

The Importance of the Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits for Wintering Wildfowl

A review of Wetland Bird Survey Data from the Five years to 2015/16

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For Lower Windrush Valley Project

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Summary

Analysis of Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) data for the five years up to 2015/16 shows that the Lower Windrush Valley Project (LWVP) Area is nationally important for wintering wildfowl. Mean peak counts of wintering Gadwall and Shoveler exceed the agreed 1% threshold for national importance and Coot are approaching the 1% threshold. Water bodies in the LWVP area are only partially covered by WeBS counts, suggesting that the WeBS counts could underestimate the actual importance of the area for wintering wildfowl.

Recommendations

| No | Recommendation | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | The LWVP area should continue to be described in any publications, communications, | | | | | | | |
| | funding bids etc as 'nationally important for wintering wildfowl'. This should enhance the | | | | | | | |
| | reputation of the area for nature conservation and encourage stakeholders (local | | | | | | | |
| | residents, recreational users of the area, birdwatchers etc) to view the area more | | | | | | | |
| | holistically, rather than as a collection of disconnected water bodies. | | | | | | | |
| 2a | Measures should be taken to increase WeBS count coverage to the 'vacant' lakes shown in | | | | | | | |
| | Annex 3. This should increase the sense of community and connectedness amongst site | | | | | | | |
| | owners and managers and if it results in elevated bird counts it may further enhance the | | | | | | | |
| | reputation of the LWVP area for nature conservation. | | | | | | | |
| 2b | If coverage is increased it is recommended that the current prioritisation shown in Annex 3 | | | | | | | |
| | is reviewed to ensure that any new counters are guided to the most productive sites first. | | | | | | | |
| | Anecdotally it is reported that one counter gave up counting due to lack of birds. | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Measures should continue be taken to increase understanding and awareness of the | | | | | | | |
| | importance of the LWVP area for wintering birds amongst key stakeholders. This could | | | | | | | |
| | include a community engagement programme to cover a range of possible approaches | | | | | | | |
| | including | | | | | | | |
| | talks to the LWV Forum | | | | | | | |
| | visits to the Project's reserves | | | | | | | |
| | guided walks | | | | | | | |
| | news on the Project website | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Witney Lake should be added to the list of named sites covered by the 'Lower Windrush | | | | | | | |
| | Valley Gravel Pits' WeBS site. The Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits is an aggregate site | | | | | | | |
| | consisting of all the main lakes between Witney and Newbridge, with the exception of | | | | | | | |
| | Witney Lake. Until recently Witney Lake was geographically separated from the often- | | | | | | | |
| | contiguous pits elsewhere in the valley. With Gill Mill coming on-line it is increasingly less | | | | | | | |
| | isolated, though if incorporated it would still require a separate counter(s). This is a | | | | | | | |
| | relatively low priority since it is expected that including Witney Lake would make little | | | | | | | |
| | difference to overall species totals. | | | | | | | |

1. Background

1.1 The Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS)

The Wetland Bird Survey is a partnership between the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (the last on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland) in association with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

The WeBS scheme monitors non-breeding waterbirds in the UK. The principal aims of WeBS are to identify population sizes, determine trends in numbers and distribution, and identify important sites for waterbirds.

Site based WeBS data is collated annually and made available on the WeBS pages of the BTO web site (see https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/webs). This report is based on that data. The count data is available thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteers who undertake coordinated monthly counts, especially during the period September to March. Some sites have no public access and the cooperation of landowners in facilitating access is greatly appreciated.

1.2 WeBS in the LWVP area

In the LWVP area two sites, the Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits(LWVGP) and Rushy Common, have been regularly counted under the WeBS scheme.

The Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits (LWVGP) is an aggregate site consisting of the majority of lakes between Witney and Newbridge. WeBS surveys have been carried out for the LWVGP's since the late 1980's.

Rushy Common has been counted as a separate site since its opening as a reserve in 2010 and this approach continued up until winter 2015/16. Following comments from local WeBS count organisers, counts for Rushy Common will be incorporated into the overall LWVGP's site data from winter 2016/17 onwards.

Witney Lake has up until now been considered as a separate lake to the main body of LWVGP's. It is recognised as a survey compartment by the WeBS scheme but is currently 'vacant' and not actively counted.

1.3 Setting the LWVP area in a National Context

A wetland in Britain is considered nationally important if it regularly holds 1% or more of the estimated British population of one species or subspecies of waterbird (see Annex 1 below for a fuller description). The population that a site is considered regularly to hold is calculated by taking the mean of the peak counts from each year in a five-year period.

Mean peak counts for all species regularly occurring in the Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits and at Rushy Common are available through to the winter of 2015/16, so this report is based upon data for the five years to 2015/16.

Waterbirds in winter are potentially highly mobile, sometimes making the definition of a 'site' and the relevant local population problematic. For the purpose of this report it is assumed that all birds of any one species originating from either of the named sites (LWVGP's and Rushy Common) are part of a single Lower Windrush Valley population. It is also assumed that counts for LWVGP's and Rushy Common have been undertaken on the same day, with the aim of reducing the possibility for double

counting. It would be possible to test these assumptions, but it is acknowledged that this work has not yet been done.

2. Results

Combined mean peak data for all species regularly occurring in the LWVGP's and Rushy Common sites is shown in Annex 2 below. For selected species, the agreed 1% population threshold (see Annex 1) for a site of British importance is also shown and the local mean peak is shown as a percentage of this threshold figure.

The data shows that the combined LWVGP's and Rushy Common mean peak populations of Gadwall (1.16% national) and Shoveler (1.32% national) exceeded the agreed thresholds for a site of national importance in the five-year period to 2015/16.

Populations of Coot (0.8% national) and Yellow-legged Gull (0.91% national) are approaching the 1% thresholds but fall some way short. It should also be noted that the mean peak of 10 Yellow-legged Gulls should be seen in the context that where 1% of the national population is fewer than 50 birds, 50 is normally used as a minimum qualifying threshold for the designation of sites of national importance.

The mean peak populations of Gadwall, Shoveler, Coot and Yellow-legged Gull are also shown in Table 1, together with eight other species which occur in the LWVP area at between 0.37% and 0.55% of their respective national (GB) populations. There are no nationally agreed thresholds for sites of sub-national importance for wintering waterbirds but the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) has agreed criteria and thresholds for the identification of sites of County importance. An extract from the TVERC criteria relevant to wintering birds is reproduced in Annex 5. Using these criteria and thresholds it can be seen that the LWVP area comfortably exceeds the threshold requirements for Teal so it is reasonable to claim that the area may be considered to be of County importance for this species. Closer inspection of data may indicate that the area is also of County importance for other species.

(NB: TVERC will be reviewing the criteria and thresholds but this has not been done at the time of writing in August 2018).

Table 1: Key Winter Waterbird Population Data from LWVP area¹

| | Lower | Rushy | Combined | 1% Great | LWVP |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| | Windrush | Common | count | Britain | combined |
| Species | Valley | 5 yr mean | | | count as % |
| | 5yr mean | peak to | | | GB |
| | peak to | 2015/16 | | | |
| | 2015/16 | | | | |
| Coot | 1,330 | 113 | 1,443 | 1800 | 0.8 |
| Cormorant | 154 | 15 | 169 | 350 | 0.48 |
| Gadwall | 279 | 12 | 291 | 250 | 1.16 |
| Great Crested Grebe | 63 | 9 | 72 | 190 | 0.37 |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | 483 | 36 | 519 | 1200 | 0.43 |
| Pochard | 201 | 8 | 209 | 380 | 0.55 |
| Red-crested Pochard (feral) | 130 | 6 | 136 | N/A | N/A |
| Shoveler | 212 | 20 | 232 | 180 | 1.32 |
| Teal | 779 | 29 | 808 | 2100 | 0.38 |
| Tufted Duck | 468 | 39 | 507 | 1100 | 0.46 |
| Wigeon | 1,575 | 99 | 1,674 | 4400 | 0.38 |
| Yellow-legged Gull | 10 | | 10 | 11* | 0.91 |

(*NB where 1% of the national population is less than 50 birds, 50 is normally used as a minimum qualifying threshold for the designation of sites of national or international importance).

¹ Frost, T.M., Austin, G.E., Calbrade, N.A., Mellan, H.J., Hearn, R.D., Stroud, D.A., Wotton, S.R. and Balmer, D.E. 2018. Waterbirds in the UK 2016/17: The Wetland Bird Survey. BTO/RSPB/JNCC. Thetford. Data released under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

One other species of interest in the LWVP area is the Red-crested Pochard. The feral population in the UK has grown considerably in recent years and the LWVP area is now the third ranked site in the UK after the Cotswold Water Park East and Cotswold Water Park West.

Whilst it is not within the remit of this report to consider historical changes to wildfowl populations in the LWVP area it may be noted that prior to the current study period the LWVP area was nationally important for Coot, Pochard and Tufted Duck². The change of importance of the area from diving ducks to dabbling ducks (Gadwall, Shoveler) may merit further investigation.

² Pond Conservation Trust (2005) *Baseline ecological Assessment of 40 Gravel Pit Lakes in the Lower Windrush Valley (Oxfordshire)* Lower Windrush Valley Project.

3. WeBS Coverage in the LWVP area

There are around 60 gravel pit lakes in the Lower Windrush Valley Project area. 51 of these, named in Annex 3 below, are delineated by the WeBS scheme. Of these, 24 are currently counted and 27 are 'vacant'. These lakes are shown in Figure 1 below.

All the 'vacant' lakes are currently considered to be of Medium High priority for coverage but it is known that several have only small numbers of wildfowl which are unlikely to influence overall peak mean counts. It is felt that some of the lakes around West Oxfordshire Sailing Club would make a difference to overall count totals (John Melling *pers comm*). Some of the lower interest pits are sometimes counted when accessing other pits.

One possibility would be to re-prioritise all the pits then aim to count all the High priority sites on core count days – September to March – and all other sites at agreed regular intervals (eg annually; every three years; or even on a rolling programme of sub-areas) so confirming or revising the ranking.

It has been noted that 'lakes' 16a and 17v (labelled as 'vacant' sites) are no longer lakes (Lucy Kennery *pers comm*).

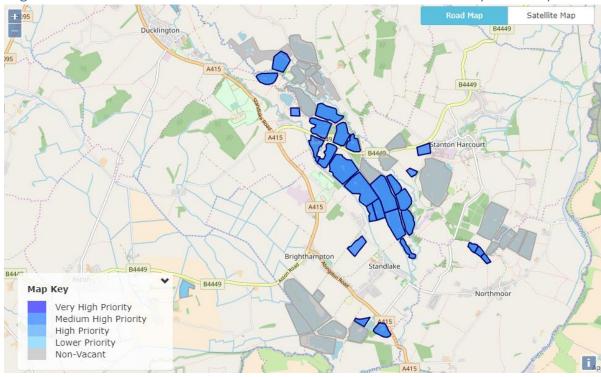


Figure 1: Vacant Sites for WeBS Counts in the Lower Windrush Valley as at July 2018

It seems probable that if count coverage were to be increased then the perceived overall importance of the Lower Windrush Valley Project area for wintering waterbirds would increase.

4. LWVP Reserves in Context

The LWVP maintains two nature reserves in the Project area: Standlake Common and Rushy Common.

Gravel extraction at Standlake Common was completed in 2000. Oxfordshire County Council worked in partnership with the mineral company and the landowner to establish a mosaic of wetland habitats on this 25ha site, and management is now carried out by LWVP. The lake has very gently sloping banks with gravel beaches and areas of shallows that attract ducks and wading birds as well as supporting a diversity of aquatic plants. A number of islands also provide refuges and safe nesting sites for many birds. The reed bed attracts smaller birds such as the reed bunting and a variety of insects.

Rushy Common Nature Reserve is a 30ha site with a lake and two ponds that are being managed for the benefit of wildlife. Public access is not permitted across the reserve but the bird hide on the southern shore offers good views across the site and is accessible to wheelchair users. In addition, a bird viewing screen, installed in 2016, allows bird watchers and wildlife enthusiasts to see a part of the reserve not easily viewable from the current hide.

Annex 4 shows the mean peak WeBS counts for Standlake Common and Rushy Common. Both sites make a significant contribution to total winter wildfowl numbers. Standlake Common is one of the most important sites in the area for Teal, Wigeon, Gadwall and Coot. Rushy Common holds an appreciable proportion of the area's population of Shoveler.

5. Recommendations

| No | Recommendation | Lead person | Timescale |
|----|---|-------------|-----------|
| 1 | The LWVP area should continue to be described in any | LWVP | Ongoing |
| | publications, communications, funding bids etc as 'nationally | Project | |
| | important for wintering wildfowl'. This should enhance the | Manager | |
| | reputation of the area for nature conservation and encourage | | |
| | stakeholders (local residents, recreational users of the area, | | |
| | birdwatchers etc) to view the area more holistically, rather | | |
| | than as a collection of disconnected water bodies. | | |
| 2a | Measures should be taken to increase WeBS count coverage to | Local WeBS | To be |
| | the 'vacant' lakes shown in Annex 3. This should increase the | organiser | agreed |
| | sense of community and connectedness amongst site owners | supported | |
| | and managers and if it results in elevated bird counts it may | by LWVP, | |
| | further enhance the reputation of the LWVP area for nature | OOS and | |
| | conservation. | possibly | |
| 2b | If coverage is increased it is recommended that the current | West | |
| | prioritisation shown in Annex 3 is reviewed to ensure that any | Oxfordshire | |
| | new counters are guided to the most productive sites first. | Field Club | |
| | Anecdotally it is reported that one counter gave up counting | | |
| | due to lack of birds. | | |
| 3 | Measures should continue be taken to increase understanding | LWVP | Ongoing |
| | and awareness of the importance of the LWVP area for | Project | |
| | wintering birds amongst key stakeholders. This could include a | Manager | |
| | community engagement programme to cover a range of | | |
| | possible approaches including | | |
| | talks to the LWV Forum | | |
| | visits to the Project's reserves | | |
| | guided walks | | |
| | news on the Project website | | |
| 4 | Witney Lake should be added to the list of named sites | BTO/ Local | To be |
| | covered by the 'Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits' WeBS site. | WeBS | agreed |
| | The Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits is an aggregate site | organiser | |
| | consisting of all the main lakes between Witney and | | |
| | Newbridge, with the exception of Witney Lake. Until recently | | |
| | Witney Lake was geographically separated from the often- | | |
| | contiguous pits elsewhere in the valley. With Gill Mill coming | | |
| | on-line it is increasingly less isolated, though if incorporated it | | |
| | would still require a separate counter(s). This is a relatively | | |
| | low priority since it is expected that including Witney Lake | | |
| | would make little difference to overall species totals. | | |

Annex 1: How 1% Species Thresholds are Calculated for Identifying Sites of International or National Importance.

The following extract from the BTO web site at https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/webs/data/species-threshold-levels describes how 1% species thresholds are agreed:

Species Threshold Levels

Any site recognised as being of international ornithological importance is considered for classification as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC/79/409), whilst a site recognised as an internationally important wetland qualifies for designation as a Ramsar site under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat.

Criteria for assessing the international importance of wetlands have been agreed by the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention Bureau 1988). Under criterion 6, a wetland is considered internationally important if it regularly holds at least 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird, while criterion 5 states that any site regularly supporting 20,000 or more waterbirds also qualifies. Britain and Ireland's wildfowl belong, in most cases, to the northwest European population and the waders to the east Atlantic flyway population (Wetlands International 2012). A wetland in Britain is considered nationally important if it regularly holds 1% or more of the estimated British population of one species or subspecies of waterbird, and in Northern Ireland important in an all-Ireland context if it holds 1% or more of the estimated all-Ireland population. The 1% thresholds for British, all-Ireland and international waterbird populations, where known, are listed in Table A1. Thus, any site regularly supporting at least this number of birds potentially qualifies for designation under national legislation, or the EC Birds Directive or Ramsar Convention. The international population for each species and subspecies is also specified in the table. However, it should be noted that, where 1% of the national population is less than 50 birds, 50 is normally used as a minimum qualifying threshold for the designation of sites of national or international importance.

It was agreed at the meeting of the Ramsar Convention in Brisbane that population estimates will be reviewed by Wetlands International every three years and 1% thresholds revised every nine years (Rose & Stroud 1994; Ramsar Resolution VI.4). 1% thresholds have not been derived for introduced species since protected sites would not be identified for these birds. Sources of qualifying levels represent the most up-to-date figures following recent reviews: for wildfowl and waders in Britain see Musgrove et al. (2011); for gulls in Britain see Banks et al. (2007); for all-Ireland importance see Crowe & Holt (2013). International criteria follow Wetlands International (2012). It should be noted that for some populations, where the British total is the international total, the precise figure given for the estimates may differ because of different rounding conventions applied in the relevant publications.

Annex 2: Mean Peak WeBS Counts for Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits and Rushy Common

| Species | 5 Year Mean Peak Combined WeBS counts for all counted sites in LWVP Area (LWVGP's and Rushy Common) to winter 2015/16 | 1% Great Britain population | LWVP combined count as % GB population | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Black-headed Gull | 613 | | | |
| Black-tailed Godwit | 3 | | | |
| Canada Goose | 375 | | | |
| Common Gull | 15 | | | |
| Common Tern | 10 | | | |
| Coot | 1,443 | 1800 | 0.8 | |
| Cormorant | 169 | 350 | 0.48 | |
| Curlew | 1 | | | |
| Egyptian Goose | 3 | | | |
| Gadwall | 291 | 250 | 1.16 | |
| Golden Plover | 37 | | | |
| Goldeneye | 24 | | | |
| Goosander | 14 | | | |
| Great Black-backed Gull | 7 | | | |
| Great Crested Grebe | 72 | 190 | 0.37 | |
| Green Sandpiper | 2 | | | |
| Grey Heron | 27 | | | |
| Greylag Goose (feral) | 264 | | | |
| Herring Gull | 70 | | | |
| Kingfisher | 2 | | | |
| Lapwing | 208 | | | |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | 519 | 1200 | 0.43 | |
| Little Egret | 17 | | | |
| Little Grebe | 12 | | | |
| Mallard | 415 | | | |
| Mallard (domestic) | 12 | | | |
| Moorhen | 38 | | | |
| Mute Swan | 122 | | | |
| Oystercatcher | 12 | | | |
| Pintail | 76 | | | |
| Pochard | 209 | 380 | 0.55 | |
| Red-crested Pochard | 136 | | | |
| Redshank | 1 | | | |
| Shoveler | 232 | 180 | 1.32 | |
| Smew | 1 | | | |
| Snipe | 2 | | | |
| Snow Goose | 22 | | | |
| Teal | 808 | 2100 | 0.38 | |
| Tufted Duck | 507 | 1100 | 0.46 | |
| Water Rail | 1 | | | |
| Wigeon | 1,674 | 4400 | 0.38 | |
| Wood Sandpiper | 1 | | | |
| Yellow-legged Gull | 10 | | | |

Annex 3: Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits WeBS Count Locations and Coverage as at July 2018

Source: WeBS Online

| Name of Lake | Pit Reference | WeBS Priority for | Existing | |
|---|---------------|-------------------|----------|--|
| Name of Lake | Pit Reference | Coverage | Coverage | |
| Back's Lake | Pit 12 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Barnes Lake | Pit 31 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Christ Church Lake | Pit 25 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Darlow Water | Pit 5 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Dix Pit | Pit 16 | ŭ | | |
| | Pit 33 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Downs Road Lake | | Lower | Vacant | |
| Gill Mill Lake | Pit 59 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Guys Lakes (1) | | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Guys Lakes (2) | | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Guys Lakes (3) | | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Hardwick North | - | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Lincoln Lake | Pit 26 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Vicarage Pit | Pit 8 | Lower | Counted | |
| Vauxhall Pit | Pit 9 | Lower | Counted | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - | | Medium High | Counted | |
| Conservation Pond | | | | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - Lake 16a | Pit 16a | Medium High | Vacant | |
| (no longer present) | | | | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - Lake 60 | Pit 60 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 1 | Pit 1 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 10 | Pit 10 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 11 | Pit 11 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 2 | Pit 2 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 21 | Pit 21 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 22 | Pit 22 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 23 | Pit 23 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 26 | Pit 26 | Lower | Counted | |
| Standlake Common | Pit 29 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 3 | Pit 3 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 30 | Pit 30 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Hunters Corner | Pit 32 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 4 | Pit 4 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 6 | Pit 6 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 65 | Pit 65 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Conveyor Belt Lake | Pit 66 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Conservation Lake | Pit 67 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Amenity Lake | Pit 68 | Medium High | Counted | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No 7 | Pit 7 | Lower | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No. 35 | Pit 35 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No.36 | Pit 36 | Medium High | Vacant | |
| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - No.36 Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - Pit 17 | Pit 17 | Medium High- | Vacant | |
| (no longer present) | FIL 1/ | ivieululli nigii- | Vacaill | |
| (no longer present) | | | | |

| Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits - Sand | - | Medium High | Counted |
|--|--------|-------------|---------|
| Martin Lake | | | |
| (Graham Lake | Pit 72 | Medium High | Vacant |
| Claire Lake | Pit 84 | Medium High | Vacant |
| Rushy Common | Pit 69 | Medium High | Counted |
| Shifford Lake | Pit 38 | Medium High | Counted |
| States Lagoon | Pit 34 | Lower | Vacant |
| Stoneacre Lake | Pit 18 | Medium High | Counted |
| Three T's Pit | Pit 27 | Medium High | Counted |
| Watkin's Farm (W) | Pit 61 | Medium High | Counted |
| Watkins Farm Lake (E) | Pit 58 | Medium High | Counted |
| Willow Pool | Pit 24 | Medium High | Counted |
| Windsurfing Lake | Pit 28 | Medium High | Counted |

Annex 4: Mean Peak WeBS Counts for Lower Windrush Valley Project Reserves in 5 years to 2015/16

| Species | Rushy Common 5 yr avg to 2015/16 | Standlake Common 5 yr avg to 2015/16 | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Black-headed Gull | 187 | 179 | | |
| Black-tailed Godwit | | | | |
| Canada Goose | 17 | 117 | | |
| Common Gull | | | | |
| Common Tern | | | | |
| Coot | 113 | 228 | | |
| Cormorant | 15 | 15 | | |
| Curlew | | | | |
| Egyptian Goose | 0 | | | |
| Gadwall | 12 | 54 | | |
| Golden Plover | 23 | | | |
| Goldeneye | 3 | 3 | | |
| Goosander | | 9 | | |
| Great Black-backed Gull | 1 | | | |
| Great Crested Grebe | 9 | 8 | | |
| Green Sandpiper | | 1 | | |
| Grey Heron | 2 | 3 | | |
| Greylag Goose (feral) | 7 | 144 | | |
| Herring Gull | 4 | | | |
| Kingfisher | | | | |
| Lapwing | 91 | 45 | | |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | 36 | 34 | | |
| Little Egret | 1 | 2 | | |
| Little Grebe | 5 | 1 | | |
| Mallard | 50 | 114 | | |
| Mallard (domestic) | | | | |
| Moorhen | 5 | 6 | | |
| Mute Swan | 8 | 50 | | |
| Oystercatcher | 2 | 1 | | |
| Pintail | 0 | 63 | | |
| Pochard | 8 | 18 | | |
| Red-crested Pochard | 6 | | | |
| Redshank | 0 | | | |
| Shoveler | 20 | 13 | | |
| Smew | | 1 | | |
| Snipe | 0 | 1 | | |
| Snow Goose | | | | |
| Teal | 29 | 549 | | |
| Tufted Duck | 39 | 66 | | |
| Water Rail | | | | |
| Wigeon | 99 | 529 | | |
| Wood Sandpiper | | | | |
| Yellow-legged Gull | | 1 | | |
| | | | | |

Annex 5: Extract from BMERC/TVERC (2009) Criteria for the Selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire

5.7.Aii. Notable birds - non-breeding

Any site that frequently supports significant non-breeding numbers of any of the Notable Species listed in Table 5.7.Aii, may be considered for Wildlife Site status under species criterion 5.7.Aii.

"Supporting" may be by way of providing any one or more of feeding, resting, or roosting provision. "Significant numbers" are numbers that are equal to or exceed the threshold numbers given for each species in Table 5.7.Aii. "Frequently" will be taken to mean that at least the threshold numbers have been recorded on several occasions, and in more than two seasons, in the last five years.

A species would be regarded as no longer being supported at a site in significant numbers, if a 3-year period elapsed without such numbers of the species being recorded. However, to ensure this not simply due to lack of survey at appropriate time, before removal of any previously designated LWS on the basis of "Birds no longer supported at a site", at least one new survey should be undertaken in appropriate weather at the relevant time of year and time of day.

Birds in Table 5.7.Aii are species that:

- occur in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire or Oxfordshire outside the breeding season
- and which are any one or more of:
 - threatened in Europe (ET); defined as those birds listed in Annex 1 of the European Birds Directive or classed as migratory waterfowl under the Directive.
 - having significant national non-breeding population (SNPn) (defined as >20% of the European wintering population occurring in Great Britain, as listed on the Amber-list of BOCC)
 - having significant county non-breeding population (SCPn)
 - considered to be County Scarce as non-breeding birds (CSn)

Table 5.7.Aii

| Species | Minimum | ET | SNPn | SCPn | CSn | Comments |
|---------------------|---------|----|------|------|-----|----------|
| | number. | | | | | |
| Little grebe | | Υ | | | | |
| Great crested grebe | | Υ | | | | |
| Cormorant | | Υ | Υ | | | |
| Bittern | 1 | Υ | Υ | | Υ | |
| Bewick's Swan | 2 | Υ | Υ | | Υ | |
| Whooper Swan | 2 | Υ | Υ | | Υ | |
| Wigeon | | Υ | Υ | | | |
| Gadwall | 100 | Υ | Υ | Υ | | |
| Teal | 200 | Υ | Υ | Υ | | |
| Pintail | | Υ | Υ | | | |
| Shoveler | 100 | Υ | Υ | Υ | | |
| Pochard | | Υ | Υ | | | |
| Tufted duck | | Υ | | | | |

| Goldeneye | | Υ | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Goosander | | Y | | | |
| Smew | 2 | Υ | | Y | |
| Red kite | | Y | | | Site to include known roost site |
| Marsh harrier | | Y | | Y | Site to include known roost site |
| Hen Harrier | 1 | Y | Y | Y | Site to include known roost site |
| Merlin | 1 | Y | | Υ | Site to include known roost site |
| Peregrine | 2 | Y | | Y | Site to include known roost site |
| Water Rail | 2 | | | Y | |
| Snipe | | Υ | | | |
| Long-eared Owl | 1 | | | Υ | |
| Short-eared Owl | 2 | Υ | | | |
| Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | 1 | | Υ | | |
| Woodlark | 2 | Y | Υ | Y | |
| Cetti's Warbler | 1 | | | Y | |
| Dartford Warbler | 2 | Υ | | Y | |

(NB: TVERC will be reviewing these criteria and thresholds but this has not been done at the time of writing in July 2018).

Annex 6: Map of the Lower Windrush Valley Project Area and Gravel Pit Lakes, 2006

