

Land off Mill Lane, Whitburn
Ecological Impact Assessment

July 2026

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Issuing office

4 Riverside Studios | Newcastle Business Park | Newcastle Upon Tyne | NE4 7YL
T: 0191 303 8964 | W: www.bsg-ecology.com | E: info@bsg-ecology.com

Client	Story Homes
Project	Land off Mill Lane, Whitburn
Version	FINAL
Project number	P26-405

	Name	Position	Date
Originated	Harry Glass	Ecologist	18 November 2025
Reviewed	Ian Heard	Principal Ecologist	19 November 2025
Amended following client feedback	Harry Glass	Ecologist	16 January 2026
Reviewed	Ian Heard	Principal Ecologist	19 January 2026
Approved for issue to client in draft	Claire Dewson	Associate Director	20 January 2026
Issued to client in draft	Harry Glass	Ecologist	21 January 2026
Finalised and issued	Alexander Permain	Senior Ecologist	2 February 2026
Amended following LPA comments	Alexander Permain	Senior Ecologist	7 July 2026
Reviewed	Owain Gabb	Director	16 July 2026
Approved for issue to client	Claire Dewson	Associate Director	17 July 2026
Finalised and issued	Alexander Permain	Senior Ecologist	20 July 2026

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1 Introduction

Background to commission

- 1.1 BSG Ecology Ltd. was commissioned by Story Homes (the 'Client') in April 2025 to undertake ecological surveys in support of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) that will be used to inform a planning application for a proposed residential development at land off Mill Lane (the 'Site'), Whitburn, South Tyneside. This EclA report is referred to as BSG Ecology (2026a), to maintain consistency with all other relevant submission documents. The commission included a comprehensive suite of ornithological surveys and reporting. The methods and proposed mitigation strategy are outlined in detail in separate documents (BSG Ecology 2026b & 2026c), however all the pertinent information to inform the evaluation, including proposed mitigation and compensation measures are provided within this report.
- 1.2 A planning response was returned from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) Ecologist in March 2026 with a request for additional information and clarification on several issues.
- 1.3 This EclA report takes account of additional desk study data on non-breeding curlew records (as detailed further in BSG Ecology, 2026b) and provides an updated evaluation and impact assessment that takes account of the LPA response.
- 1.4 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment for the Site has also been undertaken, which is reported separately (BSG Ecology, 2025d). The proposed Site layout is shown in **Appendix 1** (drawing reference: Landscape Masterplan, P21-2566_EN_0001, Revision D).

Site description

- 1.5 The Site is approximately 10.7 ha in size and is located adjacent to (west of) Mill Lane, Whitburn, South Tyneside. To the east of the Site is the A183 and to the north of the Site is Kitchener Road. The Site is centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) NZ 40564 63396. The Site is shown in **Figure 1, Section 7**. Where the 'Survey Area' is referred to in this report, this concerns a larger area encompassing the Site and additional off-site land that was surveyed for potential species compensation (see **Section 3**).
- 1.6 The Site comprises a single arable field, which is in a grass lay and subject to haylage cutting prior to the first surveys in November 2024. At the time of survey, the field turned over and planted with winter wheat in August 2025. There are no significant field margins, and the boundaries are delineated by a dry-stone wall and post and wire fencing. Scattered scrub is present on the western boundary.

Description of project

- 1.7 The client submitted a full planning application (planning reference: 260049) in January 2026 for a residential development comprising 205 homes with associated sustainable urban drainage features and public open space (see Drawing number: P21-2566_EN_0001, Revision D, **Appendix 1**).
- 1.8 Ecological and ornithological surveys to inform the application were undertaken in accordance with industry standard guidance (UKHab, 2023; Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group, 2025; Harris *et al.*, 1989) and this report has been written in line with CIEEM guidance taking the mitigation hierarchy into account.

Planning policy and legislation

- 1.9 Summaries of relevant planning policy and legislation are provided in **Appendix 2**. The following are relevant to this assessment:
 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations);
 - Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);

- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The Environmental Act 2021; and
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

1.10 Relevant local planning policies and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are listed below:

- South Tyneside Core Strategy (particularly EA3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity);
- Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2036 (particularly WNP5: Biodiversity and Geodiversity);
- SPD 3 – Green Infrastructure Strategy;
- SPD 5 Planning Obligations & Agreements; and
- Interim SPD 23 – Mitigation Strategy for European Sites (Recreational Pressure from Residential Development).

Consultation

- 1.11 On 17 October 2024 an on-Site meeting between South Tyneside Council's (STC) Ecologist and BSG Ecology took place to discuss the scope of survey effort required for the Site. It was agreed that wintering waders were a high priority ecological feature, and a robust suite of surveys would be required to inform the planning decision (methods are summarised in **Section 3** of this report, and in BSG Ecology 2025b). Additionally breeding birds, including barn owl *Tyto alba*, habitats and scoping surveys for protected species including bats and badger *Meles meles* were recommended by the STC Ecologist.
- 1.12 Pre-application consultation with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) (comments received 19 September 2025) indicated that a report to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for potential impacts on the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site would not be required if the bird surveys demonstrated no functional linkage with the Site. Functionally linked land is used to describe areas of land or sea occurring outside a designated site which is considered to be critical to, or necessary for, the ecological or behavioural functions in relation to a season of a qualifying feature for which a SPA/Ramsar site has been designated (Tyldesley *et al.*, 2015). An updated request for a shadow HRA report was made within the planning response received from the LPA ecologist in March 2026. This was requested due to the need to consider air quality impacts on Durham Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 1.13 Further consultation took place with South Tyneside's Planning Officers on both 30 September 2025 and 6 October 2025 during which the survey effort undertaken to date was outlined and feedback sought from the LPA on whether they considered the baseline dataset was robust. Potential mitigation approaches were also discussed at the meeting.
- 1.14 The LPA ecologist was satisfied with the survey effort but requested that further consideration be given to the mitigation options proposed.
- 1.15 An additional consultation took place with the LPA Ecologist on 2 June 2026 to discuss the wader compensation strategy and considerations to improve the existing strategy (see BSG Ecology, 2026c).

Personnel

- 1.16 Habitat survey, badger scoping survey and ground level tree assessments to inform the planning application were undertaken by Senior Ecologist Hannah Breadin BSc MSc ACIEEM. Hannah holds a Level 2 survey licence for bats (2019-50569-CLS-CLS). She has worked as a professional ecologist since 2014 and is a competent botanical surveyor with Field Identification Skill Certificate (FISC) Level 4. She has completed numerous habitat surveys across the North East of England.
- 1.17 The wintering wader, spring passage and autumn passage surveys were completed by Ian Heard ACIEEM, Principal Ecologist at BSG Ecology, Alexander Permain, Senior Ecologist at BSG Ecology, Ian Forsyth, freelance field ornithologist and Harry Glass, Ecologist at BSG Ecology. Alexander and

Ian Heard both regularly undertake bird surveys throughout the wintering bird season and are competent at wader identification. Ian Forsyth is an experienced field surveyor and has undertaken wintering bird surveys for BSG Ecology for almost five years. Harry assisted on several of the crepuscular wintering wader surveys as a health and safety second.

- 1.18 Breeding bird characterisation surveys were undertaken by Alexander Permain, Ian Forsyth and Ian Cole who is an experienced freelance ornithologist. All three surveyors have multiple years of experience in conducting breeding bird characterisation surveys and non-breeding bird surveys, including those targeted for waders. [REDACTED].
- 1.19 The breeding bird territory mapping and reporting was prepared by Alexander Permain who has over 3 years' experience in report production particularly in completing ornithological reports, assessment of breeding bird assemblages and territory mapping.
- 1.20 Earthworm surveys were undertaken by Harry Glass and Jennifer Peacock, Ecologists at BSG Ecology. Harry has worked as an ecological consultant for over 3 years and Jennifer for 2 years and have experience undertaking a variety of protected species surveys across the UK.
- 1.21 This report has been authored by Harry Glass, Ecologist at BSG Ecology. Harry has worked as an ecological consultant for three years and has authored several ecological assessment reports for a variety of projects throughout the UK. The report was then updated by Alexander Permain of whom has authored several EclA reports during his time at BSG Ecology.
- 1.22 This report has been reviewed by Ian Heard. Ian has over 14-years of experience as an ecological consultant which includes preparing and reviewing Ecological Impact Assessments and providing technical advice.
- 1.23 This report has also been reviewed by Claire Dewson MCIEEM. Claire has worked in ecology and nature conservation for over 20 years, during which time she has authored and reviewed ecological impact assessments in both planning authority and professional consultant roles.
- 1.24 An additional technical review has been undertaken by Owain Gabb MSc, MCIEEM, CEnv of BSG Ecology. Owain has worked as a professional ecologist since 1999 and has delivered ornithological input to ecological impact assessment schemes throughout the UK and Ireland.
- 1.25 Further details of experience and qualifications can be found at <http://www.bsg-ecology.com/people>

2 Methods

Desk study

- 2.1 The Environmental Records and Information Centre North East (ERIC NE) was contacted to provide data to determine the presence of any protected species records and non-statutory sites of nature conservation value e.g., Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within a 2 km search buffer of the Site, and within the last ten years. A 2 km search buffer was considered sufficient due to the size of the Site and the habitats present. The data was provided by ERIC in August 2025.
- 2.2 The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was checked for the presence of statutory designated sites of international importance e.g. Ramsar Sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) within a 10 km search buffer of the Site. The presence of statutory designated sites of national importance e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) was checked within a 2 km search buffer, in conjunction with a review of their associated Impact Risk Zones (IRZ). Additionally, MAGIC was consulted to identify Priority Habitats¹, and granted European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence return data, within a 2 km search buffer of the Site.
- 2.3 Aerial photographs and the 1:25,000 OS map (Google Maps and OS Maps) of the Site and its surroundings were reviewed to identify ponds within a 500 m search buffer of the Site and assist in the characterisation of habitats onsite and adjacent.
- 2.4 Additional data specifically on non-breeding curlew records was received by BSG Ecology from the LPA Ecologist in March 2026 and has been considered further within this report.

Survey areas

- 2.5 For the extended UK habitat survey and the badger survey, the 'Survey Area' is defined as the Site (plus a 30 m buffer) and land used for the Wader Compensation Site (see **Paragraph 3.24**)
- 2.6 For the breeding bird characterisation surveys, the 'Survey Area' is defined as the Site and a 50 m buffer zone. A 50 m buffer was included to capture breeding behaviour within the immediate vicinity and determine if indirect disturbance effects were likely to impact any species present.
- 2.7 For the non-breeding wader surveys, the 'Survey Area' is defined as the Site and the wader buffer zone (300 m). The buffer zone is applied to understand wader activity within land surrounding the Site.

Field survey

- 2.8 This section describes survey effort for ecological features that has the potential to be significantly impacted by the development and therefore required dedicated survey. Other ecological features are not considered as part of this assessment due to no suitable habitat on Site and in the immediate area.

Extended UK Habitat survey

- 2.9 The extended UK habitat survey covered the Site, a 30 m perimeter buffer of the Site (where accessible), and 'Field 1' and 'Field 2' of the Wader Compensation Site (see **Paragraphs 3.24 – 3.39**).
- 2.10 The survey was conducted on 20 May 2025. Weather during the survey was dry, 17°C with gentle breeze (Beaufort scale 3) and no cloud.
- 2.11 Habitats were mapped in accordance with their closest UK Habitat Classification (UK Hab Ltd., 2023). Botanical species lists for each habitat were gathered and quadrats were completed to inform

¹ Habits of principal importance of Section 41, Natural Environmental and Rural Communities Act 2006

conditions assessments. Photographs were taken of features of interest, which were also target noted.

- 2.12 The survey was 'extended' to assess the potential of the Survey Area to support protected/notable species.
- 2.13 The Survey Area was also searched for the presence of non-native invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)².

Badger survey

- 2.14 During the extended UK habitat survey, the surveyor also searched for signs of badger in the Survey Area, including setts, latrines, guard hairs, and footprints, methods followed Harris *et al* (1989).

Ground level tree assessment

- 2.15 Trees in the Survey Area were subject to a ground level tree assessment. This was completed during the extended UK habitat survey. Methods followed Collins (2023), to search for features suitable for use by roosting bats.

Earthworm survey

- 2.16 The Proposed Development Site and proposed Wader Compensation Site (as shown in **Figures 1 and 9, Section 7**) were subject to an earthworm survey on 21 November 2025 in order to understand the earthworm biomass and the potential preferred foraging opportunities by the waders. The surveys were conducted by Harry Glass and Jennifer Peacock, Ecologists at BSG Ecology. Both have worked as ecological consultants since 2024 and have experience undertaking a variety of protected species surveys across the UK.
- 2.17 Survey conditions were dry, full sunshine and 4 °C). Survey methods followed guidance set out by the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB) (2024). A total of ten soil pits 20 x 20 x 20 cm were dug at roughly evenly spaced locations throughout each of the three fields (Proposed Development Site, Field 1 and 2 of the Wader Compensation Site).
- 2.18 A plan showing the earthworm pit locations can be found in **Figure 10, Section 7**.
- 2.19 Surveyors hand-sorted the soil from the pit, tallying the worms that were dug up. Results were used to draw comparative conclusions regarding the density of earthworms between each field (and thus the relative availability of foraging resource for waders).

Bird surveys

- 2.20 Wader surveys were undertaken between November 2024 and October 2025 covering the over-wintering, spring passage and autumn passage periods. The Survey Area with respect to non-breeding waders was designed to survey suitable wader habitat present in offsite fields to the west to approximately 300 m, to inform the assessment of potential indirect impacts of the development on wader populations that may be present. The survey buffer was reduced to 100 m to the south and east of the Site, as these areas were considered unsuitable for wader use (comprising residential housing and grassland fields at Whitburn Coastal Park with a high degree of disturbance from recreational use). The approach was informed by desk study information, including a review of aerial mapping of likely suitable habitat for foraging waders and the results of two wader studies commissioned by South Tyneside Council (E3 Ecology, 2020; 2023).
- 2.21 The Survey Area consisted of the Site and two agricultural fields sown with winter cereals, south of an access track leading to Lizard Lane Farm, and three horse-grazed pasture fields north of the access track. Over the course of the surveys, the two fields offsite to the west (either side of the farm access track) were identified as having potential for use as offsite wader compensation (collectively

² Section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Preventing the release into the wild of certain plants and animals which may cause ecological, environmental or socio-economic harm. Section 9 list of non-native and invasive species.

referred to in this report as the 'Wader Compensation Site') (see **Figures 8 and 9, Section 7**). Surveys of these fields continued to allow for a complete baseline data set of non-breeding waders on Site and the immediate vicinity.

- 2.22 The Survey Area for breeding bird characterisation surveys consisted of the Site and a 50 m buffer zone. A 50 m buffer was included to capture breeding behaviour within the immediate vicinity and determine if indirect disturbance effects were likely to impact any species present.

Non-breeding wader surveys

- 2.23 Wintering, spring passage and autumn passage wader surveys were completed between November 2024 and October 2025. Methodologies used current industry standard guidance (Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group, 2025).
- 2.24 The survey period included:
- Wintering (November 2024 – March 2025) – 15 surveys in total;
 - Spring passage (April – May 2025) – six surveys in total; and
 - Autumn passage (August - October 2025) – nine surveys in total.
- 2.25 See **Appendix 3** for full details of timings and weather conditions.
- 2.26 Survey effort in each month consisted of two diurnal surveys: one at a high tidal cycle, and one at a low tidal cycle (i.e., surveys were undertaken within approximately 2 hours either side of each respective tidal point). A crepuscular survey was also completed each month starting approximately 30 minutes before sunset and up to one hour after sunset. The crepuscular survey was included to understand any nocturnal roosting behaviour of waders and for this survey, surveyors utilised Night Vision Aids (NVAs)³. This non-standard method was intended to record movements of waders or wildfowl on Site or in the area around dusk and utilised the same methodology as WeBS (BTO, 2025) and low tide counts with the addition of Night Vision Aids (NVAs).
- 2.27 The 'look-see' methodology (Gilbert, *et al.*, 1998) was used along a pre-determined survey transect route, with ad lib stops at suitable vantage points. All wader species observations were recorded using standard BTO species codes and survey symbology.
- 2.28 Any sightings of notable species, such as raptors, owls, over-wintering or migratory geese using the Survey Area were recorded during the surveys.

Breeding bird characterisation surveys

- 2.29 Six breeding bird surveys (five diurnal surveys and one crepuscular) were undertaken between April to June 2025 in suitable weather conditions (see **Appendix 3** for full details). The methodology followed industry guidance (Bird Survey and Assessment Steering Group, 2025) which is based upon methods outlined by Bibby, *et al.*, (2000) and Gilbert, *et al.*, (1998). Diurnal surveys were timed to coincide with the peak period of bird activity, commencing within 30 minutes either side of sunrise and concluding before mid-morning. The crepuscular survey commenced approximately one hour before sunset and concluded approximately 45 minutes after sunset and utilised NVAs. The survey involved walking a transect around the Survey Area at a slow pace recording all birds present and their behaviours using standard BTO survey symbology. Particular attention was paid to birds displaying breeding behaviours that indicated breeding territories or confirm breeding attempts.

Barn owl survey

- 2.30



³ PixFra Arc series A613 thermal monocular.

Consideration of potential limitations

- 2.31 The field surveys applied a buffer extending approximately 300 m to the west of the Site. This buffer was selected because the fields immediately west of the Site were considered the most suitable nearby habitat for non-breeding waders, based on review of the South Tyneside Council wader study reports (E3 Ecology, 2020; 2023). It is considered that, because Field 1 within the Wader Compensation Site has since been extended (see **Paragraph 3.24**), some additional wader use in the northern part of that field may not have been captured. Nevertheless, the survey effort comprised three surveys per month during the over-wintering, spring passage and autumn passage periods (30 surveys in total). The August 2025 pre-application response from the LPA ecologist recommended a 500 m survey buffer for non-breeding waders around the Site. However, BSG Ecology's non-breeding wader surveys commenced in October 2024, before the formal pre-application response was issued. This level of survey effort undertaken is considered robust for evaluating the Site and land immediately west of it, assessing potential direct and indirect impacts, and informing the Wader Compensation Strategy.
- 2.32 During the winter when conditions are cold, earthworms can begin to enter a state of dormancy and bury deeper into the soil to seek warmer temperatures (Spurgeon, 2001). The earthworm survey within the Site and the Wader Compensation Site was undertaken in November in temperatures above freezing. However, it is considered reasonable that some earthworms may have already buried deeper into the soil which may have reduced the densities of earthworms caught per sampling pit. Although a spring or summer sample may increase the number of earthworms caught per sampling pit, a single earthworm survey during the winter is not considered to be a significant limitation as it has provided a representative sample to inform this report.
- 2.33 The crepuscular breeding bird survey on 19 June 2025 ended 45 minutes after sunset. This was 15 minutes less than guidance per Bird Survey and Assessment Steering Group (2025). At the time of the survey, the grass within the Site had recently taken a hay cut meaning that for the duration of the survey there was limited breeding bird activity, limited to mostly fly-overs prior to sunset. The survey was concluded early due to the limited level of activity.

Methods of evaluation and impact assessment

- 2.34 The evaluation and assessment within this chapter have been undertaken with reference to relevant parts of the 2016 Guidelines for EclA in the United Kingdom developed by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2024). Although this is recognised as the industry standard for ecological assessment, the guidance itself recognises that it is not a prescription about exactly how to undertake an ecological impact assessment (EclA); rather, it aims to "provide guidance to practitioners for refining their own methodologies".

Important ecological features

- 2.35 A first step in EclA is determination of which ecological features (habitats, species, ecosystems and their functions/processes) are important. Important features should then be subject to detailed assessment if they are likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development. It is not necessary to carry out detailed assessment of features that are unlikely to be significantly impacted either through being widespread, unthreatened and resilient to project effects, such that there is no risk to their viability.
- 2.36 Ecological features can be important for a variety of reasons and the rationale used to identify these is explained below. Importance may relate, for example, to the quality or extent of designated sites or habitats, to habitat/species rarity, to the extent to which they are threatened throughout their range, or to their rate of decline.

⁴ 15 °C, 2/8 cloud, F2 wind, dry.

- 2.37 Taking into account the CIEEM guidance, ecological features of less than Local importance are generally considered unlikely to trigger a biodiversity policy response and will be scoped out. If a ecological feature of Site level importance is potentially capable of triggering a policy response such as habitats and species including in local planning policy, and is likely to be significantly affected, then it will not be scoped out.

Evaluation: determining importance

- 2.38 The importance of an ecological feature should be considered within a defined geographical context. The following frame of reference has been used in this case:
- International (Europe);
 - National (England and UK);
 - Regional (the cumulative areas of Vice County (VC) 66 County Durham, VC 67 south Northumberland and VC 68 north Northumberland⁵);
 - County (VC 66 County Durham)
 - District (South Tyneside);
 - Local (Whitburn);
 - Site (Site boundary and immediate surrounds); and
 - Below Site level (negligible importance).

Characterising and quantifying effects and assessing their significance

- 2.39 The CIEEM (2024) guidelines state that ecological effects or impacts should be characterised in terms of ecosystem structure and function and reference should be made where relevant to: beneficial, adverse or negligible effects, extent, magnitude, duration, reversibility, timing and frequency and cumulative effects. The guidelines provide a list of "aspects of ecological structure and function to consider when predicting impacts and effects." The terms impact and effect are used within this chapter in accordance with the following definitions (as provided by the guidelines):
- Impact: "Actions resulting in changes to an ecological feature. For example, the construction activities of a development removing a hedgerow".
 - Effect: "Outcome to an ecological feature from an impact. For example, the effects on a dormouse population from loss of a hedgerow"
- 2.40 Following the characterisation of effects, an assessment of the ecological significance of those effects is made. The guidelines promote a transparent approach in which a beneficial or adverse effect is determined to be significant or not, in ecological terms, in relation to the integrity of the defined site or ecosystem(s) and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographical area, which relates to the level at which it has been valued. The decision about whether an effect is significant or not is independent of the value of the ecological feature.
- 2.41 Significance is a concept related to the weight that should be attached to effects when decisions are made. For the purpose of this assessment, 'significant effect' is an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for 'important ecological features'. A significant effect is simply an effect that is sufficiently important to require assessment and reporting so that the decision maker is adequately informed of the environmental consequences of permitting a project. The EclA guidelines state:

"A significant effect does not necessarily equate to an effect so severe that consent for the project should be refused planning permission. For example, many projects with significant adverse ecological effects can be lawfully permitted following EIA procedures".

⁵ VCs 66, 67 and 68 are used in Durham and Northumberland Bird Club ornithological reports and atlases and thus form the basis of the evaluation made in this assessment.

Main phases of Works

- 2.42 The potential impacts of the proposed works are considered in relation to its two phases: (1) construction phase and (2) operational phase.

Achieving a net gain in biodiversity value

- 2.43 The above method, based on that set out for EclA in CIEEM (2024), aims to assess significant effects on important ecological features. The effects on more commonplace and widespread habitats (together with more important habitats) have been considered through the use of a statutory metric-based calculation of loss and gain in “biodiversity units”. This reflects current Government policy in relation to securing a measurable net biodiversity gain, which is delivered through the planning system, through insertions of new statutory biodiversity gain provisions into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2.44 The Biodiversity Gain Assessment (BGA) is provided in a separate report (BSG Ecology, 2025d), produced in parallel to this EclA.

3 Ecological Baseline and Evaluation

3.1 This section sets out the findings of the baseline ecological survey work and information from the desk study. It then goes on to evaluate the interest of the identified ecological resources. Ecological features are considered in the following order:

- Protected sites – both statutory (e.g. SSSI) and non-statutory designated sites (e.g. LWS);
- Habitats; and
- Species.

3.2 Certain species and habitats have been scoped out of the assessment on the basis that they are unlikely to be significantly impacted by the development. This is either by virtue of the design or because they are very commonplace and/or of very low conservation value (unless there are other reasons to consider them further, for example, they may be legally protected or require special care and therefore require precautionary measures to be adopted). Where it has been possible to scope out an ecological feature, the rationale for doing so is provided in the text below.

Future baseline

3.3 In the absence of the proposed development, it is likely that the Site would continue to be managed in an arable crop rotation, alternating between cereal and non-cereal crops with lay periods.

3.4 In the absence of the proposed development and assuming the Site is consistently managed, the biodiversity interest of the Site is not likely to change significantly.

Designated sites

Statutory designated sites

3.5 There are three statutory designated sites of international importance within 10 km of the Site, comprising one Ramsar site, one SAC, and one SPA. Two SSSIs, which are of national importance, and three Local Nature Reserves (LNR), which are of county importance, fall within 2 km of the Site.

3.6 **Table 1** provides a summary of statutory designated sites in order of proximity to the Site. The table includes their reasons for designation, and rationale for their consideration within this assessment. The locations of statutory designated sites within the desk study area are shown in **Figures 2a and 2b, Section 7**.

Table 1: Statutory sites within 10 km of the Site

Site name	Reason for designation	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
Durham Coast SAC	Designated for supporting the Annex I habitat of 'Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts'. The examples found on the Durham Coast are the only example of their kind on Magnesian Limestone in the UK.	0.4 km north-east	Potential for increased recreational pressure on notified habitats. Scoped in for further consideration.
Durham Coast SSSI	Notified for supporting regionally and nationally rare habitats, including the Annex I habitat described above; but also calcareous grassland, dune systems and wet flushes, supporting breeding little tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i> as well as wintering and foraging purple sandpiper <i>Calidris maritima</i> , ruddy turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i> , sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i> and knot <i>Calidris canutus</i> . Also supports locally rare invertebrate species including Durham argus butterfly <i>Aricia artaxerxes subsp. salmacis</i> , least minor moth <i>Photedes captiuncula</i> , and the water beetle <i>Helophorus dorsalis</i> .	0.4 km north-east	Potential for increased recreational pressure on notified habitats and species. Proposals fall inside the impact risk zone (IRZ) of the SSSI and meet the criteria for consultation with Natural England regarding the potential effects of the development. Scoped in for further consideration.
Whitburn Point LNR	Nature reserve featuring a variety of woodland, scrub, wetland, open water and lowland meadow grassland habitats.	0.5 km east	Access is permitted using several footpaths around its edge, which are screened from the main reserve by woodland and scrub, eliminating the potential for increased recreational pressure on the main reserve. Scoped out of for further consideration.
Northumbria Coast SPA	Classified for supporting breeding little tern (1.7% GB population, 1993-1997) and Arctic tern <i>Sterna paradisea</i> (2.92% GB population, 2010-2014), as well as wintering turnstone (2.6% biogeographic population, 1992-1997) and purple sandpiper (1.6% biogeographic population, 1992-1997).	0.9 km south-east	Potential for increased recreational pressure on qualifying species. Scoped in for further consideration.
Northumbria Coast Ramsar Site	Classified for supporting breeding little tern (2.2% GB population, 200 census) and wintering populations of purple sandpiper (1.6%	0.9 km south-east	Potential for increased recreational pressure on qualifying species.

Site name	Reason for designation	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
	GB population, 1998/1999 – 2002/2023), ruddy turnstone (1% of GB population, 1998/1999 – 2002/2003.		Scoped in for further consideration.
Marsden Old Quarry LNR	Former limestone quarry managed as a nature reserve, supporting species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland. Additional areas of gorse scrub support breeding red list species including linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i> and yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i> . Public access is permitted throughout the site via allocated footpaths.	1.1 km north-west	LNR's encourage public access through managed access to link people with nature. Scoped out for further consideration.
Cleadon Hill SSSI	Cleadon Hill supports species-rich calcareous grassland on shallow soils, rock outcrops, and old earthworks. The habitat is rare and fragmented in the region due to quarrying and agricultural intensification.	1.3 km west	Potential for increased recreational pressure on notified species. Scoped in for further consideration.
Cleadon Hills LNR	Cleadon Hill supports species-rich calcareous grassland on shallow soils, rock outcrops, and old earthworks. The habitat is rare and fragmented in the region due to quarrying and agricultural intensification.	1.3 km west	LNR's encourage public access through managed access to link people with nature. Scoped out for further consideration.

Non-statutory designated sites

- 3.7 ERIC NE returned information on 16 non-statutory designated sites within 2 km of the Site, including 13 LWS and 3 Local Geodiversity Sites (LGS) (see **Figure 3, Section 7**). The designated sites, a summary of the reasons for their designation, and rationale for their scoping for further consideration, are presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Non-statutory sites within 2 km of the Site

Site name	Reason for designation	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
Kitchener Road LWS	Designated for its species-rich unimproved grassland with strong calcareous influence from the underlying former limestone quarry. Currently under horse grazing.	Immediately north	Recreational impacts considered unlikely given the land is privately owned without public access, fenced, and occasionally horse grazed, discouraging direct access. Scoped out of further consideration.
Marsden Quarry LWS	Designated for its sparse Magnesian Limestone grassland around the southern and western fringes of the active Marsden quarry.	0.2 km north	Recreational impacts considered unlikely given the quarry is in active use and public access is prohibited. Scoped out of further consideration.
Whitburn Firing Range LWS	Extensive area of open grazed pasture regularly supporting winter roosting golden plover, up to 2,500 birds ⁶ . Also supports wintering / feeding lapwing, oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> , redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i> , ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> and curlew.	0.4 km south	Direct access is prohibited: no recreational impacts are considered likely. It is over 400 m from the Site that and therefore constraint and are unlikely to cause disturbance to the birds using the LWS. Scoped out for further consideration.
Marsden Limekilns LWS	Diverse area of habitat including several areas of species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland, which are the primary reason for designation. The LWS spans several areas of land, some of which are directly accessible via public footpath from the Coast Road.	0.5 km north	Direct access is prohibited: no recreational impacts are considered likely Scoped out for further consideration.
The Leas LWS	A large area of grassland mosaic featuring extensive areas of neutral and modified grassland suffused with smaller areas of	0.5 km north	Potential for increased recreational pressure on listed habitats.

⁶ The LWS citation suggests this figure is the equivalent of 1% of the wintering GB population. However, survey data from 2006 suggests that the current GB population is as high as 410,000 wintering birds (Woodward *et al*, 2020). The typical count on the LWS would therefore be <0.01% of the GB population and therefore not significant to the level asserted in the LWS citation.

Site name	Reason for designation	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
	species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland and areas of maritime influence.		Scoped in for further consideration.
Whitburn Point LWS	Nature reserve featuring a variety of woodland, scrub, wetland, open water and lowland meadow grassland habitats.	0.5 km east	Access is permitted along allocated footpaths around its edge, which are screened from the main reserve by woodland and scrub, eliminating the potential for increased recreational pressure on the main reserve. Scoped out of further consideration.
Marsden Limekilns LGS	Designated for its geological interest only.	0.6 km north	Assessment of geological impacts is beyond the scope of this report. Scoped out of further consideration.
Beacon Hill Quarry LWS	Area of rough species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland located within Whitburn golf course.	0.7 km north-west	Direct access is permitted only for users of the golf course: this is considered to represent only a small number of potential residents and would not lead to a significant increase in recreational pressure. Scoped out of further consideration.
Lizard Lane Cutting LWS	Two steep, rocky road verges either side of Lizard Lane supporting species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland. Direct access is possible but considered to be unlikely due to the steep topography and the presence of a public footpath routed behind the LWS parallel to Lizard Lane.	1.0 km north-west	New residents would likely use the public footpath and avoid the LWS. Scoped out of further consideration.
Marsden Old Quarry LWS	Former limestone quarry managed as a nature reserve, supporting species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland. Additional areas of gorse scrub support breeding red list species including linnet and yellowhammer.	1.1 km north-west	Potential for increased recreation pressure on notified species. Scoped in for further consideration.

Site name	Reason for designation	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
	Public access is permitted throughout the site via footpaths.		
Marsden Old Quarry LGS	Designated for its geological interest only.	1.1 km north-west	Assessment of geological impacts is beyond the scope of this report. Scoped out of further consideration.
Cleadon Hill Cliffs LWS	Steep scrubby bank with occasional rock exposures supporting Magnesian Limestone grassland niches, though the citation suggests these are gradually shrinking as the LWS transitions from scrub to woodland. Scrub supports breeding linnet, yellowhammer and whitethroat.	1.1 km south-west	Potential for recreational pressure is unlikely due to topography of the feature and scrub limiting accessibility. Scoped out for further consideration.
Cleadon Hill Cliffs LGS	Designated for its geological interest only.	1.1 km south-west	Assessment of geological impacts is beyond the scope of this report. Scoped out of further consideration.
Cleadon Quarry LWS	Former limestone quarry supporting patchwork of scrub and open grassland, both showing strong Magnesian Limestone influence. Public access is possible throughout the site via footpaths and desire lines.	1.6 km west	Potential for increased recreation pressure on notified habitats. Scoped in for further consideration.
Cleadon Pumping Station LWS	Former water pumping station supporting a network of species rich Magnesian Limestone grassland alongside woodland and scrub habitats.	1.8 km west	Potential for increased recreation pressure on notified habitats. Scoped in for further consideration.
Undercliffe Pond LWS	Victorian estate pond within broadleaved woodland. Site character has not been ascertained as access has not been given to the LPA to survey the LWS.	2 km south-west	Impacts are not anticipated due to the distance from Site and the exclusion of public access due to being

Site name	Reason for designation	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
	Public access is not permitted.		located on private land, eliminating potential for increased recreational pressure. Scoped out of further consideration.

Evaluation of designated sites

- 3.8 SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites are of **international importance**.
- 3.9 SSSIs are of **national importance**.
- 3.10 LNRs and LWSs are of **county importance**.

Wildlife Corridor

- 3.11 The Site is also located within a Wildlife Corridor, identified in local policy WNP6: Green Infrastructure Enhancement and Connectivity and local policy 35: Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain⁷ (The aim of the policy is to support the retention and expansion of existing wildlife corridors to reconnect vulnerable and priority habitats, creating an ecological network in association with designated sites. The wildlife corridor is not designated for a particular species; it forms part of a wider network of dark corridors and green space.
- 3.12 A total of 4.31 ha of the Site is situated within the wildlife corridor. This mainly incorporates land within the northern part of the Site where the corridor extent contours at its southerly point and extends east to west to other land offsite (see **Figure 1, Section 7**). The 4.31 ha of wildlife corridor within the Site is made up of Modified Grassland (see **Paragraph 3.19**) and is managed as a grass ley. Additional habitat on Site was limited to a small amount of scrub in the south-western part of the Site. All habitats were subject to a habitat condition assessment which concluded that they were in poor condition (see BSG Ecology, 2026d). There is also limited connectivity within the extent of wildlife corridor within the Site due to the absence of linear features such as hedgerows, trees and field margins.
- 3.13 At time of writing, the South of Tyne and Wear Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is out for public consultation as draft and not yet finalised. Measures within the LNRS will help coordinate and support nature recovery within South Tyneside local authority⁸.

Evaluation

- 3.14 The area of wildlife corridor within the Site is wholly made up of ecologically low distinctiveness modified grassland of which is in poor condition. The connectivity of the area of wildlife corridor within the Site is constrained on all aspects by built development and infrastructure (to the north, Kitchener Road, to the south, residential homes, to the west, Lizard Lane and to the east, Mill Lane). Within the area of wildlife corridor within the Site, it is currently not subject to significant light spill. The wildlife corridor within the Site forms part of the wider corridor network and it is considered to be of **District level importance**.

Priority Habitats

- 3.15 Six different priority habitat types were found within 2 km of the Site (see **Figure 4, Section 7**). The character and rationale for their scoping for further consideration are described in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Priority habitat parcels within 2 km of the Site

Priority habitat type	Description	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
Deciduous woodland	Small isolated woodland parcels present within Cleadon Hill Cliffs	0.3 km east	Impacts on the woodland as a result of increased air pollution are not anticipated based on the scope of the proposals.

⁷ This policy is also considered to include the Wildlife Corridor Network.

⁸ South of Tyne and Wear LNRS also includes Gateshead and Sunderland local authorities.

Priority habitat type	Description	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
	SSSI and LWS, Marsden Old Quarry LNR and LWS and scattered throughout the wider arable landscape.		Potential for effects as a result of increased recreational use. Scoped in for further consideration.
Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land	The closest parcels have been subsumed into active quarry works and are no longer present. An additional parcel is present 1.1 km north-west on the Marsden Old Quarry LNR and LWS, MAGIC has a low confidence in the classification of this parcel. A review of other desk-based sources (including the LNR & LWS citation) indicate that the habitats have developed beyond an open mosaic structure and into grassland and scrub.	0.3 km north of Site	No open mosaic habitat is thought to be present within 2 km and the habitat is therefore not mapped on Figure 4, Section 7 . Scoped out of further consideration.
Lowland calcareous grassland	Isolated parcels present on Cleadon Hills SSSI and Marsden Old Quarry LWS.	0.6 km north	Potential for effects as a result of increased recreational use. Scoped in for further consideration.
Maritime cliffs and slopes	Continuous area of habitat present along the entire coastline.	0.6 km east	Pollution impacts not anticipated based on distance and separation from Site. Additional recreational pressures not anticipated due to steep topography and prohibited access where the habitat is present. Scoped out of further consideration.
No main habitat but additional habitat exists Lowland Calcareous	Large area covering Whitburn Golf Course and Marsden Old Quarry LWS. MAGIC cites the additional habitat as 'lowland	0.6 km north-west	Potential for impacts as a result of increased recreational use. Scoped in for further consideration.

Priority habitat type	Description	Distance from Site (closest point)	Scoped in or out of further consideration
	calcareous grassland', likely referring to the areas of Magnesian limestone influence present.		For the purposes of this report, this habitat is considered alongside 'lowland calcareous grassland'.
Reedbed	One small parcel is present on the central wet area of Whitburn Point LNR and LWS.	0.6 km east	The reedbed is separated from public access by woodland and scrub, eliminating the potential for increased recreational pressure on the main reserve. Scoped out of further consideration.
Coastal sand dunes	One thin strip is present at Whitburn Sands and Seaburn Beach.	1.6 km south	Potential for effects as a result of increased recreational use. Scoped in for further consideration.
Traditional orchards	One small, isolated parcel is present immediately north of Undercliffe Pond LWS on private land. Its status is unclear.	1.9 km south-west	Direct effects are not anticipated based on distance and the scope of the proposals. Increased recreational impacts are not anticipated as access is prohibited. Scoped out of further consideration.

Evaluation

- 3.16 Deciduous woodland is uncommon in the South Tyneside district which is largely dominated by agricultural production, or residential development. Deciduous woodland is better represented elsewhere within the county in larger and more continuous parcels. Deciduous woodland is therefore assessed as being of **District importance**.
- 3.17 Coastal sand dunes are only represented in the South Tyneside district in a small area (approximately 405 m in length) located south-east of Whitburn near Whitburn Beach. Due this being a localised habitat and the only example in South Tyneside, it is assessed as being of **County level importance**.
- 3.18 The lowland calcareous grassland in South Tyneside is Magnesian Limestone grassland, arising from local underlying geology and history of mineral extraction. From areas derived from MAGIC.GOV, approximately 19 ha of lowland calcareous grassland habitat is present within 2 km of the Site, with approximately 30 ha found in the wider South Tyneside area. Additionally, approximately 264 ha is found in the vice county. Due to the significant proportion of lowland calcareous grassland located within 2 km of the Site it is therefore assessed as being of **County level importance**.

Habitats on Site

- 3.19 UK Habitat types found on Site are shown within **Figure 1, Section 7**. The Site is made up of modified grassland managed for haylage production, with isolated mixed scrub along its western boundary.

Modified grassland (g4)

- 3.20 The modified grassland (**Photograph 1, Section 8**) is 10.58 ha in size and dominated (more than 80%) by perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* with occasional Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, cock's foot *Dactylis glomerata* and soft brome *Bromus hordeaceus*. Herbs make up less than 5% of the sward, with cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa* and white clover *Trifolium repens* recorded rarely. No bare ground is present.

Evaluation

- 3.21 The modified grassland is of low ecological value, and in poor condition due to its current management regime. Similar habitat is common and widespread in the surrounding area. The modified grassland habitat is considered to be of **negligible importance and is scoped out of further consideration in this report**.

Mixed scrub (h3h)

- 3.22 A small strip of mixed scrub (0.02 ha) is present along the western boundary forming part of the Lizard Lane roadside verge (**Photograph 2, Section 7**). Species include hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg, rose *Rosa* sp. and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*. Isolated hawthorn bushes are present further north along the same roadside verge, recorded as 'scattered scrub' (**Figure 1, Section 7**). The scrub may be a remnant hedgerow but is considered to be defunct with reference to the UK Habitat definition (UK Hab Ltd., 2023).

Evaluation

- 3.23 The scrub consists of common and widespread species and is limited in extent. It is assessed to be of **Site importance and is scoped out of further consideration in this report**.

Habitats within proposed compensation site

- 3.24 UK Habitat types found within the proposed compensation site are shown within **Figure 1, Section 7**. The compensation site is made up of two fields, including Field 1 managed as horse pasture and Field 2 in arable rotation.

Modified grassland (g4)

- 3.25 Field 1 is 7.7 ha in size and is grazed by horses (**Photograph 4, Section 8**). As a result of intensive grazing management, the grass has a short sward with an average height of 5 cm to 10 cm throughout the field. Small areas of poaching have occurred from horse movements. Herb species account for less than 5% of the sward and in many locations, herbs are absent entirely. Grass species include perennial rye grass, soft brome, cock's foot and Yorkshire fog. Herb species (where present) included dandelion sp. *Taraxacum* sp., common mouse-eared chickweed *Cerastium fontanum*, and daisy sp. *Bellis* sp.
- 3.26 The field is bound by post and wire fencing, dry stone wall, and a newly planted hedgerow is present on the southern boundary (**Photograph 4, Section 8**).

Evaluation

- 3.27 Modified grassland is of low ecological value, being species poor and in this instance heavily grazed and poached in some areas. The habitat is common and widespread in the surrounding area. Modified grassland habitats in the proposed compensation site are therefore considered to be of **negligible importance and are scoped out of further consideration in this report**.

Cereal crops (c1c)

- 3.28 An arable field of 5.3 ha was sown with a winter wheat crop at the time of survey (**Photograph 5, Section 8**). Around the margins of the field a (0.5 m wide) strip of grassland is present. Dominant species include cock's foot, perennial rye grass and Yorkshire fog, with occasional barren brome *Bromus sterilis*. Herb species within the field margin were cleavers *Galium aparine* and cow parsley. Immediately adjacent to Field 2, to the west, is an agricultural shed upon a review of aerial imagery⁹ which appears to have been constructed in 2018.

Native hedgerow (h2a)

- 3.29 Along the northern boundary of the cereal crop field and along the southern boundary of the modified grassland field is a newly planted hedgerow; predominantly hawthorn but with rare occurrence of hazel *Corylus avellana* and blackthorn. The hedgerow measures approximately 0.75 km in length.

Evaluation

- 3.30 The arable cropland is of low ecological value, being an intensively managed monoculture with negligible field margins. The habitat is common and widespread in the surrounding area. The arable habitats in the proposed compensation site are therefore considered to be of **negligible importance and are scoped out of further consideration in this report**.

Protected and notable species**Badger**

- 3.31 ERIC NE returned no records of badger within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.32 No setts or other evidence of badger presence such as latrines, footprints or snuffle holes (foraging activity) were identified within the Site. The arable landscape provides sub optimal foraging habitat for the species. Badgers are considered unlikely to be encountered during the works due to the poor suitability of habitats and lack of historic records within the surrounding area.

Evaluation

- 3.33 The Site does not provide suitable sett building habitat, and arable land is generally considered to be limited in suitability for earth worms (a major component in the diets of badgers (Roper, 2010), which is supported by the limited numbers of earthworms found during the earthworm survey (see BSG Ecology, 2026c). The wider area is similarly unsuitable for badger being under agricultural or livery management. There is no connectivity between the Site and suitable badger habitat. Badger is considered to be absent from the Site and immediate area. The Site is assessed as being of **negligible importance** to badger and they are **scoped out of further consideration in this report**.

Bats

- 3.34 ERIC NE returned two records of bats within 2 km of the Site, comprising one record of noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and one record of unidentified pipistrelle species *Pipistrellus spp.* The pipistrelle record was of low spatial accuracy (two-figure grid reference, accurate only to 10 km). The noctule record was located approximately 0.6 km east of Site at Whitburn Point LWS, dated 2023.
- 3.35 No buildings or trees are located on the Site. Trees adjacent to the Site (located within private residence) were assessed from the Site boundary as unsuitable to support roosting bats due to the age and health of the trees indicating that suitable features to support roosting bats were unlikely to be present. Additionally, the trees present were impacted by street and residential lighting, further limiting their suitability to support roosting bats.
- 3.36 The habitats on Site are of low value to foraging and commuting bats as they feature poor floristic and structural diversity and an impoverished soil invertebrate fauna limiting emergence of crane fly

⁹ Google Earth PRO (2026).

Tipula paludosa therefore means that the Site is unlikely to support a significant invertebrate foraging resource. Furthermore, the Site is considered to have limited connectivity to higher quality roosting and foraging resource in the immediate area: the A183 immediately east of Site is heavily impacted by street lighting and there are few hedgerows or mature tree features in the vicinity of the Site that could provide commuting and foraging pathways to the west and north.

Evaluation

- 3.37 No suitable roosting features were present within or immediately adjacent to the Site. Therefore, the Site is assessed as being of **negligible importance** to roosting bats and are **scoped out of further consideration**.
- 3.38 Habitats on Site were assessed as being of **Site importance** to foraging bats but due to the lack of connectivity and poor site conditions for bats, they are **scoped out of further consideration in this report**.

Birds

- 3.39 ERIC NE returned a total of 9,569 bird records within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.40 A full data set is not shown within this report but can be made available upon request.

Non-breeding wader surveys

Desk study

- 3.41 ERIC NE returned a total of 9,961 bird records within 2 km of the Site. Of the records returned, 1,420 related to wader birds. Of note, 254 of the 1,420 records were returned for curlew. One record of curlew was returned for the Site itself, comprising a flock of over 30 birds recorded in October 2018. One record of lapwing on Site was returned; 40 adults were recorded on Site in October 2018). The majority of the records relate to Whitburn bird observatory which is located off-site approximately 665 m to the east. Other waders recorded in the desk study included bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica* (70 records), black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* (ten records), dunlin *Calidris alpina* (148 records), golden plover (109 records), green sandpiper *Calidris alpina* (10 records), greenshank *Tringa nebularia* (six records), grey phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* (15 records), grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (15 records), knot (61 records), lapwing (17 records, purple sandpiper (46 records), redshank *Tringa totanus* (221 records), ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula* (110 records), ruff *Calidris pugnax* (16 records), sanderling (93 records) and turnstone (211 records). The majority of the records relate to Whitburn Observatory whereby there is a sea watching facility for bird watching
- 3.42 Additional data regarding non-breeding curlew within the Site was provided by the LPA Ecologist in March 2026 and is summarised in **Table 4**. The data sent in by the LPA Ecologist only included curlew counts.

Table 4: Additional non-breeding curlew records provided by LPA Ecologist (including the original record source) within planning response in March 2026

Date	Count	Source
24 December 2019	81	STC wader study – raw data (the Site is referenced in STC studies as 'Field 30')
29 December 2019	112	STC wader study – raw data
6 November 2022	100	ERIC NE
17 October 2024	96	STC species records
27 February 2026	133	iRecord submission

11 March 2026	95	iRecord submission
15 March 2026	130 – 135	Submission emailed to LPA Ecologist

3.43 Within the planning response from the LPA ecologist in March 2026, further consideration to factors potentially influencing the use of curlew on Site was requested. This could be due to a number of factors including:

- Food resources and probing availability – specifically earthworm density and ease of probing;
- Land management – crop types can influence the use of fields by curlew specifically where crop rotation is concerned. The use of the Site as a grass ley reduces tillage events and maintains earthworm burrows, an important food resource for curlew;
- Vegetation height and structure – sward height and structure are important features of the Site with a low sward maintained over the winter allowing curlew to forage in relative safety;
- Field size – field size is important in the attractiveness of a field as a foraging resource. As the Site is approximately 10.7 ha in size, this is sufficient to allow flocks of curlew to forage in relatively unenclosed land;
- Topography – field topography may influence the Site's use by curlew in respect of potential overall wetness. Whilst this may not necessarily be attributed to the earthworm populations, probing opportunities may be easier in damper conditions; and
- Proximity to the coast – the Site's close proximity may influence the regular use of the Site by curlew over the winter.

Site results

3.44 Full detailed results are presented in **Appendix 4**. A summary of the peak counts of waders from within the Site is shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Peak counts of waders across all wader surveys within the Site (15 surveys)

Species	Site		
	Winter	Spring passage	Autumn passage
	Peak count		
Curlew	85	-	65
Golden plover	24	-	-
Lapwing	-	-	34

3.45 Curlew were recorded on Site on 12 out of the 15 surveys between November 2024 and March 2025 (present on 80% of the wintering surveys) foraging and loafing, with a peak count of 85 birds observed during the January 2025 high tide survey. Curlew were noted on Site during all winter low tide surveys and every high tide survey except in March. Curlew were also recorded immediately prior to dusk during the crepuscular surveys in January, February and March, however the birds left Site shortly after sunset on all three occasions. The surveyors noted that when birds took flight, they headed in a south / south-west direction, potentially to known nocturnal roost sites such as Boldon Flats (E3 Ecology, 2023). Curlew numbers decreased in March, and they were not recorded during the spring passage period (April and May) as the birds had likely returned to their breeding grounds.

3.46 During the autumn passage surveys (August – October), curlew was observed using the Site on four of the nine surveys (present on 44% of the autumn passage surveys) but absent from August surveys entirely. A peak count of 65 curlew was recorded on the September high tide survey. During the

autumn passage surveys there was clearly a preference for use of the Site at high tide with low tide counts not exceeding 21 birds.

- 3.47 Golden plover were recorded on Site once, during the January high tide survey, when 24 individuals were noted. No other records of golden plover on Site were made; therefore, no clear pattern of Site use could be identified in relation to tide, sunset or season.
- 3.48 -A total of 34 lapwing were recorded once on Site during the September crepuscular survey. No other instances of lapwing on Site were recorded and therefore no distinct pattern as to the use of the Site by lapwing around tides, sunset or the season could be established.
- 3.49 No wader species were recorded during the spring passage period.
- 3.50 No bird species notified on the nearby European designated sites were recorded during any of the surveys.

Wader Compensation Site results

- 3.51 Full detailed results are presented in **Appendix 4**. A summary of the peak counts of waders from within the Site is shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Peak counts of waders across all wader surveys within the Wader Compensation Site (15 surveys)

Species	Wader Compensation Site		
	Winter	Spring passage	Autumn passage
	Peak count		
Curlew	52	-	5
Golden plover	3	-	-
Lapwing	48	-	53

- 3.52 Curlew were recorded using the Wader Compensation Site for foraging and loafing on 11 of the 15 wintering wader surveys (present on 73% of the wintering surveys) between November and March, with a peak count of 52 birds during the February high tide survey. They were noted in the Wader Compensation Site during all high tide surveys, and every low tide survey except for November. Curlew were observed immediately prior to dusk during crepuscular surveys in January and March, however the birds left shortly after sunset on both occasions flying in a south / south-west direction (see **Paragraph 3.44**). Curlew numbers declined slightly in March, and they were not recorded during the spring passage period (April and May).
- 3.53 During the autumn passage surveys, curlew was recorded within the Wader Compensation Site on two of the nine surveys, with a peak count of five birds on the September low tide survey. Curlew did not display any distinct pattern in regard to their use of the Wader Compensation Site around tides, sunset or the season.
- 3.54 Golden plover was recorded within the Wader Compensation Site on one occasion in November high tide survey where three birds was recorded loafing within the field to the south, The remainder of golden plover records were located outside of the Wader Compensation Site (but within the Survey Area) within an arable field to the south ('Field 22' of E3 Ecology, 2023). Records here were more numerous with golden plover using this field on three of the surveys with a peak count of 54 birds during the November high tide survey with the additional two occurrences within the Survey Area recorded on two of the crepuscular surveys with a peak count of 47 birds on the January crepuscular survey. Birds were recorded loafing within the field and not observed taking flight during the survey.

- 3.55 Golden plover did not display any distinct pattern with regard to their use of the Wader Compensation Site around tides, sunset or the season as they were only recorded once. Golden plover activity was higher within a field to the south of the Survey Area (outside of the Wader Compensation Site). No golden plover was recorded during the spring or autumn passage surveys within the Wader Compensation Site.
- 3.56 Lapwing were recorded on two of the wintering surveys, more frequently in the Wader Compensation Site than on the Site. During the wintering surveys, lapwing was observed with a peak count of 48 birds within the Wader Compensation Site during the January crepuscular survey. On the crepuscular survey in January where 48 lapwing were recorded, they were observed to be foraging and mobile and were not considered to be using this as a nocturnal roost. An additional 30 birds were recorded on the field to the south of the Wader Compensation Site, within the Survey Area. During the autumn passage surveys a peak count of 53 lapwing was recorded within the Wader Compensation Site. The species did not display any clear pattern of use of the Wader Compensation Site in relation to tide, sunset or over the season.
- 3.57 No lapwing was recorded during the spring passage wader surveys.
- 3.58 During autumn passage, lapwing was noted in the Wader Compensation Site on one of the surveys, with a peak count of 34 birds during the September high tide survey. Additional occurrences included lapwing flying over during two of the crepuscular surveys and were therefore considered to be commuting over in a south and east direction.
- 3.59 No qualifying species of the Northumbria Coast SPA and Northumbria Coast Ramsar site were recorded during any of the surveys.

Evaluation – non-breeding waders (Site and Wader Compensation Site)

- 3.60 The following approach has been taken in determining whether waders using the Survey Area meet geographical levels of importance:
- District level importance has been assessed against estimated district population numbers presented in studies commissioned by South Tyneside Council (E3 Ecology, 2020 and 2023). These studies quote Durham Bird Club annual reports and indicate that the South Tyneside district area supports an estimated 300 curlew, 4,000 golden plover and 700 lapwing.
 - County level importance has been assessed against over-wintering wader populations in VC 66. A review of the Durham Bird Club annual report (Bell *et al.*, 2025) and the Durham Bird Club County Atlas (Bowey *et al.*, 2012) estimated there to be 3,100 curlew individuals, 11,700 golden plover individuals and 11,000 lapwing individuals.
 - Regional level importance has been assessed against over-wintering wader populations in VC66, VC67 and VC68, estimated to be 8,200 curlew individuals, 31,200 golden plover individuals and 25,600 lapwing individuals, per a review of Durham Bird Club annual report (Bell *et al.*, 2025), the Durham Bird Club County Atlas (Bowey *et al.*, 2012) and the Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club annual report Mould (2024).
- 3.61 No bird species forming the qualifying features of the Northumbria Coast SPA and Northumbria Coast Ramsar site were recorded in the Survey Area. The Survey Area is not therefore considered to be functionally linked to these European sites. Potential impact pathways on the ornithological features of these sites are limited to increased recreational pressures, which are discussed in **Section 5** of this report.

Curlew

Site

- 3.62 The results of the field surveys undertaken by BSG Ecology between 2024 - 2025 indicate that peak counts of curlew on Site exceeded 1% of the estimated county population of over-wintering curlew (i.e. ≥ 31 birds) on eight of the 15 surveys (53%) in the core winter period and three of the nine surveys (33%) in the autumn passage period. The results of the field surveys also show that peak

counts of curlew on Site exceeded 1% of the estimated regional population of over-wintering curlew (i.e., ≥ 82 birds) on two of the 15 surveys (13%) in the core winter period but did not exceed 1% of the regional population during the autumn passage period. No curlew was recorded using the Site during the spring passage period.

Wader Compensation Site

- 3.63 The results of the field surveys undertaken by BSG Ecology between 2024 - 2025 indicate that peak counts of curlew within the Wader Compensation Site exceeded 1% of the estimated county population of over-wintering curlew (i.e. ≥ 31 birds) on four of the 15 surveys (26%) in the core winter period. Curlew did not exceed this threshold during autumn passage surveys, and no curlew were recorded using the Wader Compensation Site during the spring passage period.

Survey Area

- 3.64 Curlew flocks appeared to utilise the Survey Area as part of a network of available roosting, loafing and foraging resource in the local landscape.
- 3.65 Flocks were observed arriving to the Survey Area from elsewhere, relocating between fields, or flying off south and east over the houses and becoming lost to sight. This was noted in the crepuscular surveys especially, whereby any curlew recorded in the Survey Area left shortly after sunset. It is therefore concluded that the Site is not used as part of a nocturnal roost for curlew and this is supported by STC wader reports (E3 Ecology, 2020 and 2023) which indicate that the highest densities of nocturnal waders were in fields off-site to the south-east, beyond Whitburn village. The STC wader reports did not return any nocturnal records of curlew for the Site.
- 3.66 The survey findings are consistent with the findings of the STC wader studies undertaken by E3 Ecology (2020 & 2023) which did record consistent use of the Survey Area by curlew. The STC wader studies recorded some peak counts exceeding 1% of the estimated district population of curlew, and on occasions county and regional thresholds of importance. The STC wader study reports recorded a peak count of 112 curlew within the Site (which exceeds 1% of the estimated over-wintering regional population) during field surveys between 2019 – 2020 (E3 Ecology, 2020). However, during the updated surveys by STC between 2022 – 2023, a peak count of 51 curlew was observed (E3 Ecology, 2023). This exceeds 1% of the estimated over-wintering county population but not the regional population threshold. Additional sites to the south and south-east of Whitburn village (see 'Field 7' and 'Field 10' within E3 Ecology, 2023) held higher densities of curlew during the study, specifically fields to the south and south-east of Whitburn village.
- 3.67 Although the Site was found to contain less earthworms than the Wader Compensation Site¹⁰, research studies in Europe into foraging of curlew of intensive grassland found that foraging dynamics is not completely reliant on earthworm biomass (abundance) but indeed how many they are able to catch through ease of probing (Onrust, 1989). With the current land management of the Site being a short-term grass ley with less tillage events, it is considered that the fields with a grass ley present an easier opportunity for curlew to probe for their earthworm prey.
- 3.68 The Site is made up wholly of grassland with no additional features which could increase its appeal for curlew (such as wader scrapes). Whilst the Site, in isolation, does not represent an exceptional resource for curlew in the context of the local landscape, it provides typical habitat that meets a variety of needs and is part of a network within South Tyneside of fields which are of particularly importance to curlew. In the context of the STC wader studies (E3 Ecology 2020; 2023), the Site was mapped as one of six fields ('Fields 6, 22, **30**¹¹, 56, 68 and 71') within the study that were considered the most attractive to curlew and was used the most frequently by curlew in significant numbers. Most of the other fields were located away from the coastline to the west of Whitburn village (some as far as 2.35 km from the coastline). Therefore, proximity to the coast is not considered to be an overriding factor attracting curlew to this Site. Within the study, Field 68 in particular had frequent curlew usage with significant counts (E3 Ecology, 2020; 2023). The only field with significant curlew

¹⁰ The survey was undertaken during winter, when earthworms are known to bury deeper into the soil (Spurgeon, 2001) making detection increasingly difficult (see **Paragraph 2.32**).

¹¹ The 'Site'.

counts on the coastline was Field 6 which saw the highest peak count of curlew across the entire study area (140 birds on 28 November 2019; E3 Ecology, 2020) however significant counts within Field 6 was less frequent overall.

- 3.69 Desk study data included in **Table 4** indicate that peak counts of curlew exceeded 1% of the estimated regional over-wintering curlew population in 2019, 2022 and 2026. In combination with field surveys by BSG Ecology which recorded peak counts of curlew exceeding 1% of the estimated regional over-wintering population in 2024, that equates to four seasons in total in which 1% of the estimated regional over-wintering population has been exceeded.
- 3.70 Multiple seasons of peak curlew counts above the threshold for regional importance was recorded

Evaluation

- 3.71 Curlew peak counts within the Wader Compensation Site exceeded 1% of the estimated county wintering curlew population on four of the surveys, all within the core winter period. The peak curlew counts did not exceed 1% of the estimated regional wintering curlew population on any of the surveys. However, the population of curlew that are using both the Site and the Wader Compensation Site are considered to be part of the same local population, with the potential for interchanging their foraging and loafing activities between fields. The Site and the Wader Compensation Site as a whole are considered to be of **Regional importance to non-breeding curlew**.

Golden plover

Site

- 3.72 Golden plover was recorded on Site on one occasion (24 birds). The peak count did not exceed 1% of the estimated district population.
- 3.73 Surveys of golden plover within the wider area (E3 Ecology, 2020; 2023) show that significant numbers are regularly recorded such as in the old Whitburn firing range.

Compensation Site

- 3.74 Golden plover were recorded on the Wader Compensation Site on one occasion (three birds) recorded during the wintering period. This count does not exceed 1% of the district population. No records of golden plover were made during the spring or the autumn passage periods

Evaluation

- 3.75 The Site and Wader Compensation Site as a whole is considered to be of **Site level importance to non-breeding golden plover**.

Lapwing

Site

- 3.76 Lapwing were recorded on Site on one occasion (34 birds) during the September tide survey. This count exceeded 1% of the estimated district population. Notwithstanding this, as the species was only recorded once, it is considered that significant numbers of lapwing are not dependent upon the Site for roosting and foraging. The STC wader studies (E3 Ecology, 2020; 2023) did not record lapwing using the Site. Within these studies, lapwing was more numerous in 'Field 6 and 'Field 7' which are located off-site to the south-east at the former Whitburn firing range.

Wader Compensation Site

- 3.77 Lapwing were recorded on the Wader Compensation Site six times, three in the core winter period and three times in the autumn passage period. All peak counts exceeded the estimated 1% district population for lapwing with an increased frequency of recordings.

Evaluation

- 3.78 The Site and the Wader Compensation Site are considered to be of **District level importance to non-breeding lapwing**.

Breeding birds

Desk study

- 3.79 Of the 9,961 bird records returned by ERIC NE in the desk study, ten species were BoCC red list species and have the potential to breed within (or in close proximity to the Site) based on the habitats present. These included: herring gull *Larus argentatus* (219 records), grasshopper warbler (five records), grey partridge *Perdix perdix* (six records), house martin *Delichon urbicum* (nine records), house sparrow *Passer domesticus* (15 records), lapwing (57 records), linnet (27 records), skylark *Alauda arvensis* (36 records), starling *Sturnus vulgaris* (43 records) and yellowhammer (15 records).

Field survey

- 3.80 In total, 36 species were recorded within the Survey Area during the breeding bird characterisation surveys undertaken in 2025. Of which, ten were Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) red list species, ten were BoCC amber list species, 14 were BoCC green list species and two were species not assessed in the BoCC due to being non-native/introduced (pheasant) and of domestic origin (feral pigeon). Species confirmed breeding in the Survey Area are shown in **Table 6**. Full results are presented in **Appendix 5**.
- 3.81 A total of five species were confirmed breeding within the Site, 12 were confirmed breeding in the survey buffer, and a further 19 were considered non-breeding either due to unsuitable breeding habitat, or insufficient breeding evidence over the survey period. **Figures 5 and 6, Section 7** show the red- and amber-listed species' breeding territories found in the Survey Area.
- 3.82 Grasshopper warbler was the only red-listed species holding territory on Site. Two territories were found on the Site's northern and north-western boundary respectively, centred on tussocky field margins on the periphery of the Site.
- 3.83 Four amber-listed species were confirmed breeding within the Site. These were meadow pipit, whitethroat, woodpigeon and wren. The meadow pipit territories were located in the northern and western areas of the field. The two whitethroat territories were located within the Site, centred on the area of scrub within the western part of the Site and the field boundary to the north of the Site. A wren territory was located on the southern boundary of the Site, likely associated with immediately adjacent residential gardens.
- 3.84 One woodpigeon territory was centred on the scattered hawthorn on the Site's western boundary. Woodpigeon are amber-listed due to the UK supporting over 25% of the European population but are a common and widespread species in the UK and ubiquitous in farmland environments. Woodpigeon is not considered to be a species of consideration within this assessment as they are ubiquitous, occur in vast numbers and the Site is not particularly important to them based upon the single territory present. As such, woodpigeon is not considered further within this report.
- 3.85 No green-listed species were recorded breeding on Site.
- 3.86 Red-listed species confirmed breeding in the survey buffer include greenfinch, herring gull, house sparrow, starling, linnet, grey partridge, and skylark. The greenfinch territory was associated with the residential gardens immediately south of the Site. The herring gull, house sparrow and starling territories were associated with residential buildings and green space to the immediate north-east of the Site. The linnet territory was centred on scrub within Kitchener Road LWS. The grey partridge and skylark territories were associated with the arable and grazing fields off-site to the west.
- 3.87 Meadow pipit was the only amber-listed species confirmed breeding in the survey buffer. The territory was located within the arable field off-site to the south-west.

- 3.88 Four green-listed species were confirmed breeding within the survey buffer, including blackbird *Turdus merula* (two territories), chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* (one territory), goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* (two territories) and pied wagtail *Motacilla alba* (one territory). These green-listed species and species not assessed in the BoCC are of low conservation concern, being common and widespread, and as such are not considered are not further within this report¹².
- 3.89 A total of 19 species (two red-listed, six amber-listed, nine green-listed, and two not assessed in the BoCC) were observed within the Survey Area but were not considered to have established a territory, either due to unsuitable breeding habitat, or insufficient breeding evidence over the survey period.

Table 6 shows the breeding territories within the Site. Breeding bird territory maps are shown on **Figures 5 and 6, Section 7**.

Table 6: Classification of birds and their associated territories recorded in Survey Area

Common name	Scientific name	Confirmed breeding territories (Site)	Confirmed breeding territories (50 m survey buffer)	BoCC status	Designations	Estimated breeding pairs within the County ¹³
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	2	-	Red	Section 41	300
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	-	1	Red	-	<4,000
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	-	1	Red	Section 41	1,500
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	-	5	Red	Section 41	>25,000
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	-	1	Red	Section 41	5,000
Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	-	1	Red	Section 41	1,500 – 2,000
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	-	1	Red	Section 41	30,000
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	-	1	Red	Section 41	20,000 – 35,000
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	2	1	Amber	-	20,000
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	2	-	Amber	-	7,400
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	1	-	Amber	-	N/A
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	1	-	Amber	-	79,200
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	-	*	Green	Schedule 1	100

¹² Barn owl is assessed due to its protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

¹³ With reference to Bowey *et al* (2012), VC 66 County Durham.

Common name	Scientific name	Confirmed breeding territories (Site)	Confirmed breeding territories (50 m survey buffer)	BoCC status	Designations	Estimated breeding pairs within the County ¹³
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	-	2	Green	-	49,000
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	-	1	Green	-	60,000 – 70,000
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	-	2	Green	-	3,000
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	-	1	Green	-	3,000

*Barn owl was recorded breeding beyond the 50 m survey buffer. Their inclusion in this table is due to their discussion below.

- 3.90 No qualifying ornithological feature species of Northumbria Coast SPA and Northumbria Coast Ramsar site were recorded during any of the surveys.

Evaluation – breeding birds

- 3.91 The Site overall supports a low assemblage of breeding birds. The breeding territories on Site will all be lost because of the development. The loss is not considered to be significant at or above the County level (i.e. 1% or more of the estimated number of breeding pairs within the County¹³). No population estimates for these species at a local or district level are available however grassland and scrub habitats in which these species rely on for nesting and foraging are widespread in the locality. The Site is considered to be of **Site importance for these species**.
- 3.92 The 50 m survey buffer supported a more diverse breeding bird community than the Site itself. Indirect impacts on these breeding territories may arise during construction and operation. The territories that may be affected are not considered to be significant at or above the County level (i.e. 1% or more of the estimated number of breeding pairs within the County¹³). No population estimates for these species at a local or district level are available however the habitats these species rely on for nesting and foraging are widespread in the locality. The 50 m survey buffer is considered to be of **Site importance for these species**.
- 3.93 No qualifying bird species on the Northumbria Coast SPA or Northumbria Coast Ramsar Site were recorded in the Survey Area and therefore it is **not** considered to be functionally linked to the European Sites. Potential impact pathways on notified species are limited to increased recreational pressures and urban edge effects, which are discussed in **Section 6** of this report.

Barn owl

- 3.94 [REDACTED]
- 3.95 [REDACTED]. Incidental sightings of commuting barn owl within the Site were observed on four of the wader surveys (15 January 2025, 18 March 2025, 2 April 2025 and 19 June 2025). Three out of the four surveys recorded barn owl commuting over the Site and travelling in a north and south-west direction. No observations of barn owl foraging on Site were recorded.

3.96

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- 3.97 The entire Site is characterised by 'Type 3' foraging habitat for barn owl (Shawyer, 2012) as its management as a grass ley provides suboptimal habitat for field vole *Microtus agrestis* (the primary prey species for barn owl), due to a lack of a thatch layer. Dependant on food availability, barn owl generally can have a large home range¹⁴. Within the locality, most of the land use is for the purpose of agriculture although there are some areas of suitable habitat such as Cleadon Hills LWS (located 1.1 km south-west of the Site) which are likely to provide optimum foraging habitat for barn owl.

Evaluation – Barn owl

- 3.98 The habitats on Site provide low suitability for barn owl foraging opportunity due to the management regime creating 'Type 3' foraging habitat (Shawyer, 2012) for barn owl. Barn owl was observed using the Site to commute to areas with more favourable foraging areas. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The presence of open land off-site to the west will continue to provide unrestricted commuting routes to suitable foraging habitat. The Site is therefore considered to be of **Site level importance for barn owl**.

Hedgehog

- 3.99 ERIC NE returned 17 records of hedgehog within 2 km of the Site. The closest record is immediately adjacent to the Site in the adjacent residential gardens, dated 2021.
- 3.100 Dedicated survey for hedgehog was not undertaken. Hedgehog was recorded on Site incidentally during the crepuscular spring passage wader survey on 19 May 2025, and on the crepuscular breeding bird survey on 19 June 2025. On both occasions the individuals were recorded foraging around the southern boundary of the Site, adjacent to the residential gardens. No other hedgehogs were recorded.

Evaluation

- 3.101 The previously recorded grassland ley habitat on Site was considered to provide suitable foraging habitat for hedgehog. With the transition to cereal crops the Site may become less suitable. The connectivity to the east of Site is limited by Mill Lane to the east and Lizard Lane to the west and there are limited linear features overall within the Site that connect to habitats off-site for foraging and dispersal. Hedgehog is therefore **scoped out for further consideration in this report**.

Invasive non-native species

- 3.102 ERIC NE returned eight records of invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, including four records of Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, one record of giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, and three records of Japanese rose *Rosa rugosa*. The closest record to Site is of Japanese rose at Souter Lighthouse approximately 0.6 km north of Site.

Evaluation

- 3.103 No invasive non-native plant species were recorded in the Survey Area during the extended UK habitat survey.
- 3.104 Invasive non-native plant species are therefore **scoped out of further consideration**.

¹⁴ Approximately 6 km² (Séchaud *et al.*, 2022).

4 Designed-in Avoidance, Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures

Designed-in mitigation and other measures

- 4.1 The following incorporated measures are applicable to ecology and have been designed into the scheme or will be incorporated into the Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Habitat and Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) as appropriate.
- 4.2 Details of work necessary to retain, create and manage new and retained ecological and landscape features during the works and on will be provided in a HMMP or equivalent. It is recommended that the production of such a document, and its approval by South Tyneside Council, is subject to an appropriately worded planning condition. It would cover all designed-in mitigation as well as any additional ecology mitigation detailed later in this report.

Sensitive lighting

- 4.3 A lighting strategy to minimise light spill will be put in place to minimise the risk of disturbance of bat and terrestrial mammals during the construction phase, and birds (such as grasshopper warbler and whitethroat) during the construction and operational phase. It is anticipated that this will be secured through an appropriate planning condition should the development receive planning permission.
- 4.4 Temporary lighting during construction and permanent lighting associated with the development will be designed in line with good practice (BCT & ILP, 2023) to control lighting and this should be conditioned as part of the planning approval if granted. Typical measures may include:
- Motion-sensitive security lighting and avoidance of floodlighting;
 - Avoidance of lighting with ultra-violet (UV) components in areas where lighting is required for public safety purposes. UV light is particularly disruptive to bat behaviour;
 - Use of flat-glass protectors on luminaires to help reduce light spill above angles greater than 70° from the vertical plane; and
 - Avoidance of light spill on to surrounding habitats by using accessories such as shields, louvres, hoods and cowls.

CEMP

- 4.5 Details of work necessary to retain, create and manage new and retained ecological features during the construction phase will be provided in a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) or equivalent. It is recommended that the production of such a document is subject to an appropriately worded planning condition. It would cover all designed-in and other measures detailed later in this report.
- 4.6 Measures to protect mammals throughout construction should be incorporated, including but not limited to:
- Works to be limited to the hours from dawn to one hour before sunset to minimise disturbance;
 - Cover excavations overnight to prevent animals falling into them or have an escape ramp installed with an angle shallower than 45 degrees to allow escape. Inspect excavations daily for the presence of animals before recommencing work on them;
 - Any deep excavations that are to be left open overnight will include a means of escape for any animals that may fall in;
 - Any temporary perimeter fencing should continue to allow mammals to safely move through the landscape, by leaving at least a 22 cm gap at the bottom; and
 - Avoid the creation of large stockpiles of materials and store building materials above ground on pallets as these may be attractive for sheltering animals;

Pollution control measures

- 4.7 The pollution control measures that will be put in place during the construction phase are:
- all surface water drainage will be treated onsite;
 - Silt traps will be installed downhill of any works;
 - In any period of dry weather, Heras fencing with dust sheets will be deployed preventing hazardous particles and dust from escaping; and
 - In any period of prolonged dry weather, areas which see heavy plant activity will be dampened down.
- 4.8 These measures should be conditioned as part of the planning approval if granted.

Ecological clerk of works

- 4.9 An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appointed to ensure compliance with any guidance, plans or working method statements that might be required (for instance the ecological aspects of a CEMP). The ECoW will provide briefings to all relevant personnel; provide advice in the event of any unforeseen species issues that might arise during the project; and oversee the implementation of mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.

Pre-works checks for breeding birds**Breeding birds**

- 4.10 Breeding birds: all works involving the disturbance or destruction of any areas capable of supporting breeding birds should take place outside of the breeding season, which generally extends from mid-March to August. However, it should be noted that some species can commence breeding earlier or continue breeding efforts beyond this period. Should works need to take place during the bird breeding season the area should be checked for nesting birds by a suitably qualified ecologist. If nesting birds are detected, then work in that area should be delayed until the birds and their young have dispersed.

Habitat Management Monitoring Plan (HMMP)

- 4.11 All proposed mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures detailed below will be incorporated into a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan). It is anticipated that the HMMP would be the subject of an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 4.12 The plan will include a series of management prescriptions and an annual work plan for a standard minimum period of 5 years from completion of the construction of the development which is capable of being rolled out over a 30 year period. Personnel responsible for implementation of the plan will be identified. Monitoring will take place at appropriate intervals to ensure that habitats develop according to the targets set, and protected species are not adversely affected. The consented development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan. The production of this plan will make reference to relevant sections of current best practice, notably that identified in BS42020:2013 (BSI, 2013).

Mitigation through design

- 4.13 The proposed landscaping plan for the Site includes measures to avoid and mitigate for potential impacts to ecological features. Ecology specific mitigation includes:
- The retention and protection of existing trees and shrubs on Site and on the Site boundary, in accordance with BS 5837: 2012 (BSI, 2012).

- The design of the lighting scheme will utilise downward lighting columns, with a minimum 30 m stand-off to retained scrub habitat and new landscaping. Lighting specifications will be in line with guidance provided by BCT and ILP (2023). This will retain the habitat's value for species that may be utilising the existing dark corridors they provide.
- Improvement of the vegetation structure and diversity on Site through provision of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) basin, Public Open Space (POS), and biodiversity offset planting, which will positively contribute to foraging and sheltering provision for passerine birds and hedgehog by increasing habitat suitability for invertebrate prey items.
- The provision of POS and accessible landscaping throughout the development (see **Appendix 1**) will partially mitigate for the increased residential pressures on nearby statutory and non-statutory designated sites by providing immediate green space for recreational use by residents within the Site itself.
- Pedestrian pathways throughout the Site have been designed to enable access to POS as well as link to existing open space nearby, including direct access to the play area immediately north-east and to Whitburn Coastal Park east of Site beyond the A183. A circular walk around the development would take approximately 15 minutes, with the option to extend into Whitburn Coastal Park for a circular route of approximately 40 minutes.

5 Ecological Impacts, Additional Mitigation and Residual Effects

- 5.1 This section considers the potential effects of the proposed development on key ecological features (designated sites, habitats and species). The assessment of impacts is carried out in stages.
- 5.2 Impacts are assessed firstly in the absence of mitigation (but considering any designed-in mitigation – see below) and then with further mitigation, compensation and enhancement considered.
- 5.3 Where further mitigation and other measures are required, these are described.
- 5.4 Residual effects are described for each important feature, considering the measures designed into the development and any further mitigation measures that will be committed to by way of appropriately worded planning conditions or other appropriate agreement.

Internationally designated sites

- 5.5 Northumbria Coast SPA and Northumbria Coast Ramsar site were scoped in for further consideration (see **Section 3**) due to potential increased recreational pressure and a potential loss of functionally linked habitat. Durham Coast SAC was also scoped in for further consideration due to potential increased recreational pressure.

Construction related effects

Loss of functionally linked habitat

- 5.6 None of the qualifying bird species in the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site (little tern, Arctic tern, turnstone, and purple sandpiper) were recorded on Site or within the Survey Area during the suite of bird surveys, and the Site is not suitable to support these species. It is therefore considered that the Site does not share functional linkage with the SPA or Ramsar site, and the loss of functionally linked habitat is therefore not considered to be an impact pathway during the construction or occupation phases. A HRA for this has therefore not been undertaken, per discussions with the LPA at pre-application (comments received 19 September 2025).

Operational related effects

Increased recreational pressure on notified habitats and qualifying species

- 5.7 Potential impacts on the SPA, SAC and Ramsar site are limited to increased recreational pressures from new residents only. In the absence of mitigation, a precautionary conclusion is that the development will cause a **significant adverse effect on the designated sites at the international level**.

Air quality impacts on notified habitats and qualifying species

- 5.8 The increase in traffic associated with the development is very small in the context of the wider network and would not result in any measurable change in pollutant concentrations and is below the 1000 Annual Average Daily Traffic flow (AADT) threshold for detailed assessment. Further information can be found within a separate Shadow HRA report (BSG Ecology, 2026f). It is considered that air quality impacts as a result of the development will not cause a significant effect.

Mitigation

- 5.9 The proposed development falls inside the 6 km zone of influence set out in South Tyneside Council's interim Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 23, which presents a strategic mitigation scheme to address increased recreational pressures on international designated sites including Durham Coast SAC, Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site. SPD 23 allows developers to contribute a fixed tariff per dwelling to fund strategic mitigation measures overseen and implemented by South Tyneside Council. As the POS provided on Site cannot fully mitigate for the increased recreational

pressures on the internationally designated Sites, the applicant will be entering into this option and will provide the required contribution via an appropriate worded legal agreement.

Residual effects on internationally designated sites

- 5.10 No significant residual effects on internationally designated sites are anticipated.

Nationally designated sites

Construction related effects

- 5.11 **No significant effects** on nationally designated sites arising from the construction phase are anticipated due to the scope of works, distance and separation from the Site.

Operational related effects

Increased recreational pressure on notified habitats and species

- 5.12 Durham Coast SSSI and Cleadon Hills SSSI were scoped in for further consideration (see **Section 3**) due to potential recreational pressure on the interest features (habitats and species).

Cleadon Hills

- 5.13 Cleadon Hills SSSI is currently in an unfavourable – declining status with active pressures including invasive/non-native species, cutting regime, scrub encroachment, undergrazing and weeds/inappropriate species (Natural England, 2024a). Within the list of pressures, recreational disturbance is identified as a low risk but does have the potential to occur (Natural England, 2024a).
- 5.14 Cleadon Hills SSSI may be subject to increased recreational pressure as a result of the new homes. However, there are no public footpath networks leading directly to Cleadon Hills SSSI from the Site itself. New residents would need to follow the public rights of way (PRoW)) (Tyne and Wear Heritage Way) which is approximately 1.1 km in walking distance from the Site at the southern entry point to the PRoW and 1.2 km from the PRoW's northerly entry point. A review of OS maps¹⁵ indicates that there is a considerable separation distance of approximately 1.67 km between the start of the PRoW and to the start of Cleadon Hills. Additionally, there are limited parking opportunities adjacent to the entrance due to private residential parking.
- 5.15 Whilst the proposed development may lead to some additional footfall on the SSSI, there are alternative areas for recreation within a much closer proximity (such as Whitburn Coastal Park) and it is considered that it is unlikely that a significant number of new residents will take this route and increase pressure on the SSSI.
- 5.16 In absence of mitigation, this will cause an effect on Cleadon Hills SSSI that would be **permanent adverse significant at the Site level**.

Durham Coast

- 5.17 Durham Coast SSSI is currently split between favourable (c. 47%) and unfavourable – recovering (c.35%) status (Natural England, 2024b). The remainder is not recorded. The active pressures are not listed and therefore it is not possible to understand active and potential pressures. However, upon review of the feature condition document, the unfavourable – recovering areas are primarily related to persisting colliery spoil which has eroded some of the beach, as well as isolated examples of litter and fire remains (Natural England, 2024b).
- 5.18 Additional footfall from the proposed development may lead to isolated increases in use of Whitburn beach for recreational use. However, the feature document (Natural England, 2024b) demonstrates that much of the area within the SSSI is inaccessible or steep-sided, limiting its appeal to the public.

¹⁵Route calculated using OSmaps (<https://explore.osmaps.com>)

A public footpath is also located on the edge of the SSSI, leading in a north – south direction, providing the public with a well-marked walking route. to these areas and it is unlikely therefore that these areas will incur significant recreational pressure.

- 5.19 In the absence of mitigation, this will cause an effect on Durham Coast SSSI which would be a **permanent adverse significant at the Local level**.

Mitigation

- 5.20 The Durham Coast SSSI shares the same designated features and area footprint with that of the Durham Coast SAC (see **Figure 2a, Section 7**). Although the SSSI is not considered in SPD 23, a review of the strategic measures it employs, and the features notified in Durham Coast SSSI suggests that contribution to the scheme would also serve to mitigate increased recreational pressures on the Durham Coast SSSI.
- 5.21 The provision of POS on Site will serve to partially mitigate impacts on Cleadon Hills SSSI by providing immediate green space for residents to use.
- 5.22 Mitigation will focus on channelling recreational access east of the Site towards Mill Lane and Whitburn Coastal Park, located approximately 0.2 km north-east of Site, ensuring that it is directly accessible. The park will provide a similarly attractive coastal open space away from the designated sites.
- 5.23 The nearest coastal access is via the entrance to the car park for Souter Lighthouse which is situated approximately 0.27 km off-site to the north-east. There is a network of footpaths at this point; continuing along the footpath north will take the resident towards Whitburn Coastal Park near Souter Lighthouse. To the south it will take the resident towards Souter Lighthouse Lower car park and Whitburn Point LWS and the east footpath leads directly to the cliffs at Whitburn Coastal Park. These footpaths are considered to be more likely to be utilised by new residents due to the proximity to the Site, with circular routes available linking back to Site via Mill Lane.
- 5.24 It is recommended that adequate signposting of these routes is provided within the development itself through information boards and signposts, located on the POS and the pedestrian access routes leading east out of the development. The boards should illustrate clearly the walking routes to and around the Whitburn Coastal Park to direct pedestrians and dog walkers there. Supporting interpretation should also be provided, to remind walkers that the coastline is important for nature conservation, and encourage mindful and considerate use of the landscape, such as dogs on leads and sticking to existing footpaths. This should be supplemented with an information pack provided to new residents that also sets out the above. This should be secured through a condition and legal agreement with the LPA.

Residual effects on nationally designated sites

- 5.25 Taking into account the existing and proposed mitigation measures, the effect on Cleadon Hills will be reduced to a level that is **not significant**.
- 5.26 Taking into account the existing and proposed mitigation measures, the effect on Durham Coast SSSI will be reduced to a level that is **not significant**.

Locally designated sites

Construction related effects

No construction related effects are anticipated on any of the locally designated sites.

Operational related effects

Increased recreational pressure on habitats and species

- 5.27 Increased recreational pressure may occur at Marsden Old Quarry LNR and Marsden Old Quarry LWS, though this would be through residents driving to these locations, of which there is limited parking available off Lizard Lane. There is a considerable separation distance between the Site and Marsden Old Quarry LNR and LWS (1.1 km north-west of the Site). The roadside footpath adjacent to the Site (opposite Lizard Lane) ends at the junction to Kitchener Road. For this reason, residents would need to continue walking along north along Mill Lane and access the Tyne and Wear Heritage way at Marsden which is approximately a 1.6 km walk in order to access Marsden Old Quarry. The foot traffic from the new residents to Marsden Old Quarry will not be significant and it is considered that more locally accessible areas will be utilised.
- 5.28 Cleadon Quarry LWS and Cleadon Pumping Station LWS were scoped in for further consideration due to potential increased recreational pressure from new residents taking local walks. The potential operational effects on these designations overlap with those outlined in **Paragraph 5.14**.
- 5.29 Potential recreational impacts may occur on The Leas LWS through an increase in recreational pressure. It is considered likely that most new residents will walk locally along the coast due to the network of coastal paths present (as opposed to the north or west of the Site where there are limited public footpaths) as well as the layout of the proposed development, with most footpaths designed to lead footfall onto Mill Lane to the east of the Site. Within The Leas LWS there are already public footpaths notably alongside the cycle lane of the coast road and an additional path further east which runs parallel to the coastal headland. There are a number of desire lines on The Leas LWS at present, and an increase in new residents walking their dogs here may incur further impacts on sensitive habitats and protected species (such as ground-nesting birds). Notwithstanding this, there are closer areas to the Site for recreational use such as Whitburn Coastal Park (0.2 km to the north-east) and it is likely that this will incur more footfall from the new residents than The Leas LWS. It is also considered that due to the presence of a well-established footpath route, it is likely that residents walking off the designated route will be limited.
- 5.30 Increased recreational pressures from residents will, in the absence of mitigation, result in a **permanent adverse effect significant at the District level** on The Leas LWS and a **permanent adverse effect significant at the Site level** on Marsden Old Quarry LWS, Cleadon Quarry LWS and Cleadon Pumping Station LWS.

Mitigation

- 5.31 The provision of POS on Site will serve to partially mitigate effects on locally designated sites by providing immediate green space for residents to use.
- 5.32 Mitigation measures will focus on channelling recreational access east of the Site towards Mill Lane and Whitburn Coastal Park, located approximately 0.2 km north-east, ensuring that it is directly accessible. The park will provide a similarly attractive coastal open space away from the designated sites.
- 5.33 It is recommended that adequate signposting of these routes is provided within the development itself through information boards and signposts, located within the POS and the pedestrian access routes leading east out of the development. The boards should illustrate clearly the walking routes to and around the Whitburn Coastal Park to direct pedestrians and dog walkers there. Supporting interpretation should also be provided, to remind walkers that the coastline is important for nature conservation, and encourage mindful and considerate use of the landscape, such as dogs on leads and sticking to existing footpaths. This should be supplemented with an information pack provided

to new residents that also sets out the above. This should be secured through a condition and legal agreement with the LPA.

Residual effects on locally designated sites

- 5.34 With the mitigation measures in place recreational pressures on The Leas LWS will be reduced to a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level** and will reduce the effects on Marsden Old Quarry LWS, Cleadon Quarry LWS and Cleadon Pumping Station LWS to a level that is **not significant**.

Wildlife Corridor

Construction related effects

Loss of habitat within the wildlife corridor

- 5.35 Approximately 2.6 ha of the wildlife corridor within the Site will become residential housing and associated hardstanding which will result in the loss of dark corridors and green spaces (see **Figure 1, Section 7**) which shows the extent of corridor within the Site). The loss of dark corridors and green spaces will cause a **permanent adverse effect on the wildlife corridor significant at the District level**.

Operational related effects

Increased recreational pressure on the remaining wildlife corridor

- 5.36 In the areas where the wildlife corridor is retained within the Site (approximately 1.71 ha) recreational pressure may erode the remaining extent of the corridor. Additionally, residential lighting may expose the remaining areas to significant levels of light pollution. Increased recreational pressures and residential lighting and will result in a **permanent adverse effect on the wildlife corridor that will be significant at the District level**.

Mitigation

- 5.37 Within the landscape proposals for the Site, biodiversity enhancements have been targeted to areas to the west and to the north which currently provide the darkest green corridors and links to offsite habitat particularly to the north of Kitchener Road. Within this area approximately 1.14 ha of biodiversity improvements have been proposed. Within the north and west of the Site, wildflower meadow grass mix (modified grassland) will be created (totalling approximately 0.9 ha. This will deliver a more species-rich sward and in combination with proposed native scrub habitat adjacent which could reasonably enable utilisation for a wider variety of species than that of the fast-growing grass dominant sward that currently makes up the majority of the Site. At present, the linear connectivity on the western boundary is poor however a new native hedgerow will be created (approximately 143 m in length) which will enhance south-north connectivity to other areas of wildlife corridor offsite to the north. New native scrub (approximately 0.2 ha) will be planted within the wildlife corridor, primarily on the northern extent, which will improve the connectivity in the north-west to north-east section of the corridor and will provide new opportunities for nesting birds.
- 5.38 Measures to reduce recreational disturbance on habitats that will be created include the design of footpath networks directing public footfall away from these sensitive habitats, as well as the creation of designated POS areas of which are shown within drawing: P21-2566_EN_0001, Revision D, **Appendix 1** which will serve to mitigate these impacts.
- 5.39 The sensitive lighting strategy (see **Paragraphs 4.3 – 4.4**) will be designed in line with good practice (BCT & ILP, 2023). This will reduce light spill from street lighting onto the habitats created within the wildlife corridor (as well as the wider Site during the construction phase). The design of the lighting strategy will ensure that light spill from new external street lighting during the occupational phase will be minimised on the retained and created habitats.

Residual effects on the wildlife corridor

- 5.40 The mitigation measures described above, and the proposed biodiversity enhancements are likely to reduce the effects on the wildlife corridor extent within the Site to a **permanent adverse effect that is significant at the Site level**.

Priority habitats***Construction related effects***

- 5.41 No significant effects on priority habitats arising from the construction phase are anticipated due to the scope of works, distance and separation from the Site.

Operational related effects**Increased recreational pressure on priority habitats**

- 5.42 Priority habitats within 2 km of the Site include lowland calcareous grassland, coastal sand dunes and deciduous woodland. Lowland calcareous grassland, deciduous woodland are present in scattered parcels throughout the landscape, but particularly on nearby locally designated sites. There is only a small, localised example of coastal sand dunes found near Whitburn Beach. The closest parcels of priority habitat are described in **Table 3, Section 3**. In reference to **Paragraph 5.23** and the landscape proposals (see drawing: P21-2566_EN_0001, Revision D, **Appendix 1**), newly created footpaths will direct foot traffic to the east exiting the Site at Mill Lane. As Whitburn Coastal Park is situated only 0.2 km north-east of the Site, it is likely that increased footfall will occur here during the operational phase. Within Whitburn Coastal Park there are three blocks of deciduous woodland present. Restrictive access of post and wire fencing is already present around most areas of the woodland. Notwithstanding this, Whitburn Coastal Park has a number of formal well-signposted footpaths, and it is unlikely that these blocks of deciduous woodland will result in further recreational pressures. Other areas of deciduous woodland are present within 2 km of the Site, though these are predominantly located west towards Cleadon of which there is no locally accessible public footpaths leading to these parcels of woodland from the Site. Parking facilities near the areas of deciduous woodland are limited to roadside laybys and residential streets and there are existing well-established and marked public footpaths next to these woodland parcels dissuading further recreational impacts.
- 5.43 Whilst it is anticipated that there will be an increase in recreational use of the King Charles III Coastal Path which sits adjacent to the coastal sand dunes found near Whitburn Beach, the footpath is wide and well-marked/signposted dissuading recreational use of areas off the trail. Additionally, there is a car park adjacent at Whitburn Bents which attracts visitors from areas outside of Whitburn for recreational use of the beach. It is considered unlikely that an increase in residents from the proposed 205 residential homes will see a significant increase in footfall and any significant increase in direct impacts to coastal sand dunes due to existing infrastructure.
- 5.44 Areas of lowland calcareous grassland are predominately found on the Marsden coastline (associated with The Leas LWS, 0.5 km to the north-east). As noted in **Paragraph 5.27**, it is anticipated that additional residents from the Proposed Development may result in recreational impacts on The Leas LWS (and therefore on areas of lowland calcareous grassland). Other examples of this habitat are found west of the Site, mostly in smaller fragments at Marsden Old Quarry. Lowland calcareous grassland is also found 1.3 km to the west at Cleadon Hill. As per **Paragraph 5.14**, it is unlikely that Cleadon Hill will endure significant additional foot traffic due to the lack of footpath connectivity via walking, and limited parking opportunities nearby.
- 5.45 It is considered that in the absence of mitigation these areas would be subject to increased recreational pressures during occupation, resulting in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level for deciduous woodland and at the County level for lowland calcareous grassland**.

Mitigation

- 5.46 The provision of POS on Site will serve to partially mitigate impacts on priority habitats by providing immediate green space for residents to use. However, it is recognised that such provision cannot fully mitigate for increased recreation pressures.
- 5.47 It is considered that mitigation measures regarding signage and information distribution described in and the footpath design (see drawing: P21-2566_EN_0001, Revision D, **Appendix 1**) will also serve to mitigate impacts on priority habitats (as these are predominantly found within those sites).

Residual effects on priority habitats

- 5.48 The mitigation measures described above are likely to reduce the effects on lowland calcareous grassland to a **permanent adverse effect that is significant at the Site level** and to deciduous woodland to a level that is **not significant**.

Breeding birds**Construction related effects**

- 5.49 All nesting birds are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended). Further details of the protection afforded to nesting birds can be found in **Appendix 2**.
- 5.50 Two grasshopper warbler territories and two whitethroat territories are located on Site concentrated around boundary scrub habitats and two ground-nesting meadow pipit territories on Site are located within the modified grassland. Although existing scrub features will be retained where possible, it is considered that these territories will be lost during the construction phase. In addition, all modified grassland on Site will be lost during the construction phase. In absence of mitigation this will result in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.
- 5.51 The territories located within the 50 m survey buffer will be indirectly impacted by disturbance during construction, resulting in a **temporary adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.
- 5.52 Measures associated with 'Field 2' of the Wader Compensation Site (see **Paragraph 5.80**) include securing this field as a permanent grass ley which will introduce up to three hay cuts per annum (early summer, late summer and autumn), potentially displacing the two skylark territories (see **Figure 6, Section 7**) and/or affecting the breeding performance of skylark. In the absence of mitigation, this will result in an **adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**. Measures associated with 'Field 1' of the Wader Compensation Site (see **Paragraphs 5.80 – 5.81**) include optimum grazing management during the over-wintering period, as such, the grass sward will continue to be grazed during the spring and summer with no discernible habitat changes for breeding birds (grey partridge and skylark) from that of the current baseline. As such, changes in the grazing regime during the winter will have an effect on breeding birds within Field 1 that is **not significant**.

Operational related effects

- 5.53 During the operational phase there will be an increase in external lighting onto retained and newly created habitats in the absence of mitigation. This may influence diurnal behaviour of birds and may prevent birds from breeding in that area. Impacts may also include predation pressure from increased population of domestic cats. Research indicates that cats take wild animals and birds (Woods et al., 2003) but that the impact this has on populations of wild animals and birds is unclear (RSPB, 2018). In the UK, wild species most often caught by cats are generally common and widespread and are those often closely associated with human habitation (Woods et al., 2003). In the absence of mitigation, effects on breeding birds will result in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.

Mitigation

- 5.54 Existing boundary scrub habitats will be retained and protected through measures set out in a CEMP. Site traffic will be routed away from these habitats to avoid disturbance of these species. Landscaping

in the northern areas of the Site includes the provision of scrub planting along with a grassland meadow buffer between the scrub and residential housing suitable for lost grasshopper warbler and whitethroat territories to re-establish (see **Appendix 1**). Within this area, footpaths will be designed to minimise disturbance to these habitats and direct recreational activity to areas of POS and towards Mill Lane offsite to the east.

- 5.55 At least 20% of the proposed houses will have an integrated bird box affixed to increase nesting provision for birds on Site. This will provide nest sites for BoCC red list species such as house sparrow, starling and swift *Apus apus*. The integrated boxes should be installed on northern aspect and away from windows in order to maximise their uptake.
- 5.56 New native hedgerows will provide further nesting habitat for species such as dunnock *Prunella modularis* and house sparrow.
- 5.57 Effects on active breeding bird nests arising from construction will be addressed in the CEMP.
- 5.58 The sensitive lighting strategy (see **Paragraphs 4.3 – 4.4**) will be designed in line with good practice (BCT & ILP, 2023) and will reduce light spill onto the retained scrub and habitats on Site and off-site during the construction phase and will reduce light spill from new external streetlighting during the occupational phase on the proposed retained and created habitats. An offsite compensation site for wader species will be provided on land west of the Site (as shown in **Figures 8 and 9, Section 7**) which will convert the arable field (Field 2) into a grass ley habitat. The peripheries of this habitat, where grass growth is less vigorous, may be suitable for meadow pipit nesting or provide an escape route during mowing.
- 5.59 When an early summer hay cut of Field 2 within the Wader Compensation Site is due to be undertaken, a nest check should occur within 24 hours prior to the cut by an ecologist or ECoW. Any skylark nest locations will be marked on a map and protected with a suitable buffer when cutting operations are underway. Skylark can have up to three broods within a breeding season (BTO, 2026) and can lay their first clutch in late April (BTO, 2026). The time elapsed between late April, and the first early summer hay cut will at a minimum allow the first brood to be raised. Skylark are known to cease breeding in arable crops or grassland once it reaches in excess of 60 cm (Donald & Morris, 2005). Although an early summer hay cut may initially reduce the immediate suitability of raising a second brood (or attracting additional prospecting skylark seeking suitable breeding habitat), the field will increase in attractiveness for second (and potentially third broods) prior to the late summer hay cut.

Residual effects on breeding birds

- 5.60 Meadow pipit territories lost to development are considered likely to re-establish in Field 2 following implementation of the wader compensation strategy, resulting in **a temporary adverse effect significant at the Site level**.
- 5.61 Grasshopper warbler and whitethroat territories lost during construction are considered likely to re-establish in the northern landscaping area on Site, resulting in **a temporary adverse effect significant at the Site level**.
- 5.62 The breeding performance of skylark territories offsite to the west within Field 2 of the Wader Compensation Site may initially be impacted through an early summer hay cut however skylark can have up to three broods within a breeding season and it is considered that the proposed management of this grassland will allow first brood completion and potential for skylark to raise a second and third brood due to a reduced sward following the first cut and a delay until the next cut in late summer when breeding activity of skylark should have natural ceased. With the mitigation measures in place and considered hay cut timings, the effect on skylark as a result of the grassland management of Field 2 is likely to be reduced to a level that is **not significant**.
- 5.63 In terms of the overall residual effect on breeding birds, whilst there may be temporary losses to current territories of grasshopper warbler, meadow pipit and whitethroat, the habitat creation proposed on Site including native scrub, tree planting, native hedgerow, species-rich grassland and

the integrated bird nest box features within residential units is likely to increase the overall breeding bird assemblage resulting in a **positive effect at the Site level**.

Barn owl

Construction related effects

- 5.64 Barn owl is a Schedule 1 species under the WCA 1981 (as amended) making it unlawful to disturb it while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or to disturb its dependent young. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. The Site will however be lost as a commuting route for barn owl during the construction phase. The potential impacts during the construction phase may arise through collision and mortality associated with heavy plant machinery traffic and through light spill from the construction site onto neighbouring habitats. Whilst the importance of the Site for barn owl is limited to commuting only, without mitigation the loss of commuting habitat will result in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.

Operational related effects

- 5.65 The habitat will be lost after construction, and the Site will no longer be suitable for barn owl to use as a commuting route. In absence of a sensitive lighting strategy, external lighting during the operational phase and its light spill onto habitats on the periphery of the Site may disrupt commuting movements and the nocturnal behaviour of barn owl. Without mitigation, it will result in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.

Mitigation

- 5.66 The sensitive lighting strategy (see **Paragraphs 4.3 – 4.4**) will be designed in line with good practice (BCT & ILP, 2023) and will reduce light spill onto the retained habitats on Site and offsite during the construction phase and will reduce light spill from new external lighting during the occupational phase on the proposed retained and created habitats.
- 5.67 The offsite Wader Compensation Site (as shown on **Figures 8 and 9, Section 7**) will continue to provide dark and open habitat which will allow barn owl to commute to foraging areas. No additional mitigation is proposed for barn owl.

Residual effects on barn owl

- 5.68 With mitigation measures in place effects on barn owl during the construction and occupational phase will be reduced to a level that is **not significant**.

Non-breeding birds: Site

Construction related effects

- 5.69 The Site has been assessed to be of Regional importance to non-breeding curlew, of Site importance to non-breeding golden plover and of District importance to non-breeding lapwing. This is based on assessments of their regional, county and district over-wintering populations. The proposal will result in the loss of 10.58 ha of suitable foraging habitat for all three species. The birds will likely be displaced towards other suitable habitat such as land offsite to the west (see 'Field 25' and 'Field 31' in E3 Ecology Report, 2023). Without mitigation, this will result in a **permanent adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the Regional level, a permanent adverse effect on golden plover that is significant at the Site level and a permanent adverse effect on golden plover that is significant at the District level**.

Operational related effects

- 5.70 The public open space and landscaping on Site is considered unlikely to be used by non-breeding waders due to it being surrounded by new homes and the associated urban edge effects that brings. **No additional effects on non-breeding waders on Site are anticipated during the operational phase of the development.**

Mitigation

- 5.71 Loss of suitable wader habitat on Site will be mitigated for through the provision of an off-site Wader Compensation Site, the site of which is 13.06 ha in size and exceeds the size of the proposed development site by 2.36 ha. The land is located immediately west offsite as shown in **Figure 8, Section 7**.
- 5.72 Within the Wader Compensation Site, Field 1 will continue to be managed with horses; however, the grazing regime will change with no grazing between 01 October and 29 February inclusive in perpetuity (defined here as being the operational life of the development). This will improve the foraging habitat for non-breeding waders through a more diverse grass sward and will alleviate disturbance from grazing animals and human disturbance while tending to them during the curlew's core over-wintering period. The earthworm surveys (see BSG Ecology, 2026c) confirmed that the highest densities of earthworms were in Field 1. Permanent pasture is well known to support high earthworm densities due to less turnover of the soil and therefore considerably less earthworm mortality (Lovasz *et al.*, 2004). Field 1 is private land; signage will be installed prior to construction works in appropriate areas to re-affirm this and interpretation signage will also be installed in the form of educational awareness about waders present here and in the compensation site.
- 5.73 Field 2 which is located to the south of the farm track will be converted to a grass ley a habitat similar to what will be lost on Site. Grass leys are known to support higher densities of earthworms due to low till practices which maintain earthworm burrows (Bertoncelj *et al.*, 2025). The management of Field 2 will ensure that a short grass sward is maintained for the over-wintering period. This will be implemented prior to any construction to ensure no loss of habitat availability for waders and will be secured through a legal agreement. As per Field 1, this is private land and restricted access, and signage will be installed to reaffirm this.
- 5.74 See **Figure 9, Section 7** for the post-intervention habitats. Full details of the wader bird compensation proposals are set out in a separate report 'Wader Compensation Strategy' (BSG Ecology, 2026c). The Wader Compensation Strategy also includes management, monitoring and performance target prescriptions associated with the proposed enhancement measures.

Residual effects on non-breeding waders: Site

- 5.75 The size of the Wader Compensation Site and the additional measures that are proposed are likely to reduce the effects on non-breeding waders on Site, it is recognised that the Site is used in significant numbers during the core over-wintering period for waders (specifically curlew). The loss of the Site to the Proposed Development is therefore viewed holistically as part of the wider over-wintering wader population, and not in isolation. It is therefore considered that this will result in **a permanent adverse effect on curlew that is significant at a Local level** and an effect on **lapwing and golden plover that is not significant**.

Non-breeding waders: Wader Compensation Site**Construction related effects**

- 5.76 Confidence that these measures will be successful can be taken from the results which show that the Wader Compensation Site frequently supports non-breeding curlew. The peak counts suggest that curlew can exceed the threshold of County level significance. The potential of the Wader Compensation Site to interchange with birds using the Site means that the Wader Compensation Site has been assessed to be of Regional importance to non-breeding curlew.

- 5.77 The Site has also been assessed to be of the Site level importance for non-breeding golden plover and of District level importance for non-breeding lapwing, based on assessments of their regional, county and district populations. Increasing the density of birds on the Wader Compensation Site is likely to increase competition for foraging resources, potentially impacting the non-breeding wader population that currently utilise the site. In the absence of mitigation, this would result in a **permanent adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the Local level, a permanent adverse effect on golden plover that is significant at the Site level and a permanent adverse effect on lapwing that is significant at the Site level.**
- 5.78 Additionally, disturbance will arise from construction activity on Site in the absence of suitable screening. Without mitigation, this will result in a **temporary adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the Local level, and a temporary adverse effect on golden plover and lapwing that is significant at the Site level.**

Operational related effects

- 5.79 There is potential for increased disturbance during the operational phase from walkers moving in a north-south direction along Lizard Lane. There is an existing footpath present here and entrances to the Wader Compensation Site at the junction of the farm track west of Site that could be used by dog walkers during the winter months when grazing is removed (despite this being on private land). This could discourage the populations of non-breeding waders present from using the fields to forage, loaf and roost. Additionally, horse grazing adjacent to the north of Field 1 within Wader Compensation Site (as commented in the planning response in March 2026) could have indirect impacts on the effectiveness of the measures proposed through wader displacement during the non-grazing period. Without mitigation, this will result in a **temporary adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the Local level, and a permanent adverse effect on golden plover and lapwing that is significant at the Site level.**

Mitigation

- 5.80 Habitat enhancements for non-breeding waders on the Wader Compensation Site (as set out in **Paragraphs 5.71 – 5.74**) will improve the fields' suitability for non-breeding wader foraging through optimum grazing management and through the creation of a permanent grass ley. Access to Field 1 is currently restricted through a metal gate and stock proof fencing. Whilst unauthorised access is considered unlikely, restricted access and interpretation signage will help alleviate any additional pressure that may come. Additional signage will be installed near Field 2 in order to reaffirm authorised access only. Full details of the wader compensation measures are set out in Wader Compensation Strategy (BSG Ecology, 2026c). The Wader Compensation Strategy also includes management, monitoring and performance target prescriptions associated with the proposed enhancement measures.
- 5.81 This report has been updated to take account of comments made by the LPA ecologist in a planning response of March 2026. Field 1 within the Wader Compensation Site has increased from 3.51 ha to 7.77 ha increasing the total land included within the strategy to 13.06 ha. This will prevent the displacement of waders through grazing horses and people tending to their horses in areas immediately adjacent and increase the area of sward diversity and as such increase the carrying capacity of the Wader Compensation Site to support waders, Field 1 was found to have the highest density of earthworms (see BSG Ecology, 2026c), and it is therefore considered that an increase in the size of this field will increase the overall carrying capacity of the fields to support waders during the winter and decrease inter and intra-specific competition for food resources.
- 5.82 Potential disturbance arising from walkers along Lizard Lane will be addressed through the installation of appropriate fencing to secure the Wader Compensation Site, and appropriate signage (including information boards and signage indicating restricted access). The green corridor walking route through the Site (shown in drawing: P21-2566_EN_0001, Revision D, **Appendix 1**) would also provide an attractive alternative route that connects to Kitchener Road and Mill Lane, that is screened from the Wader Compensation Site by landscape planting and retained scrub.
- 5.83 There are newly planted hedgerows on the south boundary of Field 1 and on the north boundary of Field 2. These hedgerows will be managed to maintain a low height (< 1.2 m) and maintain open

sightlines and attractiveness of the fields as a foraging resource. The management, monitoring measures and responsible parties are presented in the Wader Compensation Strategy (BSG Ecology, 2026c).

- 5.84 Measures to mitigate noise and vibration disturbance arising from construction will be set out in the CEMP.
- 5.85 The linear landscaping corridor proposed for the western area of Site adjacent to Lizard Lane (see **Appendix 1**) will screen the development from the Wader Compensation Site once planting matures and will mitigate disturbance from the Site during occupation.

Residual effects on non-breeding waders: Wader Compensation Site

- 5.86 It is considered that the size of the Wader Compensation Site (13.06 ha) in combination with the measures outlined above and presented within the Wader Compensation Strategy (BSG Ecology, 2026c) will enhance the foraging and loafing conditions within the Wader Compensation Site leading to its ability to support a larger carrying capacity of non-breeding curlew, golden plover and lapwing. The measures provided will have a **neutral to a positive effect at the Local level**.

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7 Figures

(overleaf)

Figure 1: UK Habs baseline habitats

Figure 2a: International designated sites within 10 km of Site

Figure 2b: Statutory designated sites within 2 km of Site

Figure 3: Non-statutory designated sites within 2 km of Site

Figure 4: Priority habitats within 2 km of Site

Figure 5: Breeding bird characterisation survey: BoCC Red List species

Figure 6: Breeding bird characterisation survey: BoCC Amber List species

████████████████████

Figure 8: UK Habs baseline habitats (Site and Off Site)

Figure 9: Wader compensation strategy post intervention UK Hab map

Figure 10: Earthworm survey – sampling pit locations



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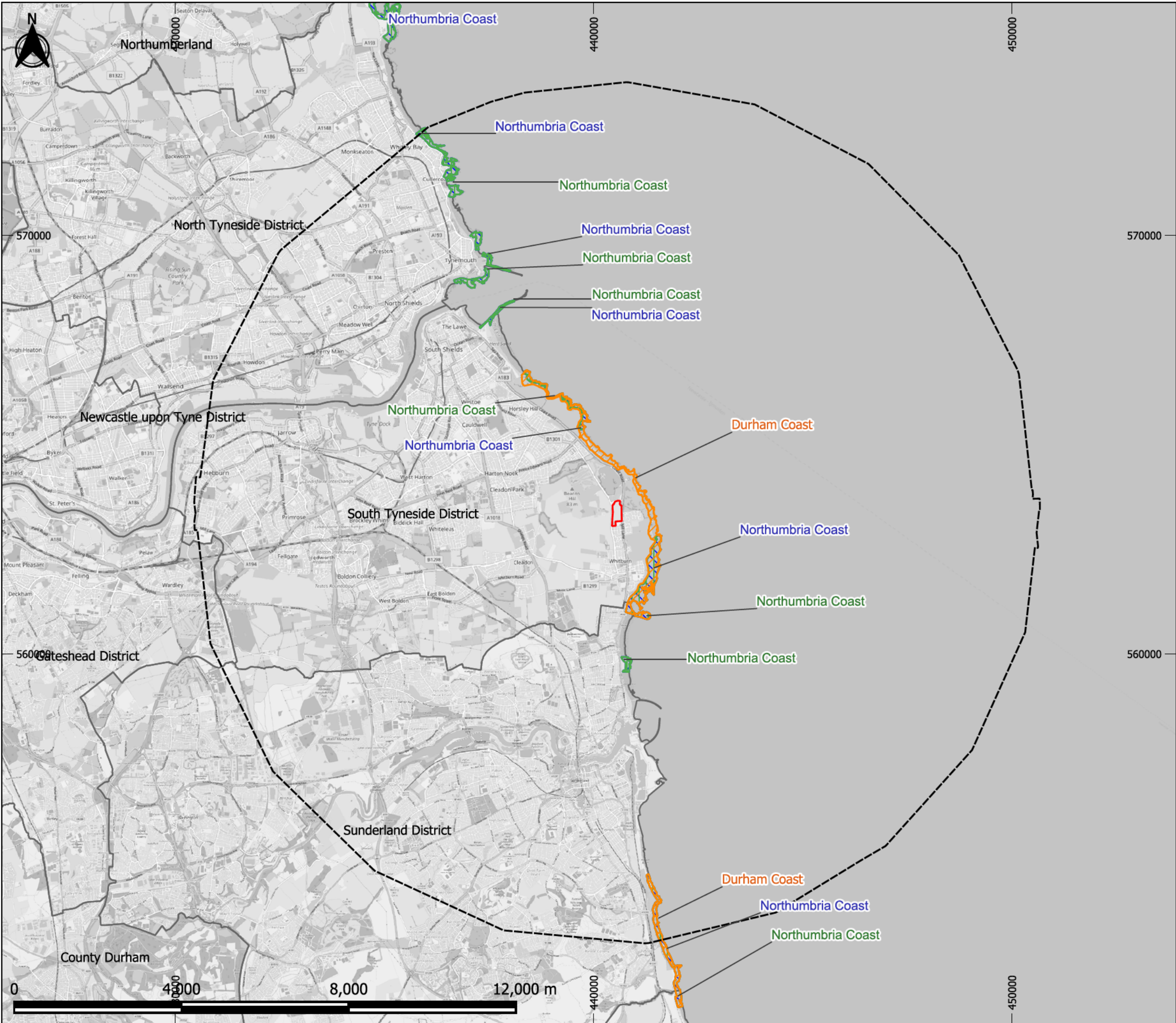
PROJECT TITLE
LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 1: UK Habs baseline habitats

DATE: 17/10/2025
DRAWN: BH
CHECKED: AP
APPROVED: IH
SCALE: 1:2,200
VERSION:1.2

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Sources: BSG Ecology survey data

- Legend
- Scattered scrub
 - Fence
 - Mixed scrub
 - Modified grassland
 - Wildlife corridor
 - Site boundary



- Legend
- Special Areas of Conservation
 - Ramsar
 - Special Protection Areas
 - 10km from site boundary
 - Site boundary



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PROJECT TITLE
LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 2a: International Designated Sites within 10 km

DATE: 12/12/2025 CHECKED: AP SCALE: 1:86,563
DRAWN: SP APPROVED: IH VERSION:1.0

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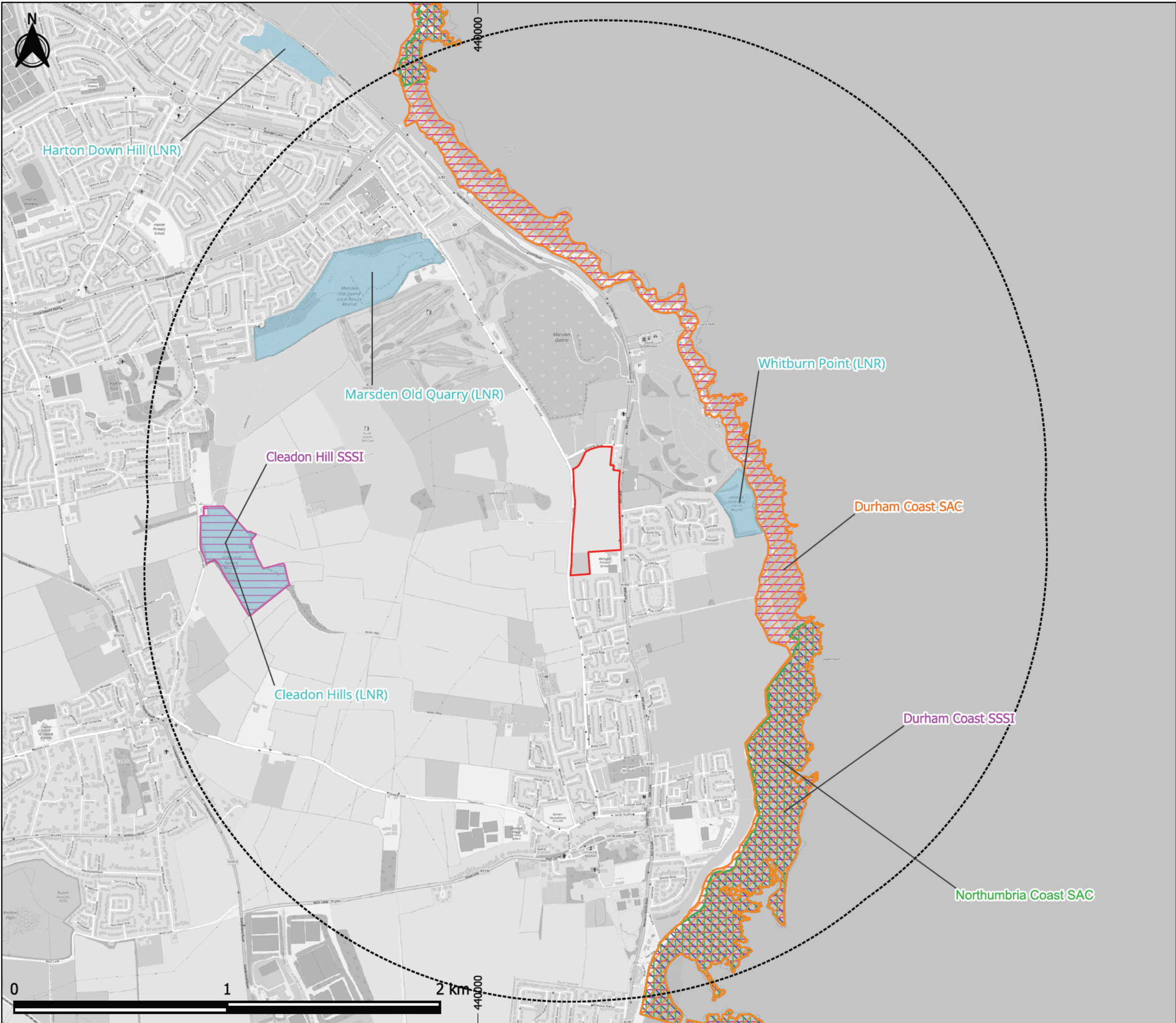
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- Legend
- Site boundary
 - 2km from site boundary
 - 10km from site boundary
 - Durham Coast Special Areas of Conservation
 - Northumbria Coast Ramsar
 - Northumbria Coast Special Protection Areas
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest
 - Local Nature Reserves

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Figure 2b: Statutory Designated Sites within 2 km

DATE: 12/01/2026 CHECKED: AP SCALE: 1:17,000
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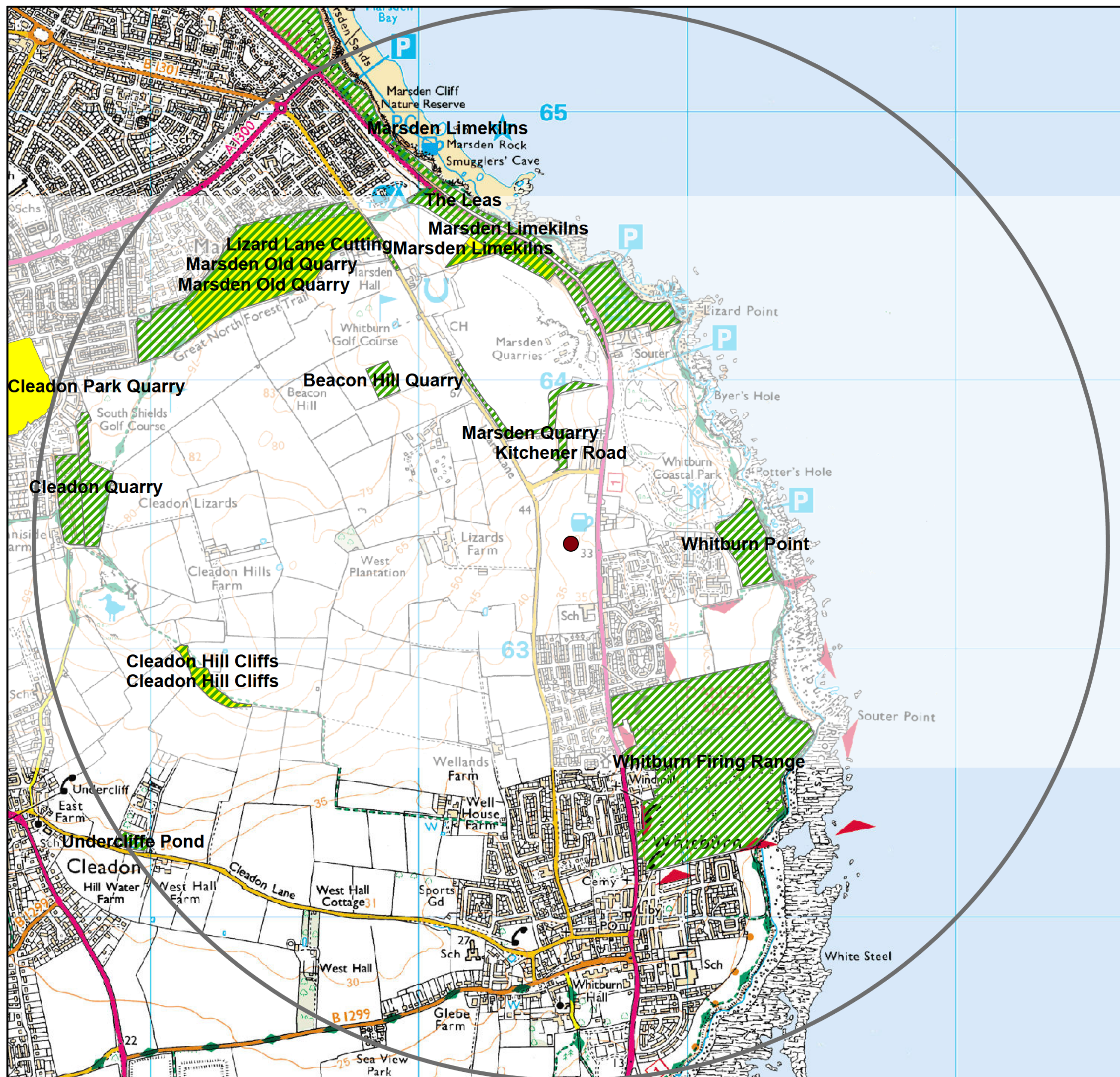
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ECOLOGICAL DATA SEARCH - NON STATUTORY SITES

LIZARD LANE

BSG ECOLOGY

PLOT PRODUCED: 15 August 2025

- NZ4056763390
- 2000m Search Area
- South Tyneside LGS
- South Tyneside Local Wildlife Sites

Produced by



**Environmental Records
Information Centre
North East**

**Great North Museum: Hancock
Barras Bridge
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne & Wear
NE2 4PT**

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- Legend
- Priority Habitats
- Coastal sand dunes
 - Coastal sand dunes, Maritime cliff and slope
 - Deciduous woodland
 - Lowland calcareous grassland
 - Lowland calcareous grassland, Maritime cliff and slope
 - Lowland meadows
 - Lowland meadows, Maritime cliff and slope
 - Maritime cliff and slope
 - No main habitat but additional habitats present
 - Reedbeds
 - Traditional orchard
 - 2km from site boundary
 - Site boundary

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LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

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Figure 4: Priority habitats within 2 km

DATE: 28/11/2025 CHECKED: AP SCALE: 1:16,700
DRAWN: SP APPROVED: IH VERSION: 1.1

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Legend

Survey boundary

Site boundary

Confirmed Territories

BoCC Red List Species

BTO Code	Common Name
GH	Grasshopper Warbler
GR	Greenfinch
HG	Herring Gull
HS	House Sparrow
LI	Linnet
P.	Grey Partridge
S.	Skylark
SG	Starling



Legend

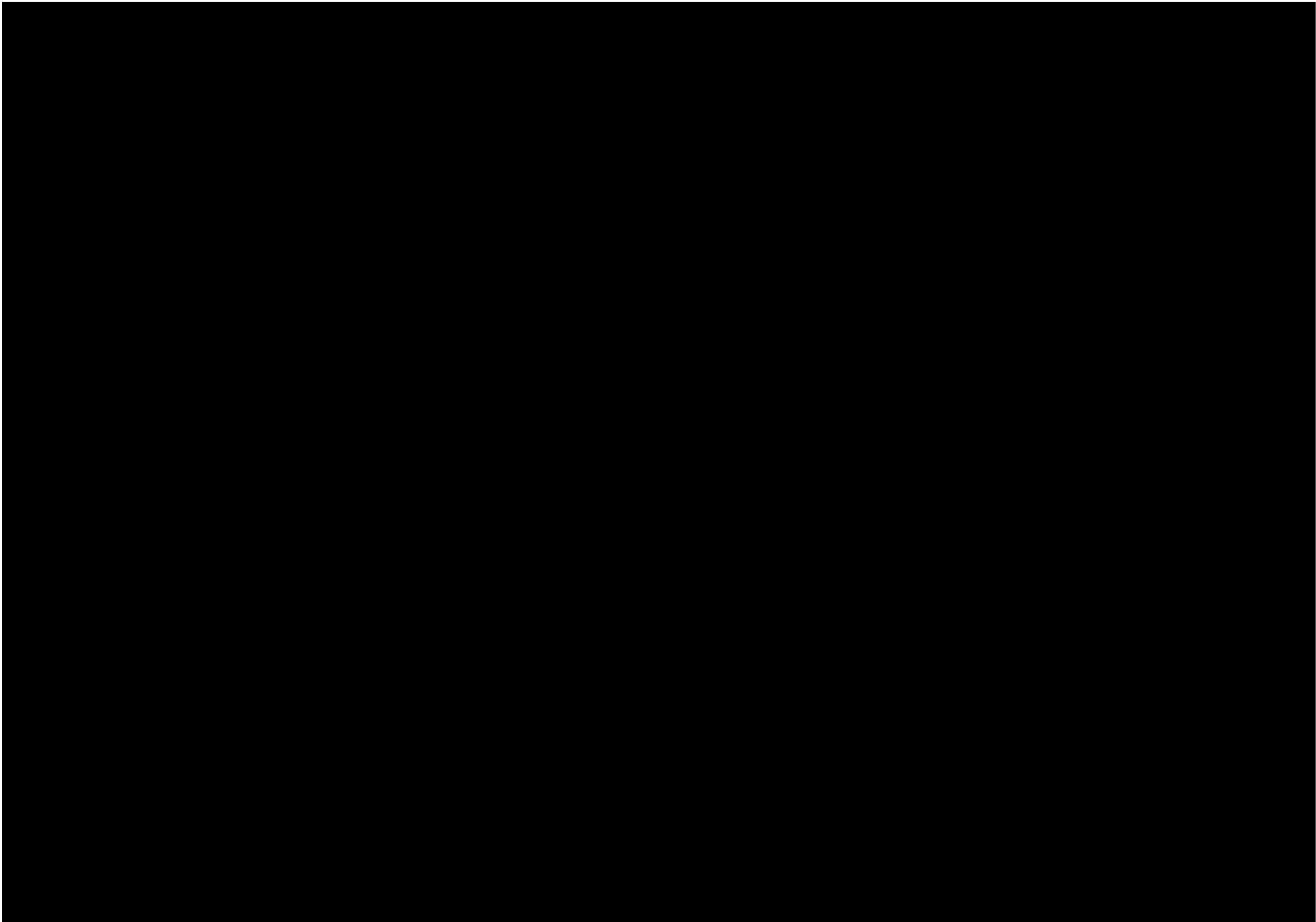
 Survey boundary

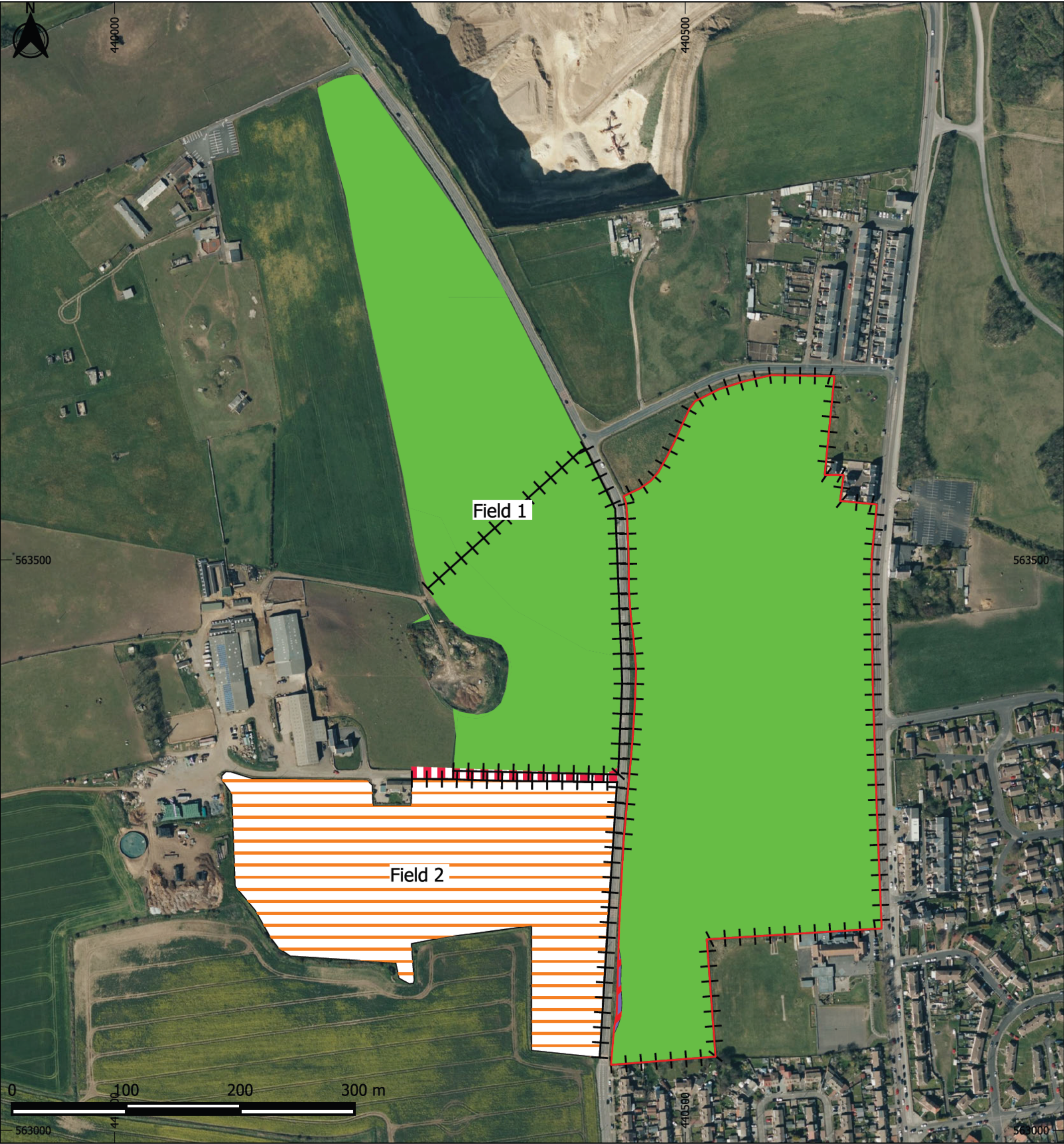
 Site boundary

Confirmed Territories

CH Amber

BTO Code	Common Name
MP	Meadow Pipit
WH	Whitethroat
WP	Woodpigeon
WR	Wren





- Legend
- Built linear features (u1e)
 - Cereal crops
 - Developed land; sealed surface
 - Mixed scrub
 - Modified grassland
 - Site boundary



- Legend
- Fence
 - Wall
 - Modified grassland
 - Site boundary



- Legend
- Sampling pit
 - Survey boundary

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PROJECT TITLE
LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 10: Earthworm survey sampling pit locations

DATE: 12/01/2026 CHECKED: AP SCALE: 1:3,500
DRAWN: BH APPROVED: IH VERSION:1.0

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Sources: BSG Ecology survey data

8 Photographs



Photograph 1 – Modified grassland on Site



Photograph 2 – Mixed scrub on Site, adjacent to Lizard Lane.



Photograph 3 – Modified grassland grazing field west of Site.



Photograph 4 – Newly planted hedgerow in horse grazed field.



Photograph 5 – Winter cereal field south-west off-site.

Appendix 1: Landscape Masterplan (P21-2566_EN_0001)

(Overleaf)

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INDICATIVE PLANT SCHEDULE

Below is an indicative schedule of plants which may be used, amongst others. Exact plant location, species and specification will be determined at the detailed soft landscape design phase.

Feature Trees (POS)

Planted as Extra Heavy Standard 14-16cm girth

Acer freemanii 'Autumn Blaze'
Acer platanoides 'Emerald Queen'
Acer rubrum 'October Glory'
Aesculus hippocastanum
Castanea sativa
Pinus sylvestris
Populus tremula
Quercus palustris

Trees (POS)

Planted as Heavy Standard 12-14cm girth

Acer campestre
Alnus glutinosa
Carpinus betulus
Fagus sylvatica
Gleditsia triacanthos
Pinus sylvestris
Prunus avium
Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'
Quercus robur
Sorbus torminalis
Tilia cordata 'Streetwise'
Ulmus New horizon'

Native Trees (within native shrub buffer)

Planted as Standards 8-10cm girth

Malus
Lutinus
Pinus sylvestris
Prunus padus
Quercus robur
Sorbus aucuparia

Street Trees (development edge and verges)

Planted as Heavy Standard 12-14cm girth

Acer campestre 'Streetwise'
Prunus 'Sunset Boulevard'
Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'
Sorbus aria 'Majestica'
Tilia cordata 'Streetwise'

Plot Trees (to front gardens)

Planted as Heavy Standard 12-14cm girth

Acer griseum
Malus 'Evereste'
Prunus 'Snow Goose'
Prunus subhirtella 'Autumnalis'
Sorbus 'Olympic Flame'

Native Scrub

Native shrub plants B, 60-80cm height; planted at 15m centres on even staggered grid

Species	%
Crataegus monogyna	15
Cornus sanguinea	10
Corylus avellana	15
Hippophae rhamnoides	5
Ilex aquifolium	5
Malus sylvestris	10
Prunus spinosa	15
Rosa canina	5
Viburnum opulus	10
Ulex europaeus	10

Native Hedgerow

Native plants B, 60-80cm height; planted in double staggered row

Species	%
Crataegus monogyna	30
Corylus avellana	15
Ilex aquifolium	5
Ligustrum vulgare	10
Prunus spinosa	20
Sambucus nigra	5
Ulex europaeus	5
Viburnum opulus	10

Ornamental / Single Species Hedgerow

(to development edges and front gardens)

Carpinus betulus
Escallonia 'Apple Blossom'
Escallonia 'Iveyi'
Ligustrum ovalifolium
Prunus laurocerasus 'Otto Luyken'
Prunus Lusitanica

Amenity Planting (example shrubs)

Artemisia lessertiana
Aucuba japonica
Brachyglottis 'Sunshine'
Ceanothus thyrsiflorus repens
Choisya ternata 'Sundance'
Choisya x dewitteana 'Aztec Pearl'
Cistus x purpureus 'Alan Fradd'
Cornus sanguinea 'Midwinter Fire'
Cornus sericea 'Flaviramea'
Cornus alba 'Kesselringii'
Euonymus fortunei 'Emerald Gaiety'
Hebe 'Autumn Glory'
Hebe 'Great Orme'
Hypericum 'Hidcote'
Mahonia japonica
Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'
Lonicera pileata
Photinia x fraseri 'Little Red Robin'
Potentilla fruticosa
Prunus laurocerasus 'Otto Luyken'
Phormium 'Tricolor'
Stipa gigantea
Viburnum davidii

SPECIES RICH GRASS

Meadow grass areas sown with Emorsgate EM3 Special General Purpose Meadow Mixture

Mix comprises EG1 grass mix with EM3F Wildflower component. Composition 80% grass, 20% wildflower species

Amenity grass areas sown with Emorsgate EL1 Flowering Lawn Mixture

Species rich grass suitable for regular mowing. Composition 80% grass, 20% wildflower species

SuDS grass areas sown with Emorsgate EM8 Meadow Mixture For Wetlands

Species rich grass suitable seasonally wet soils. Composition 80% grass, 20% wildflower species

KEY

- Site boundary
- Blue line boundary
- EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES
- Trees/vegetation to be retained
- Hedgerow to be retained
- Root Protection Area (RPA)
- Existing vegetation to be removed
- Public Right of Way (PROW)
- Existing stone walling to be repaired
- Existing agricultural context views
- Existing cycle routes

PROPOSED LANDSCAPE FEATURES

- POS trees (individual and hedgerow)
- Feature trees
- Plot trees
- Single species native hedgerow
- Mixed species native hedgerow
- Ornamental hedgerow mix
- Native mixed shrubs (5+ woody species)
- Glades within native shrubs
- Ornamental/amenity planting to POS
- Indicative ornamental groundcover, shrubs & herbaceous planting
- Species rich meadow grass suitable for location (Emorsgate EM3)
- Species rich amenity/mown grass (Emorsgate EL1)

- Mown paths and verges/varied sward height
- Species rich SuDS grass (Emorsgate EM8)
- Front garden turf (or gravel in areas of unsuitable growth)
- Development plot rear garden grass seed
- Bulb planting
- Footpath - timber edged crushed stone
- Indicative location of LEAP/LAP
- Indicative location of trim rail equipment
- Bow top play railings with 2no. gates TBC
- Timber knee rail 450mm high
- Principle circulation routes
- Green corridor
- Indicative bench location

Rev	Date	By	Note
D	2026/07/07	NW	Amends in line with new layout and ecology requirements
C	2026/06/15	NW	Amends in line with new layout and comments
B	2025/12/15	NW	Amends in line with comments
A	2025/12/11	KCH	Amends in line with comments
	2025/11/17	NW	First draft

Landscape Masterplan

Mill Lane, Whitburn

Client: Story Homes Ltd

DRWG No: P21 2566_EN_0001

SHEET: S1

Drawn by: NW

Date: 17/11/2025

Scale: 1:1000 @ A1

REV: D

Approved by: KC

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Appendix 2: Summaries of Relevant Policy, Legislation and Other Instruments

This section briefly summarises the legislation, policy and related issues that are relevant to the main text of the report. The following text does not constitute legal or planning advice.

National Planning Policy Framework (England)

The Government issued the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2024 (last updated 07 February 2025). Text excerpts from the NPPF are shown where they may be relevant to planning applications and biodiversity including protected sites, habitats and species.

The Government sets out the three objectives for sustainable development (economy, social and environmental) at paragraphs 8-10 to be delivered through the plan preparation and implementation level and 'are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged' (paragraph 9). The planning system's environmental objective is 'to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity...' (paragraph 8c).

In conserving and enhancing the natural environment, the NPPF (Paragraph 187) states that 'planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment' by:

- Protecting and enhancing...sites of biodiversity value... '(in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)'.
- Recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services... including... trees and woodland.
- Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.
- Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.

In respect of protected sites, at paragraph 188, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to distinguish, at the plan level, '...between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value...take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.' A footnote to paragraph 188 refers to the preferred use of agricultural land of poorer quality if significant development of agricultural land is to take place.

Paragraph 192 refers to how plans should aim to protect and enhance biodiversity. Plans should: 'identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity [a footnote refers to ODPM Circular 06/2005 for further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity in the planning system], wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation;' and to 'promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.'

Paragraph 193 advises that, when determining planning applications, '...local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments) should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development

in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.'

In paragraph 194, the following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.'

In paragraph 195 the NPPF refers back to sustainable development in relation to appropriate assessment and states: 'the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site'.

In paragraph 196, the NPPF refers to planning policies and decisions taking account of ground conditions and risks arising from land instability and contamination at sites. In relation to risks associated with land remediation account is to be taken of 'potential impacts on the natural environment' that arise from land remediation.

In paragraph 198 the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that development is appropriate to the location and take into account likely effects (including cumulative) on the natural environment and, in doing so, they 'should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation' (paragraph 198c).

Government Circular ODPM 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (England only)

Paragraph 98 of Government Circular 06/2005 advises that "the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Local authorities should consult Natural England before granting planning permission. They should consider attaching appropriate planning conditions or entering into planning obligations under which the developer would take steps to secure the long-term protection of the species. They should also advise developers that they must comply with any statutory species' protection provisions affecting the site concerned..."

Paragraph 99 of Government Circular 06/2005¹⁶ advises that "it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted".

Standing Advice (GOV.UK - England only)

The GOV.UK website provides information regarding protected species and sites in relation to development proposals: 'Local planning authorities should take advice from Natural England or the Environment Agency

¹⁶ ODPM Circular 06/2005. *Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impacts within the Planning System* (2005). HMSO Norwich.

about planning applications for developments that may affect protected species.' GOV.UK advises that 'some species have standing advice which you can use to help with planning decisions. For others you should contact Natural England or the Environment Agency for an individual response.'

The standing advice (originally from Natural England and now held and updated on GOV.UK¹⁷) provides advice to planners on deciding if there is a 'reasonable likelihood' of protected species being present. It also provides advice on survey and mitigation requirements.

When determining an application for development that is covered by standing advice, in accordance with guidance in Government Circular 06/2005, Local planning authorities are required to take the standing advice into account. In paragraph 82 of the aforementioned Circular, it is stated that: 'The standing advice will be a material consideration in the determination of the planning application in the same way as any advice received from a statutory consultee...it is up to the planning authority to decide the weight to be attached to the standing advice, in the same way as it would decide the weight to be attached to a response from a statutory consultee.'

The Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act includes the requirement for mandatory biodiversity gain for all qualifying developments in England through an amendment to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which came into force on 12 February 2024. For all qualifying developments in England, The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 8 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2024 (SI44) at Regulation 3 advises in relation to planning applications that '*the biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to a planning permission within the scope of regulation 2 (2) of these Regulations, where the application for planning permission was made before 12th February 2024*'. From 12 February 2024, the Act and associated secondary Regulations (SI2024 No's 44- 50) insert amendments into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which in summary require the following for all qualifying developments in England:

- The provision of a required percentage of biodiversity gain, currently set nationally to be at 10%, as a general condition of planning permission,
- The use of the statutory Biodiversity Metric to calculate the biodiversity gain,
- Submission to and approval by the planning authority, of a Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) for the development before the development may be begun; the BGP is to be prepared using a template prepared by Defra to demonstrate how biodiversity gain will be delivered on and / or off-site and how the biodiversity gain hierarchy has been applied so that the local planning authority can take account of the approach taken when deciding whether to approve the BGP,
- Significant on-site biodiversity gain and all offsite biodiversity gain to be secured for a fixed period, currently nationally set at 30 years,
- Alternative arrangements to be made for the purpose of minimising the adverse effect of development to habitats deemed to be irreplaceable habitat (see NPPF),
- Demonstration of how the biodiversity gain will be secured, typically through planning obligations in a section 106 agreement,
- Registration of offsite biodiversity gain and allocation of relevant biodiversity units to a given development in a national register for which Natural England is the Register Operator,
- Use of statutory biodiversity credits through the Secretary of State, which is considered to be a last resort, if onsite and/or offsite biodiversity gains cannot achieve the required percentage.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Habitats and species of principal importance (England)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 01 October 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal

¹⁷

importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England as required by the Act. In accordance with the Act the Secretary of State keeps this list under review and will publish a revised list if necessary, in consultation with Natural England.

The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public authorities, including local authorities, local planning authorities and statutory undertakers, the latter such as utilities companies, 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, including development management and planning. This was previously commonly referred to as the 'Biodiversity Duty.'

On 01 October 2024 the Biodiversity Duty¹⁸ was updated and strengthened to become a 'duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity' which requires public authorities to consider what action the authority can take to further the Government's 'general biodiversity objective'. The public authority then must determine appropriate policy actions and specific objectives that can be taken and must take the appropriate action. Actions to satisfy the general biodiversity objective may be through the revision of existing policies and 'specific objectives.' The public authority must have regard to the relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy and relevant national species and/or protected sites strategies prepared by Natural England when complying with the general biodiversity objective. Consideration by a given public authority was first to take place within one year of the Environment Act 2021 coming into force and then be subject to a review after no more than 5 years although other reviews can be undertaken at any time.

Guidance for public authorities in England on implementing the Biodiversity Duty has been published by Defra¹⁹ on GOV.UK. The guidance requires a public authority to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity and how they deliver their policies and actions to achieve their objectives. The roles of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, species and protected sites strategies are set out and public authorities are advised that the action they take at a local level will contribute to national biodiversity goals and targets. Public authorities are required to consider their enhanced biodiversity duty in development plans and decisions including planning policy, environmental impact assessment and how they manage their own land to improve biodiversity value including details in relation to 'green and blue spaces.' Guidance is also provided on how local authorities and local planning authorities must write and publish a biodiversity report as part of fulfilling their duty; these individual authority reports will be used by Defra as part of their Environmental Improvement Plan 5-yearly reviews.

In 2007, the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Partnership published an updated list of priority UK species and habitats covering terrestrial, freshwater and marine biodiversity to focus conservation action for rarer species and habitats in the UK. The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework²⁰, which covers the period from 2011 to 2020, now succeeds the UK BAP. The UK priority list contained 1150 species and 65 habitats requiring special protection and has been used as a reference to draw up the lists of species and habitats of principal importance in England.

In England, there are 56 Habitats of Principal Importance and 943 Species of Principal Importance on the S41 list. These are all the habitats and species found in England that were identified as requiring action in the UK BAP and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities in the subsequent UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

Competent authorities

Under Regulation 7 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) a "competent authority" includes "any Minister of the Crown..., government department, statutory undertaker, public body of any description or person holding a public office.

In accordance with Regulation 9, "a competent authority must exercise their functions which are relevant to nature conservation, including marine conservation, so as to secure compliance with the requirements of the [Habitats and Birds] Directives. This means for instance that when considering development proposals a competent authority should consider whether EPS or European Protected Sites are to be affected by those works and, if so, must show that they have given consideration as to whether derogation requirements can be met.

¹⁸ [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#)

¹⁹ [Complying with the biodiversity duty - GOV.UK](#)

²⁰ JNCC and Defra (on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group). 2012. *UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework*. July 2012. (<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6189>)

Birds

All nesting birds are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. In addition to this, for some rarer species (listed on Schedule 1 of the Act), it is an offence to disturb them whilst they are nest building or at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) places duties on competent authorities (including Local Authorities and National Park Authorities) in relation to wild bird habitat. These provisions relate back to Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the EC Directive on the conservation of wild birds (2009/147/EC, 'Birds Directive'²¹) (Regulation 10 (3)) requires that the objective is 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 new Wild Birds Directive...' Regulation 10 (7) states: 'In considering which measures may be appropriate for the purpose of security or contributing to the objective in [Regulation 10 (3)] Paragraph 3, appropriate account must be taken of economic and recreational requirements'.

In relation to the duties placed on competent authorities under the 2017 Regulations, Regulation 10 (8) states: 'So far as lies within their powers, a competent authority in exercising any function [including in relation to town and country planning] in or in relation to the United Kingdom must use all reasonable endeavours to avoid any pollution or deterioration of habitats of wild birds (except habitats beyond the outer limits of the area to which the new Wild Birds Directive applies).'

South Tyneside Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Relevant local planning policies and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are listed below:

- South Tyneside Core Strategy EA3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2036;
- SPD 3 – Green Infrastructure Strategy;
- SPD 5 Planning Obligations & Agreements; and
- Interim SPD 23 – Mitigation Strategy for European Sites (Recreational Pressure from Residential Development).

South Tyneside Core Strategy EA3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The South Tyneside Core Strategy sets out the strategy, policies and proposals by which all planning applications for development will be assessed by South Tyneside Council. Of particular relevance to this report is Policy EA3 of the South Tyneside Core Strategy:

"To optimise conditions for wildlife, implement the Durham Biodiversity Action Plan²² and tackle habitat fragmentation, the Council will:

- a. *Secure and enhance the integrity of designated sites;*
- b. *Maintain, enhance, restore and add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests;*
- c. *Ensure that new development would result in no net loss of biodiversity value of any of the following Priority Habitats:*
 - i. *Magnesian Limestone grassland;*
 - ii. *Coastal sand dunes;*
 - iii. *Maritime cliffs and slopes;*
 - iv. *Mudflats*
 - v. *Rivers and wetlands;*

²¹ 2009/147/EC Birds Directive (30 November 2009. European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

²² At the time of writing, the Durham Biodiversity Action Plan has been withdrawn. The Biodiversity Action Plan will likely be superseded by the South Tyneside Local Nature Recovery Strategy, but this document has not yet been publicly released.

- vi. *Species rich neutral grasslands;*
- vii. *Rocky shores.*
- d. *Reduce the fragmentation of, or improve or extend existing Priority Habitats;*
- e. *Create new Priority Habitats, especially in the Habitat Creation Zones of:*
 - i. *Cleadon Hills*
 - ii. *Downhill*
 - iii. *River Don Valley*
 - iv. *Wardley Colliery*
- f. *Protect and strengthen populations of Priority or other protected species*
- g. *Enhance the biodiversity value of wildlife corridors; and*
- h. *Where appropriate, restrict access and usage in order to conserve an area's biodiversity value."*

Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2036 WNP5: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan is the Local Development Plan for the Whitburn Neighbourhood Area (where the Site is located) and sets out locally specific planning policies to be applied when considering development proposals in the area. Of particular relevance to this report is Policy WNP5 of the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan:

"Development proposals must demonstrate how they will deliver measurable net gains of a minimum of 10% for biodiversity within the Neighbourhood Area and how they will be secured in perpetuity.

Development proposals will be supported which deliver the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats in the Plan area, including local nature reserves, local wildlife sites and sites of geological interest identified on the Policies Map and listed below. Development proposals that will significantly harm the biodiversity value of these sites will not be supported unless the harm can be mitigated or compensated.

Local Nature Reserves in the Neighbourhood Area are: • Whitburn Point • Marsden Old Quarry Local Wildlife Sites in the Neighbourhood Area are: • Beacon Hill Quarry • Whitburn Firing Range • Marsden Limekilns • Kitchener Road • Lizard Lane Cutting • Marsden Quarry • Marsden Old Quarry • The Leas • Whitburn Point Local Geodiversity Sites in the Neighbourhood Area are: • Marsden Limekilns • Marsden Old Quarry.

Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity will be supported. In particular, proposals that enhance the connectivity and biodiversity of the two wildlife corridors identified on the Policies Map will be supported."

SPD3 – Green Infrastructure Strategy

The Green Infrastructure Strategy expands on the Core Strategy, providing an analysis of existing green infrastructure and setting out the vision for future improvement and provision.

SPD5 – Planning Obligations and Agreements

SPD5 provides guidance on the planning obligations or agreements that will be required to ensure that new development can be accommodated in the Borough, with acceptable impact and within the principles of sustainable development.

Interim SPD23 – Mitigation Strategy for European Sites

Interim SPD23 was prepared following an interim Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the emerging growth scenarios and options for the South Tyneside Borough, and subsequent development of a mitigation strategy in response to an identified risk of increased recreation pressure on European wildlife sites as a result of new housing growth.

Interim SPD23 sets out the process for protecting coastal wildlife, by ensuring that new housing growth adequately mitigates for its potential effects on the European wildlife sites located on the South Tyneside coast. It provides guidance for the consideration of residential development proposals.

The strategy focuses on recreation pressure from residential development and therefore does not cover additional potential effects that may occur because of residential development, such as changes to air and water quality and water resources. It also does not cover potential effects arising from non-residential development, such as tourism development, employment growth or infrastructure improvements. Further HRA work will be required to understand the extent of other, non-recreation impacts and the mitigation that may be required for such impacts.

SPD23 sets out a scheme that allows developers to contribute a fixed contribution per dwelling (and secured via a Section 106 agreement), to fund a strategic mitigation strategy overseen by South Tyneside Council to mitigate for increased recreational pressures on nearby European designated sites.

Appendix 3: Bird survey details

Table A3-1: Wader survey details

Date	Survey Type	LT/HT Sunset Times	Survey Time	Wind (Beaufort)	Cloud Cover (Oktas)	Precipitation	Temperature (°C)
HT = High Tide; LT = Low Tide; CRE = Crepuscular							
WINTERING WADER SURVEYS							
18/11/2024	CRE	15:57	15:07 – 17:33	F3	2/8	None	-1
22/11/2024	LT	12:48	12:48 – 14:38	F4	7/8	None	2
27/11/2024	HT	12:53	12:30 – 14:30	F4	7/8	None	3
03/12/2024	CRE	15:41	15:20 – 17:20	F4	2/8	None	5
06/12/2024	LT	13:22	12:00 – 14:30	F2	4/8	None	7
13/12/2024	HT	13:19	12:00 – 14:30	F0-1	8/8	None	7
10/01/2025	HT	12:01	10:45 – 13:15	F2	8/8	None	2
15/01/2025	CRE	16:14	15:14 – 17:15	F1	2/8	None	1
20/01/2025	LT	13:10	11:55 – 14:25	F0-1	8/8	None	4
03/02/2025	LT	12:32	11:15 – 14:25	F0-1	5/8	None	8
13/02/2025	CRE	17:15	16:05 – 17:30	F3	2/8	None	7
22/02/2025	HT	09:56	08:45 – 11:15	F3	0/8	None	9
04/03/2025	LT	12:10	10:55 – 13:35	F3	3/8	None	10
18/03/2025	CRE	18:14	17:35 – 19:20	F1	0/8	None	5
24/03/2025	HT	10:46	09:30 – 12:00	F4	4/8	None	8
SPRING PASSAGE WADER SURVEYS							
02/04/2025	CRE	19:55	19:25 – 20:55	F0-1	0/8	None	10
07/04/2025	HT	12:10	10:50 – 13:20	F2	0/8	None	8
29/04/2025	LT	11:07	10:07 – 12:07	F1	1/8	None	16
07/05/2025	HT	12:37	11:20 – 13:50	F2	6/8	None	13
19/05/2025	CRE	21:28	20:30 – 22:30	F3	7/8	None	13
29/05/2025	LT	11:41	10:20 – 12:50	F3	8/8	None	16
AUTUMN PASSAGE WADER SURVEYS							
12/08/2025	LT	12:35	10:25 – 12:56	F2	8/8	None	20
19/08/2025	HT	13:07	11:35 – 14:05	F2	8/8	None	14

27/08/2025	CRE	20:12	19:30 – 21:00	F1	2/8	None	9
09/09/2025	LT	11:31	10:00 – 12:30	F2	0/8	None	15
18/09/2025	HT	14:20	12:45 – 15:15	F3	0/8	None	20
29/09/2025	CRE	18:46	18:10 – 19:40	F1	4/8	None	10
07/10/2025	CRE	18:33	18:00 – 19:30	F1	2/8	None	12
09/10/2025	LT	11:25	10:10 – 12:40	F3	3/8	None	14
17/10/2025	HT	13:57	12:30 – 15:00	F0	8/8	None	12

Table A3-2: Breeding bird characterisation survey details.

Date	Timing	Sunrise / sunset*	Temperature	Wind speed (Beaufort scale)	Cloud cover (Oktas)	Precipitation	Surveyors
11/04/2025	07:10 – 09:10	06:12	10°C	3	0	None	IF
27/04/2025	05:15 – 07:50	05:36	8°C	1	3	None	IC
08/05/2025	05:00 – 07:40	05:14	4°C	2	0	None	IC
26/05/2025	04:20 – 07:10	04:41	8°C	2	0	None	IC
08/06/2025	04:00 – 07:00	04:28	8°C	2	8	None	IC
19/06/2025	20:45 – 22:35	21:48*	12°C	1	2	None	AP / IC

Appendix 4: Non-breeding wader survey results

Table A4-1: Wintering wader survey results (Site)

Species	Wintering Wader Survey Summary (Site)														
	NOV			DEC			JAN			FEB			MAR		
	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular
Curlew	x26	x77	-	x83	x68	-	x53	x85	x71	x61	x29	x4	x43	-	x2
Golden plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table A4-2: Wintering wader survey results (Wader buffer zone)

Species	Wintering Wader Survey Summary (Wader buffer zone)														
	NOV			DEC			JAN			FEB			MAR		
	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular
Curlew	-	x7	-	x6	x25	-	x13	x2	x49	x41	x76	-	x9	x47	x16
Lapwing	x16	x20	-	-	-	-	-	-	x78	-	-	-	-	-	-
Golden plover	-	x57	x11	-	-	-	-	-	x47	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table A4-3: Spring passage wader survey results

Species	Spring Passage Wader Survey Summary (Site)					
	APR			MAY		
	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular
Curlew	-	*1	-	-	-	-
*Flying over						

Table A4-4: Autumn passage wader survey results

Species	Autumn Passage Wader Survey Summary (Site)								
	AUG			SEP			OCT		
	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular
Curlew	x8*	-	-	-	x65	x51	x21	x52	-
Lapwing	-	-	-	-	x34	*2	-	-	*1
*Flying over									

Table A4-5: Autumn passage wader survey results (Wader buffer zone)

Species	Autumn Passage Wader Survey Summary (Wader buffer zone)								
	AUG			SEP			OCT		
	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular	Low Tide	High Tide	Crepuscular
Curlew	x8*	x6	-	x5	-	x7	-	-	x17
Lapwing	-	-	x18	x32	-	x53	-	-	-
*Flying over									

Appendix 5: Breeding bird characterisation survey results

Table A-5: Classification of birds and their associated territories recorded in the Site and 50 m buffer zone.

Common name	Scientific name	Breeding (✓)	Confirmed breeding territories (Site)	Confirmed breeding territories (50 m buffer zone)	BoCC status	Designations *	Estimated Breeding Pairs within the Vice County ²³
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	-	-	-	Red	Section 41	-
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	✓	2	-	Red	Section 41	300
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	✓	-	1	Red	-	<4,000
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	✓	-	1	Red	Section 41	1,500
House martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	-	-	-	Red	-	-
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	-	5	Red	Section 41	>25,000
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	✓	-	1	Red	Section 41	5,000
Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	✓	-	1	Red	Section 41	1,500 – 2,000
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	✓	-	1	Red	Section 41	30,000
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	-	1	Red	Section 41	20,000 – 35,000
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	-	-	-	Amber	-	-
Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	-	-	-	Amber	-	-
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	-	-	-	Amber	-	-
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	✓	2	1	Amber	-	20,000
Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	†	■	■	Amber	Schedule 1	-
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	-	-	-	Amber	Section 41	-
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	-	-	-	Amber	-	-

²³ In reference to Bowey *et al* (2012). Vice County '66' County Durham.

Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	✓	2	-	Amber	-	7,400
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	1	-	Amber	-	N/A
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	✓	1	-	Amber	-	79,200
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	■	■	■	Green	Schedule 1	100
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	-	2	Green	-	49,000
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	-	1	Green	-	60,000 – 70,000
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	-	2	Green	-	3,000
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	-	1	Green	-	3,000
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	-	-	-	Green	-	-
Feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	-	-	-	Not assessed	-	-
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	-	-	-	Not assessed	-	-
* Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Schedule 1 listed species. * Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act NERC (2006). Section 41 species list. ** [REDACTED]							