EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY & DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

YANGTZE, HALIFAX ROAD, LIVERSEDGE, WEST YORKSHIRE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2021 by County Planning Limited to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Daytime Bat Survey of land at Yangtze, Halifax Road, Liversedge, West Yorkshire.

1.2 The site is situated on the southern side of Halifax Road, Liversedge (O.S. grid reference: SE 19780 23763 – see Figure 1). The proposed development site currently comprises a Chinese restaurant and takeaway with associated parking area and access road. Expanses of poor semi-improved grassland and continuous scrub make up the majority of the site with small areas of tall, ruderal herb and scattered trees also present. The site was formerly the site of a working man's club together with associated tennis courts and parking areas. Residential development is located to the north and east. Pastural farmland is located to the west and south. An industrial estate located a short distance to the south.

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues on the site. A daytime bat survey is required to assess the potential use of the buildings by bats.

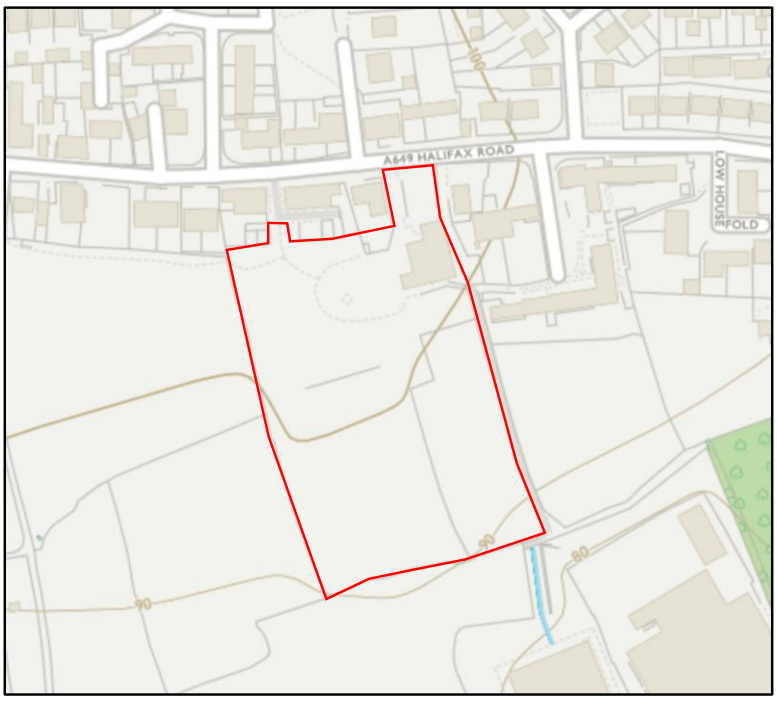


Figure 1 showing the location of the site

Description of Development

1.3 The site will be the subject of a pre-application advice request for residential development for circa 38-42 dwellings.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

2.1 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010) in March 2021. The site was walked and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.

2.2 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g. setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt and a ground-level assessment of the trees on site for potential bat roost features.

2.3 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Daytime Bat Survey

2.4 A daytime bat survey of the site was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for - any bat roost(s).

2.5 An external assessment of the existing building(s) on the site was undertaken, which included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps between window frames and the walls, and looking for bat droppings on the walls and window ledges. An internal assessment was also carried out, with particular focus on gaps in walls, cracks in roof beams, and any evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, in the internal spaces.

2.6 A ground-level assessment of any trees affected by the proposals was also undertaken. This involved a search for potential roosting features (PRF's), including peeled bark, knot holes and branch splits.

2.7 A pair of close-focussing binoculars, a high-powered torch and, where necessary, an endoscopic camera, were used to search for evidence of bats.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

2.8 Joe Walters (Ecologist) carried out the Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey and daytime bat survey on the 2nd March 2021. Joe is an experienced ecologist and fully trained in botanical surveys and protected species assessments. March can be a sub-optimal time of the year for botanical work, however due to the type of habitats present on site, a thorough assessment could be undertaken. The weather at the time of the survey was overcast, cool and dry. Daytime bat surveys can be undertaken at any time of year.

Survey Constraints

2.9 The site was fully accessible. There were no constraints to the survey.

3.0 RESULTS

EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

Poor semi-improved Grassland

3.2 This habitat is one of the most abundant on site (see Photograph 1). The grassland is unmanaged resulting in a mixed sward height. Dominant grass species include Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*. Commonly occurring herbaceous species include Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Common Ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris* and White Clover *Trifolium repens*.

Photograph 1 showing the poor semi-improved grassland

Scrub

3.3 Scrub is present on site as both continuous and scattered features. Areas of continuous scrub dominate along the western boundary and central areas of the site (see Photograph 2). Scattered scrub is found in small quantities across the site (see Photograph 3). Scrub species present include Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna,* Pampas Grass *Cortaderia* sp., Rosebay Willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, Cleavers *Galium aparine*, Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, Common Ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, Lesser Burdock *Arctium minus*, Cow Parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium* and Garden Privet *Ligustrum ovalifolium*.

Photograph 2 showing the area of continuous scrub

Photograph 3 showing a stand of scattered scrub

Tall, Ruderal Herb

3.4 Tall, ruderal herb is present as a linear feature between areas of continuous scrub and poor semi-improved grassland. This habitat is dominated by Common Nettle *Urtica dioica* and also comprises the species listed under poor semi-improved grassland. Other species present include Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* and Cow Parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*.

Scattered Trees

3.5 Scattered trees are found across the site. The trees vary in age from juvenile to early mature (see Photograph 4). Tree species include Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, Paper-bark Birch *Betula papyrifera*, Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*, Leyland Cypress *Cupressus leylandii*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*.

Photograph 4 showing some of the trees on site

Bare Ground

3.6 This habitat is present within the north-eastern corner of the site and comprises a hardstanding access road and parking area (see Photograph 5). Ephemeral/short perennial species have established within cracks and crevices and around the peripheries of the hardstanding areas.

Photograph 5 showing an area of hardstanding bare ground

Introduced Shrub

3.7 Introduced shrub beds are located with the amenity garden space in the north-eastern corner of the site (see Photograph 6). Species comprise Pampas Grass *Cortaderia* sp., Hebe sp., Wilson's Honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida*, Bamboo sp., Leyland Cypress *Cupressus leylandii*, Dog Rose *Rosa canina*, Oregon-grape *Mahonia aquifolium* and Cotoneaster sp.

Photograph 6 showing one of the introduced shrub beds

Amenity Grassland

3.8 Amenity grassland is located in the north-eastern corner of the site (see Photograph 7). The grass is regularly mown resulting in a short sward height. Abundant species include Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire Fog Holcus lanatus, Dandelion Taraxacum officinale agg., White Clover Trifolium repens, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Broad-leaved Dock *Rumex obtusifolius* and Mosses.

Photograph 7 showing the amenity grassland on site

Ephemeral/Short Perennial

3.9 This habitat has established over some areas of hardstanding within the north-eastern corner of the site (see Photograph 8). Dominant species are Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua,* Wavy Bitter-cress *Cardamine flexuosa*, Red Dead-nettle *Lamium purpureum*, mosses, Dandelion Taraxacum officinale agg., Yorkshire Fog Holcus lanatus and Herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum*.

Photograph 8 showing the ephemeral/short perennial

Spoil

3.10 Spoil piles consisting brash are located on the eastern boundary of the site and within one of the large areas of poor semi-improved grassland (see Photograph 9).

Photograph 9 showing one of the spoil piles

Bare Ground/Spoil

3.11 This habitat is located towards the north-eastern boundary of the site and consists areas of hardstanding paving covered with carpet, building materials and general waste (see Photograph 10).

Photograph 10 showing the area of bare ground/spoil

Earth Bank

3.12 This bank is located parallel to the western boundary and then turns into the centre of the site. The earth bank rises to approximately 1metre at its highest point. The bank is covered with scrub and poor semi-improved grassland species.

Intact Hedgerow

3.13 A small stretch of Cypress *Chamaecyparis/Cupressocyparis* sp. hedgerow runs parallel along the access road from the northern boundary. The hedgerow is approximately 1.2 metres high and well-managed (see Photograph 11).

Photograph 11 showing the intact hedgerow

Buildings

3.14 A large, detached building, currently used as a Chinese restaurant and takeway, is located on site. Shipping containers are also present and have been mapped under buildings.

Boundaries

3.15 The site's boundaries are marked with fencing and walls.

Japanese Knotweed

3.16 There is Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* present along the western and southern boundaries (see Photograph 12). These are present amongst the areas of continuous scrub but have been mapped separately.

Photograph 12 showing one of the expanses of Japanese Knotweed

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

3.17 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species (EPS) under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3.18 No waterbodies exist on the site, or within 250metres of the site. The hardstanding, bare ground and ephemeral/short perennial habitats on site are considered hostile habitats for Great crested Newt. The unmanaged grassland,scrub, tall, ruderal herb and introduced shrub beds provide cover and foraging opportunities for Great Crested Newts.

Bats

3.19 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006).

Daytime Bat Survey

3.20 The building to be affected by the proposals was the subject of a daytime bat survey and the results are detailed below. The building was fully accessible and could be easily surveyed.

External Survey

3.21 The building comprises an original stone-built central element alongside various single and two storey extensions (see Photograph 13). Sections of the external masonry have been rendered. The render is in reasonable condition, free from cracks or crevices bats bay exploit. The masonry to the rear of the property has not been rendered and appears in good condition and well-sealed with mortar (see Photograph 14).

Photograph 13 showing the building on site

Photograph 14 showing the exposed masonry across the rear of the property

3.22 The uPVC window and door frames are in good condition and well-sealed to the surrounding masonry (see Photograph 15). An attached conservatory is located on the northern side of the building (see Photograph 13). This is in reasonable condition with no potential entry points found.

Photograph 15 showing the exterior of the building

3.23 The building consists of pitched, hipped, sloped and flat roof sections (see Photographs 16, 17 and 18). The flat roofs are covered with a bitumen-based membrane which appears in good condition and is well-sealed to the roof edges. The sloped, pitched and hipped roof sections are covered with slate and concrete roof tiles. The tiles are largely

present and intact. However, damaged and slipped tiles are present across some of the sections of roofs.

Photograph 16 showing a section of roof

Photograph 17 showing a section of roof

Photograph 18 showing a section of roof

3.24 Wood bargeboards and soffits are located at many of the roof edges (see Photographs 19 and 20). These are largely in good condition and fitted flush to the surrounding walls and roof sections. However, some sections are showing signs of aesthetic degradation and missing sections of board. These were inspected further and were found to be shallow and not lead to any further cavities.

Photograph 19 showing a section of bargeboards and soffits

Photograph 20 showing a section of bargeboards

Internal Survey

3.25 As aforementioned, the differing sections of the building are set over one and two-storeys with a basement level also present within the building.

3.26 The small basement is easily accessed via an internal staircase. No access points were located along the external walls and no evidence of bat activity was found (see Photograph 21).

Photograph 21 showing the basement

3.27 The internal spaces of the building consist of typical restaurant rooms such as dining areas, bar area, kitchen, toilet facilities, storerooms, and entrance foyer (see Photographs 22, 23 and 24).

Photograph 22 showing the interior of the building

Photograph 23 showing the interior of the building

Photograph 24 showing the interior of the building

3.28 The internal rooms are in reasonable condition and well-sealed with no features or habitat associated with roosting bats. Roof voids are located across many of the differing roofs. A small void is present between the flat roof section of the building and the suspended ceiling below (see Photograph 25). This was found to be well-sealed and cobwebbed with no evidence of bat activity or occupancy.

Photograph 25 showing the small void between the underside of the flat roof and the suspended ceiling

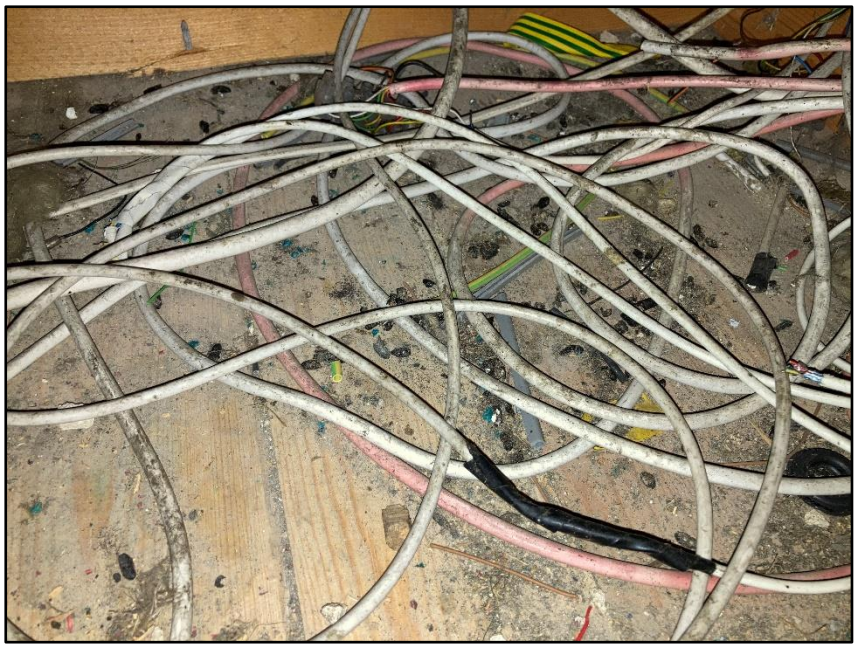
3.29 The roof voids below the sloped, pitched and hipped roofs are in reasonable condition. The roof timbers are free from cracks and crevice's bats may exploit. Many of the

underside of the roofs are covered with felt (see Photograph 26). The felt, where present, is in good condition with only a few rips and tears present. Damaged roof tiles have allowed some water ingress resulting in damp cool conditions and damage to the ceilings below (see Photograph 27).

Photograph 26 showing one of the roof voids

Photograph 27 showing the underside of one of the roof sections

3.30 No evidence of bat activity or occupancy was found within any of the rooms or void spaces. Evidence of rodent droppings were found within many of the roof voids (see Photograph 28).



Photograph 28 showing some of the rodent droppings

3.31 The trees on site were all inspected from the ground for bat roosting features, such as cavities, limb damage or peeling bark. No such features were located on any trees on site.

Badger

3.32 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.

3.33 Evidence of Badger activity was found during the survey. The details of this are documented in a separate report. Due to the sensitive nature of the report, which reveals the locations of the setts, this is not to be disclosed to the public.

3.34 The restaurant building itself, as well as the associated areas of hardstanding are well outside the zone of influence of the badger activity.

Nesting Birds

3.35 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

3.36 The continuous scrub and trees offer good bird nesting habitat.

INVASIVE SPECIES

3.37 Japanese Knotweed is located on site (see Photograph 29). The locations can be found on the phase 1 habitat map at the back of this report. This is a non-native, invasive species listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as

amended). A remediation/removal strategy can be conditioned as part of any subsequent planning application approval.

Photograph 29 showing one of the stands of Japanese Knotweed located on site

PROTECTED SITES

3.38 No statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. One statutory protected site lies within 2.5km of the site boundary. This is Sunny Bank Ponds Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which is located approximately 2km south of the site boundary. The site does not lie within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

3.39 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site boundaries, or within 2km of the site boundary. The site is not located within Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

Habitats

4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

4.2 The site is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland and continuous scrub with relatively small areas of tall, ruderal herb, amenity grassland, bare ground, introduced shrub, scattered scrub, ephemeral/short perennial and scattered trees. Other than the areas of bare ground and ephemeral/short perennial habitats, the site offers cover from predation, foraging habitat and moderate pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.

Development Context

4.3 The proposals involve the retention of most habitats on site.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

4.4 No waterbodies exist on the site or within 250metres of the site. The hardstanding, bare ground and ephemeral/short perennial habitats on site are considered hostile habitats for Great crested Newt. The unmanaged grasslands, tall, ruderal herb and scrub provide cover and foraging opportunities for Great Crested Newts.

4.5 Given the lack of breeding habitat in the locality, it is considered unlikely that Great Crested Newt occur on the development site. Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on the development at this time.

Bats

4.6 The building on site has been the subject of a daytime bat survey. No evidence of bat activity or occupancy was found in any part of the building. Potential entry points were identified during the external survey, however, these were inspected further and were found to be unsuitable.

4.7 The internal spaces are in reasonable condition and well-sealed with no evidence of bat activity or occupancy found. Therefore, the building on site is considered to have **negligible bat roost suitability** and no further survey work is required.

4.8 No potential bat roost features were identified on any of the trees on site. The site provides suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat. However, this is not linked to the wider landscape.

Badger

4.9 Evidence of Badger activity was found during the survey. The details of this are to be documented in a separate report.

Nesting Birds

4.10 The site supports suitable nesting habitats for birds within the trees and continuous scrub. No evidence of nesting birds was found during the survey. Nesting birds can be mitigated for by allowing no works to potential nesting habitats to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March – August) unless a nesting bird survey is undertaken first. This can be controlled through a suitable planning condition.

INVASIVE SPECIES

4.11 Japanese Knotweed is located on site. This is a non-native, invasive species listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is recommended this species is eradicated from the site with the use of a recognised methodology prior to works commencing in the affected areas. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not include the areas of land associated with the existing restaurant building and the surrounding hardstandings.

PROTECTED SITES

4.12 No statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. The nearest is Sunny Bank Ponds LNR which is located approximately 2km south of the site boundary. At this distance and the buffer habitats present between the protected site and the proposed development site, it is thought there will be no deleterious affects on the statutory protected site as a result of the development.

4.13 The site does not lie within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. Following the findings from the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, the following survey may be required:

- Nesting Birds – It is recommended any vegetation clearance works are carried out outside the nesting bird season (generally March – August). If the work needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season, then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.

- Badger – Evidence of Badger was activity was found onsite. The details are provided in a separate document.

Invasive Species

5.2 The Japanese Knotweed should be carefully removed from site using a recognised methodology for the affected areas. This should be either long-term herbicide application or short-term digging out and removal off-site to a licensed landfill or digging out and deep burial with a suitable barrier membrane on-site.

Habitat Enhancement

5.3 General recommendations to bring biodiversity gain to the site are:

- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.

- Bird and bat boxes should be erected on the newly converted building or retained trees where possible.

- Tree planting of native species where practically possible.

- 'Hedgehog holes' to be incorporated into any fencing.

6.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

Key

- A — Amenity Grassland
- Building
- Bare Ground
- Bare Ground/Spoil
- Continuous Scrub
- Ephemeral/Short Perennial
- Introduced Shrub
- Japanese Knotweed
- SI — Poor, Semi-improved Grassland
- S — Spoil
- Tall, Ruderal Herb
- Earth Bank
- Fence
- Intact Hedgerow
- Wall
- Scattered Scrub
- Scattered Tree

PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

Yangtze, Halifax Road, Liversedge, West Yorkshire

NOT TO SCALE

Date: 12/03/2021
Drawn by: BC

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