

1. Project Details			
Project Name:	Woodgate Hill WTW, Chemical	Project Number:	70093956
Written:	Val Gateley <i>Principal Ecologist</i>	Approved:	Alun Evans <i>Principal Ecologist</i>
Report reference:	7478.01.004	Date:	08/06/2022
2. Project Drawings			
G7478.01.002 - Phase 1 Habitat Survey			
G7478.01.004 - GCN Pond Survey Location Plan			
3. Introduction			
In May 2022, The Environment Partnership (TEP) was commissioned by United Utilities to prepare an Ecological Assessment in support of a planning application for a provision of a chemical building within the grounds of the Water Treatment Works (WTW) at Woodgate Hill, Bury. The building is proposed within an area of existing hardstanding and an area of grassland and the proposed site access will utilise existing hardstanding tracks to reach the development boundary. The proposed location of the Chemical Building is detailed below.			
 The copyright of this document, which contains information of a proprietary nature, is vested in United Utilities Water Limited. The content of this document may not be used for purposes other than that for which it has been supplied and may not be reproduced, either wholly or in part, in any way whatsoever. It may not be used by, or its contents divulged to any other person whatsoever without the prior written permission of United Utilities Water Limited. Copyright Acknowledgement: Use of Ordnance Survey map data sanctioned by the controller of HM Stationary Office. OS Licence Number 100151028 and 010031673. Crown copyright reserved. Unauthorised production infringes copyright. Contents © 2022 United Utilities Water Limited. All rights reserved. 08/06/2022. Version 1.0.			
Baseline information on nearby protected sites and the habitats present within and adjacent to proposed chemical building location and their potential to support any protected species has been gathered through a combination of desk-based study (MAGIC), extended Phase 1 habitat survey and great crested eDNA analysis. Survey work was undertaken during 2019 and 2020 as part of a wider survey effort covering the whole of the Woodgate Hill WTW site as part of the HARP project.			
This report presents the findings of the Ecological Assessment, the objectives of which are to: - Describe the existing vegetation and give an overview of the habitats present; - Identify any features of ecological value within the Site and in the surrounding area which could impose potential constraints to its development;			

- Advise on any further surveys that may be required; and
- Provide outline recommendations for mitigation measures aimed at maintaining net biodiversity value at the Site and identify where opportunities may exist to provide biodiversity enhancement in accordance with the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

4. Ecological Designations

<i>Is site within close proximity to a statutory or non-statutory protected site?</i>		☒ Yes	☐ No
SAC/SPA/ RAMSAR	☐	No SAC/SPA/ RAMSAR	
SSSI/NNR within 5km	☒	No SSSI	
Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) within 2km	☒	• Ashworth Valley • Chesham Woods (also a Local Nature Reserve) • Gorse Quarry	• Smethurst & Elbut Woods • Tack Lee & Gristlehurst Woods

5. Phase 1 Habitat Survey Summary

Surveyors:	Val Gateley
Survey date(s):	April 2019
Survey Method:	Extended Phase 1 habitat survey methods in line with JNCC and CIEEM Guidelines.
Weather Conditions:	Cool and bright.
Limitations to the survey:	No limitations to survey.

The Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken as part of a wider survey covering the whole of the Water Treatment Works (WTW) at Woodgate Hill. The following habitats are present within or adjacent to the proposed chemical store building within Woodgate Hill WTW, a description of these habitats is also given below:

- Hardstanding
- Poor semi-improved grassland

Hardstanding



The majority of the site comprises an area of hardstanding, namely hardcore/stone with very limited establishment of vegetation at the time of survey.

Poor semi-improved grassland 	The western portion of the proposed development lies within an area of poor semi-improved neutral grassland. This grassland is infrequently managed and was not actively grazed at the time of survey. The sward was relatively long and tussocky in nature. Species such as red fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>), white clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>), meadow foxtail (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>) and creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>) occur frequently.
Priority and notable habitats and plants No Section 41 or Lancashire BAP habitats were identified within or immediately adjacent to the proposed development. Schedule 9 invasive and protected plant species No invasive or protected plants were identified within or adjacent to the proposed development.	
6. Protected Species Summary	
Surveyors:	Anthony Carr, Val Gateley
Survey date(s):	15th April 2019 and 21st June 2019
Survey Method:	eDNA analysis survey methods in line with Natural England guidance.
Weather Conditions:	Cool and bright.
Limitations to the survey:	No limitations to survey.
Amphibians There are no ponds on site or within 250m of the proposed development site. There are two ponds, P92 (Dry) and P95 within 500m, these are detailed in Drawing G7478.01.004 . Pond 95 provides potential breeding habitat for amphibians but eDNA survey returned a negative result for great crested newt. Historic (pre 2014) presence of great crested newt was identified at pond 92, this pond was found to be dry in 2019 and 2020 with no potential for amphibian breeding, it is possible that during wetter amphibian breeding seasons, this feature could offer breeding potential. The grassland on and adjacent to site provides some foraging potential for amphibians. Bats The grassland habitat at the site offers some limited foraging and commuting potential for bats, no potential roosting sites were identified within or adjacent to the site. Birds The grassland and potentially the hardstanding, if disturbance levels onsite are relatively low could provide nesting opportunities for ground nesting birds, in particular lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) which have been known to breed with the wider Woodgate Hill WTW. The grassland also offers foraging potential for range of bird species. Otter and Water Vole There are no suitable watercourses within or adjacent to the site that have the potential to support otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) and water vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>). These species are not considered further in this assessment. Badger The grassland within and adjacent to the site offers some foraging potential for badger (<i>Meles meles</i>). No sett building potential was noted. No evidence of badger activity with the site or within 30m including setts, latrines and hairs was	

noted during the Phase 1 survey.

Potential for other species

The grassland provides potential foraging habitat for hedgehog and other small mammals. The grassland offers only very limited potential for reptile foraging, with basking opportunities available within the hardstanding area. The presence of reptiles is considered unlikely.

7. Conclusions

Protected Sites

There are no internationally or nationally designated sites within 5km of the proposed development. No implications as a result of the proposed development are anticipated on internationally/nationally designated sites due to the small scale of the development and the distances between the designated sites and the development site.

Five locally designated Biological Heritage Site (Chesham Woods also being designated as a Local Nature Reserve) are within 2km of the proposed development site. All of these sites lie over 500m from the proposed development and there is no connective habitat or hydrological links, and therefore are very unlikely to be impacted by the proposals.

Habitats

No Section 41 or Lancashire BAP habitats were identified within or immediately adjacent to the proposed development.

The development will result in a loss of a small amount of poor semi-improved neutral grassland. In order to provide net gain, provision of some replacement grassland or enhancement of retained grassland within the wider Woodgate Hill WTW will be required. It is recommended provision of some locally suitable species-rich grassland forms part of the landscaping proposals, if this is not feasible then an area of adjacent grassland could be enhanced to mitigate for this loss and provide a net gain in biodiversity.

Schedule 9 invasive and protected plant species

No invasive or protected plant species were identified on or adjacent to site.

Amphibians

There are no ponds within 250m and ponds within 500m either returned a negative eDNA result for great crested newt or were dry during the amphibian breeding season, therefore there are no implications with regards to great crested newt. However, the grassland provides potential foraging habitat for amphibians. The presence of other amphibian species utilising the grassland habitat on and adjacent to site cannot be ruled out and could be impacted by the proposals.

A Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement (RAMMS) detailing sensitive methods should be used during clearance affecting areas of grassland to ensure no harm or injury to amphibians. Grassland should be strimmed to approximately 10cm-15cm prior to full removal. Strimming should be undertaken in a single direction only to allow any amphibians to move away from the affected area.

Bats

There are no potential roosting features on or adjacent to site and due to the very small-scale loss of grassland and the associated limited foraging potential this has for bats, there are therefore no implications with regards to bats and the proposed development.

Birds

To ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), any planned clearance of grassland and hardstanding habitat should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive), to avoid damage to nesting birds. Any clearance works undertaken during the breeding season will require a nesting bird check to be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist a maximum of 24 hours prior to any clearance works commencing. If evidence of nesting is observed, a buffer zone will need to be set up around the nest, the size of which will be dependent upon the species nesting, and all works within the buffer zone must cease. The ecologist will monitor the nest to confirm when any young have fledged, following which the buffer can be removed and vegetation clearance works can proceed.

Badger

The grassland has some foraging potential for badger, but due to the small-scale of the works any impacts to badger are considered very unlikely. However, due to the transient nature of this species, a pre-commence survey to confirm

the status of badger on site is recommended.

Potential for other species

The RAMMS (relating to grassland clearance only), as detailed above for amphibians, should also ensure no harm or injury to hedgehogs, other small mammals and reptiles during site clearance works.

References

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010), *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey*, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough

Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (2017), *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*, CIEEM