



Gladman Developments Limited

**Henthorn Road, Clitheroe**

**Breeding Bird Survey Report**

August 2018

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## CONTENTS

|     |                                 |    |
|-----|---------------------------------|----|
| 1.0 | NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY .....     | 6  |
| 2.0 | INTRODUCTION .....              | 1  |
| 3.0 | LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE .....    | 2  |
| 4.0 | METHODOLOGY.....                | 3  |
| 5.0 | RESULTS.....                    | 5  |
| 6.0 | DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION ..... | 9  |
| 7.0 | MITIGATION .....                | 14 |

## TABLES

Table 1: Survey Dates and Conditions

Table 2: Evaluation Criteria

Table 3: Non-statutory conservation sites within 1km of the site

Table 4: Desktop Results; Notable Bird Species Recorded Locally as Provided by LERN

Table 5: Table 5: SPI, BoCC Red- and Amber-Listed Bird Species Recorded at Henthorn Road, Clitheroe during Breeding Bird Surveys in 2018 and their Recent Status within Lancashire

Table 6: Habitat Requirements, Species Account, Nature Conservation Value and Impact Assessment of S41 NERC Act SPI, BoCC Red and Amber-listed species, Recorded during Breeding Bird Surveys in 2018 at Henthorn Road, Clitheroe.

## FIGURES

Figure 1: Breeding Bird Survey Results – 30.05.18

Figure 2: Breeding Bird Survey Results – 19.06.18

## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Breeding Bird Survey Conditions & Results 2018 & EOAC Criteria for Categorisation of Breeding Status

## 1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1 The results of the breeding bird surveys show that the site supports a species assemblage consisting in the most part of widespread, common and abundant species associated with arable farmland habitats.
- 1.2 Twenty species were recorded in the site. Five species were regarded as probable breeders, and eleven species as possible breeders. No significant populations of any notable<sup>1</sup> species were recorded.
- 1.3 The overall bird assemblage within the site is considered to be of Local nature conservation value due to the presence of a number of Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC, 2006) Section 41 Species of Principal Importance (SPI) and Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC, 2015) Red and Amber listed species.
- 1.4 It is recognised that the species assemblage is likely to change in composition and diversity with the proposed development benefiting birds of more urban and woodland environments, whilst losing those associated with open farmland habitats. The loss of habitats within the site would not result in a significant impact on local populations of these farmland species.
- 1.5 The proposed outline green infrastructure on site, involving the retention of existing trees and hedgerows and new habitat creation such as tree and shrub planting; wildflower meadow, amenity and wet grassland creation as part of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Public Open Space provision, will offer a wider range of suitable nesting and foraging habitats for the majority of birds currently present on site.
- 1.6 The resultant bird assemblage that develops is recognised to be at least equivalent in value to that currently recorded.

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<sup>1</sup> Notable species include Schedule 1 species, Species of Principal Importance (SPI) and Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC, 2015) Amber and Red-listed species

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

### Site Location and Context

- 2.1 This report has been produced by FPCR Environment & Design Ltd on behalf of Gladman Developments and provides details of breeding bird surveys carried out during May & June 2018 on land to the northwest of Henthorn Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire (central grid reference SD 72925 40834).
- 2.2 The site was 5.2ha in extent, the Application Boundary, indicated by the red line on the figures, encompassed a field compartment and a further stretch of land along Henthorn Road to the south west. Surveys were undertaken on the Study Area, indicated by the blue line on the figures and referred to as 'site' in the rest of this report.
- 2.3 The site comprises an arable field bordered by Henthorn Road on the southeast edge, with hedgerows on all four borders. A small stream runs along the eastern edge of the field. The field is mainly poor semi-improved grassland, with the eastern corner comprising scattered scrub and neutral grassland. There is a small pond on the northern boundary. Residential housing in the town of Clitheroe borders the northeast edge of the site. Arable farmland surrounds most of the site. The River Ribble is located to the west of the site.

### Development Proposals

- 2.4 The proposals for the site are the construction of a residential development with associated infrastructure and public open space.
- 2.5 Existing ecological features of value such as hedgerows and mature trees are to be retained within the landscape wherever possible and enhanced in the long-term.
- 2.6 The main loss of habitat will be the arable field. The southwest edge of the field will become an attenuation area, with two wetland areas, while the southeast corner will consist of green infrastructure.

### Survey Objectives

- 2.7 The objectives of the breeding bird surveys<sup>2</sup> were to:
- Identify the presence and distribution of breeding birds on the site;
  - Evaluate the importance of local bird populations and their habitat requirements;
  - Evaluate the conservation importance of the site;
  - To identify areas of ornithological interest and make recommendations to minimise the potential impact of development and where feasible to consider opportunities for additional habitat creation.

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<sup>2</sup> The common and scientific names used follow the official British List (December 2017) available at <http://www.bou.org.uk/british-list/>

### 3.0 LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE

#### Legislation

- 3.1 The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) is the principal legislation affording protection to UK wild birds. Under this legislation all birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions to recklessly or intentionally:
- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
  - Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while in use or being built;
  - Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
- 3.2 Species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) are specially protected at all times. This extends their protection whereby they are protected against intentional disturbance whilst building or occupying a nest, and against disturbance of dependent young.
- 3.3 Certain species have also been identified as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) (formerly known as UK BAP priority species).
- 3.4 Lancashire has also produced a Local Biodiversity Action Plan<sup>3</sup>, which lists 89 species under various criteria.
- 3.5 The recent report “Wild bird populations in England, 1970- 2015”<sup>4</sup> summarises the recent trends in bird species populations in England between 1970 and 2015, and categorises species into their main habitat preferences and whether they are generalists or specialists within that broad habitat type. For instance Linnet *Linaria cannabina* is a farmland specialist. The species mentioned in this report are categorised on this basis where applicable.

#### Conservation Status

- 3.6 In addition to statutory protection, some bird species are classified according to their conservation status, such as their inclusion on the Red and Amber lists of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC)<sup>5</sup>
- Red list (high conservation concern) species are those that are globally threatened according to IUCN criteria; those whose population has declined rapidly (50% or more) in recent years; and those that have declined historically and not shown a substantial recent recovery.
  - Amber list (medium conservation concern) species are those with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe; those whose population or range has declined moderately

<sup>3</sup> Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan 2006

<sup>4</sup> DEFRA, 2017

<sup>5</sup> Eaton M.A., Aebischer N.J., Brown A., Hearn R.D., Lock, L., Musgrove A.J., Noble, D.G., Stroud, D.A., and Gregory R.D. 2015. Birds of Conservation Concern the population status of birds in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. *British Birds* 108:708-746

(between 25% and 49%) in recent years; those whose population has declined historically but made a substantial recent recovery; rare breeders; and those with internationally important or localised populations.

- Green list (low conservation concern) species fulfil none of the above criteria.

## 4.0 METHODOLOGY

### Desktop Study

- 4.1 In order to compile existing baseline ornithological information, the Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN) was contacted in May 2018 for species information.
- 4.2 The Multi-Agency Government Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website ([www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)) was consulted for information on the presence of statutorily protected sites including Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) within a minimum of 10km and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within 2km. LERN was contacted for information on non-statutory conservation sites.

### Breeding Bird Field Surveys

- 4.3 The survey methodology employed was broadly based on that of territory mapping as used for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Common Bird Census (CBC) (1983)<sup>6</sup>. Standard BTO species codes and symbols for bird activities were used to identify birds and denote activity, sex and age where appropriate. Birds were considered to be holding a territory and therefore utilising the site for breeding activities if they were displaying breeding behaviours, such as: singing, nest building, food carrying or territorial defence. If birds did not display such behaviours, e.g. were only observed flying over the site, these were considered non breeders and therefore did not have a territory.
- 4.4 To provide a preliminary assessment for determining the population status of the breeding birds on the site, two monthly surveys were undertaken in the morning in May and June 2018. The surveyor followed a circular route around the boundary of the site, affording an overview of the entire site. Bird surveys were not undertaken in unfavourable conditions such as heavy rain or strong wind, which may negatively affect the results. Table 1 provides the survey dates and weather conditions.

**Table 1: Survey Dates and Conditions**

| Date     | Cloud Cover | Rain | Wind         | Visibility |
|----------|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
| 30.05.18 | 5%          | None | None         | Excellent  |
| 19.06.18 | 90%         | None | Light breeze | Excellent  |

### Species & Assemblage Assessment

- 4.5 The conservation value of bird populations has been measured using two separate approaches: nature conservation value and conservation status. Chartered Institute of Ecology and

<sup>6</sup> Marchant, J.H. (1983) BTO Common Birds Census Instructions. British Trust for Ornithology, Tring 12pp.

Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance assesses nature conservation value within a geographical context. 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 2. In some cases, professional judgment may be required to increase or decrease the allocation of specific value, based upon local knowledge.

Table 2. Evaluation Criteria

| Nature Conservation Value | Examples of Selection Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>International</b>      | <p>A species which is part of the cited interest of an SPA and which regularly occurs in internationally or nationally important numbers.</p> <p>A species present in internationally important numbers (&gt;1% of international population).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>National</b>           | <p>A species which is part of the cited interest of a SSSI and which regularly occurs in nationally or regionally important numbers.</p> <p>A nationally important assemblage of breeding or over-wintering species.</p> <p>A species present in nationally important numbers (&gt;1% UK population).</p> <p>Rare breeding species (&lt;300 breeding pairs in the UK).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Regional</b>           | <p>Species listed as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006), which are not covered above, and which regularly occurs in regionally important numbers.</p> <p>Species present in regionally important numbers (&gt;1% of regional population).</p> <p>Sustainable populations of species that are rare or scarce within a region.</p> <p>Species on the BoCC Red List and which regularly occurs in regionally important numbers.</p>                                                                  |
| <b>County</b>             | <p>Species listed as SPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006), which are not covered above and which regularly occurs in county important numbers.</p> <p>Species present in county important numbers (&gt;1% of county population).</p> <p>Sustainable populations of species that are rare or scarce within a county, or listed as SPI for nature conservation under S41 of the NERC Act.</p> <p>A site designated for its county important assemblage of birds (e.g. a SINC Site).</p> <p>Species on the BoCC Red List and which regularly occur in county important numbers.</p>  |
| <b>District</b>           | <p>Species listed as SPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006), which are not covered above, and are rare in the locality or in the relevant Natural Area profile.</p> <p>Species present in numbers just short of county importance.</p> <p>Sustainable populations of species which are rare or scarce within the locality.</p> <p>A site whose designation falls just short for inclusion for its county important assemblage of birds (e.g. a SINC Site).</p> <p>Other species on the BoCC Red List and which are considered to regularly occur in district important numbers.</p> |
| <b>Local</b>              | <p>Other species of conservation interest (e.g. all other species on the BoCC Red and Amber List and listed as SPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) which are not covered above) regularly occurring in locally sustainable populations.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Site</b>               | <p>All other BoCC Green-listed common and widespread species.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

4.6 The most recent available county annual bird report, *The Lancashire Bird Report 2014* (Lancashire and Cheshire Fauna Society (LCFS)), was consulted to inform the assessment. The abundance of species referred to by these reports follows the following criteria:

4.7 The abundance of species referred to in this report also follows the qualification guidelines used by LCFS:

### Breeding species

- Rare: breeding in 1-6 tetrads or 1-10 pairs
- Scarce: breeding in 7-38 tetrads or 11- 50 pairs
- Uncommon: 51- 250 pairs
- Fairly common: 251- 1000 pairs
- Common: 1001-5000 pairs
- Abundant: more than 5000 pairs

**Non-breeding species**

- Vagrant (or very rare passage migrant): 1-10 records in past 25 years
- Rare: 11-50 records in past 25 years
- Scarce: 51-250 records in past 25 years
- Uncommon: 11-20 annually
- Fairly common: 21-200 annually
- Common: 201-1000 annually
- Very common: 1001-5000 annually
- Abundant: more than 5000 annually

**Local Wildlife Sites**

- 4.8 Local Wildlife Sites are recognised by central government as an important tool in promoting sustainable development and protecting biodiversity with guidance aimed at identifying sensitive or important areas for nature conservation. In Lancashire they are known as Biological Heritage Sites.
- 4.9 The site has also been assessed against Biological Heritage Site criteria<sup>9</sup> for the identification of avian sites in Lancashire based upon a number of criteria set out for breeding birds.
- 4.10 For the purposes of these guidelines, acceptable evidence of breeding by bird species includes: the presence of a territorial male; repeated sightings of the species concerned in suitable habitat during the breeding season; pair behaviour during the breeding season; birds seen nest-building or carrying nest-material; birds seen carrying food or faecal sacs; fledgling birds seen; or an occupied nest found. These guidelines apply to important sites for other essential activities by breeding birds, i.e. feeding areas where these are an integral part of the breeding sites and lek sites.

**5.0 RESULTS****Desk Study**

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<sup>9</sup> BHS Guidelines for Site Selection May 2018

### Sites of Ornithological Interest

- 5.1 There was one non-statutory site within 1km of the site. The details of this site is provided in Table 3 below and mapped on Figure 1.
- 5.2 No further sites of International, National or Regional importance, designated for ornithological interest occur within the corresponding search radii.

**Table 3: Designated Sites**

| Site Name    | Designation                    | Proximity to site (approximate) | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| River Ribble | Biological Heritage Site (BHS) | 40 m west                       | The river and its associated habitats support a rich assemblage of plants and animals. Much of the land associated with the river provides nesting habitat for bird species such as: sand martin, kingfisher, oystercatcher, common sandpiper, little ringed plover and goosander. |

### Protected Species

- 5.3 Records of protected and priority bird species derived from the desk study consultees are provided in Table 4 below. Species records have been filtered to comprise protected and / or notable species within 1km of the site from the last 20 years. The locations of the pertinent species records are mapped on Figure 1.
- 5.4 'Notable species' as referred to within the report are considered those which are specially protected (WCA, Schedule 1), are identified as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under S41 of the NERC Act 2006, and / or appear on the RSPB BoCC as declining species (red or amber lists).

**Table 4: Notable Bird Species Records**

| Species                                                | Conservation Status | Total Number of Records within 1km | Location / Minimum distance of records from site            |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Black-headed gull<br><i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> | BoCC Amber, LBAP    | 2                                  | Records ranging from 2008-2009, the closest being 220 m NE. |
| Swift<br><i>Apus apus</i>                              | BoCC Amber, LBAP    | 2                                  | Records ranging from 2010-2011, the closest being 930 m N.  |
| Willow warbler<br><i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>        | BoCC Amber, LBAP    | 1                                  | A single record from 2004, 270 m NE.                        |
| Starling<br><i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>                    | SPI, BoCC Red, LBAP | 24                                 | Records ranging from 2008-2009, the closest being 160 m SE. |
| Song thrush<br><i>Turdus philomelos</i>                | SPI, BoCC Red, LBAP | 3                                  | Three records from 2009, the closest being 270 m NE.        |

| Species                                   | Conservation Status | Total Number of Records within 1km | Location / Minimum distance of records from site              |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dunnock<br><i>Prunella modularis</i>      | BoCC Amber, LBAP    | 9                                  | Records ranging from 2008-2009, the closest being 310 m SE.   |
| House sparrow<br><i>Passer domesticus</i> | SPI, BoCC Red, LBAP | 28                                 | Records ranging from 2008-2009, the closest being 160 m SE.   |
| Grey wagtail<br><i>Motacilla cinerea</i>  | BoCC Red            | 1                                  | A single record from 2008, 890 m E within Primrose Lodge BHS. |
| Bullfinch<br><i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>     | BoCC Amber, LBAP    | 1                                  | A single record from 2009, 920 m E.                           |

Status Key: Regs = The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. WCA = Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Sch5 = Schedule 5 of WCA. SPI = Species of Principal Importance listed in Section 41, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). BoCC Red = Birds of Conservation Concern Red List. BoCC Amber = Birds of Conservation Concern Amber List, LBAP = Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan.

## Field Survey

### Summary

- 5.5 A total of twenty bird species were recorded during the breeding bird surveys in May & June 2018 (Appendix B). Of the species observed, four were Species of Principal Importance (Section 41, NERC 2006), three appear on the BoCC (2015) as Red-listed and four are Amber-listed, and as such are considered 'notable' (some species may have multiple designations). A full list of results can be found in Appendix B, whilst the approximate locations of the notable species can be found on Figures 1 and 2, and detailed in Table 5. Thirteen species are Green-listed or unlisted (not of conservation concern).
- 5.6 None of the species were confirmed as breeding.
- 5.7 Five species were considered probable breeders, whilst eleven species were considered possible breeders.
- 5.8 The notable species lesser black-backed gull (Amber) and house martin (Amber) were flyovers only.
- 5.9 All the recorded notable species are common to abundant breeding residents or summer visitors to Lancashire.

**Table 5: SPI, BoCC Red- and Amber-Listed Bird Species Recorded at Henthorn Road, Clitheroe during Breeding Bird Surveys in 2018 and their Recent Status within Lancashire.**

| Species | Conservation Status | Number of Survey Occasions recorded/ Peak number | Highest Classification of Breeding Status | Recent Status within Lancashire <sup>1</sup> |
|---------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Curlew  | SPI; Red            | 1 / 1                                            | Non-breeder                               | Abundant winter and breeding bird            |

| Species                  | Conservation Status | Number of Survey Occasions recorded/ Peak number | Highest Classification of Breeding Status | Recent Status within Lancashire <sup>1</sup>                                                                            |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lesser black-backed gull | Amber               | 1 / 1                                            | Non-breeder                               | Abundant breeder especially in Bowland and on the Ribble. Abundant spring and autumn migrant. Smaller winter population |
| House martin             | Amber               | 2/13                                             | Non-breeder                               | Common breeding bird and passage migrant                                                                                |
| Willow warbler           | Amber               | 1 / 4                                            | Probable                                  | Abundant breeding bird and double passage migrant.                                                                      |
| Song thrush              | SPI; Red            | 1 / 3                                            | Possible                                  | Common breeding resident.                                                                                               |
| Dunnock                  | SPI; Amber          | 1/1                                              | Possible                                  | Abundant breeding resident and uncommon double passage migrant                                                          |
| House sparrow            | SPI; Red            | 2/colony                                         | Probable                                  | Abundant but decreasing resident.                                                                                       |

<sup>1</sup>: *The Lancashire Bird Report 2014* (Lancashire and Cheshire Fauna Society (LCFS))

### Habitat Usage

- 5.10 Most of the site comprised one large field compartment, mostly poor semi-improved grassland, but with one corner comprising neutral semi-improved grassland. Other key habitats present on site include scattered scrub, hedgerows around the boundaries and running water (a stream).
- 5.11 The following sections provide an overview of the bird activity recorded on site within these different habitat types during the 2018 surveys, focusing on the notable species.

#### Grassland

- 5.12 The grassland habitats were barely utilised by birds, notable absentees being meadow pipit *Anthus pratensis* and skylark *Alauda arvensis*. A flyover curlew *Numenius arquata* may have been breeding in the local area, and was not observed to land on the site. House martins *Delichon urbica* overflowed the site and foraged for insects. These possibly nested in the urban area to the northeast.

#### Scattered scrub and hedgerows

- 5.13 These habitats harboured small numbers of common hedgerow birds, such as wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, blackbird *Turdus merula*, robin *Erithacus rubecula* and chaffinch *Fringilla coelops*. Notable birds included song thrush *Turdus philomelos* (three records), dunnock *Prunella modularis* (one), house sparrow *Passer domesticus* (a colony by the houses) and willow warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* (four). The latter species were also in very small numbers.
- 5.14 The small range of habitats coinciding with the largely farmed landscape has resulted in a very low diversity and abundance of breeding birds on the site.

## Breeding Bird Assemblage Value

### Local Biological Heritage Site Potential

- 5.15 The site was assessed against the published criteria for birds, set out in the “BHS Guidelines for Site Selection May 2018” to assess the site against the thresholds for county value. There are nine guidelines; however none were relevant for the site’s breeding birds, based on the bird species recorded during the surveys.

### Nature Conservation Value

- 5.16 The site is presently considered to have a nature conservation value of **Local** importance, judged by the population status and numbers of common – abundant species such as song thrush, dunnock and house sparrow.
- 5.17 The diversity of bird species on site is quite low (20), as is to be expected from an arable site in this location.

## 6.0 DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION

### Potential Impacts

- 6.1 The impact on breeding bird species arising from the potential effects of any of the considered proposals is based upon an understanding of each species’ ecological requirements, the number of birds recorded on site, their nature conservation criteria based on legislation and current guidance (e.g. Red and Amber listed Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (2015); Species of Principal Importance (Section 41 NERC Act (2006)), their county status according to The Lancashire Annual Bird Reports and professional judgment.
- 6.2 The species recorded on site that are the most vulnerable to impacts associated with the site proposals are the five notable species that are listed as Species of Principal Importance or appear on the BoCC Red and Amber lists. Table 6 summarises the habitat requirements, species accounts, nature conservation value, impact assessment and proposed mitigation of these eight species.

**Table 6: Habitat Requirements, Species Account, Nature Conservation Value and Impact Assessment of S41 NERC Act SPI, BoCC Red and Amber-listed species, Recorded during Breeding Bird Surveys in 2018 at Henthorn Road, Clitheroe.**

| Species               | Habitat Requirements <sup>†</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Species Account                                                                                                                                           | Nature Conservation Value <sup>†</sup> | Characterisation of Unmitigated Impact                  | Suggested Mitigation/ Compensation/Enhancements/Comments                                                                                                                     | Residual Impact <sup>††</sup>                                                               |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>House martin</b>   | House martins are exclusively aerial feeders. The preferred habitat of the house martin is open country with low vegetation, such as pasture, meadows and farmland, and preferably near water. It is much more urban than the barn swallow, and will nest even in city centres if the air is clean enough.                                                                                                                                                                       | House martins were seen feeding over the arable field and probably nest in the adjoining residential areas.                                               | <b>Local</b>                           | Temporary disturbance effects from initial development. | Strategic placement of house martin nest-box cups around the development would provide new breeding sites. These should be fixed under eaves away from doorways and windows. | <b>Negligible short term impact</b><br><br><b>Local Beneficial mid- to long-term impact</b> |
| <b>Willow warbler</b> | Willow warblers prefer young, open, scrubby woodland with small trees, including human-altered habitats such as coppice and young plantations up to 10–20 years old. High amounts of birch, alder and willow, with good lichen amounts, and water features (e.g. streams), fields with large amounts of bracken and mosses, and patches of low bramble (for nest cover) are preferred, but it will use a wide range of other species, including young or open coniferous forests | Willow warblers were noted on the May survey, but not thereafter. They may possibly nest on site, as behaviour indicating nesting was noted by two birds. | <b>Local</b>                           | Temporary disturbance effects from initial development. | Further tree and shrub planting within the development is likely to maintain the overall useable habitat available and provide movement corridors through the site           | <b>Negligible short term impact</b><br><br><b>Local Beneficial mid- to long-term impact</b> |

| Species            | Habitat Requirements <sup>†</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Species Account                                                                                                             | Nature Conservation Value <sup>†</sup> | Characterisation of Unmitigated Impact                                            | Suggested Mitigation/ Compensation/Enhancements/Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Residual Impact <sup>††</sup>                                                               |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Song thrush</b> | Woodland generalist; Birds can exist anywhere where trees or bushes accompany open grassland or patches of dead leaves supporting ample invertebrates. Will readily take to hedgerows, railway embankments and small gardens. Song thrushes establish a breeding territory in the late winter or early spring. | Song thrushes probably breed in the hedgerows. The small number recorded (three) indicates a small local population.        | <b>Local</b>                           | Temporary disturbance effects from initial development.                           | Further tree and shrub planting within the development is likely to maintain the overall useable habitat available to song thrush and provide movement corridors through the site. The new attenuation area and meadow areas will also provide further foraging habitats. | <b>Negligible short term impact</b><br><br><b>Local Beneficial mid- to long-term impact</b> |
| <b>Dunnoch</b>     | Woodland generalist; Commonly invades a wide variety of scrub grown situations. Has adapted to field hedgerows, farms, railway embankments, parks, gardens and vacant urban land. Feeds mainly on insects but small seeds are an important winter food.                                                        | Only one dunnoch was noted on one survey, but they are shy during the breeding season, and there are possibly more present. | <b>Local</b>                           | No loss of habitat except perhaps for foraging opportunities along field margins. | The inclusion of woodland and shrub planting will provide suitable conditions to support a stable population of dunnoch on site. Bird feeders could provide supplementary food in the winter.                                                                             | <b>Negligible short term impact</b><br><br><b>Local Beneficial mid- to long-term impact</b> |

| Species              | Habitat Requirements <sup>†</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                     | Species Account                                                                                                      | Nature Conservation Value <sup>†</sup> | Characterisation of Unmitigated Impact                                            | Suggested Mitigation/ Compensation/Enhancements/Comments                                                                                                                     | Residual Impact <sup>††</sup>                                                               |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>House sparrow</b> | Nearly always associated with man, will avoid closed or dense vegetation, and except for seasonal foraging in corn fields and other crops, will usually avoid open terrain lacking in shrubs, trees, and other cover. | They were recorded amongst site boundary hedgerows. They possibly nest locally in the hedgerows or adjacent housing. | <b>Local</b>                           | No loss of habitat except perhaps for foraging opportunities along field margins. | Strategic placement of house sparrow nest-box terraces around the development would provide new breeding sites. Bird feeders could provide supplementary food in the winter. | <b>Negligible short term impact</b><br><br><b>Local Beneficial mid- to long-term impact</b> |

<sup>†</sup> Based upon criteria set out in Table 2 and professional judgment.

<sup>††</sup> Assumes that any suggested or proposed mitigation, compensation or enhancements are undertaken in full.

### Construction Impacts

- 6.3 Construction operations could disturb bird species of nature conservation interest currently using the site for breeding and foraging.
- 6.4 Disturbance during the breeding season may lead to nest desertion or the avoidance of the area. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions to intentionally:
- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
  - Take damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
  - Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
- 6.5 The construction works likely to disturb and impact on nesting/breeding birds include the initial ground works, vegetation clearance and construction activities which will result in noise and vibration and loss of suitable breeding habitat. Increased activity adjacent to areas where species may breed may result in disturbance to the species.

### Operational Impacts

- 6.1 Construction operations have the potential to disturb birds using the site for roosting, foraging, and breeding. Operations likely to disturb breeding birds include noise from vegetation clearance, initial ground works and some construction activities, such as piling, which are of low frequency but of high amplitude. Active high level infrequent disturbance causes most birds to be displaced for short periods<sup>11</sup>. During the breeding season disturbance may lead to nest desertion or the avoidance of the area and reduce the suitability of retained nesting areas, such as the hedgerows. Ground clearance works across the site are likely to be phased and will follow the phasing of the development, both staggering removal and allowing for some habituation of breeding birds, and this will minimise the extent of potential effects from the outset. Whilst there is some potential for breeding success to be reduced, this is not expected to affect the local conservation status of the majority of the bird species using the site for breeding. Disturbance effects on the majority of birds are therefore expected to be short-term and temporary and are significant at a **Site** level only.
- 6.2 The proposed development will result in the loss of the grassland as it is developed into residential dwellings. The local cat population is likely to increase with the influx of new residents and will mean that birds, in particular passerines<sup>12</sup>, are likely to suffer an increased risk of feline predation at adult and chick stages. Increased cat populations can lead to a negative effect on bird populations through increased predation and sub-lethal effects of feline presence on fecundity<sup>13</sup>. It is probable that development will result in a decrease in breeding productivity at a **Site** level, considered not to be significant.

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11 Hockin, D., Ounsted, M., Gorman, M., Hill, D., Keller, V., and Barker, M. 1992 Examination of the effects of disturbance on birds with reference to the role of environmental impact assessments. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 36, 253–286

12 Woods, M., McDonald, R.A. & Harris, S. (2003) Predation of wildlife by domestic cats *Felis catus*. Great Britain. *Mammal Review*, 33, 174–188.

13 Beckerman, A.P., Boots, M. and Gaston, K.J. (2007) Urban bird declines and the fear of cats. *Animal Conservation* 10,3 320-325

- 6.3 In order to deter encroachment of domestic cats into sensitive areas offsite (e.g. adjacent arable habitat in which ground-nesting farmland species might breed) it is recommended that the boundaries around the development are strengthened through the planting of native thorny plant species such as blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*.

## 7.0 MITIGATION

- 7.1 In order to adequately compensate for the loss of important breeding habitats and species whilst contributing to objectives of the Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan, the following recommendations, detailed below, are made.
- 7.2 The following proposals which are relevant to the bird interest on-site will be implemented as part of the permitted development which will provide an overall gain in biodiversity within the site:
- Native trees and shrubs will be planted along the boundaries and within areas of public open space;
  - The native hedgerows will be retained;
  - An area of wildflower meadow grassland will be created within the public open space;
  - Wetland grassland will be created on the banks of the ephemeral attenuation feature;
  - Amenity grassland will be created within areas of public open space; and
  - Nest boxes will be erected on retained trees at the site boundaries. These will provide nesting opportunities to a range of bird species including blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, tree sparrow *Passer montanus* and house sparrow *Passer domesticus*.
- 7.3 The planting of native trees and shrubs should increase the availability of nesting habitat for a number of species including bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, song thrush, and members of the tit and warbler families, whilst continuing to provide an abundance of food items contributing positively to breeding success throughout the site.

### Mitigation Measures for Construction Impacts

- 7.4 All nesting birds, their nests and fledgling young are protected under the WCA, 1981 (as amended). To avoid disturbance to breeding birds, any woody vegetation will be removed prior to the bird-breeding season (March to August inclusive). If this is not possible, the site will be checked prior to removal or other ground works that may disturb breeding species (e.g. dunnocks in hedgerows) by an experienced ecologist. If active nests are found, areas will be left untouched and suitably buffered from works until all birds have fledged. Specific advice will be provided prior to undertaking the clearance.
- 7.5 To prevent disturbance to off-site habitats, areas around the application site boundary should be buffered where possible.
- 7.6 Overall, habitat losses and provisions resulting from the proposed development are expected to have beneficial residual impacts on the five notable species recorded, as assessed in Table 6; house martin, willow warbler, song thrush, dunnock and house sparrow.

## CONCLUSION

- 7.7 The results of the breeding bird surveys show that the site supports a species-poor assemblage consisting, in the most part, of widespread and common species associated with farmland and hedgerows, which is considered to be of no more than Local Nature Conservation Importance. Whilst a number of declining farmland bird species were recorded which included house sparrow, these were all recorded in small numbers and are considered common to abundant within Lancashire. The loss of arable habitats to these species is unlikely to result in an adverse impact greater than that of **Site** level.
- 7.8 The proposed native tree and shrub planting, retention of mature trees and hedgerows, and new gardens, wildflower meadow, amenity grassland, open spaces and attenuation pond will provide extensive areas of foraging and breeding habitat, leading to beneficial site level impacts for the local breeding bird population over the mid to long term.

**Appendix A: Henthorn Road, Clitheroe - 2018 Breeding Bird Survey Results & EOAC Criteria for Categorisation of Breeding Status**

| Survey | Surveyor | Date     | Cloud (%) | Rain | Wind | Visibility |
|--------|----------|----------|-----------|------|------|------------|
| 1      | LMW      | 30.05.18 | 5%        | 0    | 0    | Excellent  |
| 2      | MJJ      | 19.06.18 | 90%       | 0    | W1   | Excellent  |

| Species:<br>British<br>Common Name | Species:<br>Latin name         | Survey 1  | Survey 2 | Conservation<br>Status &<br>Protection | Breeding<br>status <sup>14</sup> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cormorant                          | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>     | 2 flyover |          | Green list                             | F                                |
| Curlew                             | <i>Numenius arquatus</i>       | 1 flyover |          | Red list<br>NERC S.41                  | F                                |
| Lesser black-backed gull           | <i>Larus fuscus</i>            | 1 flyover |          | Amber list                             | F                                |
| Woodpigeon                         | <i>Columba palumbus</i>        | 2         |          | Green list                             | H                                |
| Magpie                             | <i>Pica pica</i>               |           | 3        | Green list                             | H                                |
| Jackdaw                            | <i>Coleous monedula</i>        | 11        | 2        | Green list                             | H                                |
| Carrion crow                       | <i>Corvus corone</i>           | 3         | 2        | Green list                             | H                                |
| Blue tit                           | <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>     |           | 1        | Green list                             | H                                |
| Great tit                          | <i>Parus major</i>             | 3         |          | Green list                             | H                                |
| House martin                       | <i>Delichon urbicum</i>        | 13        | 7        | Amber list                             | F                                |
| Chiffchaff                         | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>  | 1         | 1        | Green list                             | T                                |
| Willow warbler                     | <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>  | 4         |          | Amber list                             | A                                |
| Wren                               | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> | 3         | 2        | Green list                             | T                                |
| Blackbird                          | <i>Turdus merula</i>           | 4         | 6        | Green list                             | T                                |
| Song thrush                        | <i>Turdus philomelos</i>       | 3         |          | Red list<br>NERC S.41                  | H                                |
| Robin                              | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>      | 3         |          | Green list                             | H                                |
| Dunnoek                            | <i>Prunella modularis</i>      |           | 1        | Amber list<br>NERC S.41                | H                                |

| Species:<br>British<br>Common Name | Species:<br>Latin name     | Survey 1 | Survey 2      | Conservation<br>Status &<br>Protection | Breeding<br>status <sup>14</sup> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|---------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| House sparrow                      | <i>Passer domesticus</i>   | Colony   | Colony &<br>9 | Red list<br>NERC S.41                  | P                                |
| Chaffinch                          | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>   | 4        | 1             | Green list                             | H                                |
| Goldfinch                          | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> | 1        | 4             | Green list                             | H                                |
| <b>Total No. Species</b>           |                            |          |               |                                        |                                  |

**Breeding Status evidence can be broken down into four sections, each with their own codes, as defined by the European Ornithological Atlas Committee<sup>15</sup>:**

#### **Confirmed breeder**

**DD** – distraction display or injury feigning

**UN** – used nest or eggshells found from this season

**FL** – recently fledged young or downy young

**ON** – adults entering or leaving nest-site in circumstances indicating occupied nest

**FF** – adult carrying faecal sac or food for young

**NE** – nest containing eggs

**NY** – nest with young seen or heard

**Probable breeder** - Evidence accumulated during the survey indicates that the bird species is breeding on site.

**P** – pair in suitable nesting habitat

**T** – permanent territory (defended over at least 2 survey occasions)

**D** – courtship and display

**N** – visiting probable nest site

**A** – agitated behaviour

**I** – brood patch of incubating bird (from bird in hand)

**B** – nest building or excavating nest-hole

**Possible breeder** - Evidence accumulated during the survey indicates that the bird species could be breeding on site, but the evidence is less conclusive than that obtained for probable breeders.

**H** – observed in suitable nesting habitat

**S** – singing male

#### **Non-breeder**

<sup>15</sup> European Ornithological Atlas Committee, 1979. *Categories of Breeding Bird Evidence*. European Ornithological Atlas Committee.

**F** – flying over

**M** – migrant

**U** – summering non-breeder

**UH** – observed in unsuitable nesting habitat

## Key

Application Boundary

Study Area

Fly over only

NERC Species of Principle Importance

### BoCC Red-Listed Species

CU Curlew

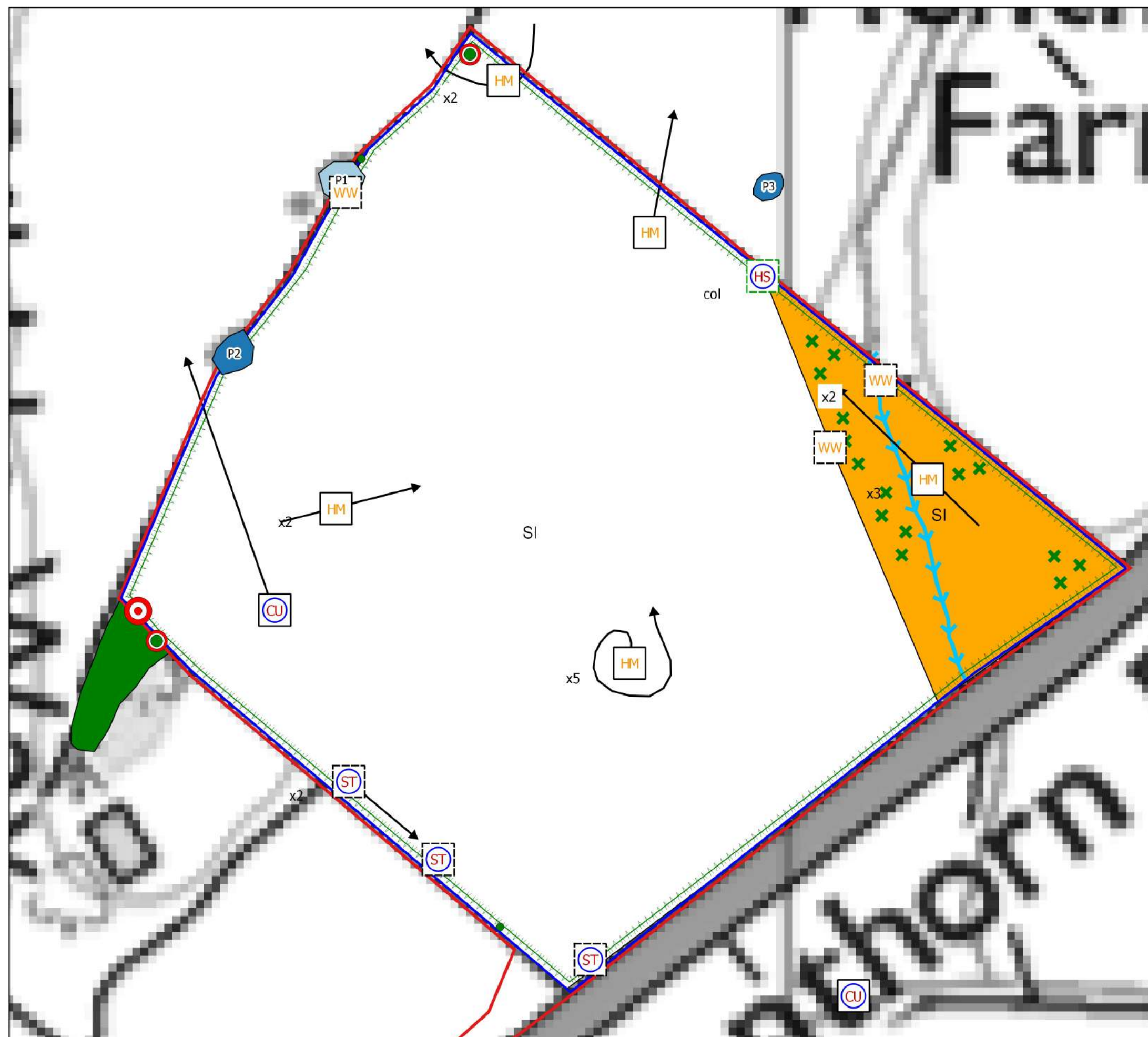
HS House Sparrow

ST Song Thrush

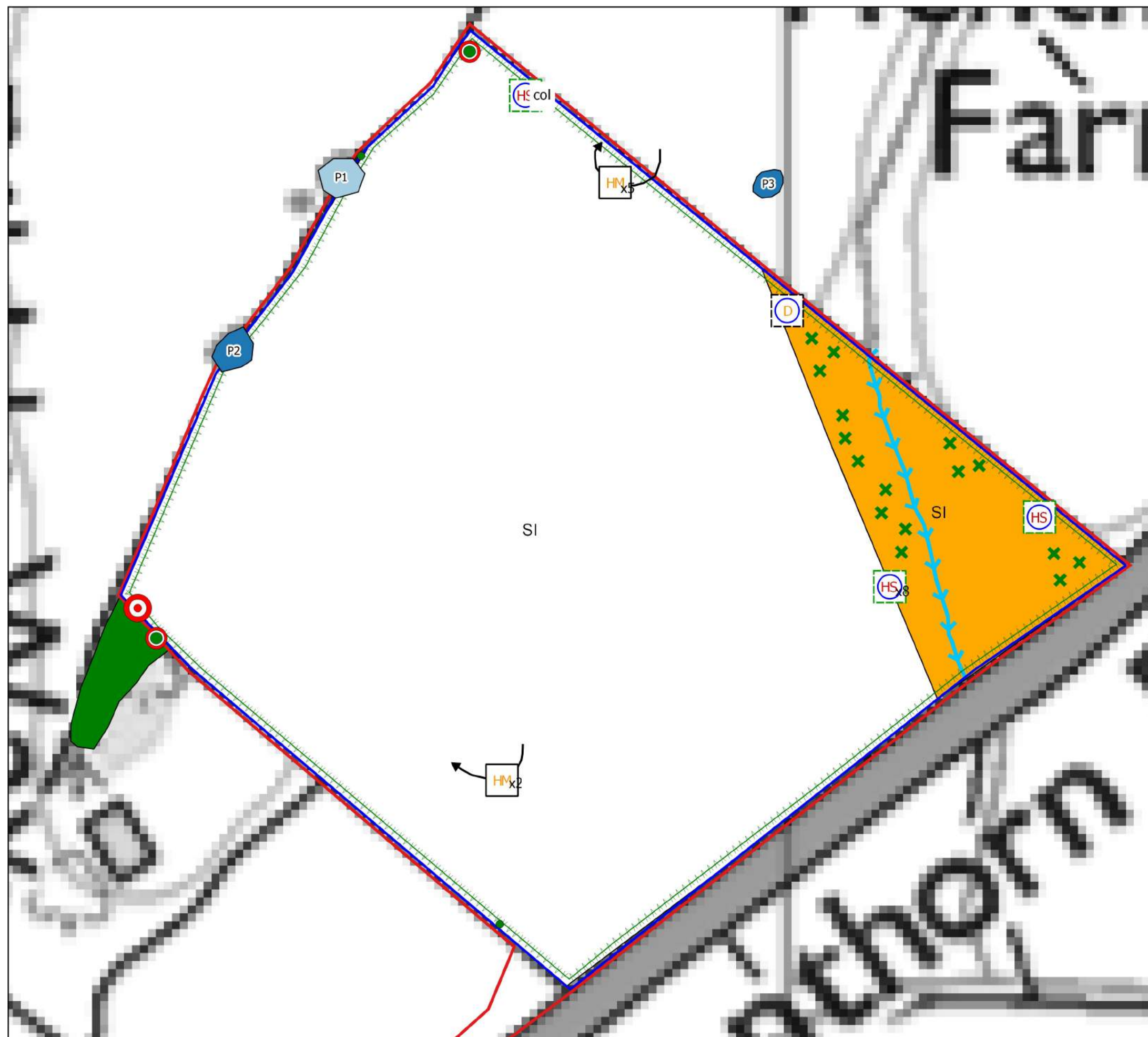
### BoCC Amber Listed Species

HM House Martin

WW Willow Warbler







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## Key

- Application Boundary
- Survey Area
- Fly Over Only
- NERC Species of Principle Importance

## BoCC Red Listed Species

HS House Sparrow

## BoCC Amber Listed Species

D Dunnock

HM House Martin

