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28.10.2021

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RE: Trevor Basin Preliminary breeding bird appraisal / survey.

1. Background and report purpose

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal compiled for this site (05.05.2019) had indicated the following:

“The area forms part of the Bird Conservation Targeting Project for arable assemblages of bird species including lapwing. The habitats on site are suitable for the breeding bird species due to the presence of areas of scrub (scattered and dense). Although no specific bird survey was undertaken the site is unlikely to support a significant amount of grassland and /or farmland birds due to urban nature of the habitats present. Urban birds are more likely to use the site such as house sparrow and starling which were both observed during the walkover on the site. A breeding bird appraisal / survey will be required prior to any tree removal to ascertain the importance of the site to breeding birds at that time. This may require hand searching and dawn observations depending upon the time of year”.

Following consultation with the Local Planning Authority it was expressed that breeding bird appraisal to include a bird survey shall be conducted to inform the planning application of this aspect. Therefore, a preliminary breeding bird appraisal has been undertaken aimed at assessing the suitability of the site for breeding birds based on the habitats present within the application boundary and based on two dawn site visits carried in August and September 2021. The purpose of which was to provide an indication of the likely and current bird species within the site and during the current breeding season and to assess the impact of development on the avian population.

2. Methods and constraints

Breeding bird surveys shall be undertaken in early morning daytime conditions and observations made shall be examined for its significance such as songbird identification, nest building, territory defence/holding, courtship displays, adults visiting nest sites, or adults carrying foetal sacs. An assessment shall be made as to the behaviour being classed as non-breeding, probable breeding and or confirmed breeding behaviour all in accordance with British Trust for Ornithology Atlases and A Field Safety Guide to Monitoring Nests (Ferguson-lees et al. 2011).

Recommendations shall be made where behaviour is confirmed as breeding related which shall require the subsequent establishment of a Precautionary Zone and no further works shall commence until field signs of breeding has ceased.

Whilst undertaken at the end of the breeding bird season the surveys inform the likely bird use at the site and coupled with the assessment presented in Table 1 a clear indication of what breeding birds can be expected at the site and the importance of the habitats at the site to the local avian community can be ascertained.

3. Surveyor

Simon Brain is a practising ecologist and chartered arboriculturist. He has attained a Post Graduate Certificate in Biological Recording with Manchester Metropolitan University and attended FSC courses for songbird identification, advanced bird survey techniques (Level M) and a CIEEM barn owl course. He regularly compiles precautionary breeding bird surveys and appraisals for construction projects.

4. Desk top survey exercise

The site is located within SSSI Impact Zone for River Dee and Bala Lake SSSI which is located 325m south of site. The development proposal does not appear to conform to those development types that require the LPA to consult Natural England on the likely risks.

The site itself is in a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone.

- Community forest (within site)

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside website has confirmed the following habitats and species apply to the site and its immediate locality:

- There are areas of woodland (section 41) habitats listed on the inventory on the north of the site.
- There are numerous areas of listed woodland within the 1km which are mainly located within 1km.

Largely all the species identified in a COFNOD data search were identified on site and reported upon in section 7 (Field survey), with the exception of the following species:

Goshawk (recorded 900m from site in dense woodland, not present on site), Woodcock (recorded 900m from site in dense woodland, not present on site), Goldcrest (could be present on site but lack of numerous conifers reducing chances of detection on survey), Mandarin duck / Dipper / Long tailed tit (could be present on site as habitat for it to be present is available but not detected on survey), Sandpiper (recorded on Dee to south of site, limited foraging ground on site to be present).

The spatial distribution of the COFNOD avian records, relative to the site position and the 1km search boundary are presented in the appendix.

5. Legislation

All birds, nests and their eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take any wild bird; damage or destroy or otherwise interfere with the nest of any wild birds while it is being used, constructed or an offence to obstruct or intentionally or recklessly kill, take or destroy the egg of a wild bird.

Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act lists birds always protected by special penalties. It is an offence to disturb any would bird listed in Schedule 1 while it is nest building or is at or near a nest with eggs or young: or disturb the dependant young.

In Wales, The Environment (Wales) Act lists species of principle importance. The UK lists of Birds of Conservation Concern and categorises species as green, amber or red to indicate the level of conservation concern for the species.

6. Habitats on site

The site is located within the area of Llangollen in a rural environment and enclosed by existing residential and commercial land uses. The habitat on site comprises of woodland, scattered tress, tall ruderal, amenity grassland, standing water including areas of hard standing.

7. Field Survey

In order to gain an insight into the actual levels of bird activity daytime observations took place to assess any avian significance on the 5th August and 3rd September 2021. Species were recorded and evidence of nesting noted on the breeding bird survey plan in appendix one. The following bird species were identified during the inspection by song identification (+) or visual means (*) or both (+/*) and are colour coded to their BoCC(4) listings:

Moorhen (*), Coot (*), **Mallard (*)**, Jackdaw (+/*), **Honey buzzard (+/*)** **Wigeon (+/*)** Jay (+/*) Woodpigeon (+/*), Greenfinch (+/*), Goldfinch (+/*), **Kingfisher (+/*)**, Great Tit (+/*), Blue Tit (+/*), **Common Gull (+/*)**, **Duncock (*)** Carrion Crow (+/*), Wren (+/*), Blackbird (+/*) Magpie (*), Chiff chaff (+), Chaffinch (+/*), Swallow (*), **Swift (+/*)**, **House Martin (+/*)**, **House sparrow (+/*)** **Starling (+/*)** **Song Thrush (+/*)** Grey Heron (+/*) and Robin (+/*).

Within appendix one (Breeding bird plan) the following breeding behaviours were noted during the field survey and denoted on the plan in blue font:

Area 1 Probable nesting goldfinch (>4 birds) present in woodland / scattered trees to north

Area 2 Probable Robin nest site (birds holding territory and visiting dense scrub area frequently)

Area 3 Wren nest site

8. Evaluation

Table 1 below lists those species found on site (29), the species predominant positions, their conservation concern level and the species breeding probability based on habitats present on site and evidence found during surveys.

English name	Conservation concern status	Habitat suitability	Breeding probability	Predominant position on site / main behaviour descriptions on plan (red)
Blackbird	Green	Scrub, trees present	High	1 amenity grass foraging
Blue Tit	Green	Scrub for foraging and holes in trees for breeding	Moderate	2 foraging in high canopy
Bullfinch	Amber	Limited fruit trees for foraging but scrub and trees for breeding	Low	3 Foraging in scattered trees

English name	Conservation concern status	Habitat suitability	Breeding probability	Predominant position on site / main behaviour descriptions on plan (red)
Carrion Crow	Green	Scrub and hard standing for foraging, some larger trees for breeding, no older nest found on survey	Low	4 perching near bridge
Coot	Green	Central Island neglected could be used for breeding but accessible by predators and steep	Low	5 foraging in canal basin
Chaffinch	Green	Some areas of scrub for breeding	Moderate	6 foraging in high canopy
Chiff chaff	Green	Tall ruderal and scrub layers for breeding present	Moderate	7 foraging in high canopy
Common Gull	Amber	No breeding habitat present	Negligible	8 Fly over and perching in boundary walls
Dunnock	Amber	Scrub, tall ruderal and bramble present for breeding	High	9 Foraging in woodland
Goldfinch	Green	Some areas of scrub for breeding	High	10 foraging in high canopy / passing through in flocks
Great Tit	Green	Scrub for foraging few holes in trees and structures for breeding	Moderate	11 foraging in high canopy
Greenfinch	Green	Some areas of scrub for breeding	Moderate	12 passing through in small numbers
Kingfisher	Amber	No banks for nesting, water for foraging/perching	Negligible	13 Perching and feeding
Honey Buzzard	Amber	Limited number of trees for nesting, limited foraging ground	Negligible	14 pass overs
House Martin	Amber	No structure for nesting	Negligible	15 pass over
House Sparrow	Red	No structure for nesting	Negligible	16 foraging in hedgerows to east
Jackdaw	Green	Scrub and hard standing for foraging, no buildings for breeding	Negligible	17 pass overs and occasional perching in bridge

English name	Conservation concern status	Habitat suitability	Breeding probability	Predominant position on site / main behaviour descriptions on plan (red)
Jay	Green	Scrub present for breeding	Moderate	18 pairs in woodland to north both on and off site
Mallard	Amber	Central Island neglected could be used for breeding but accessible by predators and steep	Moderate	19 foraging in canal basin
Magpie	Green	Scrub for breeding	High	20 foraging around site in general
Moorhen	Green	Central Island neglected could be used for breeding but accessible by predators and steep	Moderate	21 foraging in canal basin
Robin	Green	Dense scrub and occasional structure present	High	22 foraging throughout
Song thrush	Red	Woodland limited but present	Moderate	23 Heard singing off site in woodland
Starling	Red	No buildings suitable, can nest on ground and some suitable trees but not as common nest site	Low	24 mainly pass overs, some perching on trees
Swallow	Green	None for breeding, suitable for foraging only	None	25 pass over, occasional drinking
Swift	Amber	No buildings present	Negligible	26 pass over
Wigeon	Amber	Central Island neglected could be used for breeding but accessible by predators and steep	Low	27 foraging in basin
Woodpigeon	Green	Scattered scrub and trees present	High	28 perching in woodland
Wren	Green	Scrub and ivy / creepers present	High	29 foraging in woodland

Site Assessment

From the twenty-nine species found on site seventeen are green conservation status, nine are amber status and three are red listed.

The breeding potential of the red list species is negligible (house sparrow), low (Starling) and moderate for Song Thrush.

The breeding potential of the amber species is low (Wigeon and Bullfinch), negligible (Common Gull, House martin, Buzzard, Swift and Kingfisher), moderate (Mallard) and high for Dunnock species.

From the green listed species Woodpigeon, Wren, Robin, Magpie, Goldfinch and Blackbird are high potential breeding species whilst Moorhen, Jay, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Chiff Chaff, Chaffinch and Blue Tit are moderate potential breeders.

This leaves Coot and Crow as low potential and Swallow and Jackdaw as either no or negligible potential.

From the species identified seven are considered to have a high breeding probability on site and Goldfinch, Robin and Wren were confirmed as breeding / probable breeders on site.

Fuller, R.J 1980 devised a method for assessing the ornithological interest of sites for conservation based on the number of breeding species (confirmed and probable) recorded by a survey in which the following categories are used to prescribe importance: district 25-49 / county 50-69 / regional 70-84 / national 85 plus. Including confirmed / probable nest sites recorded during survey and those species with high / moderate breeding potential it is suggested that the importance of the breeding bird assemblage is at district level.

The vast majority of the green infrastructure and habitat across the site is due to be retained and it is suggested that the ecological enhancements proposed for development will impact positively on the current bird assemblage both directly (nesting provision) and indirectly (food production, for example through wildflower seeding for Finch species).

However, the most significant direct impact could be the removal of current or future nest sites that may form across the site and as such a breach of UK wildlife legislation would occur.

The indirect impact of habitat removal would also preclude the site being used in the future by the current bird assemblage. The overall impact of habitat removal is however considered to be low for the following reasons:

- The birds recorded were mainly birds of green status
- The red listed species have moderate/low breeding potential on site and their breeding habitat is retained.
- Green and amber listed species exhibited various breeding potentials including high, but their habitat is retained, and they are unlikely to be adversely affected
- Those species identified on site with a potential to breed within the habitat present are largely considered to be adaptable species which would re colonise the site and / or utilise retained habitat / artificial nesting and subsequently have an increased chance of breeding.

9. Recommendations

- Site clearance works are undertaken outside the official breeding season to avoid a breach of UK wildlife legislation (March to August inclusive). Where this is not possible, and works are undertaken in the active nesting season then the entire site will require a precautionary breeding bird survey prior to commencement. Should the ecologist find breeding birds then a 10m exclusion zone will need to be established and maintained until it can be verified that breeding behaviour has ceased. The precautionary bird survey shall also apply to February, September, and October due to the possibility of nesting within these periods. *The purpose of this is to avoid active nest sites and causing disturbance and breached of legislation.*
- An enhancements / planting plan is prepared that uses plants that provide structure (different heights up to 5m+ at maturity) and shelter (dense and thorny species) and trees that can provide suitable food resources that will attract insects and produce berries and seeds. *The purpose of which is to mitigate the small loss of breeding habitat for development.*
- The incorporation of artificial nest boxes for swift/swallow, starling, dunnock, and house sparrow particularly but also for generalist and common bird species. *The purpose of which is to enhance the development for breeding birds by providing artificial nest sites.*

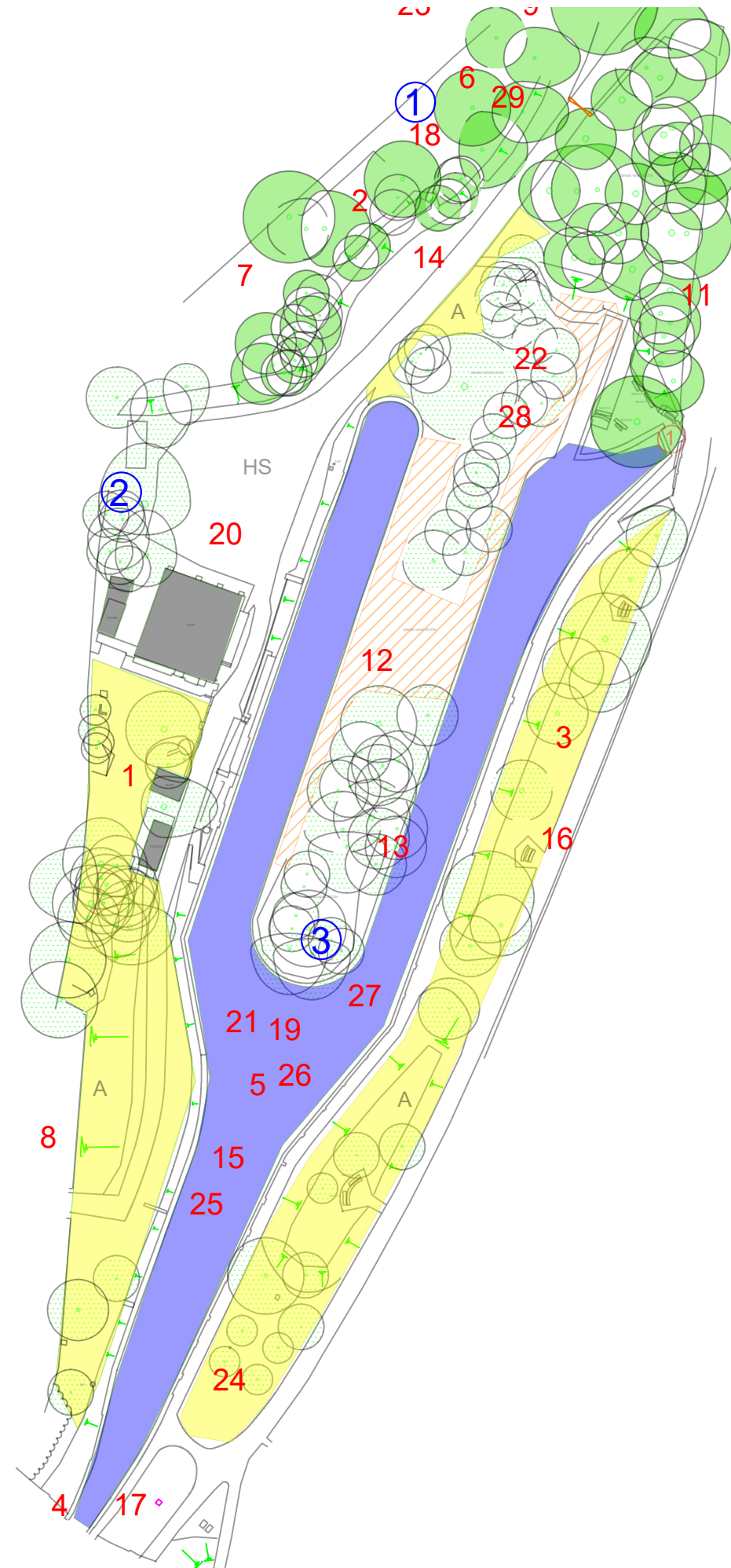
Please do let me know if there is anything further, I can assist with.

Yours sincerely



Simon Brain *Ba. RFS Cert Arb. Tech Cert Arb. PG Cert (Bio Rec)*
ICF Registered consultant Chartered arboriculturist
Managing Director

Appendix 1 – Breeding Bird Survey Plan and COFNOD avian records map



- 1 Bird signs – Breeding behavior
- 1 Bird signs – By Species

Client:		
CRT		
Project:		
Halsnead		
Detail:		
Trevor Basin		
Drawn By:	Date:	Scale:
SB	07.09.21	NTS
Drg No:	Revision:	
TR-01	V1	



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North Wales Environmental Information Service

Cofnod Environmental Information Search - E09263

Search Details

Our Reference: E09263

Your Reference: trevor basin

Requested By: Amenity Tree Care

Data Users: Simon Brain, Managing Director, Amenity Tree Care None

Search Date: 07/09/2021

Expiry Date: null

Search Type: Chargeable

Search Location: trevor basin (SJ271424)

Important Issues

- Use of the data is governed by Cofnod's Terms & Conditions, available from <https://www.cofnod.org.uk/GetTermsAndConditions.ashx>.
- Unless otherwise agreed, you **must not share the data or the method for accessing it**, e.g. an eMapper link, with anyone other than specified *Data Users*.
- Data marked as confidential or sensitive must not be released into the public domain, with the exception of the Public Version of the PDF report, which has had sensitive information removed or restricted.
- You should not amend any part of the downloaded records.
- Unless otherwise agreed, use of the data is valid until the *Expiry Date*.
- The data was generated on the *Search Date* and is not live.
- The *Dataset ID* associated with each record can be used to find information about the provenance of the data.
- Verification Levels are given for each record. For further information see our Data Quality Policy.
- Please contact us at <mailto:contactus@cofnod.org.uk> if you have any questions about using the data or wish to add further Data Users.

Notes

- Records with 4 figure grid references are displayed as 1km squares on any relevant maps. They are highlighted with (1km) next to the distance.

- Records displayed in bold are sensitive species records, and must not be released into the public domain. A public version of this report is also available and this can be released into the public domain. In the public version the resolution of sensitive species grid references are reduced and site names and comments are removed.
- Distances:** The distance from each record to the grid reference will be shown in the 'Distance (m)' column (except in public versions of reports as referred to above). Distances are highlighted in red where records fall within 50m of the grid reference. Distances are measured from the edge of the search location to the centre point of a record's grid square.
- Sites:** As well as designated and non-statutory Wildlife Sites/SINCs, NWWT and RSPB reserves are shown. Wildlife Sites/SINCs which remain unconfirmed by the relevant Local Authority are given 'Candidate' status and are displayed with a (C) suffix. The following reasons for candidate status apply: 1. Anglesey and Flintshire Wildlife Sites were identified by survey but have not been formally confirmed. 2. Conwy and Gwynedd Wildlife Sites were identified by survey and air photos and remain candidate until evaluated using selection criteria.
- Habitats:** Habitats shown are from the Habitat Survey of Wales (1979 to 1997) using the Phase 1 survey methodology. The habitat at the search location is shown in red. Habitats are ordered in descending size order, with the area and percentage cover of each habitat within the search radius shown in brackets.

Data Description

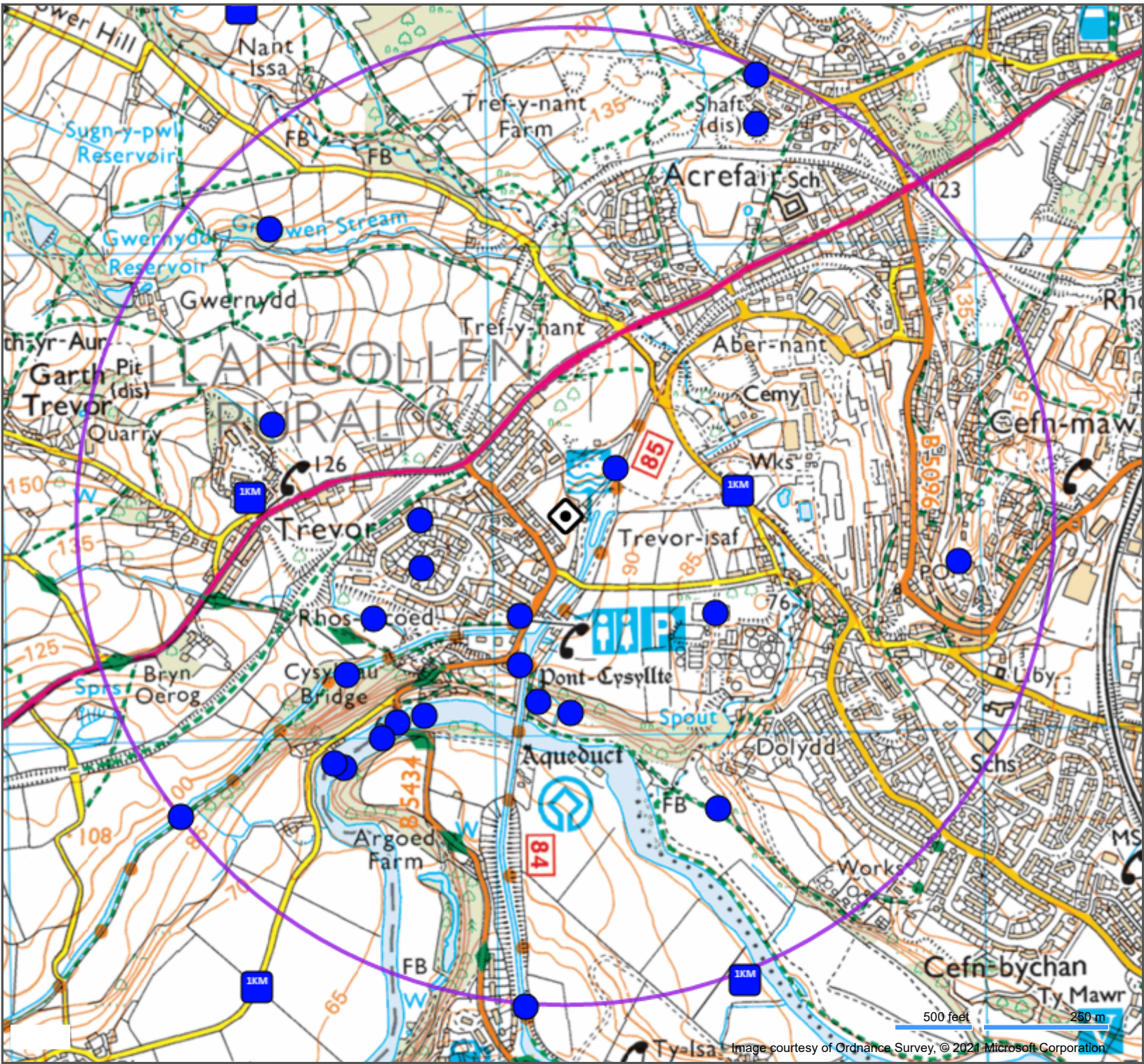
Distance	Indicates the distance, in metres, between the GRID REFERENCE of the record (using the central point of the grid square) and the search location. For any Sensitive Species Records, this cannot be released into the Public Domain.
Species Name	Name of the taxon (usually identified to species level) using the binomial system.
Grid Reference	Full grid reference based on the Ordnance Survey grid system. For any Sensitive Species Records, this cannot be released into the Public Domain.
Date	Date on which the record was made. In some cases this might be a date range, or a vague date such as 'Summer 2010'.
Recorder(s)	One or more people who made the original observation and recorded it in some way. It may have subsequently been included in a data collation by another person or it may have been submitted to Cofnod directly.
Abundance	Number of individuals recorded. Where not specified it is assumed that at least one was present.
Record Type	The recording methods used (only where specified).
Site Name	The site name (if one has been supplied). For any Sensitive Species Records, this cannot be released into the Public Domain.
Comments	Any additional notes about the sighting, including any information on habitat or substrate if this is available. For any Sensitive Species Records, this cannot be released into the Public Domain.
Dataset ID	ID of this dataset. See 'Important Issues' for more details.
Lists	Any local, national or international conservation statuses or legal protection which apply to this species and whether it is included in any Local Biodiversity Action Plans. See 'Abbreviations' for more details.
V	Summarised record Verification Level. The following codes are used: 1 - Unassessed, 2 - Unconfirmed, 3 - Considered Correct by Cofnod, 4 - Considered Correct by Expert. See our Data Quality policy, available from the Cofnod website for more details.

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North Wales Environmental Information Service

eMapper for Cofnod

trevor basin / E09263

bird record lpan

Key



Search Location



Search Buffer (1000m)



Birds