# PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

## LAND AT ASHBY'S DELI CAFE
## 13 – 15 BRITANNIA ROAD
## SLAITHWAITE
## HUDDERSFIELD
## HD7 5HF

**NOVEMBER 2026**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Land at Ashby's Deli Cafe

13 – 15 Britannia Road

Slaithwaite

Huddersfield

HD7 5HF

*A report for*

Alex Roberts (propietor of the above address)

*A report by*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

PENNINE ecological Glossop Ltd were commissioned by Mr. Alex Roberts in October 2026 to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of land adjacent to Ashby's Deli Café, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5HF (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). A site survey was conducted on the 30th of October 2026.

Figure 1.1 and 1.2 illustrates the approximate red line boundary subject to survey.

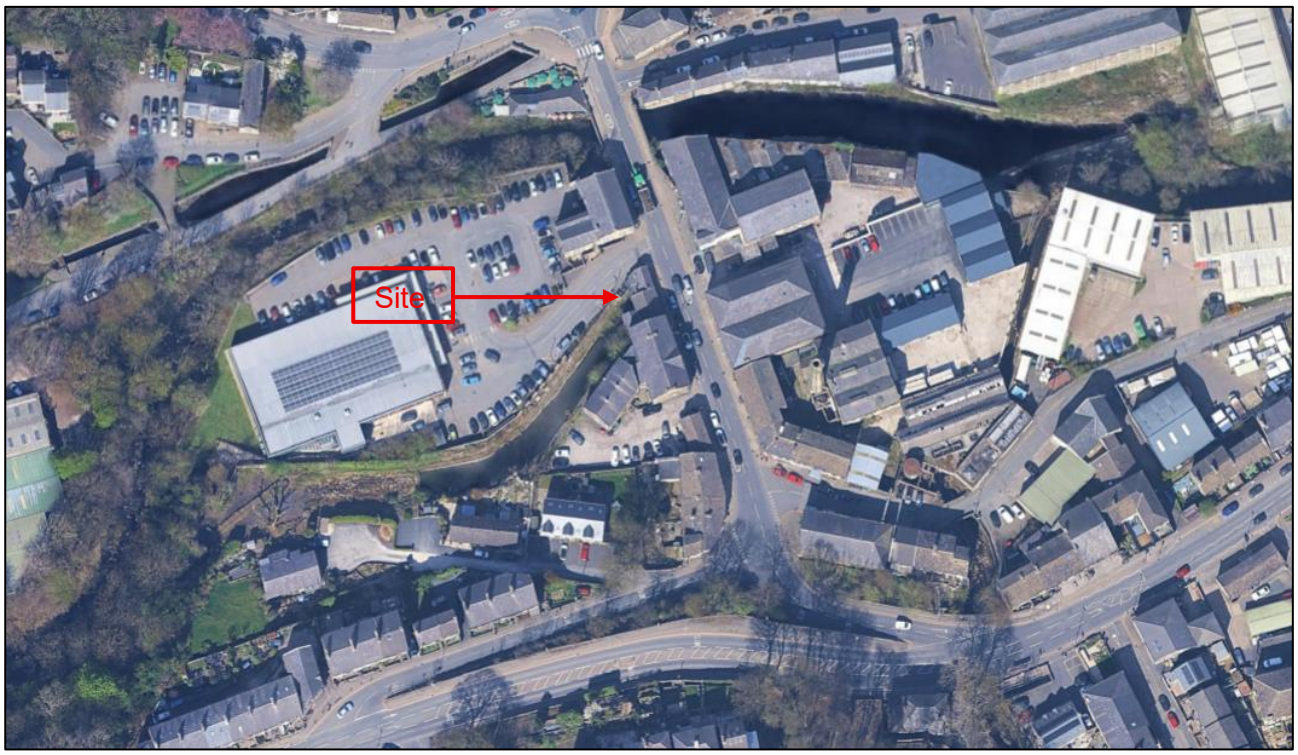


***Figure 1-1 – Site subject to survey.***




***Figure 1-2 – Site subject to survey.***

## 1.2 SITE CONTEXT

The assessment is required to support the submission of a planning application that will see the construction of an outdoor seating area for approximately 10 seats.

## 1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE

The study includes the following elements:

- A desk-based search of freely available online ecological information (e.g., Defra's MAGIC mapping tool, Google Earth, Ordnance Survey mapping etc.).
- A UK Habitat Classification field survey.
- Survey of the site to support protected and/or notable species (where applicable) including but not limited to:
    - Badger.
    - All bird species, including Schedule 1 listed species of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (e.g., barn owl, hobby, kingfisher, etc.) and those listed in Birds of Conservation Concern 5 etc. (Stanbury *et al.,* 2021).

- A Preliminary Roost Assessment for bats (European Protected Species) on all buildings, trees, culverts etc. found within the site (if present).
- All other European Protected Species excluding bats e.g., great crested newt (GCN), otter, etc.).
- Where relevant, other protected species (e.g., water vole, common toad, brown hare, hedgehog, reptiles, etc.) listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 (DEFRA, 2006).

This report also provides a full evaluation of the ecological significance of the desk based and field survey results and if required, recommendations for further survey and/or precautions when and where appropriate.

With the addition of 'site' value, the site evaluation will be considered within CIEEM's (2018) geographical context which is as follows;

- International and European
- National
- Regional
- Metropolitan, County, vice-county or other local authority-wide area
- River Basin District
- Estuarine system/Coastal cell
- Local and
- Site.

## 1.4 SITE LOCATION

The site is located immediately west of Britannia Road on the corner with the junction that provides access to Aldi. The outdoor seating area will be constructed over the top of Brook Dam. The river Colne is approximately 45m and the Huddersfield Canal 70m to the north of the site. The immediate surroundings are urban with Aldi located to the west, Slaithwaite Conservative Club to the south and other businesses across Britannia Road.

The planning application central grid reference is SE 07960 13911.

# 2. METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The methodologies relating to desk-based searches and field surveys undertaken in October and November 2026 are outlined below.

### 2.1.1 Desk Based Study

#### (a) MAGIC

The Multi Agency Geographical Information Centre www.magic.gov.uk was referred to in respect of the following;

- Statutory designated sites e.g., Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) etc. within 2km of the site boundary;
- Habitats of Principal Importance listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) within 500m of the site boundary;
- GCN licence returns within 500m of the site; and
- Granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) within 500m of the site.

The latest access to MAGIC was on the 12th of November 2026.

### 2.1.2 UK Habitat Classification Survey

A UK Habitat Classification (UKHabs) 2.0 survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023) of the habitats within the red line boundary was undertaken on the 30th of October 2026. Weather conditions were suitable for surveying with a temperature of 10°C, part cloud and dry.

### 2.1.3 Protected and/or Notable Species Surveys

#### (a) Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Survey

A daytime survey was conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn) Collins, J. Bat Conservation Trust (2023).

During the survey, the surrounding habitat was also evaluated in relation to bats as very often roost selection is closely correlated with the surrounding habitat.

#### (b) Great Crested Newts

A search for ponds within 250m of the survey area was completed as part of the scoping exercise.

#### (i) Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Assessment

A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment was undertaken on Brook Dam over which the application boundary sits. The index applies ten suitability indices which are multiplied together to produce a score for each pond (Oldham *et al,* 2000). Based on the score a pond suitability for supporting GCN is applied to each pond (see Table 2.1 below).

Note: The HSI system is not sufficiently precise to conclude that any particular pond with a high score will support newts, or that any pond with a low score will not support newts.

***Table 2.1: HSI Scoring***

| HSI Score | Pond Suitability |
|---|---|
| < 0.5 | Poor |
| 0.5 – 0.59 | Below Average |
| 0.6 – 0.69 | Average |
| 0.7 – 0.79 | Good |
| > 0.8 | Excellent |

### (c) Riparian Mammals

#### (i) Otter

Otter survey methods have been applied following standard guidance (Chanin, 2003a). The survey included a search for evidence of otter along each watercourse. Evidence of otter includes: spraints, footprints, feeding remains and slides. The surveys also concentrated on the identification of potential resting sites. Potential resting sites can be defined a 'holts' or 'couches / lay-ups'.

#### (ii) Water Vole

Surveys to determine the presence / likely absence of water vole were undertaken with reference to standard practice guidance (Dean *et al.,* 2016). Where possible, all watercourses were walked on both banks and from within the channel (if safe to do so) to search for evidence of water vole. Evidence of water voles includes burrows, droppings, latrines, feeding stations, lawns, nests, footprints and runways in vegetation.

All field signs along with habitat information for each watercourse was recorded

### (d) Bird Survey

The site was assessed for its potential to support breeding birds. This included identifying any evidence of current or historic nesting within the site (i.e. within buildings, trees, scrub, hedgerows etc.).

### (e) Scoping of Other Protected and Notable Species

Consideration was given to other protected and notable species potentially present within the site. The following species / species groups have been scoped out for further assessment, with reasoning provided below:

- Badger – As the site was dominated by water badger are not present.
- Invertebrates – The site is comprised of a waterbody thus it does not comprise the elements indicating elevated site value for invertebrates (Dobson & Fairclough, 2021). The site is considered highly unlikely to support notable invertebrate assemblages.

- Reptiles – The site comprises a waterbody which is unsuitable for most reptiles. Grass snake could frequent the waterbody, however, no resting places were identified that could support the species for any period of time. Therefore, it is unlikely they will be encountered within the application boundary.
- Other notable mammals – Whilst it is accepted that species such as hedgehog may potentially be present locally, the site is not considered capable of supporting significant populations of any notable mammal species. No observations were recorded during the survey.

## 2.2 SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE

The field survey and report has been undertaken by Stuart Macpherson. Stuart is an Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (ACIEEM) and has over 15 years' experience in ecological survey and evaluation. Stuarts key skills include;

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey / UKHabs Survey on both small planning applications and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
- Licensed bat surveyor (2021-10079-CL18-BAT) and Named Ecologists on bat mitigation licences.
- Licensed barn owl surveyor (CL29/0477).
- Licensed great crested newt surveyor (2015-16213-CLS-CLS).
- NPTC qualified tree climber (Units 206 and 306 Tree climbing and Aerial Rescue).
- Proficient field botanist.
- Breeding and wintering bird surveyor on a range of habitats including coastal, farmland and moorland habitats.
- Mammal surveys including badger.
- Riparian corridor and mammal surveys.
- Ecological Evaluation and Impact Assessments in association with large scale infrastructure project

## 2.3 LIMITATIONS

The survey was conducted on the 30th of October 2026 which is outside of the botanical survey season, however, the plants within the waterbody were easily identifiable thus there are considered to be no survey limitations.

# 3. RESULTS

The following presents the results from both the desk based study and field survey.

## 3.1 DESK BASED STUDY

A summary of the desk study records are provided below.

### (a) MAGIC

#### (i) Statutory Designated Sites

There are no nationally statutory designated site within 2km of the site.

#### (ii) SSSI Impact Risk Zones

The SSSI Impact Risk Zones have been reviewed and no further consultation with Natural England is required.

#### (iii) Habitats of Principal Importance listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006)

There are is one Priority Habitat within 500m of the site, this is deciduous woodland with the closest area 110m west.

#### (iv) GCN Licence Returns

There are no GCN Licence Returns within 500m of the site's central point.

#### (v) Granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses

There is one granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licence within 500m of the site's central point. The site appears to be located within Aldi car park, this could either be true or due to MAGIC not showing the exact location of the EPSML. The licence reference number was 2014-5943-EPS-MIT and was for the damage and destruction of a common and soprano pipistrelle resting place. The licence was valid from 11/03/2014 to 31/08/2015.

## 3.2 HABITATS

### 3.2.1 UK Habitat Classification Survey

The following habitats were recorded within the survey area on the 30th of October 2026 (refer to Figure 1 – UKHabs Plan –in Appendix A). The site is under 0.2 hectares.

- r1g Other standing water.

The site was dominated by r1g other standing water with much of the margins comprising common nettle (F), herb Robert (F), willowherb spp. (O), meadow buttercup (R), fern spp. (R), greater pond sedge (R), and water forget-me-not (LA) and a single stand of goat willow (R).

As the site only comprised the above habitat, Target Notes are not required.

## 3.3 PROTECTED SPECIES

### 3.3.1 Bats

#### (i) Preliminary Roost Assessment

The base of the building was inspected with the use of chest waders. The left hand side and underside of the café was built upon old stone/brick work that was in no order, with bit parts of stone/brick being used. In this area was a 60cm diameter pipe that was not inspected as part of the survey due to Health and Safety issues. It was suspected to go down in to the town's sewerage system. The pipe was constructed of concrete.

The underside of the café also comprised wooden ceiling joists spaced approximately 20cm apart. In addition, there were old steel joists resting on stone plinths within the water. Old pipework was attached to the joists appearing to enter the café.

The external walls of the café were constructed of red brick and grit stone. There were gaps between the joins of the two types of brick but these aren't to be adversely impacted on as part of the proposals. Additionally, there were gaps recorded at wall plate level where internal woodwork protruded, these too aren't to be impacted on.

### (ii) Bat Habitat Suitability

The site itself is moderate bat foraging/commuting habitat being a waterbody. It is likely pipistrelle and *Myotis* bat species would be recorded using the waterbody. However, much more favourable bat foraging habitat is found to the south west along the tree lined corridor of the river Colne.

### 3.3.2 Great Crested Newt

Brook Dam measured approximately 600m², was on average 7m across and its depth was unknown. The dam extended approx. 70m to the south west of the application boundary. It comprised stone banks on the north western and south eastern aspects. Vegetation recorded on both banks was terrestrial with bramble fern spp. sycamore, goat willow, buddleia, willowherb spp. rye grass, and cocksfoot grass recorded. No aquatic vegetation was recorded.

Brook Dam was subject to a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment for GCN. The results are provided in Table 3.1 below. The pond scored 0.49 which is categorised as 'Poor'.

***Table 3.1. HSI score for Brook Dam.***

| ARGUK GCN HSI Calculator | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Pond Name | |
| | Grid Ref | |
| SI No | SI Description | SI Value |
| 1 | Geographic location | 1 |
| 2 | Pond area | 1 |
| 3 | Pond permanence | 0.5 |
| 4 | Water quality | 0.67 |
| 5 | Shade | 1 |
| 6 | Water fowl effect | 0.67 |
| 7 | Fish presence | 0.33 |
| 8 | Pond Density | 0.1 |
| 9 | Terrestrial habitat | 0.33 |
| 10 | Macrophyte cover | 0.35 |
| HSI Score | | 0.49 |
| Pond suitability (see below) | | Poor |

### 3.3.3 Riparian Mammals

#### (i) Otter

Underneath the café in the north eastern corner was an embankment constructed of a concrete base and stone that was not covered by water. No evidence of the species including a holt or lay-up area was recorded.

#### (ii) Water Vole

Brook Dam did not support the habitats that would support the species. The banks were constructed of concrete and the vegetation recorded was not conducive to water vole presence.

### 3.3.4 Birds

No evidence of bird nesting was recorded during the survey.

# 4. ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4.1 DESK STUDY

The following section evaluates the site in relation to statutory/non-statutory sites, protected species and species/habitats listed under the NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Species/Habitats of Principal Importance in England.

## 4.2 DESK STUDY

### 4.2.1 Statutory Designated Sites

#### (i) Evaluation: Statutory Designated Sites

There are no statutorily designated sites within 2km of the site's application boundary.

The Natural England Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) tool[1] has been reviewed and states that consultation with NE is not required for this development.

#### (ii) Recommendations: Statutory Designated Sites

No further surveys or assessment are required.

### 4.2.2 Habitats of Principal Importance listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006)

#### (i) Evaluation

One Priority Habitat was found within 500m of the site; this is deciduous woodland with the closest area 110m west. The woodland will not be adversely impacted on by the proposals.

#### (ii) Recommendations

No further surveys or assessment are required.

[1] GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to statutorily designated sites

## 4.3 HABITATS

### (i) Evaluation: Habitats

The habitats on site, r1g other standing water is of site value only. The site area is less than 0.2 hectares so Biodiversity Net Gain does not apply.

### (ii) Recommendations: Habitats

No further surveys or assessment are required.

## 4.4 BATS

### (i) Evaluation: Bats

No features were identified that could potentially support a bat roost and the proposals will not directly affect a bat roost should one be present underneath the cafe.

### (ii) Recommendations: Bats

No further survey or assessment is required.

## 4.5 GREAT CRESTED NEWT

### (i) Evaluation: Great Crested Newt

Great crested newt are considered to be absent from the site and locally.

### (ii) Recommendations: Great Crested Newt

No further survey or assessment is required.

## 4.6 RIPARIAN MAMMALS

### (i) Evaluation: Riparian Mammals

Riparian mammals are considered to be absent from the site and locally.

### (ii) Recommendations: Riparian Mammals

No further survey or assessment is required.

## 4.7 BIRDS

### (i) Evaluation: Birds

No birds were seen or heard using the site.

**(ii) Recommendations: Birds**

No further survey or assessment is required.

# REFERENCES

Buglife (2015) *Good planning practice for invertebrates: information sheets on surveys and mitigation*.

CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.3. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester*.

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

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# Appendix A: Figure - UKHabs Baseline Survey Results



# Appendix B – Photographs



Photograph 1: Overview of the application boundary.



Photograph 2: Overview of the application boundary.



Photograph 3: Brook Dam to the east of the application boundary.



Photograph 4: Goat willow scrub in front of the application boundary.



Photograph 5: Underside of the café.



Photograph 6: Underside of the café.



Photograph 7: Example of typical construction of the underside of the café.



Photograph 8: Suspected sewerage pipe.