



GOMERSAL ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS)

KPS – Key Property Solutions

2489777-D03 (00)

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General Notes

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This document describes non-licensed mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts on protected and notable fauna and comply with legislation throughout demolition, vegetation clearance and construction activities associated with the proposed redevelopment of Gomersal St Mary's Primary School, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire BD19 4NA (the 'Site').
- 1.1.2 This Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) sets out the non-licensed mitigation measures that will be implemented for avoidance of potential impacts on bats, nesting birds, amphibians, reptiles, hedgehogs and badgers potentially present on the Site, as identified within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report by RSK Biocensus (2022), Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report by RSK Biocensus (2025), planning ecology consultation response and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Bowmer and Kirkland, 2026).
- 1.1.3 The measures are based on the current information available at the time of writing; however, additional measures may be required should the scope of works change. Any changes to the methods set out within this PWMS will require agreement with the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) and a revised PWMS may be required prior to works commencing.
- 1.1.4 This PWMS applies to works that can be undertaken in a manner that avoids impacts, or where the risk of harm is considered very low. If any works are likely to result in a breach of wildlife legislation, further surveys, mitigation and/or licensing may be required.

1.2 Summary description of site and works

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises Gomersal St Mary's Primary School located within the suburban town of Gomersal in Kirklees, West Yorkshire. The c.0.8 ha Site currently comprises eleven school buildings, hardstanding, modified grassland, scattered trees, scrub and hedgerows.
- 1.2.2 The Site is surrounded predominantly by residential dwellings with gardens and associated infrastructure. Small areas of greenspace are present within the surrounding landscape, with larger semi-rural habitats present further east and west of the Site.
- 1.2.3 The Proposed Development comprises:
 - demolition of existing school buildings (EFAA Main School Block, EFAB, EFAD and EFAC);
 - construction of a new single-storey primary school building;
 - construction of a hard sports court;
 - construction of two car parks;
 - cycle shelter installation;
 - emergency vehicle turning head; and
 - associated soft landscaping works.

1.3 Background information

- 1.3.1 RSK Biocensus was commissioned by Key Property Solutions (KPS) to undertake ecological surveys and desk-based surveys to provide ecological assessment and advice in relation to the development at St Mary's Primary School. A summary of the surveys undertaken to date (May 2026) are covered in Section 2.
- 1.3.2 Surveys undertaken to date include:
- PEA undertaken in November 2022 (RSK Biocensus);
 - updated UKHab survey undertaken in October 2025 (RSK Biocensus);
 - dawn re-entry and nocturnal bat emergence surveys undertaken in June 2023 and May 2025, respectively (Indigo Surveys Ltd);
 - updated dusk emergence survey of Building EFAA undertaken in May 2026 (RSK Biocensus);
 - updated ecological walkover survey undertaken in October 2025 (RSK Biocensus); and
 - invasive non-native species (INNS) survey undertaken in May 2026 (RSK Biocensus).
- 1.3.3 An INNS Management Plan is currently being prepared by Salix Ecology and will be implemented during the construction phase where relevant.

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

General

- 1.4.1 It is the responsibility of the client, the Principal Contractor and any sub-contractors to carry out the works in a manner that will not contravene the legislation nor the best practice measures described in this document. It is their joint responsibility that works are conducted in accordance with the timings or methods of ecological mitigation detailed in the method statements outlined below in Section 4 and 5. Any variations from the PWMS may contravene legislation and therefore risk prosecution. Thus, it is their joint responsibility that no changes to the timings or methods outlined within this PWMS, are made without prior agreement with the ECoW.

Ecological Clerk of Works

- 1.4.2 Ecological support during the proposed works will be provided by the RSK Biocensus ECoW. The ECoW must be suitably qualified for the role they are to undertake. The ECoW will lead the management of ecological issues in delivery, will advise and provide support to KPS, and liaise with the Contractor's Project Management Teams, who will have the responsibility to deliver all construction and maintenance activities.
- 1.4.3 The ECoW will oversee the quality-control of the ecological support activities undertaken throughout the proposed works to ensure a consistent approach is adopted in applying the measures detailed in this document and supporting information.
- 1.4.4 The ECoW will determine when the measures outlined within this document will be applied to work activities and how they will be communicated to the Contractor.
- 1.4.5 The ECoW (and/or as appropriate members of the supporting Contractor's team) will be appropriately licensed for overseeing of work activities in relation to those protected

species relevant to the ecological measures required for the project works. They may, if appropriate, appoint supporting team members to their licenses (or vice versa).

1.5 Contact Details

1.5.1 Table 1 below details the relevant contact details which may be required during the works.

Table 1: Contact details relevant to the proposed work at St Mary's Primary School

Name	Company/Role	Contact Details
Will Holden	RSK Biocensus Project Director	
Iveta Nikandrovaite	RSK Biocensus Project Manager	
Rob Laybourne	KPS Project Manager	
TBC	Contractor Project Manager	

2 Ecological Baseline and Assessment

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Suitable habitat for protected species was identified during the PEA undertaken by RSK Biocensus in 2022 and subsequently confirmed during the updated ecological walkover survey completed in October 2025. The walkover identified suitable habitat for bats, nesting birds, common amphibians and reptiles, hedgehogs and badgers, including buildings, grassland, scrub, scattered trees and hedgerows. This section provides a summary of the findings of these baseline surveys.

2.2 Designated sites

- 2.2.1 As part of the PEA, a Biological Data Search (BDS) was carried out to reveal the presence of national statutory and non-statutory designated nature conservation sites and protected species records for an area of 2 km radius from the Site. This was extended to 10 km for international statutory designated nature conservation sites.
- 2.2.2 There are no international statutory sites within 10 km of the Site.
- 2.2.3 The closest national statutory designated site is Oakwell Park LNR and closest non-statutory national site is Oakwell Park LWS, both located c. 1.1 km north-east of the Site. Given the distances from Site and the small scale of development, it is considered unlikely that the proposed development will have any direct or indirect impact on this or any other local designated sites.

2.3 Bats

- 2.3.1 Two buildings on the Site were identified as offering suitability for roosting bats:
- Building EFAA – moderate suitability; and
 - Surestart Children's Centre – moderate suitability.
- 2.3.2 Dawn re-entry and nocturnal bat emergence surveys undertaken in June 2023 and May 2025, respectively, recorded no evidence of roosting bats within the surveyed buildings.
- 2.3.3 An updated dusk emergence survey of Building EFAA undertaken in May 2026 also recorded no evidence of roosting bats.
- 2.3.4 The Site also offers low suitability habitat for foraging and commuting bats.

2.4 Nesting birds

- 2.4.1 Buildings, scrub, hedgerows and urban trees on the Site offer potential nesting habitat for generalist bird species.

2.5 Amphibians

- 2.5.1 There are no ponds suitable for breeding great crested newts (GCN) within 250 m of the Site. There is one pond within 500 m of the Site, located 280 m to the north, but connectivity is limited due to the presence of residential housing and roads.

- 2.5.2 Some terrestrial habitats within the development footprint are broadly suitable for GCNs and other common amphibians. The areas of urban trees, allotment areas, brash piles, other neutral grassland, hedgerows and scrub offer some small areas of foraging and commuting habitat for amphibians. However, most of the Site is generally unsuitable, with large areas containing regularly mown modified grassland, buildings and developed land and sealed surfaces.
- 2.5.3 Therefore, considering the small, fragmented areas of the suitable habitat on the Site, poor connectivity to suitable habitat in the wider landscape and lack of ponds within 250 m, GCNs or other amphibians are considered unlikely to be present within the Site.

2.6 Reptiles

- 2.6.1 No records for reptiles were returned within 1 km of the Site. Similar to amphibians, some terrestrial habitats within the Site are broadly suitable for reptiles. The areas of urban, scattered trees, other neutral grassland, hedgerows, brash piles and scrub offer some small, fragmented areas of foraging and commuting habitat. However, most of the Site is generally unsuitable, with large areas containing buildings and developed land, and sealed surfaces. Furthermore, the connectivity to other habitats in the wider landscape is limited.

2.7 Hedgehogs

- 2.7.1 The BDS returned two records of hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within 1 km of the Site. Areas of hedgerow, brash piles and dense scrub s within the Site are considered suitable for ranging, foraging and sheltering hedgehog.

2.8 Badgers

- 2.8.1 There are no badger records within 200 m of the Site. The habitats on the Site provide some opportunities for badgers (areas of dense scrub and hedgerows) but habitats in the immediate surrounding area are generally unsuitable for badger, with large residential housing estates and well-lit busy roads surrounding the site boundary. Taking this into account and the small size of the suitable habitat into account, badgers are considered to be absent from the Site.

3 Legislation

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 This section briefly describes the legal protection afforded to those species and their habitats referred to in this document. It is for information only. It is not intended to be comprehensive, to replace specialist legal advice, or to replace the original text of the legislation; instead it summarises the salient points. The proposed works have the potential to impact bats, nesting birds, amphibians, reptiles, hedgehog and badger.

3.2 Bats

- 3.2.1 All native UK bat species are protected under Regulation 43 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making it an offence to:
- Deliberately capture, kill or injure a bat;
 - Disturb a bat roost;
 - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat (even when not in use at the time); or
 - Possess, control, transport, sell or exchange a bat.
- 3.2.2 Sections 9(4) and 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:
- Disturb a bat occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; or
 - Obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by bats.

3.3 Nesting birds

- 3.3.1 All species of bird are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), extended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000. This legislation makes it an offence to intentionally:
- kill, injure or take any wild bird;
 - take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
 - take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.
- 3.3.2 Certain species of bird are also listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) and receive protection under Sections 1(4) and 1(5) of the Act. The protection was also extended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000. The legislation confers special penalties where the above-mentioned offences are committed for any such bird and also make it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:
- disturb any such bird, whilst building its nest or it is in or near a nest containing dependant young; or
 - disturb the dependant young of such a bird.

3.4 Great crested newt

3.4.1 GCN are classified as a European Protected Species listed on The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 2017 (as amended), which makes it an offence to:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill;
- deliberately disturb, including in particular any disturbance which is likely (a) to impair their ability - (i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or (ii) hibernate or migrate, where relevant; or (b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place; and,
- possess, control, transport, sell, exchange, or offer for sale or exchange.

3.4.2 GCN are also protected by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), extended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This legislation makes it an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take;
- possess or control;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place; and,
- intentionally or recklessly disturb whilst the animal occupies a breeding site or resting place.

3.5 Common amphibians

3.5.1 Common British amphibians, including common frog (*Rana temporaria*), common toad, smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) and palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*) are protected only by Section 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This section prohibits sale, barter, exchange, transporting for sale and advertising to sell or to buy.

3.6 Reptiles

3.6.1 Common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*), slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), and adder (*Vipera berus*) are listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), in respect of Section 9(5) and part of Section 9(1). This protection was extended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CROW Act).

3.6.2 Under the above legislation it is an offence to:

- intentionally or deliberately kill or injure any individual of such a species; or
- sell or attempt to sell any part of the species alive or dead.

3.7 Hedgehogs

3.7.1 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) lists several mammal species on Schedule 6, including hedgehog, for which certain methods of killing or taking are prohibited.

3.7.2 Hedgehog are listed as a Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (England).

3.8 Badgers

- 3.8.1 Badgers are protected in Britain under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.8.2 The legislation affords protection to badgers and badger setts, and makes it a criminal
- 3.8.3 offence to undertake any of the following activities without a licence:
- wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or to attempt to do so;
 - intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett by damaging or destroying it;
 - to obstruct access to, or any entrance of, a badger sett; or
 - to disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett.

4 General Measures

- 4.1.1 Application of a PWMS is based on the principles of avoidance to minimise the risk of encountering/impacting protected species. In the event a protected species, or evidence of a protected species is encountered at any point during the works, this would demonstrate that the principles set out in the PWMS are insufficient. In which case works may need to stop and the ECoW consulted on whether further surveys or a protected species licence is required to permit the works.

4.2 Toolbox talk

- 4.2.1 All operatives will be briefed prior to works commencing at the Site. This briefing will be conducted by the ECoW before works begin and outline relevant legislation, the procedures to be followed to avoid breaches of legislation, and measures to prevent adverse impacts on protected species that occur in and around the working area. All operatives will sign this method statement to confirm they have understood the brief (Section **Error! Reference source not found.**).

4.3 General working practices

- 4.3.1 The following general practices should be followed throughout the duration of the works:
- Materials will be stored on raised platforms, e.g. pallets, to reduce likelihood of animals taking refuge in them;
 - Machinery and materials will only be stored or placed on habitat that has been confirmed as unsuitable for GCN and reptiles by the ECoW;
 - The machinery, material storage, and working areas will be clearly marked to prevent activities encroaching onto adjacent habitat or features;
 - Root Protection Zones (RPZs) for retained trees will be clearly marked out with a physical barrier (such as Heras fencing) to prevent encroachment;
 - All machine and materials will avoid any RPZs for retained trees; and
 - All operatives will remain vigilant throughout the works and report any sightings of any animals (or signs of animals such as fresh digging or holes) to the ECoW.

5 Precautionary Methods

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 To reduce risks to an acceptable level, the measures set out in this PWMS must be put in place prior to works commencing.
- 5.1.2 Terrestrial habitat requirements are broadly similar for reptiles, amphibians (including GCN) and small mammals, meaning that they are likely to be found in the same places within the Site. The measures set out in this section to mitigate harm to amphibians and reptiles will also protect small mammals.
- 5.1.3 The ECoW will oversee and sign-off all work undertaken and will determine when and where it is necessary to apply the measures described in this PWMS.
- 5.1.4 Prior to works commencing, the ECoW will carry out a walkover of the working area (including proposed access routes) with the Site supervisor to identify areas of sensitive habitat or habitat features (hibernacula, refugia etc) that may pose constraints to the works. If necessary, the ECoW will discuss micro-siting of works (including proposed access) with the Site operatives to avoid impacting suitable habitats and features.

5.2 Bats

Buildings

- 5.2.1 To avoid indirect impacts on bats associated with the retained Children's Centre building, no materials, plant, machinery, fuels or chemicals will be stored adjacent to the building and unnecessary construction activity in its immediate vicinity will be avoided.
- 5.2.2 No night-time construction works will be undertaken in the vicinity of the retained building unless otherwise agreed with the ECoW.
- 5.2.3 Where temporary lighting is required, lighting will be hooded and directional and directed away from the retained building, retained mature trees and potential bat commuting routes to minimise light spill onto retained ecological features.

Trees

- 5.2.4 Cabling and excavation works will avoid the root protection areas of all retained trees on the Site.
- 5.2.5 If it is not possible to avoid impacting trees, trees within 15 m of proposed works that could be impacted will then be checked by the ECoW prior to works commencing to check for any potential roosting features (PRFs).
- 5.2.6 If no PRFs are identified, then the required limbs can be trimmed and branches removed from the working area to prevent the inadvertent building of hibernacula.
- 5.2.7 If PRFs are identified on any tree that will be affected by the works, then the works on this tree must cease and the ECoW will determine how works may proceed lawfully. This may involve further surveys to determine presence or absence of roosting bats. Further surveys can either include an endoscope survey or emergence bat surveys.

- 5.2.8 In addition to precautionary measures for roosting bats, the precautionary measures for nesting birds as outlined in Section 5.3 will also be followed for any works involving tree removal or trimming of tree limbs.

What to do if a bat is found

- 5.2.9 If a bat or evidence of bats is encountered during demolition, vegetation clearance or construction works, all works within the immediate area will cease immediately and the ECoW will be contacted.
- 5.2.10 The affected area will remain undisturbed until it has been assessed by the ECoW and further advice has been provided.
- 5.2.11 If the presence of a bat roost is confirmed, works will not recommence until an appropriate mitigation strategy has been agreed and, where required, the necessary licence has been obtained from Natural England.
- 5.2.12 If any person encounters a bat or bats and gets bitten, then that person **MUST** wash the bite site immediately with hot water and soap continuously for at least 5 minutes. The person bitten **MUST** then attend A & E whether or not they can see puncture marks. Bats can puncture the skin with no visible sign being present. Their saliva can also penetrate the skin through existing cuts and lesions.

Retained Surestart Children's Centre

- 5.2.13 To avoid indirect impacts on bats associated with the retained building, no materials, plant, machinery, fuels or chemicals will be stored adjacent to the building and unnecessary construction activity in its immediate vicinity will be avoided.
- 5.2.14 No night-time construction works will be undertaken in the vicinity of the retained building unless otherwise agreed with the ECoW. Where temporary lighting is required, lighting will be hooded and directional and directed away from the retained building, retained mature trees and potential bat commuting routes to minimise light spill onto retained ecological features.
- 5.2.15 Retained trees, hedgerows and other habitats that may be used by commuting and foraging bats will be protected from accidental damage throughout the construction phase.
- 5.2.16 Should any evidence of bats be identified at the retained building during the works, all works within the immediate area will cease and the ECoW will be contacted immediately for further advice.

5.3 Nesting birds

- 5.3.1 Clearance of vegetation identified as suitable for nesting birds should be timed to avoid the nesting bird season (considered to be March to August inclusive).
- 5.3.2 If this is not possible then the following measures will be implemented:
- The ECoW will carry out a pre-inspection of all suitable nesting vegetation to be cleared prior to works commencing to search for evidence of nesting birds. This will involve observation of the vegetation for approximately 45-60 minutes at dawn/early morning followed by a physical search of vegetation.

- In the event an active bird's nest is found or evidence of nesting is observed then further work will only take place under the guidance of the ECoW.
- An appropriate buffer/exclusion zone (minimum of 5 m) will be agreed with an ornithologist and will be established around the active/suspected nest in which no vegetation clearance will take place.
- Only once the ECoW has confirmed the chicks have fledged and the nest has been confirmed no longer active, clearance within the buffer zone can proceed.
- If no evidence of nesting birds is found, clearance of the vegetation must be completed no more than 48 hours after the check. If clearance does not take place within 48 hours, a repeat check will be required.

5.4 Amphibians, reptiles and small mammals

General

- 5.4.1 Prior to works commencing, the ECoW will undertake a walkover inspection of the working area to identify any refugia, hibernacula or other habitat features that may support amphibians, reptiles or small mammals.
- 5.4.2 Vegetation clearance and ground disturbance works will, where practicable, be undertaken during the active season for amphibians and reptiles (typically March to October inclusive, weather dependent). If works are required during the hibernation period, the ECoW will first confirm that no suitable hibernacula are present within the working area and that works can proceed without risk to hibernating animals.

Vegetation Clearance

- 5.4.3 Vegetation clearance will proceed directionally towards retained habitat to allow animals to disperse naturally from the working area.
- 5.4.4 Where appropriate, a two-stage vegetation cut will be undertaken comprising:
 - an initial cut to approximately 150 mm height;
 - no further work for a minimum 24-hour period to allow animals to disperse naturally; and
 - a second cut to ground level.
- 5.4.5 Any log piles, brash piles, rubble piles or other refugia within the working area will be checked by the ECoW prior to removal.
- 5.4.6 If any amphibians, reptiles or small mammals (excluding great crested newts) are encountered during vegetation clearance works, works within the immediate area will cease temporarily and the animal will be allowed to move away naturally. Where necessary, the ECoW may relocate the animal to suitable adjacent habitat outside the working area.

Groundworks and Excavations

- 5.4.7 Any excavations left open overnight will either be covered or provided with a suitable means of escape, such as a graded earth ramp or wooden plank.
- 5.4.8 Open excavations will be inspected at the start of each working day prior to recommencement of works.

- 5.4.9 If any trapped animals are identified within excavations, the ECoW will be contacted and the animal safely removed before works recommence.

Great crested newts

- 5.4.10 Although great crested newts are considered unlikely to be present on the site, if a suspected great crested newt is encountered during the works:
- all works within the immediate area will cease immediately;
 - the animal will be left undisturbed in situ;
 - the ECoW will be contacted immediately; and
 - works will only recommence following ecological advice and potentially consultation with Natural England.

5.5 Hedgehogs

- 5.5.1 If hedgehogs are discovered during the works, the hedgehog will be left in-situ. The ECoW will determine an appropriate buffer within which works will temporarily cease. This will allow the hedgehog to move away from the area of its own accord, overnight. If works are undertaken during spring/ summer/ autumn, the hedgehog will unlikely to be hibernating, and works will likely to be able to recommence the following day.

5.6 Badgers

- 5.6.1 The following precautionary working measures should be implemented during the works to avoid impacts to badgers and avoid breaches of legislation.

Pre-construction

- 5.6.2 To ensure that no holes or setts have been excavated since the previous surveys, an experienced ecologist will perform an updated badger survey a maximum of one month before the planned works, and also immediately before the works are to be undertaken (a pre-commencement check).

Open excavations

- 5.6.3 Any steep-sided open excavations over 1 m deep must be appropriately covered overnight, or a means of escape provided throughout the duration of the work to prevent badgers and other mammals from falling in and becoming trapped.
- 5.6.4 Small excavations can be covered with boarding and weighed down with sandbags at the end of each working day to prevent badgers from entering. For larger excavations, a shallow escape slope or ramp should be provided with a slope no greater than 45° to enable animals to escape if they do enter. Covering excavations when not in use will also discourage animals from entering them and digging new holes.

Additional measures

- 5.6.5 If a badger sett is discovered on the site during the works, works must stop immediately and an ecologist should be contacted.

6 Method Statement Sign off

Declaration – by signing this document, I confirm that I have read and understood this document, and that I will comply with all measures detailed above.

NAME (PRINT)	ORGANISATION	SIGNATURE	DATE

Appendix A - Species Identification

Great crested newt



Smooth newt



Palmate newt



Common frog



Common toad



Natterjack Toad



Common Lizard



Slow worm



Grass snake



Adder



Bat



Badger



Badger sett entrance



Hedgehog





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