Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

BE536.2
Land adjacent to 46 The Fairway

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Revision	A
Site address	Land adjacent to 46 The Fairway, Huddersfield HD2 2FQ
Grid reference	SE 14286 19883
Report reviewed by	David Watts BSc (Hons) FdSc MCIEEM
Client	Mr Anwar
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Executive Summary

Bagshaw Ecology Ltd have been requested by Mr Anwar to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the land adjacent to 46 The Fairway, Huddersfield HD2 2FQ, in relation to an application for planning. The development proposals are to construct an access drive through the site.

The survey found the site to consist of a woodland. The woodland was of no discernible National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type, and had ground flora typical of disturbed and cultivated land. The habitats on the site were determined to be of low ecological importance.

Signs of foraging badger *Meles meles* were observed on the site. No signs of any other protected species were observed, although the trees on the site were determined to have potential for nesting birds.

There are no foreseeable impacts of the development proposals upon the ecological value of the site or the surrounding area. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), it is recommended that the ecological value of the site is enhanced through the incorporation of bat boxes into the proposed development.

1. Introduction

Background

1.1. Bagshaw Ecology Ltd have been instructed by Mr Anwar to carry out Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the land adjacent to 46 The Fairway, Huddersfield HD2 2FQ, hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

1.2. The purpose of the report is to identify the habitat types on the site, along with the presence or absence of any protected or notable species. The ecological impact of any proposed development is assessed, and mitigation, management and aftercare proposals are suggested when appropriate.

Site Details

1.1. The site is located at grid reference SE 14286 19883, and is accessed off the west of Jilley Royd Lane. The site is bound by residential properties to the north and south, by Jilley Royd Lane to the east, and by the garden of 46 The Fairway to the west.

1.2. The site consists of a small area of woodland, bordered by amenity gardens.



Figure 1: Aerial imagery showing approximate site boundary (Google Earth Pro, 2017)

Proposed Development

1.3. The development proposals are to construct a driveway, leading from Jilley Royd Lane from the east, to the garden of 46 The Fairway, to the west.

2. Legislation and Policy

2.1. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately or recklessly injure, kill or capture any animal species protected under Schedule 5 of the act.
- Deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or take any wild bird; to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while occupied or being built, or to take or destroy the egg of a wild bird. Additional protection is afforded to bird species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act.
- Intentionally pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant included in Schedule 8 of the act.

2.2. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 makes it an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb any animal protected under Schedule 2 of the regulations. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an animal, even if the animal is not present at the time.

2.3. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) includes a list of 943 national priority species and 56 habitats of principal importance, with all species and habitats having specific action plans defining the measures required to ensure their conservation. Although the UKBAP has since been superseded by County Biodiversity Plans, it remains a useful point of reference.

2.4. Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 requires that any public bodies take into consideration any species and habitats listed in the UKBAP when implementing their duty and exercising any normal functions.

2.5. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should aim to protect or enhance biodiversity and conservation interests, and where possible any development should aim to increase net gains in biodiversity.

3. Methods

Ecological Data Search

3.1. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) Magic Maps website was consulted as to any land based designations within 1km of the site.

3.2. Aerial imagery was assessed to give an appraisal of the surrounding land use.

3.3. Due to the small size of the site, further consultation with the local record centre was not considered necessary.

Site Survey

3.4. The habitat survey and mapping exercise was carried out on 4th July 2017 by David Watts BSc (Hons) FdSc MCIEEM, an ecological consultant experienced in carrying out habitat and protected species surveys.

3.5. The study area was surveyed in accordance with JNCC (2010) guidelines. Habitat types were assigned an alphanumeric code, and target notes were made identifying important species, along with the presence of potential habitats for any protected or notable species.

3.6. Habitats and species present on or adjacent to the site were assessed using CIEEM's (2016) guidelines. Ecological features were classed as being of either international, national, regional, district, local, low or of negligible importance (see table 3.1).

Table 1 Importance of Ecological Features

Value of feature	Key examples
International	• Internationally designated sites (SPA, pSPA, SAC, cSAC, pSAC, Ramsar site, Biogenetic Reserve, or an area which meets designation for such sites. • Internationally significant and viable areas of a habitat type listed in Annexe 1 of the Habitats Directive. • Any regularly occurring, globally threatened species. • A regularly occurring population of an internationally important species, which is threatened or rare in the UK.
National	• A nationally designated site (SSSI, NNR), or an area which has met the published selection criteria. • A regularly occurring significant number/population of a nationally important species (e.g. listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)). • A feature identified as being of critical importance in the UK BAP.
Regional/County	• Viable areas of key habitat identified in the regional or county BAP. • A regularly occurring significant population/number of any important species important at regional/county level. • Sites of conservation importance which exceed the district selection criteria but which fall short of SSSI selection guidelines.

Value of feature	Key examples
District	• Areas of habitat identified in District/City/Borough BAP. • Sites that the designating authority has determined meet the published ecological selection criteria for designation. • Sites/features which are scarce within the District/City/Borough. • A regularly occurring significant population/number of any important species important at District/City/Borough level.
Local	• Areas identified in a Local BAP. • Sites/features which are scarce in the locality or which are considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource within the local context (e.g. species-rich hedgerows). • Local Nature Reserves. • Any populations, species or habitats of local importance.
Low/Site	• Habitats of moderate to low diversity which support a range of locally and nationally common species, the loss of which can be easily mitigated.
Negligible	• Habitats of no ecological value, the removal of which requires no mitigation.

3.7. The trees on site were assessed for bats using methodologies prescribed by Collins (2016). This involved an inspection of trees from ground level, to determine of potential roost features were present.

3.8. Taking account of the structural features of trees, and the surrounding habitat, trees were assigned a level of roost suitability based upon professional judgement (see table 2).

Table 2 Bat Roosting Potential in Trees

Roosting potential	Criteria
Confirmed Presence	Presence confirmed by the survey.
High	A tree with one of more potential roost features that is obviously suitable for large numbers of bats.
Moderate	A tree with one or more potential roost features but which is unlikely to support roosts of high conservation status.
Low	A tree of sufficient size and age to contain potential roost features but with none seen from the ground, or features with very limited roost potential.
Negligible	Negligible habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats.

4. Results

Constraints

4.1. The site survey was conducted inside the optimum period for Phase 1 Habitat surveys. Some species are only visible at certain times of the year, and may not have been present during the survey.

Designated Sites

4.2. A search on Magic Maps (DEFRA, 2017) identified Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitats within 1km of the site, the closest of which is Upper Fell Grave, 190m north of the site, and which is also listed as an ancient/semi-natural woodland.

Habitats

4.3. The immediate surrounding land use is predominantly residential. Tree cover in the surrounding area is high, with good terrestrial connectivity leading to and from the site.

4.4. The site consists of Broadleaved, Semi-Natural Woodland (JNCC Code A1.1). Canopy tree species include sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus,* ash *Fraxinus excelsior,* pedunculate oak *Quercus robur,* holly *Ilex aquifolium,* common lime *Tilia* x *europaea,* silver birch *Betula pendula,* and field elm *Ulmus minor.*

4.5. The ground flora appears to have been recently disturbed and consists predominantly of feverfew *Tanacetum parthenium,* common nettle *Urtica dioica* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus.* Other species include cleavers *Galium aparine,* creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens,* wood avens *Geum urbanum,* Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus,* red fescue *Festuca rubra,* common bent *Agrostis capillaris,* hedge woundwort *Stachys sylvatica,* ragwort *Senecio Jacobaea,* foxglove *Digitalis purpurea,* Jack-by-the-hedge *Alliaria petiolata,* ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolate,* herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*, and primrose *Primula vulgaris.* Towards the south of the site are some ornamental shrubs which have encroached from adjacent gardens, including snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus* and box-leaved honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida.*

4.6. The woodland appears to be of no discernible National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type (Rodwell, 1991). With a ground flora consisting predominantly of species typical of disturbed and cultivated land, the woodland on the site is considered to be of low/site ecological importance.

Bat

4.7. DEFRA (2017) holds no records of granted European Protected Species Licenses within 1km of the site.

4.8. None of the trees on the site exhibited features suitable for roosting bats.

Other Mammals

4.9. Badger *Meles meles* foraging signs were observed on the site. These were relatively sparse, being confined to one area of the site. No badger setts, or further signs of badgers, such as latrines, were observed.

4.10. There are no riparian habitats on or adjacent to the site suitable for water voles or otters *Lutra lutra*.

Reptiles and Amphibians

4.11. A search on aerial imagery (Google Earth Pro, 2017) revealed no ponds within 500m of the site. There may be small ponds within the gardens of residential properties which are not visible from aerial imagery.

4.12. Habitat connectivity is limited by roads in the surrounding area. It is considered that the site provides suboptimal habitat for amphibians and reptiles.

Bird Species

4.13. The trees on the site provide suitable habitat for nesting birds. Common bird species typical of gardens were observed during the survey, including robin *Erithacus rubecula,* blackbird *Turdus merula,* great tit *Parus major* and goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis.*

5. Assessment

5.1. No trees will require removal due to the development proposals. The proposed access drive will necessitate the removal of some of the ground flora, the majority of which consists of common species typical of disturbed places. This is not considered to have any ecological impact upon the site or the wider surrounding area.

5.2. Foraging sings of badger were observed on the site. The foraging signs were relatively sparse, and no badger setts or latrines were observed on the site. There is no foreseeable impact of the development proposals upon this species.

5.3. The trees on the site have potential for nesting birds, however, no trees necessitate removal due to the development.

5.4. No further protected species have the potential to be affected by the development proposals.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. As the development has no foreseeable impact upon the ecological value of the site and the surrounding area, and as no protected species have the potential to be affected by the development proposals, no further surveys or mitigation is considered necessary.

6.2. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, it is recommended that the ecological value of the site is enhanced through the incorporation of two bat boxes into the development proposals. Bird boxes of type Schwegler 1FF, and should be hung from trees at a minimum height of 5m, and with clear flight paths to and from the entrances.

7. References

CIEEM (2016). *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in Britain and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal, 2nd Edition.* Winchester: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

Collins, J. (2016). Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition. Bat Conservation trust, London

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Rodwell, J.S. (1991). *British Plant Communities Volume 1: Woodlands and Scrub.* Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, Cambridge.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Ch. 69

Appendices

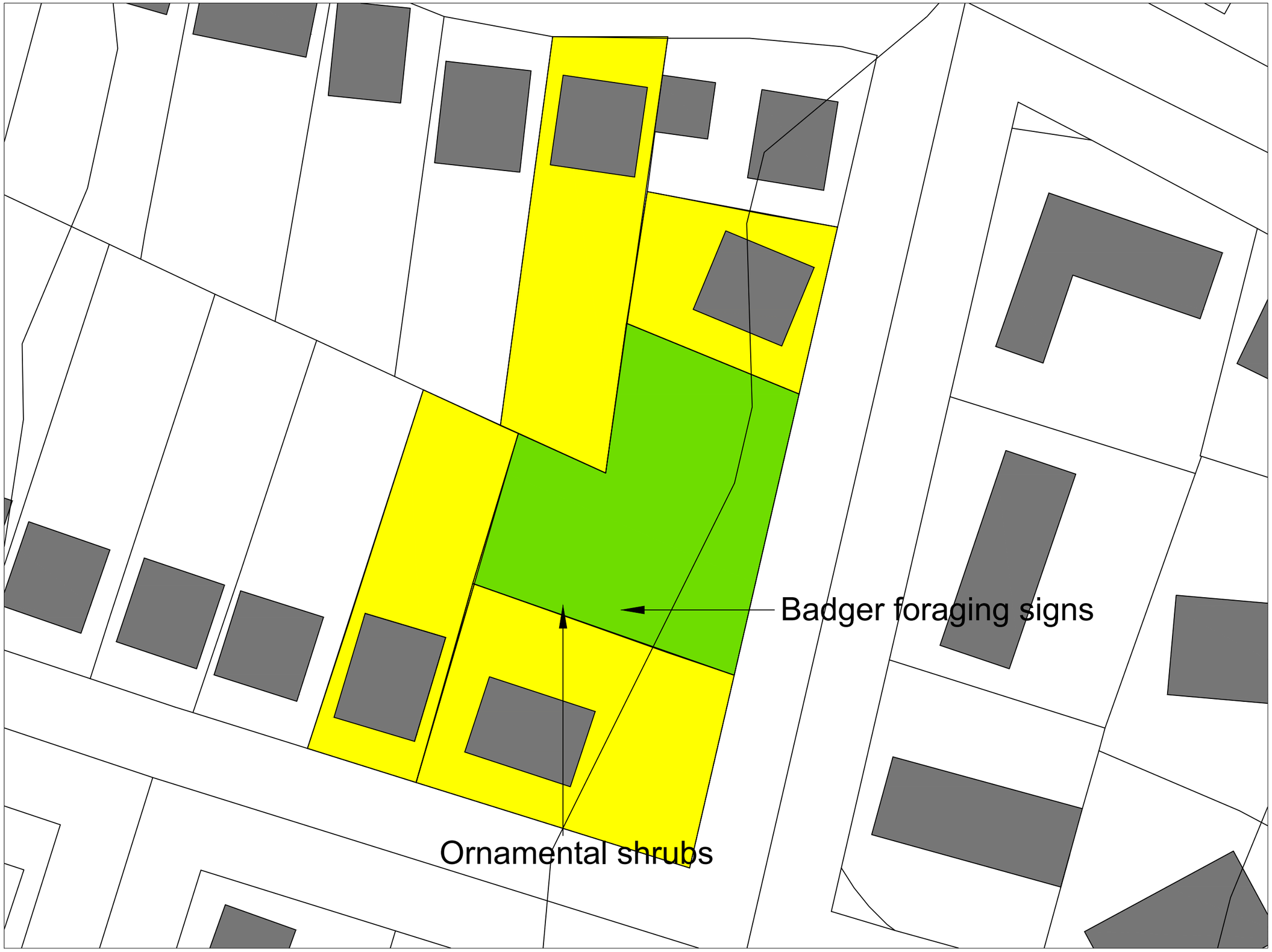
Appendix 1: Photographs



Plate 1: The site



Plate 2: The site



Appendix 2: Phase 1 Habitat Map

Project:	46 The Fairway
Client	Mr Anwar
Drawn by:	David Watts
Date:	18th July 2017
Scale:	1:400 @ A3

Do not scale off this drawing

Key:

	A1 Broadleaved woodland
	J1.2 Amenity grassland
	Buildings

Bagshaw Ecology