

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

Site: Village Bakery, Coed Aben Rd, Wrexham Industrial Estate, Wrexham

Ref: 21819

Client: C4Projects



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CONTENTS

	Page No
SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Background and survey objectives	5
1.2 Site description	5
1.3 Proposed works	5
2. METHODOLOGY	6
2.1 Desk study	6
2.2 Habitat survey	6
2.3 Protected species survey	6
2.4 Constraints	6
3. RESULTS	7
3.1 Desk study	7
3.2 Habitat survey	8
3.3 Protected species survey	9
4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	11
4.1 Site evaluation	11
4.2 Possible impacts of proposed work and recommendations	11
4.3 Further surveys	11
5. REFERENCES	12
APPENDICES	13
Appendix 1: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map	14
Appendix 2: Target Notes	14
Appendix 3: Bird species list	14
Appendix 4: Relevant legislation	15

SUMMARY

At Village Bakery, on Coed Aben Rd, Wrexham Industrial Estate, planning permission is being sought for the redevelopment of the site.

In October 2021 Indigo Surveys Ltd was instructed to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site. This was undertaken to determine the presence of any important habitats or species which might be impacted on by the proposed development.

Ecological data from Cofnod, the ecological database for North Wales is pending assimilation and review.

The Phase 1 visit took place on 11th October 2021, in mild bright conditions.

The site was moderate in extent, comprising an industrial unit (The Village Bakery), with associated car parks and goods yard.

Much of the plot was taken up by buildings and hard standing, with the remainder comprising small areas of close mown amenity grassland lawns.

Fences enclosed the site from adjacent plots.

No rare vascular plants were found, and all species recorded were common and widespread.

During the site visit just one species of birds was observed, this a Species of Low Conservation Concern (RSPB Green list).

No bird nesting opportunities/habitats were present within the survey area.

The buildings/units had negligible suitability for roosting and/or hibernating bats, whilst the site was considered to offer negligible value habitat for foraging bats (i.e. dominated by hard standing and buildings).

There were no signs or evidence of Badger *Meles meles* activity, whilst there were no suitable habitats for riparian mammals on the site itself.

There were no still water or other wetland features on the site, and as such there was negligible potential for amphibians.

The site offered negligible habitat for common reptiles, whilst the site also had poor connectivity to potential reptile habitats in the wider area (i.e. surrounded by industrial plots and roads).

Since much of the site was dominated by hard standing, it was concluded that there was no potential for significant invertebrate assemblages, in particular those species listed as a priority in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and/or Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Indeed, none were noted.

Care will be taken when carrying out earthworks, as small mammals could be present. Any small mammals disturbed or uncovered will either be caught by hand and relocated to a safe area, or left to vacate the work site in their own time.

If excavations are to be undertaken, it should be noted that open trenches could potentially trap wildlife, especially if these fill up with water. Escape routes should therefore be provided if trenches cannot be infilled immediately. These can be in the form of branches or boards placed on the bottom of the trench, with their upper ends above ground level and touching the sides, or sloping ends left in trenches.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and survey objectives

At Village Bakery, Wrexham Industrial Estate, planning permission is being sought for the redevelopment of the site.

In October 2021 Indigo Surveys Ltd was instructed to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site. This was undertaken to determine the presence of any important habitats or species which might be impacted on by the proposed development.

Ecological data from Cofnod, the ecological database for North Wales is pending assimilation and review.

1.2 Site description

The site was moderate in extent, comprising an industrial unit (The Village Bakery), with associated car parks and goods yard.

Much of the plot was taken up by buildings and hard standing, with the remainder comprising small areas of close mown amenity grassland lawns.

The grassland comprised a short sward of Perennial Ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, Creeping Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus* along with White clover *Trifolium repens* and Dandelion *Taraxacum vulgare* agg.

Fences enclosed the site from adjacent plots.

No rare vascular plants were found, and all species recorded were common and widespread.

The Ordnance Survey Grid Reference is SJ 37600 49815 centred on the middle of the site.

1.3 Proposed works

It is understood that the site is to be redeveloped for industrial units/use.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk study

A detailed desk study was undertaken to determine the nature conservation designations and protected species that had been recorded within a 2.0 km radius of the site. This involved contacting statutory and non-statutory organisations, and then assimilating and reviewing the data provided.

The consultees for the desk study were:

- ❑ Multi Agency Geographic Information (MAGIC) website www.magic.gov.uk;
- ❑ National Biodiversity Network Gateway website;
- ❑ Cofnod.

2.2 Habitat survey

A Phase 1 Habitat Survey was carried out across the whole of the survey site. It was conducted using standard JNCC (2003) techniques and methodologies.

The Phase 1 visit took place on 11th October 2021, in mild bright conditions.

2.3 Protected species survey

During the surveys the potential for other protected and important species was assessed. This included European Protected Species, legally protected species and Local Biodiversity Action Plan Species (and habitats).

2.4 Constraints

The survey was undertaken late in the season, however, the habitats could be identified (i.e. hard standing)

3. RESULTS

3.1 Desk study

Ecological data from Cofnod, the ecological database for North Wales is pending assimilation and review.

3.1.1 *Designated sites*

Statutory Sites

Non-Statutory Sites

3.1.2 *Protected species*

3.2 Habitat survey

3.2.1 Habitat descriptions

The following habitats were recorded across the site:

- ❑ Amenity grassland;
- ❑ Fence;
- ❑ Building and hard standing.

These are shown on the Phase 1 Habitat Survey map in Appendix 1, with the target notes (where applicable) in Appendix 2.

Amenity grassland

The grassland comprised a short sward of Perennial Ryegrass, Creeping Fescue and Yorkshire Fog along with White clover and Dandelion (Figs. 1 and 2).



Figs. 1 & 2 Amenity grassland

Fence

Sections of fence ran along much of the site perimeter (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 Fence

Building and hard standing

The site was moderate in extent, comprising an industrial unit (The Village Bakery), with associated car parks and goods yard (Figs. 4 and 5).



Figs. 4 & 5 Building and hard standing

3.2.2 Flora

The botanical composition of each habitat was typical, and all species recorded were common and widespread.

No rare vascular plants were found.

3.3 Protected species survey

3.3.1 Bats

The buildings/units had negligible suitability for roosting and/or hibernating bats, whilst the site was considered to offer negligible value habitat for foraging bats (i.e. dominated by hard standing and buildings).

3.3.2 Badgers

There were no signs of Badger *Meles meles* activity.

3.3.3 Otters

No suitable habitat for Otter *Lutra lutra* was present within the survey area.

3.3.4 Water Voles

No suitable habitat for Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius* was present within the survey area.

3.3.5 Birds

During the site visit just one species of bird was observed, this a Species of Low Conservation Concern (RSPB Green list).

A full list of species observed is given in Appendix 3.

3.3.6 Reptiles

The site offered negligible habitat for common reptiles, whilst the site also had poor connectivity to potential reptile habitats in the wider area (i.e. surrounded by industrial plots and roads).

3.3.7 Great Crested Newts

There were no still water or other wetland features on the site, and as such there was negligible potential for amphibians.

3.3.8 Invertebrates

Since much of the site was dominated by hard standing, it was concluded that there was low potential for significant invertebrate assemblages, in particular those species listed as a priority in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and/or Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Indeed, none were noted.

3.3.9 Other species

No other protected or LBAP species were observed during the site visit.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Site evaluation

The site was considered to offer very low value to wildlife, this due to being dominated by buildings and hard standing (industrial units/yard) and subsequent habitats having limited floristic diversity.

The site lacked bird nesting habitat and only one species of bird was observed.

The buildings/units had negligible suitability for roosting and/or hibernating bats, whilst the site was considered to offer negligible value habitat for foraging bats (i.e. dominated by hard standing and buildings).

There were no still water or other wetland features on the site, and as such there was negligible potential for amphibians.

The site offered negligible habitat for common reptiles, whilst the site also had poor connectivity to potential reptile habitats in the wider area (i.e. surrounded by industrial plots and roads).

There were no signs of Badger activity and no suitable habitat for Otters or Water Voles, whilst there was negligible potential for significant invertebrate assemblages, in particular those species listed as a priority in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and/or Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

4.2 Possible impacts of proposed work and recommendations

Care will be taken when carrying out earthworks, as small mammals could be present. Any small mammals disturbed or uncovered will either be caught by hand and relocated to a safe area, or left to vacate the work site in their own time.

If excavations are to be undertaken, it should be noted that open trenches could potentially trap wildlife, especially if these fill up with water. Escape routes should therefore be provided if trenches cannot be infilled immediately. These can be in the form of branches or boards placed on the bottom of the trench, with their upper ends above ground level and touching the sides, or sloping ends left in trenches.

4.3 Further surveys

No further surveys are required.

5. REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map

Appendix 2: Target Notes

Appendix 3: Bird species list

Appendix 4: Relevant legislation

Appendix 1: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map



(Not to scale)

Legend		
	Survey boundary	 Fence
	Building/hard standing	 Target Note
	Amenity Grassland	

Appendix 2: Target Notes

No Target Notes

Appendix 3: Bird species list

Common name	Latin name
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>

Appendix 4: Relevant legislation

4.1 – Birds

In Britain, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. There are penalties for:

- ☐ *Killing, injuring or capturing them, or attempting any of these;*
- ☐ *Taking or damaging the nest whilst in use;*
- ☐ *Taking or destroying the eggs.*

4.2 – Bats

In England, Scotland and Wales, all bat species are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) (as amended), through inclusion in Schedule 5. In England and Wales this Act has been amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW), which adds an extra offence, makes species offences arrestable, increases the time limits for some prosecutions, and increases penalties.

All bats are also included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994, (or Northern Ireland 1995) (the Habitats Regulations), which defines ‘European protected species of animals’.

The above legislation can be summarised thus (Mitchell-Jones and McLeish, 2004):

- ☐ *Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (or take) bats;*
- ☐ *Deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not);*
- ☐ *Recklessly disturb roosting bats or obstruct access to their roosts;*
- ☐ *Damage or destroy roosts;*
- ☐ *Possess or transport a bat or any part of a part of a bat, unless acquired legally;*
- ☐ *Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats, or parts of bats.*

The word ‘roost’ is not used in the legislation, but is used here for simplicity. The actual wording is ‘any structure or place which any wild animal...uses for shelter or protection’ (WCA), or ‘breeding site or resting place’ (Habitats Regulations).

As bats generally have both a winter and a summer roost, the legislation is clear that all roosts are protected whether bats are in residence at the time or not.