Johnstown Infants School, Johnstown
Wrexham County Council

Biosecurity Risk Assessment

September 2024

Produced by Wildbanks Conservation

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Wildbanks Conservation was commissioned to prepare a Biosecurity Risk Assessment for the refurbishment works of the empty Johnstown Infants School, for which planning permission was received on 12/09/2024 (Ref: P/2024/1224).

1.2 A Bat and Bird Survey Report was undertaken by Wildbanks Conservatoin in May 2024, where a pond with 'Average' potential to support Great Crested Newts (GCN) was identified within school grounds. A GCN Reasonable Avoidance Measures - Method Statement (RAMS) has been prepared to inform contractors as to the precautions to be taken whilst working on site with respect to amphibians. This report is available and should be read in conjunction with this Biosecurity Risk Assessment.

1.3 This Biosecurity Risk Assessment will discharge condition 4 of the above planning permission.

1.4 The school (hereafter referred to as the Site) is situated within the residential area of Johnstown, Wrexham. The school building is located within a school grounds consisting of school playing field, green spaces, playgrounds and carpark. Wider habitat around the Site consists of housing estate to the East, North and West with associated buildings, hardstanding, roads and gardens. To the South is the Johnstown Bowling Club and a playing field.

1.5 The building is proposed to be refurbished internally so that it can be a school again. Proposed works include removing and replacing existing roof coverings and roof insulation and replacing flooring, windows and doors. The footprint of the building will not change.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 A Preliminary Roost Assessment, Visual Assessment and Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) were undertaken on the Site on the 14th May 2024 by Wildbanks Conservation to inform the planning application and identify any constraints to the proposed works with regards to protected species and provide mitigation measures for the scheme. A GCN Reasonable Avoidance Measures - Method Statement (RAMS) has also been prepared to inform contractors as to the precautions to be taken whilst working on site with respect to amphibians.

2.2 Summary

Bats

2.2.1 The habitat immediately surrounding the Site is predominantly residential properties with small areas of parks, gardens and school grounds providing some green spaces that could be utilised by foraging bats. The wider habitat beyond the residential properties provides good foraging habitat within Stryt Las a'r Hafod SSSI/SAC. Overall, the habitat surrounding the Site is considered of low-moderate potential value for bats.

2.2.2 The building is very well sealed and maintained, the flat roof was in excellent condition and all windows, doors and cladding present did not have any suitable bat access points or potential features suitable for bats. Therefore, the building is considered to have negligible potential for roosting bats.

Birds

2.2.3 The building does not show signs of nesting birds. Birds were identified using the mature hedge to the northeast of the building, however, due to its distance from the building, and that the proposed works are to take place within the current footprint of the building, it considered likely that nesting birds will not be disturbed during the works.

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

2.2.4 The presence of a pond on Site in conjunction with nearby Stryt Las a'r Hafod SSSI/SAC, designated for GCN populations and habitat, suggests that the presence of GCN cannot be ruled out. The HSI results indicate that the pond is of 'average' quality for GCN. It is unlikely that any GCN present will be disturbed by the proposed works due to the distance of the pond from the building and the tarmac/school grounds buffer. The proposed works are to take place within the current footprint of the building, and the building accessed only via the adjoining tarmac to the south. However, a Great Crested Newt (*Tritarus cristatus - GCN*) Reasonable Avoidance Measures - Method Statement (RAMS) has been prepared for the works as a precaution

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

2.2.5 No evidence of invasive animals or plants listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 were observed at the time of the Assessment within the Site. Nor was evidence of INNS noted within the immediate vicinity of the Site. However, it is known that some species listed on Sch. 9 of WCA 1981 are present within the wider area of Wrexham, namely Japanese Knotweed (JKW) (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heraculeum mantagezzianum*).

2.2.6 Other invasive non-native species of plants and animals do exist, and a precautionary approach should be taken when bringing materials onto site. Appendix 1 lists all species found within Schedule 9 of the WCA 1981 (as amended).

Disease

2.2.7 Amphibian disease has become a major cause of the decline in numbers of many amphibian species worldwide. Two main causes for concern are the fungal disease *Chytridiomycosis* and the viral disease *Ranavirus*. Both of these diseases are known to be present within the UK, in a rare but widespread fashion.

3.0 LEGISLATION

3.1 This section summarises the requirements of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Legislation relevant to the Site and is not to be regarded as a definitive legal opinion. When dealing with individual cases, the client is advised to consult the full texts of the relevant legislation and obtain further legal advice.

Legislation

3.2 Section 14(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act makes it illegal to release or allow to escape into the wild any animal which is not ordinarily resident in Great Britain and is not a regular visitor to Great Britain in a wild state, or is listed in Schedule 9 to the Act. It is also illegal to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant listed in Schedule 9 to the Act. The Schedule 9 list of animal and plant species has been amended by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England and Wales) Order 2010. Offences under section 14 carry a maximum penalty of a £5,000 fine and/or 6 months imprisonment on summary conviction (i.e. at Magistrates' Court) and an unlimited fine (i.e. whatever the court feels to be commensurate with the offence) and/or 2 years imprisonment on indictment (i.e. at Crown Court). Appendix 1 gives the full list of plant species in Schedule 9 of the WCA for England and Wales.

3.3 Other relevant legislation:

- EU Regulation (1141/2014) on invasive alien (non-native) species
- Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

4.0 SITE BIOSECURITY RISK ASSESSMENT - METHODOLOGY

4.1 This Biosecurity Risk Assessment has been produced following the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) proforma for Terrestrial Biosecurity Risk Assessment.

4.2 In summary: Activities that may spread Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) and/or animal diseases are listed, and each is assessed on the Severity (S) and Likelihood (L) of spreading INNS/disease according to the below tables and relevant scores. An overall Risk is calculated by multiplying S x L.

Severity of impact (S)

4.3 Non-native species and diseases have the potential to cause harm to the environment, economy and the way that we live. The severity of the impact should be rated according to the following table:

1	Minimal very local and /or very short term
2	Minor changes at a local level
3	Moderately large change at local level
4	Major long-term changes to local area with possible impact at wider level
5	Massive widespread and long-term changes

Likelihood of spread (L)

4.4 This a consideration of how likely the activity is to cause the spread of a non-native species or disease, and should be rated according to the following table:

1	**Very unlikely** – theoretically possible but not expected to occur	1 in 10,000 years
2	**Unlikely** – has not occurred anywhere in living memory	1 in 1,000 years
3	**Possible** – has occurred at least once somewhere but not locally	1 in 100 years
4	**Likely** – has happened on several occasions elsewhere, or at least once locally	1 in 10 years
5	**Very likely** – happens continually and expected to occur	Once a year

4.5 The aim is to reduce the risk rating to as low as is reasonably practicable; a score of 4 or less is usually considered acceptable and a score of 12 or above is unacceptable and the

project/development should be postponed and altered to reduce the risk to acceptable levels.

Severity of impact						
	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	5	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
		Likelihood of spread				

4.6 Control measures are then identified and described to reduce the likelihood of INNS / diseases being spread.

4.7 Assign a rating of 1-5 (low to high) for Residual Likelihood (RL) of INNS/disease being spread after control measures have been implemented.

4.8 Recalculate to find the Residual Risk (RR) by multiplying S x RI. The residual risk scale is as follows:

0 –4: Risk are likely to be acceptable.

4 –12: Consider further options for reducing risk, and if not available consider proceeding with caution.

12 +: Risk is too high; do not proceed until further consideration of control options has been taken into account.

5.0 SITE BIOSECURITY RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Activities that might spread INNS/disease through the development.

Activities that might spread INNS	Severity of Impact	Likelihood of Spread	Overall Risk
1. Transportation of seed/stem fragments or disease into Site from external locations, either on vehicles or machinery (on tyres, tracks, buckets, *etc*).	1	3	**3**
2. Transportation of seed/stem fragments or disease into site from external locations, either on footwear or hand-tools.	1	3	**3**
3. Transportation of seed/stem fragments or disease into site within materials (e.g. (top-)soil/ hardcore/aggregate, *etc*.)	1	4	**4**

5.2 Control measures and management tasks have been identified that will reduce the risk level. The Residual Risk is then calculated.

Activity that might spread INNS	Control Measures	Severity of Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk
1. Transportation of seed/stem fragments or disease into Site from external locations, either on vehicles or machinery (on tyres, tracks, buckets, *etc*).	• Wherever possible, avoid bringing vehicles/ machinery on to site. • All plants to be acquired from reputable suppliers who confirm that they follow appropriate biosecurity measures. • Good site hygiene maintained at all times. No overly dirty vehicles allowed on site; vehicles and machinery to be free from mud or visible dirt prior to entering the site. • If vehicles or machinery is used on another site, then it is to be cleaned of visible dirt and disinfected using one of the approved methods listed below. • All site workers made aware of the Biosecurity Risk Assessment.	1	2	**3**
2. Transportation of seed/stem fragments or disease into site from external locations, either on footwear or hand-tools.	• Keep foot-wear/ hand-tools free from accumulated mud, pay particular attention to the treads on foot-wear. Thoroughly clean foot-wear/ hand-tools before entering site, and at the end of each day or leave on site.	1	2	**2**

	• Good site hygiene maintained at all times. No overly dirty footwear allowed on site; footwear to be free from mud or visible dirt prior to entering the site. • All site workers made aware of the Biosecurity Risk Assessment.			
3. Transportation of seed/stem fragments or disease into site within materials (e.g. (top-)soil/ hardcore/aggregate, *etc*.)	• Where possible no soil or materials will be imported/exported to/from the site. • If procuring quarried or recycled materials such as hardcore, topsoil *etc*. ensure reputable companies are used and ensure materials sourced from uncontaminated areas.	1	2	**2**

5.3 The Residual Risk of any activity that could cause the spread of INNS during the proposed works has been calculated and with the implementation of Control Measures, no risk exceeds a score of 4 and is therefore considered acceptable and the proposed works can proceed without further works with regards to Invasive Non-Native Species/disease.

5.4 However, if the development alters and activities other than those listed above that could cause the spread of INNS/disease are identified, the above process should be repeated for each additional activity and control methods put in place accordingly to maintain a Residual Risk of 4 or below.

A1 APPENDIX 1 – SPECIES LISTED UNDER SCHEDULE 9 OF THE WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

Plants:

Common name	***Scientific name***
False-acacia	*Robinia pseudoacacia*
Fanwort	*Cabomba caroliniana*
Fern, Water	*Azolla filiculoides*
Fig, Hottentot	*Carpobrotus edulis*
Hogweed, Giant	*Heracleum mantegazzianum*
Hyacinth, water	*Eichhornia crassipes*
Kelp, Giant	*Macrocystis angustifolia*
Kelp, Giant	*Macrocystis integrifolia*
Kelp, Giant	*Macrocystis laevis*
Kelp, Giant	*Macrocystis pyrifera*
Kelp, Japanese	*Laminaria japonica*
~~Knotweed, Japanese~~	~~*Polygonum cuspidatum*~~ Name changed in 2010
Leek, Few-flowered	*Allium paradoxum*
Lettuce, water	*Pistia stratiotes*
Parrot's-feather	*Myriophyllum aquaticum*
Pennywort, Floating	*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*
Salvinia, Giant	*Salvinia molesta*
~~Seafingers, Green~~	~~*Codium fragile tomentosoides*~~ Name changed in 2010
Seaweed, Californian Red	*Pikea californica*
Seaweed, Hooked Asparagus	*Asparagopsis armata*
Seaweed, Japanese	*Sargassum muticum*
Seaweeds, Laver (except native species)	*Porphyra spp except -* *P. amethystea* *P. leucosticta* *P. linearis* *P. miniata* *P. purpurea* *P. umbilicalis*
Shallon	*Gaultheria shallon*
Stonecrop, Australian swamp	*Crassula helmsii*
Wakame	*Undaria pinnatifida*
Waterweed, Curly	*Lagarosiphon major*

The following plants were added to Schedule 9 by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England and Wales) Order 2010:

Common name	***Scientific name***
Alexanders, Perfoliate	*Smyrnium perfoliatum*
Algae, Red	*Grateloupia luxurians*
Archangel, Variegated Yellow	*Lamiastrum galeobdolon subsp. argentatum*
Azalea, Yellow	*Rhododendron luteum*
Balsam, Himalayan	*Impatiens glandulifera*
Cotoneaster	*Cotoneaster horizontalis*
Cotoneaster, Entire-leaved	*Cotoneaster integrifolius*
Cotoneaster, Himalayan	*Cotoneaster simonsii*
Cotoneaster, Hollyberry	*Cotoneaster bullatus*
Cotoneaster, Small-leaved	*Cotoneaster microphyllus*
Creeper, False Virginia	*Parthenocissus inserta*
Creeper, Virginia	*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*
Dewplant, Purple	*Disphyma crassifolium*
Fanwort (otherwise known as Carolina Water-Shield)	*Cabomba caroliniana*
Fern, Water	*Azolla filiculoides*
Fig, Hottentot	*Carpobrotus edulis*
Garlic, Three-cornered	*Allium triquetrum*
Hyacinth, Water	*Eichhornia crassipes*
Knotweed, Giant	*Fallopia sachalinensis*
Knotweed, Hybrid	*Fallopia japonica x Fallopia sachalinensis*
Knotweed, Japanese	*Fallopia japonica*
Leek, Few-flowered	*Allium paradoxum*
Lettuce, Water	*Pistia stratiotes*
Montbretia	*Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora*
Parrot's Feather	*Myriophyllum aquaticum*
Pennywort, Floating	*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*
Potato, Duck	*Sagittaria latifolia*
Primrose, Floating Water	*Ludwigia peploides*
Primrose, Water	*Ludwigia grandiflora*
Primrose, Water	*Ludwigia uruguayensis*
Rhododendron	*Rhododendron ponticum*
Rhododendron	*Rhododendron ponticum x Rhododendron maximum*
Rhubarb, Giant	*Gunnera tinctoria*

Rose, Japanese	*Rosa rugosa*
Salvinia, Giant	*Salvinia molesta*
Seafingers, Green	*Codium fragile*
Stonecrop, Australian Swamp (otherwise known as New Zealand Pygmyweed)	*Crassula helmsii*
Waterweed, Curly	*Lagarosiphon major*
Waterweeds	*All species of the genus Elodea.*

Animals:

Common name	***Scientific name***
Chinese mitten crab	*Eriocheir sinensis*
Egyptian goose	*Alopochen aegyptiacus*
Grey squirrel	*Sciurus carolinensis*
Muntjac deer	*Muntiacus reevesi*
Signal crayfish	*Pacifastacus leniusculus*
Terrapins - all subspecies including red-eared slider, yellow-bellied slider, Cumberland slider and common slider	*Trachemys scripta*
Asian hornet	*Vespa velutina nigrithorax*
Chinese sleeper/Amur sleeper	*Percottus glenii*
Coati	*Nasua nasua*
Common myna	*Acridotheres tristis*
Coypu	*Myocastor coypus*
Fox squirrel	*Sciurus niger*
Indian house crow	*Corvus splendens*
Marbled crayfish	*Procambarus fallax f. virginalis (Procambarus virginalis)*
Muskrat	*Ondatra zibethicus*

New Zealand flatworm	*Arthurdendyus triangulatus*
North American bullfrog	*Lithobates (Rana) catesbeianus*
Pallas's squirrel	*Callosciurus erythraeus*
Pumpkinseed	*Lepomis gibbosus*
Raccoon	*Procyon lotor*
Raccoon dog	*Nyctereutes procyonoides*
Red swamp crayfish	*Procambarus clarkii*
Ruddy duck	*Oxyura jamaicensis*
Sacred ibis	*Threskiornis aethiopicus*
Siberian chipmunk	*Tamias sibiricus*
Small Asian mongoose / Javan mongoose	*Herpestes javanicus*
Spiny-cheek crayfish	*Orconectes limosus (Faxonius limosus)*
Striped eel catfish	*Plotosus lineatus*
Topmouth gudgeon (also known as stone moroko)	*Pseudorasbora parva*
Virile crayfish	*Orconectes virilis (Faxonius virilis)*