

For and on behalf of
Boningale Developments Limited

Ecology Note on Additional Bird Ringing Data

Albrighton South

Outline application to include access for a mixed-use development comprising up to 800 dwellings, a care home of up to 80 units, a secondary school and local centre with associated access, infrastructure, landscaping and drainage

Shropshire Council Reference: 24/02108/OUT

PINS Reference: 6007402

Prepared by Daniel Ross

Beamsley Ecology Ltd

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This note has been prepared on behalf of the Appellant (Boningale Developments Ltd) at the Inspector's request following the submission of additional bird ringing records by Ms Jenni Hood, an Interested Party (IP). It considers the information contained in her document dated 20 September 2026 and its implications for the ecological assessments submitted to date, including the wintering and breeding bird survey reports (CD9.5, CD9.28), my Proof of Evidence (CD1.17) and the evidence given during my ecology examination-in-chief.
- 1.2 The IP submission comprises ringing records for greenfinch, skylark and woodcock at Church Farm and associated land, together with maps identifying the recording areas and a statement of limitations. These records provide useful supplementary information about the occurrence and use of the local landscape by these species. I have considered this information in reaching the conclusions set out below.

2.0 SUMMARY OF SUBMITTED DATA

- 2.1 The records are summarised as follows:

Table 1: *IP Data summary*

Species	Period Covered	Summary
Greenfinch	2021–2025	105 newly ringed individuals, all recorded at Church Farm Feeder.
Skylark	2021–2024	123 capture records, comprising 120 new ringings and three subsequent encounters. Records fall between October and March and relate to Footpath Fields, Ditch Fields and Yard Fields.
Woodcock	2021–2024	21 capture records, comprising 20 new ringings and one subsequent encounter. Records fall between November and February and relate to Footpath Fields and Ditch Fields.

- 2.2 The supplementary submission does not assess the implications of the records for the proposed development or expressly suggest that they materially alter the conclusions of the existing ecological assessments. This note considers those implications.
- 2.3 These are cumulative records collected over several years. They do not represent the number of birds present simultaneously, breeding-territory estimates or population estimates for the appeal site.
- 2.4 The Ditch Fields recording area lies outside the appeal site, south of Holyhead Road. The Church Farm Footpath Fields recording area partially overlaps the appeal site. Although the recording areas are mapped, individual capture locations within them are not provided. Consequently, it is not possible to establish which Footpath Fields records relate to land within the appeal site, and the capture totals cannot be attributed wholly to land affected by the proposals.
- 2.5 The Appellant's bird surveys and the ringing records differ in their purpose, methods, geographical coverage and recording periods. The surveys carried out by the Appellant during the determination of the application and during the appeal were intended to characterise bird use of the site and inform the assessment of development effects; they were not an exhaustive inventory of every bird using the site or surrounding landscape. The additional records complement that evidence and are not inconsistent with the survey findings.

3.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The ecological assessment follows a staged process. Existing species records, together with an appraisal of habitat suitability, inform the need for and scope of breeding and wintering bird surveys. These surveys characterise bird use of the site and provide evidence to inform the assessment of potential development effects and the mitigation required. Survey findings are considered alongside existing records, habitat information and other relevant evidence. The additional ringing records have been reviewed within this process to establish whether they identify bird use or potential effects that would materially alter the assessment or require changes to the proposed mitigation.
- 3.2 Greenfinch was recorded during the Appellant's wintering and breeding surveys. The additional records demonstrate use of Church Farm Feeder over several years. Supplementary feeding attracts and concentrates birds at that location, and the cumulative total is not directly comparable with observations made during individual survey visits across the appeal site. The records do not establish the extent to which these individuals used or depended upon habitats within the development footprint. The larger cumulative total does not, in itself, indicate that the assessment of effects on greenfinch requires alteration.
- 3.3 Skylark was recorded during both the Appellant's wintering and breeding bird surveys. The wintering survey recorded a peak count of 26 and identified an adverse effect at Local level arising from the loss of winter feeding opportunities. The ringing records provide further evidence of autumn, winter and early spring use of the local fields, including at night, and reinforce the need for the mitigation strategy to address winter habitat requirements alongside breeding requirements. The need for a mitigation strategy to address winter habitat has been acknowledged by the Appellant
- 3.4 Woodcock was recorded during the March 2026 breeding bird survey and assessed as an overwintering visitor. The additional records demonstrate repeated winter use of the Church Farm recording areas, including nocturnal use of open fields. They do not provide evidence of breeding within the appeal site. Their relevance includes the potential loss of winter feeding opportunities, which should be considered alongside the retention of woodland and other sheltering habitats.
- 3.5 The proposals include retention of the majority of woodland, mature trees and hedgerows, together with habitat creation and management within on-site landscaped areas, the off-site bird-mitigation area and BNG land. This combination provides opportunities to maintain sheltering habitats and deliver feeding resources for the species concerned. The additional records can contribute to the detailed design and management prescriptions needed to secure those functions, including suitable winter food availability and vegetation structure.
- 3.6 I have considered the additional information in the context of the existing survey evidence, the distribution of the recording areas and the proposed mitigation and compensation. In my professional judgement, it does not materially alter the conclusions of the Wintering and Breeding Bird Survey Reports, my Proof of Evidence or the evidence given during my ecology examination-in-chief. My assessment, taking account of the proposed mitigation and compensation and its implementation, remains that no likely significant residual effects on birds have been identified. This does not imply an absence of habitat loss or adverse effects before mitigation.
- 3.7 The additional records should be incorporated into the detailed Ecological Impact Assessment at reserved matters stage and used to inform the design of on-site landscaping, development of the Bird Mitigation Strategy, and the design and management of the off-site bird-mitigation and BNG land. They provide further information for refining the implementation of the proposed measures without requiring a fundamental change to the overall mitigation and compensation approach.