

R I C H A R D S

M O O R E H E A D & L A I N G L T D

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P L A N N I N G | L A N D S C A P E | E N V I R O N M E N T

**A55 Junction 15 and J16 Improvements**

**Supplementary Ecological Survey Information**

## **Junction 16**

**Breeding bird Survey Report 2020/2021 season**

for

**WELSH GOVERNMENT**

May 2021

3066/11B



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## A55 Junction 15 and J16 Improvements

### Supplementary Ecological Survey Information

### Junction 16

### Breeding bird Survey Report 2020/2021 season

FOR

WELSH GOVERNMENT

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## 1 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Junction 16 of the A55 (Figure 1) is proposed for improvement works (the ‘Scheme’). This junction is located on North Wales coast, adjacent to the Irish Sea. A range of ecological surveys have been undertaken to identify the baseline ecological conditions and enable the assessment of the impacts of the Scheme within the Environmental Impact Assessment process. This document reports on the breeding bird surveys undertaken for the Scheme during 2020 to determine the assemblage and distribution of breeding species present in areas that could be subject to direct impacts and/or disturbance.

1.1.2 Nomenclature within this report follows the British (English) vernacular name within the British Ornithologists’ Union British List<sup>1</sup>.

### 1.2 Designated Sites

1.2.1 The proposed development area is located in close proximity to one Natura 2000 site designated due to its avian importance (non-breeding season only); Lavan Sands Special Protection Area (SPA) (0.3km/north). The qualifying features of this internationally designated site are summarised below.

**Table 1: Designated Site Details**

Qualifying Features	Feature Type	% of Population
<b>Lavan Sands SPA</b>		
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> (in non-breeding season)	Regularly occurring migratory species	0.5% Europe & Northern/Western Africa

1 BOU (2017). The British List; The official list of bird species recorded in Britain [online] available at: <https://www.bou.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/British-List-2020-01-24.pdf>

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## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Common Bird Census Survey

- 2.1.1 Field surveys broadly followed the ‘territory mapping’ or Common Bird Census (CBC) methodology<sup>2,3</sup>, albeit with a reduced number of visits (four). CBC territory mapping is the most accurate practical way to determine the numbers and distribution of breeding birds where a high level of detail is required. Essentially, the method involves mapping all birds seen or heard during walkover visits to the site, paying particular attention to behaviour which indicates breeding (e.g. singing or carrying nesting material or food). By combining the results of all visits (Section 2.2), it is possible to determine the species present within the Survey Area and derive an indication of the numbers of breeding territories within the Survey Area.
- 2.1.2 Four approximately evenly-spaced survey visits were completed between May and early July 2020.
- 2.1.3 Surveys, which included areas within the potential development area and a buffer of 50m (Figure 2) (henceforth referred to as the ‘Survey Area’), commenced approximately one hour after sunrise and were completed by noon. The start point of surveys was alternated between visits to ensure all parts of the Survey Area received adequate coverage during peak periods of bird activity. The surveyor logged all bird observations on field maps using standard BTO coding, paying particular attention to behaviour indicative of breeding. However, observations of birds outside the Survey Area were also logged when seen.

### 2.2 Territory Mapping

- 2.2.1 Species observed within suitable breeding habitat were considered to represent breeding birds if a nest, eggs or young were located, if they were observed displaying or singing, if adults were observed carry food/faecal sacks or were observed in territory disputes. In addition, birds recorded in the same location on at least two visits were also considered to represent breeding birds.
- 2.2.2 Territory mapping was completed in relation to the following species, henceforth referred to as ‘Target Species’:
- Species included on the Red and Amber lists of Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales (BoCCW) <sup>3</sup>.
  - The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Section 7 Priority Species (S7PS)<sup>5</sup>.

2 Bibby, C.J., Hill, D.A., Burgess, N.D. and Mustoe, S. (2000) *Bird Census Techniques*. 2nd Edition. Academic Press: London

3 Marchant, J. H. (1983) BTO Common Birds Census Instructions. BTO, Tring.

4 Johnstone I., Bladwell S. (2016). *Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 3: the population status of birds in Wales*. Birds in Wales, vol.14 No.1

5 Environment (Wales) Act 2016

- Schedule 1 species, of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)<sup>6</sup>.

## 2.3 Surveyor

2.3.1 All survey work was completed by Martyn Owen MCIEEM. Martyn is a highly experienced consultant ornithologist, former County Bird Recorder for Shropshire and holds Schedule 1 survey licences issued by Natural Resources Wales, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage.

## 2.4 Survey details

2.4.1 Detail in relation to survey dates and weather are provided within Table 2.

**Table 2: Survey Details**

Survey Visit	Date	Time	Surveyor	Weather
1	11/05/2020	Start:06:20 Finish: 11:05	MO	Wind: 1 - 3 NE Rain: Nil Cloud: 2/8 – 7/8 Temp (°C): 7 - 9
2	25/05/2020	Start:05:40 Finish: 09:20	MO	Wind: 1 - 2 SW Rain: Nil Cloud: 0/8 – 1/8 Temp (°C): 12 - 17
3	02/06/2020	Start: 05:20 Finish: 09:10	MO	Wind: 0 – 1 W Rain: Nil Cloud: 0/8 - 1/8 Temp (°C): 15 - 17
4	29/06/2020	Start: 05:15 Finish: :08:55	MO	Wind: 3 – 4 SW Rain: Inf. light rain Cloud: 5/8 – 6/8 Temp (°C): 13 - 15

## 2.5 Limitations

- 2.5.1 The findings presented in this study represent those at the time of survey and reporting, and data collected from available sources. Ecological surveys are limited by factors which affect the presence of plants and animals, such as the time of year, migration patterns and behaviour.
- 2.5.2 Four CBC survey visits were completed. Whilst this does not conform to the requirements of a full CBC survey (eight-ten visits), it is deemed adequate in this instance to provide an appropriate indication of the breeding bird assemblage and numbers of pairs within the Survey Area.
- 2.5.3 During territory mapping, birds recorded in the same location on at least two visits were considered to represent breeding birds. Including birds recorded only on one date would have likely led to the overestimation of breeding numbers due to the potential inclusion of passage migrants. This may have led to some pairs which did breed being excluded during territory

<sup>6</sup> Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

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mapping, although such instances would likely be rare, and not compromise the overall conclusions of this report.

- 2.5.4 The locations of territories on Figure 2 should be viewed as approximate, with the locations shown indicating a location within the territory of a breeding pair, rather than a nest location.



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### 3 RESULTS

- 3.1 Table 3 provides a summary of all target species considered likely to have bred within the Survey Area during the survey period with the locations of these territories shown on Figure 2. A summary of observations of non-breeding Target Species and all other species logged during surveys, is included within Table 4.
- 3.2 A total 37 species were logged, of which 25 species were considered to have bred within the Survey Area. Of these breeding species three are included on the BoCCW3 Red List, five are included on the BoCCW3 Amber List with two being S7PS, being of principal important for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales.
- 3.3 No species is included on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) bred within the Survey Area.

**Table 3: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Target Species**

Species	Conservation Status	Number of Territories		Total Number of Territories	Comment
		On Site	Within 50m Buffer		
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red List	0	1	1	Bred on a service station roof. Also regularly logged in flight during each survey.
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>	Amber List	1	1	2	Territories in the south of the survey area.
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Amber List S7PS	0	4	4	Two territories to the south and two territories to the north of the site.
Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Amber List	0	2	2	Bred within trees at a caravan site in the east of the survey area and in the south.
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	Amber List S7PS	7	12	19	Abundant with the survey area. Bred on housing.
Linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Red List	0	1	1	A single territory in coastal scrub.
Long-tailed Tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	Amber List	0	1	1	A single territory within a mature garden in the south of the site.
Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>	Red List	1	3	4	Three territories in coastal scrub to the north of the site and a territory within scrub near the A55.

- 3.4 Table 4 provides a summary of the non-breeding Target Species and all other species observed across the survey period within the Survey Area.

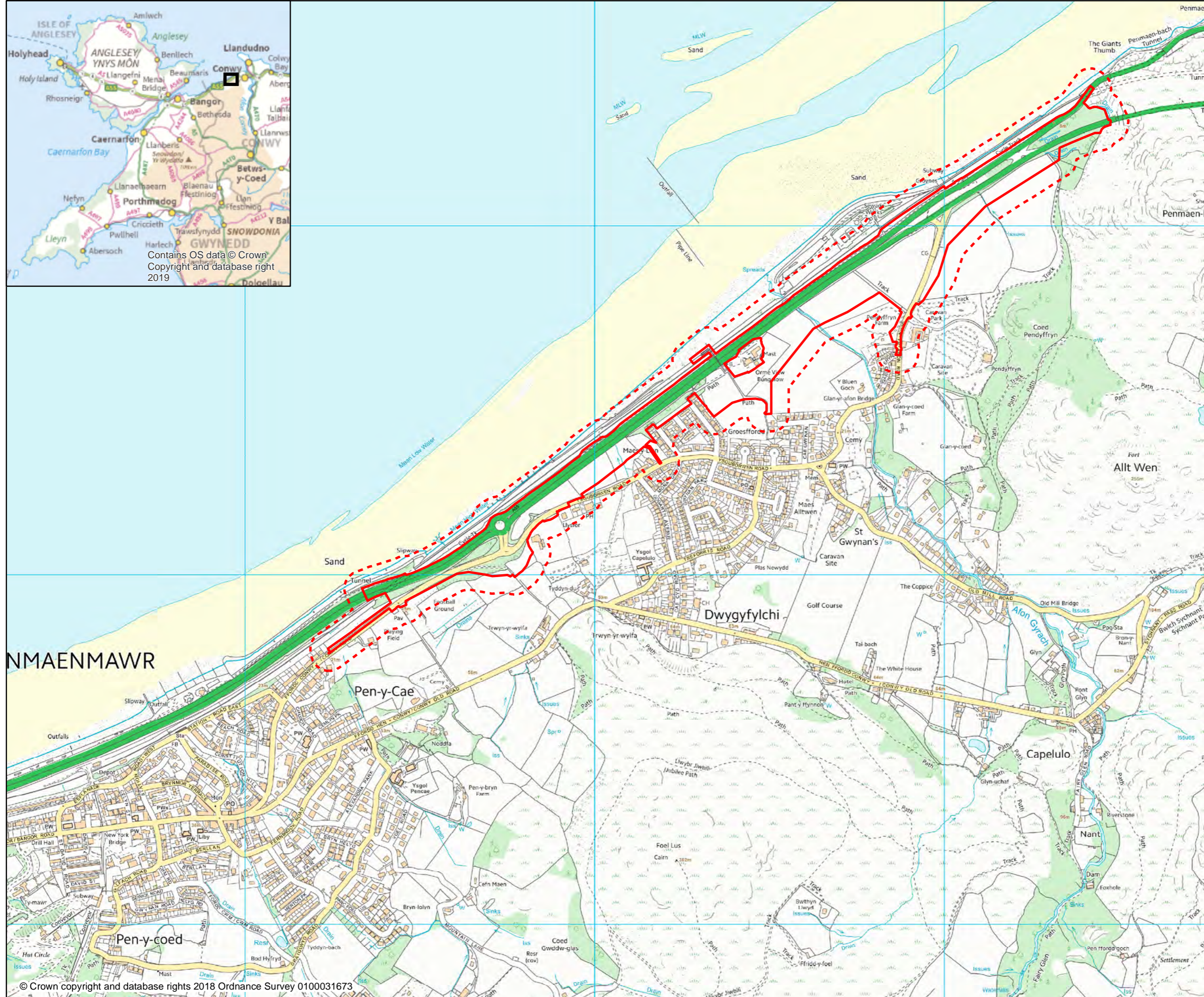


**Table 4: Breeding Bird Survey Results – Non-Target Species and Other Species**

Species	Comment
Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i>	Two birds flew through the Survey Area during Survey 2.
Wood Pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately two territories present.
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Observed within the Survey Area during Surveys 2 and 3.
Oystercatcher	Observed in flight along the coast during each survey.
Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	A singleton calling within the Survey Area during Survey 3.
Chough <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	Two birds flew high over the Survey Area during Survey 2.
Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately one territory present.
Carrion Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	Observed foraging within the Survey Area during Surveys 2, 3 and 4.
Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>	A family party were observed to the southeast of the Survey Area during Surveys 2 and 3.
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately two territories present.
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with at least one territory present.
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with at least one territory present.
House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with at least one territory present.
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately seven territories present.
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with at least one territory present.
Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately two territories present.
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia curruca</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with at least one territory present.
Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately seven territories present.
Treecreeper <i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with at least one territory present.
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Observed foraging within the Survey Area during Surveys 3 and 4.
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately five territories present.
Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately three territories present.
Stonechat <i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	One bird observed to the north of the Survey Area during Survey 2.
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately 11 territories present.
Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	Observed foraging within the Survey Area during Survey 1.
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	One bird observed within the Survey Area during Survey 4.
Rock Pipit <i>Anthus petrosus</i>	One bird observed to in the north of the Survey Area during Survey 2.
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately three territories present.
Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Bred within the Survey Area with approximately 11 territories present.

## 4 SUMMARY

- 4.1 A breeding bird survey to inform proposed improvement works at Junction 16 of the A55 was completed during 2020.
- 4.2 During these surveys all species observed or heard were recorded. A total 37 species were logged, of which 25 species were considered to have bred within the Survey Area. Of these breeding species three are included on the BoCCW3 Red List, five are included on the BoCCW3 Amber List with two being S7PS.
- 4.3 No species is included on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) bred within the Survey Area.



J16 Extents  
 50m Buffer

**A55 Junction 16  
Breeding Bird Survey Report  
2020**

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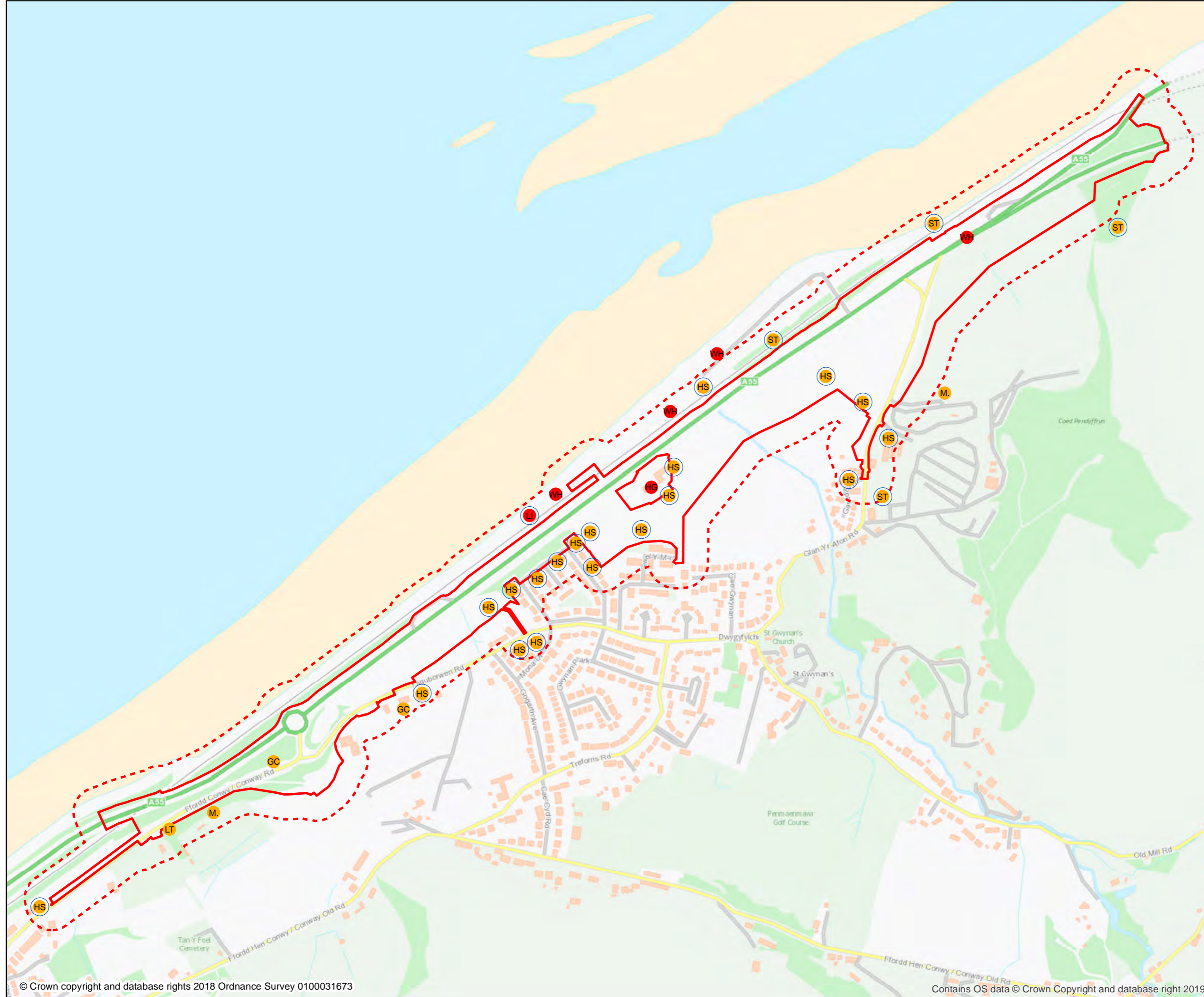


**Fig 1;  
Site Location**

Drawn: JG	Scale (@A3): 1:10,000	Date: 10/07/2020
Drawing No: 1		Rev:

**Birds of Conservation Concern (Wales)**

- Red List
- Amber List
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016; Section 7 Species
- J16 Extents
- 50m Buffer
- GC, Goldcrest
- HG, Herring Gull
- HS, House Sparrow
- LI, Linnet
- LT, Long-tailed Tit
- M., Mistle Thrush
- ST, Song Thrush
- WH, Whitethroat



**A55 Junction 16  
Breeding Bird Survey Report  
2020**



**Fig 2:  
Breeding Bird Territory Map**

Drawn: JG	Scale (@A3): 1:7,000	Date: 16/07/2020
Drawing No: 1	Rev:	