



**ENTEGRO**

**ESG FIBRUS - MILLOM**

**REPORT TO INFORM HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT**

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REPORT TO INFORM HABITATS REGULATIONS ASESSMENT

JUNE 2025

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DRAWINGS	TITLE	SCALE
ST21363-OLT40-B-001	OLT 40 Millom-Statutory Designated Sites	1:100,000@A3

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong LLP (WA) was appointed by Entegro to produce a report to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to consider a proposed upgrade of fibre optic cabling infrastructure within Millom, within the county of Cumbria and Lake District. The site assessed within this report (see Section 1.2) is referred to as an Optical Line Terminal (OLT) (hereafter referred to as the 'Project'). The site will continue to be assessed as the design is updated and made available to WA and this report will be updated accordingly.

1.1.2 The project has been assessed both in isolation and in-combination with other plans and projects. The appropriate Local Plan, where each Project is located, has been used as the principal source of information for in-combination assessments (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Project Details		
OLT Name	OLT Number	Relevant Local Plan
Millom	OLT40	Copeland Local Plan 2021 - 2038 (now Cumberland) Lake District National Park 2020 – 2035

1.1.3 The assessment is informed by the fibre optic infrastructure upgrade proposals in the form of GIS Shapefiles (Entegro, 2025), the Fibrus Working Specifications and high-level desktop assessment undertaken by WA; ST21363 Millom (WA, 2025).

1.1.4 The Fibrus Working Specifications are listed below:

- ACC-SPC-C001 – Poling Work Specification Version 1.2
- ACC-SPC-C002 – Poling Stability Specification Version 1.2
- ACC-SPC-C006 - Network Build Ducting Specification V1.1
- CPL-PRO-O002 Fibrus Pole Data Capture Guidance
- Specification\_For\_Concrete\_Box\_Construction\_A3Drawings\_ACCSPCC004a
- Specification\_for\_Concrete\_Joint\_Box\_Construction\_ACCSPC004
- Specification\_Modular\_Box\_ACCSPC005

## 1.2 Site Description & Context

1.2.1 The Project consist of a network of newly proposed and existing overground and underground fibre optic cable infrastructure, and includes ducts, chambers and poles. The network covers small to large areas around towns, villages and rural areas.

1.2.2 The works will take place in and around the towns/villages of Millom, Kirksanton, Whicham, Whitbeck, Bootle, Bootle Station and Corney, as well as the A595 and other highways that connect the above.

## 1.3 Proximity to European Sites

1.3.1 There is one location where the works are located within the boundary of a European Site. There are numerous locations where works are scheduled to take place in close proximity or adjacent to European Sites. Some locations within the Project are located adjacent to or within habitats or cross over watercourse that are ecologically connected to a European Site.

1.3.2 The location of the Project relative to the European Sites is displayed on drawing ST21363-OLT40-B-001.

## 1.4 Reason for this HRA

1.4.1 The UK Government has published guidance (*Guidance on the use of Habitats Regulations Assessment*, July 2019) which sets out advice provided in the Planning Inspectorate's *Habitats Regulations Assessment relevant to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (Advice Note 10)*<sup>1</sup>.

1.4.2 The Competent Authority (in this case the Local Planning Authority) must comply with Regulation 63(1) of the Habitat Regulations 2017, as follows:

*"63 (1) A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for a plan or project which:*

*(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and*

*(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.*

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<sup>1</sup> Although the project to which this report related is not an NSIP, the published advice remains relevant.

*Must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives."*

1.4.3 Advice Note 10 clarifies the process that should be followed:

- Stage 1 - Screening: Screening for LSEs. If no LSEs are identified, either in isolation or in combination with other plans or projects, then an appropriate assessment will not be required and the project may take place, subject to grant of any other permissions or consents;
- Stage 2 - Appropriate Assessment: If Stage 1 identifies LSEs [or if LSEs cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information], it is necessary to determine if the project, either individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, will adversely affect any European sites(s), in view of the site(s') conservation objectives;
- Stage 3 - Assessment of alternatives: A consideration of alternative solutions is required if it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the affected European site(s); and
- Stage 4 - Consideration of IROPI: If there are no alternative solutions, an Assessment of Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) is required.

1.4.4 This report relates only to Stage 1.

## 2 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 As set out above, HRA can be broken down into discrete stages, each of which effectively culminates in a test. The stages are sequential, and it is only necessary to progress to the following stage if a test is failed. Only the first stage is relevant to this report, and the approach to Stage 1 (Screening) is set out below:

### 2.2 Stage 1 – Likely Significant Effect Test (Screening)

2.2.1 The purpose of the Screening test is to decide:

- Is the Project, either alone or in combination with other relevant projects and plans, likely to result in a significant adverse effect upon European sites?

2.2.2 If it can be demonstrated that significant effects are unlikely, no further assessment is required. As a result of the People over Wind C-323/17 (Court of Justice of European Union, 12 April 2018 (ECJ)) the ECJ have clarified that *...it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of the measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site.*

2.2.3 It is a requirement of the Regulations that the impacts of any plans or projects being assessed are not considered in isolation but in combination with other plans and projects that may also be affecting the European site(s) in question. As set out earlier in Table 1, the Copeland and Lake District National Park Local Plans are considered the major point of information for the in-combination assessment

### 3 STAGE 1 – SCREENING OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

#### 3.1 Screening

3.1.1 The qualifying features of the internationally designated sites of relevance to this Project is discussed in Table 2 below. It also identifies the distance and direction from the European Site.

Table 2. Designated Sites Information		
European Designation	Reasons for designation	Distance/Direction from OLT
<p><b>Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features.</li> <li>• The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features.</li> <li>• The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely.</li> <li>• The population of each of the qualifying features.</li> <li>• The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Qualifying species:</b> The site is designated under Article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northern Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i></li> <li>• Pink-footed goose <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i></li> <li>• Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i></li> <li>• Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i></li> <li>• Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i></li> <li>• Red knot <i>Calidris canutus</i></li> <li>• Common ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i></li> <li>• Whooper swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i></li> <li>• Little egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i></li> <li>• Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i></li> <li>• Herring gull <i>Larus argentatus</i></li> <li>• Common gull <i>Larus canus</i></li> <li>• Lesser black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus</i></li> <li>• Mediterranean gull <i>Larus melanocephalus</i></li> <li>• Bar-tailed godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i></li> <li>• Eurasian curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i></li> <li>• Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i></li> </ul>	<p>0.0km (Project is within this designation at two locations within a holiday lodge park within Steel Green - NGR: SD 17119 78822 and SD 17009 78782)</p>



Table 2. Designated Sites Information		
European Designation	Reasons for designation	Distance/Direction from OLT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Golden plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i></li> <li>Grey plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i></li> <li>Little tern <i>Sterna albirfrons</i></li> <li>Common tern <i>Sternua Hirundo</i></li> <li>Sandwich tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i></li> <li>Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i></li> <li>Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Morecambe Bay SAC</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species.</li> <li>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats.</li> <li>The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species.</li> <li>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Qualifying habitats:</b> The site is designated under Article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estuaries</li> <li>Mudflats and sandflat not covered by seawater at low tide</li> <li>Large shallow inlets and bays</li> <li>Perennial vegetation of stony banks</li> <li>Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand</li> <li>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)</li> <li>"Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes")"</li> <li>"Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")"* Priority feature</li> <li>Humid dune slacks</li> </ul> <p>The site also qualifies, but is not primary reason for selection, for the following habitat listed in Annex I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time</li> <li>Coastal lagoons * Priority feature</li> <li>Reefs</li> <li>Embryonic shifting dunes</li> </ul>	<p>0.0km (Project is within this designation at two locations within a holiday lodge park within Steel Green - NGR: SD 17119 78822 and SD 17009 78782)</p>

Table 2. Designated Sites Information		
European Designation	Reasons for designation	Distance/Direction from OLT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The populations of qualifying species.</li> <li>The distribution of qualifying species within the site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) * Priority feature</li> <li>Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Qualifying species:</b> The site is designated under Article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Morecambe Bay Ramsar</b></p> <p>There are no conservation objectives currently proposed for the Ramsar designation.</p>	<p>This designation qualifies under Ramsar criterion 4, 5 and 6 of the Ramsar Convention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Criterion 4</b> – The site is a staging area for migratory waterfowl including internationally important numbers of passage ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>.</li> <li><b>Criterion 5</b> – Assemblages of international importance, species with peak counts in winter: 223709 waterfowl (5-year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003).</li> <li><b>Criterion 6</b> – species regularly supported during the breeding season: lesser black-backed gull, herring gull and sandwich tern.</li> <li><b>Criterion 6</b> – species with peak counts in spring/autumn: cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>, shelduck, northern pintail, common eider <i>Somateria mollissima</i>, oystercatcher, ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>, grey plover, sanderling, Eurasian curlew, common redshank, turnstone, lesser black-backed gull, great crested grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>, pink-footed goose, Eurasian wigeon <i>Anas Penelope</i>, common goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>, red-breasted merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>, golden plover, northern lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>, red knot, dunlin and bar-tailed godwit.</li> </ul>	<p>0.0km (Project is within this designation at two locations within a holiday lodge park within Steel Green - NGR: SD 17119 78822 and SD 17009 78782)</p>
<p><b>Drigg Coast SAC</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and</p>	<p><b>Qualifying habitats:</b> The site is designated under Article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estuaries</li> <li>Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) * Priority feature</li> </ul>	<p>700m north of works located at SD 08026 90789</p>

Table 2. Designated Sites Information		
European Designation	Reasons for designation	Distance/Direction from OLT
<p>ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species.</li> <li>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats.</li> <li>The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species.</li> <li>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely.</li> <li>The populations of qualifying species.</li> <li>The distribution of qualifying species within the site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>)</li> </ul> <p>The site also qualifies, but is not primary reason for selection, for the following habitat listed in Annex I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mudflats and sandflat not covered by seawater at low tide</li> <li>Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand</li> <li>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)</li> <li>Embryonic shifting dunes</li> <li>"Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes")"</li> <li>"Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")"* Priority feature</li> <li>Humid dune slacks</li> </ul>	
<b>Duddon Mosses SAC</b>	<p>The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active raised bogs</li> <li>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration</li> </ul>	~8km east of the proposed works.

## 4 IMPACT PATHWAYS

### 4.1 Identifying Potential Pathways of Impact

4.1.1 In carrying out an HRA, it is important to determine the various ways in which the Project in question can impact on European Sites (including any functionally linked land) by following the pathways along which development can be connected with those sites, in some cases many kilometres distant. Briefly defined, pathways are routes by which a change in activity associated with a development can lead to an effect upon a European Site.

4.1.2 Only credible and likely impact pathways have been considered within this assessment and are listed below in Table 3. Impacts that are excluded in Table 1 are not discussed further in this report.

Table 3. Potential Impacts				
European Designation	Disturbance	Direct habitat loss	Degradation of habitat	Direct Harm to Fauna
Morecambe Bay SPA	✓	✓	✓	X
Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Ramsar	✓	✓	✓	X
Morecambe Bay SAC	X	✓	✓	X
Drigg Coast SAC	X	X	X	X
Duddon Mosses SAC	X	X	X	X

4.1.3 A description of each of the potential impacts, and the pathways via which they could occur, and whether a significant effect is likely to arise, is detailed below in Table 4.

**Table 4: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects**

Potential Effect on European Site	Impact Type	Is a Significant Effect likely to occur?
Disturbance to European site qualifying species (visual, vibrations or noise)	The planned works within this Project are located within the boundary of the overlapping designations of Morecambe Bay SPA and Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Ramsar at two locations within a holiday lodge park within Steel Green - NGR: SD 17119 78822 and SD 17009 78782. The proposed works are for a newly proposed chamber at each of the two locations. As the works are temporary and minor, and situated within an operational holiday park, they are considered unlikely to cause disturbance to the qualifying features of the SPA. Therefore, as disturbance is unlikely to occur, there can be no significant effect.	No
Direct loss of habitat within the boundary of a European site	As mentioned above, the works within this Project are located within the boundary of the overlapping designations of Morecambe Bay SPA and Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Ramsar, as well as Morecambe Bay SAC at two locations within a holiday lodge park within Steel Green - NGR: SD 17119 78822 and SD 17009 78782. The works within these locations should be located within the road of the holiday park or the adjacent amenity grassland. The online imagery (from 2025) and street view (from 2011) indicate that qualifying habitats are not present within the adjacent amenity grassland at the above locations. The qualifying habitats are also unlikely to be present in these locations given the aquatic and environmental conditions required to support the habitat. Therefore, a significant effect is not likely.	No
Degradation to habitat within the boundary of a European site	<p>As detailed above, there are works within this Project that are located within the boundaries of the overlapping designations of Morecambe Bay SPA, Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Ramsar and Morecambe Bay SAC. The works have the potential to adversely impact qualifying habitats through degradation via pathways such as incorrect storage of materials, contractors straying from the working area or pollution (such as dust or fuel spills).</p> <p>As the works are minor and temporary, if any road closures, diversions or traffic management are required, this is not anticipated to create significant increases in nitrogen deposition than there currently is produced from traffic levels. The additional traffic movements associated with the works within the Project will be</p>	No

**Table 4: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects**

Potential Effect on European Site	Impact Type	Is a Significant Effect likely to occur?
	<p>minimal and restricted to a very low number of construction vehicles operating for short periods.</p> <p>Works within this Project are located within European sites along the coastline, in close proximity to watercourses that is connected upstream of a European site at several locations: SD 13171 82028, SD0907186704, SD1151884627 and SD1078088017. These watercourses are located upstream of the European sites assessed within this report, and flow directly into them. If any pollution run-off occurs during construction works, then this could flow directly into or downstream via a connected watercourse to the European sites and have adverse impacts upon the qualifying species or the habitats they depend on.</p> <p>Standard pollution prevention measures employed on the majority of construction sites across the UK, should eliminate the risk of these impacts occurring. Such measures should be detailed in a Construction Environment Management Plan and briefed to all contractors ahead of works.</p> <p>As a result of the above, a significant effect is not likely.</p>	

*In-combination Impacts from OLT40*

- 4.1.4 When the works within this Project are considered in combination with the policies within the local plans described at Table 1, it is considered there are no likely significant effects arising from this Project. Relevant potential significant effects identified within each supporting HRA are considered below in Table 5.

Table 5: Assessment of in-combination effects within OLT09 Rural on European sites.		
Effects considered within the Local Plan HRA	Assessment of in-combination effects	In-combination Effects with Local Plan
Recreational pressures	Not an LSE within this Assessment and the Project will not result in any increases of recreational pressures.	No effects
Changing water quality (run-off into watercourses linked to a European Site)	Potential adverse effects to either Morecambe Bay SPA, Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Ramsar and Morecambe Bay SAC through surface water run-off or accidental pollution into connected watercourses during construction was identified within this assessment. Though the supporting HRA does not identify any impacts through this pathway upon either SAC when mitigation is implemented.	No effect
Loss of or disturbance to off-site supporting habitats	No impacts identified within Stage 1 of this assessment. Additionally, within the supporting Local Plan HRA, all SAC designations were screened out.	No effect
Air quality – nitrogen emissions	The Project will only result in a very minor increase in vehicles related to the construction works. It will not result in increased vehicle emissions through other means (recreation, new employment or new industry). The Copeland HRA identifies potential LSE of increased nitrogen emissions, but only for policies that relate to housing and employment policies.	No effect

## 5 CONCLUSIONS OF ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 Conclusion

5.1.1 This HRA assessment considers the proposed fibre optic infrastructure upgrade works within OLT40 as part of 'Project Daffodil', upon the following European sites: Morecambe Bay SPA, Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Ramsar and Morecambe Bay SAC. Drigg Coast SAC was scoped out of the assessment due to negligible risk of impacts arising from the proposed works and significant distance from the proposed works.

5.1.2 The following potential impacts were screened out:

- Direct loss of habitat within a European Site;
- Indirect loss or degradation of habitat within a European Site; and
- Harm to qualifying fauna.

5.1.3 This is on the assumption that best practise construction measures will be set out in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (or similar document) by an appropriately skilled ecologist.



## 6 REFERENCES

Allerdale Borough Council (2014) Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1). [https://www-cloudfront.allerdale.gov.uk/media/filer\\_public/75/ab/75ab8862-bdee-4f3d-850d-2735286da5c1/adopted\\_allerdale\\_local\\_plan\\_part\\_1\\_-\\_final\\_version\\_151014.pdf](https://www-cloudfront.allerdale.gov.uk/media/filer_public/75/ab/75ab8862-bdee-4f3d-850d-2735286da5c1/adopted_allerdale_local_plan_part_1_-_final_version_151014.pdf)

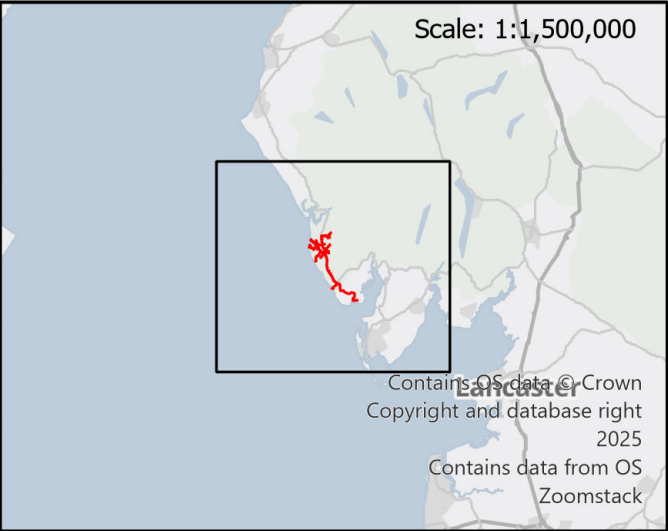
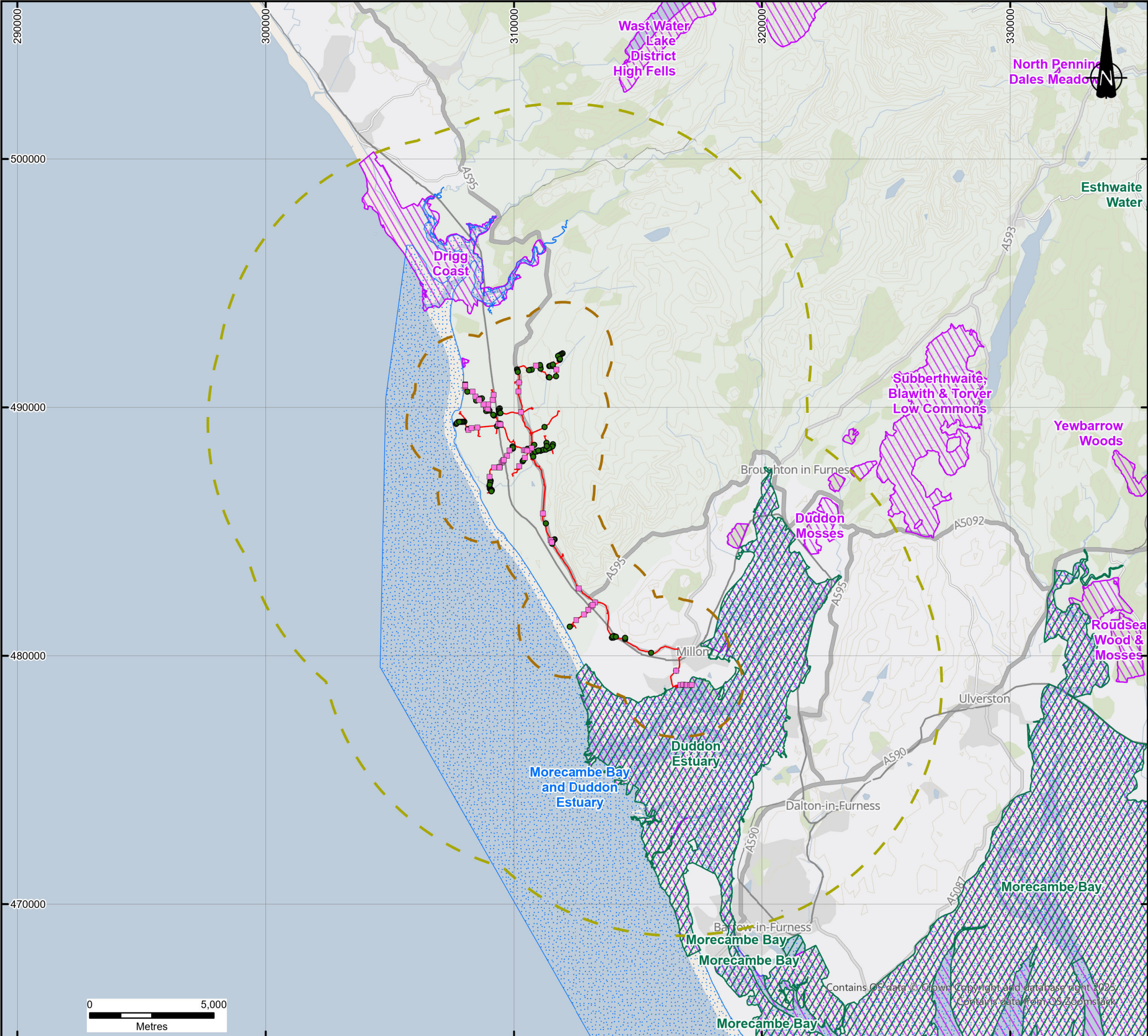
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Wardell Armstrong (2025) GM13161 Millom Desk Study Technical Note.

## DRAWINGS





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**KEY**

- Special Areas of Conservation
- Special Protection Areas
- Ramsar
- OLT40 10km from Planned Works
- OLT40 2km from Planned Works
- OLT40 Planned Fibre Cable
- OLT40 Planned Fibre Duct
- OLT40 Planned Chambers
- OLT40 Planned Poles

**Notes:**

Boundaries are indicative.

Natural England copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2025.

REVISION	DETAILS		DATE	DRAWN	CHK'D	APP'D
CLIENT						
ENTEGRO LTD						
PROJECT						
EGS FIBRUS						
DRAWING TITLE						
OLT40 MILLOM- STATUTORY DESIGNATED SITES						
DRG No.			REV	SUIT. CODE		
ST21363-OLT40-B-001			A	--		
DRG SIZE		SCALE	DATE			
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