



Boningale Developments Limited

Land to the East of Tilstock Road

Breeding Bird Report

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I Introduction

I.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This report describes the results of the Breeding Bird Surveys undertaken by PJA on behalf of Boningale Developments Ltd. between 12 May and 11 July 2025 for land off Tilstock Road, Tilstock, Shropshire.
- 1.1.2 PJA was commissioned by Boningale Developments Ltd. to undertake a suite of targeted Breeding Bird Surveys to establish the ornithological baseline conditions; particularly regarding skylarks. The site has historically been subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, undertaken by Cass Design Consultants Ltd. in support of their application (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Cass Design Consultants Ltd, October 2024), which highlighted the requirement for further targeted species surveys. The following terms are used:
- **Project** – Land off Tilstock Road, Tilstock, Shropshire; and
 - **Survey feature** – Feature of potential impact.
- 1.1.3 This report is intended to be read with reference to location map Figure 1-1 / Appendix A, Figure 1.

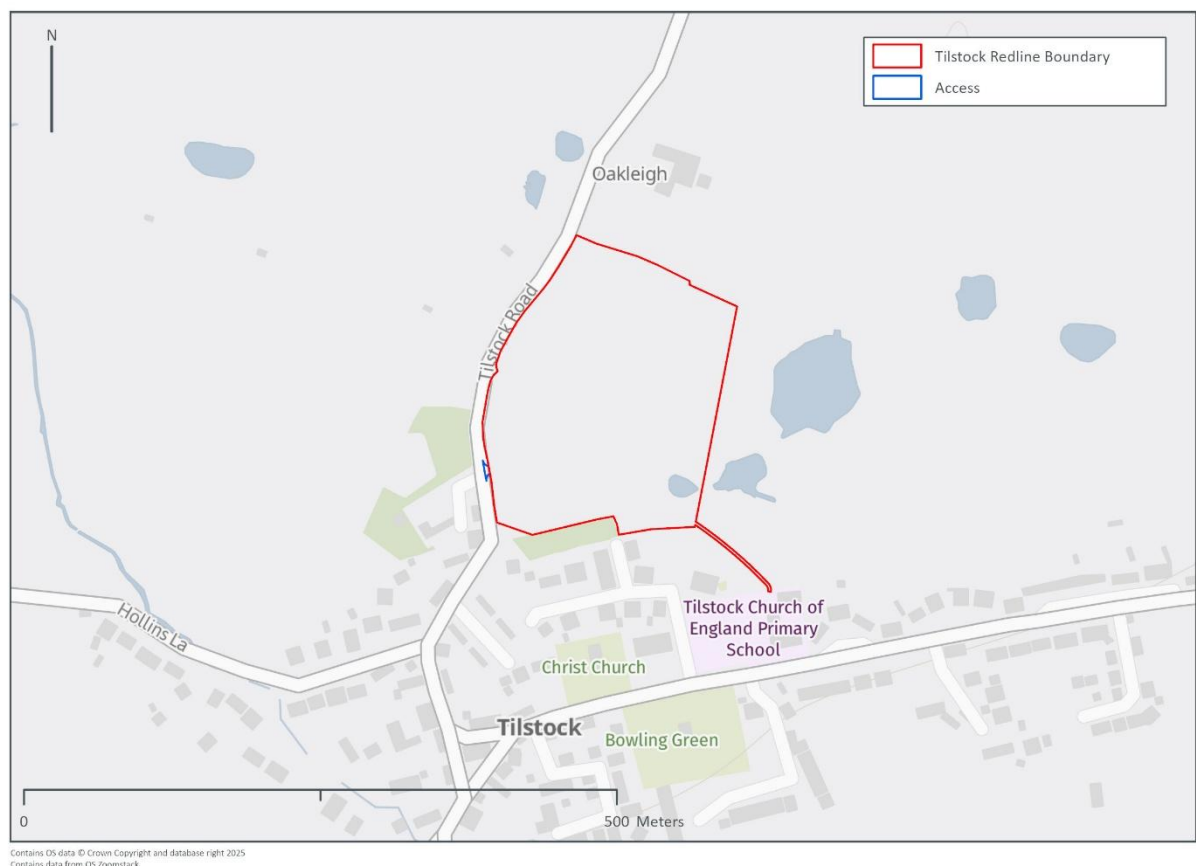


Figure 1-1. Land off Tilstock Road, Tilstock, Shropshire.



1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 Surveys were commissioned in order to:

- provide baseline information on breeding ornithological features within the surveyed area;
- Identify the presence of notable breeding bird species within the surveyed area;
- establish the presence / likely absence of skylark within the surveyed area highlighted during the PEA; and,
- determine the need for further survey and / or mitigation.

1.2.2 This report provides the results of the surveys undertaken between 12 May and 11 July 2025, drawing conclusions from the findings of the surveys. The report additionally makes recommendations to further surveys and / or species mitigation required as a result of skylark and / or other notable breeding bird species being identified utilising features; where required. It represents a snapshot of conditions at the time of survey, and it should be noted that the findings may be subject to change.

1.3 Project overview

1.3.1 The project covers approximately 4 hectares (ha) of agricultural grassland, bounded by hedgerows, containing two ponds. The site is located immediately north of the village of Tilstock, centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SJ 54275 38065.

1.3.2 The proposed development comprises the erection of 70 residential dwellings, including 10 affordable units, together with associated landscaping, drainage, and infrastructure works. Vehicular access to the site will be provided via Tilstock Road, subject to a future Section 278 agreement.



2 Legislation and Guidance

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 Relevant legislation and guidance relating to breeding birds is summarised below. This legislation and guidance have been used to inform the evaluation of the conservation statuses of the species recorded when assessing the importance of the breeding bird populations present.

2.2 Legislation

European Commission Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)

- 2.2.1 A number of bird species found in the UK (including some breeding species) are protected at an international level under the European Commission (EC) *Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds*, 2009 (2009/147/EC). These species are afforded an enhanced level of legal protection and all European Union member states have a responsibility to maintain the population status of these species. This Directive has been transposed into British law through the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations*, 2017 (as amended).
- 2.2.2 Species listed on Annex 1 of the Directive are those for which the UK Government is required to take special conservation measures (including the designation of land as Special Protection Areas (SPAs)) to conserve populations of these species throughout their distributions. These sites form part of the UK's national site network of core sites that are protected for rare and threatened species.
- 2.2.3 Bird species listed on Annex 1 of the Directive are those which are deemed to be:
- in danger of extinction;
 - vulnerable to specific changes to their habitats;
 - considered rare due to their small population sizes and / or restricted local distributions; and
 - in need of particular attention due to their specific habitat requirements.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

- 2.2.4 All wild birds are protected in the UK under Section 1 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act* (WCA) 1981 (as amended). This protection has been extended through the *Countryside Rights of Way* (CRoW) Act, 2000. Under this legislation it is an offence to intentionally:
- kill, injure or take any wild bird;
 - take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; and
 - take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.



2.2.5 In addition, certain species are listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA receiving special protection under Sections 1(4) and 1(5), which confer penalties where the above-mentioned offences are committed, in addition to making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb any such bird whilst building its nest or whilst it is in or near a nest containing eggs or dependent young; and
- disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006

2.2.6 The *Natural Environment and Rural Communities* (NERC) Act, 2006 requires local and governmental authorities and departments to have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity and measures associated with public rights of way and other rural affairs.

2.2.7 A number of bird species are listed as being “Species of Principal Importance for conservation” in England under Section 41 (S41) of the NERC Act 2006, and as such they are a material consideration during the planning process. These “Species of Principal Importance” are those identified as requiring action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), which continue to be regarded as species of conservation priority under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (which succeeded the UKBAP in July 2012).

2.3 Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

2.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. This includes requirements for the contribution to and enhancement of the natural environment, including habitats and biodiversity. The NPPF specifies the obligations that Local Authorities and the UK Government have regarding statutory designated sites and protected species under UK and international legislation and how these should be delivered in the planning system.

Birds of Conservation Concern

2.3.2 The Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red, Amber and Green lists categorise the UK’s regularly occurring bird species according to their level of Conservation Concern (Stanbury *et al.*, 2021). Although these listings confer no legal protection, they are fundamental in guiding conservation action for individual species when birds may be affected by a plan or project.



Red list species

2.3.3 These are species of high conservation concern, including:

- species that are globally threatened according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria;
- species with a historical breeding decline that have not shown a substantial recent recovery;
- species that have shown a severe breeding decline over the last 25 years or longer term;
- species that have shown a severe breeding range decline over the last 25 years or longer term; and
- species whose non-breeding populations have declined over the last 25 years or longer term.

Amber list species

2.3.4 These are species of medium conservation concern, including:

- species of European Conservation Concern;
- species whose populations have declined historically but which have made a substantial recent recovery;
- species whose breeding populations have declined moderately over the last 25 years or longer term;
- species that have shown a moderate breeding range decline over the last 25 years or longer term;
- species whose non-breeding populations have declined moderately over the last 25 years or longer term; and
- rare breeders or non-breeding rarity species with internationally important or localised populations.

Green list species

2.3.5 Green list species fulfil none of the criteria detailed above. As such, they have stable or increasing populations and are not currently of conservation concern.

2.3.6 Non-native species are not afforded Red, Amber or Green list status.



3 Methodology

3.1 Desk-based assessment

3.1.1 A desk study has been carried out to identify nature conservation designations, designations of ornithological interest, and to obtain existing records of bird species potentially relevant to the project. Biological records data were requested from the Telford Ecological Data Service (TEDS) as well as online publicly available sources and previous reports in relation to the project, detailed below:

- Defra MAGIC Interactive map (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk>);
- National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas (<https://nbnatlas.org>); and,
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Cass Design Consultants Ltd, October 2024.

3.1.2 The desk study included a search for:

- International nature conservation designations (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)) within 10 km of the proposed Project to identify sites where an ornithological interest is the primary reason for designation.
- National statutory nature conservation designations (Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)) within 2 km of the proposed Project where an ornithological interest is the primary reason for designation.
- Reference was also made to Ordnance Survey maps of the wider area and online aerial images (www.google.co.uk/maps) in order to determine any habitat features of potential interest for birds in the area.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 A breeding bird survey was undertaken within the Survey Area between 12 May and 11 July 2025, following guidance from the Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group (2025), comprising a series of six staggered survey visits undertaken at least seven days apart.

3.2.2 Five of the six visits were carried out from dawn and finished by 12:00 hrs, whilst one visit was conducted at dusk (i.e., during the last few hours of the day and extended beyond sunset for at least one hour). The dusk survey was conducted to identify species not readily recorded by conventional surveys at dawn, as species are known to vary in their detectability throughout the day.

3.2.3 The survey area comprised the Project area, plus up to a 100m buffer ('Wider Survey Area'), observed from within the Project area boundary to specifically record the presence of Skylark. Suitable optical equipment was used to observe bird behaviour. Survey direction walked alternated

on each visit, to ensure that all areas were covered at various times of morning across the duration of the survey. A summary of the transect extent is provided in Appendix B Figure 2.

- 3.2.4 During the survey, all bird registrations were recorded on scaled field maps using standard British Trust for Ornithology ('BTO') species codes and behaviour notations (such as calling, singing, carrying food, active nest). The approximate locations of bird territories within the Survey area were determined using standard territory mapping techniques to identify and isolate areas within which birds consistently displayed breeding behaviours (following Gilbert *et al.* 1998).
- 3.2.5 'Notable Species' relevant to the Project were defined as those listed on Birds of Conservation Concern ('BoCC') 'Amber List' and 'Red List' species (Stanbury *et al.*, 20214 and Stanbury *et al.*, 2025), Annex 16 listed species, Schedule 1 listed species, birds listed under Section 41 (S41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) and Shropshire Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) species.
- 3.2.6 All breeding bird survey visits were undertaken by suitably competent and experienced ecologists, with all surveys conducted during clement conditions.

3.3 Interpretation of survey results

Assessment of breeding status

- 3.3.1 Results from the survey visits were used to assess the breeding statuses of all bird species recorded, based on the criteria presented in Gilbert *et al.* (1998), additionally taking into consideration understanding of the breeding ecology of the species in question. These criteria are based on the principle that many species are territorial during the breeding season and, as such, observation of certain behaviours (e.g., singing, displaying, aggressive interactions) can be used to infer breeding or likely breeding by a given species.
- 3.3.2 Breeding by a particular species within the Site was assessed as being 'Confirmed' if:
- a nest or recently used nest was identified;
 - a nest with young was identified or heard;
 - recently fledged young were identified or heard;
 - adults were observed entering and / or leaving a nest site, or an adult was observed incubating eggs; or
 - a territory was positively identified due to the number and type of observations recorded (i.e., a combination of observations of a male singing from the same area of suitable nesting habitat on multiple occasions, adults seen visiting a probable nest site at that location and / or observation of a pair at that location).
- 3.3.3 Breeding by a particular species within the Site can be assessed as being 'Probable' if:



- nest-building was observed;
- a bird was observed visiting a probable nest site on a single occasion;
- agitated behaviour or alarm calls were observed in or near suitable nesting habitat;
- a pair were observed in suitable nesting habitat during the breeding season;
- courtship and/or display were observed; or
- a male was observed singing in the same location on two or more occasions.

3.3.4 Breeding by a particular species within the Site can be assessed as being 'Possible' if:

- a male was heard singing on one occasion during the breeding season; or
- birds were observed in or near suitable nesting habitat during the breeding season.

3.3.5 Species not observed exhibiting the behaviours above are assessed as 'Non-breeding'.

Conservation status

3.3.6 An assessment of the importance of every breeding bird population recorded, considered the conservation statuses of the species recorded. Species afforded special statutory protection or included on lists of species of conservation interest were evaluated.

3.3.7 The conservation value of bird populations has been assessed using two separate approaches: nature conservation value and conservation status following the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance on ecological impact assessment (CIEEM, 2024). To attain each level of value, an ornithological resource or one of the features (species population or assemblage of species) should meet the criteria set out in Table 3-1 below. In some cases, professional judgement may be required to increase or decrease the allocation of specific value, based upon local knowledge.

Table 3-1: Selection of Nature Conservation Value of bird species returned within 2 km.

Nature Conservation Value	Example of Selection Criteria
International	A species which is part of the cited interest of an SPA and which regularly occurs in internationally or nationally important numbers. A species present in internationally important numbers (>1% of international population).
National	A species which is part of the cited interest of a SSSI and which regularly occurs in nationally or regionally important numbers. A nationally important assemblage of breeding or over-wintering species. A species present in nationally important numbers (>1% UK population). A rare breeding species (<300 breeding pairs in the UK).
Regional	Species listed as priority species in the UK BAP, which are not covered above, and which regularly occurs in regionally important numbers. Species present in regionally important numbers (>1% of regionally population).

Nature Conservation Value	Example of Selection Criteria
	Sustainable populations of species that are rare or scarce within a region. Species on the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red List and which regularly occurs in regionally important numbers.
County	Species listed as priority species in the UK BAP, which are not covered above, and which regularly occurs in county important numbers. Species present in county important numbers (>1% of county population). Sustainable populations of species that are rare or scarce within a county, or listed in a county BAP. A site designated for its county important assemblage of birds. Species on the BoCC Red List and which regularly occur in county important numbers.
Local	Species listed as priority in the UK BAP, which are not covered above, and are rare in the locality or in the relevant Natural Area profile. Species present in numbers just short of county importance. Sustainable populations of species which are rare or scarce within the locality. A site whose designation falls just short for inclusion for its county important assemblage of birds. Other species of conservation interest (e.g. all other species on the BoCC Red and Amber List and UK BAP which are not covered above) regularly occurring in locally sustainable populations.

Species abundance

- 3.3.8 The importance of individual breeding bird populations recorded was assessed in the context of sizes of each population relative to international, national and regional population estimates.
- 3.3.9 International 1% population thresholds (i.e., the size at which a population is assessed as being of international importance, as it comprises over 1% of the international population for a given species) were obtained from Wetlands International.
- 3.3.10 National 1% population thresholds (i.e., the size at which a population is assessed as being of national importance, as it comprises over 1% of the national population for a given species) were calculated from the national population estimates detailed by Woodward et al. (2020).
- 3.3.11 Assessment of county, district or local importance was based on professional knowledge of the species in question and information provided in the *Birds of Shropshire* (2019).

Species diversity



- 3.3.12 The importance of the breeding bird assemblage recorded during the surveys was assessed according to its level of species diversity, in reference to the criteria described by Fuller (1980). It should be recognised that breeding birds have undergone widespread decline since these criteria were devised. As such, the qualifying number of species for a given importance category proposed by Fuller (1980) is now considered to be relatively high. This disparity is taken into account within the adapted importance criteria assessment.

3.4 Personnel

- 3.4.1 Surveys and reporting have been undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced ecologists;

- 3.4.2 Dr. S. A. Graham BSc (Hons), MSc, CEcol, CEnv, MCIEEM, FLS.

Dr. S. A. Graham has been a practicing ecologist for over eighteen years, holding a BSc (hons), MSc and PhD as well as being a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and both a Chartered Ecologist (CEcol) and Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv).

Mr Phil Playford BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIEEM, MRSB.

Mr Phil Playford has been a practicing ecologist for over seventeen years, holding a BSc (hons) and MSc as well as being a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and The Royal Society of Biology (MRSB)

3.5 Limitations

- 3.5.1 Field surveys for breeding birds were undertaken at appropriate times of day and in suitable weather conditions. Considering the habitat types and extents, and the species for which the Project site is potentially suitable, the six survey visits completed between May and July 2025 inclusive are considered sufficient to record the breeding bird populations present across the Project.
- 3.5.2 The transect route was designed to maximise coverage of the Site. The potential for double counting of mobile species (e.g., raptors) has been taken into consideration when evaluating species abundance and habitat use.
- 3.5.3 Desk study data is useful in providing supplementary ecological information for a site, it should, however, be acknowledged that data is dependent on the submission of records to the relevant organisation / recording body / local species group. As such, a lack of records for a particular species does not necessarily mean that the species is absent from the site and / or wider search area. Similarly, records of a particular species do not necessarily mean that the species is still present within a given area.



- 3.5.4 The lack of evidence of a protected and / or notable species does not preclude their possible presence at a later date. This is particularly true for birds; their use of a particular habitat and / or feature can significantly vary, not only on a seasonal basis, but also from day to day. Any survey represents only a 'snapshot' of possible bird activity. Importantly, lack of evidence of a bird species does not guarantee their absence and therefore consideration should be given to the need to update the data in the future in the event of substantial delay to the implementation of Project.
- 3.5.5 This report is valid for a period of 12 to 18 months from the time of survey, not report production. Reliance on the findings of this report, post this period, should seek clarity from the report author, as per the CIEEM (2019) Guidance.



4 Results

4.1 Desk-based assessment

Designated Sites

- 4.1.1 The desk study returned two Internationally designated sites with features of ornithological interest within 10 km of the Site. Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 1 and Phase 2 are both Ramsar Sites, with the closest element of east site located ca. 1.98 km northwest and 3.59 km west. No specific details have been provided within the JNCC data sheet for Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 1 other than *Noteworthy fauna: birds*. Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2 has the following species currently occurring at levels of national importance: northern shovler *Anas clypeata*, great cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*, great bittern *Botaurus stellaris stellaris* and water rail *Rallus aquaticus*.
- 4.1.2 The desk study identified no nationally designated sites with features of ornithological interest within 2 km of the Site.
- 4.1.3 The desk study identified no non-statutory designated sites with features of ornithological interest within 2 km of the Site.

Data search

- 4.1.4 Data obtained from Telford Ecological Data Service (TEDS) included records of 44 bird species which could potentially be present within the Site and surrounding land during the breeding season. Species recorded within a 2 km buffer during the last fifteen years include the following:
- Raptors such as barn owl (*Tyto alba*) and peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*);
 - Waders such as lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*) and snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*); and
 - Declining farmland species: skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) and tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*).
- 4.1.5 No species records were returned by TEDS from within or immediately adjacent to the site with the closes record being from ca. 1.19 km north-east.

Field Surveys

- 4.1.6 Surveys were conducted when weather conditions were generally conducive to breeding bird surveys. Full weather details are provided within Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Environmental variable encountered during the breeding bird surveys in 2025.

Environmental variables	Conditions experienced during survey					
	1 (12/05/2025)	2 (28/05/2025)	3 (08/06/2025)	4 (19/06/2025)	5 (02/07/2025)	6 (11/07/2025)
Temperature (oC)	13	11	10	22	13	15
Cloud cover (Oktas)	0/8	7/8	0/8	0/8	0/8	0/8
Wind speed (mph)	1	1	1	1	1	1
Precipitation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

4.1.7 A total of 29 bird species were recorded during the surveys for breeding birds undertaken between May and July 2025 inclusive. Full breeding bird survey data, showing Peak counts (i.e., the maximum number of birds recorded in a single survey visit) and breeding statuses for each species are presented in Table 4-2 below, including descriptions for selected species. Territories are shown in Appendix C - H.

4.1.8 In summary, in reference to the criteria described in Section 3.3, the breeding statuses of the 29 species recorded during survey were as follows:

- Confirmed: 0 species;
- Probable: 10 species;
- Possible: 4 species; and
- Non-breeding: 15 species.

4.1.9 Observations of non-breeding birds just visiting the Site (e.g., gulls feeding in fields) and birds flying over the Site were also recorded.



Table 4-2: Summary of species recorded during the 2025 surveys for breeding birds.

Species		BTO code	Breeding status	Peak count for each transect						Description
Common name	Scientific name			1	2	3	4	5	6	
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	B.	Probable	6	6	4	3	4	5	Calling from hedgerow
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	BC	Possible		1					Singing from the hedgerows
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	BT	Probable	1	1	1	1	1	1	Calling from hedgerow
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	BZ	Non-breeding	1	1			1	2	Flying over site, not utilising site
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	CH	Probable	1	1	1		1	1	Singing from the hedgerows
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	CC	Probable		1	1		1	1	Singing from the hedgerows
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	C.	Non-breeding	1	2	1	2	1	1	Travelling across site
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	D.	Possible	1	1	2		1	1	Singing from the hedgerows
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	GS	Non-breeding			1		1		Calling from hedgerow
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	GT	Probable	3	3	4	4	5	3	Calling from hedgerow
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	GR	Possible	1	1	1		1	1	Singing from trees to the west
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	GO	Probable	2	2	3		1	3	Travelling across site
Herring gul	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	HG	Non-breeding	1						Flying over site, not utilising site
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	JD	Non-breeding		2	6	10	2	2	Travelling across site
Lapwing*	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	L.	Non-breeding			1	1	1	1	Seen regularly along a dried up pond just to the east of the site
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	LT	Non-breeding					1		Singing from the hedgerows
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	MG	Non-breeding	2	1	3	1		1	Singing from the hedgerows
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	NH	Possible			1			1	Singing from the hedgerows
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	PW	Non-breeding	2	1		2	2	1	Travelling across site
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	R.	Probable	3	4	3	2	3	5	Calling from hedgerow
Skylark*	<i>Alauda Arvensis</i>	S.	Non-breeding	1	1	1		1	1	Heard singing in a field to the east of the site
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	SN	Non-breeding				1			Heard and seen during the nocturnal visit within the grassland
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	SL	Non-breeding			3		2	4	Travelling across site

Species		BTO code	Breeding status	Peak count for each transect						Description
Common name	Scientific name			1	2	3	4	5	6	
Tawny owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	TO	Non-breeding				1			Heard and seen during the nocturnal visit from a tree along the northern boundary
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	TC	Non-breeding						1	Singing from the hedgerows
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	WH	Probable	1	1	1		1		Singing from the hedgerows
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	WP	Non-breeding	6	6	10	14		9	Sheltering and foraging along the boundaries and treelines
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	WR	Probable	3	3	5	3		5	Calling from hedgerow
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citronella</i>	Y.	Probable	1	1	1		1		Singing from the hedgerow to the west

* Species noted adjacent to site – not present on site.

5 Evaluation

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 An assessment of the importance of the breeding bird populations recorded across the Site during the field surveys undertaken between May and July 2025 is provided below, taking into consideration of:

- relevant designated sites with features of ornithological interest;
- the conservation statuses of the species recorded (e.g., their inclusion on the legislation and guidance described in Section 2);
- populations size of species recorded (e.g., species abundance);
- the overall diversity of the breeding bird assemblage recorded; and
- the spatial patterns of breeding bird usage of the Site, including any areas of particular importance to breeding bird populations.

5.2 Designated sites

5.2.1 The desk study returned two Internationally, designated sites with features of ornithological interest. Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 1 and Phase 2 are both Ramsar Sites, with the closest element of east site located ca. 1.98 km northwest and 3.59 km west. Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 1 and Phase 2 has the following lists the following species currently occurring at levels of national importance: northern shovler *Anas clypeata*, great cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*, great bittern *Botaurus stellaris stellaris* and water rail *Rallus aquaticus*. None of these species are likely to be or have been encountered on the habitats identified across the Site, therefore, internationally designated sites are not discussed further in this report.

5.2.2 No nationally or non-statutory designated sites, with features of ornithological interest pertinent to habitats identified across the Site, have been identified within their respective survey areas.

5.3 Conservation status

5.3.1 Twenty-nine species were recorded during the 2025 surveys for breeding birds. The majority of species encountered comprised typical common and widespread species of lowland farmland and woodland edge. 10 of the 29 species recorded are included under the legislation and guidance described in Section 2 of this report (as shown in Table 5-1).

Table 5-1: Protected and / or notable species recorded during the 2025 surveys.

Species	Breeding status	Conservation status category				
		Schedule 1	Annex 1	S41	Red	Amber
Blackbird	Probable					
Blackcap	Possible					

Species	Breeding status	Conservation status category				
		Schedule 1	Annex 1	S41	Red	Amber
Blue tit	Probable					
Buzzard	Non-breeding					
Chaffinch	Probable					
Chiffchaff	Probable					
Carrion crow	Non-breeding					
Dunnock	Possible			X		X
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Non-breeding					
Great tit	Probable					
Greenfinch	Possible				X	
Goldfinch	Probable					
Herring gull	Non-breeding			X	X	
Jackdaw	Non-breeding					
Lapwing*	Non-breeding			X	X	
Long-tailed Tit	Non-breeding					
Magpie	Non-breeding					
Nuthatch	Possible					
Pied Wagtail	Non-breeding					
Robin	Probable					
Skylark*	Non-breeding			X		
Snipe	Non-breeding					X
Swallow	Non-breeding					
Tawny owl	Non-breeding					X
Treecreeper	Non-breeding					
Whitethroat	Probable					X
Woodpigeon	Non-breeding					X
Wren	Probable					X
Yellowhammer	Probable			X	X	

Schedule 1: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 species; Annex 1: EC Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) Annex 1 species; S41: NERC Act 2006 S41 Species of Principal Importance; Red: BoCC Red list species; Amber: BoCC Amber list species.

5.3.2 In summary, the 10 species recorded included:

- No Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 species;
- No EC Birds Directive Annex 1 species;
- 4 NERC S41 Species of Principal Importance;
- 4 BoCC Red list species; and
- 6 BoCC Amber list species.



5.4 Species abundance

5.4.1 Based on peak counts and the number of territories recorded for the individual species encountered during the 2025 breeding bird surveys, no species were present in numbers of international or national level importance.

5.4.2 Species accounts for those found across the survey site and included under the legislation and guidance described in Section 2 of this report (as shown in Table 5-1) are as follows;

- A peak count of two dunnocks was observed singing from the hedgerows;
- A peak count of one greenfinch was observed singing from trees to the west;
- A peak count of ten woodpigeons was recorded within the site during the surveys. This species were observed sheltering and foraging along the boundaries and treelines;
- A peak count of five wrens was observed within the site during the surveys. This species was observed singing and calling along the boundaries;
- A peak count of one whitethroat was observed singing from the hedgerows;
- A peak count of one yellowhammer was observed singing from the hedgerow to the west;
- A peak count of one tawny owl was heard and seen during the nocturnal visit from a tree along the northern boundary;
- A peak count of one snipe was heard and seen during the nocturnal visit within the grassland.
- A peak count of 1 herring gull was seen flying over the site but not directly associated with the site.
- A single lapwing was seen regularly along a dried up pond just to the east of the site.
- In the wider area a skylark was heard singing in a field to the east of the site (ca 335 m from the site boundary).

The habitat on site was considered suitable for skylark with a mixture of long and short sward grassland, if a little close to hedge lines. Skylarks nest on the ground, in vegetation which is 20–50cm high. This is roughly the height of the grassland on site but they need the grass to be open in structure so they can reach the ground and the grassland in the field is for the most part is dense with a thatch making it hard to access the ground. There are some parts around a dried up wallow where access to the ground is easier and that bit is more suitable for skylark. Horses present and grazing on the field during nesting season again make it a little less suitable. Overall habitat has moderate potential for nesting skylark with no skylark heard or seen on site or in immediate proximity to the site, although they are present in the wider landscape.

5.4.3 Considering their conservation statuses and numbers recorded during the breeding bird surveys in 2025, populations of “protected / notable and other” bird species recorded are considered to be of up to Site level importance.

5.5 Conclusions

- 5.5.1 Surveys for breeding birds undertaken between May and July 2025 to inform the Project recorded a total of 29 individual bird species, 14 of which were recorded as either probably or potentially breeding within the Site. Probably or potentially breeding species recorded included no WCA Schedule 1 species, no EC Birds Directive Annex 1 species, two NERC S41 Species of Principal Importance (Dunnock and Yellowhammer), two BoCC Red list species (Yellowhammer and Greenfinch) and three BoCC Amber list species (Dunnock, Whitethought and Wren).
- 5.5.2 Based on the results of the breeding bird species diversity recorded in 2025, the breeding bird assemblage is considered to be of Local level importance.
- 5.5.3 Hedgerows and mature trees bordering the site were of greatest value to breeding birds, with the greatest diversity being notable farmland bird species present towards the north, south and west supported a relatively narrow, potential breeding bird assemblage but contained territories of breeding species.
- 5.5.4 In the absence of mitigation, the Project has the potential to adversely affect a small number of breeding birds within and immediately adjacent to the Site through the loss and / or alteration of suitable habitat, both in the short term and long-term. The Project additionally has the potential to adversely affect breeding birds through increased disturbance, and through the potential destruction of active nests. These impacts could occur throughout the construction period of the Project. Mitigation measures, implemented through the adoption of a Reasonable Avoidance Measures approach will be taken, as necessary, to minimise the potential for adverse effects.
- 5.5.5 Habitat creation and enhancement measures have been proposed and will be incorporated into the design of the Project to compensate for any removal or alteration of habitat, and to ensure the Scheme has a positive effect on breeding birds.



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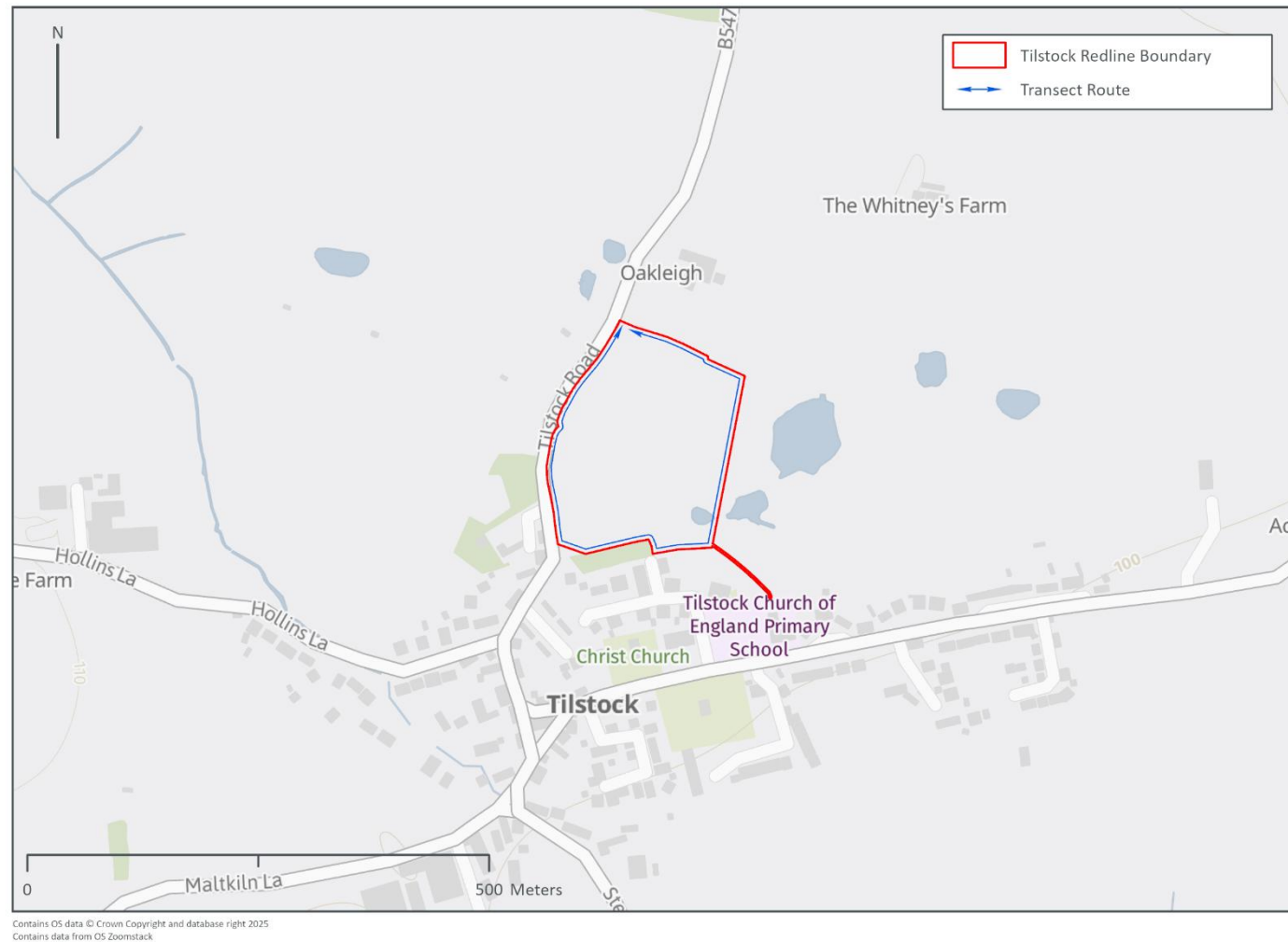


Appendix A Figure 1: Site location plan.





Appendix B Figure 2: Transect routes.





Appendix C Figure 3: Summary of 2025 breeding bird survey results – 12/05/2025.





Appendix D Figure 4: Summary of 2025 breeding bird survey results – 28/05/2025.



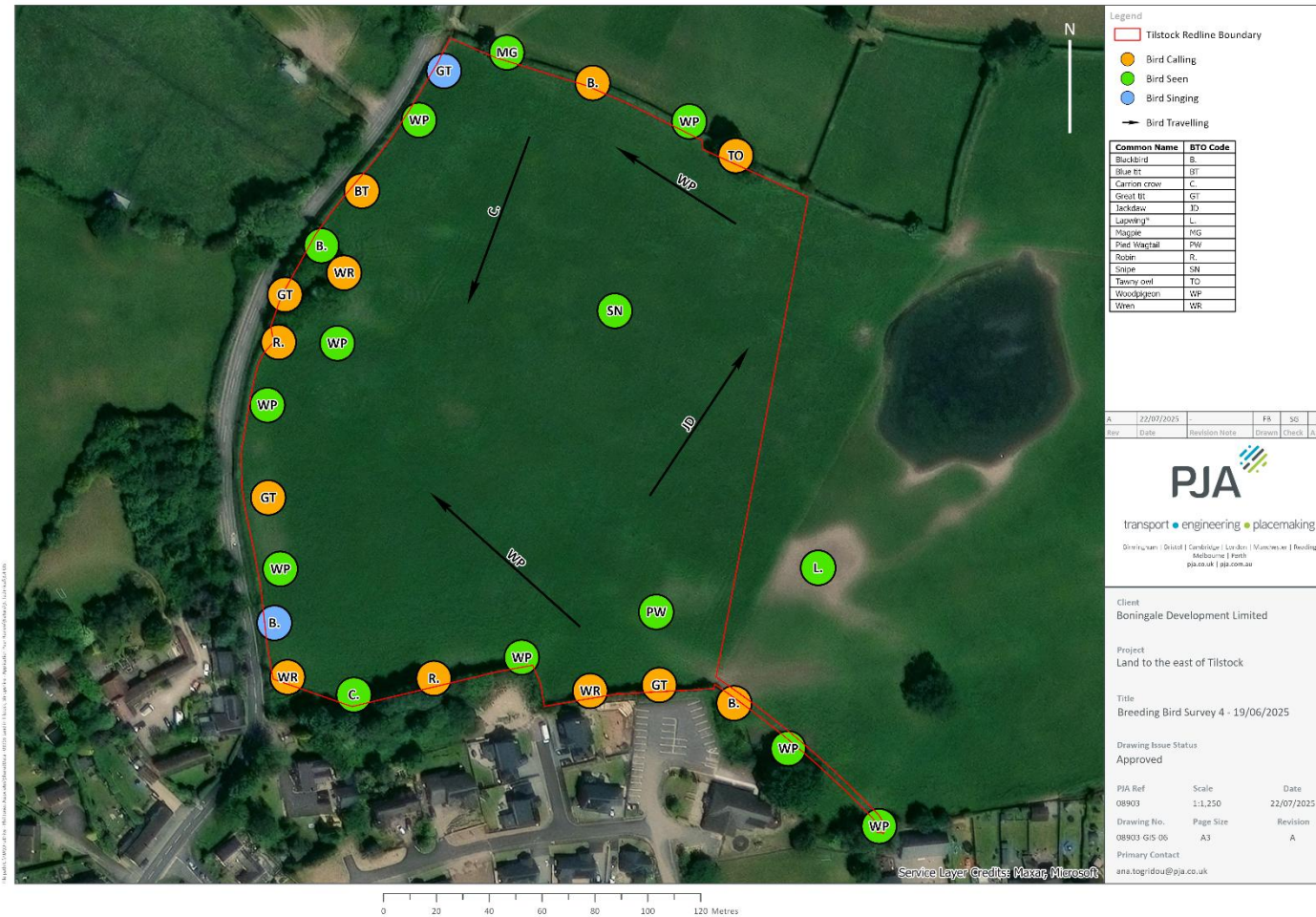


Appendix E Figure 5: Summary of 2025 breeding bird survey results – 08/06/2025.





Appendix F Figure 6: Summary of 2025 breeding bird survey results – 19/06/2025.





Appendix G Figure 7: Summary of 2025 breeding bird survey results – 02/07/2025.





Appendix H Figure 8: Summary of 2025 breeding bird survey results – 11/07/2025.

