

Breeding Bird Assessment for the Proposed GNI 143 Ballykilleen Pipeline



30th April 2026

Prepared by: Frank Spellman of Altemar Ltd.
On behalf of: Gas Networks Ireland

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Summary

Structure/features:	No existing structures are present within the Proposed Development. The proposed development area consists mainly of agricultural grassland, hedgerows, treelines, standalone trees, ditches, watercourses, the Grand Canal, and road crossings.
Location:	Kilwarden Offtake Installation (Kilwarden, Co. Meath) to Bord na Móna Cushaling Peaker Plant (Kilcumber, Co. Offaly).
Bird species breeding (survey area):	Goldcrest, house martin, mallard, starling, swallow, blackbird, blackcap, blue tit, buzzard, chaffinch, chiffchaff, dunnock, goldfinch, great tit, jay, long-tailed tit, robin, siskin, woodpigeon, wren, song thrush, yellowhammer.
Proposed work:	Gas pipeline installation and associated above and below-ground works.
Surveys by:	Frank Spellman & Emma Peters
Survey dates:	9 th – 12 th June 2025.

Receiving environment

Description of the Proposed Project

The Proposed Development site and associated temporary working areas covers an area of approximately 243.4 hectares (ha) (the “Proposed Development Site”) and encompasses all lands required for the construction and operation of the pipeline, including the Kilwarden Offtake Installation, the Ballykilleen AGI, temporary construction compounds, line-pipe storage areas, and all associated ancillary works.


The Proposed Development Site comprises the c. 23.65 km linear route of the underground GNI 143 Ballykilleen Pipeline and its temporary working areas.

The Proposed Development site outline and location are demonstrated in figures 1 & 2.



0 2 4 6 8 10 km

Legend:

 EIAR Red Line Boundary

Project: GNI143 Ballykillen Pipeline
 Location: Kilwarden Offtake Installation (Kinnegad) to Bord na Móna Cushaling Peaker Plant (Edenderry)
 Date: 15th December 2025
 Drawn By: Frank Spellman (Altamar)

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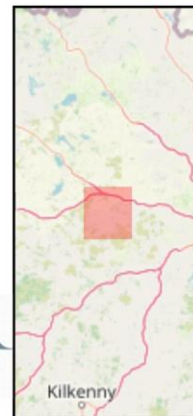



Figure 1. Proposed Development site.



0 2 4 6 8 10 km



Legend:

 EIAR Red Line Boundary

Project: GNI143 Ballykillen Pipeline
 Location: Kilwarden Offtake Installation (Kinnegad) to Bord na Móna Cushaling Peaker Plant (Edenderry)
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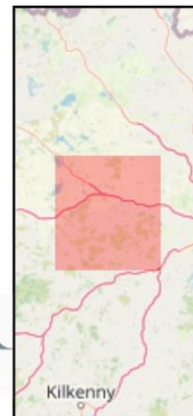


Figure 2. Proposed Development location.

Competency of assessor

Since its inception in 2001, Altemar has been delivering ecological and environmental services to a broad range of clients. Operational areas include: residential; infrastructural; renewable; oil & gas; private industry; Local Authorities; EC projects; and, State/semi-State Departments.

This report and associated surveys were carried out by Frank Spellman (MSc (Ind) Zoology, BSc Zoology). Frank has extensive experience in carrying out a wide range of ecological surveys as both a sub-contractor and employee for environmental consultancies and organisations in Ireland and the US. These include both roving and static acoustic bat surveys, terrestrial non-avian mammal surveys, breeding/wintering bird surveys, freshwater ecology surveys as well as flora/invasive plant surveys. Frank has been lead surveyor on numerous development projects within Ireland carrying out full avian/non-avian mammal, wintering bird, breeding bird, Fossitt and invasive species assessments.

This report and associated surveys were carried out by Emma Peters (BSc Environmental science). Emma has carried out a diverse array of fauna and flora surveys as an employee of Altemar Ltd. These include terrestrial flora, breeding bird, bat (emergent, detector, static, foraging, potential bat roost, internal building roost inspection and ground level tree assessments), mammal, predatory bird, reptile, amphibian and over-wintering bird assessments. Emma has been lead ecologist on multiple projects in Altemar. Emma administers surveys according to techniques approved and recommended by CIEEM.

Legislative context

The Wildlife Act 1976 protects wild birds in Ireland. Based on this legislation it is an offence to wilfully interfere with or destroy wild birds and their nests and eggs (other than the wild species mentioned in the Third Schedule of this Act). Under this legislation it is an offence for any person who *“wilfully takes or removes the eggs or nest of a protected wild bird otherwise than under and in accordance with such a licence, wilfully destroys, injures or mutilates the eggs or nest of a protected wild bird, wilfully disturbs a protected wild bird on or near a nest containing eggs or unflown young.”*

Habitats Directive- Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora has been transposed into Irish Law, including, via, *inter alia*, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

Council Directive 2009/147/EC 2010 on the conservation of wild birds provides for the conservation of wild birds by, among other things, classifying important ornithological sites as Special Protection Areas. The Directive relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state, their eggs, nests and habitats in the European territory of the Member States. The Directive prohibits in particular:

- deliberate killing or capture by any method;
- deliberate destruction of, or damage to, their nests and eggs or removal of their nests;
- taking their eggs in the wild and keeping these eggs even if empty;
- deliberate disturbance of these birds particularly during the period of breeding and rearing, in so far as disturbance would be significant having regard to the objectives of this Directive;
- keeping birds of species, the hunting and capture of which is prohibited.

Under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended), notwithstanding any consent, statutory or otherwise, given to a person by a public authority or held by a person, except in accordance with a licence granted by the Minister under Regulation 54, a person who in respect of the species referred to in Part 1 of the First Schedule:

- deliberately captures or kills any specimen of these species in the wild,
- deliberately disturbs these species particularly during the period of breeding, rearing, hibernation and migration,
- deliberately takes or destroys eggs of those species from the wild,
- damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, or
- keeps, transports, sells, exchanges, offers for sale or offers for exchange any specimen of these species taken in the wild, other than those taken legally as referred to in Article 12(2) of the Habitats Directive,

shall be guilty of an offence.

Breeding bird survey

This report presents the results of four site visits by Frank Spellman and Emma Peters on the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th June 2025. A breeding bird transect survey was carried out on each occasion.

Survey methodology

This Breeding bird survey was carried out based on the BTO Common Bird Census (Bibby *et al.*, 2000 and Gilbert *et al.*, 1998) and following CIEEM guidelines.

A 15-minute settlement period was given following arrival to allow resumption of bird activity after any possible disturbance caused by arrival on site. Various features and habitats such as scrub, treelines, standalone trees, hedgerows, watercourses, ditches, a canal and grassland were present throughout the survey area. A single transect following the full assessment corridor of the proposed pipeline was carried out across four survey days by two surveyors, covering all areas and features available for breeding activity within and adjacent to the survey area. Surveys began at the north end of the survey area and ending at the southern end. Proposed compound areas were also assessed.

The survey was carried out over 8 hours on 4 occasions, beginning at dawn and ending by mid-day. All internal and adjacent features to the Proposed Development site were assessed. Care was taken not to double count any observations. Weather conditions were suitable on each occasion. Heavy rainfall during the 12th of June may have reduced bird activity and inhibited the ability of surveyors to hear bird calls at distance. However, the southern portion of the survey area contained little habitat of breeding value for birds (lack of hedgerows/treelines between fields), and compound areas contained little habitat of breeding value that would be impacted by the proposed project.

Survey results

Habitats of breeding bird potential

A desk and ground level breeding habitat assessment were carried and used to examine the structures and vegetation within the survey area for features that could provide breeding habitat. Potential nesting features include scrub, treelines, mature conifer/deciduous canopies, ivy, grassland, reeds, artificial structures, waterbodies, grassland etc. All features within the assessment area were assessed for breeding bird potential.

Areas of high breeding bird potential included hedgerows, treelines, mature trees, scrub, riparian/drainage ditch vegetation and grassland present throughout and adjacent to the assessment area. Grassland throughout the assessment area was primarily agricultural (grazing), short, and of limited value for ground-nesting birds.

Breeding activity survey

A total of 35 species were recorded within the survey area across four surveys (table 2). Of these species, goldcrest, greenfinch, house martin, house sparrow, mallard, spotted flycatcher, starling, and swallow are considered amber-listed Bird of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCCI). Meadow pipit and yellowhammer were also recorded on site and are both red-listed BoCCI. The remaining species are green-listed BoCCI.

22 species were recorded breeding or displaying behaviour indicative of breeding within and/or adjacent to the assessment area (table 1). Five breeding species are amber-listed BoCCI: goldcrest, house martin, mallard, starling and swallow. One breeding species (yellowhammer) is a red-listed BoCCI. At chainage 13,300 m yellowhammer breeding behaviour was recorded within hedgerow directly adjacent to the proposed pipeline route, which would be directly impacted by the proposed project.

The remainder of breeding species are green-listed BoCCI. Locations of breeding evidence recorded are demonstrated in Volume IV of the associated EIAR. No breeding activity was recorded at either of the compound locations.

Breeding activity was found throughout the survey area. No particular areas held higher concentrations of breeding activity than others or would be considered of greater importance for breeding by birds in general or species of conservation importance than others. The primary habitat supporting breeding within the

assessment area is hedgerow and heavily ivy-clad trees/treelines, which are widespread throughout the assessment area.

There was a notable reduction in breeding activity from chainage 18,300 m southwards, along which only two breeding observations were recorded. Agricultural fields from this point south were primarily devoid of hedgerow and/or treeline habitat with most fields solely divided by single wire electric fences and ditches along the assessment area. Locations of breeding behaviour are demonstrated in the associated maps for this report located in Volume IV of the EIAR.

Table 1. Species confirmed breeding within and adjacent to the assessment area.

Common name	BTO	Latin name	BoCCI
Blackbird	B.	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Green
Blackcap	BC	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Green
Blue Tit	BT	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Green
Buzzard	BZ	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Green
Chaffinch	CH	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Green
Chiffchaff	CC	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Green
Dunnock	D.	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Green
Goldcrest	GC	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Amber
Goldfinch	GO	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Green
Great Tit	GT	<i>Parus major</i>	Green
House Martin	HM	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Amber
Jay	J.	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Green
Long-tailed Tit	LT	<i>Aegithalus caudatus</i>	Green
Mallard	MA	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber
Robin	R.	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Green
Siskin	SK	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	Green
Song Thrush	ST	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Green
Starling	SG	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Amber
Swallow	SL	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Amber
Woodpigeon	WP	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Green
Wren	WR	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Green
Yellowhammer	Y.	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red

Table 2. Total species recorded within and immediately adjacent to the assessment area.

Common name	BTO	Latin name	BoCCI
Blackbird	B.	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Green
Blackcap	BC	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Green
Blue Tit	BT	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Green
Bullfinch	BF	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Green
Buzzard	BZ	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Green
Chaffinch	CH	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Green
Chiffchaff	CC	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Green
Dunnock	D.	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Green
Goldcrest	GC	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Amber
Goldfinch	GO	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Green
Great Tit	GT	<i>Parus major</i>	Green
Greenfinch	GR	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Amber

Common name	BTO	Latin name	BoCCI
Hooded Crow	HC	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Green
House Martin	HM	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Amber
House Sparrow	HS	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Amber
Jackdaw	JD	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Green
Jay	J.	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Green
Long-eared Owl	LE	<i>Asio otus</i>	Green
Long-tailed Tit	LT	<i>Aegithalus caudatus</i>	Green
Magpie	MG	<i>Pica pica</i>	Green
Mallard	MA	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber
Meadow Pipit	MP	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Red
Pheasant	PH	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Green
Pied Wagtail	PW	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>	Green
Raven	RN	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Green
Robin	R.	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Green
Rook	RO	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Green
Siskin	SK	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	Green
Song Thrush	ST	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Green
Spotted Flycatcher	SF	<i>Musciapa striata</i>	Amber
Starling	SG	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Amber
Swallow	SL	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Amber
Woodpigeon	WP	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Green
Wren	WR	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Green
Yellowhammer	Y.	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red

Breeding bird assessment findings

Review of local bird records

The review of existing bird records (sourced from NBDC Database) within five 10km² grid (Reference grid N52, N53, N62, N63, N64) encompassing the study area reveals that 66 known bird species have previously been observed and recorded locally (*Table 3*).

Table 3: Status of bird species within a 50 km² area (Reference grids N52, N53, N62, N63, N64)

Species Name	Date of Last Record	Dataset	BoCCI Status
Barn Owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>)	12/07/2017	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>)	11/04/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Brambling (<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>)	19/03/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Common Sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Common Sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)	11/04/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>)	05/03/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>)	31/03/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>)	31/07/1972	The First Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1968-1972.	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)	19/09/2020	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Goldcrest (<i>Regulus regulus</i>)	15/02/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)	09/12/2019	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section III Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>)	25/10/2020	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Great Spotted Woodpecker (<i>Dendrocopos major</i>)	03/09/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts

Species Name	Date of Last Record	Dataset	BoCCI Status
Greenfinch (<i>Chloris chloris</i>)	07/04/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Grey Partridge (<i>Perdix perdix</i>)	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Grey Wagtail (<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>)	21/05/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	08/04/2018	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>)	29/02/1984	The First Atlas of Wintering Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1981/82-1983/84.	Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
House Martin (<i>Delichon urbicum</i>)	07/04/2019	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	07/04/2024	Birds of Ireland	Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Jack Snipe (<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>)	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section III Bird Species
Kestrel (<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>)	23/03/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	08/05/2025	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)	25/03/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)	16/10/2010	Birds of Ireland	Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Linnet (<i>Linaria cannabina</i>)	11/08/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Little Egret (<i>Egretta garzetta</i>)	25/03/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species
Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>)	03/05/2025	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Little Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius dubius</i>)	22/04/2019	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)	14/06/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III,

Species Name	Date of Last Record	Dataset	BoCCI Status
			Section I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Marsh Harrier (<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>)	01/05/2010	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Meadow Pipit (<i>Anthus pratensis</i>)	31/03/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)	24/02/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Mistle Thrush (<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>)	31/03/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Mute Swan (<i>Cygnus olor</i>)	02/01/2025	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Nightjar (<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>)	31/07/1972	The First Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1968-1972.	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	15/03/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species
Pheasant (<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>)	27/09/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section I Bird Species
Pink-footed Goose (<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>)	25/10/2020	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species
Quail (<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>)	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)	25/03/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Redwing (<i>Turdus iliacus</i>)	21/11/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>)	17/06/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Robin (<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>)	28/12/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Rock Dove (<i>Columba livia</i>)	04/09/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species
Sand Martin (<i>Riparia riparia</i>)	19/06/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Skylark (<i>Alauda arvensis</i>)	08/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Snipe (<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>)	31/03/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section III Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation

Species Name	Date of Last Record	Dataset	BoCCI Status
			Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Sparrowhawk (<i>Accipiter nisus</i>)	27/10/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Spotted Crake (<i>Porzana porzana</i>)	02/07/1993	Rare birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Spotted Flycatcher (<i>Muscicapa striata</i>)	14/07/2019	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	02/01/2025	Birds of Ireland	Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Stock Dove (<i>Columba oenas</i>)	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Stonechat (<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>)	31/03/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)	01/09/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Swift (<i>Apus apus</i>)	28/06/2020	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Tree Sparrow (<i>Passer montanus</i>)	22/04/2018	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>)	01/08/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Wheatear (<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>)	21/04/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Whinchat (<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>)	30/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>)	25/03/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Wigeon (<i>Mareca penelope</i>)	22/12/2018	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Willow Warbler (<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>)	10/05/2025	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Woodcock (<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>)	19/04/2019	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III,

Species Name	Date of Last Record	Dataset	BoCCI Status
			Section III Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Yellowhammer (<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>)	18/07/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Barn Owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>)	12/07/2017	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>)	11/04/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Brambling (<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>)	19/03/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Common Sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Common Sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)	11/04/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>)	05/03/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>)	31/03/2024	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>)	31/07/1972	The First Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1968-1972.	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)	19/09/2020	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Goldcrest (<i>Regulus regulus</i>)	15/02/2023	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List

Mitigation

Habitats within the assessment area are not of significant importance to the local breeding bird population overall. However, the impact of the development during construction phase will be a loss of existing habitats and species. The proposed development is also likely to disturb habitat used by red-listed Yellowhammer during construction. The following mitigation measures relevant to birds, as well as those outlined within the accompanying NIS and EIAR, shall be implemented to minimise any potential negative impact on biodiversity:

- An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appointed to oversee the construction phase and to oversee the implementation of all mitigation including compliance with Wildlife Acts and Water Pollution Acts and ensure that biodiversity in neighbouring areas including birds will not be impacted.
- All hedgerows requiring removal will be re-planted with a hedgerow mix of similar species composition following construction.
- No removal of ivy from trees within or adjacent to the works area will take place.

- All mitigation measures outlined in the EIAR Chapters and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) that pertain to the construction stage of the proposed development will be implemented by the Contractor.
- The effectiveness of the proposed mitigation will be monitored throughout the construction period.
- The construction corridor will be marked out prior to the commencement of construction.
- All construction work will be confined strictly to the construction corridor. Any construction works required outside the construction corridor will require prior approval from the appointed ecologist.
- Lighting during construction should not spill outside the proposed development site.
- Relevant guidelines and legislation (Section 40 of the Wildlife Acts, 1976 to 2012) in relation to the removal of trees and timing of nesting birds will need be followed e.g. do not remove trees or shrubs during the nesting season (1st March to 31st August). Should this not be possible a pre-clearance inspection will be carried out by an ecologist and clearance will not take place if nests are present.

Conclusion

This report presents the results of four surveys carried out by Frank Spellman and Emma Peters from 9th – 12th June 2025. A breeding bird transect survey was carried out on each occasion. The surveys comply with bird survey guidance documentation including BTO Common Bird Census (Bibby *et al.*, 2000 and Gilbert *et al.*, 1998) following CIEEM guidelines. Weather conditions were suitable on each occasion, apart from when heavy rainfall occurred during the 12th June. However, areas covered on 12th June contained considerably less suitable nesting habitat than other areas along the Proposed Development site.

A total of 35 species were recorded within and adjacent to the overall assessment area. 22 species were recorded breeding or displaying behaviour indicative of breeding.

16 green-listed bird species of conservation concern were recorded breeding within and/or adjacent to the assessment area.

Five amber-listed bird species of conservation concern were recorded breeding within and/or adjacent to the assessment area: goldcrest, house martin, mallard, starling and swallow.

One red-listed bird species of conservation concern was recorded breeding within and adjacent to the survey area; yellowhammer.

The primary habitats of nesting value are hedgerows, and heavily ivy-clad trees and treelines.

The proposed development is predicted to have a short/medium-term low adverse effect on breeding birds within the proposed area due to the removal of sections of hedgerow habitat and potential impact on trees within the assessment area. However, retention of all vegetation outside of the finalised construction corridor and reinstatement of sections of removed hedgerow will result in similar levels and type of currently available breeding habitat long-term. Trenchless crossings of watercourses and the Grand Canal will preserve breeding habitat for waterfowl and reed-nesting birds in these areas. As re-planted hedgerow sections mature, following full implementation of mitigation measures, the overall impact of the proposed development will be a long-term neutral/negligible effect on breeding birds within the assessment area.

Mitigation measures are proposed.

References

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4. **Collated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre from different sources, General Biodiversity Records from Ireland**, National Biodiversity Data Centre, Ireland, accessed 17 October 2023, <<https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Dataset/7>>
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9. **EU Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 2009**
10. **Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W., & Evans, J. (1998)** Bird Monitoring Methods: A Manual of Techniques for UK Key Species. The Royal Society for the protection of Birds, Sandy, Bedfordshire, England.
11. **Gilbert G, Stanbury A and Lewis L (2021),** “Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2020 –2026”. Irish Birds 9: 523—544
12. **Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife [Amendment] Act 2000.** Government of Ireland.