

Albrighton South

Appeal reference: 6007402

Ecology Note: Response to Interested Party (Jenni Hood)

Prepared by Daniel Ross, Beamsley Ecology Ltd on Behalf of the Appellant

Date: 17/09/2026

- 1.1.1 This note responds to the statement of Jenni Hood dated 15 September 2026.
- 1.1.2 Ms Hood describes observations at Church Farm between 2022 and 2025, including nocturnal work using thermal-imaging equipment. These observations are relevant additional evidence. The absence of mapped locations, counts and dates for individual records limits the extent to which they can be related to the proposed site.
- 1.1.3 I have considered the observations in the context of the ecological survey carried out on behalf of the Appellant, and considered whether the additional records require changes to the proposed approach to mitigation and compensation.
- 1.1.4 The Appellant's bird surveys followed accepted methodologies intended to identify the principal bird interest, assess potential impacts and inform mitigation and compensation. They are not claimed as an exhaustive inventory of every species using the Site.
- 1.1.5 Many of the species named by Ms Hood were recorded by the Appellant's surveys, including skylark, yellowhammer, fieldfare, greenfinch, linnet, mistle thrush, starling, buzzard, kestrel and sparrowhawk. Woodcock was also recorded during the March 2026 breeding survey and assessed as an overwintering visitor. The additional named birds are grey partridge, redpoll, lesser spotted woodpecker, barn owl, short-eared owl, tawny owl, little owl and red kite. Ms Hood also reports brown hare and leverets.
- 1.1.6 The observations add to our understanding of the bird assemblage using the local landscape, including nocturnal feeding and roosting use, and these records can be used to inform management of retained habitats, proposed landscaped areas, bird-mitigation land, and BNG areas.
- 1.1.7 Grey partridge is associated with farmland, and its requirements for nesting cover and feeding habitat overlap with the proposed farmland-bird measures. The reported breeding records should therefore inform the detailed prescriptions within the Bird Mitigation Strategy.
- 1.1.8 Redpoll and lesser spotted woodpecker reinforce the relevance of retaining and managing mature trees, woodland and boundary habitats.
- 1.1.9 Brown hare was not recorded during the Appellant's surveys. Ms Hood's observations, including leverets, nevertheless indicate use of Church Farm, although the locations are insufficiently defined to establish the extent of use within the development footprint. These records should inform the management of retained open habitats and precautionary working methods.
- 1.1.10 Barn owl was not recorded during the Appellant's breeding or wintering bird surveys, a dead barn owl was incidentally recorded along the southern boundary of the Site during recent bat

survey. Ms Hood's observations nevertheless identify its presence at Church Farm. The locations and use of the reported boxes should be checked against the proposals so that any effects on nesting or roosting provision and disturbance are addressed.

- 1.1.11 In my judgement, the additional observations do not indicate a need to change the overall mitigation and compensation approach. The proposed retention of the majority of woodland, mature trees and hedgerows would maintain habitat resources for woodland and boundary-associated species. The bird-mitigation and BNG land also provide opportunities to address the requirements of additional farmland species through targeted management, including nesting cover and feeding habitat for grey partridge and retained open habitat for brown hare. These benefits depend on appropriate management prescriptions and should not be assumed from habitat creation alone. The additional records should therefore inform those prescriptions, alongside assessment of the reported barn owl boxes and any associated nesting, roosting or disturbance effects.
- 1.1.12 My conclusion concerns the continued suitability of the overall approach; species-specific measures may require refinement through the detailed ecological documents.
- 1.1.13 Skylark is addressed separately.