

**Land off Mill Lane, Whitburn**  
Ecological Impact Assessment

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# 1 Summary

- 1.1 This Ecological Impact Assessment has been undertaken to inform a planning application for a proposed residential development on land off Mill Lane, Whitburn, South Tyneside. The Site comprises a single field of approximately 10.7 hectares (ha), which was under haylage crop management as a grass ley at the time of survey.
- 1.2 Ecological Impact Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with guidance provided by CIEEM (2024). Desk-based assessment and ecological surveys from 2024 to 2025, including an extensive suite of ornithological survey have been used to determine the key ecological receptors to the development, and likely impacts in the absence of mitigation:
- Designated sites of county, national and international importance, including Durham Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar, which face increased recreational pressure on listed habitats and species;
  - Priority habitats of deciduous woodland and lowland calcareous grassland, which face increased recreational pressure;
  - South Tyneside Wildlife Corridor;
  - Whitburn Firing Range Local Wildlife Site (LWS), which supports non-breeding curlew and lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, that face loss of habitat is functionally linked to the LWS;
  - Non-breeding curlew *Numenius arquata* which were recorded on Site, in numbers exceeding 1% of the estimated county population, which face loss of suitable foraging and loafing habitat;
  - Non-breeding golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* and lapwing, which were recorded on Site in numbers exceeding 1% of the estimated district population, which face loss of suitable foraging and loafing habitat;
  - Breeding grasshopper warbler *Locustella naevia* (BoCC<sup>1</sup> Red List) and whitethroat *Sylvia communis* (BoCC Amber List), which face temporary loss of breeding territory through disturbance during construction, and meadow pipit *Anthus pratensis* (BoCC Amber List), which face permanent loss of breeding territory through habitat loss;
  - Barn owl *Tyto alba*, which face loss of suitable commuting habitat; and
  - Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, which were recorded incidentally on Site during bird survey work, which face loss of habitat connectivity in the wider area and have potential to be harmed during construction.
- 1.3 Mitigation for these receptors is discussed:
- Contribution to South Tyneside Council's strategic mitigation scheme for increased recreational pressures on international designated sites, as set out in SPD 23;
  - Provision of on-Site public open space (POS), alongside informational signage to encourage recreational use towards Whitburn Coastal Park, and distribution of materials to inform residents about sensitive use of nearby designated sites and priority habitats;
  - Provision of like-for-like habitat compensation through conversion of one cereal crop field west of Site to grass ley and associated field margin, and the removal of horse grazing on another field west of Site between October – February, to mitigate for impacts on non-breeding waders, breeding meadow pipit, and functionally linked wader populations from Whitburn Firing Range LWS;
  - Provision of landscape planting to mitigate for impacts on breeding birds such as grasshopper warbler and whitethroat; and

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<sup>1</sup> Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D., and Win I. (2021). *The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain*. British Birds 114: 723-747.

- Designed-in mitigation including Construction and Environmental Management Plans and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans, to protect retained habitats and prevent harm to hedgehog during construction.

1.4 Following mitigation, within the Site it is considered that:

- Impacts on non-breeding curlew will be reduced to a permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Local level;
- Impacts on priority habitat (lowland calcareous grassland), South Tyneside wildlife corridor and one locally designated site will be reduced to a permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level;
- Impacts on breeding birds will be reduced to a temporary adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level; and
- There will be no significant residual effect to international and national designated sites, and on seven locally designated sites, priority habitat (deciduous woodland), barn owl, non-breeding golden plover, non-breeding lapwing, and hedgehog.

## 2 Introduction

### Background to commission

- 2.1 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 and potential mitigation for ornithological receptors are provided within this report.
- 2.2 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).

### Site description

- 2.3 The Site is approximately 10.7 ha in size and is located adjacent to the 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 an Ordnance Survey grid reference (OSGR) of NZ 40564 63396. The Site is shown in **Figure 1, Section 8**. The 'Survey Area' encompasses the Site plus additional off-site land that was surveyed for protected species (see **Section 3**).
- 2.4 The Site comprises a single arable field, which was in a grass lay and subject to haylage cutting prior to the first surveys in November 2024 until the field was 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 or post and wire fencing. Scattered scrub is present on the western boundary.

### Description of project

- 2.5 The client intends to submit a full planning application for a residential development of 205 units with associated sustainable urban drainage features and POS, (see Drawing number: P21-2566\_EN\_0001, **Appendix 1**). The ecology surveys have been undertaken in accordance with industry standard guidance (CIEEM, 2024) and have been used to inform the final development design taking the mitigation hierarchy into account.

### Planning policy and legislation

- 2.6 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 (Amendment) (EU Exit) 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.
- 2.7 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

- 2.8 On 17 October 2024 an on-Site meeting between South Tyneside Council's 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 receptor, 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 council.
- 2.9 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 SPA and Ramsar site would not be required if the bird surveys demonstrate that there is no functional linkage with the Site. Functionally linked habitat is considered to be areas of habitat that are critical to the ecological or behavioural functions (such as foraging, roosting or breeding) of a designated site or notified feature.
- 2.10 Further consultation took place with South Tyneside's Planning Officers on 30 September 2025 and their Ecologist on 06 October 2025 whereby the survey effort undertaken to date was outlined and feedback was sought from the LPA on the robustness of the baseline dataset collected, along with discussions regarding potential mitigation strategies.
- 2.11 The LPA ecologist was satisfied with the survey effort but requested that further consideration be given to the mitigation options proposed.

### Personnel

- 2.12 The habitat survey, badger scoping survey and ground level tree assessments were undertaken by Senior Ecologist Hannah Breadin BSc MSc ACIEEM. Hannah holds a Level 2 survey licence for bats (2019-50569-CLS-CLS). Hannah has worked as a professional ecologist for over 11 years and is a competent botanical surveyor with Field Identification Skill Certificate (FISC) Level 4 and has completed numerous habitat surveys across the North East of England.
- 2.13 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 has assisted on several of the crepuscular wintering wader surveys for health and safety reasons.
- 2.14 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 each in conducting breeding bird characterisation surveys and are all competent in sight and visual identification of all commonly occurring and vagrant species which arrive in the United Kingdom. **REDACTED**
- 2.15 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.
- 2.16 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.

- 2.17 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.
- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 Additional technical review has been undertaken 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.
- 2.20 Further details of experience and qualifications can be found at <http://www.bsg-ecology.com/people>



### 3 Methods

#### Desk study

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) 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, along with their associated Impact Risk Zones (IRZ). Additionally, MAGIC was consulted to identify Priority Habitats<sup>2</sup>, and granted European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence return data, within a 2 km search buffer of the Site.
- 3.3 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.

#### Field survey

- 3.4 This section describes survey effort for ecological receptors that are likely to be significantly impacted by the development and therefore required dedicated survey. Other ecological receptors, that are not likely to be significantly affected due to a lack of suitable habitat on Site and in the immediate area have not been considered as part of this assessment.

#### *Extended UK Habitat survey*

- 3.5 The extended UK habitat survey was undertaken on Site, within a 30 m buffer of the Site (where accessible), and on 'Field 1' and 'Field 2' of the Wader Compensation Site (see **Paragraph 3.13**).
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 Habitats were mapped in accordance with their closest UK Habitat Classification (UK Hab Ltd., 2023). Habitat mapping was limited to the Site and Botanical species lists for each habitat were gathered and quadrats were completed to inform conditions assessments. Quadrats recorded the relative abundance of each species according to the DAFOR scale (Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional and Rare). Photographs were taken of features of interest, which were also target noted.
- 3.8 The survey was 'extended' to assess the Survey Area's potential to support protected/notable species.
- 3.9 The Survey Area was searched for the presence of non-native invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)<sup>3</sup>.

#### *Badger survey*

- 3.10 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).

<sup>2</sup> Habitats of principal importance of Section 41, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

<sup>3</sup> 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.

**Ground level tree assessment**

- 3.11 During the extended UK habitat survey, trees in the Survey Area were subject to a ground level tree assessment, methods followed Collins (2023), to search for features suitable for use by roosting bats.

**Bird surveys**

- 3.12 Wader surveys were undertaken between November 2024 and October 2025. The Survey Area with respect to non-breeding waders was designed to survey suitable wader habitat present in off-site fields to the west, to inform the assessment of potential indirect impacts of the development on wader populations that may be present. The survey buffer was reduced to 100m 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).
- 3.13 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 off-site to the west (either side of the farm access track) were identified as having potential for use as off-site wader compensation (referred to in this report as the 'Wader Compensation Site') (see **Figures 8 and 9**). Surveys of these fields continued to allow for a complete baseline data set of non-breeding waders on Site and the immediate vicinity.
- 3.14 The Survey Area for breeding bird characterisation surveys consisted of the Site and a 50 m buffer zone. A 50 m buffer was included in order 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**

- 3.15 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) and BTO Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) and Low Tide Counts (LTCs).
- 3.16 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.
- 3.17 See **Appendix 3** for full details of timings and weather conditions.
- 3.18 Survey effort in each month consisted of two diurnal surveys: one at a high tidal cycle, and one at a low tidal cycle. In line with WeBS and LTC methods (Gilbert *et al.*, 1998 and BTO, 2025), the surveys began approximately one hour before and up to two hours after the respective tidal point. A crepuscular survey was also completed each month starting approximately 30 minutes before sunset and up to one hour after sunset. 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 and low tide counts with the addition of Night Vision Aids (NVAs).
- 3.19 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.
- 3.20 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

- 3.21 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

3.22

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### Consideration of potential limitations

- 3.23 No trees were present within the Site boundary; all trees recorded during the ground level tree assessment were in adjacent gardens and were not accessible for inspection. Only the aspects visible from the Site itself could be inspected. This is not considered to be a significant limitation to the assessment as the trees themselves were deemed to be of insufficient size and age to support potential roosting features (see **Section 4**).
- 3.24 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

- 3.25 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 current best practice 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

- 3.26 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.
- 3.27 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.

- 3.28 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 receptor 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***

- 3.29 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 (Vice County (VC) 66 County Durham, VC 67 south Northumberland and VC 68 north Northumberland<sup>4</sup>);
  - 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***

- 3.30 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"
- 3.31 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.
- 3.32 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".*

<sup>4</sup> 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**

- 3.33 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**

- 3.34 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.
- 3.35 The Biodiversity Gain Assessment (BGA) is provided in a separate report (BSG Ecology, 2025d), produced in parallel to this EclA.

## 4 Ecological Baseline and Evaluation

4.1 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 receptors are considered in the following order:

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

4.2 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

4.3 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.

4.4 In the absence of the proposed development and assuming the Site is managed as it currently is, the biodiversity interest of the Site is not likely to change significantly.

### Designated sites

#### *Statutory designated sites*

4.5 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 nationally important SSSI fall within 2 km of the Site. Three Local Nature Reserves (LNR) fall within 2 km of the Site.

4.6 **Table 1** provides a summary of statutory designated sites, the 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**.

**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              | Notified for supporting the Annex I habitat of 'Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts'. Particularly, 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.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 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> , 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 water beetle <i>Helophorus dorsalis</i> . | 0.4 km north-east                  | Potential for increased recreational pressure on notified habitats and species.<br><br>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.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b> |
| 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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>                                                     |
| Northumbria Coast SPA         | Notified for supporting breeding little tern (1.7% GB population, 1993-1997) and arctic tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</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 notified species.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Northumbria Coast Ramsar Site | Notified for supporting breeding little tern (1.7% GB population, 1993-1997) and arctic tern (2.92% GB population, 2010-2014), as well as wintering turnstone (2.6% biogeographic population, 1992-                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 0.9 km south-east                  | Potential for increased recreational pressure on notified species.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| Site name              | Reason for designation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Distance from Site (closest point) | Scoped in or out of further consideration                                                                             |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                        | 1997) and purple sandpiper (1.6% biogeographic population, 1992-1997).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                    | <b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b>                                                                           |
| 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> .<br><br>Public access is permitted throughout the site via allocated footpaths. | 1.1 km north-west                  | Potential for increased recreational pressure on notified species.<br><br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b> |
| 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.<br><br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b> |
| 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                        | Potential for increased recreational pressure on notified species.<br><br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b> |

#### **Non-statutory designated sites**

- 4.7 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**). 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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>                                                |
| 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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>                                                                                                         |
| Whitburn Firing Range LWS | Extensive area of open grazed pasture regularly supporting winter roosting golden plover, up to 2,500 birds <sup>5</sup> . 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.<br>Potential for indirect effects on cited wader species through loss of functionally linked foraging habitat within the Site boundary.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b> |
| 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 <b>Scoped out for further consideration.</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| 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.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

<sup>5</sup> 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.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                    | <b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b> |
| Marsden Limekilns LGS   | Designated for its geological interest only.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 0.6 km north                       | Assessment of geological impacts is beyond the scope of this report.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>                                                                                                                                              |
| 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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>   |
| Lizard Lane Cutting LWS | Two steep, rocky road verges either side of Lizard Lane supporting species-rich Magnesian Limestone grassland.<br><br>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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>                                                                                                                                             |
| 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.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b>                                                                                                                                                  |

| 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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>          |
| 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 increased recreation pressure on notified habitats and species.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b> |
| 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.<br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>          |
| Cleadon Quarry LWS          | Former limestone quarry supporting patchwork of scrub and open grassland, both showing strong Magnesian Limestone influence.<br><br>Public access is possible throughout the site via footpaths and desire lines.                                                          | 1.6 km west                        | Potential for increased recreation pressure on notified habitats.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b>             |
| 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.<br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b>             |
| 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.<br><br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b> |

**Evaluation of designated sites**

- 4.8 SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites are of **international importance**.
- 4.9 SSSIs are of **national importance**.
- 4.10 LNRs and LWSs are of **county importance**.

**Wildlife Corridor**

- 4.11 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 Gain (this policy is also considered to be the Wildlife Corridor Network). 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.
- 4.12 A total of 4.31 ha of the Site is situated within the wildlife corridor. This mainly incorporates land within the north of the Site where the corridor extent contours at its southernly point and extends east to west to other land offsite (see **Figure 1**). The 4.31 ha of wildlife corridor within the Site is made up of Modified Grassland (see **Paragraph 4.18**) and is managed as a grass ley. Additional habitat on Site was limited to a small amount of scrub within the south west of the Site. All habitats were subject to a habitat condition assessed 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.

**Evaluation**

- 4.13 The area of wildlife corridor within the Site is wholly made up of ecologically low distinctiveness habitat of which is in a poor condition. The connectivity of the area of wildlife corridor within the Site is constrained on all aspects (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. It is acknowledged that the wildlife corridor forms a part of the wider corridor network and it is considered to be of **District level importance**.

**Priority Habitats**

- 4.14 Six different priority habitat types were found within 2 km of the Site (see **Figure 4**). 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 SSSI and LWS, Marsden Old Quarry LNR and LWS and scattered throughout the wider arable landscape. | 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.<br><br>Potential for effects as a result of increased recreational use.<br><br><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b> |

| Priority habitat type                                                          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Distance from Site (closest point) | Scoped in or out of further consideration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land                               | <p>The closest parcels have been subsumed into active quarry works and are no longer present.</p> <p>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 &amp; LWS citation) indicate that the habitats have developed beyond an open mosaic structure and into grassland and scrub.</p> | 0.3 km north of Site               | <p>No open mosaic habitat is thought to be present within 2 km and the habitat is therefore not mapped on <b>Figure 4</b>.</p> <p><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b></p>                                                                                            |
| Lowland calcareous grassland                                                   | Isolated parcels present on Cleadon Hills SSSI and Marsden Old Quarry LWS.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 0.6 km north                       | <p>Potential for effects as a result of increased recreational use.</p> <p><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                   |
| Maritime cliffs and slopes                                                     | Continuous area of habitat present along the entire coastline.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 0.6 km east                        | <p>Pollution impacts not anticipated based on distance and separation from Site.</p> <p>Additional recreational pressures not anticipated due to steep topography and prohibited access where the habitat is present.</p> <p><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b></p> |
| <p>No main habitat but additional habitat exists</p> <p>Lowland Calcareous</p> | Large area covering Whitburn Golf Course and Marsden Old Quarry LWS. MAGIC cites the additional habitat                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 0.6 km north-west                  | <p>Potential for impacts as a result of increased recreational use.</p> <p><b>Scoped in for further consideration.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                   |

| Priority habitat type | Description                                                                                                             | Distance from Site (closest point) | Scoped in or out of further consideration                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                       | as 'lowland calcareous grassland', likely referring to the areas of Magnesian limestone influence present.              |                                    | <b>For the purposes of this report, this habitat is considered alongside 'lowland calcareous grassland'.</b>                                                                                                               |
| 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.<br><br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>                   |
| Coastal sand dune     | One thin strip is present at Whitburn Sands and Seaburn Beach.                                                          | 1.6 km south                       | Areas of the dunes are fenced to protect the priority habitat from impacts arising from excessive public access.<br><br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b>                                                        |
| 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.<br><br>Increased recreational impacts are not anticipated as access is prohibited.<br><br><b>Scoped out of further consideration.</b> |

## Evaluation

- 4.15 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**.
- 4.16 The lowland calcareous grassland in South Tyneside is Magnesian Limestone grassland, arising from local underlying geology and history of mineral extraction. Approximately 19 ha of this habitat is present within 2 km of the Site, approximately 30 ha is found in the South Tyneside area, and approximately 264 ha is found in the vice county (areas derived from MAGIC). The lowland calcareous grassland within 2 km of the Site is therefore assessed as being of **County level importance as it exceeds 1% of the total county area**.

## Habitats on Site

- 4.17 UK Habitat types found on Site are shown within **Figure 1**. The Site comprises a field of modified grassland managed for haylage production, with isolated mixed scrub along its western boundary.

**Modified grassland (g4)**

- 4.18 The modified grassland (**Photograph 1**) is 10.58 ha in size and was 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 made 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 was recorded.

**Evaluation**

- 4.19 Modified grassland is of low ecological value, and in poor condition due to its current management regime. The 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**.

**Mixed scrub (h3h)**

- 4.20 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**). 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**). 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**

- 4.21 The scrub consists of common and widespread species and is limited in extent. Significant habitat features such as ecological niches including clearings and sheltered edges are not present. The habitat is therefore assessed to be of **Site importance and is scoped out of further consideration**.

**Habitats within proposed compensation site**

- 4.22 UK Habitat types found within the proposed compensation site are shown within **Figure 1**. 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)**

- 4.23 Field 1 is 3.5 ha in size and was grazed by horses at the time of survey (**Photograph 4**). 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.

- 4.24 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**).

**Evaluation**

- 4.25 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**.

**Cereal crops (c1c)**

- 4.26 An arable field of 5.3 ha was sown with a winter wheat crop at the time of survey (**Photograph 5**). Around the margins of the field is a narrow 0.5 m strip of grassland dominated by grasses including



cock's foot, perennial rye grass and Yorkshire fog, with occasional barren brome *Bromus sterilis*. Herb species within the field margin consisted of cleavers *Galium aparine* and cow parsley.

- 4.27 Along the northern boundary of the field is a newly planted hedgerow; predominantly hawthorn but with rare occurrence of hazel *Corylus avellana* and blackthorn. The hedgerow measures approximately 0.75 m in length.

#### Evaluation

- 4.28 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**.

#### Protected and notable species

##### **Badger**

- 4.29 ERIC NE returned no records of badger within 2 km of the Site.
- 4.30 No sett building or other evidence of badger activity such as latrines, footprints or snuffle holes (foraging activity) were identified within the Site, and the arable landscape is limited to 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

- 4.31 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. 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**.

##### **Bats**

- 4.32 ERIC NE returned two records of bats within 2 km of the Site, comprising one record of noctule *Nyctalus noctule* 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.
- 4.33 No buildings or trees are located on the Site itself. The 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.
- 4.34 The habitats on Site are of low value to foraging and commuting bats as they feature poor floristic and structural diversity (and therefore are 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

- 4.35 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**.
- 4.36 Habitats on Site were assessed as being of **negligible importance** to foraging bats and are **scoped out of further consideration**.

### Birds

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

### Non-breeding wader surveys

#### Desk study

- 4.39 ERIC NE returned a total of 9,961 bird records within 2 km of the Site. Of the records returned, 1,420 relate to wader birds. Of note, 254 records were returned for curlew. The majority of the records relate to Whitburn bird observatory which is located off-site approximately 665 m to the east. One record of curlew was returned for the Site itself, comprising a flock of over 30 birds recorded in October 2018. 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 (57 records, with one record of lapwing on Site was returned; 40 adults were recorded on Site in October 2018), 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

### Site results

- 4.40 Full detailed results are presented in **Appendix 4**.
- 4.41 Curlew were recorded on Site on 12 of the 15 surveys between November and March, with a peak count of 85 birds and an average count of 40.1 birds. They were recorded on Site during all winter low tide surveys and every high tide survey except March. They were also recorded immediately prior to dusk during crepuscular surveys in January, February and March, however the birds left Site shortly after sunset on all three occasions. Curlew numbers declined in March and were absent during the spring passage period (April and May).
- 4.42 During the autumn passage surveys (August – October), curlew was recorded on Site on four of the nine surveys, with a peak count of 65 birds and an average count of 21 birds. They were recorded only during September and October.
- 4.43 Golden plover were recorded only once on Site. Twenty-four birds were recorded on Site during the January high tide survey, resulting in an average count of 1.6 birds across all surveys.
- 4.44 Lapwing were recorded only once on Site. Thirty-four birds were recorded on Site during the September crepuscular survey, resulting in an average count of 3.8 birds across all surveys.
- 4.45 No wader species were recorded during the spring passage period.
- 4.46 No bird species notified on the nearby European designated sites were recorded during any of the surveys.

### Wader Compensation Site results

- 4.47 Full detailed results are presented in **Appendix 4**.
- 4.48 Curlew were recorded using the wader buffer zone on 11 of the 15 non-breeding surveys between November and March, with a peak count of 76 birds and an average count of 19.4 birds. They were recorded in the Wader Compensation Site during all high tide surveys and every low tide survey except for November. Curlew were recorded immediately prior to dusk during crepuscular surveys in January and March, however the birds left shortly after sunset on both occasions. Curlew numbers declined slightly in March and were absent during the spring passage period (April and May).
- 4.49 During the autumn passage surveys, curlew was recorded in the Wader Compensation Site on four of the nine surveys, with a peak count of 17 birds and an average count of 4.8 birds. Curlew did not display any distinct pattern in regard to their use of the Wader Compensation Site around tides, sunset or the season.
- 4.50 Golden plover were recorded more frequently in the Wader Compensation Site than the Site, both in terms of higher peak counts and higher average numbers. Golden plover were recorded with a peak count of 57 and an average count of 7.6 birds. During the winter period, golden plover were recorded in the Wader Compensation Site on the November high tide and crepuscular survey, and the January crepuscular survey. The species did not display any distinct pattern in regard to their use of the Wader Compensation Site around tides, sunset or the season.
- 4.51 No golden plover was recorded during the spring or autumn passage.
- 4.52 Lapwing were recorded more frequently in the Wader Compensation Site than in the Site, both in terms of higher peak counts and higher average numbers. Lapwing were recorded with a peak count of 78 and an average count of 7.6 birds. During the winter period, lapwing was recorded in the Wader Compensation Site on the November low and high tide surveys and the January crepuscular survey. The species did not display any distinct pattern in regard to their use of the Wader Compensation Site around tides, sunset or the season.
- 4.53 No lapwing was recorded during spring passage.
- 4.54 During autumn passage, lapwing was recorded in the Wader Compensation Site on three of the surveys, with a peak count of 53 birds and an average count of 11.4 birds. Lapwing was not recorded during any high tide surveys in this period.
- 4.55 No bird species notified on the nearby European designated sites were recorded during any of the surveys.

### Evaluation – non-breeding waders

- 4.56 Regarding the evaluation of non-breeding waders:
- 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 draw the conclusion that the South Tyneside district area supports an estimated 300 curlew, 4,000 golden plover and 700 lapwing. However, the specific bird club reports used to determine this are not cited.
  - 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).

- 4.57 The results of the surveys indicate that curlew utilise the Site for daytime foraging and loafing from September to March inclusive, but do not use the Site during the spring passage period. On all crepuscular surveys, curlew left the Site shortly after sunset, it is therefore considered that the Site does not provide nocturnal roosting resource for curlew.
- 4.58 Curlew flocks appeared to utilise the Survey Area as part of a network of available roosting, loafing and foraging resource in the wider area. Flocks were observed arriving to the Survey Area from elsewhere, relocating between fields, or flying off south and east over the houses and out of sight altogether. This was noted in the crepuscular surveys especially, whereby any curlew recorded in the Survey Area left shortly after sunset. The survey findings are consistent with the findings of the wader studies undertaken by E3 Ecology (2020 & 2023). The studies found high densities of waders in fields to the south and south-east of Whitburn village and noted that the highest densities of nocturnal waders in fields to the south-east beyond Whitburn village.
- 4.59 Curlew counts on Site exceeded 1% of the estimated county wintering curlew population (i.e.  $\geq 31$  birds) on eight of the surveys in the core winter period and three of the surveys in the autumn passage period. Average curlew numbers exceeded this threshold during the core winter period, but not during autumn passage. Curlew counts and averages did not exceed 1% of the estimated regional wintering curlew population on any of the surveys. The Site is therefore considered to be of **County importance to non-breeding curlew**.
- 4.60 Golden plover were recorded on Site on one occasion. The count did not exceed 1% of the estimated district population. Surveys of golden plover within the wider area (E3 Ecology, 2020 and 2023) indicate that golden plover utilise the Site as part of a wider habitat network and significant numbers are regularly recorded elsewhere. The Site is therefore considered to have **Site level importance to non-breeding golden plover**.
- 4.61 Lapwing were recorded on Site on one occasion. The count exceeded 1% of the estimated district population, however, 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. Site is therefore considered to be of **District level importance to non-breeding lapwing**.
- 4.62 Curlew counts on the Wader Compensation Site exceeded 1% of the estimated county wintering curlew population on four of the surveys, all within the core winter period. Average curlew numbers did not exceed this threshold. Curlew counts and averages did not exceed 1% of the estimated regional wintering curlew population on any of the surveys. The Wader Compensation Site is therefore considered to be of **County importance to non-breeding curlew**.
- 4.63 Golden plover were recorded on the Wader Compensation Site three times, in the core winter period. Two of the counts exceeded 1% of the estimated district population. The Wader Compensation Site is therefore considered to be of **District level importance to non-breeding golden plover**.
- 4.64 Lapwing were recorded on the Wader Compensation Site six times, three in the core winter period and three in the autumn passage period. All counts and the average count exceeded 1% of the estimated district population. The Wader Compensation Site is therefore considered to be of **District level importance to non-breeding lapwing**.
- 4.65 No bird species notified on the nearby European designated sites were recorded in the Survey Area and therefore the Survey Area is not considered to be functionally linked to the European Sites. Potential impact pathways on notified species are limited to increased recreational pressures, which are addressed by SPD23 (see **Section 6**).

### Breeding birds

#### Desk study

- 4.66 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).

### Site results

- 4.67 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 species not assessed in the BoCC. Species confirmed breeding in the Survey Area are shown in **Table 4**. Full results are presented in **Appendix 5**.
- 4.68 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** show the red- and amber-listed species' breeding territories found in the Survey Area.
- 4.69 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, centred on tussock margins on the periphery of the Site.
- 4.70 Four amber-listed species were confirmed breeding within the Site, including: 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 west 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 residential gardens immediately adjacent. 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. As such, woodpigeon is not considered to be a species of conservation concern and are not considered further within this report.
- 4.71 No green-listed species were recorded breeding on Site.
- 4.72 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 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.
- 4.73 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.
- 4.74 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 significant ecological receptors and are not assessed further within this report<sup>6</sup>.
- 4.75 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 4** shows the breeding territories within the Site. Breeding bird territory maps are shown on **Figures 5 and 6**.

<sup>6</sup> Barn owl is assessed due to its protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

**Table 4: 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 <sup>7</sup> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 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>       | -                                     | 6                                                   | 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>               | REDACTED                              |                                                     | Green       | Schedule 1   | 100                                                     |
| 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                                                   |

<sup>7</sup> With reference to Bowey *et al* (2012), VC 66 County Durham.



- 4.76 No bird species notified on the nearby European designated sites were recorded during any of the surveys.

#### Evaluation – breeding birds

- 4.77 The Site overall supports a poor 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 County<sup>7</sup>). 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**.
- 4.78 Woodpigeon, an amber-listed species, were regularly recorded but is amber-listed due to the UK supporting over 25% of the European population. Woodpigeon are a common and widespread species in the UK and ubiquitous in farmland environments. As such woodpigeon is not considered to be a species of conservation concern. Species of low conservation concern are considered to be of **Site level** importance or below and therefore have been **scoped out of further consideration**.
- 4.79 The 50 m survey buffer supported a more diverse set of breeding birds than the Site. 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 County<sup>7</sup>). 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**.
- 4.80 No bird species notified on the nearby European designated sites were recorded in the Survey Area and therefore the Survey Area 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 addressed by SPD23 (see **Section 6**).

#### Barn owl

- 4.81 **REDACTED**
- 4.82 **REDACTED** Incidental sightings of commuting barn owl within the Site were observed on four of the wader surveys (15 January 2025, 18 March 2025, 02 April 2025 and 19 June 2025). Three out of the four observations 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.
- 4.83 **REDACTED**
- 4.84 The entire Site is characterised by 'Type 3' foraging habitat for barn owl (in reference to 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 has a home range of approximately 6 km<sup>2</sup> (Séchaud *et al.*, 2022). 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 is likely to provide optimum foraging habitat for barn owl.

#### Evaluation – Barn owl

- 4.85 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**

**REDACTE** 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**

- 4.86 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.
- 4.87 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 Site boundary, adjacent to the residential gardens. No other hedgehogs were recorded.

### **Evaluation**

- 4.88 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 maybe less suitable, however some foraging and commuting potential is likely to be retained in the grassland habitats within the field margins. Although connectivity to the east of Site is limited by Mill Lane, the Site has connectivity to other good quality hedgehog foraging and dispersal habitat to the south, north and west. The Site is considered to be of **Site level importance to hedgehog**.

### **Invasive non-native species**

- 4.89 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**

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



## 5 Designed-in Avoidance, Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures

### Designed-in mitigation and other measures

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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*

- 5.3 A lighting strategy to minimise light spill will be put in place to minimise the risk of disturbance of bats, terrestrial mammals, and birds.
- 5.4 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**

- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 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;
  - Implement appropriate construction phase lighting strategy to minimise light spill and direct it away from adjacent habitats of ecological value (e.g. Site boundary features), reducing 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***

5.7 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 downhill of any works;
- In any period of dry weather, deploy heras fencing with dust sheets; and
- In any period of prolonged dry weather, damping down of areas which see heavy plant activity.

5.8 These measures should be conditioned as part of the planning approval if granted.

#### ***Ecological clerk of works***

5.9 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***

5.10 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 are a buffer zone appropriate for the species be put in place.

#### ***Habitat Management Monitoring Plan (HMMP)***

5.11 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.

5.12 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***

5.13 The proposed landscaping plan for the Site includes measures to avoid and mitigate for potential impacts to ecological receptors. 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 SuDS basin, 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.

## 6 Ecological Impacts, Additional Mitigation and Residual Effects

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Where further mitigation and other measures are required, these are described.
- 6.4 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**

- 6.5 Northumbria Coast SPA and Northumbria Coast Ramsar site were scoped in for further consideration (see **Section 4**) 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**

- 6.6 None of the bird species notified in the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site (little tern, arctic tern, turnstone, and purple sandpiper) were recorded on Site or within the survey buffer zone during the suite of bird surveys, and the Site is not considered 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 species**

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

### **Mitigation**

- 6.8 The proposed development falls inside the 6 km zone of influence set out in South Tyneside Council's interim SPD 23, which presents a strategic mitigation scheme for mitigating increased residential 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**

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

## Nationally designated sites

### Construction related effects

- 6.10 **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

- 6.11 Durham Coast SSSI and Cleadon Hills SSSI were scoped in for further consideration (see **Section 4**) due to potential recreational pressure on notified habitats and species.
- 6.12 Cleadon Hills SSSI may be subject to increased recreational pressure as a result of the development. There are limited public footpath networks leading to Cleadon Hills SSSI walking from the Site; new residents would need to enter a public rights of way (Tyne and Wear Heritage Way) north of Whitburn Golf Club (1.2 km north-west). 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, continuing along a public footpath south-west (approximately 3.3 km walking distance<sup>8</sup>). Due to this separation distance, it is unlikely that this will lead to a considerable increase in foot traffic. Parking opportunities around Cleadon Hills are limited, with no designated car park present. The parking opportunities are limited to roadside laybys or residential streets which is unlikely to be attractive to new residents.
- 6.13 Durham Coast SSSI may also be subject to increased recreational pressure as a result of the development. The additional footfall from the proposed development may lead to direct impacts on sensitive habitats and protected species and indirect impacts through disturbance to protected species, such as wader birds. There is a footpath on the edge of the Durham Coast SSSI which begins at the northern point at Whitburn Firing Range LWS (see **Figure 2b**) and continues south to Seaburn. For most of this area, public access is restricted to most of the SSSI by the coastal headland, though it is acknowledged that some areas are accessible including Whitburn Beach. This may lead to disturbance related effects to wading birds through an increase in dogs not on a leash and people walking.
- 6.14 In the absence of mitigation, this will cause an effect on Durham Coast SSSI which would be a **permanent adverse effect significant at the national level**.
- 6.15 In absence of mitigation, this will cause an effect on Cleadon Hills SSSI that would be **permanent adverse at the Site level**.

### Mitigation

- 6.16 The Durham Coast SSSI shares the same designated features and area footprint with that of the Durham Coast SAC (see **Figure 2a**). 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.
- 6.17 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.
- 6.18 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.

<sup>8</sup> Route calculated using OSmaps (<https://explore.osmaps.com>)

- 6.19 The nearest coastal access is via the car park behind Whitburn Lodge east of Site. The footpath leads east toward Whitburn Point LWS, but this is functionally a dead end: several offshoots from the path divert north onto Whitburn Coastal Park. It is considered that these are more likely to be taken by pedestrians and dog walkers, with circular routes available back to Site via Mill Lane or Whitburn Lodge.
- 6.20 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 encourage movement of 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***

- 6.21 No residual impacts on the Cleadon Hills SSSI are anticipated.
- 6.22 No residual impacts on the Durham Coast SSSI are anticipated.

### **Locally designated sites**

#### ***Construction related effects***

#### **Loss of functionally linked habitat**

- 6.23 Potential impacts on Whitburn Firing Range LWS arise from loss of suitable habitat that may be functionally linked to the LWS impacting non-breeding wader species noted in its citation (particularly golden plover, but also lapwing, oystercatcher, redshank, ringed plover and curlew). Of these species, only golden plover, lapwing and curlew were recorded on Site.
- 6.24 Golden plover were recorded only once on Site during the suite of wader surveys, during the January high tide survey loafing in a flock of 24 birds. This single observation amounts to <1% of the regular count of 2,500 cited on the LWS. Based upon the limited records of golden plover on Site it is unlikely that the LWS population regularly uses the Site and that levels of use are below the 1% significance threshold, and therefore the **impacts to the LWS are not considered to be significant**.
- 6.25 Numbers of curlew and lapwing that regularly use the LWS are not specified in the LWS citation. Surveys of wader populations on the LWS field undertaken in 2021 and 2022 (E3 Ecology, 2023) recorded a peak count of 22 curlew and 37 lapwing on the LWS. The peak and average numbers of both species recorded on Site exceeds 1% of the peak counts recorded on the LWS. Therefore, the Site is considered to have functional linkage to the LWS in respect to these species. In the absence of further mitigation, the loss of suitable habitats on Site will result in **a permanent adverse effect on Whitburn Firing Range LWS that will be significant at the County level**.

#### ***Operational related effects***

#### **Loss of functionally linked habitat**

- 6.26 The adverse effect on Whitburn Firing Range LWS (described above) through loss of functionally linked habitat will persist throughout the operational phase in the absence of further mitigation.

#### **Increased recreational pressure on notified habitats and species**

- 6.27 Increased recreational pressure may occur to Marsden Old Quarry LNR and Marsden Old Quarry LWS, though this would be through residents driving to the location, 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.

- 6.28 Cleadon Hills LNR, Cleadon Hill Cliffs LWS, 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. As per **Paragraph 6.12**, there are limited public footpath networks in the locality leading to Cleadon and in order to access via walking from the Site, new residents would need to enter a public rights of way (Tyne and Wear Heritage Way) north of Whitburn Golf Club (1.2 km north-west). 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, continuing along the public footpath south-west (approximately 3.3 km walking distance to the closest site<sup>9</sup>). Due to this separation distance, it is unlikely that this will lead to a considerable increase in foot traffic. Parking opportunities around Cleadon Hills are limited, with no designated car park present. The parking opportunities are limited to roadside laybys or residential streets which is unlikely to be attractive to new residents.
- 6.29 Potential recreational impacts may occur on The Leas LWS may occur 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 (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.
- 6.30 Increased recreational pressures from residents will, in the absence of mitigation, result in an **adverse effect significant at the District level** on The Leas LWS an **adverse effect significant at the Site level** on Marsden Old Quarry LNR, Marsden Old Quarry LWS, Cleadon Hills LNR, Cleadon Hill Cliffs LWS, Cleadon Quarry LWS and Cleadon Pumping Station LWS.

### ***Mitigation***

- 6.31 Loss of suitable wader habitat on Site functionally linked to Whitburn Firing Range LWS will be mitigated for through the provision of off-site compensation ('Wader Compensation Site') located immediately west of Site as shown in **Figures 8 and 9**. Field 1 will have its grazing removed between October – February to improve its suitability for wintering waders. Field 2 to the south-west of Site (south of the access track to farm at Lizard Lane) will be converted to grass ley habitat, to provide like-for-like mitigation for on Site losses. 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.
- 6.32 Full details of bespoke compensation for wader species is set out in a separate wader compensation strategy report (BSG Ecology, 2025c).
- 6.33 The provision of POS on Site will serve to partially mitigate impacts on locally designated sites by providing immediate green space for residents to use. However, it is recognised that such provision cannot fully mitigate for increased recreation pressures.
- 6.34 Mitigation measures in respect to increased recreational pressures as set out in **Paragraphs 6.16 – 6.20 and Paragraphs 6.76 – 6.80** will also serve to mitigate effects on Marsden Old Quarry LNR,

<sup>9</sup> Route calculated using OSmaps (<https://explore.osmaps.com>)



Cleadon Hills LNR, Marsden Limekilns LWS, The Leas LWS, Marsden Old Quarry LWS, Cleadon Hill Cliffs LWS, Cleadon Quarry LWS and Cleadon Pumping Station LWS.

### ***Residual effects on locally designated sites***

- 6.35 It is considered that, following the provision of the off-site compensation for waders, there will be **no significant residual effects** that are likely to arise on wader species associated with Whitburn Firing Range LWS.
- 6.36 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 LNR, Marsden Old Quarry LWS Cleadon Hills LNR, Cleadon Hill Cliffs 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**

- 6.37 Approximately 2.6 ha of the wildlife corridor within the Site will become residential housing and associated hardstanding which will result in a loss of dark corridors and green spaces (see **Figure 1** 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**

- 6.38 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 of the wildlife corridor to significant levels of light pollution. Increased recreational pressures and residential lighting will result in a **permanent adverse effect on the wildlife corridor that will be significant at the District level**.

### ***Mitigation***

- 6.39 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. Within this area approximately 1.14 ha of biodiversity improvements have been proposed. Within the north and west of the Site, species-rich coastal meadow grass will be created (totalling approximately 0.9 ha). This will deliver ecologically higher distinctiveness habitat than what is currently present on Site, potentially enabling its utilisation for a wider variety of species. At present, the linear connectivity on the western boundary is poor. To the west of the Site, within the wildlife corridor, 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 facilitate new opportunities for nesting birds.
- 6.40 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 **Appendix 1** will serve to mitigate these impacts.
- 6.41 The sensitive lighting strategy (see **Paragraph 5.3**) 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 light spill from new external street lighting during the occupational phase will be reduced on the proposed retained and created habitats to ensure that dark corridors to the west and to the north of the Site are maintained.



***Residual effects on the wildlife corridor***

- 6.42 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 an **adverse effect that is significant at the Site level**.

***Priority habitats******Construction related effects***

- 6.43 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***

- 6.44 Priority habitats within 2 km include lowland calcareous grassland and deciduous woodland, which are present in scattered parcels throughout the landscape, but particularly on nearby locally designated sites. The closest parcels are described in **Table 3, Section 4**. In reference to **paragraph 6.14** and the landscape proposals (see **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 on most areas of the woodland. Notwithstanding this, Whitburn Coastal Park has a number of formal well-signposted footpaths, and it is therefore 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.
- 6.45 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 6.27**, 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 6.28**, 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.
- 6.46 It is considered that in the absence of mitigation these areas would be subject to increased recreational pressures during occupation, resulting in **an adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level for deciduous woodland and at the Local level for lowland calcareous grassland**.

***Mitigation***

- 6.47 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.
- 6.48 It is considered that mitigation measures regarding signage and information distribution described in **Paragraphs 6.16 – 6.20** will also serve to mitigate impacts on priority habitats (as these are predominantly found within those sites).

**Residual effects on priority habitats**

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

**Breeding birds****Construction related effects**

- 6.50 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**.
- 6.51 Two grasshopper warbler and whitethroat territories are located on Site concentrated around boundary scrub habitats. Although existing hedgerow and scrub features will be retained where possible, it is considered that these territories will be lost during the construction phase and in absence of mitigation this will result in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.
- 6.52 Two meadow pipit territories are located on Site within the grassland. In the absence of mitigation these territories will be lost to development, resulting in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.
- 6.53 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**.

**Operational related effects**

- 6.54 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**

- 6.55 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.
- 6.56 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 *Passer domesticus*, starling *Sturnus vulgaris* and swift *Apus apus*. The integrated boxes should be installed on northern aspect and away from windows in order to maximise their uptake.
- 6.57 New native hedgerows will provide further nesting habitat for species such as dunnock *Prunella modularis* and house sparrow.
- 6.58 Effects on active breeding bird nests arising from construction will be addressed in the CEMP.

- 6.59 The sensitive lighting strategy (see **Paragraph 5.3**) 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 offsite during the construction phase and will reduce light spill from new external streetlighting lighting 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**) which will convert the arable field (field 2) into a grass ley habitat. It is considered that the peripheries of this habitat, where grass growth is less vigorous, will be suitable for meadow pipit nesting.

#### ***Residual effects on breeding birds***

- 6.60 Meadow pipit territories lost to development are considered likely to re-establish in field 2 of the Wader Compensation Site following implementation of the wader compensation strategy, resulting in **a temporary adverse effect significant at the Site level**.
- 6.61 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**.
- 6.62 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***

- 6.63 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** 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 off commuting habitat will result in a **permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.

##### ***Operational related effects***

- 6.64 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 an **adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level**.

#### **Mitigation**

- 6.65 The sensitive lighting strategy (see **Paragraph 5.3**) 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.
- 6.66 The offsite Wader Compensation Site (as shown on **Figures 8 and 9**) 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**

- 6.67 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 waders: Site****Construction related effects**

- 6.68 The Site has been assessed to be of County importance to non-breeding curlew, of District importance to non-breeding lapwing, and of Site importance for non-breeding golden plover, based on assessments of their regional, county and district populations. Proposals 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 off-site to the west. Without mitigation, this will result in a **permanent adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the County level, a permanent adverse effect on lapwing that is significant at District level, and a permanent adverse effect on golden plover that is significant at the Site level**.

**Occupation related effects**

- 6.69 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 human disturbance. **No additional impacts on non-breeding waders on Site are therefore anticipated during the occupation phase.**

**Mitigation**

- 6.70 Loss of suitable wader habitat on Site will be mitigated for through the provision of off-site compensation in the Wader Compensation Site (8.8 ha). The land is located immediately west off-site as shown in **Figure 8**. Field 1 will continue as livestock grazed; however, the grazing regime will change through management modifications, and all livestock will be removed between 01 October and 29 February. This will improve the foraging habitat for non-breeding waders and reduce human disturbance while tending livestock during the core over-wintering period. Field 2 which is located to the south of the farm track will be converted to grass ley habitat similar to what will be lost on Site. 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.
- 6.71 See **Figure 9** for the post-intervention habitats. Full details of bespoke wader bird mitigation is set out in a separate report 'Wader Compensation Strategy' (BSG Ecology, 2025c).

**Residual effects on non-breeding waders: Site**

- 6.72 It is considered that the size of land available and the measures proposed within the Wader Compensation Site is likely to reduce the effects on non-breeding waders on Site to **a permanent adverse effect on curlew that is significant at a Local level and a permanent adverse effect on lapwing and golden plover that is not significant**.

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

- 6.73 The Wader Compensation Site has been assessed as being of County importance for non-breeding curlew and of District level importance for lapwing and golden plover, 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 resource, potentially impacting the non-breeding wader population that regularly utilise the Wader Compensation Site fields. In the absence of mitigation, this would result in a **permanent adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the County level, and a permanent adverse effect on golden plover and lapwing that is significant at the District level**.

- 6.74 Additionally, disturbance will arise from construction activity on Site in the absence of suitable screening, resulting in a **temporary adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the County level**, and a **temporary adverse effect on golden plover and lapwing that is significant at the District level**.

#### ***Operational related effects***

- 6.75 There is potential for increased disturbance during the operational phase from walkers moving in a north-south direction along Lizard Lane. There are 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). Disturbance from the Site will also arise from occupation of the dwellings. This could discourage the significant populations of non-breeding waders present from using the fields to forage, loaf and roost, resulting in a **permanent adverse effect on curlew that is significant at the County level**, and a **permanent adverse effect on golden plover and lapwing that is significant at the District level**.

#### ***Mitigation***

- 6.76 Habitat enhancements for non-breeding waders on the Wader Compensation Site (as set out in **Paragraph 6.70**) will improve the fields' suitability for non-breeding wader foraging and mitigate the effects of increased wader densities.
- 6.77 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 **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.
- 6.78 Measures to mitigate noise and vibration disturbance arising from construction will be set out in the CEMP.
- 6.79 The linear landscaping corridor proposed for the western area of Site adjacent 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.
- 6.80 Full details of bespoke wader bird mitigation are set out in a separate report 'Wader Compensation Strategy' (BSG Ecology, 2025c).

#### ***Residual effects on non-breeding waders: Wader Compensation Site***

- 6.81 It is considered that mitigation measures outlined above will reduce residual effects on non-breeding waders within the Wader Compensation Site to a level that is **not significant**.

#### ***Hedgehog***

##### ***Construction related effects***

##### ***Harm to animals during construction***

- 6.82 Hedgehog have potential to be on Site during the construction phase and potential harm to hedgehog could arise as a result of reckless killing or injury during plant movements or entrapment in trenches and pits. Due consideration is given to these impacts and suitable mitigation will be set out in a CEMP which will reduce the impact to a level that is **not significant**.

##### ***Loss of suitable habitat and habitat connectivity***

- 6.83 During construction, the Site will be de-vegetated, regularly disturbed and overall habitat suitability for hedgehog will be reduced. This may present a barrier to hedgehog dispersal moving north to

south or vice versa. Mill Lane to the east is a busy single carriageway and is considered to present an existing barrier to hedgehog moving east-west. Alternative suitable habitat for hedgehog foraging and dispersal is found off-site to the west. The loss of habitats on Site is therefore considered to present **a temporary adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level.**

### ***Operational related effects***

#### ***Loss of habitat connectivity***

- 6.84 Whilst the replacement of habitats on Site with POS and landscaping can partially mitigate for the loss of suitable hedgehog foraging and dispersal habitat, new fencing in private gardens often prevent hedgehog access and movement without accommodating features in their design. In the absence of mitigation measures there is the potential for a loss of habitat connectivity through the Site resulting in **a permanent adverse effect that will be significant at the Site level.**

### ***Mitigation***

- 6.85 To mitigate the loss of on-Site connectivity, accommodating features such as 'hedgehog highways' (small spaces cut out of fences or bespoke hedgehog friendly fence panels) will be installed to allow hedgehog to move between gardens, POS and newly planted landscaping features. Panels should be sympathetically positioned to encourage movement of hedgehog through garden habitats and within the green infrastructure (generally north to south), rather than in proximity to roads experiencing higher levels of vehicle movement such as the A183 and Lizard Lane (generally east to west).
- 6.86 The installation and securing of such features should be subject to an appropriately worded planning condition.

### ***Residual effects on hedgehog***

- 6.87 The mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures described above are likely to reduce the effects on this species to a level that is **not significant.**



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## 8 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

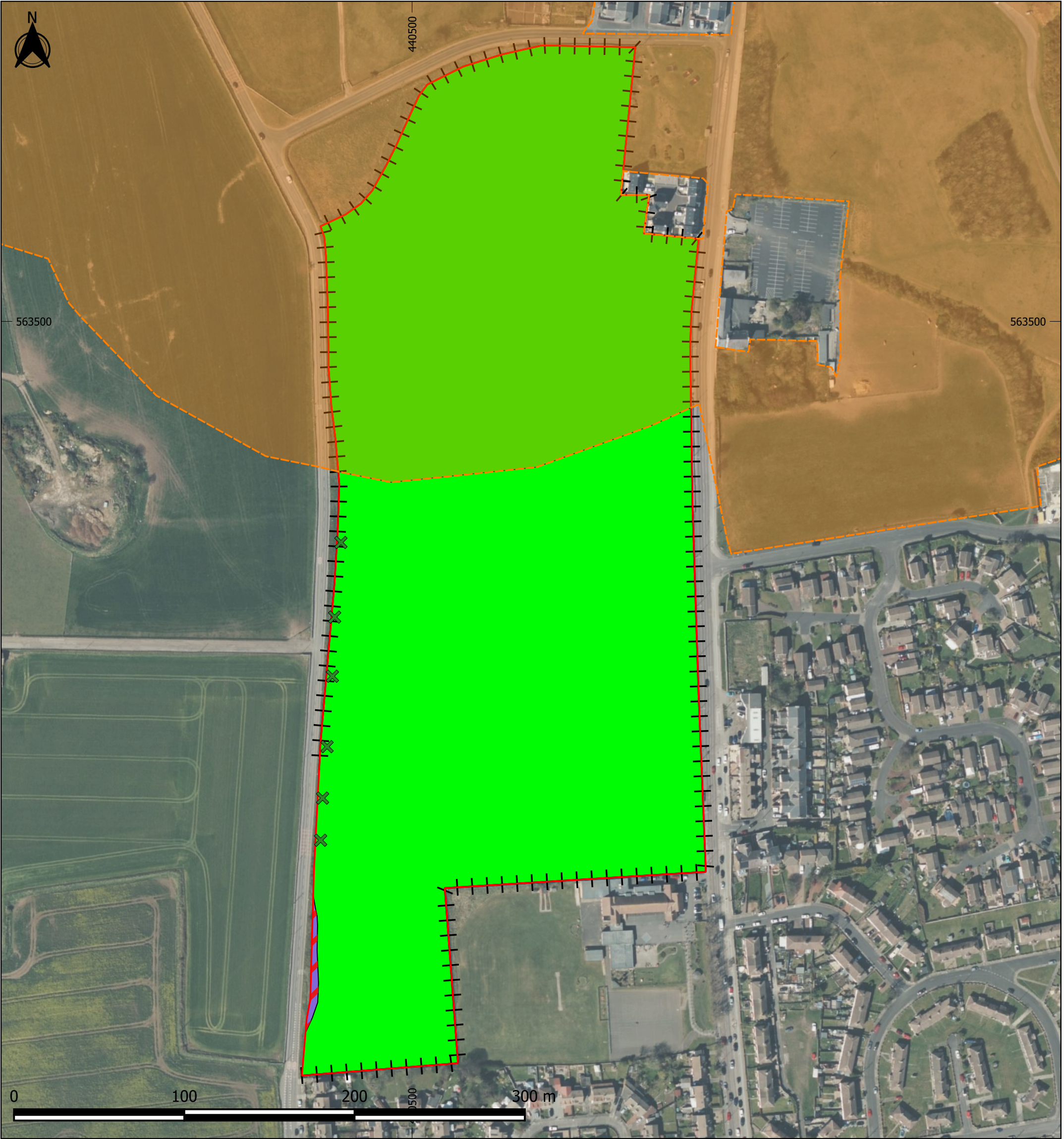
Figure 6: Breeding bird characterisation survey: BoCC Amber List species

**REDACTED**

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

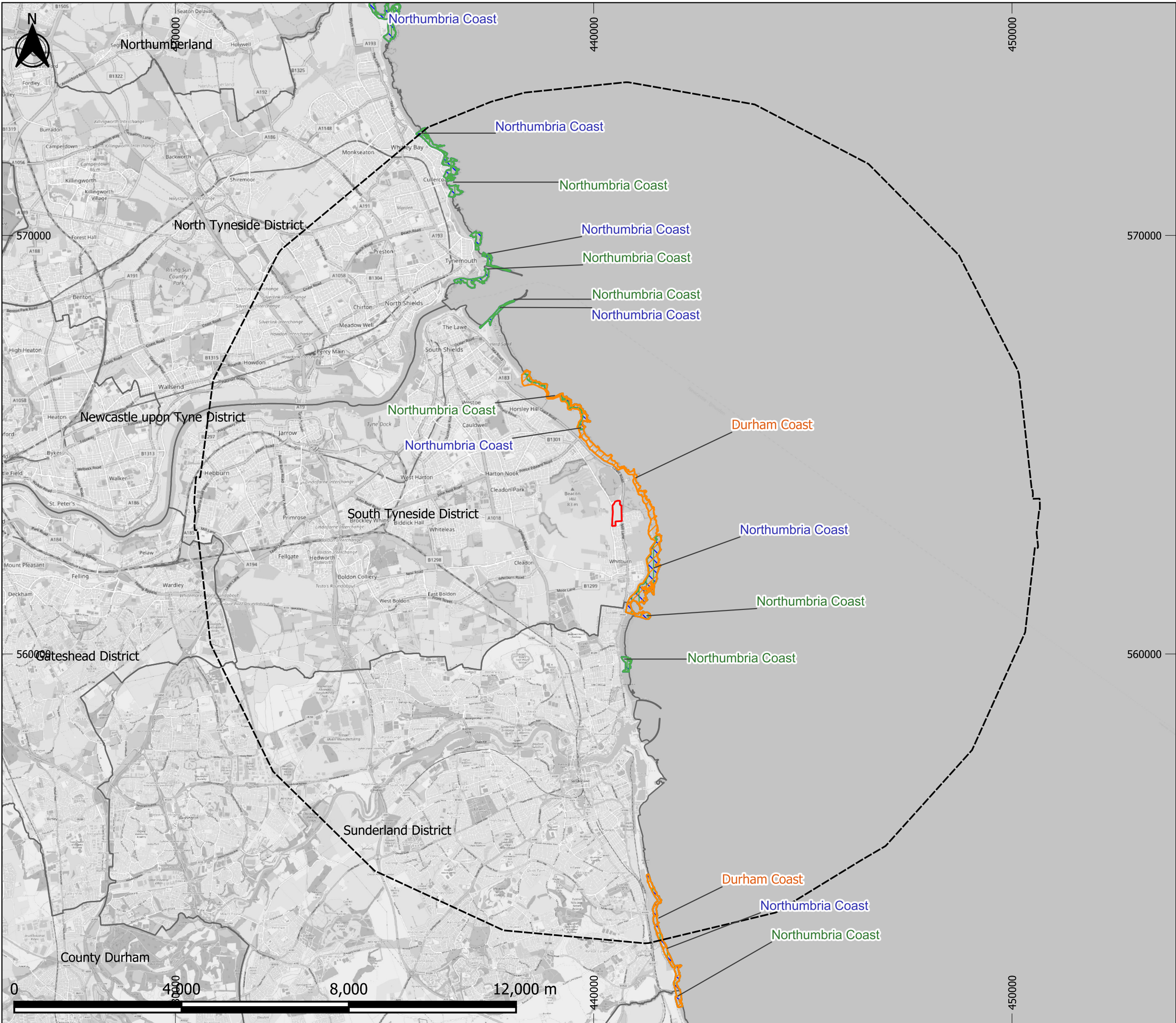
Figure 9: Wader compensation strategy post intervention UK Hab map





- 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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JOB REF: P24-775

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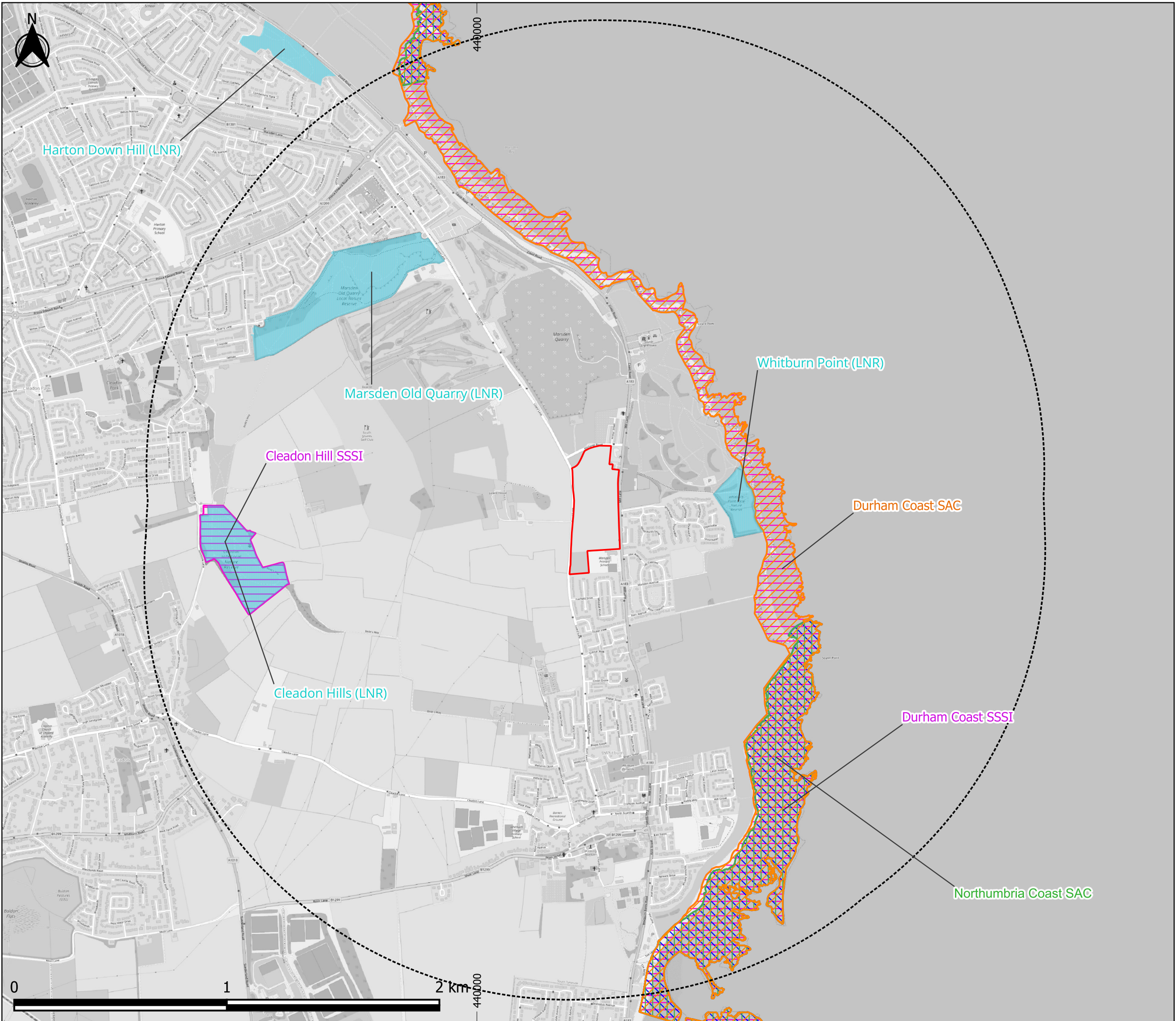
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- Legend
- Site boundary
  - 2km from site boundary
  - 10km from site boundary
  - Durham Coast Special Areas of Conservation
  - Northumbria Coast Ramsar
  - Northumbria Coast Special Protection Areas
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest
  -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

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T: 0191 303 8964  
JOB REF: P24-775

PROJECT TITLE  
LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 2b: Statutory Designated Sites within 2 km

DATE: 12/01/2026  
DRAWN: BH  
CHECKED: AP  
APPROVED: IH  
SCALE: 1:17,000  
VERSION:1.0

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Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

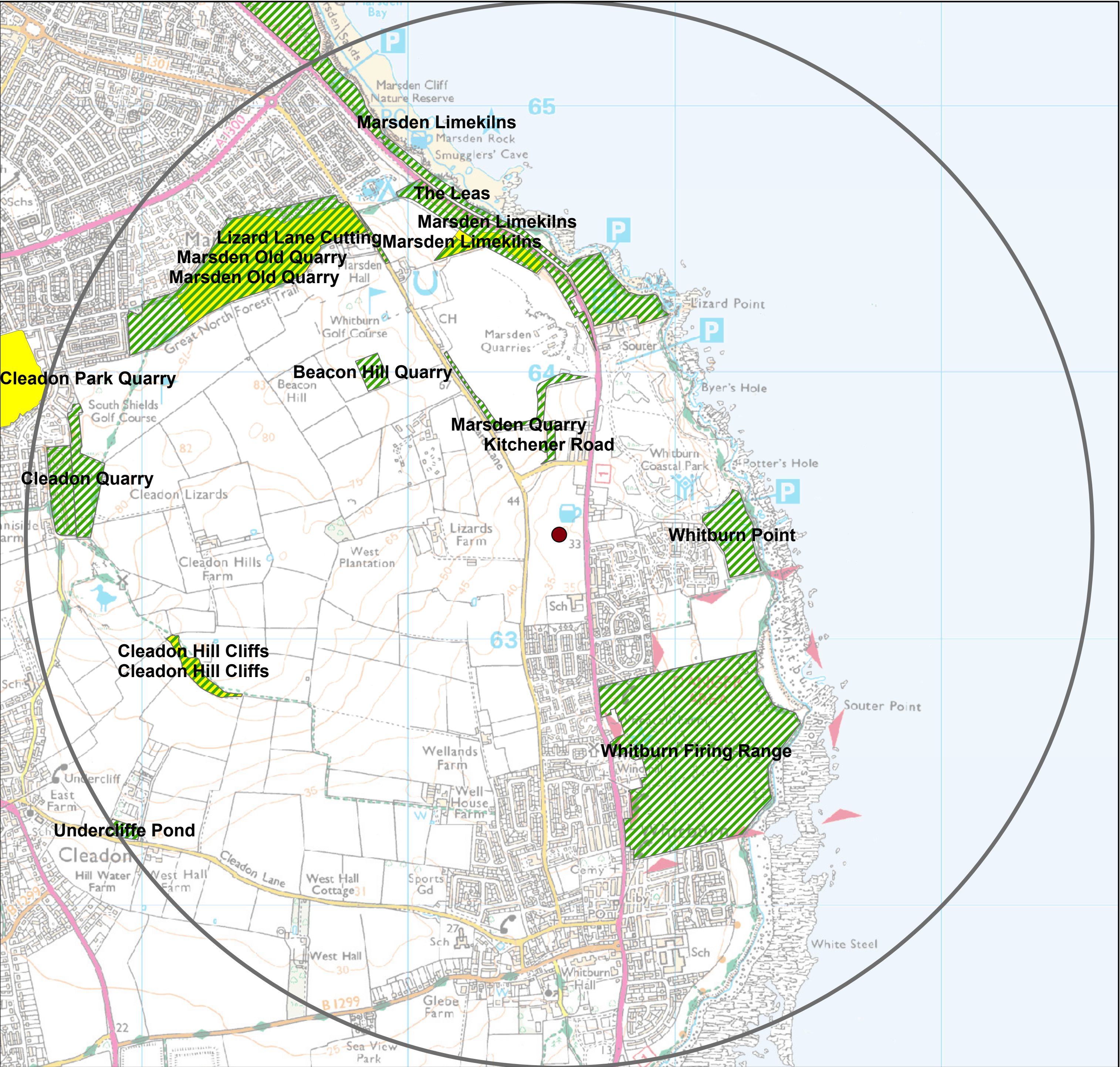
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ECOLOGICAL DATA SEARCH -  
NON STATUTORY SITES

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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JOB REF: P24-775

PROJECT TITLE  
LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE

DATE: 28/11/2025  
DRAWN: SP

CHECKED: AP  
APPROVED: IH

SCALE: 1:16,700  
VERSION: 1.1

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JOB REF: P24-775

PROJECT TITLE  
LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE  
– BoCC Red List species

DATE: 28/11/2025  
DRAWN: SP  
CHECKED: AP  
APPROVED: IH  
SCALE: 1:2,400  
VERSION:1.2

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Projection: OSGB 1936/British National Grid - EPSG 27700  
Sources: BSG Ecology survey data

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

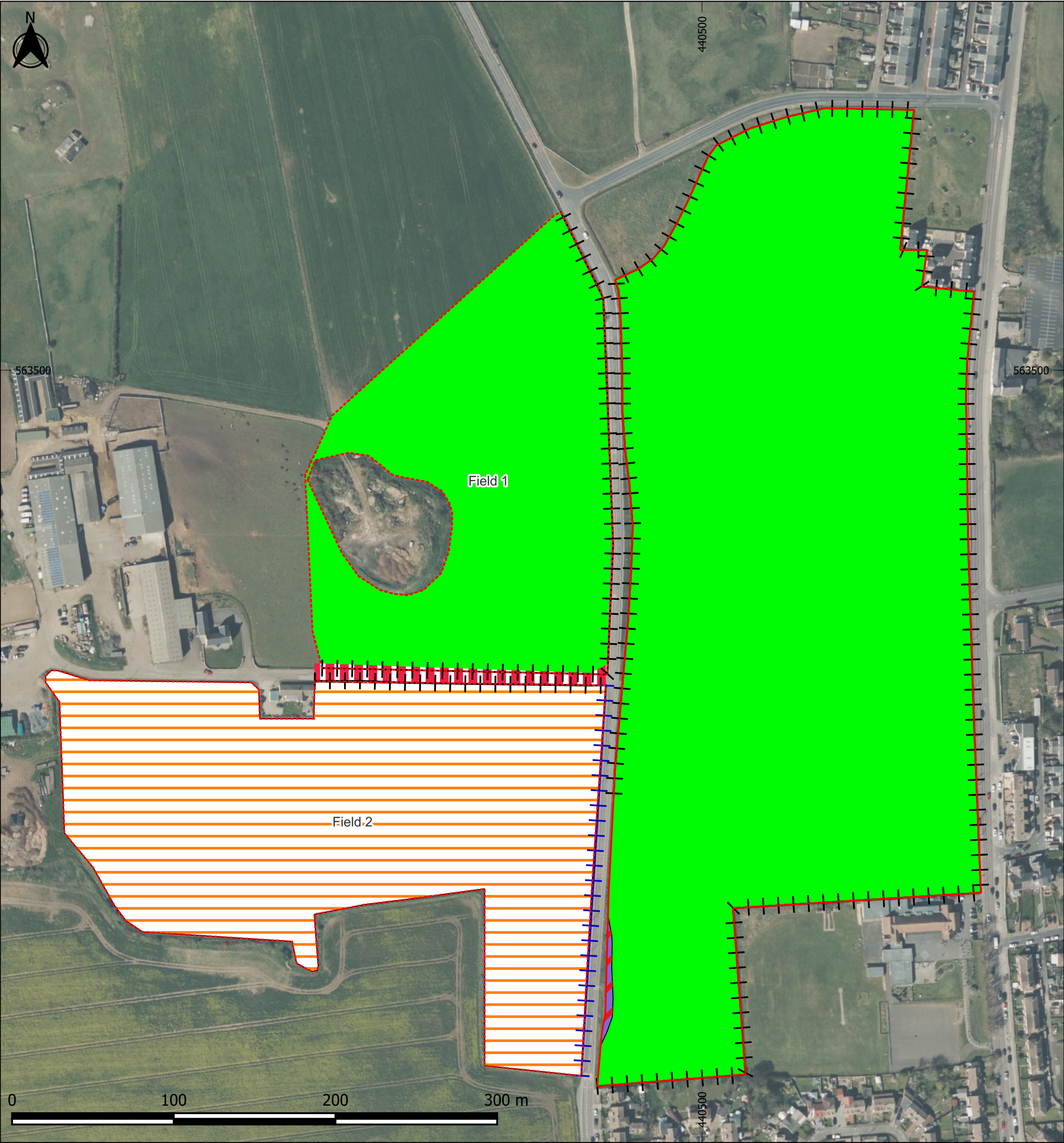
  Site boundary

Confirmed Territories

CH Amber

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





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JOB REF: P24-775

PROJECT TITLE

LAND OFF MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE

baseline habitats plan)

DATE: 24/11/2025

CHECKED: AP

SCALE: 1:2,325

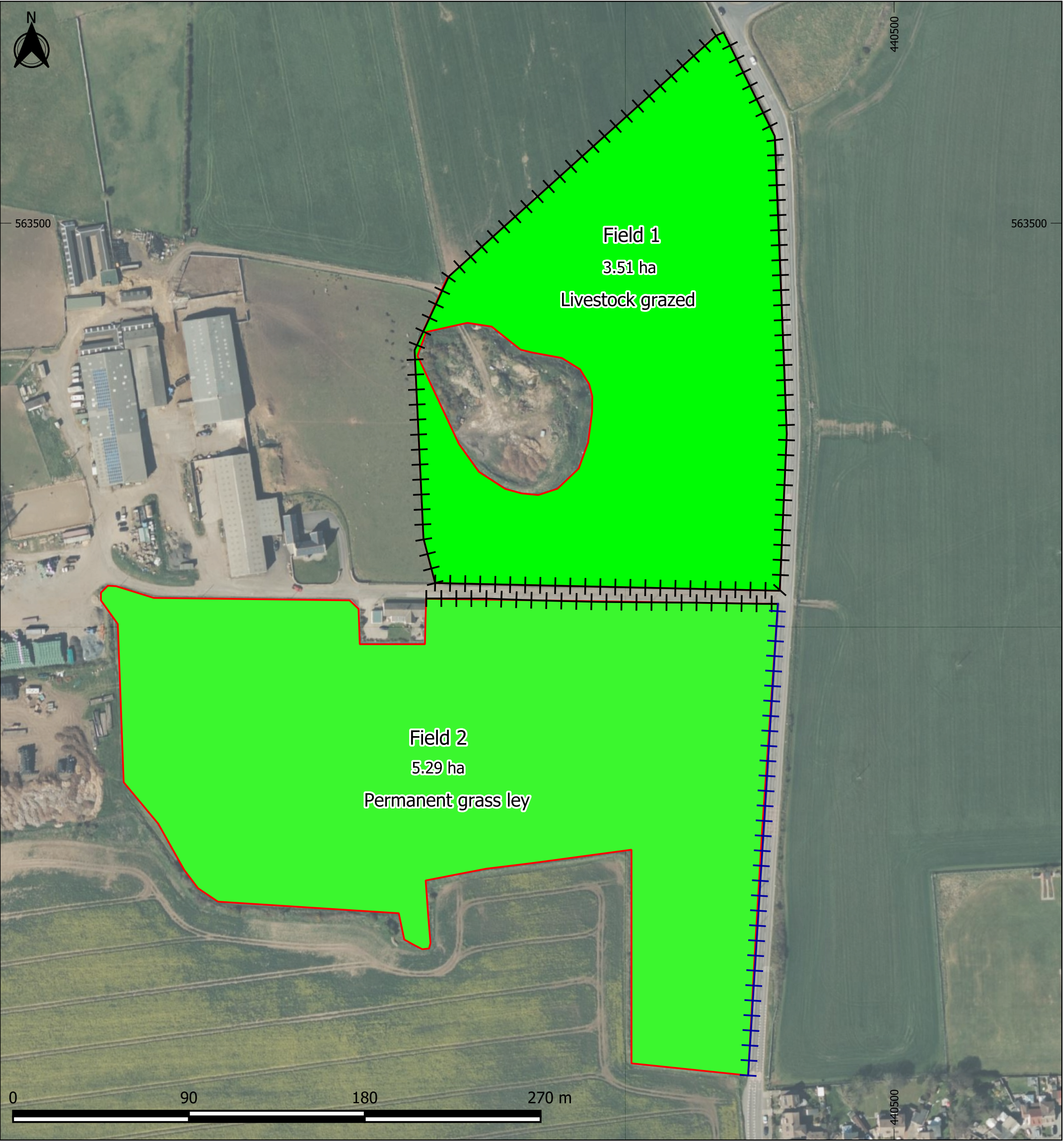
DRAWN: SP

APPROVED: IH

VERSION:1.0

- Legend
- Fence
  - Wall
  - Cereal crops
  - Developed land; sealed surface
  - Mixed scrub
  - Modified grassland
  - Off-site boundary
  - Site boundary





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JOB REF: P24-775

PROJECT TITLE  
MILL LANE, WHITBURN

DRAWING TITLE  
post intervention UKhab map

DATE: 18/12/2025  
DRAWN: SP  
CHECKED: AP  
APPROVED: IH  
SCALE: 1:1,921  
VERSION:1.1

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



## 9 Photographs



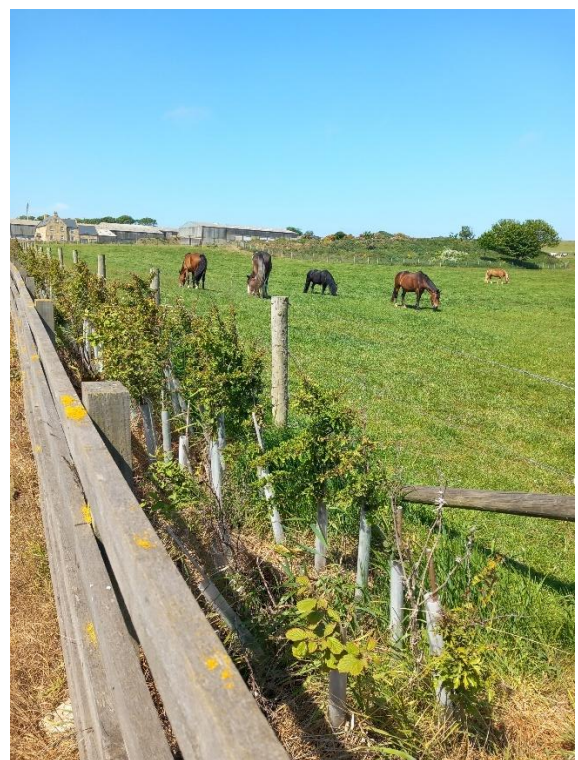
**Photograph 1** – Modified grassland on Site



**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)**



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#### INDICATIVE PLANT SPECIES

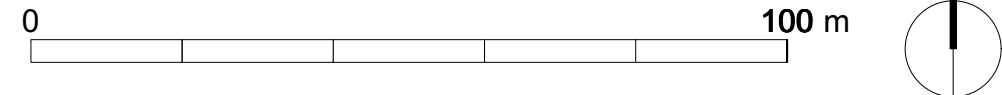
| EG1 Grass Seed Mix for coastal meadow (sown with EM3 Wildflower Mix)                                      |                             |  | COMPOSITION (%) | NOTES |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|-------|
| Proportion of base grass mix to be sown with EF3 Wildflower Mix to be advised by scheme Ecologist         |                             |  |                 |       |
| Poa pratensis                                                                                             | Smooth-stalked Meadow-grass |  | 20              |       |
| Agrostis capillaris                                                                                       | Common Bent                 |  | 10              |       |
| Cynosurus cristatus                                                                                       | Crested Dogtail             |  | 35              |       |
| Festuca rubra                                                                                             | Red Fescue                  |  | 30              |       |
| Pheum bertolonii                                                                                          | Smaller Cat's-tail          |  | 5               |       |
| Total                                                                                                     |                             |  | 100             |       |
| EM3 Wild Flowers for Coastal Meadow                                                                       |                             |  | COMPOSITION (%) | NOTES |
| Achillea millefolium                                                                                      | Yarrow                      |  | 2               |       |
| Agrimonia eupatoria                                                                                       | Agrimony                    |  | 1               |       |
| Betonica officinalis                                                                                      | Betony                      |  | 6               |       |
| Centaurea nigra                                                                                           | Common Knapweed             |  | 10              |       |
| Daucus carota                                                                                             | Wild Carrot                 |  | 5               |       |
| Echium vulgare                                                                                            | Viper's-bugloss             |  | 3               |       |
| Filipendula ulmaria                                                                                       | Meadowsweet                 |  | 1               |       |
| Galium album                                                                                              | Hedge Bedstraw              |  | 4               |       |
| Galium verum                                                                                              | Lady's Bedstraw             |  | 2               |       |
| Geranium pratense                                                                                         | Meadow Crane's-bill         |  | 2               |       |
| Leucanthemum vulgare                                                                                      | Oxeye Daisy                 |  | 5               |       |
| Malva moschata                                                                                            | Musk Mallow                 |  | 5               |       |
| Medicago lupulina                                                                                         | Black Medick                |  | 2               |       |
| Onobrychis viciifolia                                                                                     | Sainfoin                    |  | 1               |       |
| Pastinaca sativa                                                                                          | Wild Parsnip                |  | 1               |       |
| Plantago lanceolata                                                                                       | Ribwort Plantain            |  | 7               |       |
| Poterium sanguisorba                                                                                      | Saled Burnet                |  | 3               |       |
| Primula veris                                                                                             | Cowslip                     |  | 5               |       |
| Prunella vulgaris                                                                                         | Selfheal                    |  | 8               |       |
| Ranunculus acris                                                                                          | Meadow Buttercup            |  | 8               |       |
| Ranunculus bulbosus                                                                                       | Bulbous Buttercup           |  | 3               |       |
| Rhynanthus minor                                                                                          | Yellow Rattle               |  | 2               |       |
| Rumex acetosa                                                                                             | Common Sorrel               |  | 2               |       |
| Scabiosa columbaria                                                                                       | Small Scabious              |  | 1               |       |
| Silene dioica                                                                                             | Red Campion                 |  | 4               |       |
| Silene vulgaris                                                                                           | Bladder Campion             |  | 5               |       |
| Taraxacum officinale                                                                                      | Dandelion                   |  | 1               |       |
| Vicia cracca                                                                                              | Tufted Vetch                |  | 1               |       |
| Total                                                                                                     |                             |  | 100             |       |
| SU05 Wet Grassland Mix                                                                                    |                             |  | COMPOSITION (%) | NOTES |
| Wetland grass mix for SU05 area - marginal plug planting within the edges. Refer to P9 plug planting mix. |                             |  |                 |       |
| Agrostis castellana                                                                                       |                             |  | 5               |       |
| Festuca ovina                                                                                             |                             |  | 20              |       |
| Festuca rubra                                                                                             |                             |  | 65              |       |
| Festuca Rubra Commutata                                                                                   |                             |  | 10              |       |
| Total                                                                                                     |                             |  | 100             |       |

| Trees (Extra Heavy Standard Trees, POS Trees & Feature Trees)                                                                                  |    |     | Garth/Height Size (cm) | NOTES     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----|------------------------|-----------|
| Alnus glutinosa                                                                                                                                | RB | STD | 14-16cm                |           |
| Betula pendula                                                                                                                                 | RB | STD | 14-16cm                |           |
| Carbinus betulus                                                                                                                               | RB | STD | 14-16cm                |           |
| Corylus avellana                                                                                                                               | RB | STD | 14-16cm                |           |
| Pinus nigra                                                                                                                                    | RB | STD | 14-16cm                |           |
| Quercus robur                                                                                                                                  | RB | STD | 14-16cm                |           |
| Sorbus aucuparia                                                                                                                               | RB | STD | 14-16cm                |           |
| Standard Trees (POS Trees & Biodiversity Areas)                                                                                                |    |     | Garth/Height Size (cm) | NOTES     |
| Acer campestre                                                                                                                                 | RB | STD | 12-14cm                |           |
| Betula pendula                                                                                                                                 | RB | STD | 12-14cm                |           |
| Carpinus betulus                                                                                                                               | RB | STD | 12-14cm                |           |
| Corylus avellana                                                                                                                               | RB | STD | 12-14cm                |           |
| Prunus avium                                                                                                                                   | RB | STD | 12-14cm                |           |
| Quercus robur                                                                                                                                  | RB | STD | 12-14cm                |           |
| Feathered Trees (Northern/Northwest Biodiversity Area)                                                                                         |    |     | Garth/Height Size (cm) | NOTES     |
| Acer campestre                                                                                                                                 | B  | FTH | 180-210cm              |           |
| Alnus glutinosa                                                                                                                                | B  | FTH | 180-210cm              |           |
| Betula pendula                                                                                                                                 | B  | FTH | 180-210cm              |           |
| Corylus avellana                                                                                                                               | B  | FTH | 180-210cm              |           |
| Crataegus monogyna                                                                                                                             | B  | FTH | 180-210cm              |           |
| Sorbus aria (Lutescens)                                                                                                                        | B  | FTH | 180-210cm              |           |
| Sorbus aucuparia                                                                                                                               | B  | FTH | 180-210cm              |           |
| Species Rich Native Hedgerow Mix                                                                                                               |    |     | COMPOSITION %          | Size (cm) |
| Species rich hedge mix planted @ 6/m in a Double Staggered Row. To be planted in species groups of approximately 10.                           |    |     |                        |           |
| Cornus sanguinea                                                                                                                               |    |     | 5                      | 60-80     |
| Corylus avellana                                                                                                                               |    |     | 20                     | 60-80     |
| Crataegus monogyna                                                                                                                             |    |     | 40                     | 60-80     |
| Ilex aquifolium                                                                                                                                |    |     | 5                      | CSL 40-60 |
| Prunus spinosa                                                                                                                                 |    |     | 15                     | 60-80     |
| Rosa canina                                                                                                                                    |    |     | 5                      | 60-80     |
| Viburnum opulus                                                                                                                                |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Single Species Hedgerow Mix                                                                                                                    |    |     | Size (cm)              | NOTES     |
| Single species mix to development frontages and key interfaces within the development. Planted as containerised stock subject to availability. |    |     |                        |           |
| Carpinus betulus                                                                                                                               |    |     | 40-60                  | CSL       |
| Native Scrub/Shrub Mix                                                                                                                         |    |     | COMPOSITION %          | Size (cm) |
| Native Low Scrub/Shrub Planting Mix planted @ 1/m2. Individual varieties to be planted in groups of approximately 5-9.                         |    |     |                        |           |
| Acer campestre                                                                                                                                 |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Corylus avellana                                                                                                                               |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Cornus sanguinea                                                                                                                               |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Crataegus monogyna                                                                                                                             |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Ilex aquifolium                                                                                                                                |    |     | 5                      | CSL 40-60 |
| Prunus avium                                                                                                                                   |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Prunus spinosa                                                                                                                                 |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Rosa canina                                                                                                                                    |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Sorbus aucuparia                                                                                                                               |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Viburnum opulus                                                                                                                                |    |     | 5                      | 60-80     |
| Viburnum opulus                                                                                                                                |    |     | 10                     | 60-80     |
| Total                                                                                                                                          |    |     | 100                    |           |
| Amenity Shrub Mix                                                                                                                              |    |     | COMPOSITION %          | Size (cm) |
| 3/5L pots dependent on species selection                                                                                                       |    |     |                        |           |
| Ajuga reptans                                                                                                                                  |    |     |                        |           |
| Alchemilla mollis                                                                                                                              |    |     |                        |           |
| Aucuba japonica                                                                                                                                |    |     |                        |           |
| Bergenia cordifolia                                                                                                                            |    |     |                        |           |
| Carex comans                                                                                                                                   |    |     |                        |           |
| Ceanothus thyrsiflorus repens                                                                                                                  |    |     |                        |           |
| Choiya ternata                                                                                                                                 |    |     |                        |           |
| Cornus alba                                                                                                                                    |    |     |                        |           |
| Eunymia fortunei                                                                                                                               |    |     |                        |           |
| Geranium macrorrhizum                                                                                                                          |    |     |                        |           |
| Hebe                                                                                                                                           |    |     |                        |           |
| Hebe pinguifolia                                                                                                                               |    |     |                        |           |
| Hedera colchica                                                                                                                                |    |     |                        |           |
| Heuchera                                                                                                                                       |    |     |                        |           |
| Hydrangea arborescens                                                                                                                          |    |     |                        |           |
| Hylotelephium                                                                                                                                  |    |     |                        |           |
| Hypericum 'Hidcote'                                                                                                                            |    |     |                        |           |
| Lavandula angustifolia                                                                                                                         |    |     |                        |           |
| Lonicera leata                                                                                                                                 |    |     |                        |           |
| Photinia x fraseri                                                                                                                             |    |     |                        |           |
| Potentilla fruticosa                                                                                                                           |    |     |                        |           |
| Hedera colchica                                                                                                                                |    |     |                        |           |
| Sedum                                                                                                                                          |    |     |                        |           |
| Skimmia japonica                                                                                                                               |    |     |                        |           |
| Stipa tenuissima                                                                                                                               |    |     |                        |           |
| Viburnum davidii                                                                                                                               |    |     |                        |           |
| Vinca minor                                                                                                                                    |    |     |                        |           |
| P9 Plug Planting                                                                                                                               |    |     | COMPOSITION %          | Size (cm) |
| Marginal planting for SU05 basin upper edges and surrounding grassland edges (within wet grassland mix areas).                                 |    |     |                        |           |
| Salix umbellata                                                                                                                                |    |     |                        |           |
| Salix pseudacorus                                                                                                                              |    |     |                        |           |
| Lythrum salicaria                                                                                                                              |    |     |                        |           |
| Myosotis scorpioides                                                                                                                           |    |     |                        |           |
| Ranunculus flammula                                                                                                                            |    |     |                        |           |
| Bulb Planting                                                                                                                                  |    |     | COMPOSITION %          | Size (cm) |
| Within POS and grassland verges adjacent to key pedestrian routes.                                                                             |    |     |                        |           |
| Anemone nemorosa                                                                                                                               |    |     |                        |           |
| Hyacinthoides non-scripta                                                                                                                      |    |     |                        |           |
| Narcissus pseudonarcissus                                                                                                                      |    |     |                        |           |

- 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 coastal views
  - Existing cycle routes

- PROPOSED LANDSCAPE FEATURES**
- Trees
  - Specimen shrub
  - Single species native hedgerow
  - Mixed species native hedgerow
  - Single species hedgerow mix
  - Native scrub/shrub mix
  - Amenity shrub mix
  - P9 plug planting
  - Indicative ornamental groundcover, shrubs & herbaceous planting
  - Species rich 'coastal meadow' grass - EM3 Wildflowers for Coastal Meadow or similar approved
  - Open space amenity/mown grass

- Pond: Wetlands - EM8F Wild Flowers For Wetland or similar approved
- Development plot front garden turf
- Development plot rear garden grass seed
- Bulb planting
- Footpath - timber edged crushed stone
- Indicative location of LEAP/LAP
- Indicative location of trim trail equipment
- Bow top play railings with 2no. gates TBC
- Principle circulation routes
- Green corridor
- Indicative bench location



#### 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: A

Approved by: RB

**PEGASUS GROUP**

| Rev | Date       | By  | Note                         |
|-----|------------|-----|------------------------------|
| A   | 2025.12.15 | NW  | Amends in line with comments |
| B   | 2025.12.11 | KCH | Amends in line with comments |
|     | 2025.11.17 | NW  | First draft                  |



## 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 06/2005<sup>10</sup> 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".

<sup>10</sup> ODPM Circular 06/2005. *Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impacts within the Planning System* (2005). HMSO Norwich.

### 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 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.UK<sup>11</sup>) 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

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<sup>11</sup>

## **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 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 Duty<sup>12</sup> 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 Defra<sup>13</sup> 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 Framework<sup>14</sup>, 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.

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<sup>12</sup> [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Complying with the biodiversity duty - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>14</sup> 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>)



### 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.

### 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’<sup>15</sup>) (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 Plan<sup>16</sup> and tackle habitat fragmentation, the Council will:*

<sup>15</sup> 2009/147/EC Birds Directive (30 November 2009. European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

- 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;*
  - 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<br>Sunset Times | Survey Time   | Wind (Beaufort) | Cloud Cover (Oktas) | Precipitation | Temperature (°C) |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|
| HT = High Tide; LT = Low Tide; CRE = Crepuscular |             |                       |               |                 |                     |               |                  |
| <b>WINTERING WADER SURVEYS</b>                   |             |                       |               |                 |                     |               |                  |
| 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                |
| <b>SPRING PASSAGE WADER SURVEYS</b>              |             |                       |               |                 |                     |               |                  |
| 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               |
| <b>AUTUMN PASSAGE WADER SURVEYS</b>              |             |                       |               |                 |                     |               |                  |
| 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          |
| <b>*Flying over</b> |                                            |           |             |          |           |             |          |           |             |

**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         | -        | -         | -           |
| <b>*Flying over</b> |                                                         |           |             |          |           |             |          |           |             |

## Appendix 5: Breeding bird 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 <sup>17</sup> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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>    | ✓            | -                                     | 6                                                 | 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>    | REDACTED     |                                       |                                                   | Amber       | Schedule 1     | -                                                             |
| Reed bunting             | <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i> | -            | -                                     | -                                                 | Amber       | Section 41     | -                                                             |
| Wheatear                 | <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>    | -            | -                                     | -                                                 | Amber       | -              | -                                                             |

<sup>17</sup> 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>               | REDACTED |   |   | 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