



Wintering Bird Survey Report 2024/2025

St. Asaph Solar Farm

Anesco Limited

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Basis of Report

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BoCC	Birds of Conservation Concern
BOU	British Ornithologists' Union
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
COFNOD	North Wales Environmental Information Service
EC	European Council
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FLL	Functionally Linked Land
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MAGIC	Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SLR	SLR Consulting Limited
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
VP	Vantage Point
WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act



1.0 Introduction

In October 2024, SLR Consulting Limited (SLR) was commissioned by Anesco Limited to undertake a series of winter bird surveys for the proposed solar farm at St Asaph, Denbighshire, broadly centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SJ 02443 72771, hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.

This report presents the findings of the wintering bird survey undertaken at the Site.

1.1 Background

SLR were previously instructed to provide ecological support in relation to the proposed solar farm at St Asaph in December 2021. Since that date, extensive ecological surveys have been undertaken which have fed into the Site design and final layout.

1.2 Site Description

The Site is situated in Denbighshire, approximately 1km to the southwest of the settlement of St Asaph, and approximately 8km south of the seaside town of Rhyl. The location of the Site is shown in Drawing C0002452_01 (Appendix A) and the Site boundary is shown in Drawing C0002452_02 (Appendix B). The Site consists of the main Solar Site and the Cable Route, connecting to the St Asaph Substation.

The Solar Site is approximately 35.42ha in extent and is divided into two areas approximately 250m apart. The Western Parcel is a set of four fields approximately centred on NGR SJ 02123 72727 and the Eastern Parcel is a set of three fields approximately centred on NGR SJ 02644 72614. The current Site layout (Drawing C0002452_02 Revision Z, issued April 2026) excludes any proposed development or alterations within the northernmost field within western parcel under this proposal. The fields within the Solar Site consist of modified grassland, of a short to medium sward length used for cattle and sheep grazing. The boundaries of the fields consist of flailed hedgerows, some containing mature trees, and of semi-natural, lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

The Cable Route is limited to highways that connect the Solar Site to St Asaph Substation. This includes the track to Tyn Y Coed, Glascoed Road, and Cwttir Lane.

The wider landscape is generally farmland used for grazing or arable crops, there are also several woodlands, some of which are ancient.

1.3 Purpose of this Report / Objectives of Survey

The objective of the surveys was to assess the overall value of the Site for wintering birds and establish whether or not there could be a 'functional link' between the Site and relevant designated ornithological sites, namely the Liverpool Bay SPA and the Dee Estuary SPA and/ or Ramsar Site.

This report documents the methods and results of those surveys and evaluates the overall importance of the Site for wintering birds. The assessment of impacts resulting from the proposed development and the identification of mitigation measures are beyond the scope of this report and are covered in a separate Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA).

1.4 Evidence of Technical Competence and Experience

Surveys were undertaken by Guy Ostler BSc, Toby Bell MSc, Joseph Pass MSc, Peter Wigglesworth MSc, and Charlotte Baldwin MBiolSci.



Guy Ostler is a Senior Field Ecologist at SLR, specialising in Ornithology, with over 3 years of professional survey experience, and is a Qualifying member of CIEEM. This report was also authored by Guy.

Toby Bell is a Project Ecologist at SLR, with 2 years professional survey experience, including ornithology surveys, and is a Qualifying member of CIEEM.

Joseph Pass is a Graduate Ornithologist at SLR with over a year of professional survey experience.

Peter Wigglesworth is a Project Consultant at SLR with five years of professional survey experience, and a special interest in Ornithology.

Charlotte Baldwin is a Graduate Ecologist with SLR Consulting with two years ecological surveying experience.

Technical review was conducted by Andy Law CEcol MCIEEM, a Principal Consultant at SLR with 34 years of ecological consulting experience, and by Gary Oliver MCIEEM, a Principal Consultant at SLR with over 29 years relevant experience; Gary is also a highly competent ornithologist.

1.5 Nomenclature

The phylogenetic order and nomenclature throughout this report follows The British List (10th Edition)¹, updated by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU) Records Committee. A full list of the species referred to in this report, including scientific names, is provided in Appendix D.

1.6 Legislative background

1.6.1 Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (amended 2026) requires the publication of a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Section 7 list is used to guide authorities in implementing their duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity.

1.6.2 Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Section 1, Part I of the WCA 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence (with certain limited exceptions and in the absence of a licence) to intentionally:

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- damage, take or destroy its nest while that nest is in use or being built; or
- take or destroy its eggs.

A person shall also be guilty of an offence if they possess or control any live or dead wild bird or any part of, or anything derived, from such a bird, or an egg of a wild bird or any part of such an egg.

¹ British Ornithologists' Union. 2022. The British List: A Checklist of Birds of Britain (10th edition), Ibis 164: pp.860 – 910.



1.7 Conservation Frameworks

Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) identifies species which are declining, or appear to be in need of conservation action- see Table 2-1 Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) criteria in section 2.2 for BoCC criteria.



2.0 Methods

2.1 Desk study

2.1.1 Designated sites

The Natural Resources Wales designated sites website² was consulted and a data search requested from Cofnod, the local environmental record centre North Wales, to provide information on:

- Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites within 20km of the Solar Site boundary; and
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR) with ornithological interest features, and RSPB reserves, within 2km of the Solar Site boundary.

2.1.2 Bird records

Data searches were undertaken for records of protected and conservation priority species, which are those listed on:

- Annex I of European Council (EC) directive 2009/147/EC ('the Birds Directive');
- Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended);
- Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (amended 2026);
- Birds of Conservation Concern UK (BoCCUK)³ Red and Amber; and
- Birds of Conservation Concern Wales (BoCCW)⁴ Red and Amber.

Searches were undertaken with the following organisations:

- COFNOD, for records from within 2km of the Solar Site boundary.

2.2 Field survey

A four-hour long survey was carried out per month between October 2024 and March 2025 inclusive. On each occasion the survey was undertaken by a team of two ecologists, with one ecologist covering the Western Parcel, and one the Eastern Parcel of the Solar Site. Both ecologists extended their survey to include all surrounding fields/ land in their visual envelope, including the proposed cable route between the Eastern and Western Parcels. The survey area did not include the substation connection Cable Route, which follows existing roads, and which shall involve trenching entirely within the road surface itself.

² [Natural Resources Wales / Find protected areas of land and sea](#)

³ Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D., and Win I. 2021. The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds 114: 723-747. Available online at <https://britishbirds.co.uk/content/status-our-bird-populations>.

⁴ Johnstone, I.G., Hughes, J., Balmer, D.E., Brenchley, A., Facey, R.J., Lindley, P.J., Noble, D.G. and Taylor, R.C. Online First. Birds of Conservation Concern Wales 4: the population status of birds in Wales. Milvus: the Journal of the Welsh Ornithological Society. Consolidated list available online at [BoCCW4-consolidated-list-September-2024.pdf](#).



Each survey was timed to take place two hours either side of high tide at Rhyl, with the intention of establishing whether or not there is a functional link with the Liverpool Bay SPA and/ or the Dee Estuary SPA or Ramsar Site, and the Site itself.

The methodology for non-breeding walkover survey, as detailed in the Bird Survey Guidelines⁵, was followed. Surveys sought to qualify the diversity of birds interacting with the Site, or adjacent land, in the context of their specific ecology and population status.

The method involved walking a transect, with frequent stops to scan for target species. The route enabled visual coverage of the full survey area, which encompassed the Solar Site plus a 100m buffer. This excluded the substation connection Cable Route, which follows existing roads, and which shall involve trenching entirely within the road surface itself.

Target species were all species named within the citation for the Liverpool Bay SPA or Dee Estuary SPA or Ramsar Site, listed on Annex I, Schedule 1, NERC Section 41, and BoCC Red or Amber. All species observations were recorded onto a map of the survey area, using BTO notation to record behaviour, with target species prioritised over non-target species.

Surveys were undertaken on the following dates:

- Visit 1 – 29th October 2024;
- Visit 2 – 14th November 2024;
- Visit 3 – 16th December 2024;
- Visit 4 – 14th January 2025;
- Visit 5 – 11th February 2025; and
- Visit 6 – 3rd March 2025.

The dates, times and corresponding weather conditions for each survey are provided in Appendix C. Surveys were undertaken in suitable weather conditions, avoiding heavy rain and low visibility (e.g. fog). Surveys were completed within daylight hours.

Results have been presented for each target species as peak flock counts and frequency of observation. Peak flock count refers to the highest count obtained for a certain species within the survey area on a single visit. Frequency refers to the number of visits on which a certain species was recorded within the survey area.

In assigning a level of value to a species, it is necessary to consider its distribution and status, including a consideration of trends based on available historical records. Reference has therefore been made to published lists and criteria where available. Examples of relevant lists and criteria include: species named in the Liverpool Bay SPA or Dee Estuary SPA or Ramsar site citations; species of European conservation importance (Annex 1 of the Birds Directive); species of principal importance for biodiversity under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act and BoCC Red and Amber lists. BoCC identifies species which are declining, or which appear to be in need of conservation action. Specific criteria are used to place birds on a Red, Amber or Green list, as outlined in Table 2-1 Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) criteria, overleaf.

⁵ <https://birdsurguidelines.org/non-breeding-walkover-survey/> [Accessed September 2024]



Table 2-1 Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) criteria

Red criteria	Amber criteria
Species that are globally threatened according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria.	Species of European Conservation Concern.
Species with an historical decline in breeding population which have not shown a substantial recent recovery.	Species whose population has declined historically but which have made a substantial recent recovery.
Species that have shown a severe breeding decline over the last 25 years or longer term.	Species whose breeding population has declined moderately over the last 25 years or longer term.
Species that have shown a severe breeding range decline over the last 25 years or longer term.	Species that have shown a moderate breeding range decline over the last 25 years or longer term.
Species whose non-breeding population has declined over the last 25 years or longer term.	Species whose non-breeding population has declined moderately over the last 25 years or longer term.
	Rare breeders or non-breeding rarity species with internationally important or localised populations.
Green list criteria	
Species that fulfil none of the Red or Amber criteria detailed above at the publication of the most recent edition of BoCCUK, currently 2021, and BoCCW, currently 2022.	

2.3 Limitations

2.3.1 Desk study

Desk study data is unlikely to be exhaustive, especially in respect of species, and is intended mainly to set a context for the study. It is therefore possible that important species not identified during the data search do in fact occur within the vicinity of the Site. Interpretation of maps and aerial photography has been conducted in good faith, using recent imagery, but it has not been possible to verify the accuracy of any statements relating to land use and habitat context outside of the field study area.

2.3.2 Field Survey

Lack of evidence of a species does not necessarily preclude it from being present at a later date. Due to the nature of the subjects of ecological surveys it is feasible that species that use the Site may not have been recorded by virtue of their seasonality, cryptic behaviour, habit, or random chance.



3.0 Results

3.1 Desk study

3.1.1 Designated sites

Table 3-1 documents those designated ornithological sites identified within the search area. No RSPB reserves, SSSI's with ornithological interest features or LNR's with ornithological interest features were identified within the search area.

Table 3-1 Details of designated ornithological sites within the search area

Designated site	Distance from the Solar Site at closest point	Qualifying or notified features
Liverpool Bay SPA	8.5km	Qualifying species: Red throated diver- 6.89% of GB non-breeding population, little gull (non-breeding), common scoter- 10.31% of NW European non-breeding population, little tern- 6.84% of GB breeding population, common tern- 1.80% of GB breeding population, non-breeding season assemblage species include red-breasted merganser- exceeds 1% of GB population, cormorant- exceeds 1% of GB population. ⁶
The Dee Estuary SPA, and Ramsar Site	14.42km	Qualifying species: Bar-tailed godwit (wintering)- 2.2% of GB population, redshank (passage)- 5.9% of Eastern Atlantic wintering population, shelduck (wintering)- 2.6% of Northwestern Europe population, teal (wintering)- 1.3% of Northwestern Europe population, pintail (wintering)- 9.0% of Northwestern Europe population, oystercatcher (wintering)- 2.5% of Europe & N/W Africa wintering population, grey plover (wintering)- 1.1% of Eastern Atlantic wintering population, Knot (wintering)- 3.5% of NE Can/Grl/Iceland/NW Eur population, dunlin (wintering)- 2.0% of N Siberia/Europe/W Africa population, black-tailed godwit (Icelandic race, wintering)- 3.5% of Eastern Atlantic wintering population, curlew (wintering)- 1.1% of Europe breeding population, redshank (wintering)- 3.5% of Eastern Atlantic wintering population, great crested grebe (as part of non-breeding waterbird assemblage), cormorant (as part of non-breeding waterbird assemblage), wigeon (as part of non-breeding waterbird assemblage), lapwing (as part of a non-breeding waterbird assemblage), sanderling (as part of non-breeding waterbird assemblage), common tern (breeding)- 3.2% of GB population, little tern (breeding)- 2.9% of GB population. Sandwich tern (breeding)- 2.3% of GB population. Non-qualifying (less than 1% of GB population) species of interest: Leach's Petrel (<i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>), little egret, bewicks swan, whooper swan, smew, hen harrier, merlin, peregrine, golden plover, ruff, wood sandpiper, short-eared owl, and kingfisher ⁷

⁶ [Liverpool Bay SPA | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

⁷ [European Site Conservation Objectives for Dee Estuary SPA - UK9013011](#)



3.1.2 Bird records

3.1.2.1 Local Records Centre

Cofnod returned 551 records of birds within 2km of the Solar Site boundary, including 47 'notable species' that occur in the UK between the months of September and March inclusive ('notable' here referring to those species that have any of the following conservation status'- Annex 1 of the Birds Directive, WCA 1981 Schedule 1, NERC Section 41, Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act, and Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red List or BoCC Amber List). These can be found in **Table 3-2** Bird Species within 2km of the Solar Site.

Table 3-2 Bird Species within 2km of the Solar Site

Species	No. of Records	Closest to Solar Site boundary (m)	Lists
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	22	1	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	13	169	BoCC Amber list
Mistle thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	17	169	BoCC Red list, Section 7
Song thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	15	169	Section 41, BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Tawny owl <i>Strix aluco</i>	7	169	BoCC Amber list
Black headed gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	13	394	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	16	394	Section 41, BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Common gull <i>Larus canus</i>	11	394	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Greenfinch <i>Chloris chloris</i>	16	394	BoCC Red list, Section 7
Herring gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	14	394	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
House sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	19	394	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Lesser black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	9	394	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Red kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>	7	394	Annex 1, Schedule 1.1
Redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>	15	394	Schedule 1.1, BoCC Amber list
Reed bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	5	394	Section 41, BoCC Amber list
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	4	394	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	12	394	BoCC Amber list
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	14	394	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	10	422	BoCC Amber list
Grey wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	17	708	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Marsh tit <i>Poecile palustris</i>	3	708	Section 41, Section 7



Species	No. of Records	Closest to Solar Site boundary (m)	Lists
Brambling <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	1	754	Schedule 1.1
Dipper <i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	14	754	BoCC Amber list
Fieldfare <i>Turdus pilaris</i>	12	754	Schedule 1.1, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i>	7	754	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Meadow pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	9	754	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Peregrine falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	10	754	Annex 1, Schedule 1.1
Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	4	754	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnuculus</i>	11	799	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	8	799	Annex 1, Schedule 1.1, BoCC Amber list
Lesser redpoll <i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	3	799	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	11	799	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Common sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	6	1,027	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Barn owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	7	1,147	Schedule 1.1
Hawfinch <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	1	1,169	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Tree sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	2	1,297	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Short eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	1	1,309	Annex 1, BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Goshawk <i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	3	1,349	Schedule 1.1, Section 7
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	3	1,372	Section 41, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Mediterranean gull <i>Ichthyiaetus melanocephalus</i>	2	1,372	Annex 1, Schedule 1.1, BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Great black-backed gull <i>Larus marinus</i>	2	1,556	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Green sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>	1	1,556	Schedule 1.1, BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>	1	1,556	Annex 1, Schedule 1.1, BoCC Red list, Section 7
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	1	1,556	BoCC Amber list, Section 7
Golden plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	1	1,634	Annex 1, Section 7
Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1	1,634	Annex 1, Schedule 1.1, BoCC Amber list, Section 7



Species	No. of Records	Closest to Solar Site boundary (m)	Lists
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	1	1,786	BoCC Red list, Section 41, Section 7



3.2 Field survey

Target species

A total of 30 target species were recorded during the winter walkover surveys. Table 3-3 Peak flock counts and frequency of records from each survey visit presents the peak flock counts and frequency of observation from each survey visit.

Table 3-3 Peak flock counts and frequency of records from each survey visit

Target species	Total number of records	Number of visits in which species recorded	Peak flock count ⁸ on each visit Number of records ⁹ per visit					
			Visit No.					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
Greylag goose	1	1	2 ¹	-	-	-	-	-
Mute swan	1	1	-	2 ¹	-	-	-	-
Mallard	10	3	18 ⁴	-	-	-	3 ⁵	1 ¹
Teal	6	5	1 ¹	3 ¹	5 ¹	2 ¹	2 ²	-
Stock dove	1	1	-	-	-	2 ¹	-	-
Woodpigeon	81	6	60 ²²	62 ¹⁵	19 ²²	13 ¹⁰	20 ⁹	2 ³
Woodcock	1	1	-	-	1 ¹	-	-	-
Snipe	3	3	-	1 ¹	-	1 ¹	1 ¹	-
Herring gull	16	5	12 ⁶	5 ²	6 ⁶	5 ¹	-	32 ¹
Lesser black-backed gull	5	2	2 ²	-	5 ³	-	-	-
Cormorant	1	1	2 ¹	-	-	-	-	-

⁸ 'Peak flock count' refers to the highest count of a single flock in a defined period (e.g. a single visit). It is considered inappropriate to sum the counts within the survey area on each visit, as the large survey area and survey methodology do not allow for simultaneous/instantaneous counts of the whole area and birds are likely to move between areas/fields, and therefore there would be a risk of repeat counting of birds. It is acknowledged that it is therefore not an estimate of the peak number of birds within the survey area at any one time and therefore the frequency of observations and the peak counts from individual fields/land parcels are also presented in the relevant figures.

⁹ Frequency relates to the total number of flocks recorded on a single visit.



Target species	Total number of records	Number of visits in which species recorded	Peak flock count ⁸ on each visit Number of records ⁹ per visit					
			Visit No.					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
Sparrowhawk	2	1	-	-	1 ²	-	-	-
Red kite	2	1	-	-	-	-	1 ²	-
Kestrel	1	1	-	-	-	-	1 ¹	-
Magpie	12	5	1 ²	-	1 ²	1 ³	2 ³	1 ²
Rook	13	5	32 ⁴	18 ⁴	1 ¹	50 ¹	18 ³	-
Coal tit	3	2	-	-	-	1 ¹	-	1 ²
Wren	83	6	2 ²³	2 ²¹	1 ¹³	1 ⁸	1 ¹²	2 ⁶
Starling	20	5	3 ¹	49 ⁶	22 ⁴	58 ⁴	150 ⁵	-
Song thrush	20	5	5 ⁴	-	1 ⁵	1 ²	4 ⁸	1 ¹
Mistle thrush	11	4	2 ²	-	2 ⁶	1 ¹	-	2 ²
Redwing	39	6	3 ³	8 ¹¹	25 ¹⁰	30 ⁸	12 ³	6 ⁴
Fieldfare	7	3	-	134 ²	14 ²	10 ³	-	-
House sparrow	2	2	-	1 ¹	4 ¹	-	-	-
Dunnock	33	6	2 ¹¹	2 ¹²	1 ²	1 ³	1 ³	2 ²
Meadow pipit	9	4	1 ¹	1 ²	12 ⁵	-	-	40 ¹
Chaffinch	24	6	12 ⁸	2 ⁶	1 ²	1 ³	1 ¹	1 ⁴
Bullfinch	7	4	-	-	4 ⁴	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹
Greenfinch	2	2	-	-	-	1 ¹	1 ¹	-
Linnet	1	1	32 ¹	-	-	-	-	-

Non-Target species

Eighteen non-target species were also observed within the survey area: pheasant, feral pigeon, buzzard, great spotted woodpecker, jay, jackdaw, carrion crow, raven, blue tit, great tit, long-tailed tit, nuthatch, treecreeper, blackbird, robin, pied wagtail, goldfinch, and siskin.



4.0 Summary

4.1 Legal and conservation status of target species recorded

Table 4-1 provides a summary of the target species recorded during the baseline surveys, their activity within the survey area, as well as their legal and conservation status.

Table 4-1 Summary of target species results and legal/conservation status

Target species	Legal and conservation status	Qualifying or notified species for nearby designated site	Summary of observations within the survey area
Greylag goose	BoCCUK: Amber BocCCW: Not assessed	No	Greylag goose were observed on Visit 1, with 2 observed flying south-east over the Western area.
Mute swan	BocCCUK Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Mute Swan were observed on Visit 2, with 2 observed flying south-west over the northern part of the Eastern area.
Mallard	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Mallard were observed on visits 1, 5, and 6 ,with most observations being of birds taking off from pools on or close to the Site boundary in both the Eastern and Western areas, as well as two observations of 2 and 3 birds flying over the Site, on Visits 1 and 5, respectively. The largest peak flock count was of 18 birds flushed from a pool on the southwestern boundary of the Eastern area, on Visit 1.
Teal	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	The Dee Estuary SPA and Ramsar Site qualifying species (wintering)	Teal were observed on all survey visits except Visit 6, with all observations coming from the northern and south-west boundaries of the Eastern area, with most of these being of birds flushed from pools around the Site perimeter The largest peak flock count was of 5 birds flushed from a pool on the Northern boundary of the Eastern area, on Visit 3.
Stock Dove	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Stock dove were observed on Visit 4 with two seen landing in a tree on the Eastern area's western boundary.
Woodpigeon	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Woodpigeon were observed on all visits, with the species being abundant across the Site, mainly in trees around the Site boundary, and the peak flock count being of 62 birds on Visit 2.



Target species	Legal and conservation status	Qualifying or notified species for nearby designated site	Summary of observations within the survey area
Woodcock	Section 7 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	No	A single observation of woodcock was made on Visit 3, with one taking off from the ground, just outside the Western area's northwest boundary.
Snipe	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	No	Snipe were observed on Visits 2, 4, and 5. All observations were of a single bird flushed from the ground by the surveyor, at the southern end of the Western area.
Herring gull	Section 7 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	No	Herring gull were observed on Visits 1-4, and Visit 6, from locations across the Site, in both the Eastern and Western areas, but with all observations being of birds in flight passing over, rather than using the Site. The peak flock count was of 32 birds in flight, in between the Eastern and Western areas, on Visit 6,
Lesser black-backed gull	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	No	Lesser black-backed gull were observed on Visits 1 and 3, with all but one observation being in the Western area, and one observation in the Eastern area. All observations were of birds in flight passing over, rather than using the Site.
Cormorant	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	Liverpool Bay SPA Qualifying species; The Dee Estuary SPA Qualifying species (as part of non-breeding waterbird assemblage)	Cormorant were observed on Visit 1, with a single observation of 2 birds flying south-west over the Western Area, passing over, rather than using the Site.
Sparrowhawk	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Sparrowhawk were observed on Visit 3, with two separate registrations of a single bird in flight passing though, with one observation being close to the Western areas North-west boundary, and the other being outside the Site boundary, but in between the Eastern and Western areas, close to farm buildings.
Red Kite	Annex 1 Schedule 1 BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	No	Red Kite were observed on Visit 2, with two observations of one bird, circling and foraging over fields, with one observation in the Eastern area and the other observation in the Western area. The timings of these observations suggest that both are likely to have been of the same bird.



Target species	Legal and conservation status	Qualifying or notified species for nearby designated site	Summary of observations within the survey area
Kestrel	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	No	Kestrel were observed on Visit 2, with a single sighting of one bird flying North-west over the Eastern area, from the direction of the Western area.
Magpie	Section 7 BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Amber	No	Magpie were observed on Visit 1 and Visits 3-6, with observations being made across the Site, in both the Eastern and Western areas, often of birds flying across the Site or sitting in trees on the Site boundary.
Rook	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	No	Rook were observed on all survey visits except Visit 6, with observations being made across the Site, in both the Eastern and Western areas, with a peak flock of 50 in flight over the Western area on Visit 4. Most observations were of birds in flight, but some were of flocks feeding on the ground. A flock of 18 was observed feeding on grassland in the southernmost field within the Eastern area on Visit 5, and a flock of 32 was observed feeding on the large arable field (winter stubble at the time) adjacent to the Eastern area's eastern boundary, on Visit 1.
Coal tit	Section 7 BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Amber	No	Coal tit were observed on Visit 4 and Visit 6 with three observations of singing birds in woodland adjacent to the Eastern area's northern boundary.
Wren	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Wren were observed during all survey visits, and were abundant in hedgerows, woodland and scrub across the whole Site.
Starling	Section 7 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	No	Starling were observed on all visits except Visit 6, across the Site, with most observations being of flocks in flight. On Visit 4, two observations were made of a flock feeding on grassland just outside the Eastern area's north-eastern boundary, with one observation being of 40 birds, and the other being of 58 birds. The peak flock count was of at least 150 birds in a communal roost in trees just outside the Eastern area's North-west boundary, on Visit 5.
Song thrush	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Song thrush were observed on all visits except Visit 2, with a peak flock count of 5 on Visit 1, although most records were of single birds. Observations were made in both the Eastern and Western areas, of mostly singing or feeding



Target species	Legal and conservation status	Qualifying or notified species for nearby designated site	Summary of observations within the survey area
			birds in trees and scrub around the site perimeter, and along the stream in the Western area.
Mistle thrush	Section 7 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Amber	No	Mistle thrush were observed on Visits 1, 3, 4, and 6, with the highest peak flock count being of 2 birds, on multiple visits. All observations came from trees, scrub and woodland around the site perimeter.
Redwing	Schedule 1 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	No	Redwing were observed on all visits, across the site, with a peak flock count of 30 recorded on Visit 4. Most observations were of flocks feeding in or calling from trees around the Site perimeter.
Fieldfare	Section 7 Schedule 1 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Amber	No	Fieldfare were observed on Visits 2-4, with all observations coming from around the Site perimeter, and a peak flock count of 134 on Visit 2, of a flock flying south-west over the northern part of the Eastern area. Most observations were of birds calling from trees and scrub,
House sparrow	Section7 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Amber	No	House sparrow were observed on Visits 2 and 3. One was heard calling on Visit 2 close to farm buildings just outside the north-eastern part of the Western area, and a flock of 4 was observed on Visit 3 in a hedge where the two southernmost access routes meet.
Dunnock	Section7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	No	Dunnock were observed on all visits and were abundant in hedgerows and scrub across the Site.
Meadow pipit	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	No	Meadow pipits were observed on Visits 1-3, and Visit 6, with a peak flock count of 40 on Visit 6, of birds feeding on grassland either side of the northernmost access route. The majority of observations were of single birds around the perimeter of the Eastern area, but a flock of 12 was observed feeding on grassland in the south-eastern part of the Western area, on Visit 3.
Chaffinch	Section 7 BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Amber	No	Chaffinch were observed on all visits, with a peak flock count of 12 birds feeding on grassland on Visit 1. Most other observations were of calling or singing birds in trees, scrub and woodland around the Site perimeter, across the Site.



Target species	Legal and conservation status	Qualifying or notified species for nearby designated site	Summary of observations within the survey area
Bullfinch	Section 7 BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	No	Bullfinch were observed on Visits 3-6, with most observations being of calling or feeding birds in trees and scrub around the Site perimeter, and along the stream in the Western area.
Greenfinch	Section 7 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	No	Greenfinch were observed on Visits 4 and 5. One observation, on visit 4 was of a calling bird in scrub along the Western area's Western boundary, and the other observation, on Visit 5, was of a calling bird in a hedgerow where the two southernmost access routes meet.
Linnet	Section 7 BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	No	Linnet were observed on Visit 1, with a flock of 32 birds feeding on stubble in an arable field outside the Eastern area's southeast boundary and periodically flying into the Site boundary, and then back onto the arable field.



4.2 Conclusion

The surveys undertaken by SLR covered the Solar Site plus a 100m buffer to assess how and to what extent the Site is used by wintering birds. The survey area did not include the substation connection Cable Route, which follows existing roads, and which shall involve trenching entirely within the road surface itself, but it did include the proposed cable route connecting the Eastern and Western Parcels.

Of the target species recorded on Site, the vast majority were using habitats around the perimeter of the Site such as hedgerows, woodland, scrub, and pools, with little usage of the field interiors by feeding birds (see Table 4-1 Summary of target species results and legal/conservation status). In conclusion, these perimeter habitats, which are used for foraging and roosting by a wide range of priority species and a relatively large number of individual birds, are clearly of higher importance to wintering birds than the field interiors, which support a relatively small range of foraging priority species and a relatively low number of individual birds, and so, in their current form (as modified grassland in use as pasture) are of relatively low importance for wintering birds.

The surveys were also timed to take place two hours either side of high tide at Rhyl, with the intention of detecting a potential functional link with the Liverpool Bay SPA., and Dee Estuary SPA and Ramsar site.

Natural England (Natural Resources Wales do not have a published definition of FLL (Functionally Linked Land), so the Natural England definition is used here) defines FLL as “*areas of land occurring within 20km of an SPA, that are regularly used by significant numbers of qualifying bird species*”¹⁰. To qualify as ‘Regular Usage’ a site must be “*used by significant numbers of birds for 7 or more years since 2010*”. Natural England also state that “*A ‘significant’ number of birds has been defined as 0.5% of the GB population or 1000 individuals*”. Natural England use the definition by Stroud *et al.* (2001) of ‘regular’ as “*When a threshold is met in two thirds of the season for which adequate data are available*”.

One qualifying species for the Liverpool Bay SPA (cormorant) was recorded over-flying the Site but not on Site per se during the surveys, and as such there is no linked functionality for this species.

Two qualifying species for the Dee Estuary SPA (teal and cormorant) were recorded during the surveys, but as stated above cormorant was only recorded in flight over the Site and the numbers of teal recorded (peak count of five birds) clearly do not meet the threshold stated above for a “significant” number of birds, being well below both 0.5% of the GB population (the UK wintering population for Teal is listed by the BTO as 435,000¹¹), and 1000 individuals (see Table 3-1 Details of designated ornithological sites within the search area). Furthermore, the Dee Estuary SPA and Ramsar site citations state that 5,251 teal occur within the estuary during the winter; as such the Site supports less than 0.01% of the SPA/ Ramsar population of this particular species.

Therefore, no functionally linked land to the Liverpool Bay SPA, or the Dee Estuary SPA/ Ramsar site has been identified within, or adjacent to, the Site, and there is no scope to affect the integrity of either designated site.

¹⁰ [Identification of Functionally Linked Land supporting Special Protection Areas \(SPAs\) waterbirds in the North West of England - NECR361](#)

¹¹ [Teal | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology](#)



Appendix A Drawing C0002452_01 Site Location

Wintering Bird Survey Report 2024-2025

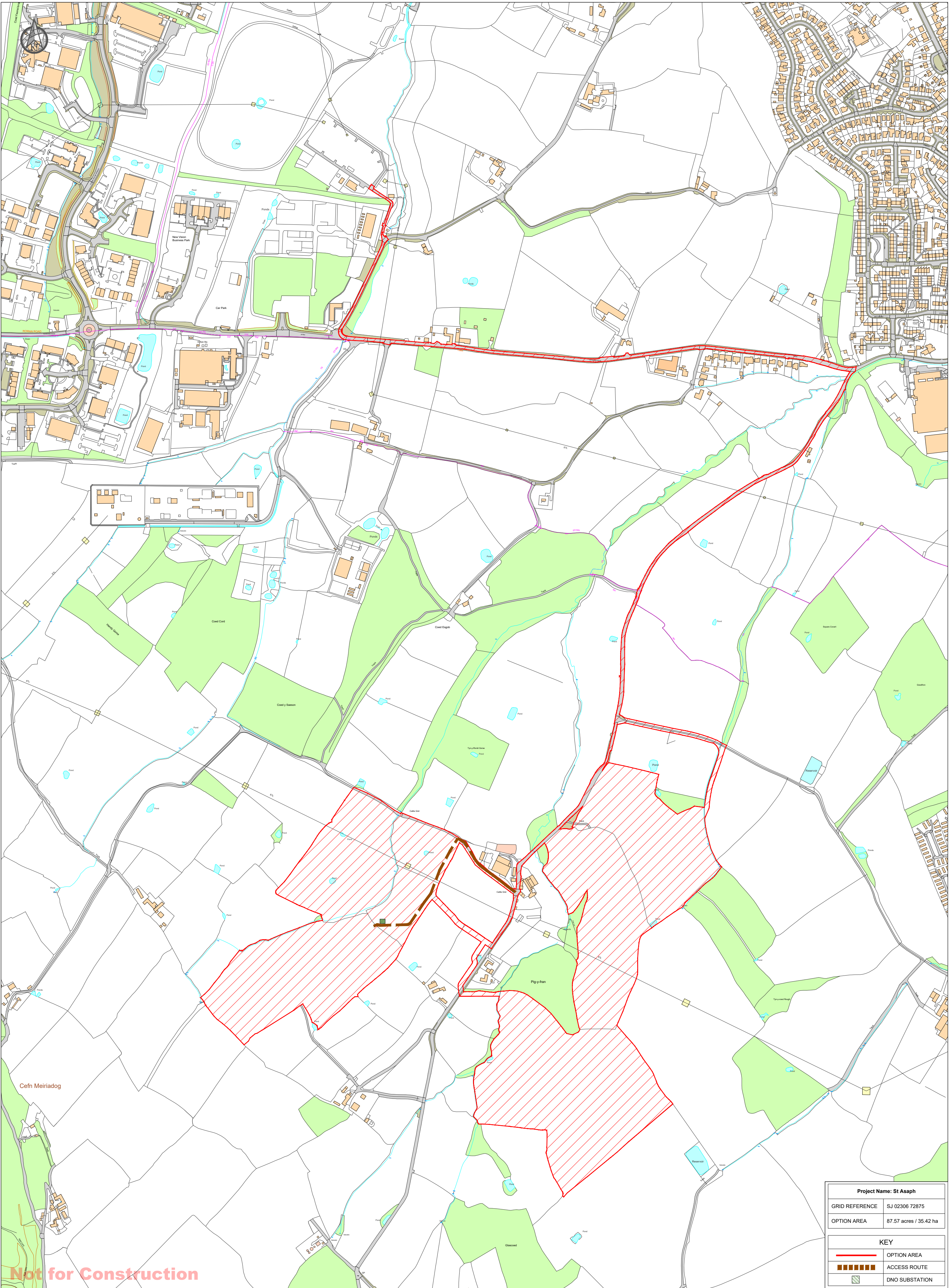
St. Asaph Solar Farm

Anesco Limited

SLR Project No.: 406.065274.00001

24 April 2026





Not for Construction

Project Name: St Asaph

GRID REFERENCE

SJ 02306 72875

OPTION AREA

87.57 acres / 35.42 ha

KEY

OPTION AREA

ACCESS ROUTE

DNO SUBSTATION

Installer Details	Comments	Revision	Description	Revised By	Date	Drawn By	Installation Address	Project
Anesco Ltd. The Green, Easter Park, Benyon Road, Reading, RG7 2PQ Tel: 0845 894 4444	 Ordnance Survey, (c) Crown Copyright 2020. All rights reserved. Licence number 100022432	A	Issued for comment	MS	20/10/2020	RD	Cefnmeiriadog, St Asaph, Denbighshire, Wales, LL17 0HF	St Asaph
		B	Land reduced from the North and extended to the South	MS	05/03/2021			
		C	Area of Land has been altered and the DNO substation moved	MS	04/05/2021			
		D	Area of Land has been altered and the DNO substation moved	MS	12/05/2021			
		E	Site area amended	JH	22/11/2023			
		F	Red Line Boundary amended & access track added in the North	JH	12/12/2023			
		G	Red Line Boundary amended	MS	10/06/2024			
		H	Red Line Boundary amended	MS	13/11/2024			
		I	Red Line Boundary amended	RD	26/03/2025			
		J	Red Line Boundary amended	RD	26/03/2025			
					</			



Appendix B Drawing C0002452_02

Site Layout

Wintering Bird Survey Report 2024-2025

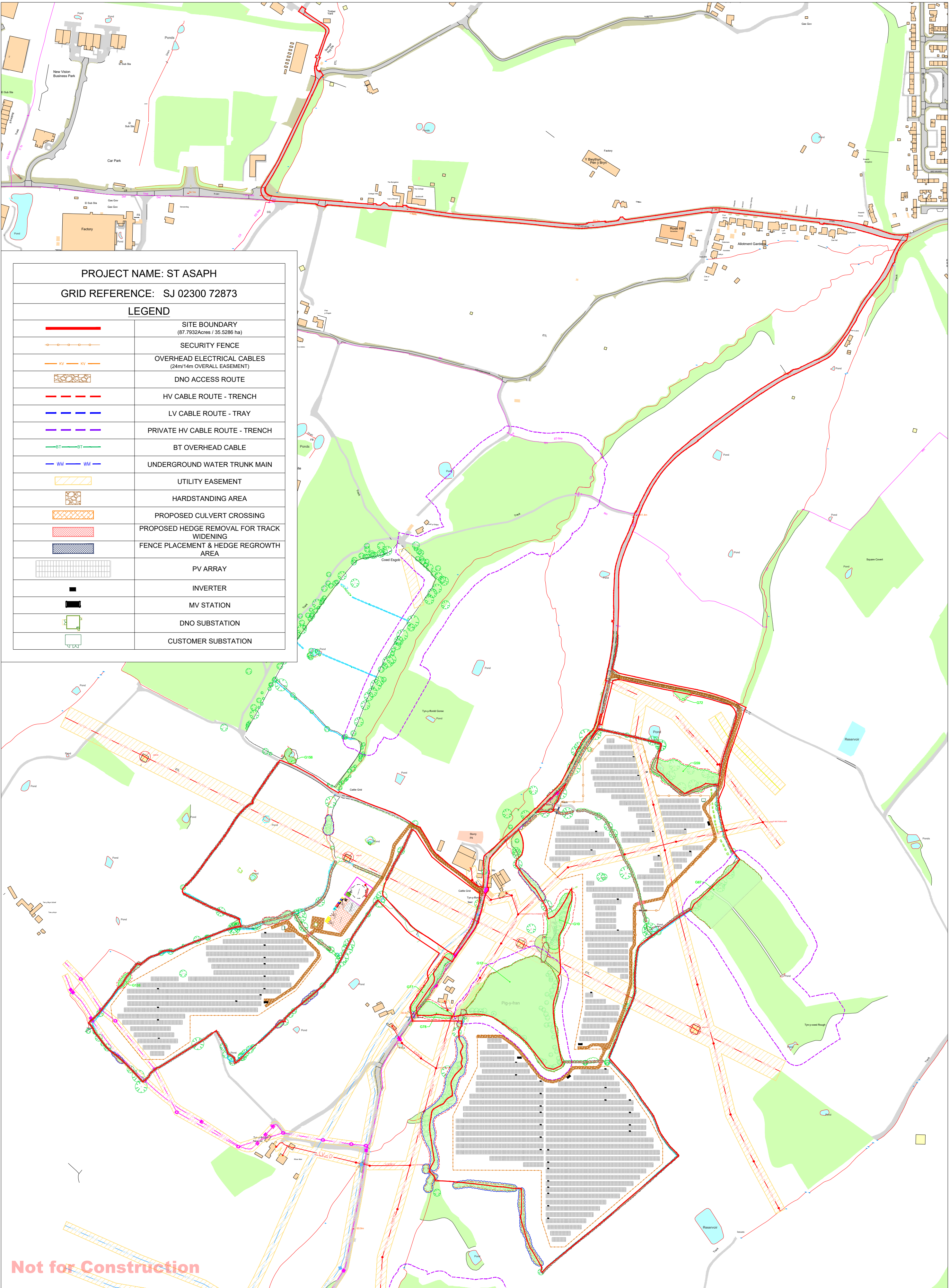
St. Asaph Solar Farm

Anesco Limited

SLR Project No.: 406.065274.00001

24 April 2026

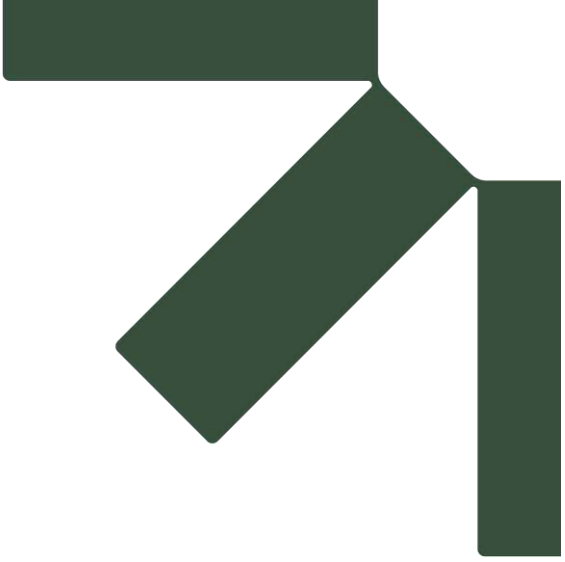




Not for Construction

Installer Details		Comments	Revision		Description	Revised By	Date	Drawn By	Installation Address	Project	Title	Drawing No.	Rev.	Sheet Size A2
			J		Red Line Boundary amended to include Private HV	JH	03/08/2022							
Anesco Ltd. The Green, Easter Park, Benyon Road, Reading, RG7 2PQ Tel: 0845 894 4444		Accesses track at site entrance amended according to the drawing "211001-08, 09, and TK12 [Sent File]". Please refer to this one for more details.	K&L&M		Site redesign using new modules and new private HV cable	JH	06/07/2023	JH						
			N&P		Red Line Boundary amended & access track added in the North & dno	JH&LD	12/11/2023							
			Q&R&S		Redesign due to array relocation & Access altered	MS	20/09/2024							
			T&U&V&W		Traps & switches, Hedgegrowth, Inverters added, Panel locations, tracks & fences amended	RD	07/04/2025							
			X		North west field removed	JH	20/01/2026							
			Y		Access track amended	RD	17/03/2026							
			Z		Arrays amended, TIC updated	RD	15/04/2026							
									Cefnmeiriadog, St Asaph, Denbighshire, Wales, LL17 0HF	St Asaph	Site layout - Planning	C0002452_02	Z	

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Appendix C Survey Metadata

Wintering Bird Survey Report 2024-2025

St. Asaph Solar Farm

Anesco Limited

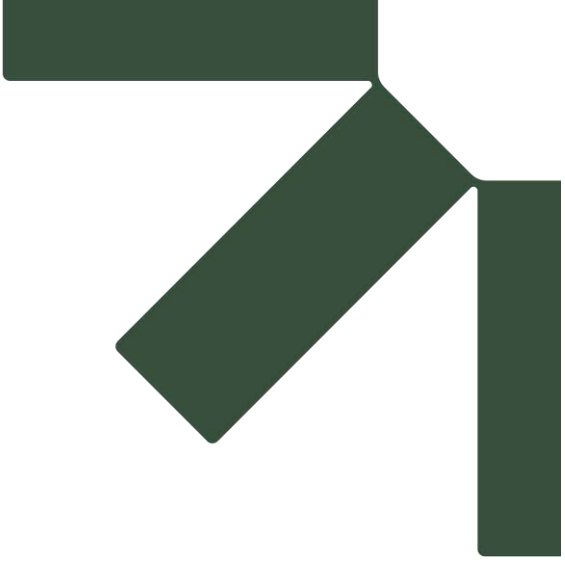
SLR Project No.: 406.065274.00001

24 April 2026

Table 4-2 Survey timings and weather data

Visit	Date	Surveyor initials	Start	End	Cloud cover (Okta)	Cloud height (0- <150m, 1- 150-500m, 2- >500m)	Rainfall	Wind (Beaufort scale)	Visibility (Poor= <1km, Moderate= 1-3km, Good= >3km)	Frost	Temperature
1	29/10/2024	GO, TB	6:58	10:58	Start- 8/8 End- 7/8	Start- 150-500m End-150-500m	Start- None End- None	Start-1, SW End- 1, NW	Start- Good End- Good	Start- 0 End- 0	Start- 12° End- 14°
2	14/11/2024	GO, TB	7:01	11:01	Start- 3/8 End- 6/8	Start- >500m End->500m	Start- None End- None	Start-1, N End-1, SE	Start- Moderate End- Good	Start- 0 End- 0	Start- 11° End- 12°
3	16/12/2024	GO, JP	9:02	13:02	Start- 6/8 End- 8/8	Start- >500m End->500m	Start- None End- None	Start-3, SW End-3, SW	Start- Good End- Good	Start- 0 End- 0	Start- 10° End- 11°
4	14/01/2025	GO, TB	9:00	13:00	Start- 2/8 End- 5/8	Start- 150-500m End-150-500m	Start- None End- None	Start-1, SW End-1, SW	Start- Good End- Good	Start- 0 End- 0	Start-10 ° End- 12°
5	11/02/2025	GO, TB	8:06	12:06	Start- 8/8 End- 8/8	Start- 150-500m End-150-500m	Start- None End- None	Start-1, NE End-1, NE	Start- Good End- Moderate	Start- 0 End- 0	Start- 4° End- 5°
6	03/03/2025	PW, CB	11:08	15:08	Start- 5/8 End- 7/8	Start- 150-500m End-150-500m	Start- None End- None	Start-1, W End-1, W	Start- Moderate End- good	Start- 0 End- 0	Start- 10° End- 11°





Appendix D Full Species List

Wintering Bird Survey Report 2024-2025

St. Asaph Solar Farm

Anesco Limited

SLR Project No.: 406.065274.00001

24 April 2026

Table 4-3 Full list of species recorded and conservation status

Species	Scientific name	Peak Flock Count ¹² (across all visits)	BoCC status	Protection Status		
				Annex 1	Sch 1	Sec 7
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	2	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Not assessed	-	-	-
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	2	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	18	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	5	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	-	-	-
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	1	BoCCUK: Not Assessed BoCCW: Not Assessed	-	-	-
Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	3	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Not Assessed	-	-	-
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	2	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	62	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	1	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	-	-	-
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	-	-	-

¹² 'Peak flock count' refers to the highest count of a single flock in a defined period (e.g. a single visit). It is considered inappropriate to sum the counts within the survey area on each visit, as the large survey area and survey methodology do not allow for simultaneous/instantaneous counts of the whole area and birds are likely to move between areas/fields, and therefore there would be a risk of repeat counting of birds. It is acknowledged that it is therefore not an estimate of the peak number of birds within the survey area at any one time and therefore the frequency of observations and the peak counts from individual fields/land parcels are also presented in the relevant figures.



Species	Scientific name	Peak Flock Count ¹² (across all visits)	BoCC status	Protection Status		
				Annex 1	Sch 1	Sec 7
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	32	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	-	-	Yes
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	5	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	-	-	-
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	2	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	1	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	1	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	Yes	Yes	-
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	1	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	1	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	-	-	Yes
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	2	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Amber	-	-	-
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	47	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	50	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	-	-	-
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	33	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-



Species	Scientific name	Peak Flock Count ¹² (across all visits)	BoCC status	Protection Status		
				Annex 1	Sch 1	Sec 7
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	2	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	1	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Amber	-	-	-
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	4	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	5	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	14	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	8	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Red	-	-	-
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	2	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	3	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	1	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	150	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	-	-	Yes
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	5	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	-	Yes
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	2	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Amber	-	-	-
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	30	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Green	-	Yes	-



Species	Scientific name	Peak Flock Count ¹² (across all visits)	BoCC status	Protection Status		
				Annex 1	Sch 1	Sec 7
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	4	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	134	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Amber	-	Yes	-
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	2	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	4	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Amber	-	-	Yes
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	2	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	-	-	Yes
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba ssp. yarellii</i>	9	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	40	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Red	-	-	-
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	12	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Amber	-	-	-
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	4	BoCCUK: Amber BoCCW: Amber	-	-	Yes
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	1	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	-	-	-
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	32	BoCCUK: Red BoCCW: Red	-	-	Yes
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	8	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	1	BoCCUK: Green BoCCW: Green	-	-	-





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