



The Sizewell C Project

9.22 Bird Survey Report - Sizewell Link Road

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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 Sizewell link road, part 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 Sizewell link road, following previous extended Phase 1 habitat surveys undertaken on the site [\[APP-461\]](#).
- 1.1.3 The site is approximately 6km in length, and is located approximately 2.7km north west of the existing Sizewell C power Station. Habitats across the site comprise arable fields bordered by hedgerows and are typical of the surrounding intensively cultivated arable landscape. 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 Sizewell link road survey area supported an assemblage of bird species including six Schedule 1 species, 15 red listed species, 13 amber listed species and 31 species of no conservation concern.
- 1.1.5 The main habitats within the survey area comprise arable fields, hedgerows along field boundaries and sparsely distributed areas of broadleaved woodland.

2 OVERVIEW

2.1 The Aims of the Surveys

- 2.1.1 The aim of the surveys was to determine the wintering bird assemblages and to gather spatial data regarding numbers and distribution of birds within the Sizewell link road area of the Sizewell C project.

2.2 Wintering Bird Surveys 2020/2021

- 2.2.1 The surveys took place between 24th November 2020 and 16th March 2021, following a designated survey transect to record the wintering bird assemblage, numbers and spatial distribution. The surveys were undertaken within the Sizewell link road area.

2.2.2 The 2020/2021 surveys identified that the proposed Sizewell link road site supported a small number of waterfowl species, as well as a range of other bird species of conservation concern commonly associated with the arable habitats identified within the survey area.

2.2.3 The distribution of birds recorded was evenly spread throughout the survey area, although the main areas supporting passerine wintering birds were field boundary hedgerows. Gulls were frequently observed feeding and loafing within the arable fields. Waders and waterfowl were primarily observed commuting over the survey area.

3 METHODS

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Desk study information is fully detailed within the **Volume 6, Chapter 7** and **Volume 6, Appendix 7A of the Environmental Statement (ES)** [[APP-461](#) and [APP-462](#)]

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 Sizewell link road survey area and adjacent habitats. Surveyors walked a predefined transect route once per month. The survey area 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 included:

- 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 special conservation concern/ green listed 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 Access was not permitted to two parcels of land within the survey area during the surveys (central grid references TM 43018 66253 and TM 40760 67757), however surveyors were able to walk along adjacent public footpaths. Any birds observed or heard calling within these areas were recorded, and as such this was not considered a major constraint to data collection.

4 RESULTS

4.1.1 During the 2020/2021 surveys, 61 bird species were recorded. Of the species recorded, six were listed as Schedule 1 (Ref. 1), 15 were included of the BoCC (Ref. 2) red list and 13 on the amber list. Additionally, 12 species were listed under S41 of the NERC Act (Ref. 3) and 31 species of no 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 Sizewell link road.

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			0	67	4	3	6
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Green	✓		1	0	18	0	0
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber		✓	5	4	0	6	2
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Amber			140	172	70	3	0
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber		✓	10	9	7	11	13
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Red	✓		3	126	26	57	28

Common Name	Scientific Name	Conser- vation Status	Sch 1	S41 NERC	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	Amber			0	0	104	0	0
Grey wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Red			1	0	0	0	0
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red		✓	1	2	9	0	1
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Red		✓	4	24	0	25	0
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber			1	1	2	1	0
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Red		✓	2	0	140	22	0
Lesser redpoll	<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>	Red		✓	1	0	0	0	0
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Red		✓	160	32	110	27	11
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber			0	0	4	5	0
Marsh harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Amber	✓		2	0	0	0	0
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	Red		✓	0	0	0	1	0
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber			35	10	2	12	0
Mediterranean gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>	Amber	✓		0	0	0	0	2
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Red			1	2	2	0	0
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Green	✓		0	0	0	0	1
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Red	✓		2	82	9	11	26
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Amber		✓	1	1	0	1	1
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Red			101	161	137	85	26

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			2	1	0	0	0
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Red		✓	1	9	2	8	4
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red		✓	8	0	17	25	62
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber			3	0	12	6	5
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Red			0	0	0	7	0
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red		✓	40	16	7	52	17

- 4.1.3 The distribution of wintering birds was fairly evenly spread throughout the survey area. Waterfowl and waders were observed primarily commuting over the survey area.
- 4.1.4 Gulls were most frequently observed foraging and loafing within the arable fields.
- 4.1.5 Lapwings and greylag geese were observed commuting above the survey area only.
- 4.1.6 Passerine species were primarily observed foraging, calling and singing from within field boundary hedgerows and sparse areas of woodland, however a large number of skylark were consistently observed foraging in a stubble field at the extreme south-east of the survey area (central grid reference TM 44169 64944).
- 4.1.7 Two marsh harriers were observed during the November survey, one of which was hunting, with the other commuting in an easterly direction above the survey area. The location of these recordings is presented in **Figure 2** in **Appendix A**.
- 4.1.8 One dead barn owl (*Tyto alba*) was found adjacent north of Town Farm Lane (grid reference TM 38883 67035).
- 4.1.9 31 bird species of no special conservation value were recorded over the course of the surveys, these results have been presented below in **Appendix C**.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1.1 The Sizewell link road survey area supports a range of wintering bird species. The majority of birds recorded within the survey area were passerines using hedgerows and woodland areas, however large numbers of skylark were observed foraging within a stubble field to the south-east of the survey area. Gulls used the survey area primarily for foraging and loafing within arable fields, and waterfowl were observed commuting above the survey area.
- 5.1.2 Overall, six Schedule 1 species, 15 red listed species and 13 amber listed species were identified over the course of the surveys, with 31 species of no special conservation value recorded (as presented in **Appendix C**).
- 5.1.3 The results of the 2020/2021 surveys are largely consistent with those identified in the desk study [[APP-461](#) and [APP-462](#)] 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).

APPENDIX A: DRAWINGS

APPENDIX B: SURVEY DETAILS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

- B.1.1. Table 1 below details the survey timings and weather conditions during each survey at Sizewell Link Road. 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 Sizewell Link Road

Survey Details	November 2020	December 2020	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021
Date	24/11/2020	15/12/2020	19/01/2021	16/02/2021	16/03/2021
Survey timings	08:10 – 13:10	09:00 – 14:20	08:27 – 13:44	08:30 – 14:00	07:30 – 12:30
Surveyors	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Weather conditions	T: 8°C, CC: 7, WS/direction: 0, no rain, excellent visibility	T: 7°C, CC: 3, WS/direction: 3 S, no rain, good visibility	T: 10°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 3 S, no rain, excellent visibility	T: 8°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 2 W, no rain, good visibility, patches of snow on ground from previous week's snowfall	T: 10°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 0, drizzle, moderate 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 survey areas.

Species	Scientific Name	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	6	43	10	31	19
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	17	51	14	116	26
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	2	6	5	5	2
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	2	3	2	3	5
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	44	34	35	56	35
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	1	0	0	1	1
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	0	0	1	4	0
Feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	0	0	0	0	1
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	0	0	2	0	3
Goldfinch	<i>Spinus tristis</i>	19	33	45	34	4
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	1	4	2	3	1
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	4	23	6	41	9
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	0	2	0	4	0
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	4	2	3	3	0
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	0	0	0	1	0
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	2	64	7	18	3
Jay	<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>	1	6	2	2	1
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	8	7	2	12	1
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	4	6	10	1	1
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	0	0	0	1	0
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	0	0	0	0	1
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	7	5	0	29	10
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	9	3	0	0	3

Species	Scientific Name	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21
Red-legged partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	25	16	0	5	0
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	7	7	6	22	12
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	90	47	1	0	0
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	1	0	0	1	0
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	2	0	0	0	0
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	0	0	0	0	1
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	190	46	523	64	572
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	6	7	3	9	6