



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- Proposed New Build Dwelling, Spring Street, Tottington -

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A report for

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October 2025

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PART 1 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 REASONS FOR SURVEY:

PENNINE ecological have been commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of this site. The purpose of this study is to address any potential ecological issues in relation to the construction of a new residential dwelling. The location is shown on the map and aerial image below.

The survey was undertaken on October 14th 2025. The sites grid reference is SD 7749 1302.

The study includes a vegetation 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.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Metric calculation has also been completed by Pennine Ecological.

1.2 SITE LOCATION:

The site is located approximately 3.5km north west of Bury in Tottington village centre to the west of Market Street (B6213). The site location is shown below indicated by the red line boundary.





Google Earth aerial image showing approximate location of proposed development.

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 250m north west 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 3km to the north 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 250m north west 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) within the red line application boundary.

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

There were no Section 41 species recorded during the survey.

1.4 SURVEY CONSTRAINTS:

The survey was conducted on 14th October 2025 which is an acceptable time for Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey / protected species assessment.

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 over 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 roost assessment 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 UK Habitat Classification Survey Methodology:

A UKHabs survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023) was undertaken and the following habitats identified. The location of habitats is shown on Map 1, Appendix 1. Condition assessments for relevant habitats recorded on site are provided in Appendix 2.

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:

On Site Habitats (within red line boundary)

- H2b Ornamental non-native hedgerow
- u1b Developed land - sealed surface
- u1c Artificial, unvegetated, unsealed surface
- u1f Sparsely vegetated urban land

2.1.3 General Description:

The proposed development area for the proposed new dwelling is approximately 27 x 16m in maximum dimensions.

The site is dominated by bare gravel substrates and hard standing.

Within the central / southern part of the site an area of recently disturbed ground is present dominated by bare earth substrates with very sparse coverage of ephemeral / ruderal vegetation (u1f sparsely vegetated urban land). Part of this area forms a spoil / earth mound with a large uprooted conifer species tree stump, tree branches and rubble. Within the spoil mound three separate locations of the highly invasive Japanese knotweed were found.

Other species recorded include very occasional / rare; ribwort plantain, herb Robert, dandelion species, bramble, curled dock, foxglove, common nettle, broad-leaved dock and smooth sow-thistle.

At the western end of the southern boundary a short length of ornamental hedgerow is present comprising six Leyland cypress trees.

2.1.4 Condition Assessment:

Evidence from Google Earth and Google Streetview indicates that recent tree / vegetation removal has occurred along the eastern site boundary.

In line with BNG guidance these habitats will be assessed based on historical aerial mapping evidence.

(See Appendix 2 for full details)

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 site.

Results:

There are no structures or features affected by the proposed work that have bat roost potential.

Foraging habitats:

The site is located in a sub-urban location with surrounding gardens and small areas of green space including woodland. To the north west within approximately 250m of the site extensive high quality bat foraging habitats associated with the wooded Kirklees Valley are present. Open farmland, woodland and Black Brook is also present within 130m of the site to the south west. 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. This is Kirklees Valley Local Nature Reserve (LNR) located approximately 250m north west of the site at its closest point.

3.1.2 Non-statutory Sites:

There is one non-statutory site (*Site of Biological Importance*) within 500m of the site. This is Kirklees Valley approximately 250m north west of the site at its closest point.

3.1.3 Sites Habitats & Higher Plant Species:

There are no Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006 affected by the proposed work.

Plant species and habitats recorded on site are common / widespread, considered to be of site value only.

Recommendations: Habitats:

A biodiversity net gain Defra Metric has been undertaken by the authors.

Japanese knotweed:

The control and eradication of this species is both difficult and expensive. The most common method of dispersal is by means of stem, crown and rhizome (*underground stem*) sections. New plants will grow from the nodes of pieces of green stem, in soil or water. Small sections of rhizome, as little as 0.7g can regrow into a new plant.

The species can be controlled by various methods although the most effective method is by direct herbicide stem injection, which may need to be repeated over several years. Treatment is best undertaken by a specialist Japanese knotweed control contractor.

Three small areas of the species are present within the mound in the center of the site.

Legally there is no requirement for a landowner to control or eradicate the species from their land. However, landowners can be prosecuted for allowing it to spread onto adjacent landowners land.

Irrespective of the above, the key recommendation is that any spoil / soil or material removed from the site, must be sent to a site licensed to receive Japanese knotweed.

Further more detailed information on the species is provided on the following government website;
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-japanese-knotweed-from-spreading>

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 **Negligible bat roost potential**.

The site is located within an area considered to be of negligible / low value for foraging bats.

Recommendations: Bats;

No further surveys are required.

Great Crested Newt:

Great crested newt (GCN) is comprehensively protected under European legislation. There are no ponds within 250m of the site.

Recommendations: Great Crested Newt;

There are no issues in relation to this species.

Birds:

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

There are no habitats on site suitable for breeding birds.

Recommendations: Birds;

No further surveys are required.

PART 4 REFERENCES:

4.1 REFERENCES:

- Bat Conservation Trust (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines*, 4th Edition.
- 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: UKHabs Habitat Survey
(Separate file)*

Site Photographs

APPENDIX 2:

Condition_assessments_version July 2025 (separate file)

APPENDIX 1: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS: 14th October 2025



Looking west into the site from the eastern boundary.



Bare substrates at the western end of the site and ornamental hedgerow along fence line.



Sites eastern boundary showing area of tree / vegetation removal, indicated by red line.



Bare substrates at the western end of the site, looking east across the site



Looking south along the eastern boundary showing area of tree / vegetation removal, indicated by red line.



Part of the southern boundary.



Rubble and spoil mound in the centre of the site.



One of three areas of Japanese knotweed re-growth within the spoil mound.



Spoil mound with coniferous tree trunk.



One of three areas of Japanese knotweed re-growth within the spoil mound.



One of three areas of Japanese knotweed re-growth within the spoil mound.



General view across the site from the eastern boundary.



General view across the site from the eastern boundary.