Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.

BATLEY CONSERVATIVE CLUB.

OS REF: SE 24179 24518.

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL.

Ref No: **240816.**

Date: **26th September 2024.**

Unit 34, The Business Village, Cudworth. S72 8RP.
info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk www.whitcher-wildlife.co.uk
Company No. 4401613.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. A planning application is being submitted for the development of Batley Conservative Club. The proposals include a change of use of a working men's club to a café, indoor market and ground floor extension to form grocery and florist.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site to establish whether there are any ecological issues that may affect the proposed development and determine the baseline biodiversity value of the site.

1.3. That initial site survey was carried out on 13th August 2024. During the initial site assessment of the site, bat roosting potential was noted and there was the recommendation of two dusk emergence surveys made. These surveys were commissioned and carried out in August and September 2024.

1.4. This report outlines the findings of all surveys and makes appropriate recommendations. This report also includes the baseline biodiversity calculations that will inform a full biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment.

1.5. Appendices I and II of this report provides additional information on specific species and are designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

****

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. Prior to visiting the site, the survey area was cross referenced to maps and aerial photographs to give a general idea of the habitats and potential issues within the area and to identify potential access and walking routes.

2.2. The survey area was walked where access was agreed and public rights of way were used where no access was agreed. All habitats within and immediately around the survey area were documented and the dominant species within that habitat listed in line with the UK Habitat Classification methodology to identify the primary habitat types throughout the survey area. All primary habitats are accompanied by secondary codes which are used to add further specific details where necessary. Each primary habitat and unique set off secondary codes will be shown individually in the appended annotated map.

2.3. The survey area and immediate surrounding area was thoroughly searched for evidence of badger (*Meles meles*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989). *Surveying Badgers*. Mammal Society: -

* Badger setts.
* Badger latrines or dung pits.
* Badger snuffle holes and evidence of foraging.
* Badger paths.
* Badger prints in areas of soft mud.
* Badger hairs caught on fencing.

2.4. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 100m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) activity by looking for the following signs, in line with Dean M, Strachen R, Gow D and Andres R (2016). *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook (The Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series).* Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. The mammal Society, London: -

* Water vole burrows.
* Water vole faeces and latrines.
* Water vole feeding stations.
* Water vole runs.
* Water vole prints in areas of soft mud.
* Water vole lawns.
* Predator field signs.

2.5. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of otter (*Lutra lutra*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with the P Chanin (2003). *Monitoring the Otter* and *Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Monitoring Series No10 Guidelines: -*

* Otter prints in soft mud.
* Otter spraints.
* Otter Holts.

2.6. The survey area was searched for watercourses and waterbodies. Where found, and where safe to enter the water, all were thoroughly searched for the presence of crayfish, for approximately 50m in each direction of the site, by searching under rocks and logs. Where stated, crayfish traps were also deployed into the watercourse. All survey work was carried out in accordance with the *Conserving Natural 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No 1, Protocol for Monitoring the White Clawed Crayfish*.

2.7. The survey area was searched for trees and structures and where found these were checked for potential bat roosting sites in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)* by looking for the following signs: -

* Holes, cracks or crevices.
* Bat Droppings.

2.7.1. The subsequent dusk emergence surveys were undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition, including the use of Night Vision Aids (NVAs).

2.8. The land immediately adjacent to the survey area was assessed for bat roosting potential and bat foraging potential. Connective routes and flight lines were also assessed whilst on site and using maps of the area.

2.9. The area within 500m of the survey site was cross referenced to maps to highlight all ponds close to the site. Where possible, all ponds identified were accessed using agreed access or public rights of way to assess the potential for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) to be present.

2.10. The survey area was assessed for the potential for reptiles and suitable reptile habitats. Where applicable the area was also searched for the presence of reptiles.

2.11. Where appropriate, the habitat within and surrounding the survey area was searched for species such as hazel, oak, honeysuckle, bramble and other species which may provide potential habitat for hazel dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*). Field signs such as feeding remains and nests were also searched for where possible, in line with P Bright, P Morris and T Mitchell-Jones *The Dormouse Conservation Handbook 2nd Edition*.

2.12. Where appropriate, the area within and surrounding the survey area was assessed for its potential to house habitat for red squirrels. Field signs of red squirrels were searched for at least every 50m, looking for any dreys, feeding signs or sightings of red squirrels.

2.13. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice.

2.14. This document is prepared in line with The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the government policy on biodiversity and nature conservation and places a duty on Planning Authorities to give material consideration to the effect of a development on legally protected species when considering planning applications. The NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance on "Natural Environment" also promote sustainable development by ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity and that it is conserved and enhanced within the development.

2.15. This report is prepared in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act that came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

2.16. The preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment were carried out by Alexandrea White BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM MIEnvSc CEnv. Alex has worked as a consultant since 2013 carrying out array of different habitat and species surveys. Alex holds Natural England Survey Licences for Great Crested Newts, Bats, Hazel Dormice and Barn Owls. She also holds Scottish Natural Heritage Licences for bats and great crested newts and Natural Resources Wales Licence for great crested newts, bats and hazel dormouse. She holds an undergraduate honours degree in Zoology and a Masters degree in Environmental Management (Landscape and Wildlife Conservation). She has successfully completed courses run by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), Field Studies Council and the Mammal Society to further her knowledge of protected species

and plant identification. Alex is an Associate member of CIEEM, a full member of IES and a Chartered Environmentalist.

2.17. The first dusk emergence survey was also carried out by Alexandrea White.
2.18. The second dusk emergence survey was carried out by Arabella Catlow BSc (Hons) ACIEEM. Since 2014 Arabella has had professional experience working as an ecological consultant carrying out a wide variety of surveys including phase 1 habitat surveys, preliminary ecological appraisals and species-specific surveys. In addition to her degree in Zoology, Arabella has successfully completed a number of courses run by CIEEM, the FSC and BCT on both protected species and botanical identification. Arabella has experience of Biodiversity Net Gain and is accredited to undertake river condition assessments utilising the MoRPh methodology. Furthermore, she holds Natural England licence for bats and great crested newts.

****

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

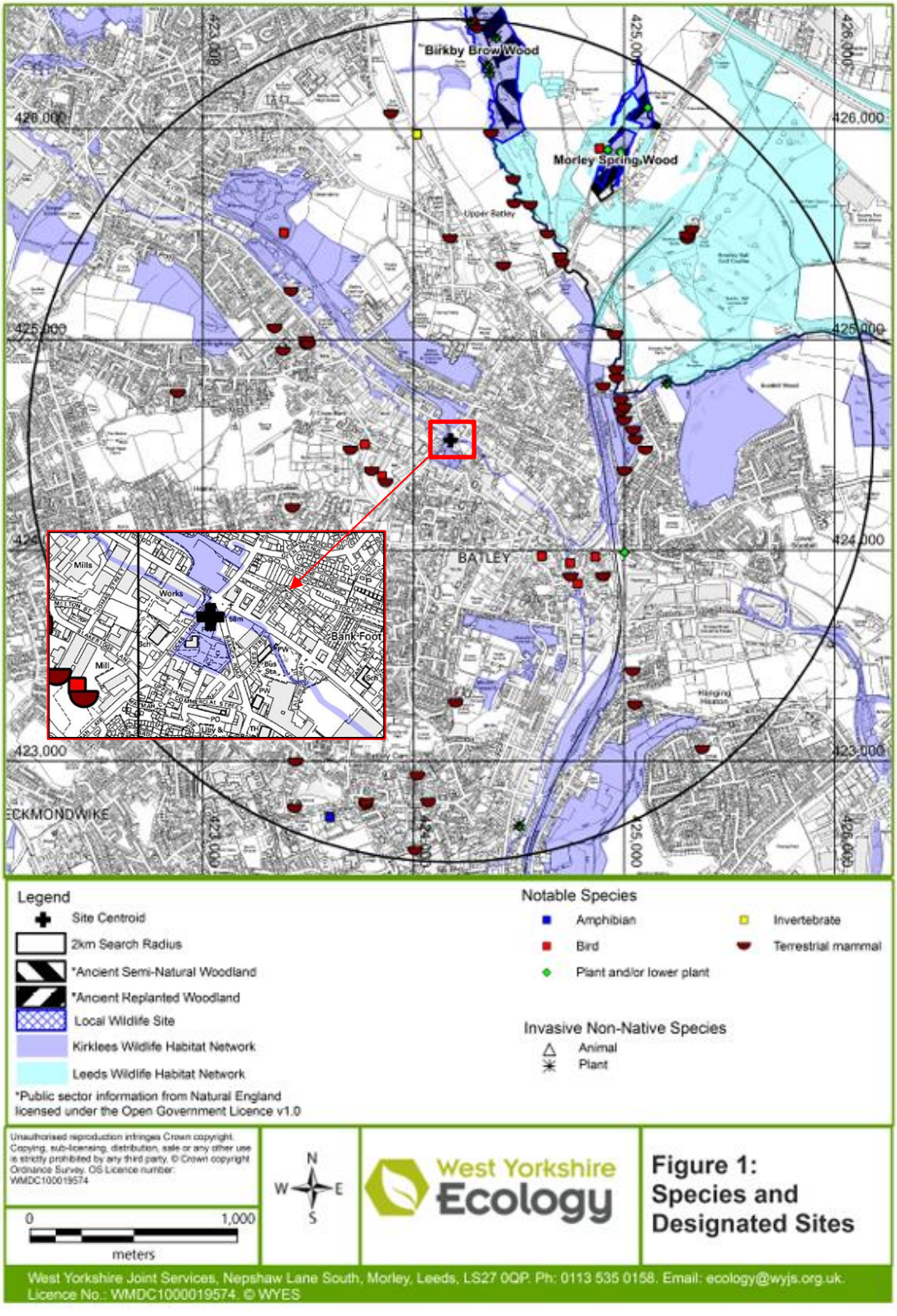
3.1.1. A data search for existing records of protected species and local designated sites within 2km of the surveyed area was submitted to the West Yorkshire Joint Services.

3.1.2. The following recent records were returned:

- A record of great crested newts approximately 1.8km southwest of the survey area which was recorded in 2016.
- A record of water vole approximately 0.8km east of the survey area which was recorded in 2020.
- A record of hedgehog approximately 1.3km northwest of the survey area which was recorded in 2023.
- Thirteen bat records within 2km of the survey area. The closest record was approximately 0.3km west of the survey area which was a casual soprano pipistrelle record. The species recorded included common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and noctule.

3.1.3. There are additional historic records (pre- 2014); given the age of these records, they are not thought to accurately represent the current species distribution.

3.1.4. The southern extent of the survey area lies within the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network. There were two Local Wildlife Sites and the Leeds Wildlife Habitat Network to the north and north east although these were over 1km from the survey area. The map below highlights the survey area and the distribution of non-statutory designated sites.



3.1.5. There were no statutory sites within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.6. There were no European Protected Species Licences (EPS) highlighted on the Magic Maps website.

3.1.7. The data search is available to the client upon request although this must not be placed within the public domain.

3.2. The Surveyed Area.

3.2.1. The proposed development is located between Branch Road and Stocks Lane in Batley. The location of the site is shown on the aerial imagery below.

3.2.2. The survey area comprised of a large stone building which was a working men's club and is currently not in use. There are areas of hardstanding and bare ground to both the front and rear of the property.

3.2.3. The survey area was situated within the centre of Batley. Commercial properties were situated to the east and west, residential properties were situated to the north and a church was situated to the south. The aerial map below highlights the location of the survey area within the wider landscape.

3.3. Survey Limitations.

There were no significant limitations to this survey.

3.4. Description of Habitats.

3.4.1. Appendix I of this report contains an annotated map marked up with the varying baseline habitats of the site. These habitats are: -

- u15b – Building
- u1b – Developed Land; Sealed Surface
- g3c – Other Neutral Grassland
- h3h – Dense Scrub
- u1f – Sparsely Vegetated Land

3.4.2. u15b – Building

The building on site was a large stone structure which was two floors. This is currently not being used and is boarded up. The roof is a box gable roof type with slates.


3.4.3. u1b - Developed Land; Sealed Surface

Secondary Code: 853 Mortared Wall, 612 Fence.

3.4.3.1. There were large areas of hardstanding around the building which was predominantly used for car parking and storage.


3.4.3.2. The boundaries comprised of both fencing and walls.


3.4.4. g3c – Other Neutral Grassland

Secondary Code: 81 tall ruderals, 10 scattered scrub, 853 Mortared Wall.

3.4.4.1. There was a grassland strip along the bund to the rear of the site. The species included: Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), cock's foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*), tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), brome (*Bromus* sp), bush vetch (*Vicia sepium*), colts foot (*Tussilago farfara*), common fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*), mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*), black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), herb Robert (*Geranium robertianium*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), cat's ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), oxford ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), hoary willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), tutsan (*Hypericum androsaemum*), spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), mouse ear hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*) and red campion (*Silene dioica*).

3.4.4.2. There was scrub and tall ruderal species also present which included: bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*), cherry (*Prunus avium*) and buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*).

3.4.4.3. There was a stone wall at the top of this bund.

3.4.5. h3h – Dense Scrub

Part of the bund, on the southwestern aspect of the site, featured dense scrub. The species included bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), travellers joy (*Clematis vitalba*), hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*) and ivy (*Hedera helix*).

3.4.6. s – Sparsely Vegetated Land

There is an area adjacent to the hardstanding which has been previously cleared although this is historic clearance. From aerial imagery this appears to have been cleared between 2020 and April 2021. The species present include: annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*), tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), red campion (*Silene dioica*), hoary plantain (*Plantago media*), weld (*Reseda luteola*), groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), ivy leaved toadflax (*Cymbalaria muralis*), colt's foot (*Tussilago farfara*), fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*), perennial sow thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*), prickly sow thistle (*Sonchus asper*), hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), great lettuce (*Lactuca virosa*) and mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*).

3.5. Description of Fauna and Invasive Flora.

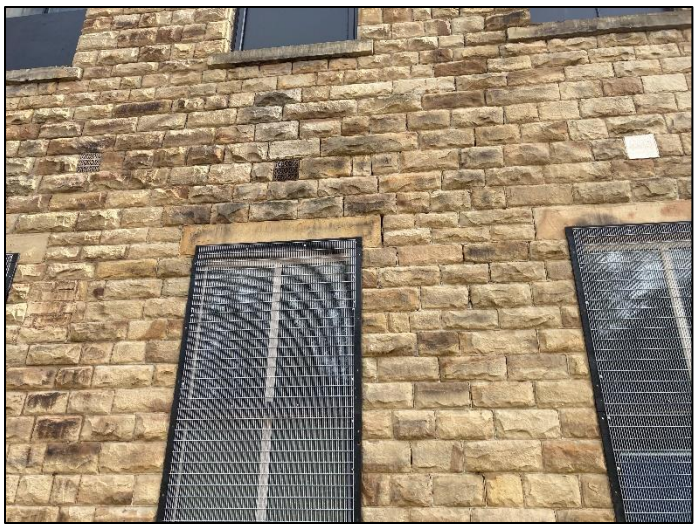
3.5.1. No badger setts or badger field signs were identified within the survey area.

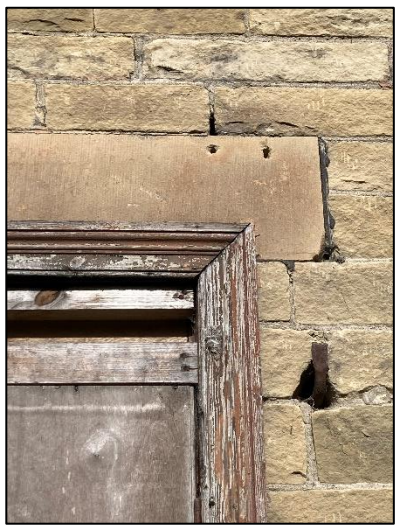
3.5.2. There are no watercourses within or adjacent to the survey area therefore there are no habitats on site suitable for water vole, otter or crayfish.

3.5.3. The building was assessed for its bat roosting potential. As the building was secure, no internal survey was undertaken.

3.5.3.1. The roof was generally in good condition and appears to have has previously repair works to maintain the condition. No slipped or missing tiles were identified and all mortared was in good condition. The height of the building did make inspection difficult although binoculars were used from surrounding streets to view the condition.

3.5.3.2. There were cracks and crevices within the walls. These features were on all aspects and included missing mortar, missing stonework, gaps between stonework and gaps around windows. These features are shown in the photographs.






3.5.3.3. Therefore, the building was assessed as having moderate bat roosting potential.

3.5.4. There were no trees within the survey and therefore no suitable habitat for roosting bats within trees.

3.5.4.1. It was noted that there were trees within the adjacent churchyard which would be suitable although these will not be affected in anyway by the proposed development. These trees are shown in the photograph below.

3.5.5. The survey area was assessed as providing low suitability for foraging and commuting bats due to the limited habitat on site and the surrounding habitat which is largely also low, except from the churchyard.

3.5.6. The site survey and review of aerial photographs and Ordnance Survey mapping highlighted no ponds within 500m of the survey area. Therefore, there is no suitable habitat to support a breeding population of great crested newts.

3.5.7. There is potential for nesting birds across the survey area, predominantly in the building. During this survey pigeons were recorded entering and exiting the building, it is considered likely there are nests present inside.

3.5.8. The survey area offers no suitability for reptiles due to the extremely urban location and lack of habitat mosaic on the site. No reptiles were seen on any of the surveys.

3.5.9. The survey area lies outside the natural range of hazel dormouse and with no introductions of the species in the area. Therefore, there are no hazel dormouse present within the survey area.

3.5.10. There are no habitats within the survey area suitable for red squirrel and the survey area is outside of their known UK distribution.

3.5.11. There were no invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) identified within the survey area.

3.6. Dusk Emergence Survey – 25th August 2024.

3.6.1. The building was assessed as having moderate potential for roosting bats, therefore, two dusk emergence survey were undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition.

3.6.2. The first survey was undertaken by two surveyors, led by Alexandrea White, who holds a level two Natural England survey licence in respect of bats (2018-35087-CLS-CLS). She was accompanied by one other surveyor, who is also licensed.

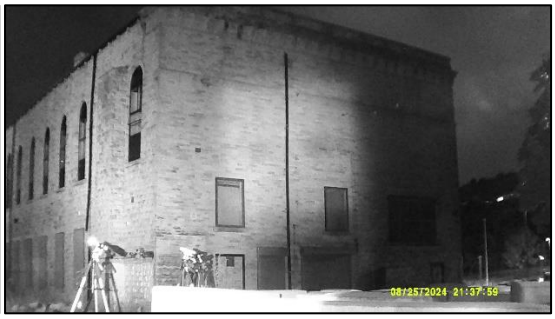
3.6.3. The survey was carried out on the 25th August 2024. The evening was warm, with a temperature of 17°C at the start of the survey and a wind measuring 2 on the Beaufort scale. Sunset was at 20:10 and the survey lasted from 19:55 until 21:40.

3.6.4. Both surveyors were equipped with Batbox Duet detectors and two-way radios. Four Anabat recorders were deployed around the site to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software.

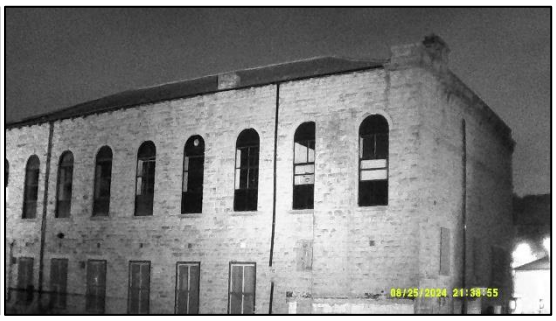
3.6.5. Night Vision Aids (NVAs) were deployed covering all potential features. In this case Whisker infrared camera, along with Nightfox XB5 850NM infrared torches were

situated covering all aspects of the buildings. The below photographs show the view of each camera and clear visibility at the conclusion of the survey.

Camera 19:

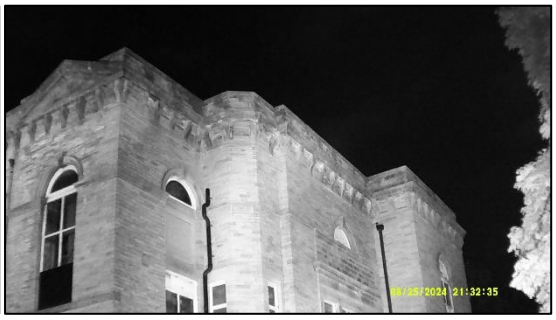



Camera 3:



Camera 16:

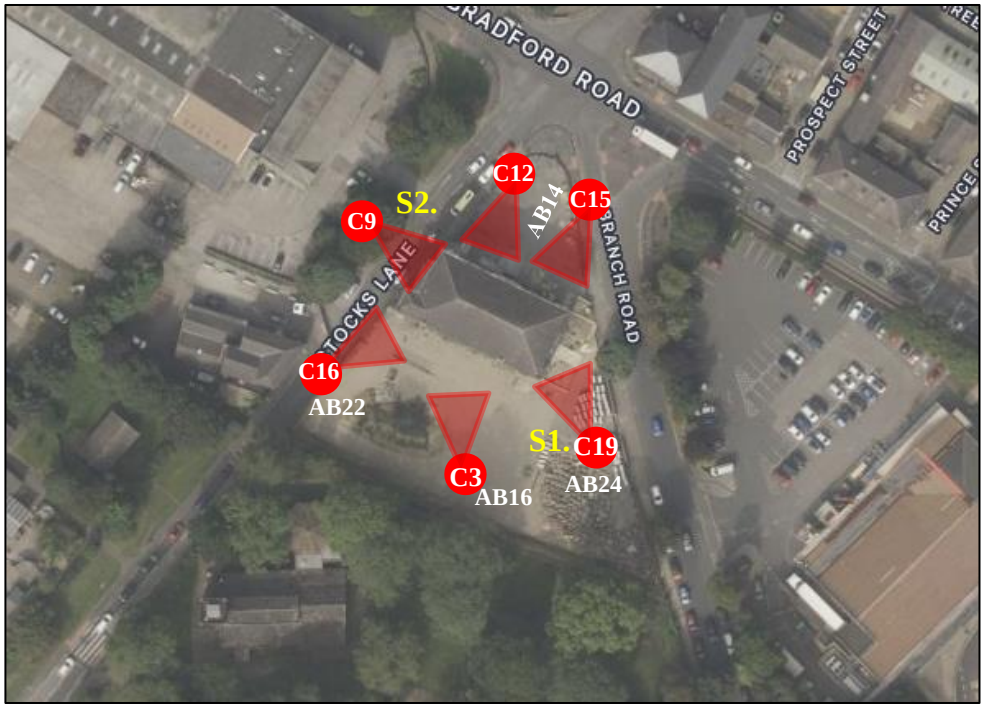
Camera 9:

Camera 12:

Camera 15:

3.6.6. The aerial photograph below shows where the Surveyors (S) and anabats were positioned. The location and viewing angles of the NVAs are shown in red.



Results

3.6.7.The surveyors recorded low levels of activity with the first bat being recorded at 20:33. The majority of the activity was picked up by the surveyor to the southeast of the site as bats were foraging and commuting from the adjacent churchyard. The species recorded by the surveyors included common pipistrelle and noctule.

3.6.8. The Anabat recordings reflected the findings of the surveyors, with the following bat calls recorded on each Anabat:

Anabat 22:
No bat calls were recorded.

Anabat 16:

Time	Species	Count
20:33	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:44	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:52	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:55	Nyctalus species	1
21:11	Common Pipistrelle	1
21:27	Common Pipistrelle	1

21:37	Common Pipistrelle	2

Anabat 24:

Time	Species	Count
20:44	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:52	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:55	Nyctalus species	1
21:08	Common Pipistrelle	1
21:10	Common Pipistrelle	1
21:17	Common Pipistrelle	1

Anabat 14:

Time	Species	Count
20:55	Nyctalus Species	1

3.6.9. None of the surveyors nor the NVAs used observed any bats emerging from or entering the building during the entirety of the survey.

3.7. Dusk Emergence Survey - 17th September 2024.

3.7.1. The second survey was undertaken by two surveyors, led by Arabella Catlow who holds a level one Natural England survey licence in respect of bats. She was accompanied by one other surveyor, who is an experienced surveyor.

3.7.2. The survey was carried out on the 17th September 2024. The evening was warm, with a temperature of 17℃ at the start of the survey and a wind measuring 2 on the Beaufort scale. Sunset was at 19:18 and the survey lasted from 19:03 until 20:48.

3.7.3. Both surveyors were equipped with Batbox Duet detectors and two-way radios. Four Anabat recorders were deployed around the site to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software.

3.7.4. Night Vision Aids (NVAs) were deployed covering all potential features. In this case Whisker infrared camera, along with Nightfox XB5 850NM infrared torches were situated covering all aspects of the buildings. The below photographs show the view of each camera and clear visibility at the conclusion of the survey.

Camera 11:

Camera 9:

Camera 17:

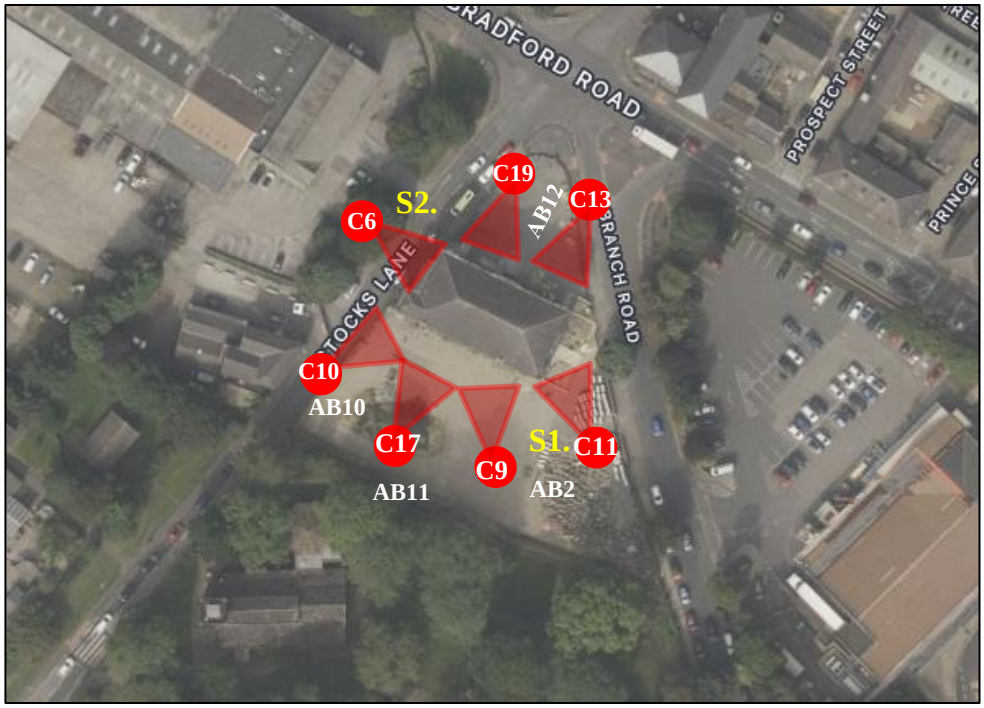
Camera 4:

Camera 6:

Camera 19:

Camera 13:

3.7.5. The aerial photograph below shows where the Surveyors (S) and anabats were positioned. The location and viewing angles of the NVAs are shown in red.



Results

3.7.6. The surveyors recorded low to moderate levels of activity with the first bat being recorded at 19:15. The majority of the activity was picked up by the surveyor to the southeast of the site as bats were foraging and commuting from the adjacent churchyard. There was low activity to the north of the site. The species recorded by the surveyors were predominantly common pipistrelle with occasional noctule bats heard.

3.7.7. The Anabat recordings reflected the findings of the surveyors, with the following bat calls recorded on each Anabat:

Anabat 2:

Time	Species	Count
19:15	Noctule	1
19:19	Noctule	1
19:25	Noctule	1
19:39	Noctule	4
19:40	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:40	Noctule	4
19:42	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:43	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:46	Noctule	2
19:49	Common Pipistrelle	1

19:54	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:56	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:57	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:58	Common Pipistrelle	2
19:59	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:03	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:04	Common Pipistrelle	5
20:05	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:14	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:15	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:16	Common Pipistrelle	5
20:17	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:19	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:20	Noctule	1
20:21	Common Pipistrelle	4
20:22	Common Pipistrelle	4
20:23	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:24	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:25	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:26	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:27	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:29	Noctule	1
20:30	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:31	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:32	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:34	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:36	Common Pipistrelle	5
20:37	Common Pipistrelle	5
20:38	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:39	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:40	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:41	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:42	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:45	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:46	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:50	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:52	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:53	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:54	Common Pipistrelle	1

Anabat 11:

Time	Species	Count
19:15 - 19:16	Noctule	1
19:19 - 19:20	Noctule	2
19:33 - 19:34	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:39 - 19:40	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:39 - 19:40	Noctule	1
19:40 - 19:41	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:40 - 19:41	Noctule	6
19:42 - 19:43	Common Pipistrelle	2
19:43 - 19:44	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:46 - 19:47	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:46 - 19:47	Noctule	2
19:47 - 19:48	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:49 - 19:50	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:53 - 19:54	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:54 - 19:55	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:55 - 19:56	Common Pipistrelle	2
19:56 - 19:57	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:57 - 19:58	Common Pipistrelle	3
19:58 - 19:59	Common Pipistrelle	4
19:59 - 20:00	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:01 - 20:02	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:04 - 20:05	Common Pipistrelle	6
20:05 - 20:06	Common Pipistrelle	4
20:15 - 20:16	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:16 - 20:17	Common Pipistrelle	4
20:17 - 20:18	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:20 - 20:21	Noctule	1
20:21 - 20:22	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:22 - 20:23	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:23 - 20:24	Common Pipistrelle	4
20:24 - 20:25	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:25 - 20:26	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:26 - 20:27	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:29 - 20:30	Noctule	1
20:30 - 20:31	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:36 - 20:37	Common Pipistrelle	4
20:37 - 20:38	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:38 - 20:39	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:39 - 20:40	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:40 - 20:41	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:42 - 20:43	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:43 - 20:44	Common Pipistrelle	2

20:46 - 20:47	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:50 - 20:51	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:53 - 20:54	Common Pipistrelle	1

Anabat 10:

Time	Species	Count
19:15 - 19:16	Noctule	2
19:19 - 19:20	Noctule	2
19:33 - 19:34	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:36 - 19:37	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:37 - 19:38	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:38 - 19:39	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:39 - 19:40	Common Pipistrelle	2
19:39 - 19:40	Noctule	1
19:40 - 19:41	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:40 - 19:41	Noctule	4
19:41 - 19:42	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:42 - 19:43	Common Pipistrelle	3
19:46 - 19:47	Common Pipistrelle	3
19:46 - 19:47	Noctule	1
19:50 - 19:51	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:54 - 19:55	Common Pipistrelle	3
19:55 - 19:56	Common Pipistrelle	4
19:56 - 19:57	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:57 - 19:58	Common Pipistrelle	5
19:58 - 19:59	Common Pipistrelle	4
19:59 - 20:00	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:00 - 20:01	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:01 - 20:02	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:03 - 20:04	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:04 - 20:05	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:05 - 20:06	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:09 - 20:10	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:15 - 20:16	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:17 - 20:18	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:21 - 20:22	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:22 - 20:23	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:23 - 20:24	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:24 - 20:25	Common Pipistrelle	2
20:25 - 20:26	Common Pipistrelle	3
20:26 - 20:27	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:29 - 20:30	Noctule	1
20:30 - 20:31	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:31 - 20:32	Common Pipistrelle	1

20:36 - 20:37	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:42 - 20:43	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:45 - 20:46	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:46 - 20:47	Common Pipistrelle	1

Anabat 12:

Time	Species	Count
19:15	Noctule	1
19:39	Noctule	4
19:41	Common Pipistrelle	1
19:46	Noctule	1
19:57	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:27	Common Pipistrelle	1
20:29	Noctule	1

3.7.8. None of the surveyors nor the NVAs used observed any bats emerging from or entering the building during the entirety of the survey.

****

4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT.

4.1. Baseline Biodiversity Value.

The below tables demonstrate the baseline units of the red line development area using the Statutory Metric.

Area habitats:

Habitat Type	Extent (Ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Biodiversity units
Sealed Surface and Buildings	0.193	V. Low	N/A	0
Other Neutral Grassland	0.014	Medium	Poor	0.06
Mixed Scrub	0.01	Medium	Moderate	0.09
Sparsely Vegetated Land	0.123	Low	Moderate	0.57
Total	**0.34**			**0.72**

Linear habitats:

There are no linear units present within the survey area with all linear features being built linear features. As such, in line with statutory guidance, there is no requirement to achieve net gain

4.2. Post Development Habitat Creation.

Currently landscaping plans are in the process of being produced and therefore no post development habitats could be calculated at this time. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal will be updated once these are received.

4.3. Biodiversity Net Gain Results.

4.3.1. A Biodiversity Net Gain Figure cannot be produced until the landscaping plans have been received.

4.3.2. In order to achieve a net gain landscaping plans will need to incorporate areas of native planting. Further advice has been provided in Section 6.

****

5. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

5.1. There were no statutory designated sites highlighted within 2km of the survey area. Therefore, there will be no impact on any such sites.

5.2. The survey area was located within the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network. Currently, there is limited vegetation on site and the plans will unlikely degrade this site further. The landscaping could aid towards strengthening the wider wildlife corridor.

5.3. No badger setts or badger field signs were identified within the survey area and therefore there will be no impact on badgers.

5.4. There are no habitats on site suitable for water vole, otter or white clawed crayfish. Therefore, the proposed works will have no impact on these species.

5.5. The building was assessed as having moderate bat roosting potential and further surveys were recommended to the client. This was due to numerous features present throughout the externals of the building.

5.6. Two surveys were carried out and no roosting bats were seen to emerge from the building. Therefore, no established roosts will be impacted by the proposed works.

5.7. There are no trees within the survey area and therefore no suitable habitat for roosting bats.

5.8. The site is assessed to provides low value habitat for foraging and commuting bats. On the provision that a suitable planting scheme is delivered on the site, there is unlikely to be any negative impact on foraging and commuting bats at a local level. If the lighting on site is altered then increased lighting could impact upon foraging bats.

5.9. The site survey and review of aerial photography and Ordnance Survey maps highlighted no waterbodies within 500m of the survey area which would be suitable for breeding great crested newts. Therefore, this species will not be affected by the proposed works.

5.10. There is potential for nesting birds within the building during the nesting bird season, which extends from March to August inclusive each year. Furthermore, pigeons

were recorded utilising the building and this species can nest all year round. Therefore, the works could have a high impact on nesting birds.

5.11. The site is assessed to provide negligible potential for reptiles. The location means it is highly unlikely to support a population of reptiles and there are no records of reptiles within the local area. Therefore, reptiles will not be affected by the proposals.

5.12. The site lies outside the natural range of hazel dormouse therefore the proposed works will have no impact on that species.

5.13. The site lies outside the natural range of red squirrels. Therefore, there will be no impact on red squirrel as a result of the proposed development.

5.14. No invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) were identified within the survey area. Therefore, no such species will be spread by the proposed works.

****

6. RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1. This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report is designed to advise the client of the initial survey results and BNG assessment so that they may be considered within the site development plan.

6.2. Once all recommendations of the PEA have been considered and the development plans have been finalised, there is a requirement for the report to be converted into an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) where details of further survey results, mitigation and ecological enhancements are included, to arrive at an assessment of the residual impact of the proposed development. This will also need to include a full BNG assessment of the site.

6.3. There is a requirement to provide an overall biodiversity net gain on the site. There will be a statutory requirement to deliver a net gain of at least 10% biodiversity units. There will also be a requirement to meet the trading rules of the Statutory Metric.

6.4. Therefore, consideration is required in order to achieve the required net gain. As there are opportunities for gains within the site, on site planting should be considered before other options such as off site, biodiversity banks and statutory credits.

6.4.1. All species planted should be native. Any landscaping must be realistic and practical from both a habitat creation and management point of view.

6.4.2. It be noted that the habitats on site can only be off set with the same, or higher, distinctiveness habitats under the BNG trading rules.

6.4.3. It is recommended that the landscaping plans go above and beyond the statutory minimum as the previous habitats on site, albeit years ago, formed part of a non statutory designated site.

6.5. If the landscaping plans provided do not provide an overall biodiversity net gain, then discussions will need to be had to try and maximise the number of biodiversity units that can feasibly be achieved on the site.

6.6. Once all options have been considered and the provision of BNG on the site has been maximised, offsite compensation will then need to be considered to deliver any shortfalls.

6.7. Any habitats that are retained, enhanced or created for the purpose of the biodiversity net gain for the site, will have to be locked into to a thirty-year management and maintenance plan.

6.8. It is recommended that a sensitive lighting scheme is implemented on the site to ensure that all lighting is downward directional and that there is no lighting directed towards any of the boundary vegetation features or new vegetation features.

6.9. It is recommended that any works to the building are carried out outside the nesting bird season. As pigeons are present within the building a nesting bird survey, immediately before any works are carried out, should be undertaken regardless of the time of year. If any active nests are found, they must be left undisturbed along with a suitable buffer around them until the young have fledged.

6.9.1. It is considered highly likely pigeon eggs and chicks will be present, regardless of the timings of the works, although timing during the winter will limit the risk of nests being present.

6.10. It is recommended that bat and bird enhancements are incorporated into the development plans. Once development plans and landscaping is provided, locations and types of enhancement can be recommended.

****

Prepared by:	
Alexandrea White BSc(Hons) MSc ACIEEM MIEnvSc CEnv.	Date: 26th September 2024.

Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou, BSc MCIEEM	Date: 3rd October 2024.

7. REFERENCES.

Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom (2010) *ARG UK Advice Note 5: Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index*. ARGUK.

Baker, J., Beebee T., Buckley, J., Gent, A. and Orchard, D. (2011). *Amphibian Habitat Management Handbook*. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bournemouth.

Barn Owl Trust (2012) *Barn Owl Conservation Handbook*, Pelagic Publishing, Exeter.

Bat Tree Habitat Key (2018) *Bat Roosts in Trees: a guide for identification and assessment for tree-care and ecology professionals*. Pelagic Publishing, Exeter

Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group (2023). *Bird Survey Guidelines for assessing ecological impacts, v.1.1.1*. Available at https://birdsurveyguidelines.org (Accessed 15/04/2024)

Bright, P., Morris, P. & Mitchell-Jones, T. (2006) *The Dormouse Conservation Handbook*. English Nature, Peterborough.

Chanin, P. (2003) *Ecology of the European Otter*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Ecology Series No.10. English Nature, Peterborough.

Chanin, P. (2003) *Monitoring the Otter Lutra lutra*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No.10. English Nature, Peterborough.

CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Cresswell, P., Cresswell, W.J., and Woods, M. (1993) *The Country Life Guide to Artificial Badger Setts*. Country Life, London.

Collins J. (ed.) 2023. *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologist: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Dean, M., Strachan, R., Gow, D. and Andrews, R. (2016) *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook* (Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series). Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. Mammal Society, London.

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2024) *Biodiversity Net Gain*. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2024) *Statutory Net Biodiversity Metric User Guide*. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023) *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2 (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

Edgar, P., Foster, J. and Baker, J. (2010) *Reptile Habitat Management Handbook*. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bournemouth.

English Nature (2001) *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

Froglife (1999) *Froglife Advice Sheet 10: reptile survey*. Froglife, London.

Gurnell, J., & Lurz, P. (2012) *Red Squirrel. In: Cresswell, W.J., Birks, J.D.S., Dean, M., Pacheco, M., Trewhella, W.J., Wells, D. and Wray, S. (2012). UK BAP Mammals: Interim Guidance for Survey Methodologies, Impact Assessment and Mitigation*. The Mammal Society, Southampton.

Harris, S., Cresswell, P. and Jefferies D. (1989) *Surveying Badgers*. Occasional Publication No 9, The Mammal Society, London.

Langton, T.E.S., Beckett, C.L., and Foster, J.P. (2001), *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*, Froglife, Halesworth.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

Natural England (2022) *Hazel Dormice: Advice for making planning decisions*. Available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hazel-dormice-advice-for-making-planning-decisions (Accessed: 15/04/2024)

Natural England (2014) *Protected species and development: advice for local planning authorities.* (updated 2021) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications (Accessed: 05/03/2021).

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 Available at https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/579/contents/made (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

Peay, S. (2003) *Monitoring the White-clawed Crayfish Austropotamobius pallipes*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No. 1. English Nature, Peterborough.

Stanbury, A. et al (2021) *The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds 114: 723-747*. Available at https://britishbirds.co.uk/content/status-our-bird-populations (Accessed 15/04/2024)

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2004). *Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Birds***.** 2004 ed. JNCC, Peterborough.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 Available at https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/579/contents/made (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 Available at https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69 (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat classification Version 2.0* Available at https://www.ukhab.org.

Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which of which are known to breed here. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man-made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Surveys

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window cills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

Legislation

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATS agreement. Numerous species are also listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number bat species and the habitats which support them.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

Appendix II. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

Ecology

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub, but others are ground nesting or prefer man- made structures or buildings.

Surveys

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

Legislation

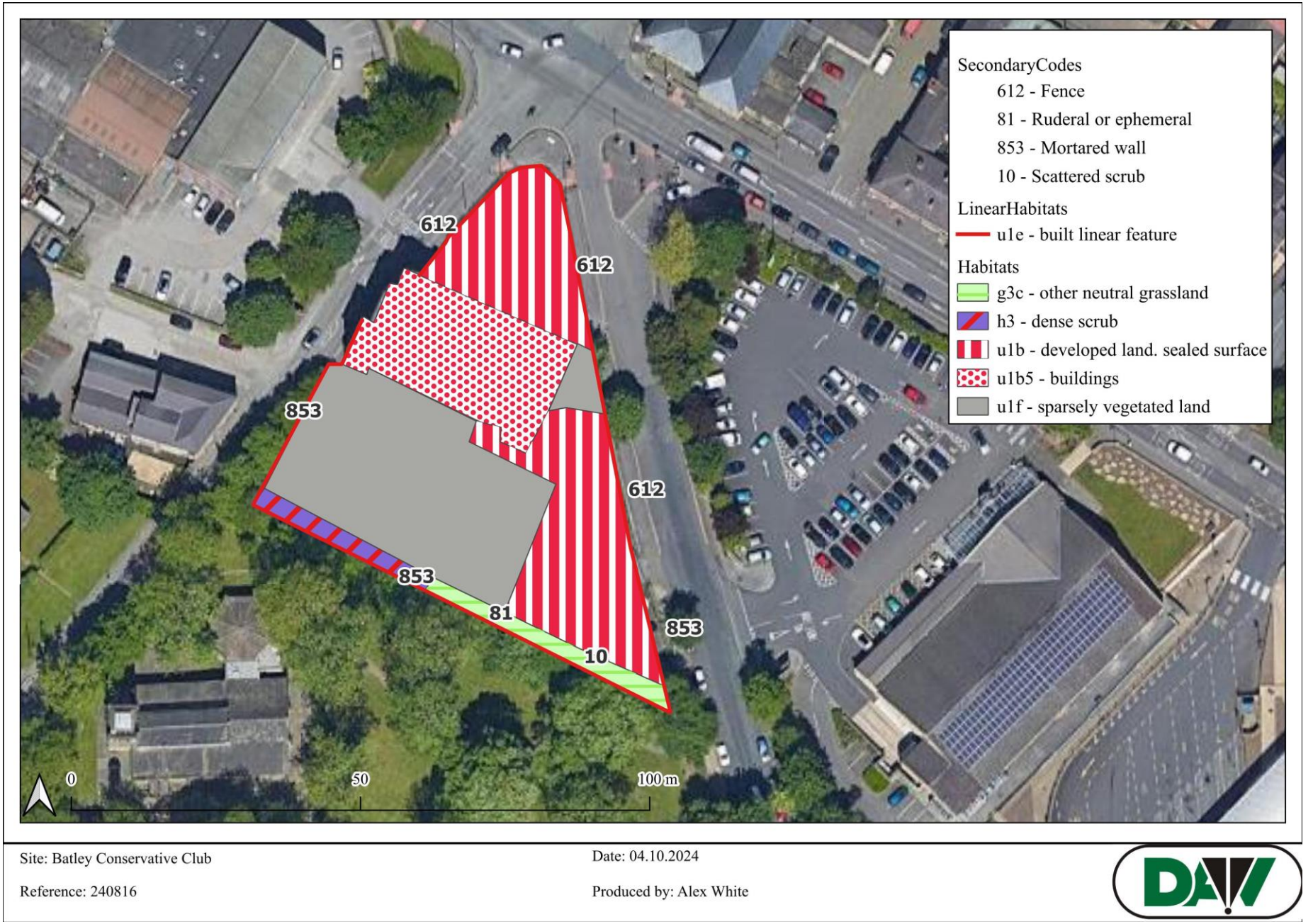
Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1. -(5) of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”.

Appendix III. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA BASELINE.



Site: Batley Conservative Club

Reference: 240816

Date: 04.10.2024

Produced by: Alex White