

Newsome Panthers ARLFC, Huddersfield
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



HABITAT WORKS

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Executive Summary

Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned by Newsome Panthers ARLFC to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land at Hall Bower Ln, Huddersfield HD4 6RN (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 14796 14432), hereafter referred to as 'the Site' and as displayed in Figure 1.

The PEA was required to inform proposals for the demolition of the existing clubhouse to facilitate the construction of a new clubhouse with associated parking and landscaping. These proposals are detailed within the drawing '*Location Plan*' (Dwg No. A102 Revision 2, dated 27/01/24).

Recommendations are made regarding impacts of the proposed development through habitat losses/potential gains on the Site post-development and the retention and protection of key ecological features. These include:

- Implementation of Best Practice Measures (BPM) for:
 - Common amphibians,
 - Badgers, and
 - Reptiles
- Consideration of enhancement opportunities for local species, including:
 - Installation of integrated bat and bird boxes
 - Installation of insect towers
 - Creation of rubble/log/brush piles

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned by Newsome Panthers ARLFC to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land at Hall Bower Lane, Huddersfield HD4 6RN (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 14796 14432), hereafter referred to as 'the Site' and as displayed in Figure 1
- 1.1.2 The PEA was required to inform proposals for the demolition of the existing clubhouse to facilitate the construction of a new clubhouse with associated parking and landscaping. These proposals are detailed within the drawing '*Location Plan*' (Dwg No. A102 Revision 2, dated 27/01/24).
- 1.1.3 This report details the findings of a PEA, including a data consultation and UK Habitat Classification survey undertaken in February 2026. Methodologies employed during the surveys are described along with the survey findings, evaluation, assessment and recommendations for any further survey work and/or mitigation/enhancement as required.
- 1.1.4 Recommendations are made regarding impacts of the proposed development through habitat losses/potential gains on the Site post-development including the retention and protection of key ecological features. The provision of species-specific enhancements are outlined where appropriate.

2. Methodology

2.1 Data Consultation

2.1.1 Data consultation was undertaken by Habitat Works with the local records centre; West Yorkshire Ecology Service (WYES) in February 2026 as part of the ecological appraisal process, to determine whether any ecological features of note had previously been recorded within 2 km of the Site. Data requested included:

- Records of protected species;
- Records of national or local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species;
- Details of any statutory sites of ecological interest e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) etc.; and,
- Details of any non-statutory sites of ecological interest e.g. Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

2.1.2 The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (<http://www.magic.defra.gov.uk>) was consulted in January 2026 for information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites of conservation interest, and for the presence of European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) and bats within 2 km of the Site. MAGIC was also used to search for information relating to GCN Class Survey Licence Returns and Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017- 2019 within 500 m of the Site.

2.1.3 Information returned from MAGIC and WYES with relevant assessments will be incorporated into the report as appropriate. All records will be reviewed, however particular interest will be placed on records within the past 10 years, with records prior to these considered historic.

2.2 Ecological Walkover Survey

2.2.1 An ecological walkover survey was undertaken 6th February by Ecology Team Manager Joe Travis BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM and Graduate Ecologist Wojciech Kaim BSc (Hons) following best practice guidelines (UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab) (UKHab Working Group (UKHCWG) 2018)). This survey method aims to define habitats and vegetation types present and provide an indication of their relative abundance. This survey method aims to characterise habitats and communities present and is not intended to provide a complete list of all species occurring across the Site.

2.2.2 The UKHab survey covered land within the Site (as illustrated by the red line site boundary in Figure 1).

2.2.3 Habitats and vegetation types present inside the Site were recorded onto a field map and notable, rare or scarce plant species, including other features of ecological interest, were highlighted using Target Notes (TN). The current management of habitats and associated features were noted and assigned UKHab secondary codes where relevant.

2.2.4 Evidence of protected species or species of nature conservation importance were recorded where present at the time of survey. Habitats or species present that are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 or the Local BAP were also noted.

2.2.5 Survey findings are detailed in Section 3 and annotated on Figure 1, Target Notes are provided in Appendix 1, while site photographs are provided in Appendix 2.

2.2.6 Plant species recorded were classified according to the subjective method of DAFOR abundance ratings. The standardised terms are as follows:

- D Dominant
- A Abundant
- F Frequent
- O Occasional
- R Rare

2.3 Protected and Key Species

- 2.3.1 Any evidence of protected species or groups encountered during the survey was recorded. This included observations of field signs and an assessment of the suitability of the habitats present to support protected species. For full details of legislation relating to all habitats and species discussed within this report visit <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>.

Amphibians

- 2.3.2 The Site was assessed for its potential to support amphibians, including a detailed GCN assessment. A desk-based search for ponds within 500 m of the Site, which are not separated by a significant barrier to amphibian dispersal, was made using 1:10,000 OS mapping. Habitats within the Site were assessed for their suitability to support amphibians during their terrestrial and aquatic stages where applicable.

Badgers

- 2.3.3 Signs of badger *Meles meles* activity were sought within the Site and within 30m of the Site boundary, where possible.
- 2.3.4 The survey followed standard methodology detailed in 'Surveying Badgers' (Harris *et al.*, 1989) and the approach as described in 'The history, distribution, status and habitat requirements of the badger in Britain' (JNCC, 1990).
- 2.3.5 The survey focused on areas with topography and/or vegetation typically utilised for sett building, in addition to key habitats typically favoured for foraging such as woodland, hedgerows, ditches and banks.
- 2.3.6 The survey involved identifying any badger field signs including setts, latrine/dung pits, foraging marks, feeding signs (e.g. snuffle holes), footprints, badger hairs and worn pathways, specifically along linear features and boundaries in the Site.
- 2.3.7 In the event of identifying badger sett(s), these were examined with key details recorded, including the number of entrances and their status (e.g. active, partially used, and disused). Where present setts identified were categorised using nationally recognised sett classification (main sett, annexe sett, subsidiary sett, outlier sett) where possible (Harris *et al.*, 1989).

Bats

- 2.3.8 Trees within the Site were subject to a ground-based assessment for their suitability to support roosting bats during the survey.
- 2.3.9 An individual structure may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats associated with it and it is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats due to their transient nature. Consequently, it is customary when undertaking such surveys to assign each feature to a defined category of roosting potential as follows: negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed (Collins, 2023).
- 2.3.10 Similar to structures, an individual tree may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats associated with it and it is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats during a single daytime

visit, given their highly transient natures. Consequently, it is customary when undertaking such surveys to assign each feature to a defined category of None, Further Assessment Required (FAR), Potential Roosting Feature – Individual (PRF – I) and Potential Roosting Feature – Multiple (PRF – M) (Collins, 2023).

- 2.3.11 The Site was also assessed for its suitability for foraging and commuting bats in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Birds

- 2.3.12 In 2021, a re-assessment of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) was published by Stanbury et al. (2021), which defined rare and threatened bird species on two lists (Red and Amber) describing the level of threat to each species of concern. “Red” is the highest conservation priority, with species needing urgent action through to “Green”, indicating that the species are relatively unthreatened.
- 2.3.13 Data consultation data was filtered for WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 bird species and those species protected under Annex 1 of the EU Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, also known as the Birds Directive. Priority species (NERC Act 2006, LBAP) were likewise highlighted and the UK Red List for birds, also known as the BoCC as described above, was also referred to.
- 2.3.14 During the Site survey any species of birds encountered were recorded. Habitats were assessed for their potential value to nesting, wintering and foraging birds.

Invertebrates

- 2.3.15 The habitats present on the Site were assessed for their suitability to support invertebrates and incidental observations of invertebrates at and adjacent to the Site were noted.

Reptiles

- 2.3.16 The habitats present on Site were assessed for their suitability to support reptiles, particularly with reference to their connectivity with other areas of suitable habitat within the wider landscape.

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

- 2.3.17 A desk-based search for watercourses on or within 30 m of the Site, which are not separated by a significant barrier to dispersal, was undertaken using OS 1:10,000 mapping.
- 2.3.18 Where access was possible, watercourses were subsequently assessed for their suitability to support otter *Lutra lutra*, water vole *Arvicola amphibius* and white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*.

Other Key and Notable Species

- 2.3.19 Whilst on Site habitats were assessed for their potential to support any other nationally, locally scarce or notable species, with particular reference to LBAP species.

2.4 Invasive Species

- 2.4.1 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and/or The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (2019) were recorded and mapped as seen during the survey.

2.5 Assumptions and Limitations

- 2.5.1 A UKHab survey is intended to provide a rapid assessment of habitats present within a site and is not intended to replace detailed vegetation or targeted protected species surveys, where deemed necessary.
- 2.5.2 The survey was undertaken outside of the peak botanical season, meaning some species may not have been

visibly present during the visit. However, due to the habitats present on the Site as well as the land use, it is considered unlikely that any significant species/findings were missed.

3. Findings and Evaluation

3.1 Site Description

- 3.1.1 The Site is located off Hall Bower Lane, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. The Site is an active sports facility, comprising a series of rugby pitches and associated clubhouse, parking and storage facilities. The pitches are sward grassland while there are some areas of taller, tussocky grassland around the boundaries of the Site in addition to occasional scattered trees, as detailed in Figure 1.
- 3.1.2 Much of the land directly surrounding the land is pastoral grassland, while to the northwest of the Site is the residential outskirts of Huddersfield. In the wider landscape there are some small pockets of deciduous woodland, while mature hedgerows are present in many of the field boundaries.

3.2 Designated Sites

- 3.2.1 A total of three statutory designated sites were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site which relates to Honley Station Cutting Scientific Site of Special Interest (SSSI), Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Upper Park Wood (LNR).
- 3.2.2 WYES returned eight non-statutory designated sites for locations within 2 km of the Site, relating to seven Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and a single Local Geological Site (LGS).
- 3.2.3 Table 1 below details the designated sites within 2 km of the Site, with Figure 2 displaying their locations.

Table 1 - Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Designated Site	Description from Citation	Approx. Distance & Direction from Site
Statutory		
Castle Hill (LNR)	A combination of acid grassland and scrub on steep slopes with semi-improved neutral grassland and acid grassland on flatter areas to the east of the site.	400 m southeast
Upper Park Wood (LNR)	In the surrounds of the site there are improved grazing fields, as well as some meadow land to the east. The site consists of a small woodland block, tall herb vegetation, scattered scrub and a damp glade.	1.3 km south
Honley Station Cutting (SSSI)	The geological features are very poorly exposed at the railway cutting. Most of the geology is covered in vegetation. The feature fails the vegetation and exposure monitoring targets, but passes all other monitoring targets.	1.8 km south
Non-Statutory		
Longley Hill Plantation (LWS)	A mixture of neutral and acid grassland with scattered trees and scrub and small blocks of woodland.	700 m northeast
Arthur, Molly Carr and Roaf Woods (LWS)	No description found.	1 km southeast

Sir John Ramsden Canal (LWS)	No description found.	1.3 km north
Hey Wood (LWS)	Located between Honley and Farnley Tyas, south of Honley Road. Surrounding land use is mainly arable, improved and semi-improved grassland.	1.6 km south
Almondbury Common (LWS)	No description found.	1.7 km east
Park Wood (LWS)	An ancient woodland site between Hanging Stone Road and Woodhead Road, south of Huddersfield. There are houses and gardens to the east and improved grassland to the west, and stone walls along most of the boundaries.	1.7 km southwest
Beaumont Park (LGS)	Exposures of Upper Carboniferous Namurian (Millstone Grit) Rough Rock and Rough Rock Flags are revealed in a line of former quarries in the grounds of Beaumont Park overlooking the Holme Valley.	1.8 km west
Huddersfield Narrow Canal (LWS)	A kingfisher was seen and an otter spraint was also noted. The most recent record held for the nationally scarce species <i>Luronium natans</i> is from 2002.	1.8 km north

- 3.2.4 The Site lies within the SSSI Impact Risk Zones for Dark Peak SSSI. The Impact Risk Zone for Dark Peak SSSI does not impact the proposed development and is unlikely to have a harmful effect on the SSSI, and therefore, will not be mentioned further within this report.
- 3.2.5 No Special Protection Areas (SPA) are present within 10 km of the Site; however, a single Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) is present within 10 km of the Site which pertains to South Pennine Moors located approximately 7 km southwest of the Site. Given that the proposals are confined to the Site and the distance between the Site and the designated site, it is not considered that the proposals will have an impact upon the designated site, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

3.3 Habitats

- 3.3.1 Priority habitats present within 2 km of the Site which include ancient woodland, wood pasture and deciduous woodland, however, none are within 30 m of the Site.
- 3.3.2 Habitats recorded on the Site, their distribution and composition are discussed in order of dominance below. Habitat locations are annotated on Figure 1.

g4 Modified grassland (Secondary Codes (SC): 32, 33, 108, 114, 128, 201, 203, 820)

- 3.3.3 The majority of the Site is comprised of modified grassland which is used as a natural sport pitch and is frequently mowed (SC: 108, 820). This is present throughout the site, with species present including perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, as well as white clover *Trifolium repens*, dandelion *Taraxacum sp.* ribwort plantain *Plantago laneolata*. A patch of tall or tussocky sward (SC: 128) is present at the southern corner of the playing fields and some edges of the fields where they are not mowed. Encompassing the whole redline site boundary there is a dry stone wall (SC: 114). The overall habitat does not host any particular botanical interest.
- 3.3.4 Scattered trees (SC: 32) are present across the borders of the Site, some of which are rooted off-site, however are growing through dry stone walling onto the Site, these consist of semi-mature elder *Sambucus*

nigra and oak *Quercus robur*. Alongside the Northern border of the south-eastern car park there is a newly planted line of trees (SC: 33, 201), consisting of predominantly common beech *Fagus sylvatica* with some silver birch *Betula pendula* also present.

- 3.3.5 Modified grassland is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor is it listed within the LBAP. The habitat is considered to be of no greater than site level importance to nature conservation.

u1b Developed land, Sealed surface (SC: 804)

- 3.3.6 A series of metal buildings, including the main club house and associated portacabins are located at the end of the car park in the centre of the Site.
- 3.3.7 A car park is present on the south-eastern entrance to the Site, some sections contains gravel on top with some gravel piles present on the most western section of the car park. This area is absent of any botanical interest.
- 3.3.8 Developed land, sealed surface, car park is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor is it listed within the LBAP. The habitat is considered to be of no greater than site level importance to nature conservation. Although not considered of significance from a botanical interest, the buildings on the Site are assessed for their suitability to support protected species below.

3.4 Species

Amphibians

- 3.4.1 WYES returned a total of 16 records of amphibians, 15 of which are historic (outwith the last 10 years), for locations within 2 km of the Site, comprising of five records of common frog *Rana temporaria*, three records of great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus*, three records of common toad *Bufo bufo*, three records of palmate newt *Lissotriton helveticus* and two records of smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*. The closest record pertains to a palmate newt located approximately 1.2 km west of the Site in 2009. The closest recent record pertains to a common frog located approximately 1.8 km north of the Site in 2020.
- 3.4.2 No GCN EPS licences were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.3 The Site location is not eligible in the Natural England GCN District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme.
- 3.4.4 No waterbodies are present within 500 m of the Site from a search of OS Maps.
- 3.4.5 Overall, terrestrial habitats on the Site offer some limited suitability for amphibians, with areas of rubble piles (Figure 1, TN1) providing areas for amphibians to shelter within. Much of the Site is short sward modified grassland which is heavily mowed, offering extremely limited foraging and sheltering opportunities for GCN, which is limited in extent and of inferior quality when compared to other habitats in the local area, in particular the tussock grassland that is present on much of the fields adjacent to the Site boundary.
- 3.4.6 Given the limited suitability of terrestrial habitats present on the Site, albeit of inferior quality to adjacent habitats, and the absence of waterbodies within 500 m of the Site, it is considered extremely unlikely that GCN will be a receptor to the proposals, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.
- 3.4.7 It should be noted that unidentified ponds/water features may exist within local gardens. In general, such water features are usually relatively small and are more likely to be used by common amphibians i.e. smooth newt, and/or common frog (albeit GCN and common toad may use them in certain circumstances; for example, if there is a larger waterbody close by that supports either of these species).

- 3.4.8 The presence of common amphibian species cannot be ruled out from the Site. Overall, the Site habitats are of no greater than site level value for common amphibians in their terrestrial stage. This is based on the availability of similar and higher quality habitat (including potentially more suitable aquatic habitat) in the wider area.

Badger

- 3.4.9 WYES returned no records of badgers *Meles meles* for locations within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.10 The Site is mostly short-sward grasslands that are used as playing fields, and as such is regularly disturbed by human activities. The habitats on the Site are flat and offer little to no suitability for sett creation or foraging on the Site.
- 3.4.11 The taller-sward grassland present around the boundaries of the Site in places offers some suitability for foraging, however these habitats are limited in scale in comparison to the adjacent fields surrounding the Site.
- 3.4.12 A push-through in a wire fence was discovered on the northern side of the Site, this is suspected to be a badger trail given the size of the push-through and the mammal trail of compacted grass indicating semi-regular use. Given this, it is considered that although badgers are not considered to be resident on the Site, there is potential that the Site forms part of the wider territory of badgers and as such will be present on the Site from time to time.
- 3.4.13 Given the lack of field signs off sett building on the Site during the walkover survey and the limited suitable habitats present on the Site for foraging, it is considered that the Site is of conservation value to badger at no greater than the site level.

Bats

- 3.4.14 WYES returned a total of 105 bats records, 76 of which are historic, for locations within 2 km of the Site. Of these records, 36 pertain to roosts, including 17 common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* roosts, three brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* roosts, a single roost record of Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and a single whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus* roost, in addition to four records of unidentified pipistrelle *Pipistrellus sp.* roosts and ten records of unidentified bat roosts. The closest roost record pertains to an unidentified pipistrelle roost located approximately 500 m south of the Site in 2005. The closest recent roost record pertains to common pipistrelle roost located approximately 1.2 km northwest of the Site in 2021.
- 3.4.15 The remaining records pertain to foraging, flying and unidentified bat activities which include common pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, Daubenton's bat, natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*, noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, whiskered bat and unidentified bats. The closest record was located approximately 500 m northwest of the Site in 2007 and pertains to an unidentified bat. The most recent record pertains to a common pipistrelle located approximately 600 m north of the Site in 2024.
- 3.4.16 No EPS licences relating to bats were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site.

Roosting Bats

- 3.4.17 A single building is present on the Site, comprising the existing clubhouse. The clubhouse is a single storey, metal sheet building with a pitched and gable ended roof. The building has a small, cluttered roof void, however there is no light ingress into the roof void, indicating a lack of access opportunities for roosting bats. The metal sheeting of the roof sits atop timber frames, which offer no crevices that could be seen as

Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) for bats. Externally, the building is well-sealed, with no crevices present between the individual metal sheets which could offer PRFs for bats.

- 3.4.18 Given the absence of PRFs across the clubhouse, it is considered that the building has 'Negligible' suitability to support roosting bats in line with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2023). As such, roosting bats are not considered to be a constraint to the proposals and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

- 3.4.19 The Site offers some limited potential for foraging and commuting bats, due to the limited scale of the habitats present on the Site in conjunction with the lack of mature vegetation that bats typically utilise for foraging and commuting. The wider local landscape contains habitats of superior quality for commuting and roosting bats, such as woodlands to the north of the Site. The Site however is an expanse of greenspace, and as such, bats may utilise the habitats on the Site for foraging. It is considered that the potential for foraging on the Site is lower than the surrounding fields, as the short-sward modified grassland on the Site is likely to support fewer insect communities than the adjacent off-site tussocky grassland fields
- 3.4.20 Overall, the Site is considered to be of low suitability for commuting and foraging bats (Collins, 2023), and therefore the habitats on the Site are considered to be of no more than site level importance for foraging and commuting bats.

Birds

- 3.4.21 WYES returned a total 222 records comprising 42 bird species for locations within 2 km of the Site. Species returned include a four Schedule 1 bird species as listed within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), 18 Red, 19 Amber and four Green listed BoCC species. Bird species recorded within 2 km of the Site are summarised in Appendix 3.
- 3.4.22 The Site offers some opportunities for nesting birds, however these are limited to trees and shrubs around the Site boundary. These are limited in size and scale in comparison to the common and widespread availability of nesting habitat in the wider local area, particularly within the woodland to the north of the Site.
- 3.4.23 The Site is considered to offer no opportunities for ground nesting birds, due to the usage of the Site as playing fields, where disturbance from human activities would deter ground nesting species from establishing nests on the Site.
- 3.4.24 Overall, due to the nature of habitats present on the Site, it is considered that the Site is of importance to nesting birds at no greater than the site level.

Invertebrates

- 3.4.25 WYES returned a total of 48 records for invertebrates comprising of beetles, butterflies and moth species. The closest record pertains to Wall butterfly *Lasiommata megera* located approximately 550 m southeast of the Site in 2018.
- 3.4.26 The habitats on the Site are unlikely to offer a range of opportunities for invertebrates, with the Site comprising mostly short-sward modified grassland, therefore they are not considered to offer the variety in plant species, structural diversity and habitat interfaces that would be necessary to support diverse communities of terrestrial invertebrates. The variety of plant species and habitat structures present are of limited diversity and generally sub-optimal for invertebrates and considered unlikely to support notable species or large invertebrate populations but may contribute to foraging opportunities for common species.

- 3.4.27 Given the limited suitable habitat present on the Site, and the presence of more suitable habitat at a larger scale in the wider area, the Site is considered of importance to invertebrate species at no greater than the site level.

Reptiles

- 3.4.28 WYES returned six records of reptiles within 2 km of the Site, all of which are historic. Comprising and three records of slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*, two records of grass snake *Natrix Helvetica* and a single record of common lizard *Zootica vivipara*. The closest record pertains to a slow-worm located approximately 600 m north of the Site in 1973.
- 3.4.29 Overall habitats on the Site are not considered to offer any significant suitability for reptiles, with the dominant habitat on the Site being modified grassland which is comprised of short-sward modified grassland, offering limited sheltering and foraging opportunities for reptile species.
- 3.4.30 There are areas of suitability for reptiles around the boundaries of the Site, in particular areas of tussocky grassland with rubble piles (TN1) present within that would offer some greater basking and sheltering reptiles. This habitat is however common and widespread in the local area, with tussocky grasslands with dry-stone walls bounding the fields present for much of the surrounding landscape.
- 3.4.31 The proposals are mostly impacting the centre of the Site, comprising hardstanding and short-sward modified grassland that is extremely unlikely to support reptiles, especially due to the Site usage as an active playing fields, further reducing the suitability of the area as reptiles generally prefer to avoid such human activities due to the noise and vibrations that will be caused by these activities.
- 3.4.32 Given the limited suitable habitat present on the Site, and the presence of habitats of greater quality and at a larger scale in the wider area, the Site is considered of importance to reptile species at no greater than the site level.

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

- 3.4.33 WYES returned no records of European otter *Lutra lutra* for locations within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.4.34 WYES returned six historic records of European water vole *Arvicola amphibius* for locations within 2 km of the Site. The closest record was located approximately 1.5 km west of the Site in 1999.
- 3.4.35 WYES returned five records of white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*, four of which are historic, for locations with 2 km of the Site. The closest record was located approximately 1.3 km west of the Site in 2011. The closest recent record was located approximately 1.6 km southwest of the Site in 2019.
- 3.4.36 No evidence of these species was recorded during the walkover survey. No watercourses are located within 30 m of the Site and as such, it is not considered that riparian mammals or white-clawed crayfish are a receptor to the proposals, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

3.5 Invasive Species

- 3.5.1 WYES returned 255 records of invasive species, 44 of which are historic, for locations within 2 km of the Site. Invasive species include American mink *Neovison vison*, Canadian waterweed *Elodea canadensis*, Canada goose *Branta canadensis*, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzia*, Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, lamiastrum galeobdolon subsp. *Lamiastrum galeobdon*, Nuttall's waterweed *Elodea nuttallii*, water fern *Azolla filiculoides*, water-hyacinth *Eichhornia crassipes* and water-lettuce *Pistia stratiotes*. The closest record pertains to Japanese knotweed located approximately 750 m southeast of the Site in 2020.

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- 3.5.2 No Schedule 9 listed species were observed within the Site during the survey, and as such will not be considered further within this report.

4. Impact Assessment, Mitigation and Enhancements

4.1 *Proposals*

- 4.1.1 The PEA was required to inform proposals for the demolition of the existing clubhouse to facilitate the construction of a new clubhouse with associated parking and landscaping. These proposals are detailed within the drawing 'Location Plan' (Dwg No. A102 Revision 2, dated 27/01/24).

4.2 *Habitats*

- 4.2.1 Given that the habitats present on the Site are common and widespread in the local landscape, it is anticipated that the loss of habitat at the Site is of importance to nature conservation at no greater than the Site level.
- 4.2.2 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) has been commissioned to formally assess the impacts the proposals have on habitats on the Site. This will be provided as a standalone report and will identify opportunities to increase the habitat value on the Site post-development and recommend measures necessary to achieve a 10% gain in-line with government policy.

4.3 *Protected Species*

Amphibians

- 4.3.1 GCN are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019 and are a European Protected Species ("EPS").
- 4.3.2 Common amphibians are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) against sale, barter or exchange of captive animals.
- 4.3.3 The presence of GCN is considered unlikely due to the absence of ponds within 2 km of the Site.
- 4.3.4 In the extremely unlikely event of discovering a GCN on the Site, works should cease immediately and an ecologist should be contacted for further advice.
- 4.3.5 As the presence of common amphibians on the Site cannot be ruled out, it is recommended that Best Practice Measures (BPM) are implemented during the proposed development works. The rubble piles (TN1) should be removed with care, with contractors operating with vigilance for any potentially present common amphibians to minimise the potential for harm to common amphibians should they be sheltering within such features. If common amphibians i.e. smooth newt or palmate newt, common frog or common toad are encountered on Site during the works they should be allowed to move away of their own volition. If in immediate danger of injury, they should be carefully moved in gloved hands to an area of safe shelter away from the footprint of works.
- 4.3.6 Rubble/log/brush piles could be installed which would provide sheltering opportunities for amphibians. These could be created within the proposed landscaping section at the Site boundary.

Badger

- 4.3.7 Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence under the act to kill, injure or take a badger. It is also an offence to destroy, damage or obstruct a currently active badger sett, or to disturb animals within the sett.
- 4.3.8 Badgers are not considered to be resident on the Site, however they are highly mobile species and have

the potential to disperse on to areas of the Site and into working areas. As such it is recommended that, BPM be implemented throughout the works to protect badgers, should they subsequently pass through these areas of the Site. The BPM should include:

- Any excavations deeper than 1 m required during the works should be covered overnight. Shallow excavations less than 1 m should have a roughened scaffold board or equivalent placed in them overnight to allow any animals which may become trapped to exit. Trenches will also be inspected each morning to ensure that no animals have become trapped overnight;
- Food/litter will not be left on Site;
- If in the unlikely event that badgers are encountered during works, then works will cease temporarily and the animal allowed to move away off its own volition. The ecologist will be contacted for advice; and,
- If badgers are suspected to be associated with the Site once works have commenced, including a suspected badger sett found on or within 30 m of the Site during the works by a contractor, works should cease and an appropriately experienced ecologist should be contacted for advice before continuing.

4.3.9 Additionally, any lighting implemented during the construction stage and upon completion of the development should be directed away from retained vegetated habitats, particularly off-site habitats to allow badgers to continue to use such habitats for foraging and commuting where present locally.

Bats

4.3.10 All species of bat occurring within the UK are included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Under regulation 41 bats are protected from deliberate capture, injury or killing, from deliberate disturbance and from deliberate damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place (roost).

4.3.11 All UK bats are also included on Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). However, their protection is limited to certain offences. Under the 1981 Act (as amended) it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb bats while they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection, or to obstruct access to any such place.

4.3.12 Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared bat, greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe, noctule and soprano pipistrelle bats are included as priority species under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Roosting Bats

4.3.13 The Site is not considered to offer any suitability for roosting bats.

4.3.14 As an enhancement for local bats, it is recommended that as compensation for the loss of PRFs across the Site, a minimum of a single bat box should be incorporated into the new clubhouse as part of the development proposals. The model of boxes used should be suitable for crevice dwelling bat species, such as the Schwegler 1FR Bat Tube. The bat boxes should be placed at a minimum of 4 m above the ground on the houses, facing southern aspects to maximise chances of occupation.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

4.3.15 The habitats on the Site were considered low for foraging/commuting bats.

4.3.16 The connectivity of the Site to the wider area through vegetated habitat is not considered to be negatively

impacted due to the limited scale of the proposals comprising a new club house in the centre of the Site, in addition to the presence of significantly greater quality and scale foraging and commuting habitat in the wider landscape. As the Site open greenspace, foraging and commuting bats may utilise the habitats on the Site as part of the wider landscape. However, given the scale and quality of the habitats on the Site, bats would not be reliant on the Site for foraging or commuting and would just form part of a wider local resource.

- 4.3.17 Given the limited scale of the proposals for the Site, in addition to the creation of a range of habitats that would improve the foraging opportunities on the Site including tree planting, it is not considered that further surveys are required and would be disproportionate in line with the proposals.
- 4.3.18 Bat species in the UK are known to be impacted by artificial lighting. In order to avoid impacts associated with artificial light spill on bat flight-lines or foraging habitat, mitigation measures should be implemented whereby the lighting of the proposed development (as well as any temporary lighting to be used during the construction phase) should be designed to avoid light-spill onto suitable surrounding habitats (in particular the newly created SUDS and trees) to safeguard these as foraging and commuting resources.

Birds

- 4.3.19 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) while a nest is in use or occupied. The nesting bird season is typically considered to fall between March and August (inclusive). Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act receive additional protection against disturbance whilst occupying a nest site.
- 4.3.20 The habitats on Site were considered to be of no more than site level importance to local bird populations given the quality of habitat recorded on the Site and the extensive availability of similar to higher quality habitat for nesting birds in the wider area.
- 4.3.21 Nesting birds could be present at the Site due to the presence of trees at the Site boundary. To minimise the risk of committing an offence in relation to nesting birds, clearance of these habitats (if required) should be programmed to be between September and February inclusive, i.e. to avoid the bird breeding season. If this is not possible, then a nesting bird check (to be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist) will be required within 48 hours of vegetation removal. If an active nest is found during a nesting bird check, there will be a requirement to establish an exclusion zone around the nest (in consultation with the ecologist) which should be maintained until it has been demonstrated that all fledglings have left the nest and the nest is no longer active. This may require monitoring for periods of at least up to a month dependent on nesting stage. Repeat visits will be required if vegetation removal is not completed within the 48-hour timeframe after the initial nesting bird check.
- 4.3.22 It is recommended that a minimum of a single integrated bird nest box should be incorporated into the proposed clubhouse as a positive enhancement for nature conservation. Schwegler Brick Box Type 25 boxes are recommended as they have been shown to achieve good uptake by a range of species and not just swifts. The bird boxes should be placed at a minimum height of 3 m (near eaves level when placed on buildings) facing different aspects to maximise chances of occupation. Full south aspects present a risk of overheating and should therefore be avoided.
- 4.3.23 It is recommended that native fruit bearing tree species and/or shrubs are considered for planting within the proposed areas of landscaping. This will offer local bird species both foraging and sheltering opportunities in the post-development landscape.

Invertebrates

- 4.3.24 Many invertebrate species are listed under Section 41 of NERC act (2006) designating them as Species of Principal Importance in England.
- 4.3.25 Several species of invertebrate and their habitat are afforded full protection under Schedule 5 (Section 9) of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Several species are also EPS. These are afforded strict protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019 under Schedule 2.
- 4.3.26 The loss of the vegetated habitats on the Site is not considered likely to impact any notable populations of invertebrates. Habitats on Site are considered of no more than site level importance for invertebrates and impacts from proposals are therefore likely to be insignificant to invertebrates resident in the local area. Common invertebrate species that may be resident in the wider area would benefit through the provision of seasonal nectar resources and consideration should be given to inclusion of native woody and flowering species in and planting schemes.
- 4.3.27 The proposals will likely require the levelling of the Site to allow for the creation of the storage areas across much of the Site. As such, consideration should be given to the creation of 'butterfly banks' with any excess soil/rubble on the Site created by the levelling of the Site. These could be created around the proposed area of Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS), and should be created up to 2 m in height and where possible shaped on a curve around sections of the SUDS with off-shoots to create a variety of microclimates for invertebrates to utilise.
- 4.3.28 Consideration should also be given to the installation of insect towers within the proposed landscaping areas of the post-development, in particular around the proposed planting. Insect towers would provide areas of shelter for invertebrates associated with the post-development landscape.

Reptiles

- 4.3.29 Common reptile species including grass snake, common lizard and slow worm are protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) against intentional killing or injury.
- 4.3.30 Due to the limited suitable habitats present the Site is considered unlikely to support reptiles, and the loss of habitats present is considered unlikely to impact reptiles at greater than the Site level.
- 4.3.31 The following BPM are recommended with regards to reptiles (these will also help to protect common amphibians):
- All Site personnel to keep a high level of vigilance for reptiles (and amphibians) during works;
 - Good general housekeeping of the Site will be employed. All materials (construction materials/arising) on Site will be stored in a suitable location at least 5 m away from suitable reptile habitat, e.g woodland edge habitats, ideally risen off the ground (e.g. on pallets) or on hard stand/bare ground away from vegetation. Materials arising from the works should be removed from the Site as quickly as possible or placed in a skip or other sealed container immediately if stored on Site. This will avoid colonisation by reptiles and other wildlife and will ensure there is no build-up of debris or other waste which may create suitable habitats for protected species that then has to be removed at a later date; and,
 - Should reptiles be encountered works in the area will cease and an ecologist contacted immediately for advice.
- 4.3.32 Rubble/log/brush piles could be installed which would provide sheltering opportunities for reptiles (and amphibians). These could be created around the proposed SUDS and constructed from rubble already

present on the Site.

5. References

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Figure 1. UK Habitat Classification Map



Legend

 Site Boundary

Baseline Habitats

 g4 - Modified grassland

 u1b - Developed land; sealed surface

 u1b5 - Buildings

 Line of trees

 Scattered trees

 Target Notes

Secondary Codes:

32 - Scattered trees

33 - Line of trees

108 - Frequently mown

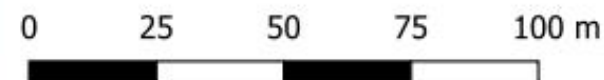
114 - Dry-stone wall

128 - Tall or tussocky sward

201 - Young trees - planted

804 - Car park

820 - Natural sports pitch



HABITAT WORKS

Newsome Panthers ARLFC

Newsome Panthers

Figure 1
UKHabs Habitat Classification Map

Figure 2. Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site



Legend

Site Boundary

2 km buffer

Designated Sites

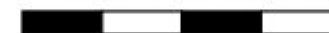
Local Geological Site (LGS)

Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

Local Wildlife Site (LWS)

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

0 250 500 750 1,000 m



HABITAT WORKS

Newsome Panthers ARLFC

Newsome Panthers

Figure 2
Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Appendix 1. Target Notes

TN1 – Rubble piles

TN2 – Fence push-through

Appendix 2. Site Photographs



Photograph 1. Short-sward modified grassland.



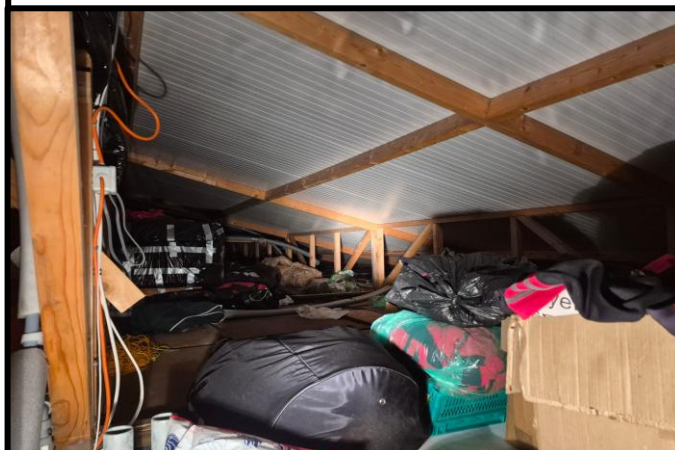
Photograph 2. Hardstanding and line of trees



Photograph 3. Example of boundary trees



Photograph 4. Newsome Panthers clubhouse



Photograph 5. Internal of clubhouse roof void



Photograph 6. TN1 – Rubble piles within tussocky grassland



Photograph 7. TN2 – Potential badger push-through

Appendix 3. Bird Species Records Summary

Common Name	Scientific Name	BoCC Status
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Schedule 1, Red
Redwing	<i>Turdus ilacus</i>	Schedule 1, Amber
Brambling	<i>Frigilla montifringilla</i>	Schedule 1, Green
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Schedule 1, Green
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Red
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Red
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	Red
House Martin	<i>Delichan urbicum</i>	Red
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Red
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>	Red
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Red
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Red
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Red
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Red
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Red
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Red
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Red
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>	Red
Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus</i>	Red
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citronella</i>	Red
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridbundus</i>	Amber
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber
Grey Wagtail	<i>Montacilla cinerea</i>	Amber
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Amber
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Amber
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Amber
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Amber
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Amber
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber
Tawney Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Amber
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Amber
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Amber
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Amber
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Amber
Collard Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Green
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Green

Grey Herron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Green
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Green
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	N/A