



THE
ENVIRONMENT
PARTNERSHIP

**Haweswater Aqueduct Resilience Programme - Proposed
Marl Hill Section**

Volume 6

Proposed Ribble Crossing

Technical Appendix 9A.4: Birds

June 2021



Water for the North West



Haweswater Aqueduct Resilience Programme

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1. Birds Technical Appendix

1.1 Introduction

- 1) TEP was appointed by United Utilities to complete an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) for the Haweswater Aqueduct Resilience Programme - Proposed Ribble Crossing. The EclA is required to inform an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and support production of the Environmental Statement (ES).
- 2) A series of ecological surveys was undertaken to complete the EclA. This Appendix is one of a series of Ecological Technical Reports (ETRs) produced to support the EclA. This ETR documents the methods and findings of the Wintering Bird surveys undertaken by Bowland Ecology Ltd.

1.2 Summary of Findings

1.2.1 Desktop Records

- 3) Records of the following notable bird species have been provided within 2 km of the Proposed Ribble Crossing:
 - barn owl *Tyto alba*
 - Black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*
 - curlew *Numenius arquata*
 - House martin *Delichon urbicum*
 - House sparrow *Passer domesticus*
 - Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
 - Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

1.2.2 Wintering Birds

- 4) The wintering bird survey was carried out between December 2020 and March 2021 using a transect survey method. Four daytime walkovers were carried out encompassing the Ribble Crossing. Transect routes were pre-determined to sample all key habitats. Bird species seen or heard and activity patterns were mapped using standard symbology.
- 5) The locations of the birds recorded during the surveys are presented at Figures 9A.8 through to 9A.11. A total of 52 no. bird species were recorded for the Proposed Ribble crossing. Of these, 26 no. species are BoCC: black headed gull, common gull, great black-backed gull, greylag goose, kestrel, lesser black-backed gull, mallard, meadow pipit, mute swan, oystercatcher, snipe, stock dove (Amber), kingfisher (amber and Schedule 1 breeding only), dunnoek (amber and SPI), grey wagtail, mistle thrush (Red), fieldfare, redwing (Red and Schedule 1 breeding only), curlew, herring gull, house sparrow, lapwing, song thrush, starling and tree sparrow (Red and SPI). The wider assemblage was reported to be typical of the habitats present.
- 6) Wader species recorded included curlew, lapwing, oystercatcher and snipe. Lapwing were only recorded in March with a peak count of 13 no. 10 of which were recorded in flight only. Curlew were recorded in February and March, with a peak count of 6 no. recorded in March and oystercatcher were recorded in January and March, with a peak count of 4 no. recorded in March. The peak counts recorded late in the season indicates that the birds were likely on passage from wintering grounds such as the Ribble Estuary to suitable breeding

grounds. A single snipe was recorded in February and March each time noted in the same field to the west of the proposed route.

- 7) Wildfowl species included mallard, which were recorded in December, January, February and March with a peak count of 19 no. recorded in March, 7 no. goosander recorded in February and a single greylag goose recorded in January and mute swan recorded in February.
- 8) A number of gull species were recorded to use the survey areas, including black headed gull, common gull, herring gull, great black-backed gull and lesser black-backed gull. Only low numbers were generally recorded, although 156 black headed gull were recorded in March with the majority of birds recorded in the fields to the south of the proposed route.

Table 1. Wintering birds recorded within the Proposed Ribble Crossing Survey Area

Ribble Crossing – Wintering Birds			
Species	Conservation Status	Peak count	
		Site	500 m buffer
Blackbird		5	4
Black-Headed Gull	BAm	124	32
Blue Tit		8	10
Buzzard			3
Canada Goose		4	28
Carrion Crow		34	26
Chaffinch		2	6
Coal Tit			1
Common Gull	BAm	11	16
Cormorant			1
Curlew	SPI, BRd	2	4
Dunnock	SPI, BAm	2	3
Kingfisher	WCA1, BAm	1	
Fieldfare	WCA1, BRd		2
Goldcrest		1	6
Goldfinch		6	9
Goosander		1	6
Great Spotted Woodpecker			1
Great Tit		5	3
Great Black-backed gull	BAm	1	

Ribble Crossing – Wintering Birds			
Species	Conservation Status	Peak count	
		Site	500 m buffer
Greenfinch		1	3
Grey Wagtail	BRd		3
Greylag Goose	BAm		1
Heron		1	1
Herring Gull	SPI, BRd		7
House Sparrow	SPI, BRd		14
Jackdaw		12	17
Kestrel	BAm	1	2
Lapwing	SPI, BRd	3	10
Lesser Black-backed Gull	BAm	2	5
Little Egret			1
Long-tailed Tit		6	6
Magpie		2	4
Mallard	BAm	2	17
Meadow Pipit	BAm	2	4
Mistle Thrush	BRd		1
Moorhen		4	3
Mute swan	BAm		1
Oystercatcher	BAm	4	
Pied Wagtail		2	1
Raven		1	
Redwing	WCA1, BRd	85	
Robin		4	6
Rook		3	
Snipe	BAm	1	
Song Thrush	SPI, BRd	1	2
Starling	SPI, BRd	40	19

Ribble Crossing – Wintering Birds			
Species	Conservation Status	Peak count	
		Site	500 m buffer
Stock Dove	BAm	3	4
Tree Sparrow	SPI, BRd	3	4
Treecreeper		1	1
Wood Pigeon		18	53
Wren		2	4