Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.

DUNFORD ROAD, HADE EDGE, KIRKLEES – NORTHERN AREA; LAND BEHIND 323 DUNFORD ROAD.

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL.

OS Ref: **SE 14641 05505.**

Ref No: **250115 – N / Rev 1.**

Date: **10th June 2026.**

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Company No. 4401613.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Works Description.

Planning permission is being sought to build residential housing and associated vegetated gardens and hardstanding on an area of land behind 323 Dunford Road, Hade Edge, Kirklees.

1.2. Survey Area.

The survey area is located in a rural location, surrounded by agricultural fields used mostly as grazing pasture and residential housing. The wider surrounding area comprises a mosaic of similar habitats, as well as heathland, woodland, grass moorland and reservoirs. The aerial map below shows the location of the survey area, outlined in red, and the surrounding area:

The survey area comprises three fields used for grazing pasture, with boundaries comprised of dry-stone wall. The limits of the survey area are outlined in red in the aerial map below:

1.3. Purpose.

Whitcher Wildlife Ltd have therefore been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.4. Limitations.

This survey was carried out in mid-winter, with it possible that spring-flowering, ephemeral, or annual species of flora could be missed. Nevertheless, all habitats were dominated by perennial species, with it highly unlikely that the aforementioned species would make any substantial difference to the classification of the habitats or the condition assessments.

1.5. Additional Information.

The site survey was carried out on the 20th January 2025, with a desk-based data search also conducted. This report outlines the findings of these and makes appropriate recommendations.

Appendix I of this report contains an annotated map marked up with the varying habitats within the site.

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

This report will be accompanied by Microsoft Excel© files of the statutory metric and condition assessment sheets for the BNG assessment.

The report was updated in June 2026 due to landscaping changes which impacted the Biodiversity Net Gain figures.

1.6. Surveyor Credentials.

The survey was carried out by Dr Steven Paul Sylvester PhD MSc BSc. Steven has over 19 years of experience in ecological surveys in Britain and abroad, both in capacity as a university lecturer training PhD, MSc and BSc students, as well as working within ecological consultancies performing Biodiversity Net Gain, UKHab, NVC, Phase 1 surveys etc. Steven is a specialist in botany and has produced 24 scientific publications focused on plant taxonomy and has described 34 new taxa to science, including 2 genera, 25 species, 3 subspecies, and 4 varieties. He is expert in grass taxonomy, with 14 peer-reviewed taxonomic treatments on grasses being produced. Steven holds a first-class BSc (Hons) degree in Ecology from University of Wales Bangor, an MSc in Biodiversity and Taxonomy of Plants with distinction from the University of Edinburgh, and a PhD in Ecology and Plant Taxonomy from the University of Zurich. Steven has produced a total of 37 scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals, including 18 papers as first author and 11 papers as second author. Steven is currently applying to be a full member of CIEEM.

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2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. Survey Standards.

This report was prepared in line with the:

a) Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) survey standards and advice, particularly their Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (2017).

b) 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.

c) 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.

2.2. Desk Study.

A data search request has been submitted to the West Yorkshire Ecology Service (WYES) to identify any records of protected species or locations of non-statutory designated sites within a 2 km radius of the survey area.

A search was also undertaken using the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) MAGIC Map website (https://magic.defra.gov.uk/) to identify locations of any statutory designated sites within a 2 km radius of the survey area or within a Zone of Influence (ZOI) for the works. Data searches were also done for publicly available online records.

2.3. Field Survey.

2.3.1. General Information.

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.

The survey area was walked with access agreed by the landowner or using public rights of way where no access was agreed.

2.3.2. Habitats and Flora.

All primary habitats within the survey area were documented and the characteristic plant species within each habitat listed in line with the UK Habitat Classification version 2.0 methodology. All primary habitats are accompanied by secondary codes which are used to add further specific details where necessary. Each primary habitat and unique set of secondary codes is shown individually in the annotated map of Appendix I. Secondary codes '*32 Scattered trees*' and '*114 Dry stone wall*' were replaced by icons or lines indicated in the legend of this map. The minimum mappable area habitat unit for the survey area is 25 m^2 and the minimum mappable linear habitat unit is 5 m. Any habitats smaller than this will not be included as standalone habitats but may be referenced within this report.

Plant species relative abundances within each habitat will be estimated using the DAFOR system:

Species abundance percentage	DAFOR term	Abbreviation
51-100%	Dominant	D
31-50%	Abundant	A
16-30%	Frequent	F
6-15%	Occasional	O
1-5%	Rare	R

2.3.3. Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments and Calculations.

A condition assessment was carried out for each habitat parcel on the site. The results of these assessments can be found within the Statutory Metric and Condition Assessment Microsoft Excel© sheets which are available alongside this document.

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric baseline biodiversity value for the site was calculated for each habitat based on the habitats area, distinctiveness, condition assessment, and strategic significance. Strategic significance is based on the Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), because the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the region has not yet been published. The Kirklees BAP specifies the following priority habitats which are found on the site: Semi-natural grassland. Thus, all g3c8 Holcus-Juncus neutral grassland will be considered of high strategic significance in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculations and given a strategic significance multiplier value of 1.15, i.e. 'Formally identified in local strategy'. All other habitats encountered on site were not in the Kirklees BAP and will be considered of low strategic significance in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculations and given a strategic significance multiplier value of 1, i.e. 'Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy'.

2.3.4. Fauna.

Badger.

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.

Water vole.

The survey area and nearby surroundings were searched for watercourses and where found, and when safe to do so, they 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.

Otter.

The survey area and nearby surroundings were searched for watercourses and where found, and when safe to do so, they 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.

White-clawed crayfish.

The survey area was searched for watercourses and waterbodies. Where found, they were assessed for their potential to support white-clawed crayfish in line with *Conserving Natural 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No 1, Protocol for Monitoring the White Clawed Crayfish*.

Bat.

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: -

* Presence of bats.
* Holes, cracks or crevices.
* Bat droppings or staining.

Where possible, the habitats immediately surrounding the survey area were also assessed for their potential to support roosting bats or for their suitability for foraging and commuting bats.

Great crested newt.

The area within a 500 m radius of the survey area was cross referenced to Ordnance Survey (OS) maps to highlight all ponds within this radius. Where possible and deemed necessary, 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.

Reptile.

The survey area was assessed for the potential to support all reptile species. Where appropriate, the area was also searched for the presence of reptiles by searching beneath or on any suitable refugia.

Hazel dormouse.

Where the survey area lies within the known natural home range of hazel dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*), the habitat within and surrounding the survey area was searched for suitable habitat, typically comprising scrub and woodland which include species such as hazel, oak, honeysuckle, bramble and other species which may provide potential habitat for hazel dormice. When possible, 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*.

Red squirrel.

Where the survey area lies within the known natural home range of red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*), the area within and surrounding the survey area was assessed for its suitability to support red squirrel. Field signs were searched for looking for any dreys, feeding signs or sightings of red squirrels.

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3. DESK STUDY.

3.1. Designated Sites and Habitats.

3.1.1. Statutory Designated Sites.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), National Parks: The Dark Peak SSSI, South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SAC, Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA, and the Peak District National Park, which all cover the same area, are located ~1.2 km southwest of the survey area as indicated in the map below. Natural England guidance on proposed developments within the SSSI impact risk zones of the survey area state that "You do not need to consult Natural England on the proposed development at this location… the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites that they underpin".

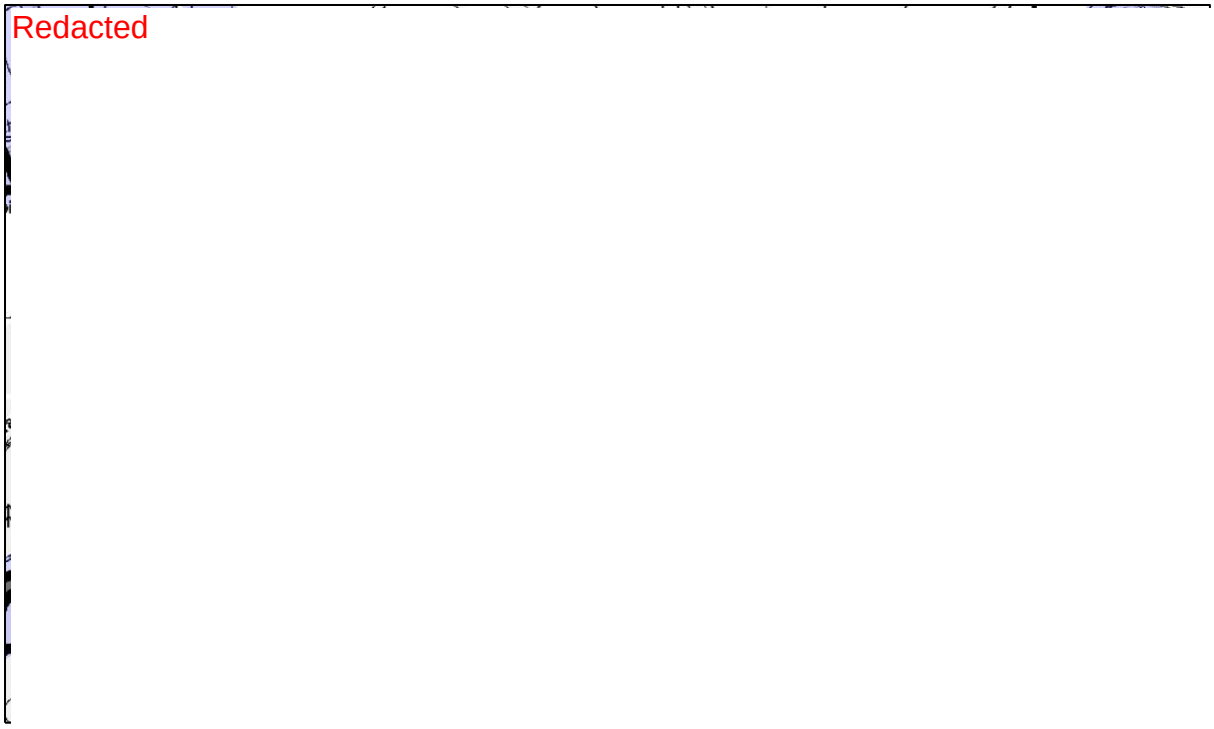
3.1.2. Non-Statutory Designated Sites.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS): Three LWS are located within 2 km of the survey area, as can be seen in the map above. Wild Boar Clough LWS is the closest and is located ~770 m to the southeast (grid reference: SE 154 054). Morton Wood LWS is located ~810 m to

the northeast (grid reference: SE 157 063). Yatehome Reservoir and Plantations LWS is located ~1.9 km to the west (grid reference: SE 114 053).

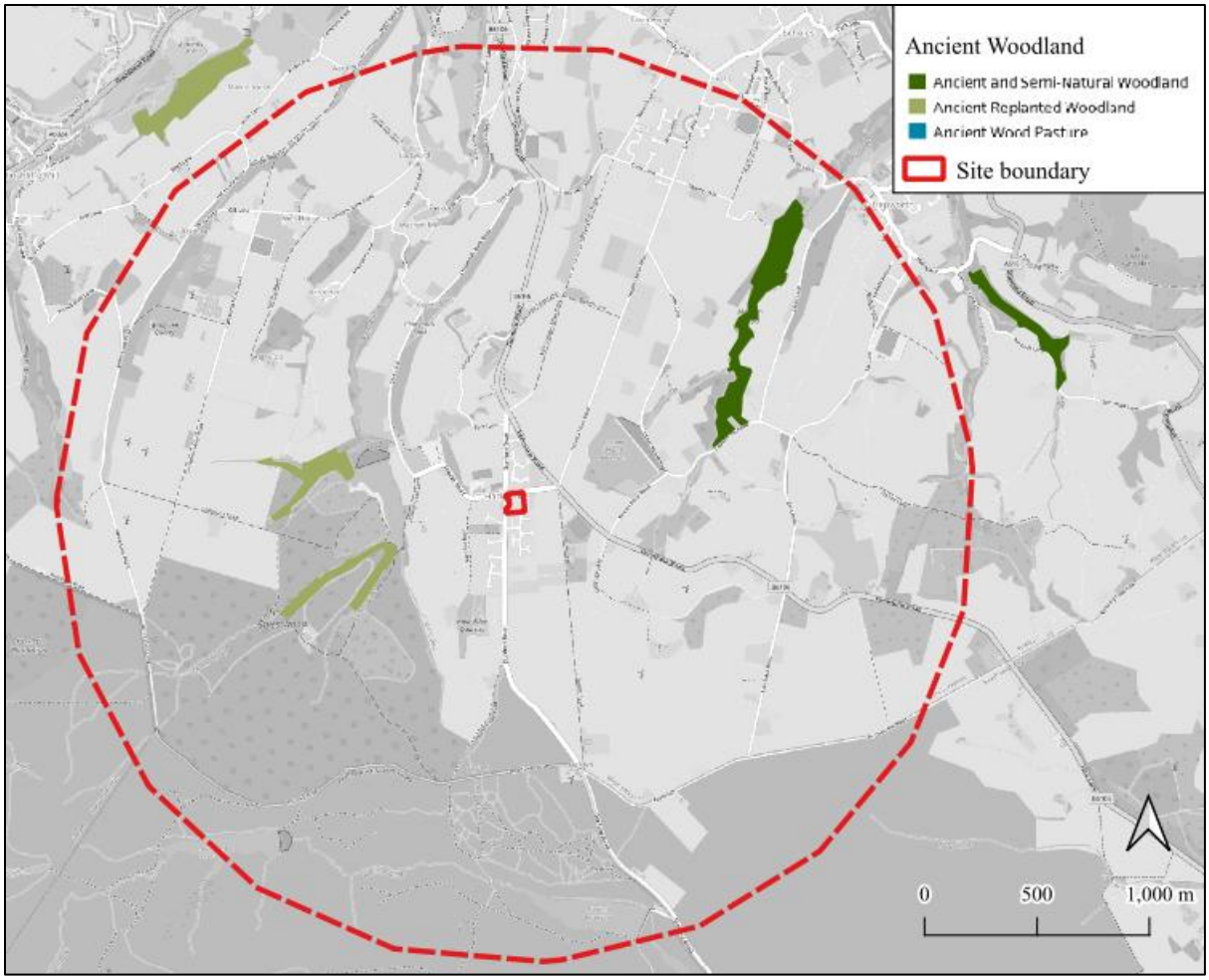
3.1.3. Wildlife Habitat Networks.

Many pockets of the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network (indicated in blue shading on the map below) are found within 2 km of the site, although none lie within the survey area. The closest is located 50 m to the southwest of the survey area.



3.1.4. Ancient Woodland.

One area of ancient woodland and two areas of ancient replanted woodland are found within a 2 km radius of the survey area, as can be seen in the map below. The ancient woodland is Morton Wood, located ~810 m to the northeast (grid reference: SE 157 063). Two areas of ancient replanted woodland are found in Holme Styles Wood, one being an area located ~520 m to the southwest and running along Hades Clough (grid reference: SE 13980 05093) and Reynard Clough (grid reference: SE 13890 05228), the other being 680 m to the west and encompassing the area of Fox Clough (grid reference: SE 13701 05631).



3.1.5. Priority Habitats Inventory (PHI).

No PHI priority habitats identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan were encountered on or close to the survey area.

3.2. Protected and Notable Species.

Various species records were returned within 2 km and the relevant records are summarised below.

- There are no badger records within 200 m of the survey area Redacted

Redacted

- 22 records of common bat species were returned, with none being within 500 m of the survey area. The closest being records of foraging common pipistrelle located 520 m southeast and 610 m northwest of the survey area. All other records are 1 km or farther from the survey area.

- Only one record of reptiles was returned, being a common lizard recorded at 1.2 km south from the survey area in 2005.

- Two records of brown hare were returned over 500 m from the survey area.

- One record of water vole was returned over 1.5 km from the survey area and is not deemed relevant to the survey area.

- No records of great crested newts, hedgehogs and small native rodents were returned.

A copy of the full data search results can be provided to the client upon request but should not be placed in the public domain.

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4. SURVEY RESULTS AND EVALUATION.

4.1. Habitats and Flora.

4.1.1. Habitat Summary.

The primary habitats within the site are listed below and described in further detail individually within the sections 4.1.2 and onwards of this report. Appendix I of this report contains an annotated map marked up with the habitats within the site.

- g3c8 – Holcus-Juncus neutral grassland
- u1e – Built linear feature

4.1.2. g3c8 – Holcus-Juncus Neutral Grassland.

Four distinct sections of g3c8 Holcus-Juncus neutral grassland that were used as grazing pasture were found on site. These were separated by dry-stone walls and are denoted as 'G1' to 'G4' in the annotated map of Appendix I and the Statutory Metric and condition assessment Microsoft Excel© sheets accompanying this report and are individually described below.

G1.

Secondary codes: 32 Scattered trees; 523 Non-native.

G1 is the small field in the northwest of the survey area. The ground flora was notably different compared to the other three fields (G2-G4) and was noted to be less frequently grazed. It was not easily classified into any UKHab grassland category and was not dominated by any particular species. It contained abundant Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and frequent cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*). Occasional species include: dandelion (*Taraxacum* sp.), nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and the non-native *Geranium* cf. *macrorrhizum*. Specimens of *Geranium* cf. *macrorrhizum* were likely a garden escape and did not key out well using vegetative keys. Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) was also rarely encountered by the dry-stone wall. The vegetation holds characteristics of g3c Other neutral grassland in having a) ≥1 species of grass abundant that is not generally sown for agricultural production, i.e. common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*); b) cover of rye-grasses (*Lolium* spp.) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*) <30%, with neither

of these species found. Nevertheless, failing of two criteria based on having a) <20% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges (having roughly 5%), and b) <9 species/m^2 (having on average 3-4 species/m^2), plus Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) being the most abundant species and the grassland managed as pasture, meant that this grassland was better classified as g3c8 Holcus-Juncus neutral grassland. G1 also bears affinity with g3c7 Deschampsia neutral grassland due to the frequent tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*), though this species was not abundant. Both g3c8 and g3c7 are classed as 'other neutral grassland' in Statutory Metric calculations, thus this discrepancy will not affect the BNG calculations.

A condition assessment of 'poor' was given principally due to failing the essential criterion in not being a good example of its habitat type, with a lack of the characteristic indicator species. One other criterion for non-acid grassland types also failed, based on <10 species/m^2, the field having on average 3-4 species/m^2.

G1 held two sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) trees on the east edge of the field and alongside the dry-stone wall, that are denoted as 'T1' to 'T2' in the annotated map of Appendix I and the Statutory Metric and condition assessment Microsoft Excel© sheets accompanying this report. Both trees were classed as 'large' (diameter at breast height

(dbh) 61-90 cm), with T1 having 75 cm dbh and T2 having 80 cm dbh. Both were given a condition assessment of 'good', passing all criteria.

G2.

Secondary codes: 32 Scattered trees.

G2 is the medium-sized field in the northwest of the survey area. It was noted to be frequently grazed and contained areas of bare ground from poaching. It was dominated by Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) with common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) and the moss *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus* frequent. Occasional species include: common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*). Dandelion (*Taraxacum* sp.) was rarely encountered.

A condition assessment of 'poor' was given due to failing on four of the six criteria for non-acid grassland types. This is based on: a) an unvaried sward height, with all the sward over 7 cm tall; b) cover of bare ground ≥5%, at ~ 10%; c) physical damage from excessive poaching evident in >5% of the field, accounting for the ~10% area of bare ground; d) <10 species/m^2, the field having on average 3-4 species/m^2.

G2 held one sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) tree on the south edge of the field and alongside the dry-stone wall, that is denoted as 'T3' in the annotated map of Appendix I and the Statutory Metric and condition assessment Microsoft Excel© sheets accompanying this report. T3 was classed as 'large' (diameter at breast height (dbh) 61-90 cm), having 76 cm dbh, and was given a condition assessment of 'good', passing all criteria.

G3.

Secondary codes: 10 Scattered scrub.

G3 is the medium-sized field in the southwest of the survey area. It was noted to be frequently grazed and contained areas of bare ground from poaching and tractor tracks. It was dominated by Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) with common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) and the moss *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*) frequent. Occasional species include creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*). A small area of scattered ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) scrub and some tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*) was found among rocks on the western edge by the dry-stone wall.

A condition assessment of 'poor' was given due to failing on four of the six criteria for non-acid grassland types. This is based on: a) an unvaried sward height, with all the sward over 7 cm tall; b) cover of bare ground ≥5%, at ~ 10%; c) physical damage from excessive poaching evident in >5% of the field, accounting for the ~10% area of bare ground; d) <10 species/m^2, the field having on average 3-4 species/m^2.

G4.

G4 is the largest field of the survey area located on the eastern side of the site and was dominated by Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), with the moss *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus* abundant and common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) frequent. Occasional species include: common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*). Dandelion (*Taraxacum* sp.) was rarely encountered. A damper area was found along the western edge of the field, with soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) frequently encountered.

A condition assessment of 'poor' was given due to failing on four of the six criteria for non-acid grassland types. This is based on: a) an unvaried sward height, with all the sward over 7 cm tall; b) cover of bare ground ≥5%, at ~ 10%; c) physical damage from excessive

poaching evident in >5% of the field, accounting for the ~10% area of bare ground; d) <10 species/m^2, the field having on average 3-4 species/m^2.

4.1.3. u1e – Built Linear Feature.

Secondary codes: *114 Dry stone wall*.

Dry-stone wall was found along the entirety of the boundary of the survey area, apart from a metal gate in field G4, and also intersected the survey area and formed the boundaries of the individual fields G1-G4. No condition assessment is required for this habitat.


4.2. Fauna.

Badger.

No badger setts or signs were identified within the survey area. The data search also retrieved no badger records within 200 m of the survey area and no sett records within 1 km of the survey area, though the survey area does fall just within the area of increased probability of badger activity (see section 3.2). Therefore, it is deemed that the works will have no impact upon badgers.

Riparian mammals and aquatic species.

There is no watercourse within, or close to, the survey area to provide suitable habitat for otter, water vole or white-clawed crayfish. Therefore, the works will have no impact upon any of these species.

Bat.

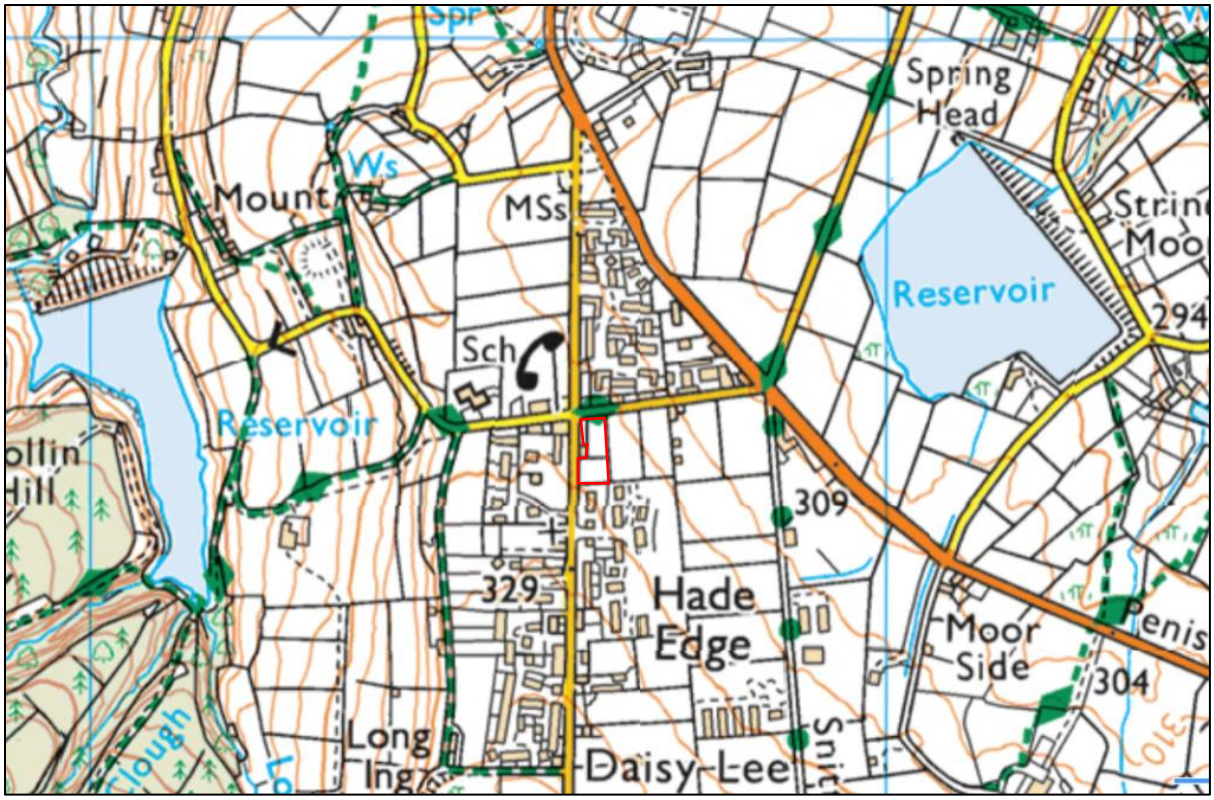
No buildings or structures were found within the survey area that could have potential to host roosting bats. The three large mature sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) trees T1-T3 within the survey area lacked features suitable for use by roosting bats. Therefore, the survey area is assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats.

The survey area provides limited habitat for foraging and commuting bats, with no vegetative corridors present.

Therefore, the works are unlikely to impact upon either roosting bats or foraging and commuting bats.

Great crested newt.

There are no ponds close to the survey area that could provide suitable breeding habitat for great crested newts. Two large reservoirs are found within 500 m, these being Boshaw Whams Reservoir, located ~340 m northeast of the survey area, and Holme Styles Reservoir, located ~470 m west of the survey area. Both of these reservoirs are at lower elevations and with obstacles such as main roads and numerous fields with dry-stone wall boundaries to cross, making it unlikely that any newts might migrate uphill to the survey area from these. Furthermore, no records of great crested newts within 2 km of the survey area were returned by the data search. Therefore, it is deemed that the works will have no impact upon great crested newts.



Nesting bird.

The survey area provides limited suitable habitat for nesting birds within the nesting season, which extends from March to August each year. This suitable habitat is principally within the trees, although no nests were observed. While the grasslands could be suitable habitat, the frequent grazing activities will deter birds from nesting in these areas. Therefore, any works carried out within the nesting season may have some limited impact on nesting birds.

Reptile.

The survey area offers limited suitable habitat for reptiles, this being principally found within the dry-stone walls bordering and intersecting the site, as well as the tussocky and less-grazed G1 grassland. However, provided precautionary measures are in place, the works are unlikely to impact reptiles.

Hedgehog.

The survey area offers very limited suitable habitat for hedgehogs, with hardly any areas to shelter. This, coupled with no records being returned from the data search, makes it unlikely that the works will impact hedgehogs.

Red squirrel and hazel dormouse.

The site lies outside of the known natural home range of both hazel dormouse and red squirrel and therefore, the works will not impact these species.

4.3. Invasive Non-Native Species.

No invasive, non-native species (INNS) listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) were identified within the survey area. Therefore, the works pose no threat of spreading any such INNS to the further environment.

4.4. Designated Sites and Habitats.

The survey area does not lie within or adjacent to any designated sites or habitats, although an area of the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network is located 50 m to the southwest. Therefore, the works will have no impact on designated sites and habitats.

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5. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN BASELINE ASSESSMENT.

The below table shows the baseline Biodiversity Unit (BU) value for the site. This is designed to give an indication of the biodiversity value of the site prior to any development. The total baseline of the site was calculated at 4.21 BU for area habitats. It should also be noted that the size classification of the individual trees will also need to be checked against any tree reports produced for the site for continuity, which may alter the baseline figures for area habitats. No linear habitats of biodiversity value or watercourse habitats were found on the site. The Microsoft Excel© files of metric and condition assessments accompany this report.

5.1. On-site Baseline Area Habitat Units.

The baseline area habitat calculations include all habitats that lie within the red line boundary of the site. The scores for each habitat and a total are shown below.

Area Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance multiplier	Biodiversity units (BU)*
Other neutral grassland: G1	0.0181	Medium	Poor	1.15	0.08
Other neutral grassland: G2	0.1276	Medium	Poor	1.15	0.59
Other neutral grassland: G3	0.1211	Medium	Poor	1.15	0.56
Other neutral grassland: G4	0.3630	Medium	Poor	1.15	1.67
Rural tree: T1	0.0366	Medium	Good	1	0.44
Rural tree: T2	0.0366	Medium	Good	1	0.44
Rural tree: T3	0.0366	Medium	Good	1	0.44
Total*	**0.63****				**4.21**

*Figures are rounded to two decimal places.
**Individual tree area values do not contribute to the total area value.

5.2. Off-site Baseline Area Habitat Units

To reduce the deficit on site, a parcel of off-site land will be used, which is located in close proximity to the site and was used as a storage / compound area for the previous development to the north of this site. This land is detailed below:

The parcel of land is situated Between Boshaw View and Snittle Road, which is outlined within a blue line boundary in the aerial image below with photographs of the area also found below:

The majority of this area was found to be g3c Other neutral grassland in poor condition, with a small area of u1f Sparsely vegetated urban land in the northeast corner. As g3c Other neutral grassland is a medium distinctiveness habitat, trading rules stipulate that it can only be replaced by another grassland habitat or a high distinctiveness habitat. There are a number of options for offsetting on this land based on the aforementioned trading rules. The most readily achievable option for offsetting would be to enhance the g3c Other neutral grassland by raising the condition score from 'poor' to 'good', which would give the necessary uplift, and also leave room for some of the area to be planted with scrub to satisfy the trading rules. This would require careful management to achieve a) a noticeable and distinct UKHab neutral grassland plant community containing a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species; b) a species rich sward, with ≥10 species/m^2; c) a varied sward height, with at least 20% of the sward less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm; d) a cover of bare ground between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens; e) a cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) less than 5%; f) a combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage less than 5% of the total area, with no invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) present.

However, not all the land can be used as much of it is to be used to completely offset another nearby development (known as the southern site). However, the remaining land not necessary for use on the southern site can be used to reduce the deficit here.

The baseline habitats for the remainder of the parcel to be used are therefore shown below:

Area Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance multiplier	Biodiversity units (BU)*
Other neutral grassland	0.1969	Medium	Poor	1	0.79
Total*	**0.1969**				**0.79**

5.3. On-site Post-Development Area Habitat Units.

The post-development area habitat calculations include all area habitats that lie within the red line boundary of the site post-works. The scores for each habitat and a total are shown below.

Area Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance multiplier	Biodiversity units (BU)*
Developed land sealed surface	0.3859	V.Low	N/A	1	0
Vegetated garden	0.2381	Low	N/A	1	0.46
Introduced shrub	0.0092	Low	N/A	1	0.02
Rural tree: T1 (retained)	0.0366	Medium	Good	1	0.44
Rural tree: T2 (retained)	0.0366	Medium	Good	1	0.44
Rural tree: T3 (retained)	0.0366	Medium	Good	1	0.44
Total*	**0.63****				**1.79**

*Figures are rounded to two decimal places.
**Individual tree area values do not contribute to the total area value.

5.4. Off-site Post-Development Area Habitat Units.

The deficit will be reduced through the uplift of 0.1969ha of the existing poor condition grassland to good condition on the aforementioned parcel of land. The off-site units will look as follows.

Area Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Strategic Significance multiplier	Biodiversity units (BU)*
Other neutral grassland	0.175	Medium	Low → Good	1	1.71

The above means that the development does not achieve the necessary 10% net gain. Overall, the scheme achieves a total loss of 1.5 units, with 1.92 additional units being required to secure a 10% gain. The scheme at present is at a 35.51% loss overall.

5.5. BNG Evaluation.

To meet 10% BNG will require at least 1.92 units which will be purchased from an off-site provider. At present, the scheme achieves a total loss of 1.5 units, equivalent to a 35.51% loss. The trading rules are not satisfied, but that is only due to the fact that the scheme is at a loss, not due to the distinctiveness of habitats nor broad habitat types.

The below table is extrapolated from the statutory metric.

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	-1.50
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	-35.51%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲	

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6. RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1. General Considerations.

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report is designed to advise the client of the survey results and BNG assessment so that any potential ecological constraints identified can be considered.

6.2. Nesting Birds.

It is recommended that any vegetation or site clearance works are carried out outside the nesting bird season, which extends from March to August each year. If this is not possible, it is recommended that the clearance works are immediately preceded by a nesting bird survey which should be undertaken by a competent person. Any active nests found, plus a suitable buffer around them, must be left undisturbed until the young have fledged.

6.3. Reptiles and Other Small Fauna.

As a precaution, it is recommended that measures are put in place to ensure no harm is caused to any reptiles, or other fauna. This should include the following measures:

- Prior to site clearance, all vegetation should be cut to a minimum of 200 mm above ground level and the arisings should be carefully removed from site. This will encourage any reptiles or other small fauna species at ground level to vacate the area and will deter them from returning.
- Any stored materials on site should be lifted cleanly off the ground and not dragged to avoid any harm to small mammals taking refuge underneath.
- Any clearance of potential refugia, such as grass cuttings or piles or brash should not be undertaken over winter, when the species may be hibernating.
- No excavations should be left open overnight, if necessary, these should be left with a mammal ramp to allow the escape of any fauna that may use the site.
- In the unlikely event that any reptiles, hedgehogs, or other small fauna are identified during the works, they should be left undisturbed and allowed to escape the works area of their own accord. If multiple reptiles or hedgehogs or hibernating reptiles or hedgehogs are identified, then works should cease and Whitcher Wildlife should be contacted for further advice.

6.4. BNG.

A net gain has not yet been achieved although efforts to explore solutions have been largely maximised. This means that off-site credits will be purchased to make up the deficit, and a minimum of 1.92 will be required. It is recommended that contact now be made with habitat banks so that prices can be compared and the units of the correct habitat types can be secured.

6.5. Biodiversity Enhancements.

In addition to ensuring a net gain of biodiversity units is achieved on the site, there will be an expectation to provide some enhancements for fauna species on the site. It is recommended that integrated bat and bird boxes are included in the final design of the buildings on site.

13 cm x 13 cm gaps should be left at the bases of garden fences, and gates should be raised at least 15 cm, to allow for the passage of small mammals.

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Prepared by:	
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Revised by:	
Mitch Greenhalgh BSc ACIEEM	Date: 10th June 2026

Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou BSc MCIEEM	Date: 10th June 2026

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APPENDIX I. HABITAT MAP - BASELINE.

Site: LAND BEHIND 323 DUNFORD ROAD, HADE EDGE, KIRKLEES.

Reference: 250115 - N

Date: 03.02.2025

Produced by: Steven Paul Sylvester

APPENDIX II. HABITAT MAP – POST-DEVELOPMENT.

Site: LAND BEHIND 323 DUNFORD ROAD, HADE EDGE, KIRKLEES.

Reference: 250115 - N

Date: 29.05.2026

Produced by: Samuel Bentley

APPENDIX III. 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 IV. REPTILE INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are five main species of reptile that reside in the UK; Common or Viviparous Lizard (Lacerta vivipara); Sand Lizard (Lacerta agilis); Slow Worm (Anguis fragilis); Grass Snake (Natrix natrix) and Adder (Vipera berus). The Adder is the only native species that is venomous although this is rarely harmful to humans.

Reptiles occupy a wide range of habitats including woodland, marshes, heathland, moors, sand dunes, hedgerows and bogs. Sand Lizards are confined to moorland and coastal sand dunes where they lay their eggs in the warm sand. The range of the Sand Lizard in the UK is therefore very limited. Slow Worms can be found in a wide variety of habitats throughout Britain and is the most likely reptile to be found in urban and suburban environments.

Maintaining the right body temperature is vital to reptiles' survival. In the morning, they find a warm basking site to heat up their bodies, then later they may move back into the shade because they do not sweat and have to be careful not to overheat. During hot summers, Adders will try to move to damper, cooler sites.

Over winter reptiles will hibernate in burrows or under longs where they are protected from the cold and predators, emerging from February onwards as the weather warms up.

Reptiles generally begin to mate April to May with young born in late July to September. The Common Lizard gives birth to live young, hence the term viviparous, meaning live bearing.

Surveys

Reptile surveys involve the searching of refuge such as logs and stones for any animal sheltering below. Artificial refuge may be laid out on site for the purpose of reptile surveys.

Legislation

Reptiles are protected under Appendix II (sand lizards) and Appendix III (common lizard, slow worms, smooth snake, grass snake and adders) of the BERN Convention (1982),

partially protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive and are all listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Communities Act (2006) making them a species of principal importance.

This makes it an offence to disturb any reptile while it is occupying a structure or place it uses for shelter or protection or to obstruct access to such a place.