



Land at Alderholt

Bird Survey Report

Prepared on behalf of ABR Ecology

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Land at Alderholt
Ecology 7845
Version 01

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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Pro Vision Ecology were commissioned in April 2021 to conduct bird surveys on an area of land at Alderholt. The survey included a standard breeding bird survey and nocturnal nightjar surveys. The surveys were requested to inform a decision on the future land use within the Local Plan with provisional plans including residential and industrial development.
- 1.2 The site currently comprises habitat suitable to support a range of breeding bird species including arable habitat, heathland and woodland areas. The red line boundary of the site includes part of Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area which will be retained within any future development plans.
- 1.3 The surveys recorded a total of 37 breeding species and the site is considered to be of district importance to local breeding birds.
- 1.4 Populations of greenfinch and house sparrow were also recorded on the site. These species are associated with urban areas and any future development can include and maintain these populations on the site through the inclusion of integrated nest boxes and provision of native planting within the urban areas.
- 1.5 The keys areas for breeding birds were the network of dense hedgerows and the heathland areas in the west of the site. The western half of the site also supported populations of arable species such as yellowhammer and linnet. Skylark were recorded breeding within the arable sections of the site.
- 1.6 To minimise impacts to the arable species breeding on the site areas of wildflower meadow habitat should be included within the western half of the site. Hedgerows should be maintained within this portion of the site with six metre buffers of uncut grassland along these edges.
- 1.7 Nightjar were recorded 'churring' from the heathland within the site boundary and foraging across the fields in the western portion of the site and northern field. Birds were observed flying along the hedgerows on the site. The site is therefore used by the birds within the adjacent heathland for foraging with breeding birds located within the heathland section of the site. The development will need to maintain foraging areas for this species and also maintain connectivity across the site with the inclusion of green corridors.
- 1.8 The site has the potential to provide ecological enhancements for the local bird population and enhancement measures have been provided within the report.

2.0 Introduction

Project Background

- 2.1 Pro Vision Ecology were commissioned in April 2021 to carry out breeding bird surveys on an area of land at Alderholt. For the site location refer to **Appendix A**. This report was commissioned in relation to the Local Plan and future development plans for the site which include residential and industrial units.
- 2.2 An initial preliminary ecological appraisal completed by ABR identified the potential for the site to support breeding bird species, including those listed within the citation for the neighbouring heathland sites. This includes woodlark (*Lullula arborea*), Dartford warbler (*Sylvia undata*) and nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*). A portion of the site was previously surveyed by Lindsay Carrington Ecological Services in 2019.
- 2.3 This report describes the current use of the site by breeding birds, including nightjar.

Brief

- 2.4 To carry out breeding bird and nightjar surveys of the land within the site boundaries and within the zone of influence of the proposed development, to inform the Client of any further work required and of the ecological implications of their proposals.

Site description

- 2.5 The site at Alderholt is in close proximity to neighbouring heathland which supports populations of woodlark, nightjar and Dartford warbler. The site itself is currently used as active arable and pasture fields intersected by networks of hedgerows. The fields are largely short sward semi-improved fields and arable which change in composition dependent on the current farming regime. The survey area also includes a portion of the heathland on the western boundary which falls within Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area.

Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.6 The key legislative provisions of relevance to this report with respect to the development proposals and their potential effects on ecological features are listed below:
 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- 2.7 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was the Governments response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK. The new UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework replaced the previous BAP and is the government's response to the new strategic plan on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Although the UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework supersedes the UK BAP, the UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats still remain an important reference source for identifying habitats and species of principal importance within the UK. Within England, Section 41 of the

NERC Act (2006) lists species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.

- 2.8 The Government has set out its policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system in the National Planning Policy Framework in Section 15 (NPPF, 2021).

3.0 Methodologies

Desk Study

- 3.1 The desk study methodology is based upon guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM, 2017). A data-gathering exercise was undertaken to obtain any available information relating to statutory nature conservation sites and priority habitats relating to birds within 500 metres of the site.

Bird surveys

Breeding Bird surveys

- 3.2 The standard Common Bird Census methodology as developed by Marchant (1983) for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) was adopted. A set route was followed on five occasions during May and June 2021 by experienced ornithologist Louisa Jones MCIEEM. The transect route was completed over a course of two mornings to fully cover the site. Surveys lasted no longer than four hours.
- 3.3 Weather conditions for the breeding bird surveys have been provided in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Weather conditions during the breeding bird surveys

Date	Visit number	Start Time	Weather conditions
05.05.21	1	05:40	1°C, cloud – 0/8, still and dry
06.05.21		05:40	2°C, , cloud – 8/8, still and dry
19.05.21	2	05:20	10°C, cloud – 8/8, still, light rain which cleared after 6
20.05.21		05:25	6°C, cloud – 8/8, still and dry
09.06.21	3	05:00	12°C, cloud – 8/8, light fog, dry
10.06.21		05:00	12°C, cloud – 8/8, still and light rain
22.06.21	4	05:00	10°C, cloud – 8/8, still and dry
02.07.21		05:00	16°C, cloud – 8/8, still and dry
07.07.21	5	05:05	16°C, cloud – 8/8, still and dry
08.07.21		05:00	14°C, cloud – 3/8, still and dry

- 3.4 Any birds encountered were identified either visually or from their vocalisations. Birds were noted with standard BTO codes and behaviour was mapped. Following the surveys territory mapping was conducted following the methodology set out in Bibby et al. (1992). Territories were determined using the criteria set out in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Criteria for determining territories

Breeding status	Registration description
Confirmed breeding territory	Two registrations of a particular species displaying breeding behaviour within a territory range over the total survey period

Breeding status	Registration description
	A single record of a nest containing eggs or young
	Two registrations of a difficult species (e.g. nocturnal species such as owls or woodcocks) within a territory range over the total survey period
Probable breeding territory	Present in suitable habitat in the same location (within normal territory range) on two occasions
	Displaying breeding behaviour ¹ on one occasion only
Possible breeding territory	Present in suitable habitat on one occasion only
Non-breeding	Present in habitat not suitable for breeding
	Immature birds (e.g. herring gull first breeds at 4 years of age)

3.5 The breeding bird assemblage on the site was assessed using the criteria set out by Fuller (1980). The adapted scale outlined in the IEEM guidelines (2006) was used which reflects the decline in arable species since Fullers guidelines were originally published.

- Up to 24 breeding species = Local Importance.
- 25 – 49 breeding species = District Importance.
- 50 – 69 breeding species = County Importance.
- 70 – 84 breeding species = Regional Importance.
- 85+ breeding species = National Importance.

Constraints

3.6 The surveys were conducted late in the survey season and are likely to have missed species which breed earlier in the year, such as woodlark and woodpecker. In consideration of the habitats present within the site the results this is not considered significant. Any potential woodlark territories would be within areas of the site outside any proposed development works in the west of the site.

Nightjar surveys

3.7 The site is directly adjacent an area of the Dorset heaths and there is potential for nightjar to breed and use the site. Nocturnal surveys for nightjar were conducted on three occasions with surveys conducted in line with the methods set out in Gilbert et al (1998). The surveys required

¹ Breeding behaviour includes displaying, singing, territorial activity, agitated or defensive behaviour, pair of adults together

two transects to cover the required areas at the correct time. Surveys began shortly before dusk and continued for up to 2 hours or until light levels negated survey.

3.8 Weather conditions for the nightjar surveys have been provided in **Table 3** below:

Table 3: Weather conditions during the nightjar surveys

Date	Visit number	Weather conditions
03.06.21	1	15°C, cloud – 2/8, still and dry
07.06.21		16°C, cloud – 4/8, still and dry
29.06.21	2	18°C s, cloud – 8/8, still and dry
30.06.21		18°C, cloud – 7/8, still and dry
12.07.21	3	17°C, cloud 8/8, still and dry
13.07.21		20°C, cloud 1/8, still and dry

Constraints

3.9 The nightjar surveys are predominantly designed to assess breeding territories on the site and are constrained when assessing foraging areas. This is due to the difficulty of observing nightjar once the light levels are below a certain threshold.

4.0 Results and Analysis

Designated sites

Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.1 The site includes one international designated site which has been listed due to the presence of important populations of Annex I bird species.
- 4.2 Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA) is located in the western half of the site (**Appendix A**). Dorset Heathlands SPA supports important populations of nightjar, woodlark and Dartford warbler, which breed across the heathland in the spring and summer. During the winter months important numbers of hen harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) and merlin (*Falco columbarius*) overwinter on the site. Part of this international site is present within the site boundary.
- 4.3 The citation for the SPA includes approximately 41-56 pairs of woodlark, representing 9.3% of the national breeding population (English Nature 1998). There are approximately 418-606 pairs of Dartford warbler breeding on the site, representing 37.9% of the national breeding population (English Nature 1998). There are approximately over 436 pairs of breeding nightjar which represent 12.8% of the national breeding population (English Nature 1998).
- 4.4 The Dorset Heathlands SPA is spread across several sites across Dorset and the section in the west of the site is Cranborne Common. This area is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). A report on the trends of citation birds within the SPA network indicates that high densities of nightjar are present on Cranborne Common, moderate densities of woodlark and moderate densities of Dartford warbler (Lilly 2014).
- 4.5 The area of the site which includes the SPA will be outside any proposed development footprint. Birds which are present within the adjacent designated sites may use the proposed development site for foraging and breeding.

Surveys

Breeding Bird Survey

- 4.6 The network of hedgerows, areas of woodland and open heath provide breeding opportunities for local birds. The results of the breeding bird surveys are provided in **Table 4** and territories for notable species are provided in **Appendix B**. A total of fifty-eight species were recorded during the surveys, eleven of which are red listed birds of conservation concern (BoCC) and UKBAP, fourteen amber listed BoCC and two Schedule I species. A total of thirty-seven species were recorded as breeding on the site.

Table 4: Birds recorded on site during the breeding bird surveys

Species	Latin name	Notable status	Max count	Number of visits recorded	Breeding status on site
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		21	5	Breeding on site
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		9	5	Breeding on site
Black-headed gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Amber List BoCC	3	4	Not breeding
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		9	5	Breeding on site
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber List BoCC, UK BAP	2	4	Breeding on site
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		1	3	Not breeding
Canada goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		1	1	Not breeding
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone corone</i>		8	5	Breeding on site
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		18	5	Breeding on site
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		13	5	Breeding on site
Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>		3	4	Breeding on site
Common whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Amber List BoCC	1	4	Breeding on site
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		1	1	Not breeding
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		1	3	Not breeding
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	1	4	Breeding on site
Dartford warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>	Schedule 1, Amber List BoCC	1	1	Possible – single registration in suitable habitat
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber List BoCC, UK BAP	12	5	Breeding on site
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	Schedule 1, Amber List BoCC	1	3	Breeding on land adjacent to site
Garden warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>		2	5	Breeding on site
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		6	5	Breeding on site
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		11	5	Breeding on site
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		3	2	Breeding on site
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>		11	5	Breeding on site
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Red List BoCC	3	3	Probable breeding on site
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		1	2	Not breeding
House martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Red List BoCC	1	2	Not breeding

Species	Latin name	Notable status	Max count	Number of visits recorded	Breeding status on site
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	14	5	Breeding on site
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>		3	1	Not breeding
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		2	4	Breeding on site
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber List BoCC	1	2	Not breeding
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	1	1	Not breeding
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	9	5	Breeding on site
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		8	5	Breeding on site
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		4	5	Breeding on site
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber List BoCC	3	5	Not breeding on site
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber List BoCC	1	2	no
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Red List BoCC	3	2	No
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		2	3	Probable breeding on site
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		7	4	Breeding
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		5	4	Breeding on site
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		16	5	Breeding on site
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Amber List BoCC	2	1	Not breeding
Sedge warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	Amber List BoCC	1	1	Not breeding
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>		4	5	Breeding on site
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	3	5	Breeding on site
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Amber List BoCC, UK BAP	5	4	Breeding on site
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Amber List BoCC	1	3	Breeding in the area
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	15	5	Breeding in surrounding houses
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber List BoCC	1	2	Not breeding
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>		6	5	Breeding on site
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		3	4	Breeding on site
Tree pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	2	3	Breeding on site
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		3	5	Breeding on site

Species	Latin name	Notable status	Max count	Number of visits recorded	Breeding status on site
Tufted duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		1	2	Not breeding
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Amber List BoCC	4	4	Breeding on site
Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		7	5	Breeding on site
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Amber List BoCC	20	5	Breeding on site
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red List BoCC, UK BAP	4	5	Breeding on site

- 4.7 The areas used most by breeding birds are the network of hedgerows and areas around the heathland. The areas of open grassland and arable fields in the west and east of the site were used by ground nesting species, such as skylark (*Alauda arvensis*). Further details for the areas of importance for the notable species are provided below.
- 4.8 Territories of dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), amber list BoCC and UKBAP species, were recorded across the site. This species was predominantly associated with the hedgerow networks with territories scattered through the site. There were a total of six confirmed territories and twelve probable territories. Dunnock is a common and widespread species and therefore the populations present are not considered significant.
- 4.9 A single Dartford warbler call, amber list BoCC and Schedule I species, was recorded on the western boundary of the site. This species is a citation species for the adjacent heathland. The call was located within the adjacent heathland and was determined as a possible territory. No other calls or song was heard over the course of the surveys. No breeding territories were recorded within any areas within the proposed footprint of construction. The land within the development site boundary is not considered to be of importance to this species, but enhancements can be provided in the scheme.
- 4.10 A single firecrest (*Regulus ignicapillus*) call, amber list BoCC and Schedule I species, was recorded along the southern edge of the site. The call originated from within an area of coniferous woodland adjacent to the site boundary and indicates a probable territory. This is the preferred habitat for this species and no breeding territories were present within the site boundary.
- 4.11 Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*), red list BoCC species, were recorded within the hedgerows in the northern half of the site. This is a species associated with urban areas and gardens. A total of four probable territories were recorded with birds heard singing on a single occasion in these locations. Greenfinch are widespread and the presence of four territories is not considered significant.
- 4.12 House sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), red list BoCC species, were recorded on the site with four confirmed territories present. The territories are located around the central barn buildings and within the surrounding scrub and the buildings in the eastern half of the site. This species is associated with urban areas. The presence of four territories is not considered significant but enhancement measures can be included within the development.
- 4.13 Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*), red list BoCC and UKBAP species, were recorded in the east of the site, foraging across the fields and also displaying breeding behaviour. One confirmed territory and one probable territory is present on the site. These were located in the western half of the

- site. This species is associated with arable areas. The presence of two territories is not considered significant but measures should be included within the development to retain territories.
- 4.14 Skylark, red list BoCC and UKBAP species, were recorded on the site with three confirmed territories and three probable territories. These were located in the east and west of the site within the areas of open arable fields. Skylark are an arable species which are suffering from declines in populations. The site is of local importance to this species and habitat should be retained within the final development plans.
- 4.15 Song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), amber List BoCC and UK BAP species, are present in the areas of woodland across the site with three confirmed territories and three probable territories. This is a common and widespread species and the populations present are not considered significant.
- 4.16 Two tree pipit (*Anthus trivialis*) territories, red list BoCC and UKBAP species, were recorded within the western half of the survey site, one confirmed and one probable. This is a species which is largely found within heathland habitat and the territories were present within the SPA boundary. These populations will not be directly impacted by the development.
- 4.17 Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*), amber list BoCC species, are present on the site with one confirmed and one probable territory on the site. This is a common and widespread species and the populations present are not considered significant.
- 4.18 Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), amber list BoCC species, have suffered recent declines and have recently been added to the BoCC list. This species was recorded breeding across the hedgerows on the site and was widespread across the survey area. A total of 33 territories were recorded across the site, however, this is not considered significant in the context of the national population.
- 4.19 Willow warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*), amber list BoCC species, were recorded along the southern and western boundary of the site. A total of three confirmed territories were recorded which were largely associated with areas of silver birch woodland. These areas are outside proposed development areas.
- 4.20 Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*), red list BoCC species, were recorded in the western half of the site. A total of three confirmed and three probable territories were present. These are largely associated with the hedgerows on the site. This is an arable species which does not reside in residential areas. This site is considered of local importance to this species and habitat should be retained within the development plans.
- 4.21 A total of 36 species were confirmed as breeding on the site, with one probable breeding. The site is therefore considered to be of district importance for birds in the area. Further recommendations are provided in **Section 5.0** for the retention of breeding habitat and the creation of new opportunities. Particular measures should be included for skylark, linnet and yellowhammer.

Nightjar surveys

- 4.22 The records of nightjar are shown in **Appendix C** and the results of the surveys are summarised below.

3rd and 7th June 2021

- 4.23 Nightjar were recorded flying from the heathland west to east across the site, with individuals seen at two locations. A single nightjar was heard calling beyond the southern site boundary. During the surveys nightjar could be heard 'churring' within the heathland from two locations.
- 4.24 Nightjar were observed flying across the grassland fields on the site further within the centre of the site, with one located near the central farmyard buildings. No activity was recorded within the northern fields of the site.

29th and 30th June 2021

- 4.25 Nightjar were observed flying across the western arable field near the pond and along the hedgerows in this area. Additional nightjar activity was recorded over the grassland field to the north of the solar panels with two birds recorded within this location.
- 4.26 A single bird was heard 'churring' within the portion of the site that encompasses Dorset Heathlands SPA.

12th and 13th July 2021

- 4.27 This survey recorded the highest activity levels of nightjar activity with birds recorded in the west of the site. Birds were observed foraging across the grassland field to the south of the site with additional birds heard within the woodland along the southern boundary. No activity was recorded in the northern half of the site.
- 4.28 A single nightjar was heard churring from the heathland adjacent to the site with an additional bird heard from the woodland along the southern boundary.

Summary

- 4.29 During the course of the surveys nightjar have been recorded foraging across the site, with the areas in the western half of the site the most frequently used. This was largely across the open grassland fields in this area. Breeding activity was recorded within the areas of heathland in the western half of the development site and within areas adjacent to the site.
- 4.30 The development scheme will need to retain breeding areas alongside commuting corridors for nightjar and retain foraging areas. This is discussed further in **Section 5.0**.

5.0 Impacts, Mitigation and Enhancement

General breeding bird assemblage

- 5.1 The survey has recorded a breeding bird assemblage of district importance on the site and development will impact populations of five red list BoCC species; greenfinch, house sparrows, linnet, yellowhammer and skylark. The development is likely to have a lower impact on greenfinch and house sparrows which are associated with urban areas. The population declines of greenfinch has been linked to the spread of the disease, trichomonosis, rather than in relation to declines in habitat. The development can include house sparrow nest boxes and scrub planting in locations currently used by colonies of sparrows to maintain these populations.
- 5.2 Linnet, yellowhammer and skylark are arable red list BoCC species which will be negatively impacted by development of the site.
- 5.3 Skylark are currently concentrated on the arable field sections of the site. The scheme will result in the loss of breeding sites for skylark which will need to be mitigated through the creation of suitable alternative habitats. This can be in the form of hay meadows in the western half of the site. To ensure skylark are able to breed in these areas the fields should not be cut between early April and the end of May. This is in line with traditional management of hay meadows.
- 5.4 Linnet and yellowhammer are associated with the hedgerows across the site and any development will need to retain these areas as far as possible. The species will require access to arable land which provides seed food throughout the year. Sources of seed can also be provided by leaving margins of six metres along retained hedgerows which should be uncut.
- 5.5 The areas of urban development can provide enhancement for the range of other common species recorded on the site through the inclusion of native planting within the landscape scheme. This should favour fruiting species to provide winter foraging and provide cover for breeding. The hedgerows should be maintained and any gappy hedgerows planted up with native thorny species to provide sufficient cover and protection for nesting birds.
- 5.6 The development will require vegetation clearance and it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use. Any vegetation clearance required must be scheduled to avoid peak bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August, although this will vary between species and local conditions) to avoid contravention of protected species legislation; unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works. Due to the presence of ground nesting birds this will also include the clearance of grassland.
- 5.7 If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, a five metre buffer will be implemented and no works will be permitted within this buffer. Works will be able to proceed once the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord.

Nightjar

- 5.8 During the course of the surveys nightjar were recorded foraging across the fields in the west of the site and breeding within heathland adjacent to the western boundary. This is a species listed within the citation of the Dorset Heathlands SPA and therefore the development will need to limit

impacts. This may require an assessment through an appropriate assessment under the Habitat Regulations guidelines and through consultation with Natural England.

- 5.9 The key areas of the site for nightjar are located within or close to the 400 metre Dorset Heathlands consultation zone which will be outside any footprint of works. The hedgerows across the site may also provide suitable commuting routes for nightjar, with birds observed flying along hedgerows during the surveys.
- 5.10 To ensure populations of nightjar can cross the scheme the development should include green corridors through the site, these should be unlit and not interrupted by buildings.
- 5.11 The scheme will also need to retain foraging areas for nightjar, these are currently over the grasslands in the west of the site with birds also observed across the field to the north of the solar panels. Any loss in foraging habitat will require replacement within the scheme through the provision of heathland habitat or wildflower meadows.

Enhancement Measures for the Development

Biodiversity Enhancement

- 5.12 In accordance with the Natural Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021), paragraph 179, development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 5.13 The following enhancement measures can be included within the development to increase the available habitat for the local bird assemblage:
- The inclusion of heathland areas within the landscape plan within the 400 metre buffer with the adjacent heathland would provide additional habitat for heathland species such as nightjar, woodlark and Dartford warbler. These areas should be fenced with post and rail fencing with mesh to prevent access by dogs. The heathland areas should include short sward areas and patches of bare ground to provide optimum foraging for woodlark.
 - The inclusion of gorse within the landscape plan can provide additional breeding opportunities for Dartford warbler present in the neighbouring heath. These should be planted within the heathland areas and managed to ensure they do not dominate the area.
 - Provision of bird boxes within the retained trees and new buildings will provide additional enhancement opportunities for birds. A range of box types should be installed to attract a diverse range of species. This should include swift bricks, which provide habitat for swifts and also house sparrows.
 - The creation of log piles within the scheme can provide additional habitat for invertebrates which will enhance the area for bats, nightjar and birds.

6.0 References and Bibliography

English Nature (1998) The Dorset Heathlands Classification Citation

Gilbert G, Gibbons D and Evans J (1998) Bird Monitoring Methods, RSPB

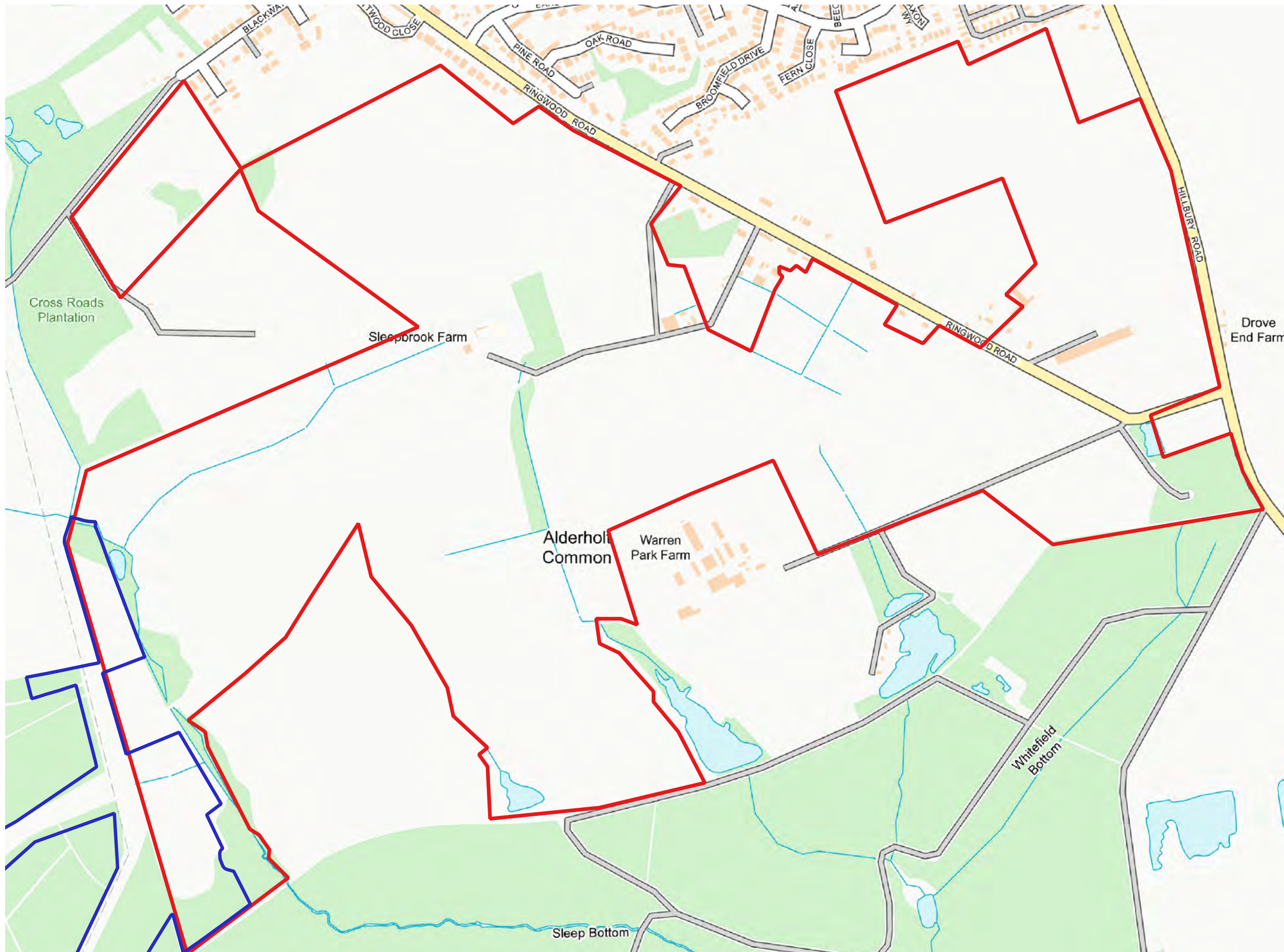
Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D., and Win I. (2021). The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. *British Birds* 114: 723-747. Available online at <https://britishbirds.co.uk/content/status-our-bird-populations>.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Site Location

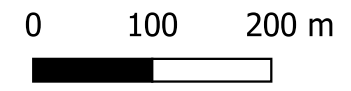


Legend

- Survey Boundary
- Dorset Heathlands SPA

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CLIENT:
ABR

PROJECT:
Alderholt

DRAWING:
Survey boundary

DATE:
09/03/22

SCALE: 1:10200

SIZE: A3

JOB NO: 7845

DWG NO: v1

REV:



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Appendix B: Notable Breeding Bird territories



Legend

Bird Surveys

Conservation Status

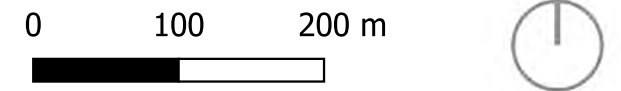
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- Red List BoCC
- Schedule 1/ Amber List BoCC

BTO Code

- BF Bullfinch
- CK Cuckoo
- D. Dunnock
- DW Dartford warbler
- FC Firecrest
- GR Greenfinch
- HS House sparrow
- LI Linnet
- S. Skylark
- ST Song thrush
- TP Tree pipit
- WH Whitethroat
- WR Wren
- WW Willow warbler
- Y. Yellowhammer
- Survey Boundary

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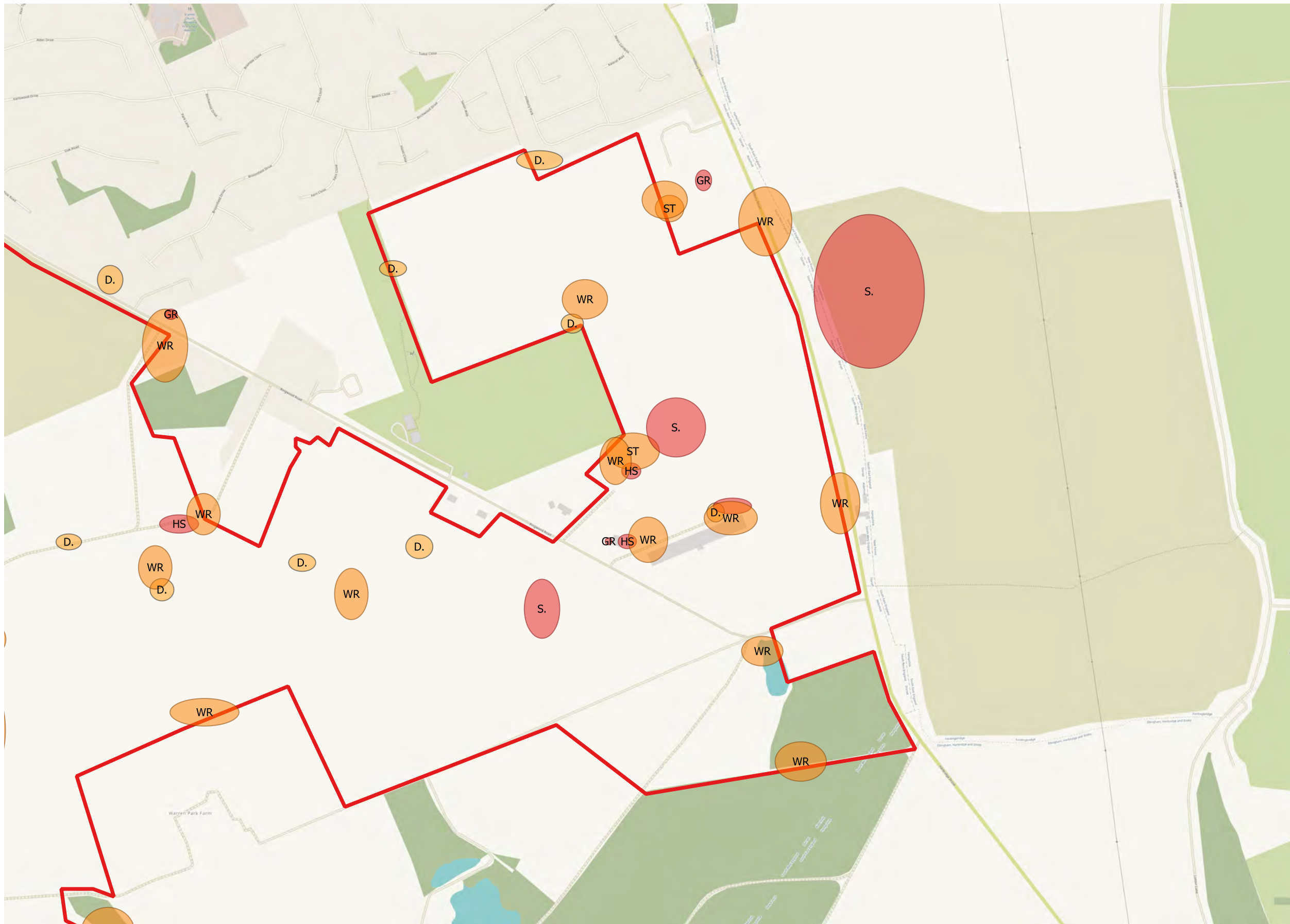
CLIENT:
ABR

PROJECT:
Alderholt

DRAWING:
Notable Bird Territories

DATE:
28/02/22

SCALE: 1:8400
SIZE: A3
JOB NO: 7845
DWG NO: V1
REV:



Legend

Bird Surveys

Conservation Status

- Amber List BoCC
- Red List BoCC
- Schedule 1/ Amber List BoCC

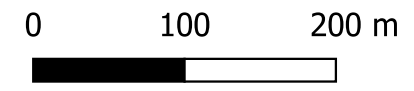
BTO Code

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- LI Linnet
- S. Skylark
- ST Song thrush
- TP Tree pipit
- WH Whitethroat
- WR Wren
- WW Willow warbler
- Y. Yellowhammer

Survey Boundary

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CLIENT:
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PROJECT:
Alderholt

DRAWING:
Notable Bird Territories

DATE:
28/02/22

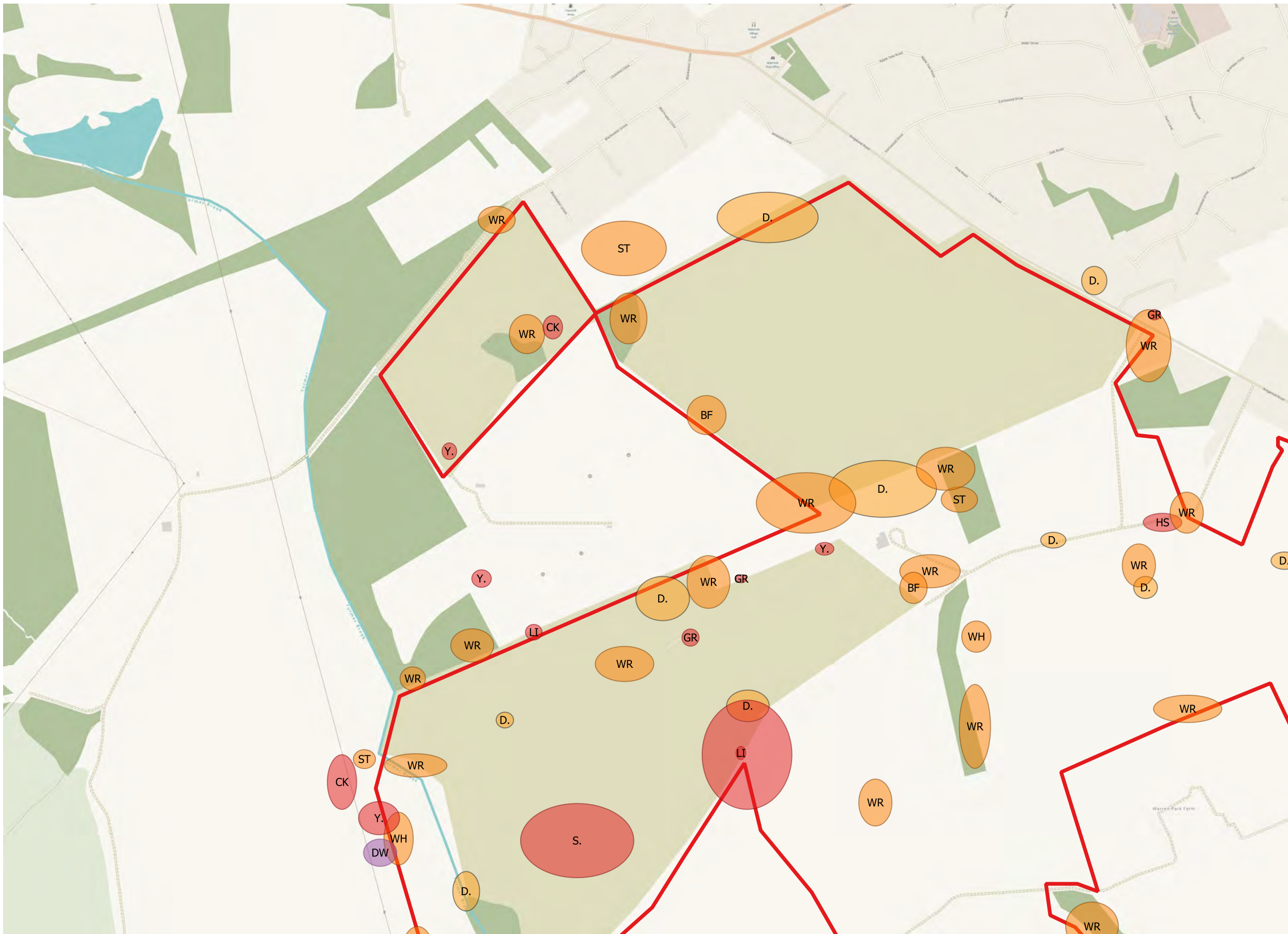
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SIZE: A3

JOB NO: 7845

DWG NO: V1

REV:



Legend

Bird Surveys

Conservation Status

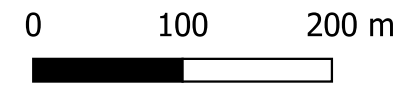
- Amber List BoCC
- Red List BoCC
- Schedule 1/ Amber List BoCC

BTO Code

- BF Bullfinch
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- ST Song thrush
- TP Tree pipit
- WH Whitethroat
- WR Wren
- WW Willow warbler
- Y. Yellowhammer
- Survey Boundary

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CLIENT:
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PROJECT:
Alderholt

DRAWING:
Notable Bird Territories

DATE:
28/02/22

SCALE: 1:8400

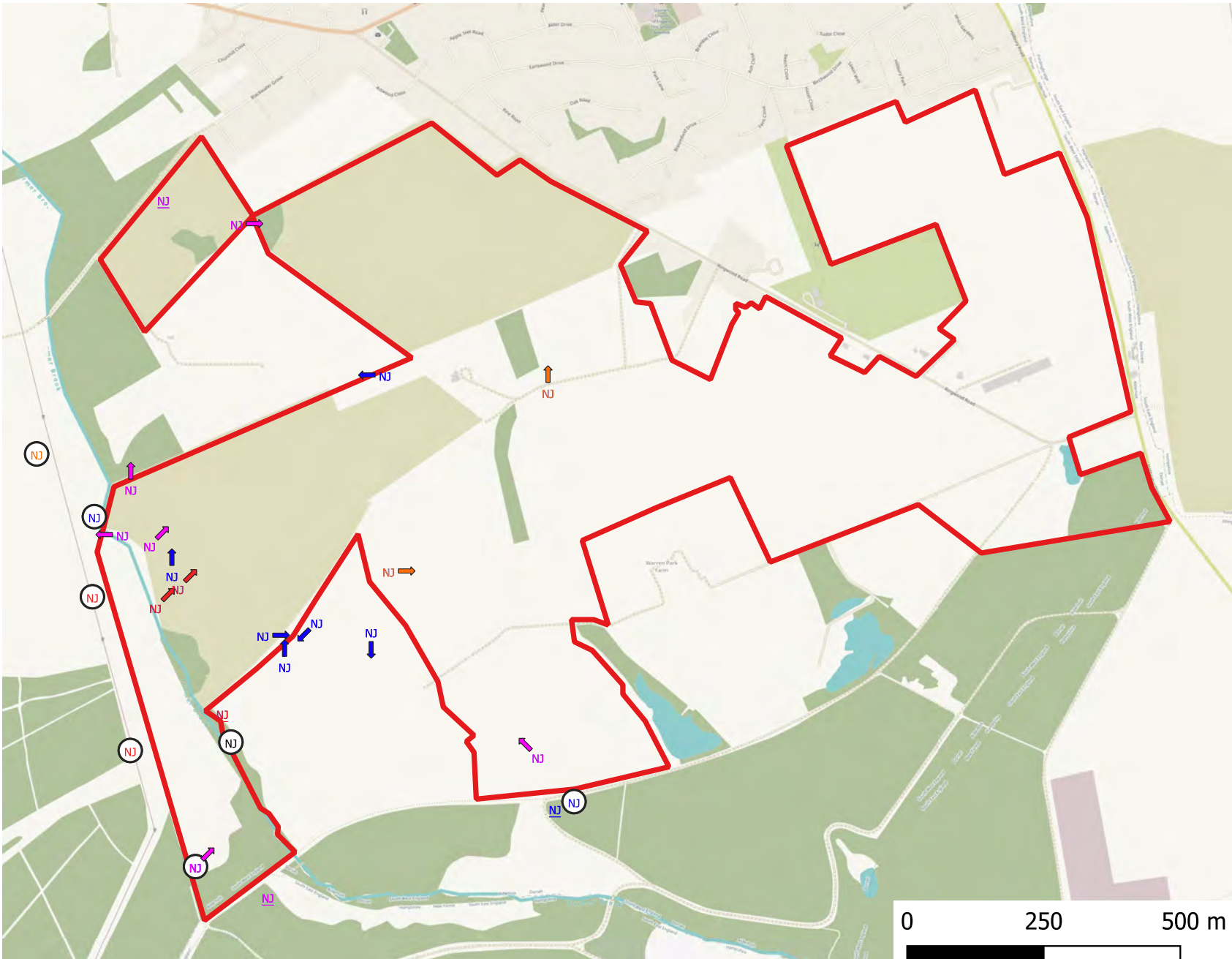
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JOB NO: 7845

DWG NO: v1

REV:

Appendix C: Nightjar Activity



Legend

Bird Surveys

Nightjars

- NJ Nightjar
- 03.06.21
- 07.06.21
- 29.06.21
- 30.06.21
- 12.07.21
- ▭ Survey Boundary

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CLIENT:
ABR

PROJECT:
Alderholt

DRAWING:
Nightjars

DATE:
28/02/22

SCALE: 1:16000
 SIZE: A4
 JOB NO: 7845
 DWG NO: V1
 REV:



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