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Ecological Assessment of RUBB Building at Wylfa Power Station

Grid Ref 3525 9394

Report and Survey by Sarah Cartmel

Survey December 2023



A daytime inspection of the building took place in December 2023. No evidence of protected species or other wildlife was seen. The building is assessed as very low potential for use by wildlife; there is a very minor potential for nesting birds internally - the only access would be through a louvred vent on the east elevation.

The work to demolish this building will not impact any wildlife. A second inspection will take place no more than 2 weeks before the building is dismantled to ensure there are no new wildlife issues.

The building is proposed to be re-built within the main power station fenced area. It will be built on an existing area of hardstanding with no wildlife issues. The construction will not impact any wildlife and will not disturb any nearby nesting birds.

Table of Contents

Page number

1. Introduction	2
2. Methods	2
3. Description of RUBB building	2
4. Assessment of Potential Impact	4
5. Safe Working Methods and timings	4
6. Biodiversity Enhancement	5

Ecological Assessment of RUBB Building at Wylfa Power Station

Grid reference: SH 3525 9394

1. Introduction

- a) Cartmel Ecology Ltd were requested to carry out an ecological assessment of the RUBB Building at Wylfa Power Station which it is proposed to dismantle and rebuild within the main fenced area.
- b) Wylfa power station is located on the north coast of Ynys Môn, approximately 1.5 km north west of Cemaes and overlooking Cemaes Bay.
- c) The whole site was subject to a comprehensive ecological survey in 2007 by RSK Carter Ecological Ltd.
- d) The coastline forms part of the North Anglesey Marine Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and within 2km of the power station site is the Cemlyn Bay SAC and the Tre'r Gof Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI), Cae Gwyn SSSI, Cemlyn Bay SSSI, Llanbadrig-Dinas Gynfor SSSI, and the Ynys Feurig, Cemlyn Bay and The Skerries Special Protection Area (SPA).

2. Methods

- a) A daytime inspection of the building took place to look for evidence of use by protected species and any other wildlife. Binoculars and a bright torch were used to search the building.
- b) Surveys were undertaken by ecologist Sarah Cartmel on the 13th December 2023.

3. Description of RUBB building

- a) The building consists of a large metal frame built over a concrete floor, with a large thick plastic tarpaulin stretched over the framework (see cover photo). It is approximately 15 x 13 m floor and 7 m tall. It is located outside the main security fence area of Wylfa power station, on the north east side, close to Wylfa Head. There is heathland habitat with gorse *Ulex europaeus* bushes close by on the north and east of the building, immediately west

is a thin line of conifers and then the main area of Wylfa Power Station and to the south is large metal building (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Location of RUBB and proposed new location

- b) The exterior of the building is very uniform, there are no fascia boards and no gaps where wildlife could gain entry. The roof material is the same as the rest of the building and there is no evidence that gulls nest on this roof. It is quite possible the material does not provide a suitable surface to nest on.
- c) The interior forms one large room which is very light with no dark crevices where bats could tuck themselves out of sight.
- d) No signs of nesting birds was seen, and no evidence or suitable roosting sites for other protected species or other wildlife.
- e) The building is well sealed, apart from a small louvred vent on the east elevation which does not have a grill on the internal side. This could provide access to small birds such as house sparrows or incidental access to bats. The interior of the building is not suitable for bats and there is no evidence of use by nesting birds.
- f) The proposed new site for the building is on the west side of the main turbine building (Figure 1 and 2). This area consists of hardstanding with no vegetation. The construction of the new building in this vicinity will not impact any protected species or other wildlife. The new building is relatively close to another building where herring gulls nest. The

construction work is not likely to disturb the nests but there is the potential for construction workers to be affected by aggressive gulls if the work commences during the nesting season (May to July).



Figure 2. Proposed new location of RUBB building

4. Assessment of Potential Impact

- a) The proposed dismantling and re-build of the RUBB building will not impact directly on any protected species or other wildlife.
- b) The building will be dismantled by first removing the tarpaulin cover, followed by dismantle of the metal framework. While the framework is being dismantled the cover will be store in this compound on the floor. There is a very minor potential for reptiles or adders to roost under this tarpaulin while it is stored (before re-construction), as the compound is very close to (<10 m) the area of gorse and heathland where adders are known to be present.
- c) The proposed location of the new building has no wildlife issues and its construction will not impact directly on any wildlife. Nesting herring gulls could become aggressive if the construction work takes place during their nesting season (May to July)

5. Safe Working Methods and timings

- a) The work to demolish the building and reconstruct it within the main fenced site at Wylfa Power Station can be undertaken at any time of year.

- b) The building will be inspected by the ecologist no more than 2 weeks before it is due to be dismantled to ensure no nesting birds or other wildlife have gained entry. If any active nests are found the work will be postponed until the young have fledged.
- c) There is very minor potential for reptiles or adders to shelter under the stored tarpaulin once it has been removed from the building. If possible the tarpaulin should be stored on pallets or similar so that it is not resting directly on the ground. If this is not possible, when it is time to lift the tarpaulin from the ground, care should be taken to inspect beneath the edges to check for their presence. The tarpaulin should be lifted very slowly in a way to avoid damaging the animals and allowing them to escape back to the heathland area.
- d) It is recommended to start construction of the new building outside the gull nesting season or until such time as the gulls have finished nesting or are no longer being aggressive - there is concern of gulls attacking the construction workers. There is no suggestion that the work will directly impact the nests as the building work is far enough away to not directly disturb any nests.

6. Biodiversity Enhancement

- a) The dismantling and re-build of the RUBB building will not impact any wildlife and no mitigation is required for its removal.
- b) However, as part of the planning process biodiversity enhancement is now required for all work that needs planning consent.
- c) There is a line of conifer trees that runs just west of the building to be demolished (Figure 1). Three Schwegler Type 1B bird boxes (one 26mm, one 32mm and one oval entrance hole) will be installed in these trees, away from any other bird boxes. They will be positioned between 2 and 3 m height, in a sheltered location away from the prevailing wind, and strong sunlight. They should be positioned so that there is a small branch nearby for the birds to land on before entering the box, but other foliage must not obscure the entrance hole.

- d) One Schwegler Type 2F bat box will also be installed along this tree line. The box should be installed approximately 2 to 3 m height, in a warm location, with no branches obscuring the box.

**Report and survey by Sarah Cartmel
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