



The Sizewell C Project

9.24 Bird Survey Report - Freight Management Facility

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1 SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 This report presents the findings of the 2020/2021 wintering bird surveys undertaken at the proposed freight management facility, 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 freight management facility site (the ‘site’), following a previous extended Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken on the site ([APP-524](#)).
- 1.1.3 The site is located adjacent and south of the A14 and comprised two arable fields bordered by hedgerows with mature trees. The site also includes a section of Felixstowe Road, adjacent and south of the two fields. The site location is presented in **Figure 1** in **Appendix A**.
- 1.1.4 The 2020/2021 wintering bird surveys identify that habitats within the freight management facility survey area support an assemblage of bird species including one Schedule 1 species, eight red listed species, six amber listed species and 17 species of no particular conservation concern.
- 1.1.5 The main habitats located within the site comprise arable fields and hedgerows with mature trees. A small area of reedbed was located within the site boundary at the northern extent, immediately adjacent to the A14.

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 freight management facility area of the Sizewell C project.

2.2 Wintering Bird 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 freight management facility area.
- 2.2.2 The 2020/2021 surveys identified that the site supported predominantly passerine species commonly associated with habitats identified within the survey area. The Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar site, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) was located 1.6km south of the site boundary.

2.2.3 The results show that the main areas supporting wintering birds were field boundary hedgerows and the mature trees within them. Birds were recorded commuting above the site and across the arable fields between hedgerows. The habitats located within the site are widespread within the surrounding landscape.

3 METHODS

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Desk study information is fully detailed within the **Volume 8, Chapter 7** and **Volume 8, Appendix 7A of the Environmental Statement (ES)** [[APP-523](#) and [APP-524](#)].

3.2 Field Surveys

3.2.1 Transect surveys for wintering birds survey visits were undertaken monthly from November 2020 to March 2021 (inclusive), to record species observed or heard within the freight management facility survey area 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, led by [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 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 wintering bird surveys, 31 bird species were recorded. Of these species recorded, one was listed as Schedule 1 (Ref. 1), eight were included on the BoCC (Ref. 2) red list and six on the amber list. Additionally, six species were listed under S41 of the NERC Act (Ref. 3) and 17 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 3** in **Appendix C** and in **Figure 2** to **Figure 6** in **Appendix A**.

Table 4.1: Notable species recorded at the Freight management facility.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Conservation Status	Sch 1	S41 NERC	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Amber			0	0	1	0	0
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Amber			0	0	1	0	0
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber		✓	2	1	0	1	0
Herring gull*	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red		✓	1	1	7	0	0
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Red		✓	0	0	0	1	3
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber			0	0	0	2	0
Meadow pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber			1	0	0	0	0
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Red	✓		0	0	0	45	0
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Red			3	0	5	7	8
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Red		✓	1	1	0	1	0

Common Name	Scientific Name	Conservation Status	Sch 1	S41 NERC	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red		✓	0	0	0	7	0
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber			0	0	0	1	2
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Red			0	0	0	1	0
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red		✓	0	1	0	0	0

- 4.1.3 The results identified that birds recorded were distributed throughout the site, however the birds of conservation concern were mainly observed using the field boundary hedgerows and mature trees for roosting.
- 4.1.4 Of the species recorded, eight red listed species were identified over the course of the surveys and six amber listed species.
- 4.1.5 One woodcock was flushed from within the westernmost hedgerow in February. The location of this recording is presented in **Figure 5** in **Appendix A**.
- 4.1.6 One yellowhammer was observed roosting within a tree in the central hedgerow of the survey area.
- 4.1.7 Dunnocks and song thrushes were heard throughout the surveys calling from the woodland adjacent south of Felixstowe Road.
- 4.1.8 Linnets were observed commuting between hedgerows within the survey area, above the arable fields.
- 4.1.9 Forty five redwings were seen roosting within mature trees along the western boundary of the survey area. The location of this recording is presented in **Figure 5** in **Appendix A**.
- 4.1.10 Two Mallards were flushed from the small reedbed area at the north of the site.
- 4.1.11 Skylarks were observed feeding within and singing above the arable fields within the survey area. The singing behaviour was only observed during the early spring months of 2021. All gulls observed were fly-over observations only.
- 4.1.12 Seventeen 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 Freight management facility survey area supports a range of wintering bird species. The site was primarily used by passerines roosting within field boundary hedgerows and the mature trees within them.
- 5.1.2 The Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar site, SPA and SSSI was located 1.6km south of the site boundary. Habitats on the site are agricultural and intensively farmed, supporting arable crops and not considered to be functionally linked to this designated site.
- 5.1.3 Overall, one Schedule 1, eight red listed and six amber listed species were identified over the course of the surveys, with 17 species of no special conservation value recorded (as presented in **Appendix C**).
- 5.1.4 The results of the 2020/2021 surveys are largely consistent with those identified in the desk study [[APP-523](#) and [APP-524](#)] 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 –
FREIGHT MANAGEMENT FACILITY
WINTERING BIRD SURVEYS 2020/2021
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

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 the Freight management facility. 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].

Table 1 Survey details for wintering bird surveys at Freight management facility (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	12:04 – 12:25	09:20 – 09:50	11:23 – 11:42	13:27 – 14:10	10:30 – 11:00
Surveyors	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Weather conditions	T: 11°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 1 S, no rain, excellent visibility	T: 7°C, CC: 4, WS/direction: 5 SW, no rain, good visibility	T: 9°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 2 S, no rain, excellent visibility	T: 8°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 2 S, no rain, good visibility. Patches of snow on ground from previous week’s snowfall.	T: 12°C, CC: 8, WS/direction: 2 N, no rain, excellent visibility

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

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>	0	2	0	0	0
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	1	1	1	3	0
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	0	1	0	0	0
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	1	0	4	3	0
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	0	0	0	2	0
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	0	0	2	0	0
Feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	0	0	4	0	0
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	1	0	0	0	0
Goldfinch	<i>Spinus tristis</i>	0	3	0	3	1
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	0	0	0	1	0
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	1	0	0	0	0
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	1	0	0	0	0
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	1	1	0	0	0
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	1	1	1	0	0
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	0	0	0	0	3
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	47	2	0	16	10
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	2	1	1	0	1