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Conwy

Breeding Bird Survey Report; 2024

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BiOME Consulting Limited, 12 Abbott's Way, Shropshire, WV16 4JZ
info@biomeconsulting.com

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Author	James Grundy MCIEEM
Project Manager	James Grundy MCIEEM
Report Reviewer	Martyn Owen MCIEEM
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Executive Summary

BiOME Consulting Ltd was commissioned by Richards, Moorehead and Laing Ltd in February 2024 to complete a suite of breeding bird surveys of a site situated to the east of Llanrwst Road, where a residential development scheme is proposed.

A breeding bird walkover survey was completed in line with relevant guidance alongside a complimentary desk study. Six walkover survey visits were completed, covering all land within the site boundary and accessible land within a buffer zone of 50m. During the surveys all Birds of Conservation Concern Wales Red and Amber listed species, The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Section 7 Priority Species, Schedule 1 species of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Annex 1 species of the EU Birds Directive 2009/147/EC were logged as 'Target Species'.

At the conclusion of surveys territories of all Target Species were mapped, broadly following the territory mapping or Common Bird Census (CBC) methodology. All Target Species observed within suitable breeding habitat were considered to represent breeding birds if evidence of probable or confirmed breeding was observed.

Targeted surveys for Barn Owl, Kingfisher, and Schedule 1 breeding raptors (specifically focussing on Red Kite, Hobby and Goshawk) were also completed within the site and a buffer zone of up to 500m from the boundary.

The avian species assemblage returned by the desk study represented species typical of a very wide range of habitats, reflecting the variety present in the wider area surrounding the site and its proximity to the coast. Notable records from the immediate vicinity of the site included two records each of Chough and Barn Owl, and a single record of Red Kite. All are Schedule 1 breeding species for which there is suitable foraging habitat on site, with potential nesting habitat present in the wider area.

The walkover surveys identified a breeding bird assemblage typical of the habitats present on site and in the surrounding area, and predominantly comprised species which are common and widespread. The great majority of records and identified Target Species territories were around the periphery of the site and/or within the 50m buffer zone, due to the distribution of suitable habitat.

Territories of seven Target Species were identified within the site and 50m buffer zone: Song Thrush (five territories), Dunnock (four territories), Chaffinch (two territories), and one territory of each of Magpie, Willow Warbler, Goldcrest and House Sparrow. A further 31 Non-target Species and Target Species for which no breeding territories were identified were recorded; this included a small number of deciduous woodland and scrub specialists.

A Barn Owl was recorded incidentally on site. There is suitable foraging habitat for the species within the site and 50m buffer zone, and potentially suitable nesting opportunities within mature trees to the east. However, no trees or structures with potential suitability for nesting Barn Owl were recorded within the site or 50m buffer zone.

A possible Goshawk, observed briefly displaying over suitable woodland habitat within the 500m buffer zone, was assumed to represent a breeding territory on a conservative basis.

No evidence of any other Schedule 1 birds breeding within the site or relevant buffer zones was recorded.

1. Introduction

BiOME Consulting Ltd was commissioned by Richards, Moorehead and Laing Ltd (RML) in February 2024 to complete a suite of breeding bird surveys of a site located east of Llanrwst Road, Conwy (**Figure 1**), where a residential development scheme is proposed.

A pre-application consultation response¹ from Conwy County Borough Council, the Local Planning Authority (LPA), identified a requirement for the assessment of potential impacts of the proposals to breeding birds. The response noted that the site is likely to support suitable habitat for nesting birds and highlighted the need for “*ecological impact assessment of proposals on... Schedule 1 birds e.g. Kingfisher [Alcedo atthis] / Goshawk [Accipiter gentilis].*”.

A suite of breeding bird and species-specific surveys was completed between March and July 2024 (inclusive) to address the LPA’s comments. A desk study was also completed. The desk study and survey methods, results and conclusions are presented within this report.

Nomenclature within this report follows the British (English) vernacular name within the British Ornithologists’ Union British list².

Within this report potentially sensitive information in relation to protected species is presented in a confidential figure (**Confidential Figure 4**) to ensure this information does not enter the public domain. This confidential figure should only be made available to appropriate conservation organisations.

¹ Conwy County Borough Council (26/10/2023) *Land East of Llanrwst Road, Gyffin, Conwy, LL32 8HZ. Residential development of 102no. affordable homes and associated works including new vehicular access from Llanrwst Road, footpath connection to Isgoed, drainage and landscaping works and creation of public open spaces.* DC/ENQ/32353.

² <https://www.bou.org.uk/british-list/category-a-b-c-species/> [accessed 09/08/2024]

2. Methodology

2.1. Suitably Qualified Ecologist

The majority of surveys were completed by Tony Baker. Tony is an experienced ornithological surveyor, with 40 years' experience undertaking breeding bird and other ornithological surveys across the UK. His experience includes over 40 years working for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) at various sites as a warden and site manager, including Lake Vyrnwy and the Gwenffrwd, and leading numerous bird and wildlife tours for Naturetrek over a ten-year period. During this period Tony also completed ornithological survey and assessment work for several ecological consultancies.

Additional survey support was provided by Martyn Owen MCIEEM and Harriet Robins. Martyn completed the Stage 2 Barn Owl *Tyto alba* survey. Martyn holds a Natural Resources Wales Schedule 1 survey licence for Barn Owl (as well as licences to survey a variety of other Schedule 1 species). He is an experienced consultant ornithologist and has completed bird survey work at many sites across Wales. Harriet completed the first breeding raptor survey visit. She has carried out nest monitoring and survey work for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), RSPB and Gloucestershire Raptor Monitoring Group since 2017, and is a licenced bird ringer (BTO C-permit). She regularly undertakes survey and monitoring work for Schedule 1 raptors (including Goshawk and Red Kite *Milvus milvus*) and a variety of other species and is a Schedule 1 licenced agent in relation to Red Kite, Goshawk, Hobby *Falco subbuteo* and Barn Owl in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire.

2.2. Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken to identify existing information relating to birds within the site and its surroundings.

The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website³ was reviewed for information relating to internationally designated sites of conservation importance for birds within 5km of the site and nationally designated sites of conservation importance for birds within 2km. The search included the following internationally designated sites: Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar Sites, and the following nationally

³ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> [accessed 19/09/2024].

designated sites: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs).

A biological records search was made through Cofnod, the Local Environmental Records Centre for North Wales, by RML on 16 May 2024. The search included statutorily and non-statutorily designated sites and records of protected and/or notable species within 2km of the site.

2.3. Breeding Bird Walkover Survey

A breeding bird survey was completed, covering all land within the site boundary and accessible land within a buffer zone of 50m (**Figure 1**). The survey method was derived from current best practice as described in Bibby *et al.* (2000)⁴, Gilbert *et al.* (1998)⁵ and Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group (2024)⁶.

Six spaced survey visits were completed between April and July (inclusive) (**Table 2**). Days of high winds (wind above Beaufort force 5), poor visibility or heavy rain were avoided. One of the six visits took place in the evening (during the last few hours of the day, and extending beyond sunset for at least one hour) with the intention of identifying species not readily recorded early in the morning. All other survey visits commenced within half an hour of sunrise and were completed by mid-morning. The direction of survey was varied between visits to ensure all areas received adequate coverage during the peak periods of bird activity. Surveyors logged all observations of birds (both those observed and heard) on field maps using standard BTO coding, paying particular attention to behaviour indicative of breeding (following the BTO's breeding evidence criteria⁷). Both 'Target Species' (**Section 2.4**) and non-Target Species were recorded within the site and 50m buffer zone. Observations of Target Species outside the buffer zone were also logged, when seen.

4 Bibby, C.J., Hill, D.A., Burgess, N.D. and Mustoe, S. (2000) *Bird Census Techniques*. 2nd Edition. Academic Press: London.

5 Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W. & Evans, J. (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods*. RSPB, Sandy.

6 Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group (2024) *Bird Survey Guidelines for assessing ecological impacts. Breeding bird survey methodology* [online] <https://birdsurveyguidelines.org/methods/survey-method/> [accessed 13/08/24].

7 British Trust for Ornithology. Breeding evidence [online] <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/birdatlas/methods/breeding-evidence> [accessed 13/08/2024].

2.4. Target Species

Target Species for this project comprised the following:

- Birds of Conservation Concern Wales Red and Amber listed species⁸.
- The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Section 7 Priority Species (S7PS).
- Schedule 1 species, of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- Annex 1 species, of the EU Birds Directive 2009/147/EC.

2.5. Territory Mapping

Territories were mapped broadly following the territory mapping or Common Bird Census (CBC) methodology⁹. CBC 'territory mapping' is the most accurate practical way to determine the numbers and distribution of breeding birds where a high level of detail is required. Essentially, the method involved mapping all birds seen or heard during each walkover visit, paying particular attention to behaviour which indicates breeding (e.g. carrying nesting material or food). By combining the results of all visits, it is possible to determine the species present on the site and derive an indication of their breeding status and the approximate locations of breeding territories.

All species observed within suitable breeding habitat were considered to represent breeding birds if evidence of probable or confirmed breeding was observed (e.g. if a nest, eggs or young were located, if adults were observed carrying nesting material/food/faecal sacks, if a pair was observed, or if territorial behaviour was observed at the same location on at least two different visits)⁷. Territory mapping was completed for all Target Species (Section 2.4).

2.6. Species-specific Surveys

Species-specific surveys were completed for Barn Owl, Kingfisher and Schedule 1 breeding raptors (specifically focussing on Red Kite, Hobby and Goshawk), covering all suitable breeding habitats within the site boundary and appropriate buffer zones (**Figure 1**). The scope of species-specific surveys was designed

⁸ Johnstone, I.G., Hughes, J., Balmer, D.E., Brenchley, A., Facey, R.J., Lindley, P.J., Noble, D.G. & Taylor, R.C. (2022) *Birds of Conservation Concern Wales 4: the population status of birds in Wales*. Milvus, 2:1 (Online First).

⁹ Marchant, J. H. (1983) *BTO Common Birds Census Instructions*. BTO, Tring.

taking into account the LPA's comments¹, the habitats present on and around the site and the potential impacts of the development.

Surveys for Schedule 1 breeding raptors were based the methods outlined within Hardey *et al.*¹⁰, and included all suitable habitats within the site boundary and a buffer zone of 500m (access permitting). Surveys were based on viewpoint watches covering suitable woodland habitat, with survey effort, spread and timings targeted towards detection of Red Kite, Goshawk and Hobby.

Surveys for Kingfisher covered all watercourses within the site and a buffer zone of 100m (access permitting). In the absence of a widely recognised, published survey method for the species, surveys were based on the BTO Waterways Breeding Bird Survey, following transects along watercourses, with 2hr watches at suitable habitat, if present (based on prey delivery rates to active nests¹¹). Three survey visits were completed (concurrently with breeding bird walkover surveys 2 to 4), commensurate with the core breeding season for Kingfisher in the UK (early April-mid-May and mid-May-late June) during daylight hours.

2.6.1. Barn Owl Surveys

A Barn Owl survey adhering to the methodology described within Shawyer (2011)¹² was completed.

The objectives of this survey were to:

- Document Barn Owl presence/likely absence.
- If present, determine Barn Owl distribution and abundance.

To achieve these objectives, the surveys outlined below were completed.

Surveys included all areas within the site and a buffer zone of 50m (access permitting).

10 Hardey, J., Crick, H., Wernham, C., Riley, H., Etheridge, B., Thompson, D. (2013). *Raptors, A field guide for surveys and monitoring*. 3rd ed. The Stationary Office, Edinburgh.

11 Cramp, S. & Simmons, K.E.L. (eds.) (2004) *BWPI: Birds of the Western Palearctic interactive* (DVD-ROM). BirdGuides Ltd, Sheffield.

12 Shawyer, C.R (2011) *Barn Owl Tyto alba Survey Methodology and Techniques for use in Ecological Assessment. Developing Best Practice in Survey and Reporting*. IEEM, Winchester.

2.6.1.1. Field Survey

A walkover survey (the Stage 1 survey) was completed during daylight to identify features of potential value to Barn Owls. Prior to the completion of this survey aerial imagery and Ordnance Survey maps were reviewed.

Features identified as of potential value to Barn Owls were inspected in detail to determine if they offer a Potential Nest Site (PNS) for Barn Owls (the Stage 2 & 3 surveys).

PNS typically include:

- Agricultural or old industrial buildings with suitable access and possessing an upper floor, loft, roof void, blocked chimney, wide wall plate, bale stack, empty water tank, ducting or large nest box.
- Disused or derelict cottages or industrial buildings such as aircraft hangers, which possess an open joist, broken ceiling panel, water tank, disused chimney or large nest box.
- Mature trees, isolated or in clusters in open fields, hedgerows or on a woodland edge, containing a hole >80mm backed by a large, dark cavity, including those which have rotted-out to ground level but which offer no obvious access to terrestrial predators through an open root structure.
- Outdoor nestboxes on poles, trees, buildings or owl towers, which offer a dark chamber.
- Outdoor bale ricks.
- Cliffs and quarries with caves or fissures.
- River, rail or road bridges containing suitable cavities within their structure.
- Rural churches and the chimneys of intermittently used holiday homes.

During surveys of the above PNS, Active Roost Sites (ARS) were also recorded. An ARS is defined as a feature within which breeding does not occur, but where a bird is seen or heard regularly or its current or recent presence (within the last 12 months) can be recognised by signs of thick, chalky-white, streaky droppings, usually accompanied by pellets and moulted feathers.

All habitats within the survey area were assessed to determine which, on the basis of their appearance and structure, offered Potential Foraging or Commuting Habitat (PFH). Barn Owls can utilise a variety of different habitat types, but the majority of prime foraging habitat in mainland Britain is provided by fields of rough-grassland and young plantations, and in particular by rough-grassland

corridors along watercourses, roadsides, arable field margins, woodland edge and occasionally along woodland rides.

All habitats within the survey area were allocated to one of the categories detailed within **Table 1**.

Table 1. Defining potential foraging or commuting habitat for Barn Owls¹²

Habitat Type	Habitat Quality	Description
1	Optimal	Optimum habitat for field voles <i>Microtus agrestis</i> (for breeding, foraging and shelter) and are of the highest value to Barn Owls. Usually permanent, unimproved or semi-improved grassland, rank and heterogeneous in appearance, often of mixed height, with fully or partly collapsed dead grass stems (straw) often dominating the leaf sward. The grassland possesses a high abundance of raised tussocks per unit area (typically 4-40m ²) coupled with a compacted basal litter layer or 'thatch' of straw, at least 30mm deep. Usually receive no real management or anything other than periodic light grazing by farm animals. Long-term set-aside grassland and unmanaged fields, wasteland, ditches, riverbanks, field margins and road verges are the most common examples of this habitat type. When viewed in the wider landscape, Type 1 Habitats can usually be recognised, particularly in the autumn, winter and early spring, by their golden or green/brown appearance.
2	Sub-optimal	Of intermediate and often transient value to Barn Owls. This type of improved or semi-improved grassland is characterised by having a homogeneous, more even-height sward, sometimes displaying some lush and emerging tussock structure but little sign of a litter layer or 'thatch'. It can sometimes constitute a mature clover/grass ley and usually receives some level of farm management such as occasional fertilization, annual topping or light grazing. When seen in the wider landscape Type 2 Habitats normally have a more uniform, dark green appearance, than Type 1 Habitats.
3	Poor	Type 3 Habitats offer very poor habitat for field voles and most other small mammals and as such are of low value to Barn Owls. These improved grasslands are characterised by having a homogeneous sward, which is often kept short throughout much of the year, no tussock structure and are devoid of any litter layer at their base. They are usually mown closely for hay or silage, heavily grazed by sheep, horses or cattle or used for public amenity. They normally display a uniform bright green appearance when viewed in the wider landscape. Acid grasslands and those overgrown with scrub which can restrict Barn Owls from hunting also fall into this habitat category.

Habitat Type	Habitat Quality	Description
Other	Little or no value	Non-grassland habitats, such as arable fields and mature woodland are generally of little or no value as a permanent foraging resource to barn owls. Arable fields containing cereals, rapeseed, or other food crops do not provide suitable habitat for field voles, although at certain times of the year, such as during harvest, they can, for short periods, expose wood mice <i>Apodemus sylvaticus</i> and temporarily attract Barn Owls. Prior to harvest, however, arable crops are largely impenetrable to foraging barn owls because of the stiff nature of the crop and high density of planting. For the purpose of the survey, arable fields without grass margins and woodlands (except those possessing wide grass rides or young plantations) are, therefore, considered unsuitable.

2.7. Survey Details

Detail in relation to survey dates and weather are provided within **Table 2**.

Table 2. Breeding bird survey details

Survey Visit	Date	Time	Weather			
			Cloud (Octas)	Wind (Beaufort)	Temp (°C)	Precipitation
Breeding Bird Walkover Surveys						
1	13/04/2024	06:20 – 08:40	6-7	3-4 SW	12	Dry
2	01/05/2024	05:40 – 07:55 and 08:25 – 08:45	3	1 SSE	10-15	Dry
3	14/05/2024	19:00 – 22:10	4	1 SE	12	Dry
4	28/05/2024	04:50 – 06:25 and 06:55-07:40	8	1 SSE	12	Survey paused during rain 06:25 – 06:55
5	12/06/2024	04:45 – 07:45	7	1 NW	11	Dry
6	02/07/2024	05:10 – 08:10	2	3 NW	12	Dry
Schedule 1 Raptor Surveys						
1	11/03/2024	10:40 – 18:13	6-8	2 ENE-N-SE	8-9	Dry
2	13/04/2024	10:00 – 12:07	6	3-4 SW	12-14	Dry
3	15/05/2024	05:30 – 09:00	6	1-2 SE	12-15	Dry

Survey Visit	Date	Time	Weather			
			Cloud (Octas)	Wind (Beaufort)	Temp (°C)	Precipitation
4	11/06/2024	18:45 – 21:45	3-7	1-2 NW	7	Dry
5	02/07/2024	18:45 – 21:45	7	1 NW	14	Dry
Barn Owl Survey						
Stages 2 & 3	15/07/2024	10:50 – 15:10	2-3	1 W	16	Dry

The Barn Owl Stage 1 survey (1 May 2024) and Kingfisher surveys (1, 14 and 28 May 2024) were completed concurrently with the breeding bird walkover surveys in calm, dry weather conditions.

2.8. Limitations

The findings presented in this report represent those at the time of survey and reporting, and data collected from available sources. Ecological surveys are limited by factors which affect the presence of plants and animals, such as the time of year, migration patterns and behaviour.

Accessible land included all areas within the site boundary and the majority of immediately adjacent land to the southwest (including a farm complex and all fields up to a distance of approximately 75m from the site boundary). Access outside these areas was limited to public rights of way only. Nonetheless, access constraints were not considered a significant limitation on the survey results.

The weather during the early breeding season in 2024 was poor across much of the UK. Optimal weather conditions for survey of breeding Schedule 1 raptors during this time period were rare. Whilst the Schedule 1 raptor surveys detailed within this report were completed in broadly suitable conditions, the lack of optimal weather may have limited the detectability of breeding Goshawk. Consequently, a brief sighting of a possible displaying Goshawk during the first Schedule 1 raptor survey (**Section 3.3**) is assumed to represent a breeding territory, although this was not confirmed.

During territory mapping, birds were considered to represent breeding territories where evidence of probable or confirmed breeding was observed. Mapping territories where only possible breeding evidence was recorded would likely have led to the overestimation of breeding numbers, due to the potential inclusion of passage migrants. This may have led to some pairs which did breed being

excluded during territory mapping, although such instances would likely be rare, and not compromise the overall conclusions of this report.

The locations of territories on **Figure 2** and **Confidential Figure 4** should be viewed as approximate, with the locations shown indicating a location within the territory of a breeding pair, rather than a nest location.

3. Results

3.1. Desk Study

3.1.1. Designated Sites

One internationally designated site for birds was identified within the 5km search area; detail is provided within **Table 3**. No nationally designated sites for birds were identified within the 2km search area (although the citation for one site, Aber Afon Conwy SSSI, located 1.0km to the east, notes that it supports high numbers of waders, especially Curlew *Numenius arquata*, Redshank *Tringa totanus* and Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*).

Table 3. Statutorily designated site details

Site	Approx. Distance from site/Direction	Description
Internationally Designated Sites (5km)		
Liverpool Bay / Bae Lerpwl SPA	3.0km/NW	Liverpool Bay / Bae Lerpwl SPA is in the east of the Irish Sea, bordering the coastlines of north-west England and north Wales, and running as a broad arc from Morecambe Bay to the east coast of Anglesey. It is classified for the protection of Red-throated Diver <i>Gavia stellata</i> , Common Scoter <i>Melanitta nigra</i> , and Little Gull <i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i> in the non-breeding season; Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> and Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i> in the breeding season, and an internationally important waterbird assemblage.

One non-statutorily designated site for birds was identified within the 2km search area. Detail is provided within **Table 4**.

Table 4. Non-statutorily designated site details

Site	Approx. Distance from site/Direction	Reason(s) for Designation
Non-statutorily Designated Sites (2km)		
Conwy RSPB reserve	1.8km/E	Partially overlapping with Aber Afon Conwy SSSI, Conwy RSPB reserve includes wetland, mixed scrub and grassland habitats. It is notable for wetland specialists, including waders and waterbirds such as Curlew, Redshank and Wigeon <i>Mareca penelope</i> , which use the site for feeding and as a high tide roost. It also supports a large Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> roost within the reedbeds.

3.1.2. Bird Records

Cofnod returned 2,827 records of birds across 204 species within 2km of the site. The assemblage represented species typical of a wide range of habitats, including gardens and suburban/urban habitats, woodland, heathland and scrub, upland areas, coastal/marine habitats and a variety of wetland types. A number of passage migrants and rare vagrant species were also represented. This reflects the variety of habitats present in the wider area surrounding the site (including the presence of a well-known/watched RSPB reserve), and its proximity to the coast.

Notable records from the immediate vicinity of the site included two records of Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* (from 2021 and 2022) and a record of Red Kite (from 2021), although the majority of records of both species were from the wider area, particularly to the north and west. Two records of Barn Owl (from 2019) were also returned. All are species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) for which there is suitable foraging habitat on site.

With regard to the Schedule 1 breeding species for which specific surveys were completed:

- Seven records of Goshawk were returned, almost all to the northeast of the site. The closest record was 0.6km from the site centroid, with the most recent record occurring in 2023.

- Twenty-eight records of Red Kite were returned, widely distributed across the 2km search area. The closest record was 0.7km from the site centroid, and the most recent record was from 2023.
- Three records of Hobby were returned, all to the east of the site. The closest record was 0.2km from the site centroid, and the most recent record occurred in 2022.
- Thirteen records of Kingfisher were returned, all to the northeast of the site. The closest record was 0.7km from the site centroid, and the most recent record was from 2023.
- Five records of Barn Owl were returned, widely distributed across the 2km search area. The closest record was 0.4km from the site centroid, and the most recent record was from 2019.

3.2. Breeding Bird Survey

Territories of seven Target Species were identified within the site and 50m buffer zone. The number of territories of each Target Species, conservation status and associated comments are detailed within **Table 5**. Territory locations of all Target Species are shown on **Figure 2**.

The most abundant Target Species within the site and 50m buffer zone were Song Thrush (five territories) and Dunnock (four territories). Two Chaffinch territories were identified, and one territory of each of the remaining species (Magpie, Willow Warbler, Goldcrest and House Sparrow). The great majority of records and identified Target Species territories were around the periphery of the site and/or within the 50m buffer zone.

Table 5. Breeding bird survey results – Target Species.

Species	Status	Number of Territories	Comment
Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	Amber List	1	Recorded in a variety of habitats both on site and within the 50m buffer zone. One territory identified within the 50m buffer zone.
Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopos trochilus</i>	Red List	1	Numerous birds recorded within woodland and scrub around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer zone during the first walkover survey visit, but considered likely to be passage migrants, with only one subsequent record. One territory identified within the 50m buffer zone to the southeast of the site.

Species	Status	Number of Territories	Comment
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>	Red List	1	Family recorded in the 50m buffer zone, in woodland to the east of the site.
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	S7PS Green List	5	Five territories identified, within trees/woodland and gardens around the edges of the site and within the 50m buffer zone.
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	S7PS Amber List	1	A pair was recorded on multiple visits in a garden within the 50m buffer zone southwest of the site.
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i>	S7PS Amber List	4	Two territories on the site boundary and a further two within the 50m buffer zone, within hedgerows, woodland and gardens.
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Amber List	2	Two territories identified within woodland around the site boundary.

Table 6 includes details of the 31 Non-target Species that were recorded within the site and 50m buffer zone and Target Species for which no breeding territories were identified.

Table 6. Breeding bird survey results – non-breeding Target Species and Non-target Species.

Species	Status	Comments
Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Not Assessed	Recorded on one occasion only, when a singing male was present within the 50m buffer to the east of the site.
Stock Dove <i>Columba oenas</i>	Green List	Up to two birds regularly recorded in the south, both within the site and 50m buffer zone.
Woodpigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	Green List	Very common across habitats around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer.
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Green List	Occasionally recorded around gardens within the 50m buffer zone to the west of the site.
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	S7PS Red List	Primarily recorded flying over the site. Occasional birds recorded using fields within the site, with a maximum of 27 observed. No evidence to suggest breeding within the site or 50m buffer zone.
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	Green List	Recorded regularly flying over the site and within suitable habitat within the 50m buffer zone. May have bred within the 50m buffer zone.

Species	Status	Comments
Tawny Owl <i>Strix aluco</i>	Green List	Juvenile recorded incidentally by RML surveyors in the west of the site, during a bat survey. Recently-fledged juvenile also recorded during RML camera trapping surveys in 2023.
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	Schedule 1 Green List	See Section 3.3 .
Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Green List	Occasionally recorded around the site boundary and in suitable woodland habitat within the 50m buffer zone.
Ring-necked Parakeet <i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Not Assessed	Single bird recorded on one occasion within the 50m buffer zone. No evidence to suggest breeding on site or within the 50m buffer zone.
Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Green List	At least two birds regularly recorded in woodland and trees around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer zone.
Jackdaw <i>Coloeus monedula</i>	Green List	At least one pair regularly recorded on site and within the 50m buffer zone, mainly in the north, with a flock of 34 birds on one occasion.
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Red List	A roost movement was recorded over the site during one of the breeding bird walkover survey visits, and an adult with juvenile was recorded on the northwest boundary during the final visit, but the species is not considered to have bred on site or within the 50m buffer zone.
Carrion Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	Green List	At least one pair regularly recorded on site and within the 50m buffer zone. Also occasional birds commuting overhead.
Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>	Green List	Occasionally recorded flying over the site and within the 50m buffer zone. No evidence to suggest breeding on site or within the 50m buffer zone.
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Green List	Very common in woodland and gardens around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer zone.
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	Green List	Occasionally recorded in woodland and gardens around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer zone.
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Green List	A pair was recorded regularly in the southwest, on site and in the 50m buffer zone. Likely to have bred within the farm complex in the 50m buffer zone southwest of the site.
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Green List	Common within woodland and scrub around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer.
Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Green List	Recorded within woodland and scrub around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer zone.

Species	Status	Comments
Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Green List	Very common in woodland and gardens around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer zone.
Nuthatch <i>Sitta europaea</i>	Green List	Recorded around the site boundary and in suitable woodland habitat within the 50m buffer zone.
Treecreeper <i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Green List	At least two birds occasionally recorded in woodland within the 50m buffer zone to the east of the site.
Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Amber List	Occasional birds recorded in the south, both within the site and 50m buffer zone, but no evidence to suggest breeding on site or within the 50m buffer zone was recorded.
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	Green List	Common across habitats around the periphery of the site and within the 50m buffer.
Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Green List	Common across habitats around the site boundary and within the 50m buffer zone.
Pied Flycatcher <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	S7PS Amber List	A female was recorded in woodland within the 50m buffer zone during the first walkover survey visit, but there were no subsequent records or evidence to suggest the presence of a breeding territory.
Redstart <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Green List	A male held territory in woodland within the 50m buffer to the east of the site.
Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	Green List	A single bird was recorded on one occasion in the 50m buffer zone southwest of the site. No evidence to suggest breeding on site or within the 50m buffer zone.
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	S7PS Amber List	A female was recorded in gardens to the west of the site, within the 50m buffer zone, during the first breeding bird walkover survey visit. However, there was no evidence to suggest the presence of a breeding territory, and the species was not recorded subsequently.
Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Green List	Regularly recorded around gardens within the 50m buffer zone.

3.3. Species-specific Surveys

A potential Goshawk was observed briefly displaying over suitable woodland habitat within the 500m buffer zone during the first Schedule 1 raptor survey (**Confidential Figure 4**). A female Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* was seen to emerge from the same woodland during a subsequent targeted watch on 13 April 2024, although no other observations of Goshawk were made during any of the surveys detailed within this report. Although the presence of a breeding territory could not be confirmed, this sighting is assumed to represent a breeding territory on a conservative basis (see **Section 2.8**).

No evidence of any other Schedule 1 raptors breeding within the site or 500m buffer zone was recorded. Single Red Kite were observed on five occasions within the 500m buffer zone during Schedule 1 raptor surveys, with others observed in the wider area, but no evidence to suggest breeding was recorded. No observations of Hobby were made during any of the surveys detailed within this report.

No Kingfishers or suitable breeding habitat were recorded within the site or 100m buffer zone. All accessible non-culverted sections of watercourse present were found to be shallow (less than 25mm deep) and unsuitable for fish, and no potential nest holes or exposed cliff features were recorded.

Although the habitats present on site and within the 50m buffer zone were largely suboptimal for Barn Owl, comprising Type 3 grassland or other habitat, the northernmost field within the site was optimal Type 1 grassland (**Figure 3**). A Barn Owl was recorded incidentally over this field by RML surveyors during a bat survey on 26 June 2024. In addition, patches of suitable Type 1 and Type 2 grasslands were present in the buffer to the east of the site. Bordering these areas of suitable grassland habitat was an Oak *Quercus* sp. woodland with scattered mature trees beyond; these trees were considered likely to offer some suitable nesting sites to the east of the site, based on their age. However, no trees or structures with potential suitability for nesting Barn Owl were recorded within the 50m buffer zone.

The Stage 1 survey identified a barn requiring further survey just outside the 50m buffer, part of a farm complex present to the southwest of the site (**Figure 3**); however, all buildings within the farm complex were surveyed as part of the Stage 2 and 3 surveys and no evidence of Barn Owl presence was found. The barn was assessed to be potentially suitable for roosting, but not nesting, due to the absence of suitable ledges within.

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

Breeding bird surveys to inform a proposed residential development scheme at a site east of Llanrwst Road, Conwy, completed in line with relevant guidance, were undertaken during spring/summer 2024. A desk study was also undertaken to identify existing information relating to birds within the site and its surroundings.

The species assemblage returned during the desk study represented a very wide range of habitats, reflecting the variety present in the wider area surrounding the site and its proximity to the coast. Notable records from the immediate vicinity of the site included two records each of Chough and Barn Owl, and a single record of Red Kite. All are Schedule 1 breeding species for which there is suitable foraging habitat on site, with potential nesting habitat present in the wider area.

The breeding bird assemblage comprised species typical of woodland, scrub and gardens/suburban habitats. Most species recorded – including all Target Species for which breeding territories were identified – are common and widespread species typical of the habitats present. The great majority of records and identified Target Species territories were around the periphery of the site and/or within the 50m buffer zone, due to the distribution of suitable habitat.

Territories of seven Target Species were identified within the site and 50m buffer zone: Song Thrush (five territories), Dunnock (four territories), Chaffinch (two territories), and one territory of each of Magpie, Willow Warbler, Goldcrest and House Sparrow.

A further 31 Non-target Species and Target Species for which no breeding territories were identified were recorded. This included a small number of deciduous woodland and scrub specialists, although the majority of those were considered to be on passage or breeding outside the site and 50m buffer zone.

A Barn Owl was recorded incidentally on site by RML bat surveyors. The northernmost field within the site comprised optimal grassland habitat, with patches of suitable grassland present in the buffer to the east of the site, with mature trees beyond which may offer some suitable nesting sites to the east of the site. However, no trees or structures with potential suitability for nesting Barn Owl were recorded within the site or 50m buffer zone.

A potential Goshawk was observed briefly displaying over suitable woodland habitat within the 500m buffer zone, assumed to represent a breeding territory

on a conservative basis. Records of this species were also identified during the desk study. The woodland adjacent to the east of the site was considered suboptimal for Goshawk, and unlikely to support a breeding pair.

No evidence of any other Schedule 1 birds breeding within the site or relevant buffer zones was recorded.

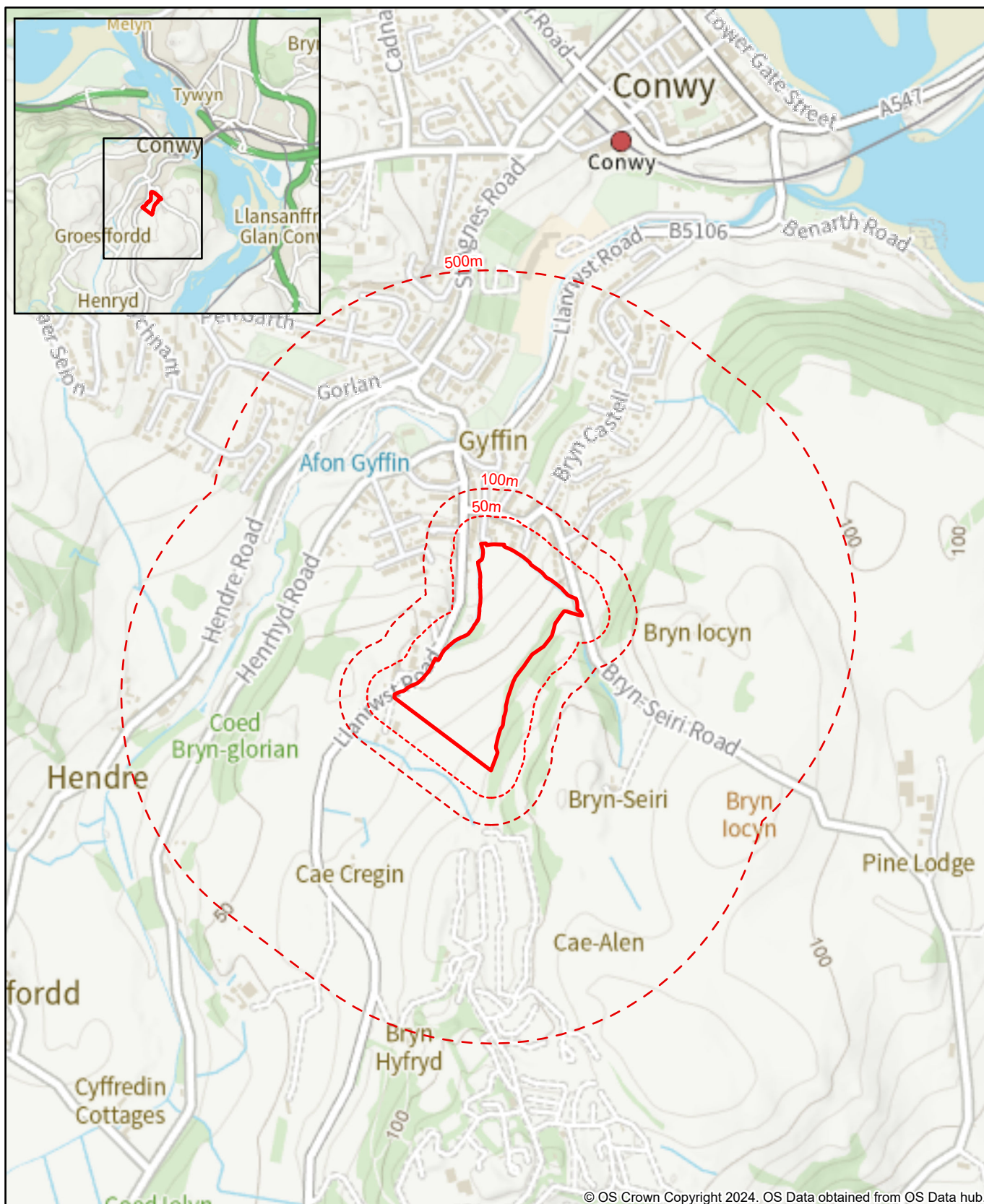
Figures


Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 - Breeding Bird Survey Results

Figure 3 - Barn Owl Survey Results

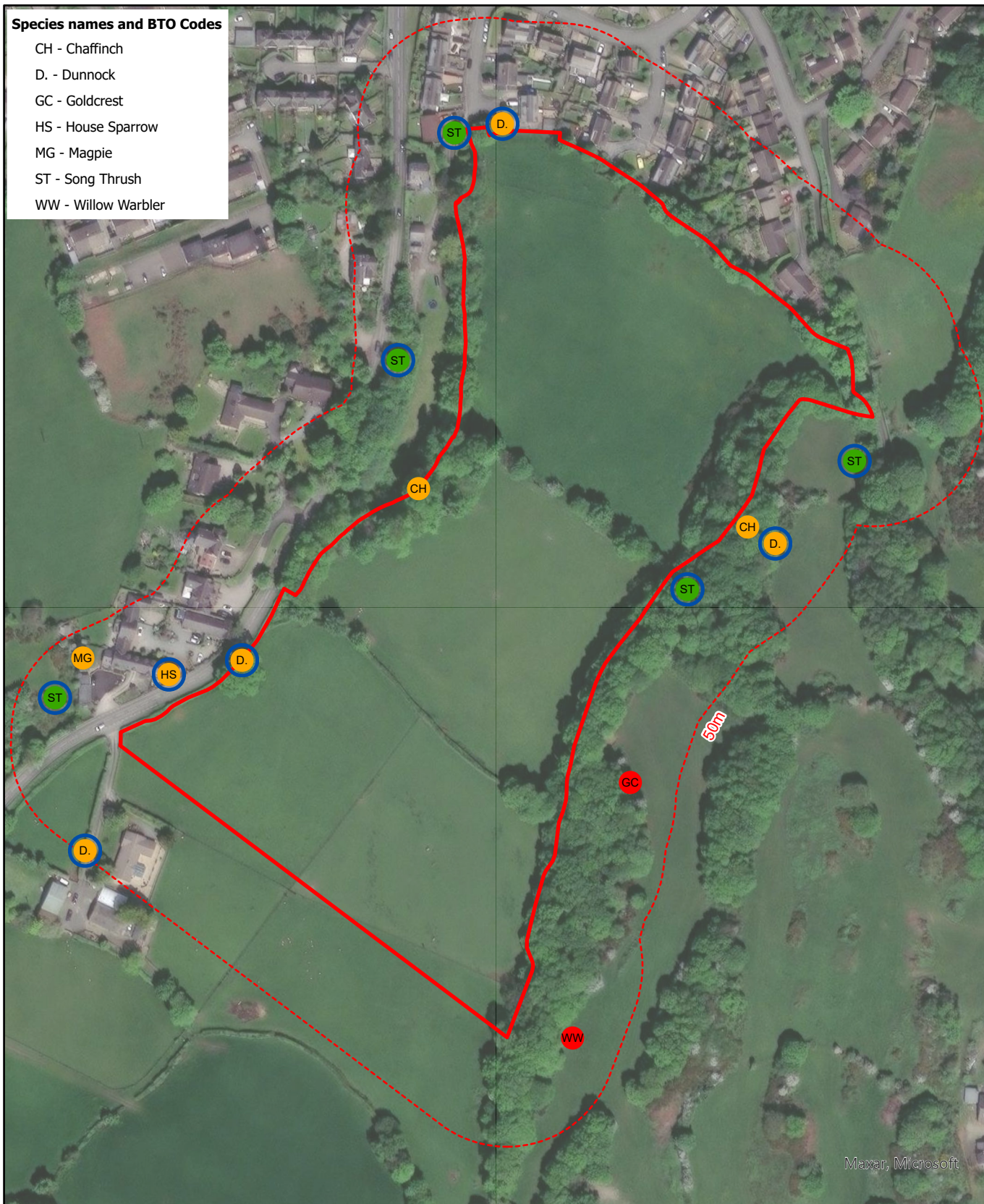
Confidential Figure 4 - Species-specific Survey Results



<p>Land East of Llanwrst Road</p>	<p> Site Boundary</p> <p> 50m Buffer</p> <p> 100m Buffer</p> <p> 500m Buffer</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N ↑ Meters 0 50 100 150 200 Scale: 1:10,000 @A4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Content: JGr Checked: JGr Drawn: JGa Ver: 1.0 Date: 28/08/2024</p>
<p>Figure 1 Site Location</p>			<p style="text-align: center;"></p>

Species names and BTO Codes

CH - Chaffinch
D. - Dunnock
GC - Goldcrest
HS - House Sparrow
MG - Magpie
ST - Song Thrush
WW - Willow Warbler



Produced by InTouch Geospatial Services Ltd.

Land East of Llanwrst Road

Site Boundary
 50m Buffer

Species Conservation Status

● Red

● Amber

● Green

Section 7 Priority Species



Meters

0 10 20 30 40 50

Scale: 1:2,500 @A4

Content: JGr
Checked: JGr
Drawn: JGa
Ver: 1.0
Date: 28/08/2024





Figure 2
Breeding Bird Survey
Results



Land East of Llanwrst Road

Figure 3
Barn Owl Survey
Results

- 50m Buffer
- Site Boundary
- Buildings subject to Stage 2 and 3 Survey
- Suitable Foraging Habitat for Barn Owl**
- Type 1 Habitat
- Type 2 Habitat


 Meters
 0 10 20 30 40 50

 Scale: 1:2,500 @A4
 Content: JGr
 Checked: JGr
 Drawn: JGa
 Ver: 1.0
 Date: 28/08/2024