



LAND EAST OF IWADE, SITTINGBOURNE

Wintering Bird Survey

Date of Report: April 2017



Wintering Bird Survey

Client: G H Dean & Co. Ltd.

Reference: J006232

Company Registration Number: 372 4176

VAT Number: 601216305

Issue:	Date:	Written by:	Reviewed by:	Amended by:	Approved by:
One	April 2017	AH	SK	AH	SK
Two	28 June 2017	-	-	AH	SK
Three	30 June 2017	-	-	SK	SK
Four	7 July 2017	-	-	EZ	-

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ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001
Certificate Number 6745



NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Survey area location and size	Land East of Iwade, Sittingbourne; OS Grid Reference TQ 90552 67481, 57 ha.
Scope and purpose of Works	Wintering bird surveys to inform and accompany a planning application
Dates of survey visits and names of surveyors	16 November 2016; 14 December 2017; 10 January 2017; 3 February 2017; 7 March 2017; 29 March 2017 All surveys were completed by Dan Sullivan, a representative of Ecosulis.
Overview	None of the species or assemblages which qualify The Swale as a Special Protection Area (SPA) were seen within the survey area. Visit 5, undertaken in March 2017, recorded six curlew and one little grebe within the north of the survey area. Curlew were recorded within the north-eastern area within the sheep grazed fields close to the eastern boundary, whilst the little grebe was recorded on the northern-most boundary. Both of these areas are over 500 meters from the proposed construction site and are located within the SPA. Both species were recorded exhibiting foraging behaviour. Both of these species are not included within the SPA Annex I of the Directive for breeding birds, however they are listed under Article 4.2 of the Directive for overwintering assemblages. Although they are not one of the main species identified within the directive for breeding, consideration of disturbance will be required with regards to overwintering. Because both species were not recorded within any of the other survey visits, and Visit 5 took place in March, it is likely both species are not utilising the area for overwintering. That said a Habitat Regulations Assessment will be required to assess the levels of disturbance on these species as a result of the development during the construction phase of the works.
Action Required for Planning and/or Legal Compliance	Habitat Regulations Assessment - an assessment of disturbance will need to be completed and mitigation measures will need to be implemented on site during construction works to ensure no indirect impacts on the SPA as a result of disturbance. This could include restricting certain activities during wintering months, a sensitive lighting scheme and potentially temporary screening. The presence of the landscaped countryside gap will assist with minimising any disturbance.
Recommendations for ecological enhancement (Site ecological enhancement is required under current planning policy)	The development proposals will include suitable habitats within the proposed country park landscape area to maintain opportunities for birds in relation to the SPA.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2016, Ecosulis was commissioned by G H Dean & Co. Ltd. to undertake a Wintering Bird Survey at the Land East of Iwade, Sittingbourne.
- 1.2 The current proposals for the development area include new residential housing and an associated Country Park.
- 1.3 Previous surveys were undertaken by Ecosulis in March 2016, which recorded habitats which provide suitable opportunities for wintering birds. This survey was completed to assess the usage of the survey area by wintering birds in association with the bird species present within the neighbouring Special Protected Area (SPA), as well as assessing any impacts of the development on the avian populations which may also indirectly affect the populations within the SPA. The survey area includes the development site to the south, the proposed countryside gap/country park, as well as part of the SPA to the north.
- 1.4 An ecologist from Ecosulis visited the survey area on six occasions between November 2016 and March 2017 to undertake the surveys. Access was provided by the landowner.

The Swale SPA

- 1.5 The Swale SPA is located south of the Thames Estuary within the south-east of England, and is located to the north-east of the development site. It consists of a complex of brackish and fresh water floodplain, ditches, saltmarsh and mudflats. Together they provide great habitat for a wide variety of invertebrate and algae species which, in turn, support a wide range of bird species including waders. During the summer months the area supports species such as marsh harriers, breeding waders and mandarin gulls, and during the migration and winter seasons supports a variety of ducks, geese and waders. The Swale provides crucial habitat for these species and supports large percentages of the UK's populations including 12 breeding pairs of Mediterranean Gull which represents 12% of the breeding population in Great Britain.

Objectives of Study

- 1.6 The objectives of this study are: to provide information on the bird species utilising the survey area; to identify if any species associated with the citation for the SPA are present on or within the survey area; to identify potential constraints and opportunities that ecology may pose to the development plans; and to identify further ecological studies that may be required to ensure that ecology is fully considered within the proposals.

General Description of Site

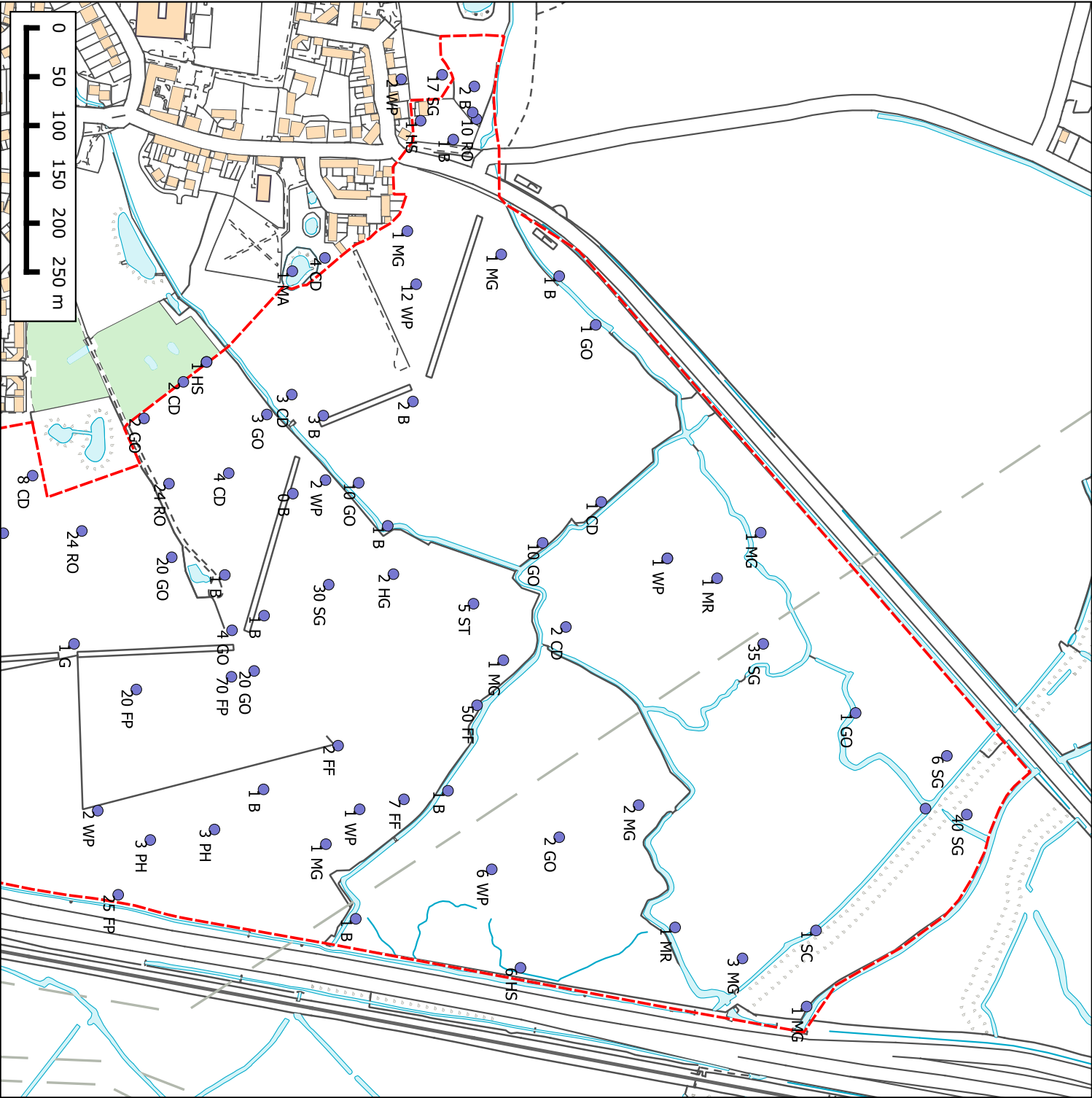
- 1.7 The survey area, which is situated on the eastern outskirts of Iwade in Kent, centred on the OS grid reference TQ 90179 67693, covers an area of 54.46ha. The survey

area comprises a network of large arable fields, which are bordered by grassland and hedgerows. Scattered trees and areas of scrub are also present across the survey area.

- 1.8 On a larger scale, the survey area is located between Iwade village and the A249. To the north arable fields are present, which then develops into habitat associated with part of The Swale SPA.

2 METHODS

- 2.1 Wintering bird surveys were undertaken on 16 November 2016, 14 December 2016, 10 January 2017, 3 February 2017, 7 March 2017 and 29 March 2017 by Dan Sullivan, an experienced representative of Ecosulis.
- 2.2 Winter bird populations within the survey area were assessed in terms of their local, national and international status. A number of factors are considered in terms of National Status, these include the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and a number of specialist reports.
- 2.3 The Directive of the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC Birds Directive) lists 195 species of birds which are in danger of extinction, are rare, have restricted local distribution, or are vulnerable to specific changes in their habitat. These species are afforded enhanced legal protection and EU member states have a responsibility to maintain the populations of these species at a level that corresponds to their ecological, scientific and cultural requirements (Article 2). This Directive is transposed into English law by The Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.
- 2.4 A report on 'Birds of Conservation Concern' allocates nearly 250 birds that regularly occur in the UK to one of three lists (Baillie et al. 2002). Those on the Red List are of high conservation concern whose populations or range is rapidly declining, recently or historically, and those of a global conservation concern. Birds on the Amber List are of medium conservation concern, whose population is in moderate decline, rare breeders, internationally important and localised species and those of an unfavourable conservation status in Europe. Bird species on the Green List are at a favourable conservation status. Bird species listed on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan largely overlap with those on the Red List.





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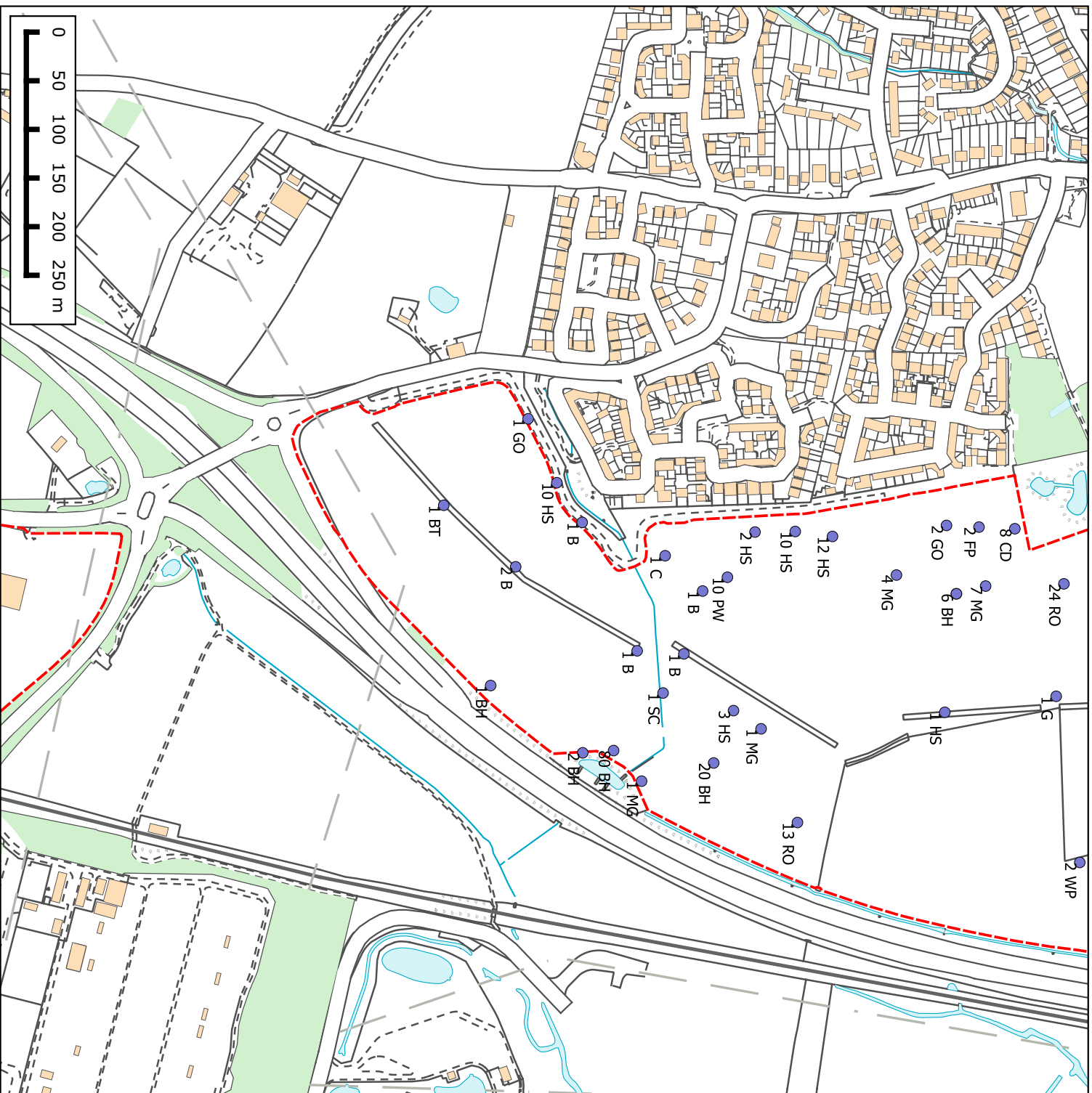
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Title: Wintering Bird Survey Visit 1 (North Area)

April 2017

Figure 1

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- Key**
- Survey Area
 - Bird Points
 - B - Black bird
 - BH - Black headed gull
 - BT - Blue tit
 - CD - Collared dove
 - C - Crow
 - D - Dunnock
 - FF - Field fair
 - FP - Feral pigeon
 - G - Green woodpecker
 - GO - Goldfinch
 - HG - Herring gull
 - HS - House sparrow
 - MA - Mallard
 - MG - Magpie
 - MR - Marsh harrier
 - PH - Pheasant
 - PW - Pied wagtail
 - RO - Rook
 - SC - Stonechat
 - SG - Starling
 - WP - Woodpigeon



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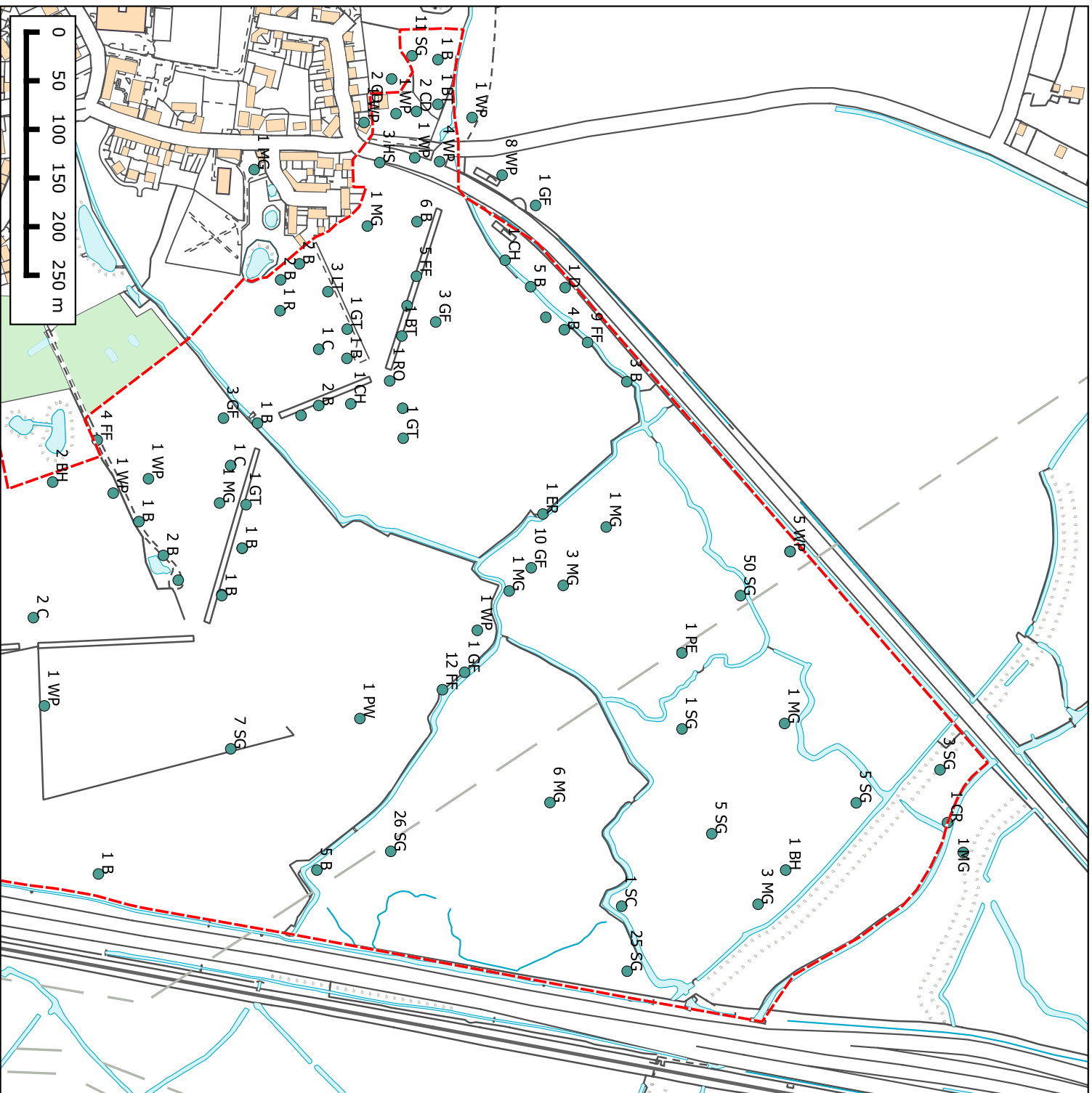
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Figure 2

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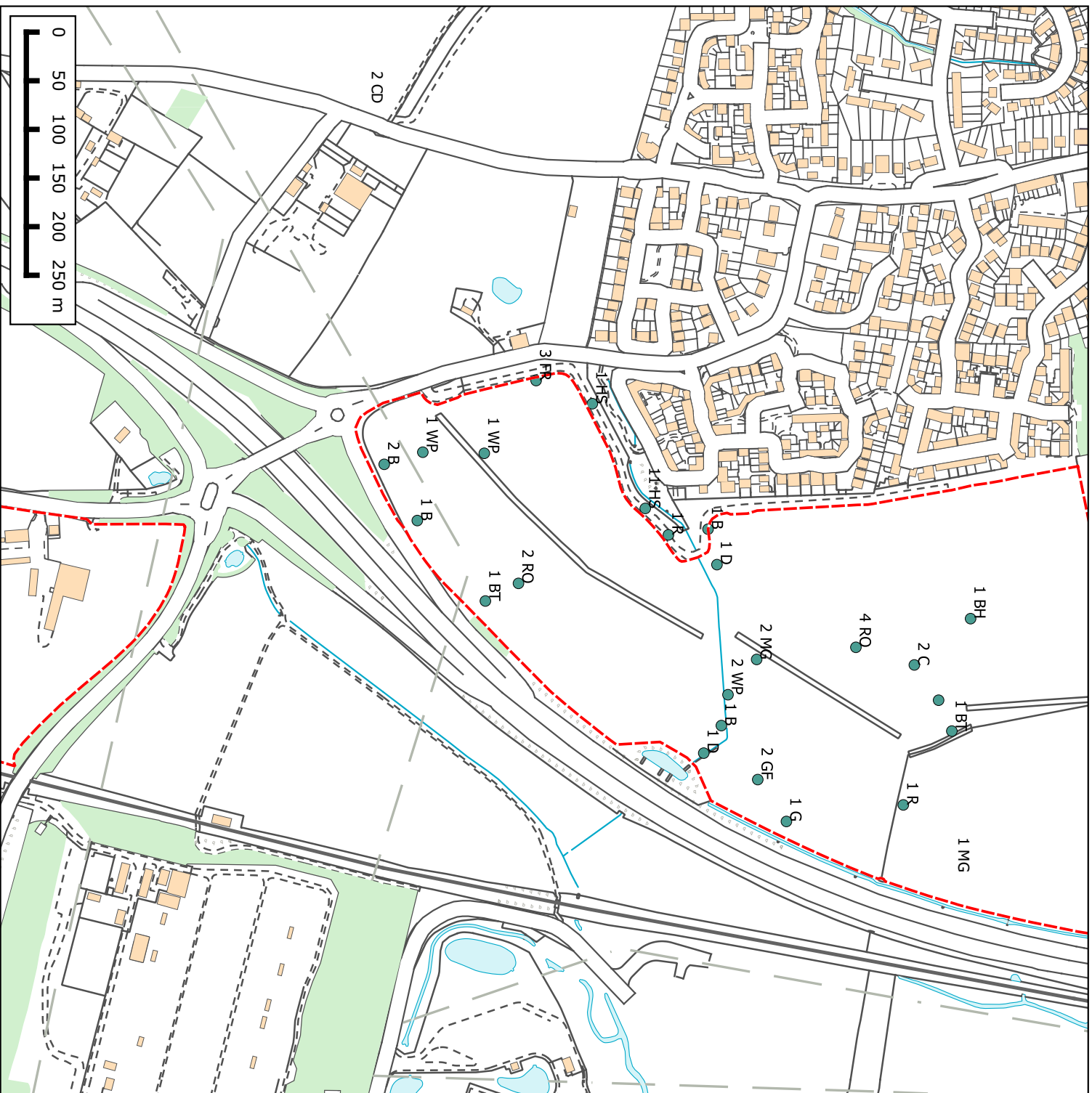
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Title: Wintering Bird Surveys Visit 2 (North Area)

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Figure 3

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Key

- Survey Area
- Bird Locations
- B - Black bird
- BH - Black headed gull
- BT - Blue tit
- CH - Chaffinch
- CD - Collared dove
- C - Crow
- D - Dunnock
- FF - Field fair
- FR - Common redpoll
- G - Green woodpecker
- GO - Goldfinch
- GT - Great tit
- HS - House sparrow
- LT - Long tailed tit
- MG - Magpie
- PE - Peregrine falcon
- PW - Pied wagtail
- R - Robin
- RO - Rook
- SC - Stonechat
- SG - Starling
- WP - Woodpigeon
- WR - Wren



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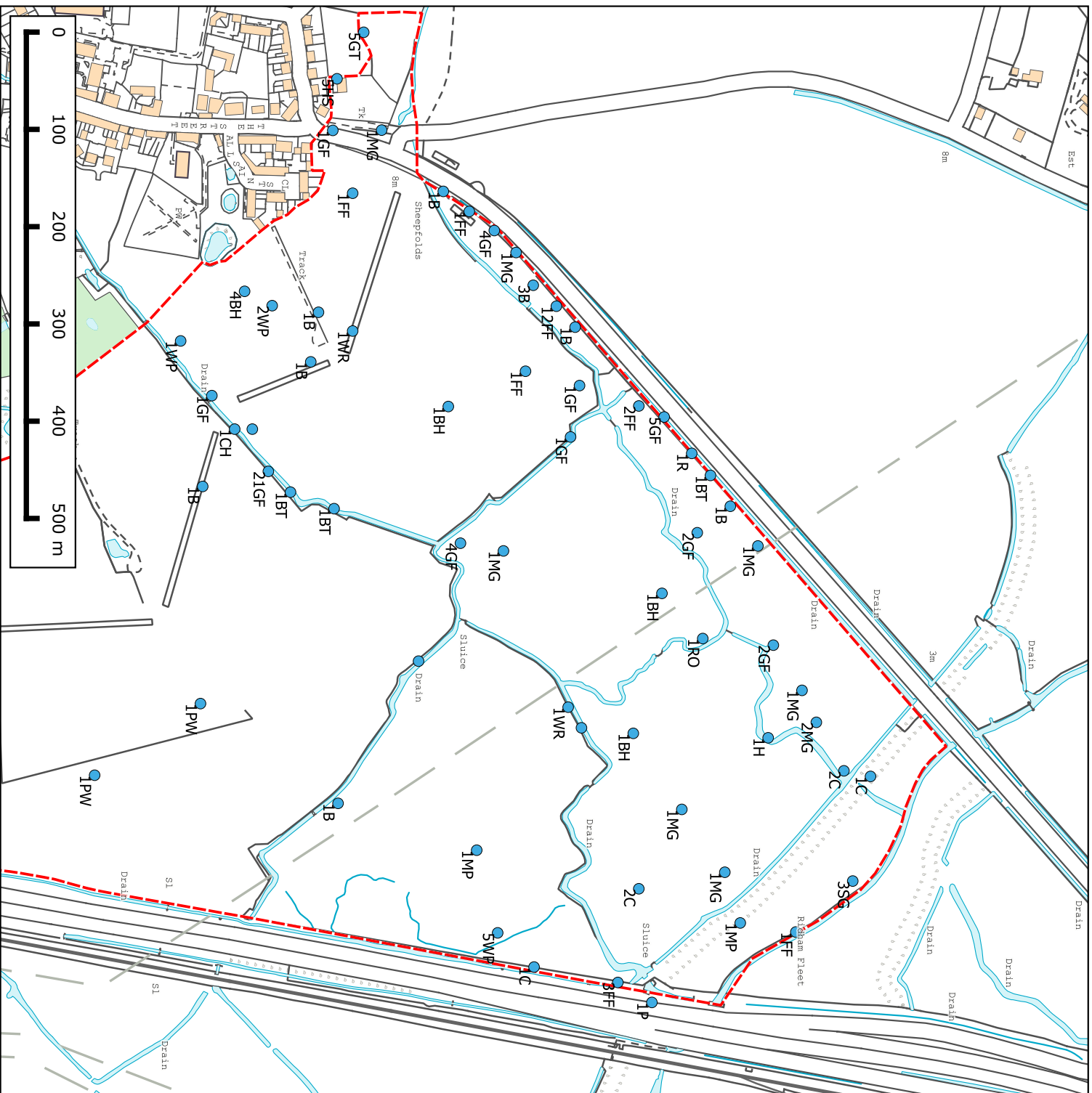
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Title: Wintering Bird Surveys Visit 3 (South Area)

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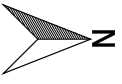
Figure 4

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Key

- Site Boundary
- Bird points
- B - Blackbird
- BH - Black headed gull
- BT - Blue tit
- CH - Chaffinch
- CD - Collared dove
- C - Crow
- FF - Fieldfare
- GO - Goldfinch
- GT - Great tit
- H - Heron
- HS - House sparrow
- MG - Magpie
- MP - Meadow pipit
- PW - Pied wagtail
- R - Robin
- RO - Rook
- ST - Songthrush
- SG - Starling
- WP - Woodpigeon
- WR - Wren



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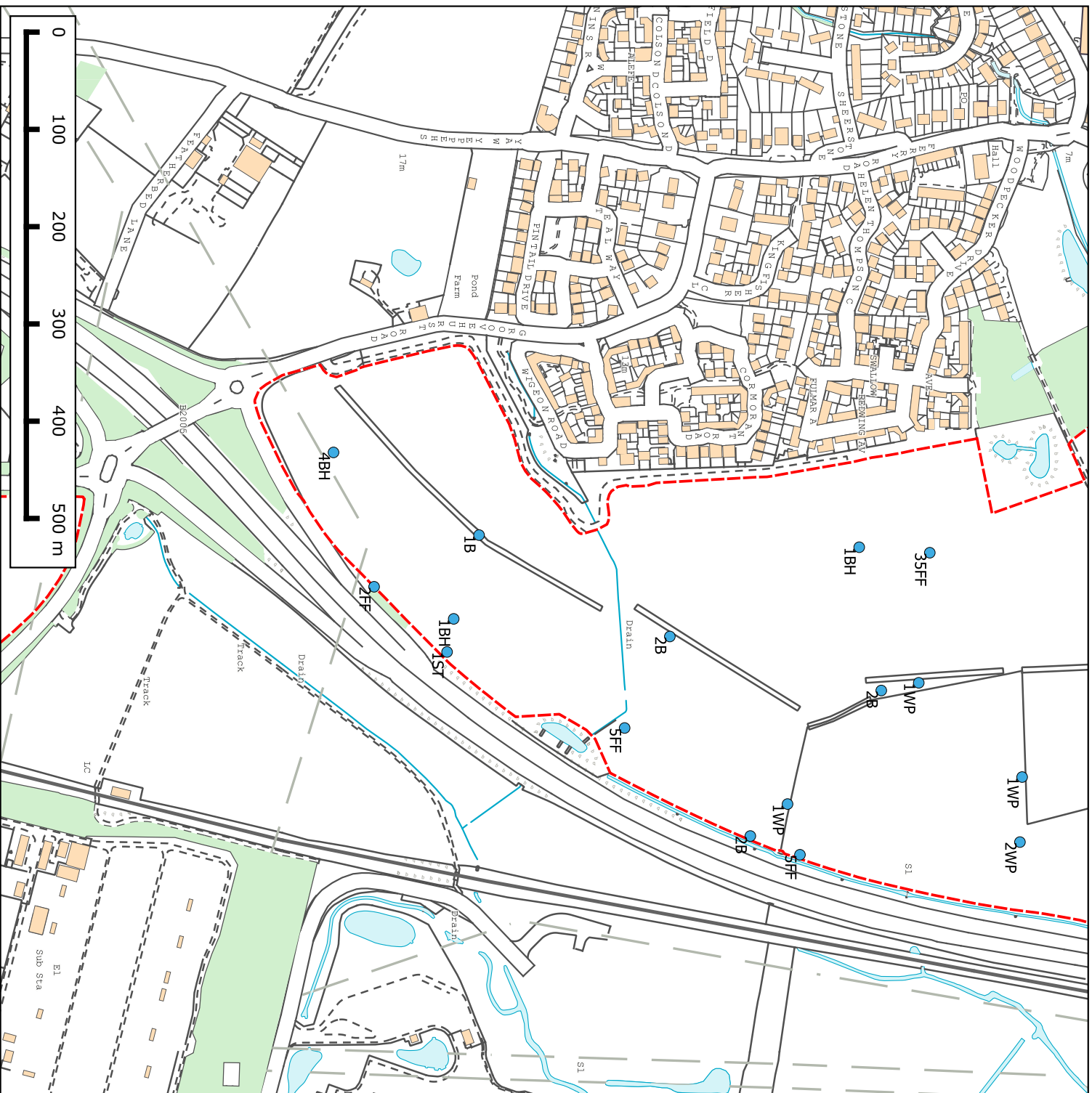
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Title: Wintering Bird Survey Visit 3 (North Area)

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Figure 5

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Key

- Site Boundary
- Bird points
- B - Blackbird
- BH - Black headed gull
- BT - Blue tit
- CH - Chaffinch
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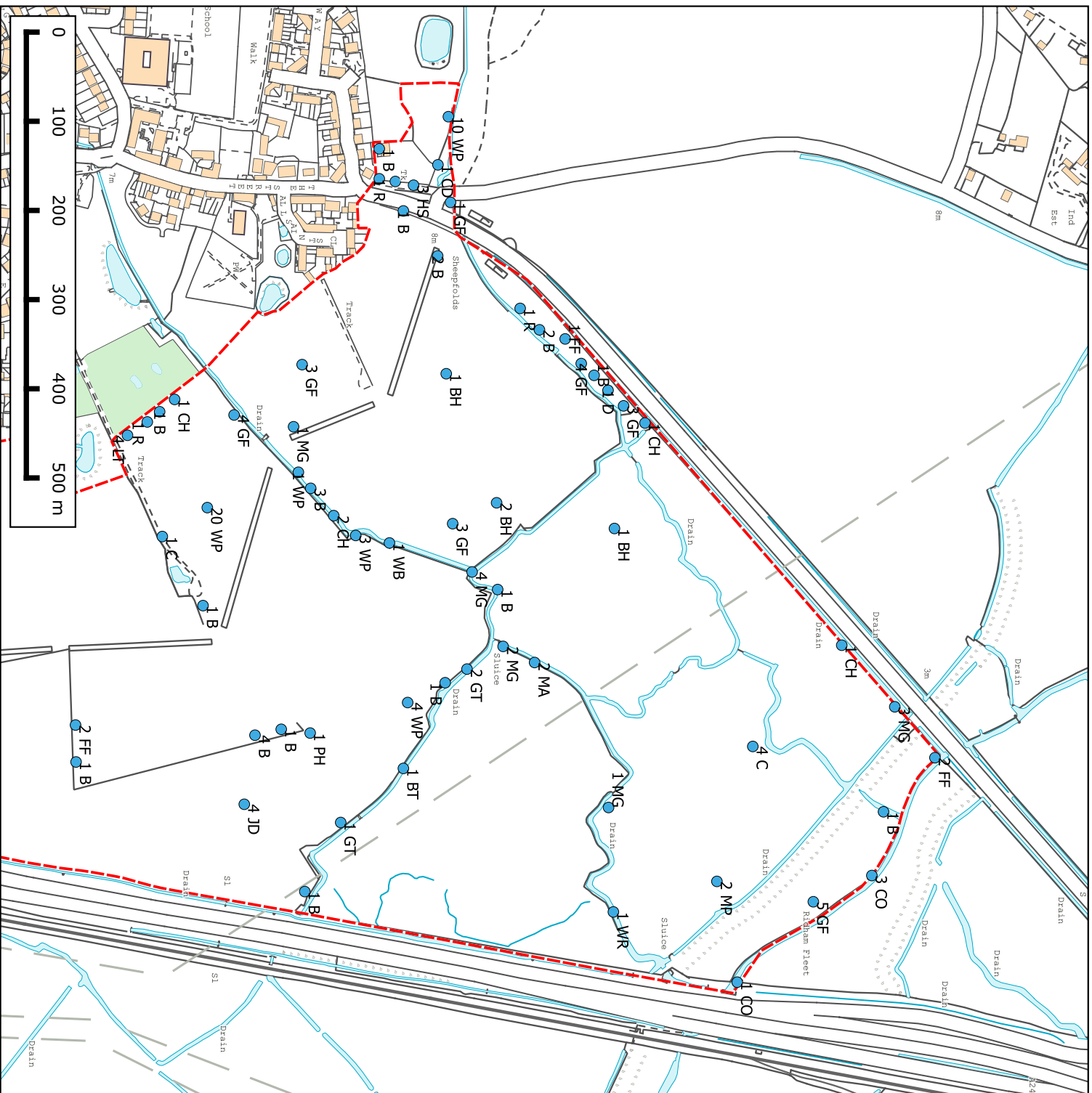
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Figure 6

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Figure 7

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