

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Appendix 5-3

Bird Survey Report

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

MWP

Bird Survey Report
May 2022 to May 2023
Proposed Rínn Rua Hotel and Leisure Park.

Rínn Rua Holiday Park LTD.

April 2024

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Contents

1.	Introduction	5
1.1	Project Background	5
1.2	Statement of Authority	5
1.3	Consultation	8
1.4	Study Area	6
1.5	Site Location and Description	6
2.	Methodology.....	9
2.1	Scientific Nomenclature: Conventions	9
2.2	Desk Study	9
2.3	Field Surveys	10
2.3.1	Point Count Surveys	10
2.3.2	Walkover Surveys	11
2.3.3	Chough Monitoring	12
3.	Existing Environment	12
3.1	Sites Designated/of Importance for Birds	12
3.1.1	Special Protection Areas (SPAs).....	12
3.1.2	Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).....	13
3.1.3	Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)/Ramsar Sites.....	13
3.1.4	I-WeBS Sites.....	14
3.2	Bird Atlas Records and Distribution	14
4.	Results	17
4.1	Point Count and Walkover Surveys.....	17
4.1.1	Auks.....	19
4.1.2	Divers	19
4.1.3	Gulls	19
4.1.4	Other Seabirds.....	20
4.1.5	Ducks.....	21
4.1.6	Geese	22
4.1.7	Waders.....	22
4.1.8	Other Waterbirds	24
4.1.9	Raptors.....	24
4.1.10	Corvids	25
4.1.11	Passerines	25
4.2	Chough Monitoring.....	27
4.3	Incidental Records	27
5.	Discussion on Avian Species Recorded within the Proposed Development Site during Surveys and Usage of Habitats.....	28
5.1	Chough	28
5.2	Waders and Gulls	29
5.3	Other Species	30
6.	Discussion on Avian Species Recorded outside the Proposed Development Site during Surveys and Usage of Habitats.....	30
6.1	Seabirds, Gulls, Waders and Other Waterbirds	30
6.2	Other Species	31
7.	Summary	32
8.	References	33

Tables

Table 1. Point count survey locations	10
Table 2. Description of main chough breeding activity phases	12
Table 3. Bird Atlas (2007 – 2011) records (breeding and wintering distribution) for V46	14
Table 4. NBDC 'Birds of Ireland' species records for V46	17
Table 5. Overview of all species of conservation concern recorded during surveys	17
Table 6. Results of chough monitoring undertaken at the proposed development site	27

Figures

Figure 1. Proposed development site layout.....	5
Figure 2. Site location	7
Figure 3. Point count (PC 1-4) survey locations.....	11

Appendices

Appendix 1	Walkover and Point Count Survey Summary
Appendix 2	Walkover Survey Results
Appendix 3	Walkover Survey Monthly Overview
Appendix 4	Point Count Survey Results
Appendix 5	Point Count Survey Monthly Overview

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Status
21513	6009	A	April 2024	HD	AR, DF	MT	FINAL

MWP, Engineering and Environmental Consultants
Address: Reen Point, Blennerville, Tralee, Co. Kerry, V92 X2TK
www.mwp.ie



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

A Planning Application is being lodged to Kerry County Council (KCC) by the Applicant for permission to renovate the existing derelict Reenroe Hotel and develop a Leisure Park on lands located at Reenroe and Emlaghmore West, near Ballinskelligs, County Kerry (see **Figure 1** below).

Malachy Walsh and Partners Engineering and Environmental Consultants (MWP) were engaged by the Applicant (Rínn Rua Holiday Park LTD.) to undertake baseline ecology surveys at the proposed development site and undertake an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development on the flora and fauna of the receiving environment as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

As part of this assessment, surveys for avian species were undertaken by MWP to inform the impact assessment. This report presents the findings of a desktop study undertaken in relation to birds and the results of bird surveys undertaken at the proposed development site between May 2022 and May 2023. This report will accompany the planning application.

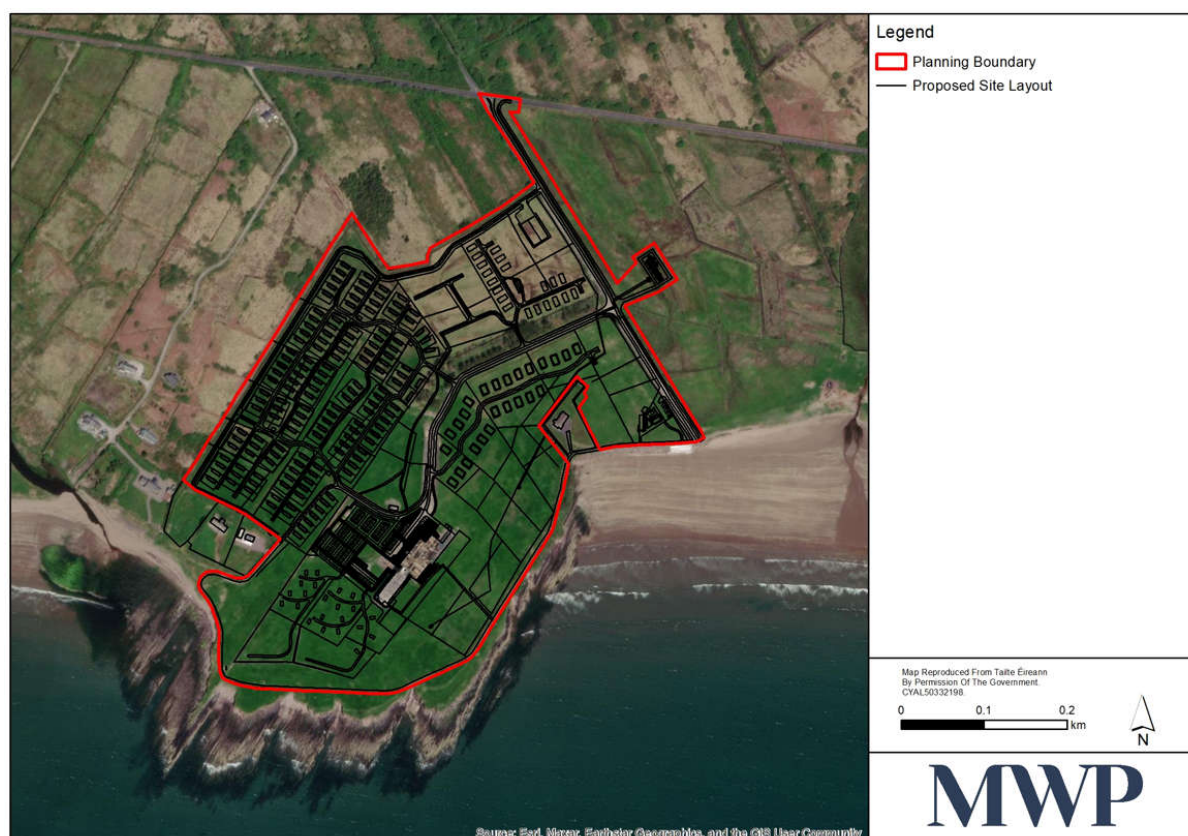


Figure 1. Proposed development site layout

1.2 Statement of Authority

The 2022/2023 surveys were undertaken by Davey Farrar, Senior Field Ornithologist with MWP. Davey has more than 30 years of bird survey experience. He has worked on hen harrier projects in conjunction with University College Cork (UCC) and estuarine bird monitoring for BirdWatch Ireland. He has worked on a wide variety of projects in both Ireland and the UK and is proficient in vantage point (VP) surveys, transect and point count surveys, targeted species surveys (hen harrier, red grouse etc.) and hinterland surveys. Davey is also proficient in

the identification of terrestrial invertebrates, with a particular interest in moths, butterflies and dragonflies. He has added two first Irish records to the bird list of Ireland.

This report was prepared by Hazel Dalton. Hazel is a Senior Ecologist with over nine years' experience in ecological consultancy with MWP including in ecological surveying and impact assessment for AA and EIAR. She has authored and contributed to numerous screening reports for AA, Natura Impact Statements (NIS) and Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Hazel is an experienced field ecologist with a diverse ecological survey profile including habitats, flora, bats, mammals, birds and terrestrial macro-invertebrates. For more information, please refer to **Appendix 5-1 of Volume 3 of the EIAR**.

1.3 Consultation

A pre-application planning meeting was held between the Applicant, MWP and KCC on the 7th June 2023. During this meeting, a general overview of the approach to ecology fieldwork in relation to the proposed development, including an outline of surveys and findings to date, was presented to KCC.

Consultation was also undertaken with a range of stationary and non-statutory consultees as part of preparation of the EIAR for the proposed development. No bird species were identified as being of note with regard to the proposed development site as part of the scoping response received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Development Applications Unit (DAU).

Pre-planning consultation was also undertaken directly with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). A site visit was undertaken between staff ecologists from MWP and the NPWS local Conservation Ranger for the area on 11th January 2024 during which the proposal and ecological survey findings to date were discussed. MWP also engaged in informal consultation with NPWS in relation to cough on-site.

1.4 Study Area

The study area for the targeted bird surveys was taken to be the full extent of the proposed development site, and the lands and marine water adjoining, including the surrounding shoreline and the Inny River Estuary.

1.5 Site Location and Description

The study area is located on the coast, approximately 2 km north-east of Ballinskelligs and 4.5 km north-west of Waterville in rural south County Kerry. The nearest large town, Cahersiveen, is located approximately 11 km to the north (see **Figure 2** below). The site is situated on a small headland, known as Rinn Rua, located on the northern shore of Ballinskelligs Bay. Immediately east and west of the small headland respectively are the sandy beaches of Trá Rinn Rua (also known as Inny Strand or Reenroe Beach) and Trá na Sassanach.

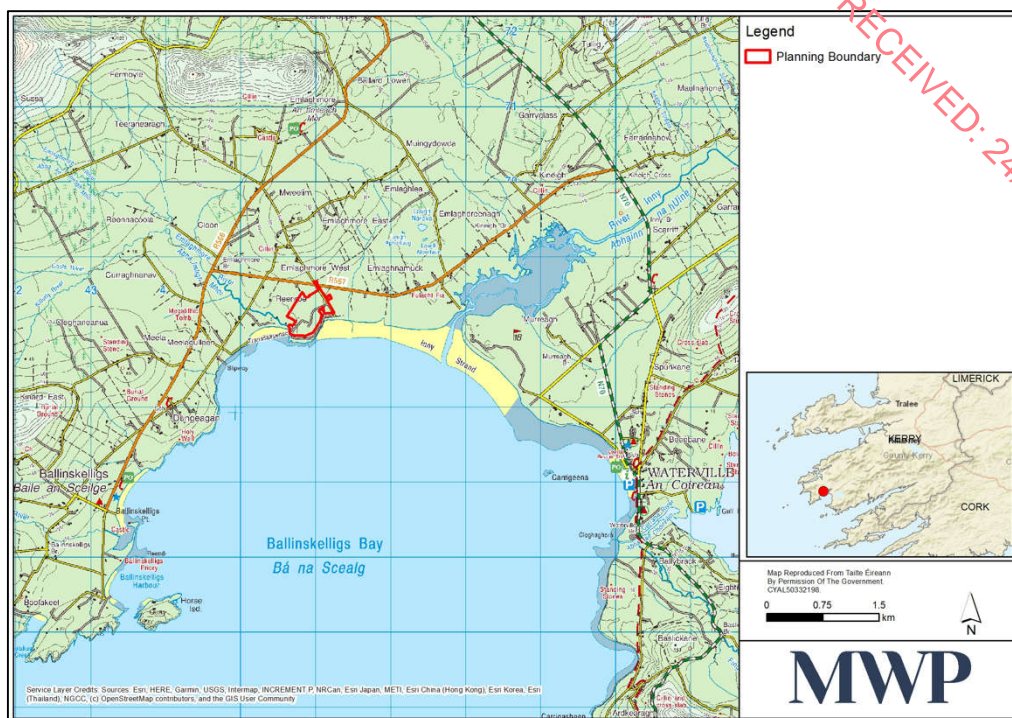


Figure 2. Site location

The proposed development site is presently occupied by a former hotel, now derelict. This building was constructed over 50 years ago and comprises mainly mass concrete. The structure commands expansive uninterrupted views of the scenic coastline and the bay to the south. The building comprises a single-story structure on the northern side (largely with roof missing and open to the elements), a tall concrete tower towards the centre and a three-story structure at the south which structurally is in relatively good condition. A small derelict house is located c. 40 m to the north-west of the centre of the hotel building. This two-story house is of stone construction, although largely plastered over, with a slate roof, in disrepair.



Plate 1. View looking south at front of derelict hotel with Ballinskelligs Bay beyond

The western half of the study area is dominated by areas of rush dominated wet grassland occurring on drained and degraded peatland soils in the north, and areas of freer draining semi-improved grassland in mosaic with wet grassland to the south, all grazed by sheep (see **Plate 1** and **Plate 2**). The coastal fringes to the south and southwest support semi-improved and localised areas of more diverse dry neutral and calcareous grassland over rocky sea cliffs/rocky shore along the fringes of Ballinskelligs Bay, which extends southwards (see **Plate 3**).

The eastern half of the study area is categorized by wet grassland on degraded peatland soils, with localised areas of improved grassland, pockets of scrub and with adjoining drainage channels and earth banks. The south-eastern corner of the site supports a localised area of reed and large sedge swamp influenced by intermittent tidal influxes or the backing up of high tidal water of the Inny (Kerry)_030 watercourse, which forms the eastern site boundary. Fields boundaries within the site support overgrown and unmanaged earth banks, most of which are adjoined by drainage channels. Lands throughout the study area are managed for agriculture, comprising sheep and dry cattle grazing. A network of deep drainage ditches crisscross much of the site, associated with field boundaries.

There are two EPA registered watercourses¹ within the study area. The western section of the study area is drained by the 4th order 'Emlaghmore21' river², while the eastern boundary of the study area comprises the 2nd order 'An Rinn Rua' stream³. These watercourses drain the lands within the site, fed by the artificial drainage network described above, as well as peatland, farmland and forestry on surrounding lands, before discharging to Ballinskelligs Bay.

There are areas of ecological importance present nearby, and extending into the wider landscape, including the Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (000335), which adjoins sections of the site boundary, and the Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) (000335) with which it overlaps. The Iveragh Peninsula SPA (004154) is located approximately 3.6 km to the southwest (see **Section 3.1** below).



Plate 2. Example of rushy wet grassland habitat occurring in north-eastern corner of proposed development site

¹ <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

² EPA Code IE_SW_21E010400

³ EPA Code IE_SW_21I010900



Plate 3. View looking east from edge of proposed development site showing rocky shoreline surrounding much of headland and the sandy shoreline of Inny Strand in the background

2. Methodology

2.1 Scientific Nomenclature: Conventions

Species nomenclature follows the standard form of the common name, followed by the binomial, on the first instance of usage in the text or the first instance of usage in a table. Thereafter, for any subsequent usage, common names only are used.

2.2 Desk Study

A desktop study was carried out prior to the commencement of bird survey-work. This provided the opportunity to gain an understanding of the bird populations' using the area through an investigation of the habitats present, previous species records, and the presence of any nature conservation sites of importance for avian species in the locality. Available ornithological data was reviewed including:

- Review of online web-mappers: National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Review of the most recent Bird Atlas: Balmer *et al.*, (2013).
- Review of Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCCI) 2020-2026 (Gilbert *et al.*, 2021)
- Review of BirdWatch Ireland I-WeBS (Irish Wetland Bird Surveys) site information.
- General ornithological information (www.birdwatchireland.ie).
- Irish Bird Reports and the journal *Irish Birds*, published by BirdWatch Ireland.
- Other information sources and reports footnoted throughout the document.

The entire study area lies within the hectad V46. For this area, the NBDC on-line mapping tool was used to generate an excel file of all bird species for which past records exist. This list was then checked for species which are either of conservation concern and/or are afforded a higher level of legislative protection e.g. under the EU Birds Directive. Information received from the NPWS data request for rare and protected species was also reviewed with regard to avian species. The resulting species list was then checked against the 'Bird Atlas (2007-2011)' (Balmer *et al.*, 2013) to determine their most recent breeding and wintering status within the area (see **Section 3.2** below)

2.3 Field Surveys

An initial walkover of the site was carried out by the field ornithologist undertaking the surveys in April 2022 to enable the identification of suitable survey locations.

Field surveys were then undertaken to gather detailed information on bird distribution and activity to predict the potential effects of the proposed development on birds. The field surveys comprised distribution and abundance surveys, carried out to record numbers and distributions of all bird species using the site that might be affected, either directly or indirectly, by the proposal.

The distribution and abundance surveys, undertaken between May 2022 and June 2023 and capturing both summer and winter seasons, comprised:

- Point count surveys
- Walkover surveys
- Monitoring of chough using hotel building (undertaken as part of walkover surveys)

2.3.1 Point Count Surveys

Point count surveys were undertaken on a monthly basis during the summer months (April to August) and on a twice monthly basis during the winter months (September to March) between May 2022 and May 2023. The aim of the point count surveys was to gather data on abundance and distribution of birds within and around the vicinity of the site during both the summer and winter periods, with a focus on the surrounding coastline and in-shore marine zone. Four locations were selected for the point count surveys within the study area (see **Table 1** and **Figure 3** below). All four locations were surveyed on each survey date. Any bird species which were either seen or heard at each location were recorded. Please see **Appendix 1** for dates and times for point count surveys.

Table 1. Point count survey locations

Point Count Location	ITM Grid Coordinates
1	445641 568092
2	445759 567963
3	446090 568248
4	447967 568432



Figure 3. Point count (PC 1-4) survey locations

Details on each point count survey carried out including survey date, time and weather conditions can be found in **Appendix 1**. Tabulated results of peak counts for all species recorded during point count surveys are provided in **Appendix 4** and an overview of point count results for species by month is provided in **Appendix 5**.

2.3.2 Walkover Surveys

Walkover surveys of the study area were undertaken between May 2022 and May 2023 on the same dates as point count surveys. The aim of the walkover surveys was to assess general distribution of all bird species within the study area and gather data on bird usage of the proposed development site and surrounding area.

The walkover surveys encompassed all areas of the proposed development site and wider study area and included all representative habitats. During each walkover survey, all bird species seen or heard by the surveyor were recorded, out to a minimum distance of 100 m of the surveyor, although the topography of the landscape often allowed for detection of birds at greater distances. During the breeding season walkovers, birds were considered to represent breeding birds if they were observed displaying or singing, if nest, eggs or young were located, if adults repeatedly alarm called or if they performed distraction displays or were observed in territorial disputes.

Details on each walkover survey carried out including survey date, time and weather conditions can be found in **Appendix 1**. Tabulated results of peak counts for all species recorded during walkover surveys are provided in **Appendix 2** and an overview of walkover results for species by month is provided in **Appendix 3**.

2.3.3 Chough Monitoring

During the initial site visit by the field ornithologist in early May 2022, a pair of breeding chough were identified utilising the derelict hotel within the proposed development site. This pair was monitored during both the 2022 and 2023 breeding seasons as part of the summer walkover surveys whereby the surveyor stopped along the walkover route and watched the breeding location within the hotel from a distance using a suitable vantage point for an approximate one-hour period during each walkover visit. In the case of the 2023 breeding season, monitoring of chough continued for an extended period into June 2023 to capture data on fledging activity and the outcome of the nest. Chough roosting activity within the structure by the same pair was also monitored during winter 2022/23 walkover surveys.

The purpose of the chough monitoring surveys was to capture data on the identified resident breeding pair and general data on chough habitat usage and distribution within the study area. The main chough breeding activity phases are outlined in **Table 2** below.

Table 2. Description of main chough breeding activity phases

Period	Activity phase	Description of Activity
March	Pre-breeding	Early breeding season. Mature adults commence nest-building.
April	Breeding	Breeding commences early to mid-April. Nests comprise a wool-lined cup where between 1-6 eggs are laid. The female incubates the eggs, while the male forages for both.
May	Breeding	Main breeding period.
June/July	Fledging and dispersal	Young start to fledge with the family group remaining within the breeding territory.
August to November	Post-breeding	Family groups typically form flocks which roost communally.

3. Existing Environment

3.1 Sites Designated/of Importance for Birds

3.1.1 Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

In relation to European nature conservation sites specifically designated for the protection of birds and their habitats, there are no Special Protection Areas (SPAs) within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site. The closest, the Iveragh Peninsula SPA (004154), is situated approximately 3.69 km to the south-west, and is designated for the protection of the following species: fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), guillemot (*Uria aalge*) and chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*).

The Iveragh Peninsula SPA is of ornithological importance as it supports an internationally important population of chough, a Red Data Book species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. The site is the second most important site in the country for this species, with 88 pairs recorded in the 2002/03 survey. The topography of the Iveragh Peninsula, with its mosaic of grazed semi-improved and improved pastures, extensive inland upland areas of coastal heath and grassland, and sand dune systems in close proximity to breeding cliffs, favours this species. Pairs and small flocks can be found around the coast and in the mountainous uplands of the Iveragh Peninsula throughout the year. Studies have shown that chough forage mainly within 300 m of the cliff tops used for breeding and these areas have been included in the site. The site supports an important peregrine population (5 pairs in 2002). The site also holds nationally important populations of guillemot (2,860 pairs in 1999-2000),

fulmar (766 pairs in 1999-2000) and kittiwake (1,150 pairs in 2000) (NPWS, 2015). The SPA partially overlaps with both the Puffin Sound – Horse Island Cliffs pNHA (001373) and the Valencia Island Cliffs pNHA (001382).

The Deenish Island and Scarriff Island SPA (004175) is located approximately 10.6 km south-east of the proposed development site, and is designated for the seabird species fulmar, Manx shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*), storm petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*), lesser black-backed gull (*Larus fuscus*) and Arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) (NPWS, 2015b). The SPA partially overlaps with the Deenish and Scarriff Islands pNHA (001345).

Puffin Island SPA (004003) is located approximately 10.5 km west of the proposed development site and is designated for the seabird species fulmar, Manx shearwater, storm petrel, lesser black-backed gull, razorbill (*Alca torda*) and puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) (NPWS, 2015c). The SPA partially overlaps with the Puffin Sound – Horse Island Cliffs pNHA (001373).

3.1.2 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

Although not designated for qualifying bird species, SACs can provide important habitats that support bird populations which are of conservation concern. Site synopses for SACs within the surrounding area were reviewed as part of the desk-top study to identify nearby SACs of importance for birds.

The Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary SAC (000335) overlaps with the southern fringe of the study area and comprises the marine waters of Ballinskelligs Bay, some adjoining terrestrial areas and the River Inny Estuary. The SAC is designated for coastal terrestrial habitats (two types of saltmarsh)⁴, neither of which are encompassed within the study area. With regard to the SAC and any potential importance for birds, a review of the NPWS site synopsis determined that the SAC is used in winter by nationally important numbers of common scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) (953 individuals) and ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) (147 individuals), both counts from 1994/95-96/97. The site is also commonly used by waders such as oystercatcher (130 individuals) and curlew (140 individuals) (NPWS, 2013). The SAC overlaps with the Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).

The Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC (000365), located approximately 5 km south-east of the proposed development site, supports populations of six bird species which are listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, including a small flock of Greenland white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*), breeding peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) and chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) (NPWS, 2013b). The SAC overlaps with the Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment pNHA.

The Kenmare River SAC (002158), located approximately 9.5 km to the south-east of the proposed development site, supports four tern species; common tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*), little tern (*Sternula albifrons*) and sandwich tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*) (NPWS, 2024). The SAC overlaps with the Darrynane Bay Islands and Marsh, Lamb's Head pNHA (001346).

3.1.3 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)/Ramsar Sites

The Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) Programme, overseen by Birdlife International, aims to identify, conserve and protect those areas throughout the world considered to be of the greatest significance to bird populations⁵. The desk-top review concluded that there is one IBA, the Iveragh Peninsula IBA (Site Code: IE077), located approximately 0.47 km west of the proposed development site. This linear site encompasses a total area of 4,000 ha and comprises sea cliff, grassland and heath habitats, overlapping with much of the Iveragh Peninsula

⁴[1330] Atlantic Salt Meadows, [1410] Mediterranean Salt Meadows

⁵<http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/programmes/important-bird-and-biodiversity-areas-ibas>

SPA (of importance for breeding chough and peregrine)⁶. There are no Ramsar sites within the vicinity of the study area⁷.

3.1.4 I-WeBS Sites

I-WeBS (Irish Wetland Bird Survey) is a joint project between BirdWatch Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in which specific wetland sites are surveyed (BirdWatch Ireland, 2019). In order to count the wetland birds, a 'look-see' method (Bibby *et al*, 2000) is used in which all birds present within a pre-defined area are counted. The aim of these surveys is to monitor non-breeding birds in Ireland and contribute to population counts. The information is also important to help assess the quality of these wetland areas. The bird groups to be counted for I-WeBS consist of swans and geese, ducks, divers, waders and gulls. Counts are made once per month from September to March annually (BirdWatch Ireland, 2019)⁸.

The rocky shore of the headland on which the derelict hotel is located, the inner part of Ballinskelligs Bay and the River Inny Estuary form part of the 'Ballinskelligs Bay OK410' I-WeBS site. A review of the BirdWatch Ireland I-WeBS website determined that summary data for this site was not available on-line. A data request for the most recent 5-year annual count data available for this site was submitted to BirdWatch Ireland on the 1st November 2023. Data was received from BirdWatch Ireland on the 3rd November 2024 and reviewed⁹. Data was only available for the most recent count period '2022/23'. There are no other I-WeBS sites situated within a 10 km radius of the proposed development site.

3.2 Bird Atlas Records and Distribution

'Bird Atlas 2007-11: The breeding and wintering birds of Britain and Ireland' (Balmer *et al.*, 2013) is the most recent comprehensive work on wintering and breeding birds in Ireland.

The proposed development site lies within hectad V46. **Table 3** below presents Breeding and Wintering Bird Atlas (2007 – 2011) data for species of conservation concern previously recorded within this hectad by the NBDC.

Table 3. Bird Atlas (2007 – 2011) records (breeding and wintering distribution) for V46

Species Name	Breeding Distribution ¹⁰	Wintering Distribution	Conservation Status ¹¹
Barn owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>)	Probable	Present	RL, Schedule IV
Barn swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)	Confirmed	-	AL
Black guillemot (<i>Cepphus grylle</i>)	Possible	-	AL
Black-headed gull (<i>Larus ridibundus</i>)	-	Present	AL
Brent goose (<i>Branta bernicla</i>)	-	Present	AL
Common coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>)	-	Present	AL

⁶ BirdLife International (2023) <http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/iveragh-peninsula-iba-ireland>

⁷ <https://wetland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/index.html?appid=cd6e1a247bdc4179b9dfc0461e950f1e#>

⁸ <https://birdwatchireland.ie/our-work/surveys-research/research-surveys/irish-wetland-bird-survey/>.

⁹ This data was supplied by the Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS), a scheme coordinated by BirdWatch Ireland under contract to the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

¹⁰ Breeding status: Seen = recorded; Possible = possible breeding; Probable = probable breeding; Confirmed = confirmed breeding; - = not recorded; Non-B = non-breeding; Breed = breeding

¹¹ Conservation Status: BD = Annex I of the Birds Directive; RL = BoCCI Red-listed; AL = BoCCI Amber-listed; Schedule IV = protected under Schedule IV of the Wildlife Act

Species Name	Breeding Distribution ¹⁰	Wintering Distribution	Conservation Status ¹¹
Common eider (<i>Somateria mollissima</i>)	-	Present	RL
Common guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>)	-	Present	AL
Common kestrel (<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>)	Confirmed	Present	Schedule IV, RL
Common kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	Possible	-	BD, AL
Common linnet (<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>)	Confirmed	Present	AL
Common redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)	-	Present	RL
Common sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)	Confirmed	-	AL
Common scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>)	-	Present	RL
Common shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)	Confirmed	Present	AL
Common snipe (<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>)	Possible	Present	RL
Common starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	Confirmed	Present	AL
Common swift (<i>Apus apus</i>)	Possible	-	RL
Common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Confirmed	-	BD, AL
Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)	-	Present	BD, RL
Eurasian curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)	Possible	Present	RL
Eurasian oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)	Confirmed	Present	RL
Eurasian sparrowhawk (<i>Accipiter nisus</i>)	Probable	Present	Schedule IV
Eurasian teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)	Possible	Present	AL
Eurasian wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>)	-	Present	AL
European golden plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)	-	Present	BD, RL
European greenfinch (<i>Carduelis chloris</i>)	Confirmed	-	AL
European shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>)	Possible	Present	AL
Goldcrest (<i>Regulus regulus</i>)	Possible	Present	AL
Great cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>)	Probable	Present	AI
Great crested grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>)	-	Present	AL
Great Northern diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>)	-	Present	BD, AL
Greater scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>)	-	Present	RL
Herring gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>)	Probable	Present	AL

Species Name	Breeding Distribution ¹⁰	Wintering Distribution	Conservation Status ¹¹
House martin (<i>Delichon urbicum</i>)	Confirmed	-	AL
House sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	Confirmed	-	AL
Lesser black-backed gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)	Possible	Present	AL
Little egret (<i>Egretta garzetta</i>)	Possible	Present	BD
Long-tailed duck (<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>)	-	Present	RL
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)	Confirmed	Present	AL
Meadow pipit (<i>Anthus pratensis</i>)	Confirmed	Present	RL
Mediterranean gull (<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>)	-	Present	BD, AL
Mute swan (<i>Cygnus olor</i>)	Confirmed	Present	AI
Northern fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>)	Probable	-	AL
Northern gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>)	-	Present	AL
Northern lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)	-	Present	RL
Northern wheatear (<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>)	Confirmed	-	AL
Peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	Possible	-	BD, GL
Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>)	-	Present	RL
Red knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>)	-	Present	RL
Red-billed chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>)	Confirmed	-	BC, AL
Red-breasted merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>)	Probable	Present	AL
Red-throated diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>)	-	Present	BD, AL
Ringed plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>)	Confirmed	Present	AL
Sand martin (<i>Riparia riparia</i>)	Confirmed	-	AL
Skylark (<i>Alauda arvensis</i>)	Confirmed	Present	AL
Spotted flycatcher (<i>Muscicapa striata</i>)	Possible	-	AL

The NBDC also holds records for the following species of conservation concern for the general area from the "Birds of Ireland" dataset), included in **Table 4** below.

Table 4. NBDC 'Birds of Ireland' species records for V46

Species Name	Date of last record	Site	Conservation Status ¹²
Arctic tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>)	2016	Inny Estuary	BD, AL
Common buzzard (<i>Buteo buteo</i>)	2021	Waterville	Schedule IV, GL
Ruddy turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>)	2017	Ballinskelligs	AL
Sandwich tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	2022	Inny Estuary	BD, AL

4. Results

4.1 Point Count and Walkover Surveys

This section outlines the results of the point count and walkover surveys undertaken within the study area between May 2022 and May 2023, with a focus on those species which are of conservation concern in Ireland (defined as either red or amber-listed species, as per BOCCI 4¹³) and/or which are afforded a higher level of legislative protection (e.g. listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive or the Fourth Schedule of the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012 [buzzards, eagles, falcons, harriers, hawks, kites, osprey, owls].

Table 5 below provides an overview of all species of conservation concern recorded within the proposed development site during walkover surveys or in the surrounding area recorded during point count surveys. Tabulated results of peak counts for all species recorded during point count and walkover surveys (including green-listed species) are provided in **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 4** respectively. An overview of all bird species recorded present within the study area on a monthly basis during point count and walkover surveys in the period May 2022 to May 2023 is provided in **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 5** respectively.

Table 5. Overview of all species of conservation concern recorded during surveys

Species Name ¹⁴	Walkover Survey (within PDS ¹⁵)	Point Count Survey (around PDS)
Auks		
Black guillemot	-	X
Razorbill	-	X
Divers		
Great Northern diver	-	X
Black-throated diver	-	X
Red-throated diver	-	X
Gulls		
Herring gull	-	X
Lesser black-backed gull	-	X
Great black-backed gull	-	X
Common gull	X	X
Mediterranean gull	-	X

¹² Conservation Status: BD = Annex I of the Birds Directive; RL = BoCCI Red-listed; Schedule IV = protected under Schedule IV of the Wildlife Act

¹³ Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland BoCCI 4 (Gilbert *et al.*, 2021)

¹⁴ EU Birds Directive Annex I species highlighted in bold text

¹⁵ Proposed Development Site (PDS)

Species Name ¹⁴	Walkover Survey (within PDS ¹⁵)	Point Count Survey (around PDS)
Black-headed gull	-	X
<u>Other seabirds</u>		
Gannet	-	X
Sandwich tern	-	X
Common tern	-	X
<u>Ducks</u>		
Common scoter	-	X
Shelduck	-	X
Teal	-	X
Wigeon	-	X
Red-breasted merganser	-	X
<u>Geese</u>		
Light-bellied Brent goose	-	X
<u>Waders</u>		
Oystercatcher	X	X
Common sandpiper	-	X
Dunlin	-	X
Ringed plover	-	X
Turnstone	-	X
Golden plover	X	X
Bar-tailed godwit	X	X
Greenshank	-	X
Redshank	-	X
Sanderling	-	X
Curlew	X	X
Whimbrel	X	X
<u>Other waterbirds</u>		
Little egret	-	X
Cormorant	-	X
<u>Raptors</u>		
Kestrel	X	X
Hen harrier	X	-
<u>Corvids</u>		
Chough	X	X
Jackdaw	X	X
<u>Passerines</u>		
Swallow	X	X
Meadow pipit	X	X
Sand martin	X	X
Linnet	X	X
Skylark	X	X
Starling	X	X
Goldcrest	X	-
Northern wheatear	X	-
Willow warbler	X	-

4.1.1 Auks

Black guillemot

Black guillemot (*Cephus grylle*) is amber listed in Ireland. This marine species only occurs on-land to breed, nesting amongst boulders at the base of cliffs, in rock crevices or in structures, such as piers, wintering near the breeding site. They can be seen in inshore waters throughout the year. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for black guillemot; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site (recorded on one occasion during point count surveys - one bird, recorded June 2022).

Razorbill

Razorbill (*Alca torda*) is red listed in Ireland. This species nests on sea-cliffs within cracks and crevices, or in scree and winters at sea. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for razorbill; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site (recorded during point count surveys in September 2022 and March and April 2023 with a peak count of 17 birds in April).

4.1.2 Divers

Great Northern diver

Great Northern diver (*Gavia immer*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. This species does not breed in Ireland, occurring along the Irish coastline between September and April, during which time it exhibits a widespread coastal distribution. During adverse weather, such as during storms, it can typically be seen in shallower nearshore waters (Lewis *et al.*, 2019). The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for great Northern diver; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site (recorded during point count surveys in in May, September and November 2022 and January, February and March 2023, with a peak count of 7 birds recorded in November).

Black-throated diver

Black-throated diver (*Gavia arctica*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. This scarce winter visitor occurs between October and April. Birds arrive from northern breeding areas in the autumn, feed in Irish waters over the winter and then return to breeding areas in the spring. Breeding by this species is not confirmed in Ireland. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for black-throated diver; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site (recorded on one occasion during point count surveys - one bird recorded January 2023).

Red-throated diver

Red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. It is a winter visitor to all Irish coasts with a widespread distribution. A very small breeding population is known from County Donegal. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for red-throated diver; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys (September and December 2022 and January, February, March and April 2023, with a peak count of 49 birds recorded in March).

4.1.3 Gulls

Herring gull

Herring gull (*Larus argentatus*) is amber listed in Ireland. It is resident along all Irish coasts. It has a widespread distribution, both along the coast and inland, during winter and summer, and is a colonial breeding species. There were no records of this species using any part of the site during bird surveys. However, this species was recorded

in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys (recorded in every month except August 2022. A peak count of 79 birds was recorded in December).

Lesser black-backed gull

Lesser black-backed gull (*Larus fuscus*) is amber listed in Ireland. This species breeds colonially, often with other gull species, on offshore islands, lake islands, on sand dunes and coastal cliffs. It has a wide winter distribution including both coastal and inland areas. There were no records of this species using any part of the site during bird surveys. However, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys (recorded in every month except August, October and November 2022. A peak count of 9 birds was recorded in April 2022).

Great black-backed gull

Great black-backed gull (*Larus marinus*) is a green-listed species, resident along all Irish coasts. It breeds colonially mainly along the coast, often on offshore islands, or other remote areas. In winter, resident birds are joined by over-wintering birds from other areas. Great black-backed gull was not recorded within the site but was frequently recorded in the wider area during point count surveys (peak count of 6 recorded in July, October and November 2022).

Common gull

Common gull (*Larus canus*) is amber listed in Ireland. It is a winter visitor to all Irish coasts. During the breeding season, this ground-nesting species can be found in both coastal and inland areas, including cliffs and lake islands. The grassland habitats within the site comprise suitable roosting/resting habitat for gulls. Common gull was recorded on-site during walkover surveys in November 2022 and January 2023 (peak count of 15 birds in January). Common gull was also recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys (recorded in every month except May and August 2022, and April and May 2023. A peak count of 62 birds was recorded in December 2022).

Mediterranean gull

Mediterranean gull (*Larus melanocephalus*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. This species breeds in small numbers, preferring low lying islands near the coast. It is widespread on the east coast during the winter months, with smaller numbers occurring elsewhere. Mediterranean gull was not recorded on-site but was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in July and October 2022 (peak of 12 birds recorded in October).

Black-headed gull

Black-headed gull (*Larus ridibundus*) is amber listed in Ireland. This species is resident along the Irish coastline. It breeds along the coast and inland, usually in wetlands, and has a widespread winter distribution (coastal and inland areas). Black-headed gull was not recorded on-site but was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in July and December 2022 and February 2023 (peak count of 24 birds recorded in December).

4.1.4 Other Seabirds

Gannet

Gannet (*Morus bassana*) is amber listed in Ireland. This species is resident along Irish coasts. It breeds colonially on offshore islands and winters at sea. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for gannet; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys, recorded in every month except January and February 2023 (peak count of 100+ birds recorded in November).

Sandwich tern

Sandwich tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. This species is mainly a summer visitor to Irish coasts. It nests colonially on the ground (coastal and inland) on islands, shingle banks and in sand dunes. Small numbers winter locally in Ireland. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for sandwich tern; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys, recorded in June, July and October 2022 (peak count of 21 birds recorded in June).

Common tern

Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. This species is a summer visitor to all Irish coasts, breeding colonially between April and October in coastal and inland areas. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for common tern; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in June, July, August 2022 and April 2023 (peak count of 14 birds recorded in April).

4.1.5 Ducks

Common scoter

Common scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) is red listed in Ireland. This species breeds on densely vegetated islands. During winter, they move to the coast, congregating in large flocks in shallow sandy bays. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for common scoter; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in September, October, November and December 2022 and January, March and April 2023 (peak count of 52 birds recorded in March).

Shelduck

Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) is amber listed in Ireland. It breeds in open area along seashores, large lakes and rivers, nesting in holes, mainly in banks and trees. It winters in sheltered estuaries and areas of tidal mudflats. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for shelduck; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in June 2022 (2 birds recorded).

Teal

Teal (*Anas crecca*) is amber listed in Ireland. They nest near freshwater lakes and pools and small upland streams, in thick cover. This species is widespread in winter in wetlands areas with good cover such as coastal lagoons and marsh, lakes and ponds. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for teal; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site on one occasion during point count surveys in October 2022 (1 bird recorded).

Wigeon

Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) is amber listed in Ireland. This species breeds in freshwater marsh, in lake or lagoon shore or on lake islands. It is widespread in winter (coastal and inland – marsh, freshwater and brackish lagoons, estuaries, bay, lakes and rivers). The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for wigeon; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in September, November and December 2022 and January, February and March 2023 (peak count of 99 birds recorded in January).

Red-breasted merganser

Red-breasted merganser (*Mergus serrator*) is amber listed in Ireland. It breeds near rivers, lakes, on islands and along the coastline. In winter, it can be found in brackish and marine waters, in protected shallow estuaries, bays and lagoons, and also offshore. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for red-breasted merganser; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site on one occasion during point count surveys in May 2022 (2 birds recorded).

4.1.6 Geese

Light-bellied Brent goose

Light-bellied Brent goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) is amber listed in Ireland. This species does not breed in Ireland. It is found mainly in coastal estuaries during the autumn and early winter, and also grasslands from mid-winter onwards. There were no records of light-bellied Brent goose using grassland habitats within the site during bird surveys; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in September and December 2022 and January, February and March 2023 (peak count of 24 birds recorded in December).

4.1.7 Waders

Oystercatcher

Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) is red listed in Ireland. This species breeds on shingle beaches, sand dunes, salt marsh, rocky shore and on large inland lakes. It is widespread in winter along the coastline, favouring open sandy coasts. The grassland habitats within the site comprise suitable foraging and resting habitat for oystercatcher. Oystercatcher was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in October and November 2022 and April 2023. A peak count of 17 birds was recorded in September 2022. Oystercatcher was also recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in every month except June and August 2022 and May 2023.

Common sandpiper

Common sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) is amber listed in Ireland. It breeds near to water (rivers, lakes and coastline), with small numbers wintering in Ireland. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for common sandpiper and there were no records of this species recorded on-site during bird surveys. However, common sandpiper was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in May and June 2022 and May 2023 (peak count of 2 birds recorded in May and June).

Dunlin

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is red listed in Ireland. It is common in coastal areas during the winter, in particular on tidal mudflats and estuaries. This species is ground-nesting, favouring low vegetation, such as machair. There were no records of dunlin using any part of the site during bird surveys. Dunlin was, however, recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in June, September, October and November 2022 and January 2023 (peak count of 30 birds recorded in September).

Ringed plover

Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) is amber listed in Ireland. It mainly breeds in coastal areas such as on exposed sand or shingle beaches, although some breed inland in short-grazed pasture near rivers and lakes. It has a widespread coastal winter distribution. There were no records of ringed plover using any part of the site during

bird surveys. Ringed plover was, however, recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in every month except May, July and August 2022 and February 2023 (peak count of 152 birds recorded in November).

Turnstone

Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) is amber listed in Ireland. The species does not breed in Ireland but has a widespread coastal winter distribution. The development site does not encompass suitable habitat for turnstone; however, this species was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in August 2022, January and April 2023 (peak count of 4 birds recorded in April).

Golden plover

Golden plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is red listed in Ireland. This species is widely distributed throughout Ireland during the winter, from coastal regions to the midlands, with numbers typically peaking between October and February. Large flocks are known to gather on a range of habitats, primarily on grassland, cultivated lowlands and coastal mudflats. Breeding occurs on heather moors, blanket bogs & acidic grasslands with the breeding distribution limited to the uplands of northwest counties in Ireland.

The grassland habitats within the site are suitable for roosting golden plover. There was one record of golden plover within the site over the winter 2022/23 period. This sighting occurred in November when a flock of 51 birds was recorded on the grassland to the south of the hotel during a site walkover survey. Golden plover was also recorded in the wider area extending away from the site in September, October and November¹⁶ 2022 and January, February and March 2023.

Bar-tailed godwit

Bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is red listed in Ireland. This species does not breed in Ireland, but has a widespread coastal winter distribution, mainly associated with estuaries. Bar-tailed godwit was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in November 2022 and January and March 2023 (peak count of 12 birds was recorded in January). Bar-tailed godwit was also recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in September, October, November and December 2022 (peak count of 19 birds recorded in September).

Redshank

Redshank (*Tringa tetanus*) is red listed in Ireland. This is an uncommon breeding species in Ireland, mainly found in the midlands. It is ground-nesting in tussocky grass, marsh and sometime heather. It has a widespread coastal winter distribution, mainly associated with mudflats, large estuaries and inlets. Redshank was not recorded on-site but was recorded in the wider area extending away from the site during point count surveys in October and November 2022 and March 2023 (peak count of 7 birds recorded in November).

Greenshank

Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) is green listed in Ireland. It is a winter visitor to mainly coastal areas, in particular estuaries, from September to April. Greenshank was not recorded on-site but was regularly recorded in the wider area during point count surveys in autumn and winter survey period, recorded in every month except February (peak count of three recorded in November 2022).

¹⁶ A sighting of 340 birds, recorded on 1st November 2022 from PC4 located in the Inny River Estuary in excess of 1.5 km east of the development site, comprised the single largest record of golden plover recorded overall over the course of the bird survey period.

Curlew

Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) is red listed in Ireland. This uncommon breeding species in Ireland nests in rough pasture, meadow and heather. It has a widespread coastal and inland winter distribution. The grassland habitats within the site are suitable for wader species such as curlew. Curlew was recorded on-site during walkover surveys in September, October and November 2022 and January, February and March 2023 (peak count of 34 birds recorded in October). Curlew was also recorded during point count surveys in the wider area in every month except May and June 2022 and April and May 2023.

Whimbrel

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) are green listed in Ireland. Whimbrel is a passage migrant in autumn (August/September) and spring (April/May). This species is not known to breed in Ireland. A small number may winter in coastal areas, mainly along the south and east coast. The grassland habitats within the site are suitable for wader species such as whimbrel. Whimbrel was recorded during bird surveys, albeit infrequently. A flock of 38 birds was recorded during a walkover survey of the site in late April 2023. A total of 16 birds was recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in mid-May 2022. These comprised the only two sightings of whimbrel during the bird survey period.

Sanderling

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) is green listed in Ireland. It is a winter visitor to Ireland occurring mainly between September and April, although birds can arrive as early as July. Sanderling is mostly found along sandy coastlines, especially non-estuarine coastlines. Sanderling was not recorded on-site but was recorded during point count surveys in the wider area in October 2022 and January and February 2023.

4.1.8 Other Waterbirds

Little egret

Little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) is listed on Annex I of EU Birds Directive and is green listed in Ireland. It is resident along coasts and rivers throughout Ireland. It breeds in lakes, marsh and estuaries and during the winter can be found in on shallow lakes, lagoons and along the coast. Little egret was recorded on one occasion during point count surveys of the wider area in February 2023 (1 bird recorded).

Cormorant

Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) is amber listed in Ireland. This species breeds in colonies mainly around the coast of Ireland, with some birds breeding inland. It winters at sea and also inland. Cormorant was recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in every month except July and December 2022 and April 2023 (peak count of 7 birds recorded in January).

4.1.9 Raptors

Kestrel

Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) is red listed in Ireland. It can be found in open habitats including moors, coastline, farmland, wetland and roadsides. It is a widespread breeding species nesting in trees, buildings or on cliffs. It is largely resident within its breeding territory. The habitats encompassed within the development site and the surrounding coastline provide suitable foraging habitat for kestrel. Mature conifers which occur provide potential nesting opportunities. No kestrel breeding activity was recorded; however, one individual was recorded foraging during a walkover survey of the site in November 2022. Kestrel was also recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in June, July and November 2022.

Hen harrier

Hen harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) is listed on Annex I of EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. Hen harrier breed on heather moor and in young forestry plantations, moving to more lowland and coastal areas during the winter months. The development site does not contain suitable nesting habitat for hen harrier and is lacking in the typical habitat features associated with foraging birds, such as hedgerow and scrub, and so is considered to comprise sub-optimal habitat. Hen harrier was recorded, however, on two separate occasions during walkover surveys in October 2022. On 12th October, a female was observed commuting through the site, while on the 25th October, a male was also observed commuting through the site.

4.1.10 Corvids

Chough

Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) is listed on Annex I of EU Birds Directive and is amber listed in Ireland. Chough are specialist soil and animal dung invertebrate feeders and require short-cropped grassland in which to forage. They nest in caves, crevices in cliff-face and old buildings and are largely coastal in distribution in Ireland. The short-cropped coastal grassland encompassed within the site is highly suitable for foraging chough. Chough was confirmed breeding on-site within the derelict hotel and this pair also use the structure as a winter roost-site. Chough was recorded during walkover surveys and was the focus of targeted monitoring – please see **Section 4.2** below for more information. Chough was also recorded in the wider study area extending away from the site during point count surveys in May 2022 and February 2023. The value of the site and surrounding area with regard to chough is discussed further in **Section 5.1** and **Section 6.2** below.

Jackdaw

Jackdaw (*Coloeus monedula*) is green listed in Ireland and is a common and widespread species. It often nests in man-made structures such as derelict buildings but will also nest on cliff-face or in trees in urban settings. In winter, this species forms large flocks which often mix with other corvids, in particular rook. Jackdaw was recorded during both walkover and point count surveys and was confirmed nesting in the derelict hotel and derelict cottage on-site.

4.1.11 Passerines

Swallow

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) is amber listed in Ireland. This species is a common summer visitor, nesting in buildings between Mid-March to late September before departing for wintering grounds. Swallow was recorded during walkover surveys in June, July and September 2022, and April and May 2023 (peak count of 12 birds recorded) and was confirmed nesting inside the hotel building and derelict cottage in both the 2022 and 2023 breeding seasons. Old nests are abundant within parts of the hotel and cottage. Swallow was also recorded in the wider area during point count surveys in May and August 2022 (peak count of 7 birds recorded).

Meadow pipit

Meadow pipit (*Anthus pratensis*) is red listed in Ireland. This widespread breeding species can be found in bogs, uplands, scrub and pasture, moving to more lowland areas during winter months. The damp grassland encompassed within the site is suitable for this species. Meadow pipit was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in every month except June and August 2022 (peak count of 40+ birds recorded). Meadow pipit was also recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in June and July 2022, and April 2023 (peak count of 3 birds recorded).

Rock pipit

Rock pipit (*Anthus petrosus*) is a green-listed species, widespread in rocky coastal areas. It breeds along rocky shores, sea cliffs and harbours. In winter, it is generally sedentary, with only local movements by young birds dispersing to new territories. The shoreline surrounding the proposed development site is suitable for this species. Rock pipit was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in January and March 2023 (peak count of six birds recorded), and during multi-disciplinary surveys of the area in April 2023. Rock pipit was frequently recorded during point count surveys of the wider area (peak count of 4 birds recorded in May and October 2022).

Sand martin

Sand martin (*Riparia riparia*) is amber listed in Ireland. This common summer visitor nests in burrows in riverbanks or quarries, departing for wintering grounds from September. The site does not contain suitable nesting habitat for this species. Sand martin was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in August and September 2022 (peak count of 5 birds recorded). Sand martin was also recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in July and August 2022 (peak count of 2 birds recorded).

Linnet

Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*) is amber listed in Ireland. This widespread resident species breeds in rough grassland, upland and coastal areas. Linnet was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in September 2022 and April 2023 (peak count of 10 birds recorded). Linnet was also recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in July and August 2022 (peak count of five birds recorded).

Skylark

Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) is amber listed in Ireland. This common resident species can be found in upland and farmland settings. It breeds in farmland, ungrazed grassland and in heath, moving to stubble fields and coastal areas in winter. Skylark was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in May 2022 and April 2023 (peak count of two birds recorded). Skylark was also recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in July 2022 (one bird recorded).

Starling

Starling (*Sternus vulgaris*) is amber listed in Ireland. This common and widespread resident species is found in rural and urban settings. Starling was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in every month except May 2022 (peak count of 50+ birds recorded) and was recorded breeding in the derelict hotel and cottage. Starling was also recorded during point count surveys of the wider area in October 2022 (20 birds recorded).

Goldcrest

Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*) is amber listed in Ireland. This common and widespread resident species occurs in broadleaved and coniferous woodland, hedgerows and gardens. Goldcrest was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in May and September 2022 (peak count of one bird recorded).

Northern wheatear

Northern wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) is amber listed in Ireland. It is a widespread summer visitor which can be found in upland areas and in scrub, typically favouring areas with a mix of exposed rock and short vegetation for breeding. This species does not overwinter in Ireland. Northern wheatear was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in April 2023 (one bird recorded).

Willow warbler

Willow warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) is amber listed in Ireland. This common summer visitor has a preference for stands of willow in bog and marsh. Willow warbler was recorded during walkover surveys of the site in April and May 2023 (peak count of one bird recorded).

4.2 Chough Monitoring

The monitoring results of the chough pair recorded nesting and roosting within the derelict hotel in 2022 and 2023 are outlined in **Table 6** below.

Table 6. Results of chough monitoring undertaken at the proposed development site

Date	Survey Period	Description of activity
11/05/22	Summer	Two chough breeding in room of hotel building. Swallow, starling and jackdaw also noted breeding in the hotel and derelict cottage.
09/06/22	Summer	Both adults feeding a juvenile at nest site hotel window.
13/07/22	Summer	No chough recorded at nest site.
10/08/22	Summer	No chough recorded.
15/09/22	Summer	No chough recorded.
29/09/22	Summer	No chough recorded at hotel building. Two chough recorded during walkover.
12/10/22	Winter	No chough recorded at hotel building. One chough recorded during walkover.
25/10/22	Winter	No chough recorded.
01/11/22	Winter	Two chough recorded going to roost in hotel building (different room than nest-site). Flock of 11 chough recorded during walkover using proposed enhancement area.
29/11/22	Winter	Two chough recorded going to roost in hotel building.
07/12/22	Winter	No chough recorded.
19/12/22	Winter	No chough recorded.
05/01/23	Winter	Two chough recorded going to roost in hotel building.
24/01/23	Winter	Two chough recorded going to roost in hotel building.
14/02/23	Winter	No chough recorded.
27/02/23	Winter	No chough recorded using hotel building. Flock of 14 chough recorded foraging in hotel grounds and proposed enhancement area during walkover survey.
02/03/23	Winter	No chough recorded.
27/03/23	Winter	No chough recorded at hotel building. Two chough recorded during walkover.
28/04/23	Summer	Pair recorded at nest-site in hotel building. One chough recorded during walkover.
12/05/23	Summer	Pair recorded feeding young at nest-site.
19/05/23	Summer	Pair still feeding young at nest-site.
02/06/23	Summer	Pair still feeding young at nest-site approx. every ten minutes.
16/06/23	Summer	Pair with four young fledged. Family group feeding along the shoreline.

4.3 Incidental Records

Other species recorded during non-avian baseline surveys included raven (*Corvus corax*) and stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*), both green-listed species, and snipe (red-listed).

There was an incidental sighting of a hen harrier on 11th January 2024 coinciding with the NPWS site visit. This individual, comprising either a female or juvenile bird, was seen from a distance foraging low over an area of reedbed beyond the most eastern extent of the Applicant's landholding, approximately 1 km east of the proposed development site. This bird was observed for less than one minute before drifting east and north-east out of sight.

5. Discussion on Avian Species Recorded within the Proposed Development Site during Surveys and Usage of Habitats

5.1 Chough

Most notable in terms of bird activity on-site was the presence of a resident pair of chough recorded during surveys. Chough is an Annex I species under the EU Birds Directive, and in Ireland is amber listed. Ireland supports an internationally important chough population, holding almost 60% of the Northwest European population¹⁷. There have been five national chough censuses in Ireland (Cabot 1965; Bullock *et al.*, 1983; Berrow *et al.*, 1993; Gray *et al.*, 2003; Colhoun *et al.*, 2023). The most recent (2021) survey estimated 386 breeding pairs in Ireland and 68 breeding pairs County Kerry¹⁸.

Chough have a largely coastal in distribution in Ireland with the maritime influence (wind exposure and salt deposition) and grazing by livestock (preferably sheep, or cattle) helping to maintain short swards in grassland pasture which comprises optimal chough foraging habitat¹⁹. Chough often use maritime grassland throughout the breeding season and dune grassland between summer and winter, but may also utilise winter stubble fields, improved grassland and arable land²⁰. During the winter months, chough favour short-cropped pasture close to breeding sites.

Chough are specialist soil and animal dung invertebrate feeders. They are mainly insectivorous but eat a wide range of other invertebrates. Beetles, in particular dung beetles and their larvae, are an important food source for chough. Ants and crane fly larvae are other important dietary items, with spiders, earthworms, berries and even cereal grains also consumed. Chough prefer to forage in short-grazed, free-draining grassland measuring between 1 and 10 cm in height²¹, but preferably less than 5 cm in height, as this allows them access to ground surface and soil insects and other invertebrates on which they feed. Livestock such as sheep maintain optimal foraging habitat conditions for chough through their grazing behaviour and the dung they produce. Year-round grazing keeps the sward at optimal height and prevents excessive build-up of dead and decaying vegetation at the surface, allowing chough continuous access to the soil. It also provides a continuous supply of dung to support foraging chough.

Chough require secure nest-sites and typically nest in sea-cliffs and caves on ledges or in crevices, but can also use abandoned buildings and other man-made stone structures. They can also be found inland from the coast nesting in abandoned quarries or mineshafts. Nests may be 400 – 700 m apart but are rarely at this density. Nests are large, untidy structures of twigs, roots and moss often with a base of heather stems, occasionally bound with mud, and lined with wool. Nest-building is undertaken by both sexes. Chough pairs exhibit faithfulness generally using the same nest site year after year (Kennedy *et al.* 1954). Uptake of artificial nest-boxes or ledges by breeding chough has been found to be successful, with various conservation projects on-going, in particular in the United Kingdom. In Ireland, NPWS are currently engaged in a targeted chough nest-box scheme in County Cork (pers. comm NPWS local Conservation Ranger). In Britain and Ireland, the first eggs are usually laid from April to mid-May or, rarely, in late March. Between three and five eggs are typically laid. The incubation period is approximately three weeks followed by a further six to seven weeks before the chicks leave the nest. This usually occurs from the first week of June onwards with the young dependant on their parents for a 6–8-week period

¹⁷ <http://www.birdsontheedge.org/2021/04/27/irish-national-chough-survey/>

¹⁸ <https://www.nature.scot/doc/naturescot-research-report-1291-review-chough-management-between-populations-comparison-biotic-and>

¹⁹ <https://kent.wildwoodtrust.org/explore/animals/red-billed-chough/>

²⁰ <http://www.birdsontheedge.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/FACTSHEET-chough1.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/management-options-and-capital-items/chough-mown-grassland/guidance-for-chough-mown-grassland/>

after this. Chough typically feed within approximately 300 m of the nest site in good quality habitat or up to approximately 3.2 km in less productive areas.

Chough are highly sociable birds. They flock together outside of the breeding season and/or as juveniles, although can also be found in small or (often temporary) large flocks throughout the year. Many flocking birds appear to be paired at all times of year and pairs commonly join and leave flocks. Over winter, chough roost in rocky crevices or on sheltered ledges on cliff faces or in old, abandoned buildings, usually roosting on or near their nest site.

Chough can be negatively impacted through intentional human disturbance such as dog-walkers in coastal grassy areas where they would typically feed, through direct persecution such as egg-taking, or through changing farming practices which can result in habitat becoming no longer suitable for foraging birds.

The pair of chough recorded on-site during the baseline bird surveys undertaken in 2022 and 2023 were recorded nesting within the derelict hotel over the two consecutive breeding seasons, comprising summer 2022 and summer 2023. In 2022, this pair fledged at least one juvenile, as recorded in early June (see **Table 6** above). There were no further sightings of chough during bird surveys until late September that year, when two birds were recorded during a walkover survey of the site. In 2023, the pair were again recorded at the same nest-site in the hotel. This sighting, in late April, comprised the first evidence of chough breeding activity recorded on-site that year. Monthly monitoring continued with the pair recorded feeding young between mid-May and early June. By mid-June, the pair had fledged four young, and the family group were observed feeding together along the shoreline to the south-east of the site. While the age of the birds concerned is not known, it is highly likely that this pair has utilised the hotel for nesting prior to the survey period. The short-cropped grassland habitats around much of the hotel provide optimal foraging habitat for chough, and chough, including the breeding pair, were observed utilising these areas of grassland during surveys.

The pair utilising the hotel for nesting also use the structure, albeit a different location, as a winter roost-site, as evidenced during the winter 2022/23 survey period. The pair were recorded on several occasions in November 2022 and January 2023 entering the hotel bedroom block to roost. The pair therefore maintained a presence on-site throughout the overall 12-month bird survey period.

Usage of the study area by individuals other than the resident pair was infrequent over the winter 2022/23 season. One flock of chough was recorded foraging on grassland in the hotel grounds during a walkover survey in early November 2022 (11 birds). A flock was also recorded foraging on grassland in the proposed enhancement area during a walkover survey in February 2023 (14 birds). Only two chough were ever seen to go into the hotel to roost over the winter survey period indicating that the hotel did not support a communal winter roost-site for this species. The flocks observed are likely moving around the surrounding area, utilising various foraging grounds throughout the winter period, including the study area on occasion. The study area and surrounds likely forms part of a much larger winter foraging resource for chough in the Ballinskelligs Bay area.

5.2 Waders and Gulls

The short-cropped coastal grassland and damp pasture which are associated with the proposed development site provide foraging and resting habitat for a variety of wader and gull species. No suitable breeding habitat is present. Golden plover, curlew, oystercatcher, bar-tailed godwit, common gull and whimbrel were all recorded during the bird survey period. These species were found to be associated with the short-cropped grassland to the south and south-west of the hotel, while curlew were also recorded in the damp, rushy fields to the north of the building.

Of these species, the only one to be recorded with any regularity on a monthly basis was curlew (recorded twice monthly between September 2022 and March 2023, excluding December). Golden plover, common gull, oystercatcher, bar-tailed godwit and whimbrel were all recorded infrequently over the winter season. Curlew (58), golden plover (51), bar-tailed godwit (12) and oystercatcher (21) are all red-listed in Ireland, and golden

plover and bar-tailed godwit are also Annex I species (peak counts denoted in brackets). Peak counts of 15 common gull (amber-listed) and 38 whimbrel (green-listed) were also recorded.

5.3 Other Species

The value of the proposed development site for breeding birds generally in terms of the suitability of the habitats occurring pertains largely to the existing structures and the limited areas where there is tall vegetation occurring, comprising mainly the treeline and perimeter hedgerows/vegetated earth banks.

As well as chough, other species recorded breeding on-site comprised swallow and starling, both amber-listed, recorded nesting in the derelict hotel and derelict cottage. Many old, disused swallow nests were found within individual bedrooms within the hotel building, attached to upper sections of internal walls or having collapsed, along with the remains of a number of small birds, presumed swallows. Starlings were also recorded roosting within the hotel interior over the winter period, including also within exposed cavity blockwork within the open-roofed single storey part of the structure. Jackdaw (green-listed) were also recorded breeding in the hotel and cottage and a pair of raven, also green-listed, possibly nested in the conifer treeline within the site in summer 2023.

Kestrel and hen harrier were infrequently recorded foraging or commuting through the proposed development site over the 12-month survey period with a total of three sightings and two sightings respectively. The proposed development site does not contain suitable breeding habitat for either species.

A variety of passerine species, all common and widespread and typical of the habitats occurring, were recorded foraging in the area in both summer and winter. The perimeter hedgerows bounding the proposed development site likely support breeding passerines such as wren, robin, dunnock, blackbird and song thrush. The coastal grassland and wet grassland habitats provide foraging opportunities for a range of small birds.

6. Discussion on Avian Species Recorded outside the Proposed Development Site during Surveys and Usage of Habitats

6.1 Seabirds, Gulls, Waders and Other Waterbirds

A wide range of species typically associated with the marine in-shore and coastal habitats of Ballinskelligs Bay and the wider coastline of the Iveragh Peninsula were recorded during point count surveys of the area surrounding the proposed development site. These surveys included the marine waters surrounding Rinn Rua headland, the adjacent beaches of Inny Strand (Trá Rinn Rua) and Trá na Sassanach and the Inny River Estuary further east (please refer to **Section 2.3.1** above).

Species which were recorded on a regular monthly basis during point count surveys of this wider area included common gull (62), cormorant (7), curlew (34), gannet (100+), great black-backed gull (6), lesser black-backed gull (9), herring gull (79), oystercatcher (17) and ringed plover (152). The peak count recorded for each species is indicated in brackets.

Species which were recorded during the winter and spring months, or occasionally during summer (non-breeding birds) comprised common scoter (52), golden plover (340), dunlin (30), great Northern diver (7), greenshank (3), light-bellied Brent goose (24), red-throated diver (49) and wigeon (99) (peak count recorded for each species is indicated in brackets).

Species recorded infrequently during point count surveys of the wider area comprised bar-tailed godwit (19), black guillemot (1), black-throated diver (1), common tern (14), common sandpiper (2), grey heron (1), little egret (1), Mediterranean gull (12), razorbill (17), red-breasted merganser (2), redshank (7), sanderling (21), sandwich tern (21), shelduck (2), teal (1), turnstone (4) and whimbrel (16).

The marine waters, sandy beaches and coastal grassland and wetland habitats in the wider area surrounding Rinn Rua headland provide foraging and roosting habitat for a variety of seabird, gull, wader and waterbird species. Wetlands habitats, such as reedbed and saltmarsh in the wider area also provide breeding habitat for a variety of waders and other waterbirds. To the west of the headland, species such as light-bellied Brent goose and wigeon can be found on the relatively quieter Trá na Sassanach.

Curlew and whimbrel were recorded in the area of grassland immediately east of the Inny Strand access road, outside the proposed development site and comprising a targeted Biodiversity Enhancement Area proposed as part of the development application. Informal discussion between the field ornithologist for the proposal and local birdwatchers in the area determined that flocks of 200+ whimbrel have been recorded previously along the grassy coastline stretching between the proposed Biodiversity Enhancement Area and the Inny River Estuary.

Snipe were also incidentally recorded in this area on numerous occasions during non-avian surveys in winter 2022/23, with numerous birds flushed during walkovers of this part of the study area. The central and northern sections of this proposed Biodiversity Enhancement Area are characterised by a retained peatland and wetland flora, prone to waterlogging in the winter months. An area of reedbed also occurs in the east of this area adjacent to the Rinn Rua Stream. These habitats provide ideal foraging habitat and shelter for a variety of waders and waterbirds in the winter months and also likely support some breeding species.

6.2 Other Species

Low numbers of chough were infrequently recorded during point count surveys of the wider area (one individual recorded in May 2022 and one individual recorded in February 2023). Small groups of chough were recorded on occasion during winter 2022/23 using the short-cropped grassland at the southern end of the proposed BEA (flocks of 11 and 14 birds recorded separately in early November 2022 and late February 2023). Other species recorded in the wider area included kestrel, jackdaw, swallow, meadow pipit, sand martin, linnet, skylark and starling. There is an abundance of suitable habitats for these species in the area surrounding the proposed development site.

7. Summary

The ornithological surveys carried out within and around the proposed development site from May 2022 to May 2023, inclusive, recorded species characteristic of the marine and coastal habitats that occur.

A total of six red-listed and eleven amber-listed species were recorded within the proposed development site during the bird survey period. Red-listed species recorded comprised bar-tailed godwit, curlew, golden plover, kestrel, meadow pipit and oystercatcher. Amber-listed species recorded comprised chough, common gull, goldcrest, hen harrier, linnet, sand martin, skylark, starling, swallow, wheatear and willow warbler.

A total of ten red-listed and 27 amber-listed species were recorded in the wider area surrounding the proposed development site during the bird survey period. Red-listed species recorded comprised bar-tailed godwit, common scoter, curlew, dunlin, golden plover, kestrel, meadow pipit, oystercatcher, razorbill and redshank. Amber-listed species recorded comprised black guillemot, black-headed gull, black-throated diver, chough, common gull, common sandpiper, common tern, cormorant, gannet, great Northern diver, herring gull, lesser black-backed gull, light-bellied Brent goose, linnet, Mediterranean gull, red-breasted merganser, red-throated diver, ringed plover, sand martin, sandwich tern, shelduck, skylark, starling, swallow, teal, turnstone and wigeon.

A total of 12 Annex I species under the EU Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC) were recorded during surveys, namely great Northern diver, black-throated diver, red-throated diver, Mediterranean gull, sandwich tern, common tern, dunlin, golden plover, bar-tailed godwit, little egret, hen harrier and chough. The majority were recorded only from the wider area surrounding the proposed development site and were not recorded within the site itself over the course of the 12-month survey period. Of the 12 Annex I species listed above, four were recorded within the proposed development site. These comprised golden plover, bar-tailed godwit, hen harrier and chough.

While the proposed development site encompasses suitable habitat for foraging and roosting/resting waders the results of the bird surveys indicate that there is only occasional usage of the site by species such as golden plover and bar-tailed godwit in the winter months. Hen harrier occasionally passes through the site, but there is no suitable breeding or roosting habitat present for this species. The proposed development site is considered to be of most significance to chough, with a resident pair recorded successfully breeding and roosting on-site within the derelict hotel in 2022 and 2023. The presence of so many Annex I and red and amber-listed species in the general area is testament to the importance of the general Ballinskelligs Bay area for avian fauna, in particular for marine seabirds, and coastal species.

8. References

- RECEIVED: 24/05/2024
- Balmer, D., Gillings, S., Caffrey, B., Swann, B., Downie, I. and Fuller, R. (2013). Bird Atlas 2007-11: The breeding and wintering birds of Britain & Ireland. BTO Books, Thetford.
- Berrow, S., Mackie, K., O'Sullivan, O., Shepherd, K., Melon, C. and Coveney, J. 1993. The second international chough survey in Ireland. Irish Birds, 5, pp.1-10.
- Bibby, C.J., Burgess, N.D., Hill, D.A., and Mustoe, S.H. (2000). Bird Census Techniques. 2nd edition. Academic Press, London.
- BirdWatch Ireland (BWI) (Unknown). I-Webs Counter Manual: Guidelines for Irish Wetland Bird Survey Counters. A joint project of BirdWatch Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government.
- Bullock, I.D., Drewett, D.R. and Mickleburg, S.P. 1983. The chough in Britain and Ireland. British Birds, 76, 377-401.
- Colhoun, K. and Cummins, S., (2013). Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2014-2019. Irish Birds, Volume 9, pp. 523-544.
- Colhoun, K., Rooney, E., Collins, J., Keogh, N., Lauder, A., Heardman, C. and Cummins, S. 2023. Status and Distribution of Chough in Ireland: Results of the national survey 2021. National Parks and Wildlife Service. ISSN 1393 – 6670.
- Gilbert, G., Stanbury, A. and Lewis, L. (2021). Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 4: 2020-2026. Irish Birds, Volume 43, 1-22.
- Gilbert, G., MacGillivray, F.S., McKay, C.R. and Robertson, H.S. 2019. Foraging habitat of a declining Scottish red-billed chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* population in the post-breeding period. Bird Study, 66(1), 32-42.
- Gray, N., Thomas, G., Trewby, M. and Newton, S.F. 2003. *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* in the Republic. Irish Birds, 7, 147-156.
- NPWS, (2024). Kenmare River SAC. Site Code: 002158. Site Synopsis. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- NPWS, (2015). Iveragh Peninsula SPA. Site Code: 004154. Site Synopsis. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- NPWS, (2015b). Deenish Island and Scariff Island SPA. Site Code: 004175. Site Synopsis. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- NPWS, (2015c). Puffin Island SPA. Site Code: 004003. Site Synopsis. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- NPWS, (2013). Ballinskelligs Bay and Inny Estuary SAC. Site Code: 000335. Site Synopsis. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- NPWS, (2013b). Killarney National Park, MacGillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC. Site Code: 000365. Site Synopsis. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Appendix 1
Bird Survey Report –
Point Count and Walkover Survey

Point Count and Walkover Survey Summary

Survey Type	Date	Observer	Start Time	Finish Time	Weather	Visibility
Walkover	11/05/22	DF	08.00	09.00	Dry and sunny, wind WNW F4-5, temp 11C, cloud 5/8	Good
Point Count	11/05/22	DF	09.10	12.30	Dry and sunny, wind WNW F4-5, temp 11C	Good
Walkover	09/06/22	DF	09.00	11.00	Dry, wind SW F5-6, temp 15C, cloud 5/8	Good
Point Count	09/06/22	DF	11.00	13.30	Dry, wind SW F5-6, temp 15C, cloud 5/8	Good
Walkover	13/07/22	DF	09.00	10.00	Dry and sunny, wind NW F3, temp 10C, cloud 4/8	Good
Point Count	13/07/22	DF	10.15	13.00	Dry and sunny, wind NW F3	Good
Walkover	10/08/22	DF	09.00	10.00	Dry and sunny, wind WNW F2, temp 21C, cloud 2/8	Good
Point Count	10/08/22	DF	10.15	12.15	Dry and sunny, wind WNW F2, temp 21C	Good
Walkover	15/09/22	DF	09.00	10.00	Dry, wind NE F2, temp 8C, cloud 4/8	Good
Point Count	15/09/22	DF	10.15	12.30	Dry, wind NE F2, temp 11C, cloud 4/8	Good
Walkover	29/09/22	DF	09.30	10.30	Dry and sunny, wind N F3-4, temp 7-14C, cloud 4/8	Good
Point Count	29/09/22	DF	10.40	12.40	Dry and sunny, wind N F3-4, temp 14C	Good
Walkover	12/10/22	DF	09.30	10.30	Dry, wind W F2, temp 13C, cloud 5/8	Good
Point Count	12/10/22	DF	10.45	12.50	Dry, wind W F2, temp 13C	Good
Walkover	25/10/22	DF	09.30	10.30	Dry, wind SSE F5-6, temp 14C, cloud 5/8	Good
Point Count	25/10/22	DF	10.45	12.45	Dry and windy, wind SSE F5-6, temp 14C	Good
Walkover	01/11/22	DF	09.30	10.40	Showers, wind NW F5-7, temp 10C, cloud 6/8	Good
Point Count	01/11/22	DF	10.45	12.45	Windy with showers, wind NW F5-7, temp 10C	Good
Walkover	29/11/22	DF	09.30	10.45	Dry, wind SE F5-6, temp 7C, cloud 8/8	Good

Survey Type	Date	Observer	Start Time	Finish Time	Weather	Visibility
Point Count	29/11/22	DF	10.50	12.50	Dry, wind SE F5-6, temp 7C, cloud 8/8	Good
Walkover	07/12/22	DF	09.30	10.30	Dry, wind NE F3-4, temp 2C, cloud 0/8	Good
Point Count	07/12/22	DF	10.45	12.45	Dry, wind NE F3-4, temp 5C, cloud 0/8	Good
Walkover	19/12/22	DF	09.30	10.45	Wind with showers, wind SW F6-8, temp 9C, cloud 8/8	Good
Point Count	19/12/22	DF	11.00	12.30	Windy with showers, wind SW F6-8, temp 9C	Good
Walkover	05/01/23	DF	09.30	10.40	Dry, wind SW F5, temp 5C, cloud 8/8	Good
Point Count	05/01/23	DF	10.45	12.45	Dry, wind SW F5, temp 5C, cloud 8/8	Good
Walkover	24/01/23	DF	09.30	10.50	Dry, wind S F1-3, temp 7C, cloud 8/8	Good
Point Count	24/01/23	DF	11.15	13.00	Dry, wind S F1-3, temp 7C, cloud 8/8	Good
Walkover	14/02/23	DF	09.30	10.30	Windy and dry, wind SSE F6-8, temp 9C, cloud 8/8	Good
Point Count	14/02/23	DF	10.45	12.15	Windy and dry, wind SSE F6-8, temp 9C, cloud 8/8	Good
Walkover	27/02/23	DF	09.30	10.30	Dry and sunny, wind SE F5-6, temp 7C, cloud 1/8	Good
Point Count	27/02/23	DF	10.50	12.50	Dry and sunny, wind SE F5-6, temp 7C, cloud 1/8	Good
Walkover	02/03/23	DF	09.00	10.00	Dry and sunny, wind E F2, temp 8C, cloud 5/8	Good
Point Count	02/03/23	DF	10.10	12.30	Dry and sunny, wind E F2, temp 8C, cloud 5/8	Good
Walkover	27/03/23	DF	09.00	10.00	Showers at times, wind SE F4, temp 9C, cloud 7/8	Good
Point Count	27/03/23	DF	10.10	12.15	Wind SE F4, temp 9C	Good
Walkover	28/04/23	DF	09.00	10.30	Dry, wind SSW F2, temp 11C, cloud 8/8	Good
Point Count	28/04/23	DF	10.40	12.40	Dry, wind SSW F2, temp 11C, cloud 8/8	Good
Walkover	12/05/23	DF	09.00	10.00	Dry, wind SW F2, temp 11C, cloud 5/8	Good

Survey Type	Date	Observer	Start Time	Finish Time	Weather	Visibility
Point Count	12/05/23	DF	10.10	12.10	Dry, wind SW F2, temp 11C, cloud 5/8	Good

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Appendix 2

Bird Survey Report – Walkover Survey Results

Walkover Survey Results

Common Name	Summer 2022			
	11/05/22	09/06/22	13/07/22	10/08/22
Blue tit	2	1		
Coal tit	1			
Chough	2	2		
Goldcrest	1			
Hooded crow			4	
Jackdaw				9
Magpie		1		
Meadow pipit	3		3	
Pied wagtail		1		2
Raven		2	1	
Robin	1	1		1
Sand martin				1
Skylark	2			
Starling		8	18	12
Stonechat		2	2	
Swallow		6	7	
Woodpigeon				1

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	15/09/22	29/09/22	12/10/22	25/10/22	01/11/22	29/11/22	07/12/22	19/12/22
Bar-tailed godwit						11		
Blackbird							1	
Blue tit	1	1						
Chough		2	1		11	2		
Coal tit	3							
Common gull					12			
Curlew	2	38	18	14	54	58		
Dunnock	1							
Goldcrest	1							
Golden plover					51			
Great tit		2						
Hen harrier			1	1				
Hooded crow						6		
Jackdaw	7	12			9	50+		4
Kestrel					1			
Linnet	8	10						
Magpie							1	
Meadow pipit		16	40+	8	16	4	1	
Mistle thrush	1	2						
Oystercatcher				6	13	21		
Pied wagtail	3		3		2	2	1	1
Raven		1					2	
Robin	1			1	3		1	
Rock dove			4					
Rook	1							
Sand martin	5							

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	15/09/22	29/09/22	12/10/22	25/10/22	01/11/22	29/11/22	07/12/22	19/12/22
Song thrush						1		
Starling		7	6		40+	48		12
Stonechat	1	6		1	2			
Swallow	9							
Woodpigeon	2							1
Wren							1	1

Common Name	Winter 2022/23					
	05/01/23	24/01/23	14/02/23	27/02/23	02/03/23	27/03/23
Bar-tailed godwit		12				7
Blackbird			1	1		
Blue tit			1	1		2
Chough	2	2		14		2
Common gull	15					
Curlew	7	18	24	31	18	15
Dunnoek	1		1	1		
Hooded crow			1		1	
Jackdaw		20	12	18	23	25
Magpie	2					1
Meadow pipit		6		3		2
Pied wagtail						2
Reed bunting			1			
Robin	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rock pipit	1	1			6	3
Song thrush				2		1

Common Name	Winter 2022/23					
	05/01/23	24/01/23	14/02/23	27/02/23	02/03/23	27/03/23
Starling		15	30	50+	20	21
Stonechat						1
Wren					1	

Common Name	Summer 2023		
	28/04/23	12/05/23	19/05/23
Blue tit		1	
Chough	1	2	2
Cuckoo		1	
Duncock		2	
Goldfinch		1	
Great tit		1	
Grey heron			1
Hooded crow		2	
Jackdaw	8		7
Linnet	3		
Magpie	1	2	
Meadow pipit	3	3	2
Oystercatcher	2		
Raven	1		
Robin		1	1
Rook		2	
Skylark	1		
Song thrush		1	1
Starling	10	7	

Common Name	Summer 2023		
	28/04/23	12/05/23	19/05/23
Stonechat			1
Swallow	6	12	5
Wheatear	1		
Whimbrel	38		
Willow warbler	1	1	
Woodpigeon		1	1
Wren		1	1

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Appendix 3
Bird Survey Report –
All Species Monthly Walkover Summary Results

Walkover Survey Monthly Summary Results

Common Name	Latin Name	2022								2023				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Bar-tailed godwit¹	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>													
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>													
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>													
Chough	<i>Pyrrhonorax pyrrhonorax</i>													
Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>													
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>													
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>													
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>													
Duncock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>													
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>													
Golden plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>													
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>													
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>													
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>													
Hen harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>													
Hooded crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>													
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>													
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>													
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>													
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>													
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>													
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>													
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>													

¹ Annex I species (EU Birds Directive) highlighted in bold; Irish Red List colour-coding as per latest assessment of Conservation Status (BoCCI 4)

Common Name	Latin Name	2022								2023				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>													
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>													
Reed bunting	<i>Emberzia shoenichus</i>													
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>													
Rock dove	<i>Columba livia</i>													
Rock pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>													
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>													
Sand martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>													
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>													
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>													
Starling	<i>Sternus vulgaris</i>													
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>													
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>													
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>													
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>													
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>													
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>													
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>													

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Appendix 4

Bird Survey Report – Point Count Survey Results

Point Count Survey Results

Common Name	Summer 2022							
	11/05/22				09/06/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Black guillemot						1		
Chough	1							
Common gull					2			
Common sandpiper			2		2			2
Common tern					1			
Cormorant		2				1		
Dunlin					2			
Gannet	12	2	1			8		
Great black-backed gull					2			
Great Northern diver	2			1				
Grey heron	1						1	
Herring gull	2			1	16		1	1
Hooded crow					4			
Jackdaw	1							
Kestrel								1
Lesser black-backed gull				2	4			2
Meadow pipit					3			
Oystercatcher	7							
Pied wagtail			1		2			
Red-breasted merganser				2				
Reed bunting								1
Ringed plover					2			
Rock pipit	3	1			4			
Sandwich tern					21	4		
Shelduck					2			

Common Name	Summer 2022							
	11/05/22				09/06/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Stonechat					2		1	
Swallow			4	1				
Whimbrel			16					

Common Name	Summer 2022							
	13/07/22				10/08/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Black-headed gull				4				
Common gull				22				
Common tern					4			
Cormorant								3
Curlew				1				12
Gannet		2				3		
Great black-backed gull				6				
Herring gull	6							
Kestrel				1				
Lesser black-backed gull	2							
Linnet	1				5			
Meadow pipit		2						
Mediterranean gull	2							
Oystercatcher	14							
Rock pipit	2							
Sand martin	2			1	2			
Sandwich tern		6						
Skylark		1						
Swallow					7			

Common Name	Summer 2022							
	13/07/22				10/08/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Turnstone					2			

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	15/09/22				29/09/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Bar-tailed godwit					9			19
Brent goose					2			1
Common gull	3				7		11	
Common scoter							42	
Cormorant				2				
Curlew				6				
Dunlin				3	6			30
Gannet		2						
Golden plover					3			
Great black-backed gull					4			
Great Northern diver		1				6		
Greenshank	1				1			
Herring gull							3	
Lesser black-backed gull	6							
Oystercatcher					17		12	5
Razorbill						9		
Red-throated diver						2		
Ringed plover				8	14			
Wigeon								24

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	12/10/22				25/10/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Bar-tailed godwit	3				7			
Common gull			1	5				48
Common scoter		16						
Cormorant				2				
Curlew	22				34			5
Dunlin				22				
Gannet						12		
Golden plover				120				79
Great black-backed gull								6
Greenshank	2							
Herring gull	4		8	3		3	2	
Mediterranean gull			12					
Oystercatcher	5	3	5	15	9			7
Redshank				1				
Ringed plover	17			74	5			
Rock pipit					4			
Sanderling	21				12			
Sandwich tern							1	
Starling					20			
Teal								1
Wigeon								52

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	01/11/22				29/11/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Bar-tailed godwit					16			
Common gull				34	9			16

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	01/11/22				29/11/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Common scoter			20			9	33	
Cormorant				1				1
Curlew	1							1
Dunlin				23				
Gannet						100+		
Golden plover				340				
Great black-backed gull					6			
Great Northern diver					3	7		
Greenshank				3				
Herring gull				7				
Oystercatcher	3				12		6	
Redshank				7				
Ringed plover				152				
Rock pipit	2							
Wigeon				94				

Common Name	Latin Name	Winter 2022/23							
		07/12/22				17/12/22			
		PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Bar-tailed godwit		15		8					
Black-headed gull		21							24
Brent goose		24							
Common gull		62		14		2			50
Common scoter				12					
Curlew		5							
Gannet			18						
Great black-backed gull		5							4
Greenshank		1							1

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	01/11/22				29/11/22			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Herring gull		79		30				
Lesser black-backed gull		6						
Oystercatcher		12		7		6		
Red-throated diver			34	9				
Ringed plover		12						
Wigeon					18			

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	05/01/23				24/01/23			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Black-throated diver		1						
Brent goose	6				7			
Common gull			18	51			12	40
Common scoter			8				14	
Cormorant		7				5		
Dunlin				19				
Golden plover								180
Great Northern diver		4				6		
Greenshank	1							
Herring gull		16				20		
Lesser black-backed gull				1				
Oystercatcher	12			5	9			6
Red-throated diver		48				31		

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	05/01/23				24/01/23			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Ringed plover				21				51
Sanderling	18				21			
Turnstone					1			
Wigeon				99				13

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	14/02/23				27/02/23			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Black-headed gull				5				1
Brent goose					6			
Chough					1			
Common gull								9
Cormorant				4				4
Curlew	5				7			
Golden plover				180				212
Great black-backed gull				2				4
Great Northern diver		3			3	4		
Herring gull		2				5		
Lesser black-backed gull								7
Little egret					1			
Oystercatcher	13				2			

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	14/02/23				27/02/23			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Red-throated diver		5				7		
Sanderling					6			
Wigeon					32			

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	02/03/23				27/03/23			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Brent goose					18			
Common gull		32						
Common scoter		23	19		22		52	
Cormorant				1				
Curlew	12							
Gannet		10				6		
Golden plover				51				138
Great black-backed gull	2			4				
Great Northern diver	3	5				5		
Greenshank	1							
Herring gull			6					
Lesser black-backed gull	4			5				
Oystercatcher	8			3		4		

Common Name	Winter 2022/23							
	02/03/23				27/05/23			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Razorbill		5						
Redshank				2				
Red-throated diver		49	8			9	4	
Ringed plover					6			
Wigeon	52							12

Common Name	Summer 2023							
	28/04/23				12/05/23			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
Common sandpiper					1			
Common scoter		48						
Common tern		14		3				
Cormorant						2		
Gannet		10			4	1		
Herring gull	5			1				1
Lesser black-backed gull	9							3
Meadow pipit				2				
Razorbill		17						
Red-throated diver		22						
Ringed plover	2				3			
Rock pipit	2				2	1		
Turnstone	4							
Whimbrel	1							

Appendix 5
Bird Survey Report –
Point Count Survey Results

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Point Count Survey Monthly Summary Results

Common Name	Latin Name	2022								2023				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Bar-tailed godwit¹	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>													
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>													
Black guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>													
Black-headed gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>													
Black-throated diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>													
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>													
Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>													
Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>													
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>													
Common sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>													
Common scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>													
Common tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>													
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>													
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>													
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>													
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>													
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>													
Gannet	<i>Morus bassana</i>													
Golden plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>													
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>													
Great black-backed gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>													
Great Northern diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>													

¹ Annex I species (EU Birds Directive) highlighted in bold; Irish Red List colour-coding as per latest assessment of Conservation Status (BoCCI 4)

Common Name	Latin Name	2022								2023				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>													
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>													
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>													
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>													
Hooded crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>													
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>													
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>													
Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>													
Light-bellied Brent goose	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>													
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>													
Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>													
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>													
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>													
Mediterranean gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>													
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>													
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>													
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>													
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>													
Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>													
Red-breasted merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>													
Redshank	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>													
Red-throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>													
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>													
Ringed plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>													
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>													
Rock dove	<i>Columba livia</i>													

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024

Common Name	Latin Name	2022								2023				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Rock pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>													
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>													
Sand martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>													
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>													
Sandwich tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>													
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>													
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>													
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>													
Starling	<i>Sternus vulgaris</i>													
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>													
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>													
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>													
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>													
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>													
Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>													
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>													
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>													

RECEIVED: 24/05/2024