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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:
Land at Wellands Lane, Scholes, Cleckheaton BD196EY

Client:
Shaun Rogerson

Survey date:
02/03/2026

Project:
This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Kirklees Council. This proposal can be described as the erection of 2no. residential dwellings with associated driveway and garden.

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion

Executive Summary

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Tables 1, 3 & 4 of this report.

Key Findings
Biodiversity Net Gain The proposed development is unlikely to trigger the requirement for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment, as it falls under one of the exemptions (state exemption i.e. self-build). **Bats** B1 holds negligible value for roosting bats. As such no further surveys are required. A low impact lighting strategy will be implemented to reduce disturbance to commuting bats. **Birds** Any building or vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the buildings/vegetation should be undertaken by a qualified ecologist prior to commencement of work. Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests. **Amphibians and reptiles** Precautionary measures will be implemented for amphibians and reptiles including site clearance being undertaken outside of the hibernation season insofar as is possible, a staged approach for vegetation clearance, and any rubble piles dismantled by hand. **Other notable species**

Contents

Introduction and Context

Introduction

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author's knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.

Limitations

Whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report is a preliminary assessment and does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. Nor does it represent a full botanical assessment. It assesses the likelihood of protected, notable and important habitats and species being present, based on a site and landscape level habitat value-based risk assessment. This is based upon the ecology, biology and known distribution of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

The survey was completed outside of the optimal survey period (April to October) for ground flora, and as such the accuracy of botanical assessment and condition assessment data may be limited in terms of species visible and ground conditions at the time of survey.

Results, Impacts and Recommendations

Site Location and Landscape Context

Table 1: Site location and landscape context

Site Location
The site is located at National Grid Reference SE 16897 25864 and has an area of approximately 0.18ha comprising one building, four scattered trees, developed land; sealed surface, other neutral grassland, built linear features and bramble scrub. The site is located in a semi-rural setting, immediately surrounded by agricultural land to the north and east and residential dwellings to the south and west. The site is enclosed by fencing to the north, east, south and west. The wider landscape comprises more extensive agricultural land to the north and south and residential areas to the east and west, including the M62 ~700m east. A review of historic maps indicates the landscape has remained largely unchanged since the late 1800s. No ponds or watercourses are located on, or adjacent to the site. Light silt-rich, and medium silty-loam soils and subsoils. Mildly Acidic to Neutral (pH: 4.5 - 6.5).
Priority Habitats and Designated Sites
Summary of Survey Findings Priority Habitats There are 3 priority habitats located within 2 km of the site. These comprise traditional orchard, deciduous woodland and ancient & semi-natural woodland. The closest priority habitat comprises traditional orchard, located ~280 m NW of the site. The site is connected to nearby habitats via field margins, hedgerows and tree lines, particularly to the east. Designated Sites

There are no other statutory sites within 2 km of the site. There are no statutory sites within 10 km of the site.

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for any SSSI's.

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from West Yorkshire Ecology records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.

Recommendations

No recommendations.

Habitats and Flora

The site survey was undertaken by Katie Whitfield BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited on Natural England Bat License (details on request) and accredited on Natural England/Natural Resources Wales Level 1 Great Crested Newt License (details on request).

Table 2: Survey weather conditions

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
02/03/2026	10.2	84	75	38.6	None

Table 3: Habitats and flora

Habitats and Flora: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations *This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.*
Onsite habitats
Summary of Survey Findings <u>Developed land; sealed surface (u1b) - Ruined building (825)</u> Sealed surfaces are found to the west of the site comprising an access road of concrete surfacing, as well as a pocket of sealed surfaces on site which is covered in fern moss (*Thuidium delicatulum*). In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment. <u>Other neutral grassland (g3c)</u> The majority of the site comprises other neutral grassland with a pocket extending to the east and a second pocket behind a stone wall to the west extending northwest. Both pockets are of the same species assemblage, albeit some **occasional** bluebells (*Hycainthoides non-scripta*) and hairy bittercress (*Cardamine hirsuta*) found in the pocket extending to the northwest. The

grassland is unmanaged with a sward height of <7cm for ~40% and >7cm for ~60% of the habitat parcel.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the other neutral grassland was assessed to have a **poor** condition value.

Table 3a: Other neutral grassland species abundance.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	Cocks-foot *(Dactylis glomerata)*
Abundant	-
Frequent	Curled dock *(Rumex crispus)*
Occasional	Cleavers *(Galium aparine)*, common nettle *(Urtica dioica)*, perennial rye-grass *(Lolium perenne)*, bramble *(Rubus fruticosus)*, dove's-foot crane's-bill *(Geranium molle)*, ribwort plantain *(Plantago lanceolata)*, wild daffodil *(Narcissus pseudonarcissus)*
Rare	Dandelion *(Taraxacum)*, sticky chickweed *(Cerastium glomeratum)*

Built linear features (u1e)
Built linear features are found in all directions, including wooden mesh fencing to the north, east and south and a stone wall to the west. Remnants of walls of red-brick construction are found centrally on site. Gaps are evident underneath the fencing to the north and south.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment.

Bramble scrub (h3d)
Bramble scrub is found to the north of the site in a dense composition.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment.

Table 3b: Bramble scrub species abundance.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	Bramble *(Rubus fruticosus)*
Abundant	-
Frequent	-
Occasional	-
Rare	-

Scattered Trees (32)

Four trees are present on site, comprising two small and two large sized trees. The survey identified sycamore *(Acer pseudoplatanus)* and black poplar *(Populus nigra)*. The sycamore trees were assessed as moderate condition, with one large specimen to the east of the site (T1) exhibiting ecological niches in the form of deadwood, potentially supporting saproxylic invertebrates, and common ivy providing autumn foraging opportunities. The large black poplar, also located to the east (T2), was in good condition and showed moss on its stem, offering microhabitats for invertebrates. A smaller black poplar (T3) and a small sycamore (T4) were also assessed as moderate condition. Of the trees present, T1 and T2 are mature and T3 and T4 are young.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the individual trees were assessed to have the following condition values:

Table 3c: The individual condition scores of each tree on site.

No.	Tree	Condition Score	Size Category

T1	Sycamore *(Acer pseudoplatanus)*	Moderate	Large
T2	Black Poplar *(Populus nigra)*	Good	Large
T3	Black Poplar *(Populus nigra)*	Moderate	Small
T4	Sycamore *(Acer pseudoplatanus)*	Moderate	Small

Building (u1b5)
There is one building on site, which is used as a shed (disused). Full details for buildings on site are included within Table 4.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of other neutral grassland, scrub, and 2no. scattered trees (T2 and T4). This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. However, this could lead to a net loss in biodiversity at the site.

Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction. This should include the following measures:

- Remove only the minimum of habitat required to facilitate the development
- Protect retained turf and soil resource from destruction and compaction using plastic matting and wooden boarding. Do not store skips and other heavy materials on retained turf.
- Grasscrete, cell web or any other porous surface treatment facilitating recovery of vegetation is preferred to hard standing.

The proposed development is unlikely to trigger the requirement for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment, as it falls under one

of the exemptions (state exemption i.e. self-build).

Invasive / Non-native species

Summary of Survey Findings

No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site or are considered likely to be on site, but, given seasonal limitations and the sites wider context, may be visible at other times of year.

Impacts

None

Recommendations

None.

Fauna

Table 4: Fauna

Fauna: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations

This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

Roosting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

There are 5 EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site as detailed below:

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
2016-20721-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~1km east	Destruction of a resting place
2016-20721-EPS-MIT-2	Common pipistrelle	~1km east	Destruction of a resting and breeding site
2016-20721-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	~1km east	Destruction of a resting place
2016-20721-EPS-MIT-3	Common pipistrelle	~1km east	Destruction of a resting and breeding site
EPSM2012-4277	Common pipistrelle	~1km east	Destruction of a resting place

No buildings or trees were present on site with suitable roosting features for bats to utilise.

Buildings

Building B1 Description

B1 is a detached, single-storey, timber-framed shed of disused usage. The main roof comprises corrugated metal sheeting with a mono-pitch/flat roof structure. The walls are made of timber boards and steel corrugated sheeting. No internal voids were recorded. The internal loft space is cluttered, with extensive areas of light ingress, with the space exposed to external weather conditions and temperature fluctuations. No bat evidence was found anywhere within the building. In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have **negligible** habitat value for roosting bats due to a lack of features likely to be used by bats at any time of year. Further there is a lack of stable dark spaces due to significant light ingress entering B1. The steel corrugated sheeting also reduces stable temperatures within.	 *B1*

Trees

Tree T1 Description

Tree T1 is a large mature sycamore found to the east of the site. T1 features PRF-1 and PRF-2 in the form of tear wounds and ivy. The tear wounds are found on the south facing side and were too high to inspect from ground level, and as such the depth of the feature could not be determined. Further, the ivy may conceal roosting features present on T1.	 *Tear wounds and ivy on T1.*

Tree T2 Description

Tree T2 is a large mature black poplar found to the east of the site. T2 features PRF-3 in the form of tear wounds on the east facing side. The full exposure of the break in limb could be viewed from ground level with no crevices noted. Further the broken limb is exposed and downward facing and as such unlikely to lead into the rest of the limb. As such T2 is concluded as being NONE (i.e. no roosting features present).	 *Broken limb on T2.*

Impacts

T2 and T4 will be removed to facilitate the development. Both trees provide no roosting features and as such no impacts on roosting bats is anticipated from their removal. The proposed development will not affect any of the features that could be used by roosting bats which were noted on T1 during the survey. However, the proposed development could result in disturbance to any bats present in T1 at the time of the works due to noise, vibration or lighting.

Recommendations

Due to the potential for disturbance impacts to bats during the proposed works, the following precautionary working methods will be required:

- The works will be timed to take place when bats are least likely to be present; November to March.

- The works will be scheduled in such a way that this element of the works (any roof tile removal) will be completed first to avoid multiple supervision visits.
- Any use of power tools and high levels of noise and vibration will be carried out at least 10m from T1 and T2 where possible.
- In the unlikely event that a bat is found, work will stop, and the ecologist will advise on how to proceed.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of scattered trees, bramble scrub, and other neutral grassland. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. Most notably, the scattered trees, T1 and T2, on site are mature and provide an ecological stepping stone to hedge and tree -lined fields that extend to more notable habitat in the wider landscape. Bats are well known to utilise linear features to aid navigation whilst travelling between foraging resources and roost sites. As such bats are likely to commute and forage through the site.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of 2no. scattered trees (T2 and T4). Given the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality as well as other retained trees on site, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.

The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.

Recommendations

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting1.

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for foraging bats:

- Planting of locally characteristic tree, shrub and hedgerows to increase foraging opportunities.

Amphibians

Summary of Survey Findings

A review of MAGIC database found no granted EPSL for great crested newts within 2km of the site.

A check was also completed for great crested newt class survey license returns and historic pond surveys. 4 records were identified, as detailed below:

Table 4a: Great crested newt class survey license returns and historic pond surveys

Record Type	Distance to Site
Great crested newt class survey license returns	~500m west
Great crested newt class survey license returns	~450m southwest
Great crested newt class survey license returns	~540m southwest
Great crested newt class survey license returns	~600m southwest

No ponds are located on, or adjacent to, the site. There is one pond found ~250m southeast (P1). Although a road as well as areas of hardstanding are present between P1 and the site these could be used for transient periods whilst utilising the line of trees and hedgerows within the landscape to migrate onto the site.

The site provides suitable habitat for amphibians in the form of scrub and unmanaged grassland which provides foraging and sheltering opportunities for amphibians. Further there are brick piles on site which offer additional refuge habitat. Agricultural land is found to the east and south which also is less optimal habitat due to increased predation risk the hedge and tree-lines surrounding such fields offer commuting opportunities onto the site. As such it cannot be discounted that amphibians may utilise the site.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.1ha of grassland and ~0.01ha of scrub within 250m of a potential breeding pond, if great crested newts are present. When completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces a 'Green' risk score, which states: 'Offence Highly Unlikely'.

Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures:

- Site clearance will be undertaken outside of the amphibian hibernation season (November to February) insofar as is possible.
- A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area.
- Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent amphibians from utilising these areas.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
- In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

Reptiles

Summary of Survey Findings

The scrub, unmanaged grassland and brick piles on site provides suitable shelter, hibernation and foraging opportunities for reptiles. Further, the wider landscape offers some connectivity via field margins to the east and south. As such, the presence of reptiles on site cannot be discounted.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.1ha of grassland, 0.01ha of scrub and 2no. scattered trees. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to the presence of more suitable habitat locally. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.

Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to reptiles, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures:

- Site clearance will be undertaken outside of the reptile hibernation season (November to February) insofar as is possible.
- A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any reptiles to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter reptiles from the working area.
- Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent reptiles from utilising these areas.
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

Birds

Summary of Survey Findings

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within B1 or the vegetation on site, however the building, scrub and trees all provide suitable shelter and could be used by common nesting birds. The site is located near agricultural land which may provide further foraging opportunities for a wide assemblage of bird species and may, on occasion use the site.

Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

Impacts

Other neutral grassland, scrub and 2no. scattered trees will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local bird populations owing to the presence of more extensive habitat locally and retained trees on site. However, the proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

Recommendations

Any building/vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building/vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests, depending on species present, until the young have fledged.

Summary of Survey Findings

Impacts

Recommendations

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Any pipework exceeding 150mm will be capped overnight.

- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

Riparian animals

Summary of Survey Findings

There are no riparian habitats on or adjacent to the site.

Impacts

Otters

No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

Water Vole

No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations

Otters

None.

Water Vole

None.

Hazel dormouse

Summary of Survey Findings

The site lies outside of the know current range for hazel dormice and there are no suitable habitats within the development area. As such it is considered likely that hazel dormice are absent from site.

Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations

None.

Invertebrates

Summary of Survey Findings

The site provides some habitat value for a variety of commonplace species but is unlikely to support important species and assemblages. In particular, the deadwood on T1 will provide value to saproxylic invertebrates.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.1ha of other neutral grassland, 0.01ha of scrub and 2no. scattered trees. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to the presence of more extensive habitat locally.

Recommendations

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for invertebrates:

- Planting of pollinator friendly grassland species
- Installation of insect hotels
- Incorporation of log piles/dead wood
- Incorporation of bee bricks into the fabric of the new dwellings. These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing elevation with no obscuring vegetation

Other e.g. small mammals

Summary of Survey Findings

The scrub, other neutral grassland and scattered trees on site offers suitable foraging, sheltering and commuting opportunities for small terrestrial mammals such as rabbits and hedgehogs. The site is well connected to more extensive habitats such as residential gardens directly north and west and agricultural land and associated field margins and hedgerow networks to the east and south, which are likely to host established populations. Further, soil mounds are found within the grassland on site to the west which indicate presence of rabbits, albeit no warrens were found.

As such, the presence of foraging, sheltering and commuting hedgehogs and rabbits on site cannot be discounted.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.1ha of grassland, 0.01ha of scrub and 2no. scattered trees. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local small mammal/hedgehog populations owing to the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs and/or rabbits, if present.

Recommendations

A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Where possible, damage to warrens will be avoided. Where avoidance of damage is not possible, works must proceed under the understanding that rabbits are protected from unnecessary suffering under the wild mammals Protection Act (1996) and as such must not be deliberately or intentionally caused to suffer via injury, entombment or the estrangement of dependant young.
- Destruction of any warren (if found) will take place using initially shovels in the intent of flushing out any remaining mobile rabbits or locating any abandoned dependant litters, which will be humanely despatched by the pest controller. The warren will be immediately destroyed via ripping by digger bucket to prevent re-occupation. Should an evening elapse between evacuation and ripping out, the process must be repeated as rabbits may return.
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Any pipework exceeding 100mm will be capped overnight.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any small mammals are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs:

- Creation of fence gaps (14cm x 14cm) to enable small mammals to travel freely through the site
- Creation of brash piles
- Installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.

Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan

Site Location Plan
1 : 1250

Proposed Site Plan
1 : 200

Existing Site Plan
1 : 500

Appendix 2: Site Location Plan

Appendix 3: Habitat Survey Plan

Appendix 4: Site Photographs

Photo 1: Sealed surfaces to the west of the site.

Photo 2: Building to the north of site (B1), subject to degradation.

Photo 3: Other neutral grassland extending to the east.

Photo 4: Wire mesh fencing to the south of site.

Photo 5: Remnants of walls found centrally on site.

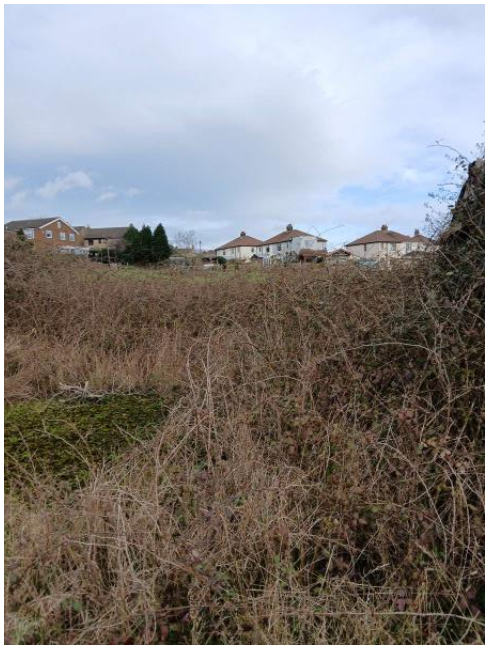

Photo 6: Bramble scrub found to the north of the site.

Photo 7: Sycamore to the east of the site.

Photo 8: Ivy found on T1.

Photo 9: Black Poplar found to the east of the site.

Photo 10: Black Poplar found to the east of the site.

Photo 12: Sycamore found to the east of the site.

Appendix 5: Baseline Condition Assessments

Table 5a: Other neutral grassland condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	**N**
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	**Y**
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.	**N**
D	Cover of bracken Pteridium aquilinum is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble Rubus fruticosus agg.) is less than 5%.	**Y**
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA5) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	**Y**
		Total 3/5
	Condition Poor due to passing 3 of 5 criteria and all essential criteria.	

Table 5b: Scattered trees - T1 Sycamore (acer pseudoplatanus) - condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	**N**
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	**Y**
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	**Y**
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	**N**
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	**Y**
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	**Y**
		Total 4/6
	Condition Moderate due to passing 4 of 6 criteria and all essential criteria.	

Table 5c: Scattered trees - T2 Black Poplar (populus nigra) - condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	**Y**
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	**Y**
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	**Y**
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	**Y**
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	**Y**
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	**Y**
		Total 6/6
	Condition Good due to passing 6 of 6 criteria and all essential criteria.	

Table 5d: Scattered trees - T3 Black Poplar (populus nigra) - condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	**Y**
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	**Y**
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	**N**
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	**Y**
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	**N**
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	**Y**
		Total 4/6
	Condition Moderate due to passing 4 of 6 criteria and all essential criteria.	

Table 5e: Scattered trees - T4 Sycamore (acer pseudoplatanus) - condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	**N**
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	**Y**
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	**N**
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	**Y**
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	**N**
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	**Y**
		Total 3/6
	Condition Moderate due to passing 3 of 6 criteria and all essential criteria.	

Limitations and Copyright

Version Control

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Katie Whitfield BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist	12/03/2026
Proof	0.2	Katie Whitfield BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist	13/03/2026
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