

## Habitat Survey [MiscDem 22/10/C]

A Habitat Survey has been conducted in support of the demolition of a group of redundant buildings on Sellafield site.

The survey was conducted with a desktop study and a site visits on the 20<sup>h</sup> October 2022.

The structure to be demolished is former concrete pier style pedestrian bridge and associated stairway (above a road/railway) that linked two buildings on the Sellafield site. (marked on Map): - as follows:-

- The structure consists of two cast concrete horizontal walkway spans (3m x 32m, 3m x 40m approx.) supported by reinforced concrete piers/pillars. A previous section has been linking to the north has been removed under another campaign in previous years. Each span is enclosed and clad in metal framed with glass panels.
- There is an associated stairway building with metal frame/glass panel construction.
- The building/structure is no longer occupied or in use. It was inspected externally and all elements are well sealed, with all panels intact, previous junctions off. and little opportunity visible for wildlife to ingress.
- It is not considered to provide significant habitat potential.

From external inspections carried out there was no evidence of wildlife intrusion found in any of the buildings.

The surrounding ground is mix of tarmacked parking, pipe trenches, strips of gravel, and railway base ground. The structures are surrounded by other buildings and vehicles movements in the surrounding area.

Any gravelled areas could provide suitable habitat for ground nesting birds, (though no evidence was found) – however, this is highly unlikely due to the proximity to both the building and accompanying roads.

There was no evidence of roosting bats from the external elevations.

There was a small amount of bird activity but no observed evidence of bird indicating nesting during the site visit. If demolition occurs in the breeding season then the roof should be checked for nesting birds prior to demolition starting.

Demolition operatives are expected to know what to do if they encounter any wildlife during their work. This should be reinforced with an appropriate toolbox talk prior to demolition starting.

The nearest area of any ecological value is the River Calder to the East. The centre of the site is ~80m from the River Calder and ~500m from the River Ehen. These are the nearest areas of natural/semi natural habitat to the proposed construction site and there is no connectivity with other gravel compounds, tarmac and numerous structures providing significant barriers to dispersal for terrestrial animals.

With the exception of the previously mentioned rivers there are no areas of fresh water within 1000m of the proposed construction site.

A review of the local area has been undertaken. The nearest statutory sites are:

- Low Church Moss SSSI ~1.4 miles NW
- Drigg Coast SSSI/SAC ~2.6 miles SE
- Hallsenna Moss SSSI ~2.5 miles SE

There is a known colony of Natterjack toads near the Sellafield Site boundary, however this is over 2.2km away from the demolition site and there is a low level of connectivity due to roads, embankments and other structural barriers limiting toad movement. The site itself is poor habitat for Natterjack toads.

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

### ***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); the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000; the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006); and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010). It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

#### **Nesting Birds**

Protection for nesting birds is detailed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Part 1, in that it is an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird; take, damage or destroy the nest of a wild bird included in Schedule 1; take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built or take or destroy an egg of any wild bird. The nesting season is officially 1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> July; however it may extend beyond those dates.

#### **Recommendations**


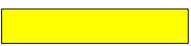
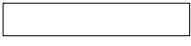






It is recommended the following mitigations are employed to ensure the risk of impacts on wildlife is as low as reasonably practicable:

- Consider scheduling the work to take place between 1st August - 28th February.

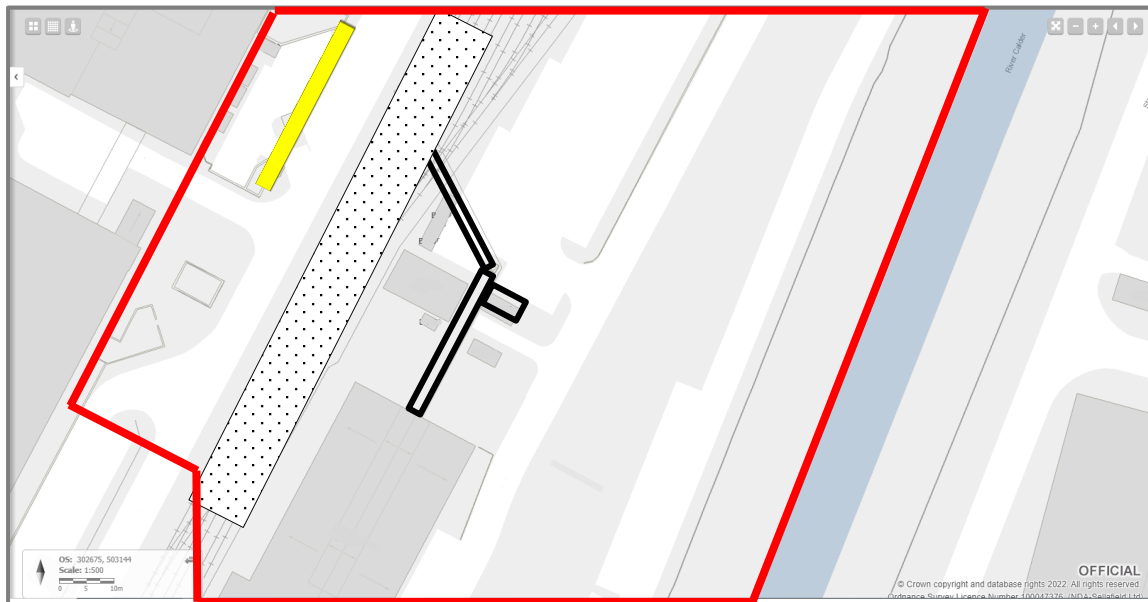
- Operatives working on the demolition will be provided with relevant tool box talks regarding identifying wildlife and actions to be taken on discovery of animals on the site during works. The tool box talks will be delivered before works commence and will focus on nesting birds and reptiles.
- It is 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.

**Note:** 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.

## Map Key

	Extent of Habitat Survey <sup>1</sup>		Amenity Grassland
	Roads (Tarmac and concrete)		Hedgrows/Shrubs
	Buildings (existing)		Bare ground-gravel / hardcore
	Other hard surfaces including footpaths		Proposed Demolition building
	Target Note (see paragraphs)		

## Map



<sup>1</sup> This is not the same as the proposed site plan.