

Memorandum

To: John Markham, Senior Construction Coordinator,
Demolition Group

Date: 24th October 2023

From: Andy Lewitt, Environmental Specialist,

Pages: 6

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Subject: **Habitat and Ecology Survey to support demolition of Office Facility (Tender Specification SP/GEN-DECOM/PROJ/00140)**

Habitat Survey

Introduction

This Habitat Survey has been conducted in support of the demolition of a redundant office facility on Sellafield site.

The survey was conducted with a desktop study, that considered potentially impacted ecological sites as described and Applicable Legislation (Appendix 2) and a site visit to the defined demolition area (Appendix 1) on the 11th October 2023.

Site Description & Scope of Survey

The building to be demolished is a temporary portacabin structure, as follows: -

- The facility consists of a two storey interlinked flat roof portacabin. The structure was inspected externally and internally. The structure is externally visually in a relatively good state of repair and still occupied at the time. The facility is used as offices, with kitchen and locker facilities included. The Facility is constructed on flat ground. The underneath and interspace between the double stacked portacabin is largely fully sealed and it was not possible to observe underneath/between the building levels. The Facility has external metal escape staircases at either end from the upper floor.
- The surrounding area to is largely tarmac parking with south and north adjacent compounds gravelly ground, with the west and east tarmac road with grass verge to west and gravel to east. To the South, West and East sides there are emptied compounds with the adjacent compound to the North having other contractor facilities.
- To the north of the compound there is another smaller single storey portacabin and to west of the compound there is a glass style smoking shelter and an ISO-Container that are excluded from scope of this assessment.

Survey Findings Discussion

- There was no evidence of wildlife habitation. There was no evidence of nests being built at or around the building. The surrounding area has limited habitat potential as the area is gravelled storage compounds/car parks/Portacabins and workshops bounded by tarmac roads to all sides.
- The building complex is generally all in good condition and appears to be well sealed.
- From external inspection and internal viewing carried out there was no evidence of wildlife intrusion found. The flat roof makes the building a possible Gull nesting site but viewed from distance no evidence was present of any nesting/nesting materials. The locale offers many better and higher nesting sites on the nearby Encapsulated Product Stores. The limited access overhangs also make the building unsuitable for Swift/Martin/Swallow nesting, excepting under the emergency escape platforms. However, there was no evidence present of current or previous nesting.
- There was no real open access points into the building being office style portacabins they are well sealed No evidence was present for roosting bats either from the external elevations or internal inspection.
- There was no observed evidence of bird activity in the direct area or overhead during the site visit. If demolition occurs in the breeding season, then the buildings should be checked for nesting birds prior to demolition starting.
- There was no evidence of small mammal or reptile incursion. The underside of the facility is enclosed and understood to be largely bare concrete or gravelled ground offering little in way of enticements for access and nesting. There was a small amount of evidence of rabbit scrapes and dropping around the building area, but nothing more.
- Any gravelled areas could provide suitable habitat for ground nesting birds, such as Oystercatchers (though no evidence was found).

Adjacent Sites of Ecological Interest

The nearest areas of any ecological value are an area of high grass embankment/dune to the South which rises up to some drainage ponds ~350m away and East, Newmill Beck ~240m (beyond the site boundary). This mound includes some small shrubs and gorse bushes. Beyond in this direction is farmland and Seascale Golf Course found at ~590m, beyond the site boundary.

The centre of the demolition site is ~640m from the River Calder and ~1100m from the River Ehen. These are the nearest areas of natural/semi natural habitat to the proposed demolition site and there is no connectivity with other gravel compounds, tarmac and numerous structures providing significant barriers to dispersal for terrestrial animals. With exception of the previously mentioned stream/rivers there are no areas of fresh water within 1000m of the proposed demolition site.

There is a known colony of Natterjack toads southward, near the Sellafield Site boundary, however this is over ~980m meters away from the demolition site and there is a low level of

connectivity due to roads, gravel hardstanding, embankments and other structural barriers limiting toad movement. The demolition site itself is poor habitat for Natterjack toads.

The Proposed demolition methodology therefore presents little risk, if any to any incursive wildlife or adjacent habitats or areas of ecological interest.

Designated Sites

Designated statutory sites within 5km of the Sellafield Site (Ref. Magic Map application <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>)

	Approximate Nearest Site Boundary (km)	Designations
Hallsenna Moor	4.2	NNR, SSSI
Low Church Moss	2.7	SSSI
Drigg Coast	3.2	SSSI, SAC
Silver Tarn, Hollas and Harnsey Mosses	4.7	SSSI
Cumbria Coast	0.5	MCZ
Lake District	2.9	National Park

There are no sites with the following designations within 5km:

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Biosphere Reserves
- Marine Nature Reserves
- Ramsar

The proposed demolitions will not impact on any designated sites.

Conclusion

Based on the above, no ecological constraints are evident to prevent the demolition of the building. Though there is potential for wildlife incursion, any potential impacts can be easily mitigated through good construction management, and wildlife awareness.

Recommendations

It is recommended the following mitigations are employed to ensure the risk of impacts on wildlife is as low as reasonably practicable:

- Consider scheduling the work to take place as early as achievable and outside the nesting season 01st March- 31st July if practicable.
- Operatives working on the demolition are to be provided with relevant toolbox talks regarding identifying wildlife and actions to be taken on discovery of animals on the site during works. The toolbox talks are to be delivered before works commence and will focus on bats, nesting birds and reptiles.
- It is recommended that operators are briefed on recognising evidence of the presence of bats. If evidence of bats is observed during demolition, then demolition should not proceed without further investigation and a detailed survey; an ecologically competent person should be contacted to assess the situation.
- As far as practicable restrict work, and laydown of materials and waste, to areas with hard surfaces (e.g. paving, poured concrete and tarmac). Do not leave any mounds of spoil that could be used as a refugia or any materials that could be utilised as nesting material.

Notes:

1. Regardless of the time of year, if nesting birds are noted on site an ecologically competent person should be contacted to assess the situation. Works will be delayed in the vicinity of any occupied nest until the young birds have fledged.



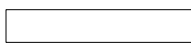
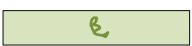



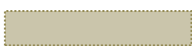
A D Lewitt
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24th October 2023

Copies:

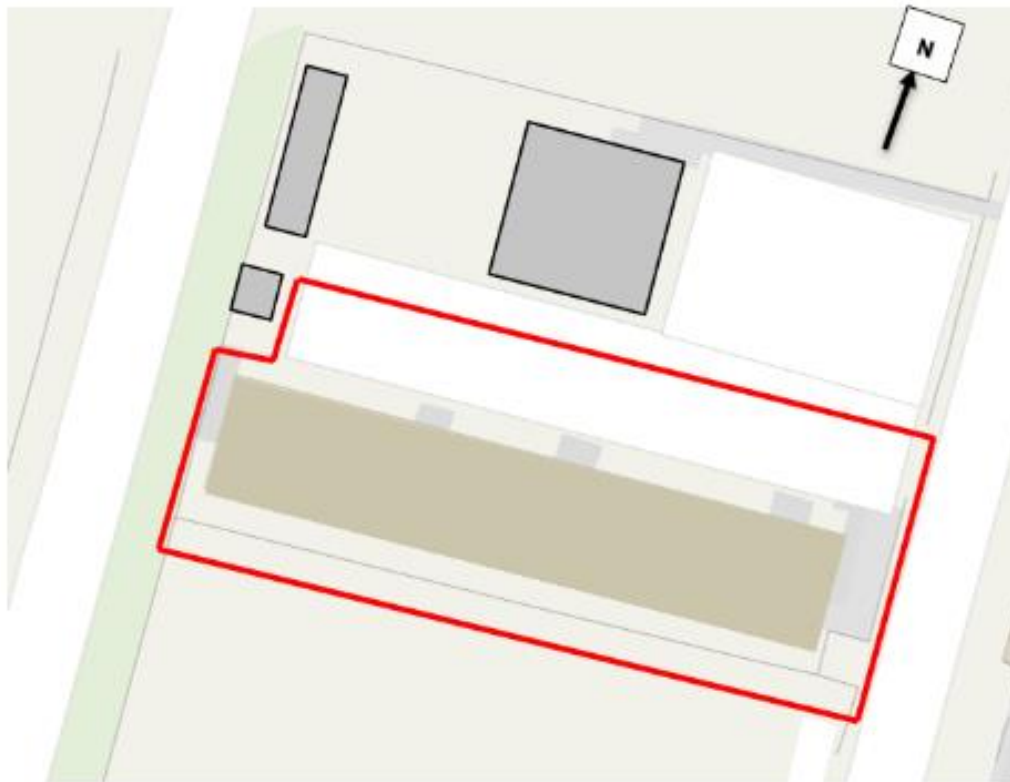
J Mawby – Environmental Specialist – Strategy & Development
SG White - EH&S Manager – Remediation Beta/Gamma & Alpha
D Miller - Senior Safety Advisor – Remediation Beta/Gamma
File & EHS Linkmap

Appendix 1: Demolition Area Layout Map

Map Key

	Extent of Habitat Survey ¹		Amenity Grassland
	Roads (Tarmac and concrete)		Hedgrow/Shrubs
	Buildings (existing)		Bare ground- gravel / hardcore
	Other hard surfaces including footpaths		Proposed Demolition buildings

Map



¹ This is not the same as the proposed site plan.

Appendix 2: Relevant Legislation

Bats

Bats and their roosts are protected in England and Wales, the relevant legislation is the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010). It is an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly capture, injure, or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

Nesting Birds

The primary legislation for Protection of nesting birds in England and Wales is the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As amended) Part 1, in that it is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird.
- Intentionally take, damage, or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building or is in, on or near a nest with eggs or young; or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

The nesting season is officially 1st March to 31st July; however, it may extend beyond those dates.

Reptiles

Reptiles, including grass snakes, adders, slow worms, and common lizards, are protected from killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Wildlife and Countryside Act Penalties

Penalties that can be imposed for criminal offences contrary to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are an unlimited fine, up to six months imprisonment or both. Similar penalties are set out under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017).