

The Great Grid Upgrade

Grimsby to Walpole

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 3 Part B Section Specific Assessments

Section 6 Refined Weston Marsh Substation Siting Zone to New
Walpole B Substation

Chapter 4 Ecology and Biodiversity

Appendix 4A Bird Survey Data 2022-24

June 2025



Contents

4A.	Bird Survey Data 2022-24	1
4A.1	Introduction	1
	Wintering Birds	1
	Breeding Birds	1

Table 4A.1	Winter bird species and abundance recorded from Section 6 Survey Area	2
Table 4A.2	Breeding season species and numbers of territories recorded from Section 6 Survey Area	3
Table 4A.3	Importance of species observed within the Section 6 Survey Area	8

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4A. Bird Survey Data 2022-24

4A. Bird Survey Data 2022-24

4A.1 Introduction

- 4A.1.1 This appendix presents the wintering and breeding bird survey data available to inform the preliminary assessment reported in the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report for Section 6 Refined Weston Marsh Substation Siting Zone to New Walpole B Substation (Section 6) of the Project. This survey data was collected from surveys from 2022 to 2024. Data presented shows the abundance and conservation status of species recorded for wintering birds and breeding birds.
- 4A.1.2 Further details of the survey methodologies adopted are provided in **PEI Report Volume 3 Part A Appendix 4B Environmental Impact Assessment Methodologies and Scope**.

Wintering Birds

- 4A.1.3 The abundance data presented for wintering birds are the summed count of all observations of a species across survey visits. This approach may overestimate counts of birds, however the approach does provide a proxy for relative abundance to allow an indicative and precautionary approach to assigning importance.
- 4A.1.4 For abundance, the values presented in parentheses within the following tables represent those records of birds in flight. The 'European Site Features' column identifies whether those species are a qualifying feature, or part of the waterbird assemblage, of European designated sites, noting the consideration of the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for the relevant species.
- 4A.1.5 IRZs are a tool development by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of potential risks posed by development proposals. They define zones for each feature, outside of which adverse impacts are unlikely.
- 4A.1.6 Further avian work has been undertaken during Winter 2024/25 for wintering birds and the full survey results will be presented and assessed in the Environmental Statement (ES).

Breeding Birds

- 4A.1.7 Breeding bird features of the Ouse Washes are omitted given their IRZ does not overlap with the Section 6 Study Area. It should be noted that the survey transect for breeding birds only had partial coverage of the area and thus the number of territories does not represent the total number of birds breeding or using this area in the breeding season.
- 4A.1.8 Further avian work will be required in 2025 for breeding birds and the full survey results will be presented and assessed in the Environmental Statement (ES).

Table 4A.1 Winter bird species and abundance recorded from Section 6 Survey Area

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance (birds in flight)	Distribution	BoCC Status ¹	Schedule 1	Section 41 ²	Annex I	European Site Qualifying Feature
Brent goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	(1000)	Recorded in flight within field north of the section.	Amber	No	Yes	No	Yes, brent goose (non-breeding) are a qualifying species for the Gibraltar Point Ramsar and The Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar. Outside of IRZ.
Mute swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	6 (6)	Recorded in flight within field north of the section, adjacent to Marsh Road.	None	No	No	No	No, listed as a component of the waterbird assemblage for the Humber Estuary, The Wash and Ouse Washes SPA and Ramsar sites. Outside of IRZ.

¹ Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D., and Win I. 2021. The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. *British Birds* 114: 723-747.

² Species of Principal Importance under the NERC Act 2006

Table 4A.2 Breeding season species and numbers of territories recorded from Section 6 Survey Area

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of territories	Distribution	BoCC Status	Schedule 1	Section 41	Annex I	European Site Qualifying Feature
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	7	Recorded adjacent to the River Nene, south of the section.	Amber	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, avocet (breeding) are a qualifying species for The Wash SPA, Ouse Washes Ramsar and Nene Washes SPA. Outside of IRZ.
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	2	Recorded in field in north and wooded corner of field, adjacent to the North Level Main Drain.	Green	Yes	No	No	No
Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	3	Recorded in adjacent fields, near the River Nene, south of the section.	Red	No	Yes	No	No
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	3	Recorded in the centre and the south of the site.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	1	Recorded in a garden in the centre of the site	Red	No	No	No	No
Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	2	Recorded adjacent to the North Level Main Drain, in the south of the section.	Red	No	Yes	No	No

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of territories	Distribution	BoCC Status	Schedule 1	Section 41	Annex I	European Site Qualifying Feature
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	28	Records within the centre and the south of the section. Concentrated within residential houses in the centre of the section.	Red	No	Yes	No	No
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1	Recorded in field boundary. North of the section.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	6	Recorded north, central and south of the section, mostly adjacent to the River Nene.	Red	No	Yes	No	No
Little ringed plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	2	Recorded adjacent to the River Nene, south of the section.	Green	Yes	No	No	No, listed as a component of the waterbird assemblage for the associated with the Humber Estuary, The Wash and Ouse Washes SPA and Ramsar sites. Outside of IRZ.
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	15	Recorded in waterbodies/watercourse within the centre and south of the	Amber	No	No	No	Yes, mallard (breeding) are a qualifying species for the Ouse Washes SPA.

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of territories	Distribution	BoCC Status	Schedule 1	Section 41	Annex I	European Site Qualifying Feature
			section such as the River Nene.					Outside of IRZ.
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	14	Recorded in waterbodies/watercourse within the centre and south of the site such as the River Nene.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	5	Recorded in waterbodies/watercourse within the centre and south of the section such North Level Main Drain.	Amber	No	No	No	No, listed as a component of the waterbird assemblage for the Humber Estuary, The Wash and Ouse Washes SPA and Ramsar sites. Outside of IRZ.
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	2	One record in a field in the centre and one record adjacent to the River Nene.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	21	Recorded within the centre and south of the section, majority of records along the North Level Main Drain.	Amber	No	Yes	No	No

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of territories	Distribution	BoCC Status	Schedule 1	Section 41	Annex I	European Site Qualifying Feature
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	36	One record in a field in the centre and one record in the south.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Sedge warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	7	Recorded along the North Level Main Drain, south of the section.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	4	Recorded along the River Nene, south of the section.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	80	Recorded in fields along the section, concentrated in the centre and south.	Red	No	Yes	No	No
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	2	Recorded in a tree and wooded area in the south of the section.	Amber	No	Yes	No	No
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	2	Recorded in residential area in the centre of the section.	Red	No	Yes	No	No
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	8	Recorded in fields and field boundaries along the section.	Amber	No	No	No	No
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	1	Record in field, south of the section.	Amber	No	No	No	No

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of territories	Distribution	BoCC Status	Schedule 1	Section 41	Annex I	European Site Qualifying Feature
Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	9	Recorded along field boundaries across the section.	Green	No	No	No	No
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	4	Recorded in fields within the centre and south of the section.	Red	No	Yes	No	No
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	8	Recorded within the centre and south, predominately in the south in fields adjacent to solar farms.	Red	No	Yes	No	No

Table 4A.3 Importance of species observed within the Section 6 Survey Area

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of breeding territories	Winter abundance (birds in flight)	County Status	Importance
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	7	0	Fairly local breeding species. Fairly common coastal breeder, colonising inland localities in the past few years. Fairly common passage migrant, scarce in winter.	County
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	2	0	Very widespread breeding species	Local
Brent goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	0	(1000)	Very common coastal winter visitor. Occasional inland.	Local
Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	3	0	Fairly widespread breeding species. Fairly common but somewhat localised and declining resident.	Local
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	3	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	1	0	Very widespread breeding species. Declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	2	0	Very widespread breeding species. Declining resident.	Local
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	28	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1	0	Fairly local breeding species. Passage migrant.	Local

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of breeding territories	Winter abundance (birds in flight)	County Status	Importance
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	6	0	Very widespread breeding species. Passage migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Little ringed plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	2	0	Fairly local breeding species. Passage migrant.	County
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	15	0	Very widespread breeding species. Passage migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	14	0	Very widespread breeding species. Common / vey common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	5	0	Very widespread breeding species. Partial migrant.	Local
Mute swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	0	6 (6)	Very widespread breeding species. Partial migrant.	Less than local
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	2	0	Fairly widespread breeding species, however few records from inland breeding locations (although numbers increasing). Very common coastal passage migrant / winter visitor and fairly common resident.	Local
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	21	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	36	0	Very widespread breeding species. Passage migrant and winter visitor.	Local

Common name	Scientific name	Numbers of breeding territories	Winter abundance (birds in flight)	County Status	Importance
Sedge warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	7	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	4	0	Fairly widespread breeding species. Common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	80	0	Very widespread breeding species. Passage migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	2	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	2	0	Very widespread breeding species. Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	8	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	1	0	Very local breeding species. Common migrant and winter visitor.	Local
Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	9	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	4	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	8	0	Very widespread breeding species.	Local

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