



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- Land at 406 Tottington Road, Bury, BL8 1TU -

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A report for

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November 2023

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CONTENTS	PAGE NO.
PART 1	INTRODUCTION:
1.1	Reasons for Survey.....1
1.2	Site Location1
1.3	Site Status.....2
1.4	Survey Constraints2
1.5	Surveyor Experience3
PART 2	SURVEY RESULTS:
2.1	Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.....4
2.2	Protected Species Surveys.....5
PART 3	ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS:
3.1	Evaluation of Survey & Recommendations.....7
PART 4	REFERENCES:
4.1	References.....11
APPENDIX 1:	<i>Map 1 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (separate file)</i>
	<i>Site Photographs</i>

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PART 1 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 REASONS FOR SURVEY:

PENNINE Ecological have been commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and protected species survey / assessment of Land at: 406 Tottington Road, Bury.

The study includes; preliminary bat roost assessment of trees on site, vegetation survey and badger survey, together with assessment for other potential protected species issues. In addition a desk top study with the governments Magic website has been completed.

The report includes a full evaluation of the ecological significance of the survey findings. The surveys are required due to proposals for re-development of the site.

1.2 SITE LOCATION:

The site is located in a sub-urban area of Bury, approximately 2.3km north west of the town centre. The site located alongside the B6213 Tottington Road. The sites central National Grid Reference is NGR: SD 7860 1218.

The site is shown below, outlined in red. Google Earth Image 05/06/23.



1.3 Site Status:

A desk top consultation study with Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC) ecological data base was not undertaken for this study. Searches for statutory sites were undertaken, as detailed below.

1.3.1 Statutory Sites:

Details of statutory sites were sought from the Natural England web site search:

<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

There is one statutory site within 500m of the site. This is Kirklees Valley Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which is located approximately 156m north of the site at its closest point. Further details can be found via the following link;

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteLNRDetail.aspx?SiteCode=L1475818>

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZ's):

The site falls within a distant SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) associated with West Pennine Moors SSSI which is approximately 4km to the north / north west of the site. However the nature / size and scale of the development does not require notification to Natural England.

1.3.2 Non-Statutory Sites:

Reference to the GMLRC web site map app, reveals that there is one non-statutory site (Sites of Biological Importance, (SBI's)) within 500m of the site. This is Kirklees Valley, which is also a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and located approximately 156m north of the site at its closest point.

1.3.3 Protected Species / Habitat Data:

Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006;

There are no Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006 associated with the site.

Section 41 Species of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006;

There were no Section 41 species recorded during the survey associated with the site.

1.4 SURVEY CONSTRAINTS:

The site survey was conducted on 17/11/23, which is a sub-optimal time for Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and protected species survey / assessment. However given the nature of the habitats present (formal garden / lawns and hard standing) this constraint is not considered significant. All the habitats within the survey area have been defined / classified accurately and sufficiently assessed. All parts of the site were accessible.

1.5 SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE:

Surveyor experience:

The surveys and assessment were undertaken by Robert Leatham, a highly experienced ecological consultant and surveyor with approximately 30 years' experience in a wide range of ecological survey and assessment.

Key skills include the following;

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and National Vegetation Classification Survey.
- Highly proficient field botanist, including some difficult plant groups.
- Mammal surveys including surveys for badger, water vole*, otter*, brown hare and preliminary bat surveys.

*Over 400km of river reaches surveyed in England for the National Rivers Authority / Environment Agency.

- Extensive experience in great crested newt (GCN) survey, evaluation, licensing and mitigation. Natural England Class Licence WML-CL08 held.
- Over 25 Great Crested Newt development licences held (*Natural England / Defra licences*).
- ¹Contributor to English Nature (*Natural England*) research papers in respect of great crested newt licensing and mitigation issues.
 - Several Great Crested Newt Conservation Licences (*Natural England*) held, including extensive work at Hic Bibi Local Nature Reserve, Coppull, safeguarding a high population of Great Crested Newts.
- Bats: Accredited agent on the Class 2 Licence of Mr Stuart Macpherson, (Natural England Class 2 bat licence (2021-10079-CL18-BAT). Under this accreditation Mr Leatham is permitted to carry out work on all bat species in all UK counties using artificial light only.
- Ecological Evaluation and Impact Assessments in association with large scale commercial development and civil engineering.

¹ *English Nature (2004) *An assessment of the efficiency of capture techniques and the value of different habitats for the great crested newt (Triturus cristatus)*. English Nature Research Report 576. PENNINE Ecological were contributors to this study.

PART 2 SURVEY RESULTS:

2.1 EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY:

2.1.1 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Methodology:

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (*Nature Conservancy Council 1990*) of the study area was undertaken on 17th November 2023. The site's habitats were mapped and higher vascular plant species were recorded and given abundance values according to the standard DAFOR scale, where:

D	=	Dominant
A	=	Abundant
F	=	Frequent
O	=	Occasional
R	=	Rare

Where appropriate these values can be prefixed by the letter L (locally) or V (very), to provide more subtle biogeographical data.

2.1.2 Habitats Present:

- A2.2 Scattered scrub
- A3.1 Scattered broad-leaved tree
- A3.2 Scattered coniferous tree
- J1.2 Amenity grassland
- J1.4 Introduced shrub
- G1. Standing water (ornamental garden pond)
- J2.4 Fence
- J2.5 Wall
- J3.6 Buildings
- J4 Bare ground / Bare earth (cultivated flower beds)

2.1.3 General Description:

The site has maximum dimensions of approximately 46m x 11.5m forming a linear rectangular formal, mature garden plot to the rear of 406 Tottington Road. The garden is separated from the house by a tarmac access road that runs along the rear of Tottington Road.

The site is dominated by predominantly non-native trees and shrubs, including domestic apple species, cherry species, damson, spruce species, cedar species, juniper, holly species and pine species. Some native trees and shrubs are present including; hawthorn and hazel. A single rowan is present.

Ornamental flower beds and a number of stone paths are present within the garden with areas of lawn and hard standing patio areas.

To the rear of the garden a small butyl lined raised ornamental pond is present that has been stocked with koi carp species.

2.2 PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEYS:

During the Phase 1 Habitat Survey additional surveys were undertaken where appropriate for the presence of other potential protected species. The following surveys were undertaken.

2.2.1 Badger Survey:

Method:

A badger survey was undertaken of the site. The badger survey used standard techniques for establishing the use of the site by badger, and includes searches for evidence of badgers including:

- Setts
- Pathways
- Footprints
- Latrines
- Foraging areas
- Scratching posts
- Boundary searches for runs, pathways and latrines.

The survey results are outlined below.

Results:

Sett Search:

The survey found no setts on site.

Search for Foraging Signs and Pathways:

The site was thoroughly searched for badger pathways and signs of foraging. No sign of badger activity was found therefore it can be concluded that the species is not using this area for foraging or commuting.

Boundary Search:

All of the boundaries of the site were walked and examined for potential runs, pathways and latrines. The search found no evidence to suggest badger activity along any of the site boundaries.

The absence of any activity signs indicates that badgers are not entering the site. The absence of latrines indicates a lack of territorial activity in the near vicinity of the site.

2.2.2 Bats:

During the survey an assessment of bat roost potential and foraging habitats was undertaken.

The daytime survey was conducted by Mr. Robert Leatham, who is an experienced ecologist and accredited agent on the Class 2 Licence of Mr Stuart Macpherson, (Natural England Class 2 bat licence (2021-10079-CL18-BAT)). Under this accreditation Mr Leatham is permitted to carry out work on all bat species in all UK counties using artificial light only.

Constraints:

There were no constraints to the bat roost assessment of the trees on site.

Results:

None of the trees on site have features capable of supporting bat roosts.

The site is located in a sub-urban location with surrounding gardens and small areas of green space including woodland. To the north within approximately 150m of the site extensive high quality bat foraging habitats associated with the wooded Kirklees Valley are present. Open farmland is also present within 100m of the site to the south on the other side of Tottington Road. However given the very small size of the site and immediate surrounding well-lit roads and residential areas the site itself is considered to be of negligible / low value for foraging bats.

2.2.3 Other Protected Species:

Issues in relation to other potential protected species where no specific survey was undertaken are assessed in the following section.

PART 3 ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS:

3.1 EVALUATION OF SURVEY & RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following section evaluates the site in relation to statutory/non-statutory sites, protected species and species/habitats listed on Section 41 Species/Habitats of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006.

3.1.1 Statutory Sites:

There is one statutory site within 500m of the site. The is Kirklees Valley Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which is located approximately 150m north of the site.

3.1.2 Non-statutory Sites:

There is one non-statutory site (Sites of Biological Importance, (SBI's)) within 500m of the site. The closet site is Kirklees Valley which is located approximately 150m north of the site.

3.1.3 Sites Habitats & Higher Plant Species:

There are no Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006 associated with the site.

The site is entirely a highly modified formal garden dominated by non-native shrubs and trees with areas of lawn, cultivated flower beds and hard standing. Plant species recorded on site are almost all non-native / introduced, considered to be of site value only.

Recommendations: Habitats:

The habitats present at this site are of low distinctiveness and highly artificial. A section of the southern part of the garden is retained. The remaining parts of the site will be a new detached property / hardstanding drive and access with a formal lawn to the north.

There is little if any scope to create meaningful habitat enhancements.

Recommendations: Habitats & Higher Plant Species:

There are no requirements for further surveys.

3.1.4 Protected Species:

Badgers:

Badgers are protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which prohibits deliberate interference with the animal or its sett.

The survey found no evidence of historic, recent or current use of the site by badgers for foraging, commuting or occupation and the species is considered to be absent.

Recommendations: Badgers;

There are no issues in relation to badgers arising from the development. No further surveys are required.

Bats:

Bats are comprehensively protected by European legislation.

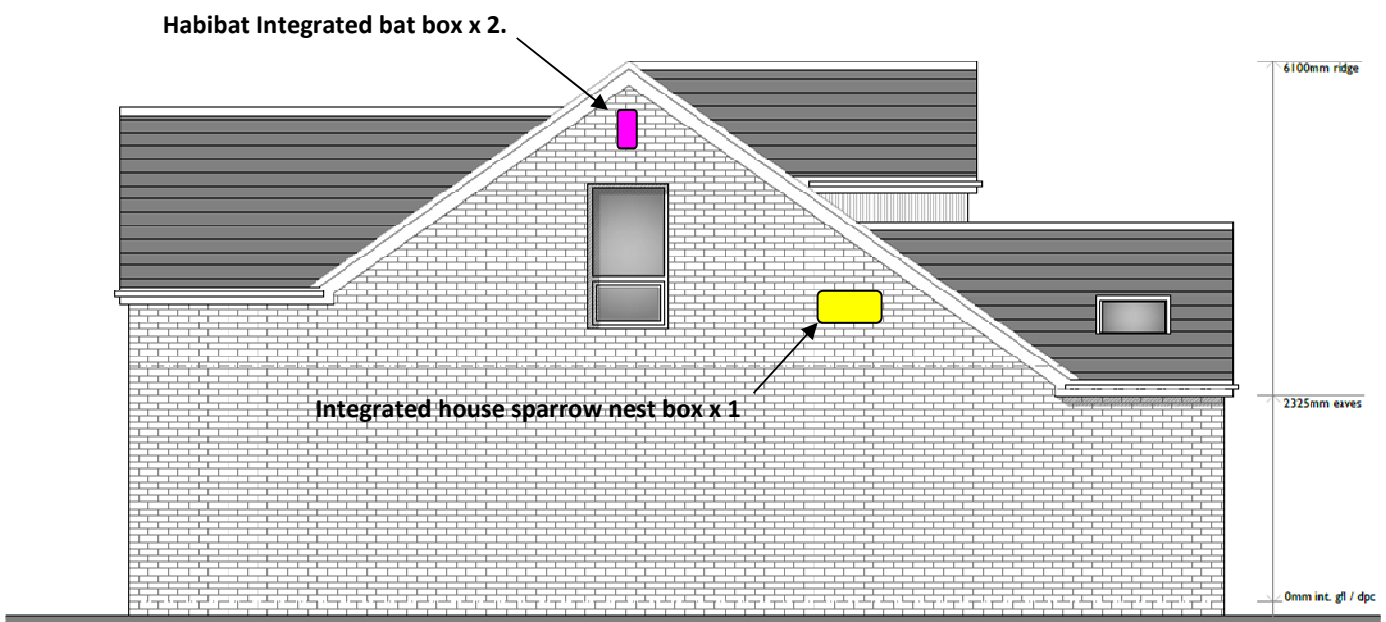
The survey has revealed that the site has no features potentially capable of supporting bat roosts. Overall the site is classified as having **Negligible bat roost potential**.

Recommendations: Bats;

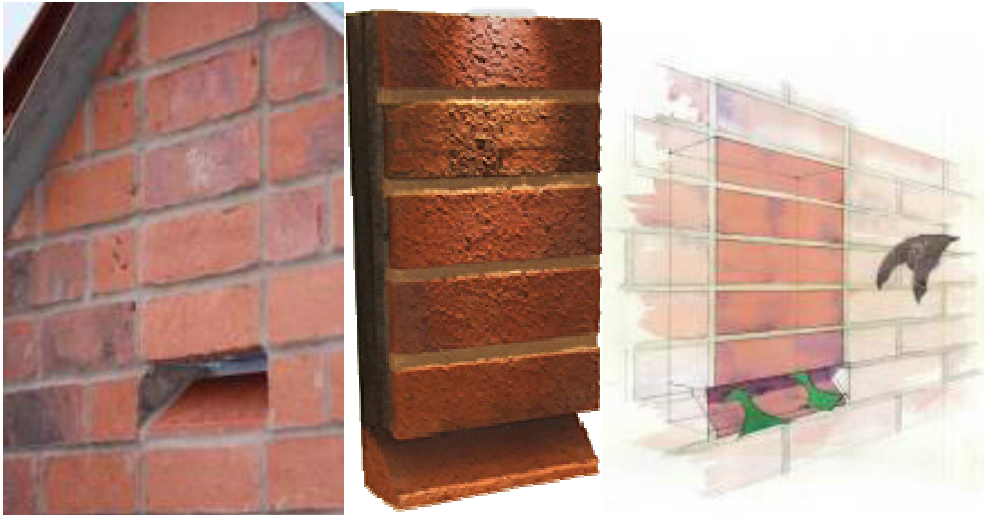
Integrated artificial bat roosts:

It is recommended that **one** integrated artificial roost is provided within the new property as shown below. Full instructions in relation to installation and positioning are provided via the link below.

In particular, the Habibat Bat Box is recommended and is a solid box made of insulating concrete with internal roosting space. The box blends seamlessly into brick-built properties and may be incorporated into the fabric of building.



side elevation
(east facing)
as viewed from 404 Tottington Road garden



<https://www.wildcare.co.uk/wildlife-nest-boxes/bat-boxes/wall-integrated.html>

Birds:

All birds are offered various levels of protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended.

The garden habitats including trees and shrubs have potential to support breeding birds.

Recommendations: Birds;

No further surveys are required.

Before any development and in order to minimize impacts on birds any site disturbance including any removal of these features should take place outside of the breeding season, i.e. between September 1st and February 28th. Following the felling of trees/scrub/shrubs, piles of brash should be removed from the site, failure to do so could provide potential nest sites if left in situ until the following breeding season.

If removal of the above features is envisaged during the breeding season (*March 1st to August 31st*), then checks should be made to establish any nesting or breeding activity, prior to removal.

Enhancing the site for Birds:

Integrated bird box within the new building;

One integrated double chamber house sparrow nest boxes (Vivara Pro) will be installed in the upper eastern elevation of the new buildings, as shown above on Page 8.

The following box is recommended;

House sparrow nest box (Vivara Pro), Double chamber:

House sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) are sociable opportunists that survive in most UK habitats, from towns and cities to farmland and countryside. Substantial declines in both urban and rural populations (estimated 71% decrease between 1977 and 2008) have led to concerns for this species.

This House Sparrow Nest Box is manufactured from WoodStone - a mix of concrete and FSC wood fibres. This material is strong and highly insulating which helps to provide a thermally stable environment within the box. It also protects against damage from predators such as cats, woodpeckers and squirrels. The two breeding chamber version is particularly suitable for house sparrows as they prefer to nest in colonies.

The House Sparrow Nest Boxes will be installed on the upper eastern elevation.



These are available here, or, from other suppliers; <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-house-sparrow-nest-box>

Great Crested Newt:

Great crested newt (GCN) is comprehensively protected under European legislation.

There is a small ornamental pond on site. This has been stocked by the owners with koi carp species a highly efficient predator of GCN eggs. There are no other waterbodies within the terrestrial range of the species that could have provided a potential source of colonisation for the species. The garden is surrounded by roads and urbanised habitats and is isolated in amphibian terms. The pond is considered totally unsuitable for the species which is deemed absent beyond reasonable doubt.

Recommendations: Great Crested Newt:

There are no issues in respect of great crested newts. The species is considered absent from the site beyond reasonable doubt. No further action is required.

PART 4 REFERENCES:

4.1 REFERENCES:

Nature Conservancy Council (1990) *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – A Technique for Environmental Audit*. Nature Conservancy Council.

Rose, F. (1981) *The Wildflower Key*. Warne.

Stace, C., (1997) *New Flora of the British Isles (Second edition)*. Cambridge University Press.

Web Sites:

Google Earth.

Natural England – Nature on the Map.

APPENDIX 1:

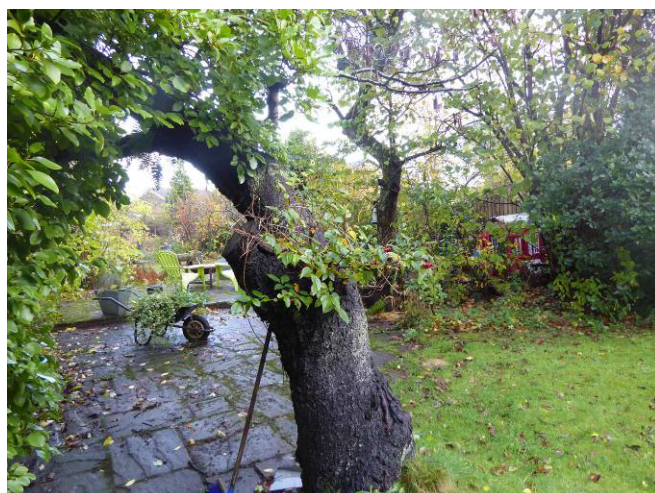
*Map 1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey
(Separate file)*

Site Photographs

APPENDIX 1: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS: 17th November 2023



Southern entrance into the site and looking long the western boundary.



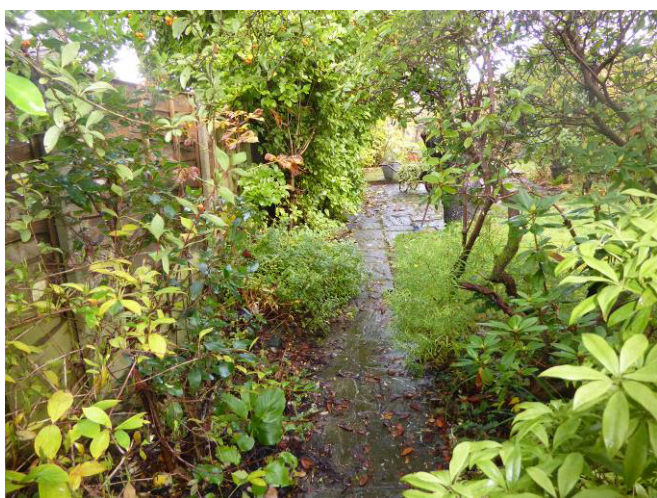
Path leading into the garden / proposed site of development, looking north.



Southern entrance into the site showing parking area.



Patio and garden areas looking north.



Path leading into the garden / proposed site of development, looking north.



Patio and garden areas looking north-east.



Looking north across the area of proposed development.



Northern part of the site and proposed development area.



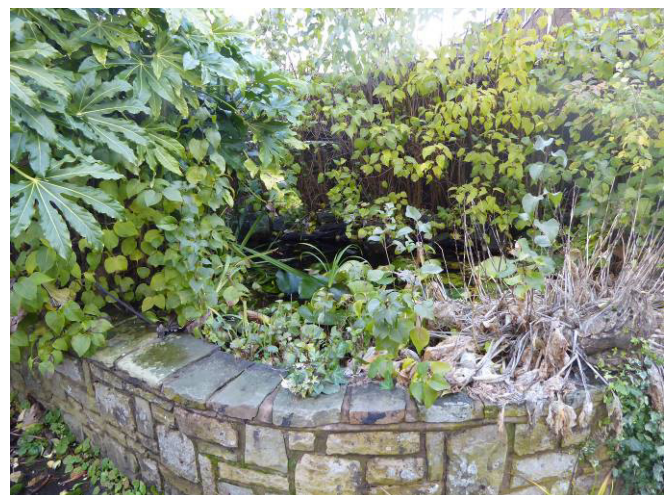
Looking north across the area of proposed development.



Northern part of the site and proposed development area.



Typical introduced shrub beds and trees on the western boundary.



Raised ornamental butyl lined pond in the NW site corner.



NE area of site.



Looking south across the area of proposed development.



Northern part of the site showing greenhouse and shed.



Looking south across the area of proposed development.



Looking south along the eastern site boundary.