



TERENCE
O'ROURKE

**Scott Young
Senior Project Manager (Infrastructure)
New Homes and Communities
Countryside Properties
Countryside House
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2 June 2016

Our Reference: 1806/Y/16

Dear Scott

Reference: Skylark survey plots KME, KMF, KMG and local centre

As you know I undertook a survey of plots KME, KMF, KMG and the local centre plot on Wednesday 25th May. The survey work commenced at 05:45 and finished at 08:00. The weather was overcast with a slight breeze, ideal for surveying skylark.

Previous monitoring work undertaken by Countryside Properties has recorded breeding skylark on these plots since construction began at Kingsmere. The areas of disturbed ground and short grassland provide excellent breeding conditions for this species. As expected the plots continue to support breeding skylark at relatively high densities. This is probably due to the diminishing extent of other suitable habitat across the wider site as build-out progresses.

I would estimate that the plots in question currently support a minimum of six pairs of skylark, with two territories encompassing parts of KMF, three territories on KME (at least one extending onto the local centre plot) and a pair of birds using KMG.

Skylark are multi-brooded, with mid-May coinciding with the peak time for first clutches of eggs to be laid. It can be assumed that territorial activity at this time of the year is related to breeding activity. From egg laying it typically takes around four weeks for young to fledge (leave the nest). The nesting season can extend well into August if ground conditions remain suitable.

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Given we are now well into the breeding season it would be advisable that no construction works are undertaken on these sites until the end of August to avoid the potential of an offence being committed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended). The Wildlife and Countryside Act makes it an offence to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built and to take or destroy the egg of a wild bird. If necessary, it would be possible to undertake small-scale works such as ground investigation under the supervision of an ecologist.

I trust that the information contained in this letter is sufficient for your requirements; however, if you have any questions relating to the survey or advice given, please do not hesitate to call.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Picksley', is written over a faint, illegible stamp or watermark.

**Jeff Picksley MIEEM
Consultant**