



The Sizewell C Project

9.20 Bird Survey Report - Southern Park and Ride

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1 SUMMARY

1.1 Receptor Status 2020/2021 Summary Overview

1.1.1 This report presents the findings of the 2020/2021 wintering bird surveys undertaken at the proposed southern park & ride at Wickham, one of the associated development sites of the proposed Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station project (hereafter referred to as ‘Sizewell C Project’).

1.1.2 The surveys are part of on-going ecological surveys of the southern park & ride site (the ‘site’), following previous extended Phase 1 habitat surveys undertaken on the site [[APP-395](#)].

1.1.3 The site is located adjacent north of the A12 and comprised arable fields bordered by hedgerows. The site incorporates a section of the A12 and its adjoining roads. The site location is presented in **Figure 1** in **Appendix A**.

1.1.4 The 2020/2021 wintering bird surveys identify that the habitats within the southern park & ride site supported a diverse assemblage of bird species including five Schedule 1 species, nine red listed species, 12 amber listed species and 22 species of no conservation concern.

1.1.5 The main habitats within the site comprise arable fields, small areas of woodland and hedgerows. The site is bordered by two areas of woodland to the west and one to the east. Large flocks of lapwings were seen feeding within fields within and adjacent to the northern extent of the site.

2 OVERVIEW

2.1 The Aims of the Survey Updates

2.1.1 The aim of the surveys was to determine the wintering bird assemblage and to gather spatial data regarding numbers and distribution of birds within the southern park & ride area of the Sizewell C Project.

2.2 Wintering Bird and Waterfowl Surveys 2020/2021

2.2.1 The surveys took place between 25th November 2020 and 17th March 2021, following a designated transect to record the wintering bird assemblage, numbers and spatial distribution. The surveys were undertaken within the southern park & ride area.

- 2.2.2 The 2020/2021 surveys identified that the proposed southern park & ride site supported a range of species of conservation concern commonly associated with arable habitats and a small number of released waterfowl.
- 2.2.3 The site is located adjacent north of the A12 and comprised arable fields bordered by hedgerows. The site incorporates a section of the A12 and its adjoining roads. The site location is presented in **Figure 1** in **Appendix A**. The arable fields, hedgerows and sparse areas of woodland are consistent with the surrounding landscape.
- 2.2.4 No statutory designated sites were identified within 5km of the site. Seven non-statutory County Wildlife Sites (CWSs) were located within 2km, however none of these sites were designated for birds. Full details of the CWSs can be found in the **Volume 4, Appendix 7A of the Environmental Statement (ES)** [[APP-395](#)].
- 2.2.5 The distribution of birds recorded was spread throughout the site, although the main areas supporting passerine wintering birds were field boundary hedgerows and the areas of woodland adjacent west. Large flocks of lapwings were seen feeding within fields within and adjacent to the northernmost field within the site.

3 METHODS

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 Desk study information is fully detailed within the **Volume 4, Chapter 7** and **Volume 4, Appendix 7A of the ES** [[APP-394](#) and [APP-395](#)].

3.2 Field Surveys

- 3.2.1 Transect surveys for wintering bird survey visits were undertaken monthly from November 2020 to March 2021 (inclusive), to record species observed or heard within the site and adjacent habitats. Surveyors walked a predefined transect route once per month. The location and transect route are detailed on **Figure 1** in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2.2 The surveys were undertaken by two teams of two surveyors, [REDACTED], all of whom are competent ornithologists.
- 3.2.3 The surveyors were equipped with binoculars and telescopes to aid identification. Observations were entered onto iPads, with the focus of the surveys being wintering birds. Sightings of all species of importance were

recorded and mapped, using standard British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) species codes. Species of importance includes:

- Species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (Ref. 1).
- Red and Amber listed Birds of Conservation Concern (BOCC) (Ref. 2).
- Species of Principal Importance listed under Section 41 (S41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 (Ref. 3).

3.2.4 Species of no conservation concern were also recorded but were not mapped.

3.2.5 See **Table 1** in **Appendix B** for the full survey details, including surveys dates and times, surveyors, and weather conditions.

3.3 Limitations

3.3.1 No limitations were encountered during the surveys. Full access across the site was permitted and all areas within the site boundary were surveyed on each survey visit.

4 RESULTS

4.1.1 During the 2020/2021 surveys, 44 bird species were recorded. Of the species recorded, five were listed as Schedule 1 (Ref. 1), nine species were included on the BoCC (Ref. 2) red list and 12 on the amber list. Additionally, 11 species were listed under S41 of the NERC Act (Ref. 3) and 22 species of no special conservation concern were recorded. Birds may fall into multiple categories of the above, and as such do not contribute to the total count of species recorded.

4.1.2 The results of the surveys are detailed in **Table 4.1** below, **Table 2** in **Appendix C** and in **Figure 2** to **Figure 6** in **Appendix A**.

Table 4.1: Notable species recorded at Southern Park & Ride (Wickham).

Common Name	Scientific Name	Conser- -vation Status	Sch 1	S41 NERC	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Amber			50	2	15	27	37
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber		✓	0	1	0	0	0
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Amber			6	3	0	12	0
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber		✓	4	3	5	4	2
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Red	✓		1	0	0	1	0
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red		✓	1	0	2	0	0
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber			1	0	0	1	0
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Red		✓	122	0	1	450	0
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Amber			0	0	0	2	0
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Red		✓	81	5	24	21	0
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber			70	12	6	23	5
Marsh harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Amber	✓		2	1	1	0	0
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber			0	0	0	4	0
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Green	✓		0	1	0	1	0
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Red	✓		1	0	2	0	0
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Amber		✓	3	0	0	0	0
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Red			2	24	8	54	7

Common Name	Scientific Name	Conser- -vation Status	Sch 1	S41 NERC	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Amber			0	0	0	0	26
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Red	✓		0	0	1	1	1
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red		✓	63	0	0	0	53
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber			70	3	5	2	1
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red		✓	16	2	1	0	4

- 4.1.3 The results show that the distribution of birds recorded was focused largely within the field areas to the north/ northwest of the A12 with some focus around the woodland blocks to the west of the site boundary. The main areas supporting passerine wintering birds were field boundary hedgerows, however skylarks were observed feeding within and singing (in December, February, and March) above the site and the adjacent arable fields.
- 4.1.4 Lapwings were observed circling and feeding between the field at the northernmost corner of the site and adjacent fields outside of but bordering the site. As well as this, a flock of 122 lapwings were seen foraging within a field outside of the site but to the south of the A12. These recordings are presented in **Figure 5** and **Figure 2** in **Appendix A**, respectively.
- 4.1.5 Of the four recordings of marsh harrier, three were observed foraging on the ground in arable land within the site and one was commuting south east above the site (See **Figure 2**, **Figure 3** and **Figure 4** in **Appendix A**).
- 4.1.6 Two red kites were observed hunting above the site in December and February, as presented in **Figure 3** and **Figure 5** in **Appendix A**, respectively.
- 4.1.7 Gulls were recorded commuting overhead and foraging within the arable fields, both within and in fields adjacent to the site.
- 4.1.8 Redwings and fieldfares were predominantly heard calling from the woodland blocks adjacent west and east of the site, however one fieldfare was observed commuting north east above the site.

- 4.1.9 A number of small flocks of linnets (fewer than 3 birds) were observed commuting above the site, however 124 birds were recorded foraging within the arable fields to the north of the A12 within the site.
- 4.1.10 Two song thrushes were recorded roosting, and singing (in March) in wooded areas outside of but adjacent to the site (as shown in **Figure 5** and **Figure 6** in **Appendix A**, respectively). One song thrush was heard calling from a hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site in January.
- 4.1.11 60 starlings were observed foraging within an arable field adjacent south of the A12, to the south east of the site (as shown in **Figure 2** in **Appendix A**). All other recordings made were of flocks commuting above the south west corner of the site.
- 4.1.12 One yellowhammer was observed foraging within an arable field within the site in January (as shown in **Figure 4** in **Appendix A**). Other yellowhammers recorded were roosting, calling and singing (in March) from within the adjacent woodland areas and field boundary hedgerows.
- 4.1.13 Mallards observed during the surveys were located on a pond within one area of woodland adjacent west of the site. It should be noted that mallards observed within the site were recorded next to a feeder within a woodland adjacent west of the site. It is likely that these birds are purposefully bred and do not constitute a wild population.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1.1 The southern park and ride site supports a range of wintering bird species. Passerines observed on the site were most frequently recorded using, calling and singing from within hedgerows and the woodlands to the west and east of the site, however the arable fields within the site offered a foraging resource for skylarks, linnets and yellowhammers.
- 5.1.2 Three marsh harriers were recorded foraging on the ground in an arable field within the site, north of the A12. (See **Figure 2**, **Figure 3** and **Figure 4** in **Appendix A**). Two red kites were observed hunting above the site in December and February, as presented in **Figure 3** and **Figure 5** in **Appendix A**, respectively.
- 5.1.3 Lapwings were observed circling and feeding between the field at the northernmost corner of the site and adjacent fields outside of but bordering the site (See **Figure 5** in **Appendix A**). As well as this, a flock of 122 lapwings were seen foraging within a field outside of the site but to the south of the A12 (See **Figure 2** in **Appendix A**).

- 5.1.4 Overall, five Schedule 1 species, nine red listed species and 12 amber listed species were identified over the course of the surveys, with 22 species of no special conservation value recorded (as presented in **Appendix C**).
- 5.1.5 The results of the 2020/2021 surveys are largely consistent with those identified in the desk study [[APP-394](#) and [APP-395](#)] results and do not affect the conclusions of the Environment Statement.

REFERENCES

1. Wildlife and Countryside Act, as amended. 1981. (Online) Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents> (Accessed 22 March 2021).
2. Eaton, M.A., Aebisher, N., Brown, A., Hearn, R., Lock, L., Musgrove, A., Noble, D., Stroud, D., and Gregory, R. 2015. BoCC 4: Population status of birds in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man. *British birds* 108:708-746.
3. Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. 2006. Section 41: Species of Principal Importance in England. (Online) Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/section/41> (Accessed 22 March 2021)



SIZEWELL C PROJECT –
SOUTHERN P&R WINTERING BIRD SURVEYS 2020/2021

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

APPENDIX A: DRAWINGS

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

APPENDIX B: SURVEY DETAILS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

- B.1.1. Table 1 below details the survey timings and weather conditions during each survey at the Southern Park & Ride (Wickham). Temperature (T) is measured in Celsius, cloud cover (CC) is measured in Oktas and wind speed (WS) is measured using the Beaufort Scale.
- B.1.2. The surveys were undertaken by lead surveyors [REDACTED] and were assisted by [REDACTED].

Table 1: Survey details for wintering bird surveys at Southern Park & Ride (Wickham) (2020/2021)

Survey Details	November 2020	December 2020	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021
Date	25/11/2020	16/12/2020	20/01/2021	17/02/2021	17/03/2021
Survey timings	09:44 – 10:00	10:15 – 11:30	09:29 – 10:29	08:18 – 09:20	09:00 – 11:00
Surveyors	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Weather conditions	T: 9°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 2 S, no rain, excellent visibility	T: 7°C, CC: 5, WS/direction: 6 SW, no rain, good visibility	T: 9°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 3 S, light drizzle at start, excellent visibility	T: 8°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 2 S, no rain, good visibility	T: 12°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 2 N, no rain, excellent visibility

APPENDIX C: SPECIES LIST – BIRDS WITH NO SPECIAL CONSERVATION CONCERN

Table 2: Peak counts of species of no special conservation concern recorded across the site.

Species	Scientific Name	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	0	7	1	6	1
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	7	9	2	14	5
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	0	2	0	1	0
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	3	4	0	0	0
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	6	67	11	0	4
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	0	0	0	1	0
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	0	0	1	0	0
Goldfinch	<i>Spinus tristis</i>	1	9	0	0	2
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	0	0	0	3	0
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	2	0	3	0	0
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	0	8	0	0	0
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	0	12	0	0	0
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	0	0	1	1	0
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	0	7	0	8	1
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	3	1	1	1	2
Red-legged partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	0	7	0	5	1
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	1	0	3	1	0
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	123	0	1	2	14
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	1	0	0	0	0
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	0	0	0	1	0
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	201	55	13	27	8
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	3	0	3	0	1