding bird surveys undertaken as part of the M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange (the 'Scheme'). The purpose of the surveys was to establish an ecological baseline for breeding birds to provide supporting information for the Environmental Statement.

A desk study pertaining to breeding birds was undertaken and breeding bird surveys were undertaken once a month during April, May, and June 2021 on all suitable areas of land within a 500m survey area around the provisional Order Limits available at the time of survey.

Seventy bird species were recorded within the survey area. Of these, evidence of breeding was recorded for 58 species. This included nine species listed as Species of Principal Importance (SoPI); eight Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) red listed species and 16 amber listed species. The remaining birds were all BoCC green listed species (two introduced species were not assessed under BoCC criteria).

Based on the desk study and field survey findings, the number of breeding bird species recorded within the survey area is considered to be a typical assemblage for the county given the range of habitats present. The number of breeding pairs per species is not considered to be significant as compared to published county and national populations. However, due to the presence of three Schedule 1 bird species breeding consistently in the survey area, the breeding bird assemblage within the survey area is considered to be of importance at **County level**.



1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

- 1.1.1 This technical report presents the findings of desk-based study and breeding bird field surveys undertaken as part of the M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange (the 'Scheme'). The aim is to establish an ecological baseline for breeding birds to provide supporting information for Chapter 8: Biodiversity of the Environmental Statement (TR010064/APP/6.1).
- 1.1.2 This report is supported by the following figures in Annex A:
 - Figure 8.6.1: Breeding Birds Survey Results (April 2021)
 - Figure 8.6.2: Breeding Birds Survey Results (May 2021)
 - Figure 8.6.3: Breeding Birds Survey Results (June 2021)

1.2 Definitions

- 1.2.1 The study area relates the area in which desk study information has been collated via online and third-party sources. This area is comprised of a 5km buffer around the provisional Order Limits which were available at the time of the search.
- 1.2.2 The survey area refers to the area in which breeding bird surveys were undertaken. This area refers to a 500m buffer around the provisional Order Limits which were available at the time of survey (the provisional Order Limits are discussed and presented in detail in the Environmental Scoping Report (TR010064/APP/6.6)). The provisional Order Limits at time of survey are largely concurrent with the Order Limits and any substantial deviations are included within the wider study area and captured within the overall baseline.

1.3 Legislative and regulatory context

1.3.1 Birds within the UK, including those that are resident, over-wintering and migratory, receive varying degrees of protection by statutory legislation. A summary of the relevant legislation and biodiversity framework for birds is provided below.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

1.3.2 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) is one of the pieces of domestic law that transposed the Wild Birds Directive.



- 1.3.3 The Regulations require the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) to ensure the conservation of rare or vulnerable species (i.e. birds listed on Annex I of the Wild Birds Directive) as well as regularly occurring migratory species, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands of international importance.
- 1.3.4 The Regulations also place additional duties on competent authorities in relation to the conservation of wild bird habitat. Regulation 10(1) and (3) requires that 'in the exercise of their functions as they consider appropriate' these authorities must take steps to contribute to the 'preservation, maintenance and reestablishment of a sufficient diversity and area of habitat for wild birds in the United Kingdom, including by means of the upkeep, management and creation of such habitat, as appropriate, having regard to the requirements of Article 2 of the Wild Birds Directive (measures to maintain the population of bird species).
- 1.3.5 SPAs along with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in the UK no longer form part of the EU's Natura 2000 ecological network. The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 Regulations created a 'national site network' on land and at sea, including both the inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK. The national site network includes existing SACs and SPAs and new SACs and SPAs designated under these Regulations.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

- 1.3.6 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the principal mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. All bird species are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) which prohibits:
 - Intentionally injuring, killing and taking any wild bird species, and
 - Intentionally taking, damaging or destroying eggs or nests (that are in use or being built) of any wild bird species
- 1.3.7 Some species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act are afforded additional protection which makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb these birds or their dependent young while they are building a nest or are on, in or near a nest containing eggs or young.



Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and Environment Act 2021

- 1.3.8 Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. There are 56 habitats and 943 species of principal importance which were initially identified as requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and which continue to be regarded as priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (JNCC and Defra, 2012). The Section 41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 "to have regard" to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions. There are 49 bird species listed on Section 41 as species of principal importance (SoPI).
- 1.3.9 The Environment Act 2021 includes provisions to amend section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 to strengthen and improve the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with the proper exercise of their functions. This will include the implementation of a mandatory system of spatial strategies for nature and a responsibility to provide biodiversity reports which provide a summary of actions undertaken to meet biodiversity duties.

The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan

- 1.3.10 The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP) (Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project, 2009) contains nine habitat and nine species action plans, which includes three species of birds and one action plan for farmland birds. Species action plans have been produced for:
 - Black redstart Phoenicurus ochruros
 - Twite Linaria flavirostris
 - Willow tit Poecile montanus

Conservation status

- 1.3.11 A widely adopted review of the status of UK birds 'The Population Status of Birds in the UK, Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) 5: 2021' (Stanbury et al., 2021) is followed within this report in relation to conservation status of UK bird species. Birds are assessed against criteria to place each species on one of three alert lists: red, amber or green. Red list species are considered to be of high conservation concern and amber list species are considered to be of medium conservation concern. Species on the green list are the least critical group. The conservation status of birds included within the BoCC document are referenced throughout this report (e.g., 'Red listed', 'Amber listed').
- 1.3.12 Several species such as pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* and Canada goose *Branta canadensis* are not assessed under the BoCC criteria due to their introduced status.



2 Methodology

2.1 Desk study

- 2.1.1 A desk study was undertaken to identify the presence of statutory designated sites for nature conservation (e.g. SPA and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)) where breeding birds are listed as qualifying or interest features of the site. This search extended to a 5km radius from the provisional Order Limits using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (Defra, 2022).
- 2.1.2 In addition, the citations of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) within 2km of the provisional Order Limits were obtained from Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) (GMEU, 2021) and reviewed for mention of breeding birds.
- 2.1.3 The following additional resources were used to gather information on birds local to the study area:
 - Records of birds within 2km of the provisional Order Limits were obtained from GMEU (data received April 2021). These records included data submitted by the Greater Manchester Bird Recording Group.
 - A review was undertaken of the UK Habitat Classification (Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3)) data within the survey area to identify the presence of suitable breeding habitats such as woodlands, waterbodies and farmland within 500m of the provisional Order Limits for the Scheme.
 - Additional records for breeding birds were requested from the County bird recorder for GMEU in April 2022 to identify any additional schedule 1 birds breeding within the survey area.

2.2 Field survey

Survey area

2.2.1 Much of the land adjacent to the Scheme, and particularly along the M60 between Junctions 17 and 18 (Simister Island) comprises the urban areas of Prestwich and Whitefield. These areas are predominately residential. Given the limited bird interest and absence of potential impacts to birds utilising these areas, such urban land was not included within the survey area.



- Areas of potential bird interest within the survey area, included the woodland and parkland habitats of Philips Park (south of the M60 between Junctions 17 and 18 (Simister Island)) and Heaton Park (south-west of Junction 18 Simister Island and west of the M66) (as shown in Figure 8.1.5: UK Habitats Classification Survey Results in Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3)). Three golf courses (Whitefield, Heaton Park and Pike Fold) are located within the survey area. Pasture fields and cultivated land were also widespread throughout the survey area. Other areas of potential bird interest comprised habitat mosaics of neutral grassland, scattered scrub and tall herb communities which were scattered throughout the survey area (see Figure 8.1.3: Priority Habitats and Ancient Woodland in Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3)).
- 2.2.3 Notable waterbodies within the survey area included Heaton Park Reservoir and several ponds located within parkland and golf courses. Four watercourses were recorded within the survey area; Hollins Brook, Whittle Brook, Castle Brook and Bradley Brook. The majority of the watercourses within the survey area were heavily modified and extensive stands of invasive species (i.e. Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*) were observed in several sections.

Breeding bird survey

- 2.2.4 All surveys were carried out with reference to the Common Bird Census (CBC) method, devised jointly by the BTO and JNCC (Marchant, 1983), and the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) method, devised jointly by the BTO, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Joint Nature Conservancy Council (JNCC) (Gilbert et al., 1998). Surveys took place at the optimal time of day for bird activity with surveys generally starting around one hour after sunrise and finishing before midday. Surveys were only undertaken during favourable weather conditions for bird activity and periods of persistent or heavy rain, high winds or poor visibility were avoided.
- 2.2.5 Breeding bird data was collected whilst walking predetermined transect through representative habitats within the survey area. Three transects were designed to cover all representative habitat types within the survey area that were potentially important for bird species, e.g. woodlands/scrub, arable fields, hedgerows, large waterbodies and watercourses. The survey transects are shown in Figures 8.6.1 to 8.6.3 in Annex A. Three visits were completed per transect during the peak breeding season, between April and June 2021. Details of the survey timings and dates are provided in Table 2.1.
- 2.2.6 Each survey visit was undertaken in daylight hours between approximately 06:00 and 11:00 hours. Visits were planned to avoid adverse weather conditions such as heavy precipitation, strong winds, mist and fog as these can reduce bird activity and affect visibility.



- 2.2.7 Survey visits were carried out by teams of two, at least one of whom was an experienced ornithologist. On some days, two teams surveyed on the same day (see Table 2.1). Transects were walked at a constant, slow pace, and the order and direction of transects was varied between visits to reduce bias. For each survey the start and end time along with the weather conditions (including wind strength (Beaufort scale), temperature and precipitation) were recorded.
- 2.2.8 Transect 1 incorporated the northern part of the survey area including Pike Fold Golf Course, arable fields and woodland. Transect 2 covered the centre of the survey area and was designed to cover Heaton Park Reservoir, Hazlitt Wood and arable land to the north-west of the M60. Transect 3 incorporated the eastern part of the survey area and covered Whitefield Golf Course and Mid Wood. The majority of the transect routes followed public rights of way. Transect routes are shown in Figures 8.6.1 to 8.6.3 in Annex A.

Table 2.1 Breeding bird field survey dates

Visit Number	Transect Number	Date of Survey Visit
1	1	19 April 2021
Start: 0700h End: 1040h	2	20 April 2021
	3	19 April 2021
2	1	11 May 2021
Start: 0530h End: 1045h	2	12 May 2021
	3	11 May 2021
3	1	14 June 2021
Start: 0530h End: 1045h	2	15 June 2021
	3	14 June 2021

2.2.9 Table 2.2 provides details of the weather conditions for each survey visit.

Table 2.2 Weather conditions

Visit Number	Date	Temp.	Wind	Precipitation	Cloud cover
		(°C)	(Beaufort Scale)		(oktas)
1	19 April 2021	7	3	None	4/8
	20 April 2021	8	1	None	1/8
2	11 May 2021	8	2	None	4/8
	12 May 2021	6	2	None	4/8
3	14 June 2021	14	1	None	4/8



15 June 2021	16	1	None	1/8
15 June 2021	10		None	1/0

- 2.2.10 During each of the survey visits the following details were recorded:
 - Bird species, numbers, age (if relevant) and sex (where possible)
 - Bird behaviour (e.g. in flight, singing, or feeding, paying particular attention to evidence of breeding described in the BTO's Bird Atlas 2007-2011 criteria (Balmer et al., 2013).
- 2.2.11 The data gathered during the field surveys was used to categorise the breeding status of birds. Breeding status was categorised as 'possible', 'probable', 'confirmed' or 'non-breeding' in accordance with the BTO's Bird Atlas 2007-2011 criteria (Balmer et al., 2013).
- 2.2.12 Whilst all birds within the survey area were recorded during each visit, primary focus was given to the priority species hierarchy which is published within the 'Bird Survey Guidelines for assessing ecological impacts' (Bird Survey and Assessment Steering Group, 2021). The hierarchy is listed as follows:
 - Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
 - Species of Principal Importance in England;
 - Red and amber listed birds within Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (Stanbury *et al.*, 2021);
 - Localised or highly specialised species regardless of inclusion above (e.g. crossbill Loxia curvirostra in coniferous woodland);
 - Nationally or locally declining species regardless of inclusion above;
 - Colonial nests or roost sites containing more than one individual of any species; and
 - Exceptional counts or aggregations of any species.

2.3 Evaluation of importance of ecological resource

- 2.3.1 Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) uses a hierarchical geographic framework to assign importance to ecological resources. This is based on an understanding of how the ecological resource may contribute to the conservation status or distribution of the species or habitat at a particular geographical scale.
- 2.3.2 The following geographical frame of reference is based on Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA 108 Biodiversity (Highways England, 2020) to assess the importance of the breeding bird assemblage within the survey area:
 - International or European



- UK or National
- Regional e.g. North-West England
- County e.g. Greater Manchester
- Local e.g. within 2km of the Scheme.
- 2.3.3 In international and UK bird conservation, it has become an established practice to generally regard 1% of a species total population, at the range under consideration e.g. national, international, biogeographic, as a threshold when assessing nature conservation importance and whether sites should be designated (Bainbridge et al., 2013; Drewitt et al., 2020). In the absence of comparable data for the county populations, an element of professional judgment has been applied and this is based on an interpretation of desk and field-based information including 'Birds in Greater Manchester, County Report 2011' (Atkins et al., 2014). Whilst this document does not provide total breeding numbers for the county, it does provide context to the field survey findings within this report. If a potentially significant notable population is encountered, this population will also be evaluated in the context of national populations as stated within 'Population Estimates of Birds in Great Britain and the United Kingdom' (Musgrove et al., 2013).
- 2.3.4 The Greater Manchester Sites of Biological Importance Selection Guidelines (GMEU, 2016) provides criteria to indicate habitats and certain species / species groups of county importance for biodiversity and this document has been used to inform the evaluation process. For example, sites that regularly support more than 0.5% of the total British breeding population of any native bird species are considered for SBI selection in Greater Manchester (criteria Br1- GMEU, 2016) and this has been factored into the evaluation.

2.4 Limitations

- 2.4.1 No limitations to the field surveys (e.g. weather, access or survey timings) were encountered.
- 2.4.2 Breeding bird surveys were undertaken in April to June 2021. Walkover surveys and UK Habitat Classification System survey updates undertaken in October 2022 and April/May 2023 respectively (see Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Survey Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3) for further details) did not record any significant change in habitat types or condition within the survey area. Therefore, no significant change to the breeding bird survey data recorded in 2021 is anticipated and the breeding bird survey data obtained in 2021 is considered sufficiently robust to inform the assessment.



3 Results

3.1 Desk study

Statutory designated sites

- 3.1.1 Sixteen statutory designated sites were identified within 5km of the Scheme: one Special Area of Conservation (SAC), two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 12 Local Nature Reserves (LNR). These are shown in Figure 8.1.5: UK Habitats Classification Survey Results in Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3). Of these, four sites list birds as being interest features:
 - Rochdale Canal SSSI located approximately 4.95km east of the Order Limits. The site is designated for its diverse aquatic flora. The site also provides feeding habitat for kingfisher and grey wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
 - Mere Clough LNR located approximately 420m south west of the Order Limits. The site is described as a large woodland which is important for bird life
 - Chapelfield LNR located approximately 2.3km north west of the Order Llmits. Interest features of this site include birds (including waterfowl), dragonflies and other aquatic fauna
 - The Cliff (Kersal Dale) LNR located approximately 3.1km south of the Order Limits. The site is also known as Kersal Dale and habitats include woodland, open water, marsh and semi-natural grassland. Woodpecker (unnamed *Picidae* species) and kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* are also cited as interest features.

Non-statutory designated sites

- 3.1.2 Seventeen non-statutory designated sites were identified within the 2km study area. These are shown in Figure 8.1.5: UK Habitats Classification Survey Results in Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3). One site was designated, at least partially, for ornithological interest: Heaton Park Reservoir (East and West) SBI, designated for its wintering wildfowl. The site is located approximately 300m south-east of the Scheme. It is one of the most important sites in Greater Manchester for goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* and one of the most important wintering roost sites in Greater Manchester for Goosander *Mergus merganser*. The site is also important for wintering tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, teal *Anas crecca*, little grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*, great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus* and coot *Fulica atra* (GMEU, 2010).
- 3.1.3 Designated sites with no ornithological interest listed within their citation will not be considered further in this report.



GMEU bird records

- 3.1.4 Over 1000 records of birds were provided by GMEU in June 2021, which included 29 species of notable conservation interest within the 2km study area. These records can be provided on request with permission from GMEU. The records included:
 - Eight species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
 (as amended): Barn owl *Tyto alba*; black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*;
 common scoter *Melanitta nigra*; hobby *Falco subbuteo*; kingfisher; little
 ringed plover *Charadrius dubius*; peregrine *Falco peregrinus*; scaup *Aythya marila*
 - Twenty-three SoPI: Black-tailed godwit; bullfinch Pyrrhula pyrrhula; common scoter; cuckoo Cuculus canorus; curlew Numenius arquata; dunnock Prunella modularis; grasshopper warbler Locustella naevia; lesser redpoll Acanthis cabaret; lesser spotted woodpecker Dendrocopos minor; reed bunting Emberiza schoeniclus; scaup; skylark Alauda arvensis; spotted flycatcher Muscicapa striata; tree pipit Anthus trivialis; tree sparrow Passer montanus; willow tit; yellow wagtail Motacilla flava; house sparrow Passer domesticus; lapwing Vanellus vanellus; linnet Linaria cannabina; song thrush Turdus philomelos; starling Sturnus vulgaris and herring gull Larus argentatus
 - One species listed on the GM BAP (Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project, 2009): Willow tit
 - Twenty BoCC Red-listed species: Black-tailed godwit; common scoter; cuckoo; curlew; grasshopper warbler; lesser redpoll; lesser spotted woodpecker; scaup; skylark; spotted flycatcher; tree pipit; tree sparrow; willow tit; yellow wagtail; house sparrow; lapwing; linnet; starling; and herring gull
 - Four BoCC Amber listed species: Bullfinch; dunnock; kingfisher; reed bunting; and song thrush.
- 3.1.5 Additional information received from the County bird recorder for GMEU identified records of three schedule 1 bird species breeding on site:
 - Several pairs of little ringed plover were confirmed to have bred at Heaton Park Reservoir in 2018, 2019 and 2020
 - Two pairs of black-necked grebe Podiceps nigricollis were present within Heaton Park reservoir during the 2020 breeding season and two different broods of young of different ages were recorded over the season. Five pairs of black-necked grebe were reported to be present on Heaton Park reservoir as of April 2022
 - A single pair of barn owl was reported to have been breeding within land associated with Pike Fold Golf Course for the past 10 years.



3.2 Field survey results

- 3.2.1 Seventy different bird species were recorded within the survey area during all three visits. Of these, 58 species were recorded as breeding (including possible and probable sub-categories). This included 25 bird species of notable conservation significance comprising:
 - One species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended): Little ringed plover
 - Nine SoPI: Bullfinch; dunnock; house sparrow; lapwing; linnet; reed bunting; skylark; song thrush and starling
 - Eight species on the BoCC Red list: Greenfinch; house martin; house sparrow; lapwing; linnet; mistle thrush; skylark and starling
 - Sixteen species on the BoCC Amber list: Bullfinch; dipper Cinclus cinclus; dunnock; grey wagtail; kestrel Falco tinnunculus; mallard Anas platyrhynchos; meadow pipit Anthus pratensis; moorhen Gallinula chloropus; oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus; reed bunting; snipe Gallinago gallinago; song thrush; whitethroat Numenius phaeopus; willow warbler Phylloscopus trochilus; woodpigeon Columba palumba and wren Troglodytes troglodytes.
- 3.2.2 Thirty-two bird species listed on the BoCC Green list were also recorded as breeding during the surveys. Birds recorded as breeding within the survey area but not assessed under the BoCC criteria included Canada goose and pheasant.
- 3.2.3 Twelve bird species were recorded as non-breeding. These included black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*, black-necked grebe, common gull *Larus canus*, crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*, feral pigeon *Columba livia f. domestica*, great black-backed gull *Larus marinus*, lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*, herring gull, siskin *Carduelis spinus*, snipe, swift *Apus apus* and wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*. Such species were on passage, flying over the site, or utilising the survey area for feeding/ loafing. Notable assemblages of gulls were particularly prevalent to the north of Pike Fold Golf Club and to the south over land adjacent to Heaton Park Reservoir. Black-necked grebe was recorded on Heaton Park Reservoir. Whilst swift were recorded as non-breeding, it is likely that swift nest sites were present within the wider area.
- 3.2.4 Table 3.1 provides a summary of the survey findings. Peak counts of species per transect and the breeding status of the identified birds recorded during the surveys are provided. The peak counts per transect along with the activity observed and the mapping data allowed an estimate of the total number of breeding pairs recorded within the survey area. Locations of the bird recordings for all of the survey visits are presented in Figures 8.6.1 to 8.6.3 in Annex A.



Table 3.1 Bird species, peak counts and breeding pair estimates

Species (common name)	Schedule 1 bird	SoPI	GM BAP	Tran	Transect peak count		count	Breeding status	Estimated no. of breeding pairs
	species			T1	T2	Т3	Total		brocamy pane
BoCC 5 Red list species									
Greenfinch	-	-	-	11	8	4	23	Possible-probable	10
Herring gull	-	✓	-	59	181	6	246	Non-breeding	N/A
House martin	-	-	-	10	15	0	25	Possible	10
House sparrow	-	✓	-	75	35	16	126	Possible-confirmed	35-40
Lapwing	-	✓	-	5	61	0	66	Probable-confirmed	3-5
Linnet	-	✓	-	3	0	0	3	Possible	2
Mistle thrush	-	-	-	6	0	2	8	Possible-probable	4
Skylark	-	✓	-	7	3	2	12	Probable	2
Starling	-	~	-	121	103	5	229	Possible-confirmed	30-35
Swift	-	-	-	0	10	0	10	Non-breeding	N/A
BoCC 5 Amber list species									
Bullfinch	-	~	-	4	2	4	10	Non-breeding	4
Black-headed gull	-	2	-	4	44	2	50	Non-breeding	N/A
Black-necked grebe	✓	-	-	1	0	0	1	Non-breeding	N/A
Common gull	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	Non-breeding	N/A



Species (common name)	Schedule	SoPI	GM	Tran	sect	oeak	count	Breeding status	Estimated no. of
	1 bird species		ВАР	T1	T2	Т3	Total		breeding pairs
Dipper	-	-	-	0	0	1	1	Possible	1
Dunnock	-	✓	-	26	11	6	43	Possible- probable	20
Great black-backed gull	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	Non-breeding	N/A
Grey wagtail	-	-	-	1	2	0	3	Possible	2
Kestrel	-	-	-	1	4	0	5	Non-breeding	2
Lesser black-backed gull	-	-	_	3	115	1	119	Non-breeding	N/A
Mallard	-	-	-	39	18	0	57	Non-breeding	N/A
Meadow pipit	-	-	-	2	11	0	13	Possible	6
Moorhen	-	-	-	7	1	0	1	Probable	3
Oystercatcher	-	- <	-	3	2	0	5	Probable	2
Reed bunting	-	~	-	20	9	0	29	Possible-probable	6
Snipe	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	Non-breeding	N/A
Song thrush	-	~	-	26	9	12	50	Possible-probable	12-15
Stock dove	-	-	-	1	1	0	2	Non-breeding	N/A
Wheatear	-	-	-	3	0	0	3	Non-breeding	N/A
Whitethroat	-	-	-	13	4	3	20	Possible-probable	3
Willow warbler	-	-	-	10	3	5	18	Possible-probable	6



Species (common name)	Schedule	SoPI						oeak	count	Breeding status	Estimated no. of
	1 bird species		BAP	T1	T2	Т3	Total		breeding pairs		
Woodpigeon	-	-	-	27	25	12	64	Non-breeding	8-10		
Wren	-	-	-	29	18	9	56	Possible-probable	10		
Notable BoCC Green list species											
Little ringed plover	✓	-	_	0	2	0	2	Probable	1		

Other BoCC Green list species

- Breeding: Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue tit, Buzzard, Carrion crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal tit, Collared dove, Coot, Garden warbler, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Goosander, Great crested grebe, Great spotted woodpecker, Great tit, Grey heron, Jackdaw, Jay, Lesser whitethroat, Little grebe, Long-Tailed tit, Magpie, Mute swan, Nuthatch, Pied wagtail, Robin, Swallow, Treecreeper and Tufted duck.
- Non-breeding: Crossbill, Feral pigeon and Siskin.



- 3.2.5 Due to the breeding bird methods employed, barn owl are unlikely to have been detected and as such, species-specific survey methods for barn owl have been undertaken and reported separately in Appendix 8.5: Barn Owl Survey Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3).
- 3.2.6 Kingfisher were not recorded during the field surveys but GMEU held multiple records. Of the 11 records supplied by GMEU, one record was located in the survey area at Heaton Park Reservoir. None of the records related to potential breeding locations. While Hollins Brook has some suitability to support breeding kingfisher the majority of the watercourses with the survey area provided limited suitability for kingfisher nest sites due to the modified and shallow banks although the riparian corridors present would provide commuting corridors/linkages and potential feeding routes for this species.



4 Evaluation

- 4.1.1 The variety of breeding bird species recorded during the surveys reflected the mosaic of different habitat types found within the survey area. The survey area was found to contain a variety of small passerine bird species which utilised the network of hedgerows and woodlands for nesting sites. A relatively low number of ground nesting farmland birds were recorded including lapwing (3-5 breeding pairs), oystercatcher (2 breeding pairs) and skylark (2 breeding pairs). These species were recorded within arable and pasture land across Transect 1 and Transect 2. Whilst the GM Biodiversity Action Plan for farmland birds was not available at the time of writing, it is likely that such birds, along with linnet, will be included within the plan.
- 4.1.2 As the survey area contains several waterbodies, including Heaton Park Reservoir, breeding evidence of several waterbirds was recorded. Breeding little ringed plover were recorded on the reservoir with GMEU data also showing the presence of breeding black-necked grebe.
- 4.1.3 Species such as house martin, swallow, house sparrow and starling were recorded and were likely to be utilising buildings within the survey area for nesting (house sparrow and starling also nest within hedgerows and trees). There are several residential areas and farm buildings within the survey area and there is likely to be a crossover of breeding populations utilising buildings in the wider area. Raptors recorded as breeding within the survey area included kestrel and buzzard.
- 4.1.4 The survey area contained areas of value to birds and in particular, sections of Heaton Park Reservoir (West and East) SBI and Mere Clough LNR and this is factored into the overall evaluation. However, no breeding populations of any species recorded within the survey area were considered to represent a significant proportion of the county populations (i.e. in numbers which are in excess of 1% of the county populations). However, three species of Schedule 1 birds were found to be breeding in the survey area consistently, having been recorded over multiple years.
- 4.1.5 Generally, the bird species recorded within the survey area are considered to be a typical assemblage for the county and district given the size of the survey area and the habitats present. The field survey findings are also considered to correlate with the desk study findings in terms of species and numbers of species which are of conservation concern. Taking all factors into consideration, the breeding bird assemblage recorded in the survey area is considered to be of **County** importance.



Acronyms and initialisms

Abbreviation	Term
BoCC	Birds of Conservation Concern (Red, Amber or Green listed)
вто	British Trust for Ornithology
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EcIA	Ecological Impact Assessment
GM BAP	The Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SBI	Site of Biological Importance
SoPI	Species of Principal Importance
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

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Annex A Figures

Figure 8.6.1: Breeding Birds Survey Results (April 2021)

Figure 8.6.2: Breeding Birds Survey Results (May 2021)

Figure 8.6.3: Breeding Birds Survey Results (June 2021)





















































