

### **3.3 Breeding Raptor Surveys**

#### **3.3.1 2021**

No raptors were confirmed breeding within 2km of the site. Red kite, osprey, buzzard and kestrel were recorded foraging or commuting within the survey area during the breeding season but no breeding territories were recorded.

#### **3.3.2 2022**

No raptors were confirmed breeding within 2 km of the site. Red kite, buzzard and kestrel were recorded foraging or commuting within the survey area during the breeding season but no breeding territories were recorded. There was also a single golden eagle recorded commuting over site in April, and a single short-eared owl was also recorded, flying north in late April.

### **3.4 Black Grouse Surveys**

No black grouse were recorded on site during black grouse surveys in 2021 or during any other surveys in 2021 and 2022. The site has poor potential for black grouse leks, as although there is abundant open ground available there is an absence of optimal breeding habitat nearby.

Subsequently, there has been an incidental record during an ecology walkover survey of a single female black grouse flying west over site between Sauchanwood Hill and Mickle Corum, on 16 October 2023, approximately 1km from the nearest proposed turbine location. This indicates that black grouse are present in the wider area.

## 4.0 Legal, Conservation and Site Status of Bird Species

**Table 4-1** summarises the legal and conservation status of the target and incidental species recorded during all surveys.

**Table 4-1: Legal, Conservation and Site Status of Bird Species Recorded in Baseline Surveys**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Territories	Conservation/Protection Status	Summary of Site Status
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Amber	In flight during VP surveys, 157 birds recorded. One observation made during raptor surveys.
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Amber	Birds present on site during two MBWSBBS survey visits. No breeding activity noted.
Red Grouse	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>	Yes	General WCA BoCC5: Amber SBL	Recorded during VP surveys, with a maximum of 4 birds noted. Breeding confirmed during MBWS surveys.
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	No	Introduced gamebird General WCA	Recorded during two MBWS survey visits, no breeding activity noted.
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	No	Annex I Schedule 1 BoCC5: Amber SBL	One bird recorded during raptor survey carrying food outside the site boundary heading NNW.
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	No	Annex I Schedule 1 SBL	Frequently recorded during VP and raptor surveys, maximum of 3 birds noted. Birds recorded commuting and foraging. No breeding activity noted.
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	No	Annex 1 Schedule 1 BoCC5: Red SBL	Two flights of single birds were recorded foraging over the site only during VP surveys.
Common buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	No	General WCA	Frequently recorded during VP and raptor surveys throughout the site, maximum of three birds recorded.
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	No	Annex 1 Schedule 1 SBL	One juvenile flight recorded during VP survey in March 2023, one flight recorded during raptor survey in April 2022.
Common kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Amber SBL	Frequently recorded during VP and raptor surveys. Birds recorded commuting and

Common Name	Scientific Name	Territories	Conservation/Protection Status	Summary of Site Status
				foraging. No breeding activity noted.
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	No	Annex 1 Schedule 1 BoCC5: Red SBL	Single birds recorded twice hunting during VP surveys.
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	No	Annex 1 Schedule 1 SBL	Noted once in 2021, foraging or commuting over site. No breeding noted.
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	No	General WCA SBL	A total of 51 birds recorded during two VP survey dates at VP1 and VP3 with a maximum of 20 birds.
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Yes	General WCA BoCC5: Amber	Two breeding territories recorded in each of 2021 and 2022 during MBWS. In addition, five flights were recorded during VP surveys.
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Red SBL	Two flights of single birds during VP and raptor surveys, present on site during three MBWS visits.
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Amber	One bird noted commuting over site during VP survey.
Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Amber	Frequently recorded during VP surveys, with a maximum peak count of 150 birds noted during one sighting.
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	No	General WCA; BoCC5: Red; SBL	Frequently recorded during VP surveys, maximum five birds noted.
Great black-backed gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	No	General WCA; BoCC5: Amber	One bird noted commuting over site during VP survey.
Short-eared owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	No	Annex I; General WCA; BoCC5: Amber; SBL	One record during a raptor survey of a bird commuting through the site.
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Red SBL	Incidentally recorded foraging over site during walkover surveys.
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Yes	General WCA BoCC5: Red SBL	Incidentally recorded during MBWS surveys. High number of breeding territories Abundantly recorded across the Site.
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	No	General WCA	Incidentally recorded during MBWS surveys. Incidentally recorded during walkover surveys.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Territories	Conservation/Protection Status	Summary of Site Status
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Yes	General WCA BoCC5: Amber	Incidentally recorded during MBWS surveys. Abundantly recorded across the Site. High number abundantly of breeding territories recorded.
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	No	General WCA	Incidentally recorded during MBWS surveys.
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Amber	Incidentally recorded during MBWS surveys.
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	No	General WCA	Incidentally recorded on three MBWS surveys
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	No	General WCA	Frequently recorded during surveys, maximum 6 birds noted. No breeding activity noted.
Lesser redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	No	General WCA BoCC5: Red SBL	Incidentally recorded during MBWS surveys.
Key	Annex I - the species is listed in Annex I of the EC Birds Directive <sup>9</sup> ; General WCA - the species is afforded general protection by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) <sup>10</sup> ; Schedule 1 & 1A - the species is listed in Schedule 1, A1 or 1A of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Schedule 1.2 applies to greylag goose by providing protection in the close season (Feb 01 – Aug 31); BoCC5 status (green, amber or red) – indicates the current Birds of Conservation Concern status category <sup>11</sup> ; and SBL – Listed on the Scottish Biodiversity List <sup>12</sup> .			

<sup>9</sup> Since the UK's exit from the EU, the Scottish Parliament have passed legislation to ensure that Scotland's nature will remain protected to the same standard as before (<https://www.nature.scot/eu-exit-brexite-information>)

<sup>10</sup> For any wild bird species listed on Schedule 1, it is an offence to disturb: 1) any bird while it is building a nest any bird while is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; 2) any bird while lekking; and 3) the dependent young of any bird. For any wild bird species listed on Schedule 1A, it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly harass any bird. For eagle species on Schedule A1, nests and nest sites are protected throughout the year.

<sup>11</sup> Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown AF, Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble DG., and Win I. (2021) Birds of Conservation Concern 5: The status of our bird populations: the 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.

<sup>12</sup> [Scottish Biodiversity List \(webarchive.org.uk\)](https://www.scottishbiodiversitylist.org.uk/)