



**BARROW ROAD, BARTON-UPON-
HUMBER.**

OS REF: TA 04218 21589.

WINTERING BIRD SURVEY RESULTS.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Strata Homes are in the process of buying a piece of arable land to the south of Barrow Road, with the intention of creating a new residential housing estate comprising 172 dwellings.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has been commissioned to carry out wintering and passage bird surveys of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. Three surveys were carried out between 30th November 2023 and 15th March 2024, and this report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. Prior to visiting the site, the survey area was cross referenced to maps and aerial photographs to give a general idea of the habitats and potential issues within the area and to identify potential access and walking routes.

2.2. Vantage Point Surveys

2.2.1. Vantage point (VP) surveys were carried out, broadly following NatureScot methodology.

2.2.2. Vantage points were chosen to cover all open arable land within the site boundary as well as immediately adjacent fields. All of the flight activity survey area was covered in less than 2km from the vantage point.

2.2.3. Surveys began immediately on commission by the client in November 2023, and two surveys per month were conducted between December 2023 and March 2024.

2.2.4. The timing of surveys was varied to take in different times of day and different tidal states to suit the variety of species known to use the Humber Estuary. Surveys were timed to include one hour before and one hour after dusk and dawn respectively. Each survey lasted for three hours, totalling twenty-seven hours of vantage point watches. This is less than the recommended thirty-six hours due to missed survey opportunities in October and early November, but is still considered to be a good sample of the flight behaviour due to the good coverage of all other months within the survey period in combination with other survey methods used for further surveys throughout the winter months.

2.2.5. All species detected by song, call, or visually were identified to species and their locations recorded on a field-map. The activity of each registration was assigned a behaviour code in accordance with standard BTO methodology. Additional commentary was made on birds landing and taking off from within and out of the development site.

2.3. Nocturnal Surveys

2.3.1. In addition to vantage point surveys, and due to the potential for waders and/or waterfowl to use the site, nocturnal surveys were also carried out between December 2023 and March 2024.

2.3.2. The surveys were carried out at least one hour after dusk, when no daylight was visible, and each survey lasted until the whole survey area had been thoroughly searched.

2.3.3. All species encountered on the site or adjacent land were recorded. The approximate locations of priority species were plotted on a site map together with behavioural notation where appropriate. Counts of secondary species were recorded separately and based on the highest number of each species in a distinct location.

2.3.4. A thermal imaging camera capable of covering large distances and recording photos/videos was used to assist with nighttime visual identification of species.

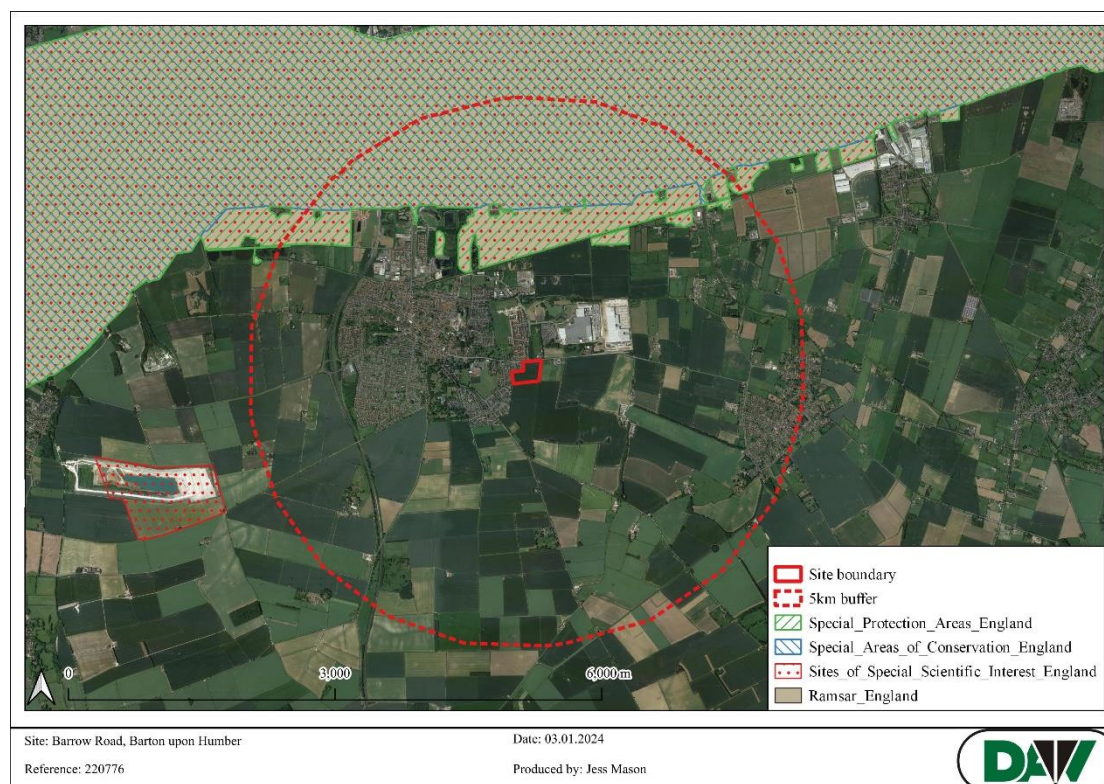
2.4. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice, in combination with advice provided by Natural England regarding survey expectations for this site specifically.

2.5. All surveys were carried out by Jess Mason MSc ACIEEM FRGS. Since 2018 Jess has had experience in a professional capacity as an Ecologist carrying out protected species and habitat surveys. Jess holds Natural England survey licences in respect of bats and great crested newts, and a Scottish Natural Heritage survey licence in respect of barn owls. She has also successfully completed a number of courses run by FSC and CIEEM in the relative protected species and carrying out site assessment using vegetation and has a MSc in Biological Recording. Jess is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A search of publicly available records shows that the site lies approximately 1.1km to the south of the Humber Estuary SPA, RAMSAR, and SSSI, shown on the map below, which are all designated for bird species.



3.1.2. Humber Estuary SPA

3.1.2.1. The site qualifies under article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain populations of the following species listed in Annex I in any season:

Annex I species	Count and season	Period	% of GB population
Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	59 individuals – wintering	5 year peak mean 1996/97 – 2000/01	1.7%
Bittern <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	4 individuals – wintering	5 year peak mean 1998/99 – 2002/03	4.0%
Hen harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	8 individuals – wintering	5 year peak mean 1997/98 – 2001/02	1.1%
Golden plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	30,709 individuals – wintering	5 year peak mean 1996/97 – 2000/01	12.3%

Bar-tailed godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	2,752 individuals – wintering	5 year peak mean 1996/97 – 2000/01	4.4%
Ruff <i>Philomachus</i> <i>pugnax</i>	128 individuals – passage	5 year peak mean 1996-2000	1.4%
Bittern <i>Botaurus</i> <i>stellaris</i>	2 booming males – breeding	3 year mean 2000-2002	10.5%
Marsh harrier <i>Circus</i> <i>aeruginosus</i>	10 females – breeding	5 year mean 1998-2002	6.3%
Avocet <i>Recurvirostra</i> <i>avosetta</i>	64 pairs – breeding	5 year mean 1998 – 2002	8.6%
Little tern <i>Sterna</i> <i>albifrons</i>	51 pairs – breeding	5 year mean 1998-2002	2.1%

3.1.2.2. The site qualifies under article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterbirds (waterbirds as defined by the Ramsar Convention) in any season:

In the non-breeding season, the area regularly supports 153,934 individual waterbirds (five year peak mean 1996/97 – 2000/01), including dark-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*, shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, wigeon *Anas penelope*, teal *Anas crecca*, mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, pochard *Aythya ferina*, scaup *Aythya marila*, goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*, bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, grey plover *P. squatarola*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, knot *Calidris canutus*, sanderling *C. alba*, dunlin *C. alpina*, ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*, bar-tailed godwit *L. lapponica*, whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, curlew *N. arquata*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, greenshank *T. nebularia* and turnstone *Arenaria interpres*.

3.1.3. Humber Estuary RAMSAR

The following bird species are listed as feature of the designation:

- Bar-tailed godwit, *Limosa lapponica* – Wintering
- Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa limosa* – Passage
- Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa limosa* – Wintering
- Dunlin, *Calidris alpina* – Passage
- Dunlin, *Calidris alpina* – Wintering
- Golden plover, *Pluvialis apricaria* – Passage
- Golden plover, *Pluvialis apricaria* – Wintering
- Knot, *Calidris canutus* – Passage
- Knot, *Calidris canutus* – Wintering

- Redshank, *Tringa totanus* – Passage
- Redshank, *Tringa totanus* – Wintering
- Shelduck, *Tadorna tadorna* – Wintering
- Waterbird assemblage - Wintering

3.1.4. Humber Estuary SSSI

The following bird species are listed as features of the designation:

Aggregations of non-breeding birds:

- Avocet, *Recurvirostra avosetta*
- Bar-tailed godwit, *Limosa lapponica*
- Bittern, *Botaurus stellaris*
- Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa limosa islandica*
- Brent goose (dark-bellied), *Branta bernicla bernicla*
- Curlew, *Numenius Arquata*
- Dunlin, *Calidris alpina alpina*
- Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
- Goldeneye, *Bucephala clangula*
- Greenshank, *Tringa nebularia*
- Grey plover, *Pluvialis squatarola*
- Knot, *Calidris canutus*
- Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus*
- Oystercatcher, *Haematopus ostralegus*
- Pochard, *Aythya farina*
- Redshank, *Tringa tetanus*
- Ringed plover, *Charadrius hiaticula*
- Ruff, *Philomachus pugnax*
- Sanderling, *Calidris alba*
- Scaup, *Aythya marila*
- Shelduck, *Tadorna tadorna*
- Teal, *Anas crecca*
- Turnstone, *Arenaria interpres*
- Whimbrel, *Numenius phaeopus*
- Wigeon, *Anas penelope*

3.2. The Surveyed Area.

3.2.1. The survey area comprises the section of land to the south of Barrow Road / A1077 shown in the aerial image below.



3.2.3. The survey area is situated within a semi-rural location and was surrounded by a mosaic of arable land, industrial units, and residential estates, with the Humber Estuary 1.1km to the north of the survey area.

3.3. Winter bird surveys results.

3.3.1. The dates, times and weather conditions of the vantage point surveys carried out are summarised in the table below:

Date	Start	End	Sunrise/ Sunset	Temp at start (°C)	Precipitation	Cloud cover (%)	Visibility	Wind (Beaufort)	High tide time	Low tide time
30/11/23	06:45	09:45	07:53	1	Snow at 09:30	70	Good	2	07:54 20:00	02:27 14:30
15/12/23	07:00	10:00	08:12	6	None	60	Good	2	07:41 19:55	02:12 14:24
20/12/23	14:30	17:30	15:42	11	None	80	Good	3	11:13 23:14	05:21 17:13
12/01/24	07:00	10:00	08:14	3	Light drizzle	100	Good	1	06:44 18:56	01:11 13:27
24/01/24	14:25	17:30	16:27	6	None	70	Good	2	06:08 18:14	00:36 12:43
16/02/24	06:15	09:15	07:19	8	None	100	Good	2	10:49 23:05	05:06 17:14
27/02/24	15:30	18:30	17:33	8	Occasional, light showers	100	Good	2	08:02 20:08	02:44 14:28
04/03/24	15:45	18:45	17:45	8	None	100	Good	3	00:21 13:01	06:48 19:41
15/03/24	05:15	08:15	06:15	10	Occasional, light showers	90	Good	2	09:33 21:52	04:03 16:14

3.3.2. The dates, time and weather conditions of the nocturnal surveys carried out are summarised below:

Date	Start	End	Sunrise/ Sunset	Temp at start (°C)	Precipitation	Cloud cover (%)	Visibility	Wind (Beaufort)	High tide time	Low tide time
20/12/23	18:30	19:30	15:42	9	None	80	Good	3	11:13 23:14	05:21 17:13
24/01/24	18:30	19:15	16:27	6	None	70	Good	2	06:08 18:14	00:36 12:43
27/02/24	19:30	20:15	17:33	8	Occasional, light showers	100	Good	2	08:02 20:08	02:44 14:28
04/03/24	19:45	20:30	17:45	8	None	100	Good	3	00:21 13:01	06:48 19:41

3.3. Vantage point surveys

3.3.1. Survey 1 – 30th November 2023.

No birds were recorded on the ground or taking off/landing within the survey area or immediately adjacent habitats. A flock of up to forty black-headed gulls was recorded circling a wide area covering the residential estate to the west of the survey area, occasionally passing over the survey area. This behaviour continued throughout the duration of the survey. In addition, a flock of up to sixty jackdaws was recorded flying towards the estuary from a copse of woodland approximately 350m to the southeast of the survey area, but not interacting with the survey area.

3.3.2. Survey 2 – 15th December 2023.

3.3.2.1. As in the first survey, both jackdaws and black-headed gulls were observed circling large areas throughout the survey, occasionally overlapping the site boundary. However, neither species was observed interacting with, landing, or taking off from within the site boundary or from immediately surrounding habitats. Maximum counts of 34 black-headed gulls and 28 jackdaws were recorded.

3.3.2.2. At 08:55, two curlews landed within the survey area, arriving from the west, and began foraging behaviour. At 09:08, a further forty curlews arrived from the west and landed in the open field. All forty-two curlews remained feeding within the field until 09:27, when fifteen curlews took off from the field and flew as a flock in a northwards direction towards the estuary until no longer visible. The remaining twenty-seven curlew remained in the field and were still feeding when the survey ended.

3.3.3. Survey 3 – 20th December 2023.

3.3.3.1. A flock of up to twenty-six black-headed gulls was recorded circling a wide area covering the residential estate to the west of the survey area, occasionally passing over the survey area. This behaviour continued throughout the duration of the survey. In addition, a flock of up to thirty-four jackdaws was feeding on the ground within the survey area or adjacent fields throughout the duration of the survey. Jackdaws were occasionally landing and taking off from within the site throughout the survey.

3.3.4. Survey 4 – 12th January 2024.

3.3.4.1. Seven species were recorded during this survey including black-headed gull, fieldfare, redwing, rook, jackdaw, curlew and pink-footed geese.

3.3.4.2. Black-headed gulls were recorded circling over the survey area and surrounding fields and residential areas throughout the duration of the survey, and frequently landed in the fields within the survey area to forage.

3.3.4.3. Large numbers of jackdaws, peaking at fifty-six birds, were present within the survey area or adjacent fields throughout the duration of the survey. These birds were occasionally landing and taking off from within the site throughout the survey.

3.3.4.4. A mixed flock of fieldfares and redwings, totalling approximately forty birds, was recorded flying west over the site towards the residential areas at 07:31. No birds showed any interaction with the site. Smaller numbers of rooks, totalling up to six birds, were recorded within the flocks of jackdaws.

3.3.4.5. Three skeins of pink-footed geese were recorded passing close the site at 07:46, 08:06, and 08:13. All three skeins were recorded flying at high altitude in an easterly direction, at a distance of 300m to 500m from the survey area, with between twenty and fifty birds recorded per skein. None of the birds showed any interaction with the site, and none passed directly over the site.

3.3.4.6. A flock of thirty-nine curlew landed on the site at 08:44 and began foraging. All birds remained within the site boundary until 09:40, when all birds departed in a northerly direction. At 09:46, twenty-nine curlew landed on the site and began foraging behaviours. These birds were still foraging on the site when the survey ended.

3.3.5. Survey 5 – 24th January 2024

3.3.5.1. At 16:13, approximately fifty-five lapwings were seen circling over the site, arriving from the east and circling the site and the immediately adjacent fields three times, before settling on land to the south of the site. The lapwings stayed on this land, immediately to the south of the survey area and separated from the survey area by a hedgerow, for approximately fifteen minutes before leaving the area after being disturbed by a person walking in the field.

3.3.5.2. Large numbers of rooks, peaking at thirty-eight birds, were present within the survey area or adjacent fields throughout the duration of the survey. These birds were occasionally landing and taking off from within the site throughout the survey.

3.3.5.3. Two black-headed gulls and twelve jackdaws were periodically observed passing over the survey area, but not interacting with the site.

3.3.6. Survey 6 – 16th February 2024

3.3.6.1. No birds were recorded on the ground or taking off/landing within the survey area or immediate adjacent habitats. A skein of twenty-six greylag geese flew at a high altitude from west to east over the survey area, but did not stop or interact with the site in any way. In addition, a flock of up to thirty-two jackdaws was recorded flying towards the estuary from a copse of woodland approximately 350m to the southeast of the survey area, but not interacting with the survey area.

3.3.7. Survey 7 – 27th February 2024

3.3.7.1. No birds were recorded taking off/landing within the survey area or immediate adjacent habitats.

3.3.7.2. However, three grey partridges were observed passing through the field on the ground, occasionally calling. The partridges were seen sporadically in different areas of the field and hedgerow throughout the duration of the survey.

3.3.7.3. Other species recorded passing over the site, but not landing or interacting with the site, included: a flock of up to twelve jackdaws, skeins of fifteen and five greylag geese, and three black-headed gulls.

3.3.8. Survey 8 – 4th March 2024

3.3.8.1. No birds were recorded on the ground or taking off/landing within the survey area or immediately adjacent habitats. Species recorded passing over the site, but not landing or interacting with the site, included: a flock of up to twenty-four jackdaws, three black-headed gulls, and five woodpigeons.

3.3.9. Survey 9 – 15th March 2024

3.3.9.1. At 05:40, six rooks were recorded passing over the site, and appeared to be leaving a roost approximately 350m to the southeast of the survey area, passing straight over the site without stopping or showing any interaction with the site.

3.3.9.2. At 06:05, a flock of eight curlew flew over the site in a southerly direction, without stopping or showing any interaction with the site, followed immediately by two herring gulls flying in the same direction.

3.3.9.3. Other species recorded flying over or close to the site without showing any interaction with the site included one magpie, thirteen starling, two woodpigeon, and a flock of twenty-eight black-headed gulls.

3.3.10 Summary of vantage point survey results

A summary of the peak counts of individual birds recorded during the surveys is provided in the table below.

Species		Peak no. of individual birds observed roosting/foraging within the survey area								
Common name	Latin name	30/11/23	15/12/23	20/12/23	12/01/24	24/01/24	16/02/24	27/02/24	04/03/24	15/03/24
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	0	42	0	39	0	0	0	0	0
Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	0	0	0	0	55	0	0	0	0
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	0	0	0	0	38	0	0	0	0
Species		Peak no. of individual birds observed in flight passing over the survey area (not roosting/foraging)								
Common name	Latin name	30/11/23	15/12/23	20/12/23	12/01/24	24/01/24	16/02/24	27/02/24	04/03/24	15/03/24
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	40	34	26	20	2	0	3	3	28
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	0	0	0	~20	0	0	0	0	0
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	0	0	0	0	0	26	15	0	0
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	60	28	34	56	12	32	12	24	0
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pink-footed goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus.</i>	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus.</i>	0	0	0	~20	0	0	0	0	0
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2

3.4. Nocturnal surveys

3.4.1. Survey 1 – 20th December 2023.

The survey area was searched from a vantage point using thermal imaging equipment, scanning the whole field, field margins, and hedgerows. No birds were observed. Transects were then walked through the survey area, scanning adjacent fields, which confirmed that no birds were roosting within the survey area or immediately adjacent habitats.

3.4.2. Survey 2 – 24th January 2024

The survey area was searched from a vantage point using thermal imaging equipment, scanning the whole field, field margins, and hedgerows. No birds were observed. Transects were then walked through the survey area, scanning adjacent fields, which confirmed that no birds were roosting within the survey area or immediately adjacent habitats.

3.4.3. Survey 3 – 27th February 2024

The survey area was searched from a vantage point using thermal imaging equipment, scanning the whole field, field margins, and hedgerows. No birds were observed. Transects were then walked through the survey area, scanning adjacent fields, which confirmed that no birds were roosting within the survey area or immediately adjacent habitats.

3.4.4. Survey 4 – 5th March 2024

The survey area was searched from a vantage point using thermal imaging equipment, scanning the whole field, field margins, and hedgerows. Two grey partridges were observed roosting in the stubble. No other birds were observed. Transects were then walked through the survey area, scanning adjacent fields, which confirmed that no further birds were roosting within the survey area or immediately adjacent habitats.

Prepared by:	
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Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou. BSc, MCIEEM.	Date: 19 th March 2024.

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Appendix I. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

Ecology

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub but others are ground nesting or prefer man-made structures or buildings.

Surveys

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

Legislation

Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1. -(5) of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”.

