

# M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange

**TR010064**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 8.7 WINTERING BIRD SURVEY REPORT**

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

Planning Act 2008

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

Infrastructure Planning

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

**M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange  
Development Consent Order 202[ ]**

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## Appendix 8.7 Wintering bird survey report

### Executive summary

This technical report presents the findings of wintering 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 wintering birds which is intended to form part of the supporting information for Chapter 8: Biodiversity of the Environmental Statement (TR010064/APP/6.1).

A desk study pertaining to wintering birds was undertaken and wintering bird surveys were undertaken once a month during February, March, October, November, December 2021 and January 2022 on all suitable areas of land within a 500m survey area around the provisional Order Limits available at the time of survey. Six transects (Transects 1 to 6) were designed to provide sufficient coverage of the full survey area.

Sixty-eight bird species were recorded during the field surveys. The most commonly recorded field observations included relatively large numbers of lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, herring gull *Larus argentatus*, lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus* and redwing *Turdus iliacus*. However, the bird species using the survey area in relatively large numbers were not considered to be solely reliant on habitats within the survey area or the Scheme footprint.

The wintering bird assemblage (including herring gull and lesser black-backed gull) associated with the Heaton Park Reservoir (East and West) SBI are considered to be of **County** importance.

With regards to the other species recorded during the surveys, none were recorded in significantly high numbers in relation to their known populations at a UK level (Musgrove *et al.*, 2013) or in the context of what would be expected on similar habitats in the local area.

The range of species and numbers recorded during the survey were considered typical of the habitats present and the value of the wintering bird assemblage (outside of the designated site) is assessed as being of **Local** importance.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the report

- 1.1.1 This report sets out the results of desk-based study and wintering bird surveys undertaken in February and March 2021, and October 2021 to January 2022 as part of the M60/M62/M66 Simister Island Interchange (the 'Scheme'). The aim is to establish an ecological baseline for wintering birds to provide supporting information for the 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 of this report:
- Figure 8.7.1: Wintering Birds Survey Results (February 2021)
  - Figure 8.7.2: Wintering Birds Survey Results (March 2021)
  - Figure 8.7.3: Wintering Birds Survey Results (October 2021)
  - Figure 8.7.4: Wintering Birds Survey Results (November 2021)
  - Figure 8.7.5: Wintering Birds Survey Results (December 2021)
  - Figure 8.7.6: Wintering Birds Survey Results (January 2022)

## 1.2 Definitions

- 1.2.1 The study area relates to 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.
- 1.2.2 The survey area refers to the area in which wintering bird surveys were undertaken. This area is 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 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 wintering 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) are one of the pieces of domestic law that transposed the Wild Birds Directive 2009/147/EC 2009 (as amended).

- 1.3.3 The Regulations requires 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) & (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 re-establishment 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 Natural Environment and Rural Communities 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 Natural Environment and Rural Communities 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) was last updated in 2009 (Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project, 2009) and 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’).

## 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., Special Protection Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest) where wintering 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 wintering 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 include data submitted from Greater Manchester Bird Recording Group
  - A review was undertaken of habitat data available at the time (see Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3) within the survey area to identify the presence of suitable overwintering habitats for birds such as woodlands, waterbodies and farmland within 500m of the provisional Order Limits at the time of study.

### 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 interests and absence of potential impacts to birds utilising these areas, such urban land was not included within the survey area.
- 2.2.2 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 8.1.2: Designated sites of the Environmental Statement Figures (TR010064/APP/6.2). 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 8.1.5: UK Habitats Classification Survey Results 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.

### Wintering bird survey

- 2.2.4 All surveys were carried out with reference to good practice guidance survey methodology for wintering bird surveys: Winter Farmland Bird Survey (Gillings *et al.*, 2008) and Bird Monitoring Methods (Gilbert *et al.*, 1998).
- 2.2.5 Wintering bird data was collected whilst walking predetermined transects through representative habitats within the survey area. Six transects were designed to cover all representative habitat types within the survey area that were potentially important for bird species, e.g. arable fields, hedgerows, large waterbodies and watercourses. The survey transects are shown in Environmental Statement Figures 8.7.1 to 8.7.6 in Annex A. Six visits were completed per transect from February and March 2021 and October 2021 to January 2022 (see Table 2.1). This period covered the main spring and autumn passage months of March and October and the winter period (November to February).
- 2.2.6 Each survey visit was undertaken in daylight hours between 0900 and 1600. 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. Transects were walked at a constant, slow pace, and the order and direction of transects was varied between visits to reduce bias. For each transect, the start and end time along with the weather conditions (including wind strength (Beaufort scale), temperature and precipitation) were recorded (see Table 2.1).
- 2.2.8 Species were observed by sight or vocalisations while walking the transects and each observation was recorded on a map using the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) species codes.
- 2.2.9 Recorded details included species, number of individuals and their behaviour using the categories 'foraging', 'resting', 'flying' and 'unknown'. For birds in flight, the direction of flight was also recorded using a compass direction if birds appeared to be undertaking longer-distance flights, rather than for example circling above a field.
- 2.2.10 Bird species nomenclature for the survey and throughout this report follows the British Ornithologists' Union British List (British Ornithologists' Union, 2017).

**Table 2.1 Wintering bird survey dates and weather conditions**

Visit Number	Date	Temp. (°C)	Wind (Beaufort Scale 0-5)	Precipitation	Cloud Cover (oktas)
1	11 Feb 2021	1	1	None	0/8
	12 Feb 2021	0	2	None	1/8
2	22 March 2021	2	2	None	2/8
	23 March 2021	7	1	None	2/8
3	14 Oct 2021	12	1	None	8/8
	15 Oct 2021	6	1	None	0/8
4	11 Nov 2021	10	0	None	8/8
	12 Nov 2021	9	1	None	8/8
5	16 Dec 2021	8	0	None	3/8
	17 Dec 2021	3	1	None	1/8
6	20 Jan 2022	6	1	None	0/8
	21 Jan 2022	6	1	None	0/8

## 2.3 Evaluation of importance of ecological resource

2.3.1 Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) 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 wintering bird assemblage within the study 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 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.

## 2.4 Limitations

- 2.4.1 No limitations to the field surveys (e.g. weather, access or survey timings) were encountered.
- 2.4.2 Wintering bird surveys were undertaken from February 2021 to January 2022. 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 Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3) for further details) recorded no significant change in habitat types or condition within the survey area to that recorded in 2021. Therefore, no significant change to the wintering bird survey data recorded in 2021/2 is anticipated and the wintering bird survey data obtained in 2021/2 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 8.1.2: Designated Sites in Appendix 8.1: UK Habitat Classification Report of the Environmental Statement Appendices (TR010064/APP/6.3). Of these, four designated 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 *Alcedo atthis* 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 Limits. 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 are also cited as interest features

#### Non-statutory designated sites

3.1.2 Seventeen non-statutory designated sites were identified within the 2km of the Scheme and are shown in Figure 8.1.2: Designated Sites 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. 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). Sites with no ornithological interest listed within their citation will not be considered further in this report.

#### GMEU bird records

3.1.3 Over 1000 records of birds were provided by GMEU, 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*; and 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 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 Amber listed species:
  - Bullfinch; dunnock; kingfisher; reed bunting; and song thrush

## 3.2 Field survey results

### Overview

3.2.1 Seventy bird species were recorded within the survey area over all six wintering bird survey visits. This included several species of notable conservation significance comprising:

- Four species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Nine SoPI
- Twelve Red listed species
- Twenty-four Amber listed species

3.2.2 All birds recorded during each of the six survey visits, their numbers and conservation status are presented in Table 3.1. The locations of all bird recordings for each of the survey visits are presented in Environmental Statement Figures 8.7.1 to 8.7.6 in Annex A.

### **Species of conservation concern**

3.2.3 Species of conservation concern includes those listed as either Red or Amber on the BoCC document and species that are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

#### **Waders**

3.2.4 A small number of waders were recorded loafing (see Glossary for description of terminology) and feeding in the fields during the wintering bird surveys. These species were lapwing and snipe *Gallinago gallinago*. The birds were generally recorded within fields to the south-west of Pike Fold golf course. This area contained suitable habitats to support these species including pools, ponds and wetter areas of grassland.

3.2.5 The maximum count for lapwing during the surveys was 150, during the November 2021 visit, located north-east of M60 J18, south of the M62. Smaller counts of 12, 43, 57 and one were recorded within other months (see Table 3.1).

3.2.6 Snipe were recorded during two of the six survey visits with a peak count of five in February and March 2021.

#### **Wildfowl**

3.2.7 Eight species of wildfowl were recorded across the six survey visits: Canada goose *Branta canadensis*; gadwall *Anas strepera*; greylag goose *Anser anser*; goldeneye; mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*; pink-footed goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*; shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*; and teal (see Table 3.1).

3.2.8 Canada goose is not listed on the BoCC 5 (Stanbury *et al.* 2021) or listed as notable on any site citation due to its introduced status.

3.2.9 Goldeneye were recorded on Heaton Park reservoir during three visits with a peak count of 14 in March 2021.

3.2.10 One record of greylag goose was noted north of Heaton Park reservoir during the October 2021 visit.

3.2.11 Pink-footed goose were recorded in February 2021 and October 2021. A peak count of 80 were recorded in flight, south of the Simister Island interchange, during the February 2021 visit.

3.2.12 Mallard were recorded using the ponds and pools found throughout the survey area as well as Heaton Park Reservoir with a peak count of 31 during the March 2021 visit. Mallard were recorded during all six survey visits.

3.2.13 A peak count of 21 teal were recorded on Heaton Park Reservoir on both the February 2021 visit and December 2021 visit.

### **Other waterbirds**

- 3.2.14 One additional species of waterbird were recorded: moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* (see Table 3.1). This species was recorded in each survey visit, with a peak count of 14 in November 2021.

### **Thrushes**

- 3.2.15 Four species of thrushes were recorded: fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*; redwing *Turdus iliacus*; song thrush; and mistle thrush *Turdus viscivorus* (see Table 3.1).
- 3.2.16 Fieldfare were recorded on all visits apart from October 2021. A peak count of 48 birds was recorded during the February 2021 visit.
- 3.2.17 Redwing was recorded on all survey visits. A peak of 583 was recorded during October 2021 with 104 birds being recorded during the following visit in November 2021. Records were scattered throughout the survey area but there was a concentration of birds throughout Pike Fold golf course.
- 3.2.18 Song thrush and mistle thrush were both recorded in relatively low numbers throughout all six visits. Peak counts were 26 song thrush recorded in November 2021 and five mistle thrush in February 2021.

### **Gulls**

- 3.2.19 Five gull species were recorded during the surveys see Table 3.1: black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*; common gull *Larus canus*; great black-backed gull *Larus marinus*; herring gull; and lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*. Herring gull are Red listed and all other gull species are Amber listed species.
- 3.2.20 The majority of gulls were recorded using Heaton Park Reservoir with several groups of herring gull flying north over Pike Fold golf course to a waste site north of the survey area.

### **Raptors**

- 3.2.21 Three raptors were recorded comprising kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* (Amber listed species); peregrine falcon *falco Peregrinus*; and sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* (see Table 3.1).
- 3.2.22 Kestrel activity was distributed throughout the survey area with the species recorded hunting over suitable grasslands.
- 3.2.23 Peregrine falcon and sparrowhawk were both only observed during the October visit, with a peak count of 2 and 4 respectively.

### **Small passerines and other species**

- 3.2.24 An assemblage of notable passerines and farmland birds was recorded throughout the survey area (see Table 3.1 comprising; bullfinch; lesser redpoll; dunnock; house sparrow; greenfinch; linnet; meadow pipit; reed bunting; skylark; and wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*).
- 3.2.25 Grey wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* were recorded during four of the six visits with a peak count of two recorded in three visits.

- 3.2.26 House martin *Delichon urbicum* were recorded during the March visit only with a peak count of two.
- 3.2.27 Starling were recorded during four of the six visits with a peak number in November of 146 birds.
- 3.2.28 Stock dove *Columba oenas* was only recorded during visit 2 with a peak count of 40. The birds were observed flying over the survey area. Stock dove are an Amber listed species.
- 3.2.29 Rook *Corvus frugilegus* were recorded during two of the six visits, with a peak count of five.



**Table 3.1 Wintering bird survey results**

Species	Scientific name	Conservation status	Visit 1 Feb 2021	Visit 2 Mar 2021	Visit 3 Oct 2021	Visit 4 Nov 2021	Visit 5 Dec 2021	Visit 6 Jan 2022
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	BoCC Green listed	5	18	18	17	24	16
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	153	11	382	193	159	23
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	BoCC Green listed	1	1	-	-	-	-
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	BoCC Green listed	6	10	13	28	16	26
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	BoCC Amber listed, SoPI	2	6	5	6	7	5
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	BoCC Green listed	3	1	2	1	1	2
Canada goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Introduced, not listed	-	3	37	19	20	5
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	BoCC Green listed	27	101	38	11	31	29
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	BoCC Green listed	10	18	39	20	25	11
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	1	-	-	-	-
Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	1	1	1	1	2
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	-	1	5	23	2
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	1	-	1	-	-	1
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	BoCC Green listed	3	3	1	5	1	5
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	BoCC Green listed	2	3	11	2	4	1

Species	Scientific name	Conservation status	Visit 1 Feb 2021	Visit 2 Mar 2021	Visit 3 Oct 2021	Visit 4 Nov 2021	Visit 5 Dec 2021	Visit 6 Jan 2022
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	BoCC Amber listed, SoPI	8	12	18	7	10	8
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	BoCC Red listed, Sch 1	48	1	-	37	25	14
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	BoCC Amber listed	1	-	-	-	-	-
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	BoCC Green listed	3	3	5	7	2	2
Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	BoCC Red listed	-	14	-	-	2	6
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	BoCC Green listed	19	24	21	36	22	6
Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	-	-	1	-	1
Great black-backed gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	-	-	-	2	-	-
Great crested grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	BoCC Green listed	2	-	-	-	-	-
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	-	-	3	4	1
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	BoCC Green listed	7	13	8	16	17	24
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	BoCC Red listed	5	9	-	2	-	-
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	BoCC Green listed	2	4	5	-	-	4
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	BoCC Amber listed	-	-	1	-	-	-
Grey wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerera</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	2	2	1	2	-

Species	Scientific name	Conservation status	Visit 1 Feb 2021	Visit 2 Mar 2021	Visit 3 Oct 2021	Visit 4 Nov 2021	Visit 5 Dec 2021	Visit 6 Jan 2022
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	BoCC Red listed, SoPI	185	54	388	270	696	231
House martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	BoCC Red listed	-	2	-	-	-	-
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	BoCC Red listed, SoPI	24	32	4	15	53	16
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	BoCC Green listed	30	19	2	14	6	1
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	BoCC Green listed	2	5	8	3	3	-
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	-	4	1	1	1	1
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	BoCC Red listed, SoPI	12	43	57	150	-	1
Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	-	3	18	25	81	147
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	BoCC Red listed	-	-	16	3	-	-
Little grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	BoCC Green listed	2	2	16	-	-	-
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	BoCC Green listed	26	18	82	33	24	9
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	BoCC Green listed	17	61	51	10	9	17
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	BoCC Amber listed	24	31	6	14	29	7
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	BoCC Amber listed	5	21	10	3	-	-
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	BoCC Red listed	5	-	1	3	3	1

Species	Scientific name	Conservation status	Visit 1 Feb 2021	Visit 2 Mar 2021	Visit 3 Oct 2021	Visit 4 Nov 2021	Visit 5 Dec 2021	Visit 6 Jan 2022
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	7	3	13	14	11	1
Mute swan	<i>Cyngus olor</i>	BoCC Green listed	4	2	3	3	7	3
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	BoCC Green listed	4	9	2	4	3	1
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Sch 1, BoCC Green listed	-	-	2	-	-	-
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	BoCC Green listed	13	7	18	-	-	-
Pink-footed goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	BoCC Amber listed, Sch1	80	-	60	-	-	-
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	-	5	-	-	-
Lesser redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	BoCC Red listed	1	-	-	-	-	-
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	BoCC Amber listed, Sch 1	90	24	583	104	47	3
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	BoCC Amber listed, SoPI	5	10	5	2	-	-
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	BoCC Green listed	5	19	16	11	12	31
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	-	5	-	-	-	1
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	BoCC Amber listed	3	-	-	-	-	-
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	BoCC Green listed	10	-	2	-	-	-

Species	Scientific name	Conservation status	Visit 1 Feb 2021	Visit 2 Mar 2021	Visit 3 Oct 2021	Visit 4 Nov 2021	Visit 5 Dec 2021	Visit 6 Jan 2022
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	BoCC Red listed, SoPI	-	3	3	-	-	-
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	BoCC Amber listed	5	5	-	-	-	-
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	BoCC Amber listed, SoPI	6	12	7	26	13	11
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	-	-	4	-	-	-
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	BoCC Red listed, SoPI	40	73	1	146	30	-
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	BoCC Amber listed	-	40	-	-	-	-
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	BoCC Amber listed	21	15	2	-	21	4
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	BoCC Green listed	1	-	2	1	-	2
Tufted duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	BoCC Green listed	-	-	25	24	31	62
Woodpigeon	<i>Palumbus columbus</i>	BoCC Amber listed	78	125	168	60	40	20
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	BoCC Amber listed	5	46	17	17	19	13
<b>TOTAL NO. SPECIES:</b> 70 species								

Key

BoCC Green, Amber and Red Lists – Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (2021)

Sch 1 – Schedule 1 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

SoPI – Species of principal importance

### **BoCC green listed species**

- 3.2.30 Three waterfowl species were recorded during the site visits: goosander; mute swan *Cygnus olor* and tufted duck, with a peak count of 1, 7 and 62, respectively. Mute swan was recorded in every survey visit.
- 3.2.31 Four other waterbird species were recorded: coot; little grebe; great crested grebe; and cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Coot and cormorant were recorded during every site visit, with peak counts of 5 and 11, respectively.
- 3.2.32 One species of thrush was recorded; blackbird *Turdus merula*. This species was recorded in each survey visit, with a peak count of 24.
- 3.2.33 One species of raptor was recorded; buzzard *Buteo buteo*, this species was recorded in every survey with a peak count 3.
- 3.2.34 17 species of passerine were recorded: blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*; blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*; chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*; chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*; coal tit *Periparus ater*; collared dove *Streptopelia decaocto*; goldcrest *Regulus regulus*; goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*; great tit *Parus major*; greenfinch *Chloris chloris*; grey wagtail *Motacilla cinerera*; long-tailed tit *Aegithalos caudatus*; nuthatch *Sitta europaea*; pied wagtail *Motacilla alba*; robin *Erithacus rubecula*; siskin *Carduelis spinus*; and treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*. Eight of these species were found in every survey visit (see Table 3.1).
- 3.2.35 Five species of corvid were recorded: carrion crow *Corvus corone*; jackdaw *Corvus monedula*; jay *Garrulus glandarius*; magpie *Pica pica*; and raven *Corvus corax*. Carrion crow, jackdaw and magpie were recorded in each survey visit.
- 3.2.36 Two other species were recorded: great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* and grey heron *Ardea cinerea* with a peak count of 4 and 5, respectively.
- 3.2.37 Several species such as pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* and Canada goose *Branta canadensis* are not assessed under the BoCC criteria due to their introduced status.

## 4 Evaluation

- 4.1.1 Based on professional judgement, the utilisation of the survey area specifically as a wintering resource by waders, winter thrushes, gulls, wildfowl and passerines is considered to be a typical assemblage in the context of the habitats available (woodland and parkland habitats, three golf courses, pasture fields and cultivated land).
- 4.1.2 Notably, large numbers of species of conservation concern were recorded for lapwing, herring gull and lesser black-backed gull. However, these bird species were not considered to be solely reliant on habitats within the survey area. These species are likely to roam over a much larger area to utilise other foraging and roosting opportunities.
- 4.1.3 Heaton Park Reservoir (East and West) SBI which qualifies under the SBI criteria “Br6: Assemblages. Ten or more regular breeding bird species; 20 or more regular breeding and wintering species; and 30 or more regular breeding, wintering and passage bird species”, is designated for its wintering wildfowl. The SBI qualifying species were found to be using the area in expected numbers (although only half of the reservoir was within the survey area). The populations associated with the reservoir are considered to be significant at the **County Level**.
- 4.1.4 With regards to the other species, none of the records are significantly high in relation to their known populations at the county level, at UK level (Musgrove *et al.*, 2013) or in the context of what would be expected on similar habitats in the local area.
- 4.1.5 In conclusion, outside of designated sites, the range of species and numbers of records during the survey are not significant in the Greater Manchester context. However, the study area covers a large area, and the range of species and numbers of birds recorded is likely to be significant within the immediate area around the Scheme. The value of the wintering bird assemblage is assessed as being of **Local Level** importance.

## Acronyms and initialisms

Abbreviation	Term
BoCC	Birds of Conservation Concern (Red, Amber or Green listed)
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EclA	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

## Glossary

Term	Definition
Loafing	Loafing refers to bird behaviour when it is in a general state of immobility, involving several heterogeneous behaviours that are not connected to feeding or breeding, such as; sleeping, sitting, standing, resting and defecating.

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## Annex A Figures

The figures in this annex have been included in separate documents as follows:

- Environmental Statement Appendix 8.7: Wintering Bird Survey Report Annex A: Figures (Figures 8.7.1-8.7.3)
- Environmental Statement Appendix 8.7: Wintering Bird Survey Report Annex A: Figures (Figures 8.7.4-8.7.6)