

Ascerta

Landscape, Arboricultural & Ecological Solutions
for the Built Environment

Ecological Method Statement

Commonwood Fishery
Wrexham
LL13 9TF

February 2018
(see revision dates below)

Rev	Date	Details

Ascerta

Mere One, Mere Grange, Elton Head Road, St Helens, Merseyside WA9 5GG
T: 0845 463 4404 E: info@landscapetreeseecology.com
www.landscapetreeseecology.com

P.789.16

Ecological Method Statement

Of

**Commonwood Fishery,
Wrexham,
LL13 9TF**

For

Mr and Mrs Paul Dunn

12 February 2018

Field Work by	Neil Everett Grad CIEEM
Document Author	Neil Everett Grad CIEEM,
Technical Review	Dr Rosalind King MCIEEM
QA Review & Approval	Susan O'Connor, B.A. (Law/CJ) Dist.

Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	- 3 -
2.0	Summary of Ecological Survey Results.....	- 4 -
3.0	Management Aims	- 5 -
4.0	Management Specifications & Prescriptions	- 5 -
5.0	Conclusions.....	- 9 -
6.0	References	- 10 -

Appendix 1	P.789.16.04 Development Site Location Plan
Appendix 2	Management Timetable

1.0 Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by Mr and Mrs Paul Dunn to prepare an Ecological Method Statement for the work being carried out in the construction of a new fishing lake, eight holiday fishing lodges, twelve holiday fishing pods, a central facility building and a combined reception / office / manager's lodge. These are to be located in three separate areas within the land ownership (blue line) boundary. as marked on drawing P.789.16.04 Development Site Location Plan (Appendix 1). The works are being carried out on land at Commonwood Fishery, Wrexham, LL13 9TF (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SJ 833 942.

The site was granted planning consent in December 2017 (HOLP/2017/0409) subject to a series of planning conditions.

The Ecological Method Statement has been prepared to support discharge of Condition 9 of decision notice HOLP/2017/0409 which states:

“No part of the development shall commence until an updated Ecological Assessment (to include amphibian surveillance) in respect of great crested newts carried out by a qualified ecologist has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include an Ecological Method Statement demonstrating any measures of protection, compensation and mitigation and demonstrate management of such measures in the long term. The recommendations as approved shall be implemented in strict accordance with timescales to be agreed before any part of the development commences onsite.”

An ecological appraisal of the site was carried out on 13th October. The site was revisited on 24th January, 2018 by Neil Everett Grad CIEEM when an update ecological survey was undertaken to support discharge of planning Condition 9 (HOLP/2017/0409) and to inform preparation of the Commonwood Fishery Ecological Method Statement. The results of the survey are presented in the Ecological Appraisal Report (Ascerta, P.789.16 Ecological Appraisal Rev A, Commonwood Fishery Wrexham, LL13 9TF, November 2016).

This Ecological Method Statement is to be read in conjunction with Ascerta Biosecurity Risk Assessment Commonwood Fishery.

2.0 Summary of Ecological Survey Results

The main findings and recommendations of the ecology survey carried out in October 2017 and updated January 2018 are summarised below:

Borras Wood North Wildlife Site (WS) is adjacent to the western boundary of site 1 (P.789.16 Development Site Location Plan). None of development work will directly affect the WS and the WS be will protected during the works, as detailed in this statement.

No amphibians were recorded during the survey. A record for a single female great crested newt within pond 11 (Appendix 1 P.789.16.04 Development Site Location Plan) was returned from the biological records search. The sites provide suitable habitat for amphibians and these will be protected by the use of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) detailed in this statement.

Mammal tracks were recorded on the sites, no evidence of badger was recorded. Badgers have been recorded in the surrounding area. The development sites may be used opportunistically by badgers as they forage in the surrounding area. Badger will be protected during the works by RAMs detailed in this statement.

No records for bats were returned for the sites. Two of the sites, 1 and 2 (Appendix 1 P.789.16.04 Development Site Location Plan) provide moderate to high commuting and foraging habitat. Site 3 provides low commuting and foraging habitat. Some of the trees on site within the blue line boundary have been assessed as having low-moderate roost potential. Bat foraging and commuting habitat and trees with bat roost potential will be protected by the measures detailed within the statement.

The sites provide habitat for nesting and foraging birds. Guidance with regards to appropriate timing to construction works and measures to protect nesting birds are detailed within the statement.

3.0 Management Aims

The aim of the management plan is to detail measures for the protection of habitats and species. Ecological mitigation and compensation proposals within the three development sites are also detailed to ensure net gains to biodiversity as a result of the proposals. The plan will:

1. Fulfil the requirements of Condition 9 (HOLP/2017/0409);
2. Ensure the habitats within the three development sites are protected during construction and any habitat to be lost is compensated for;
3. Ensure that protected species which may be present are protected or mitigated for during construction;
4. Provide measures to enhance the habitats within the sites where possible; and
5. Detail the management prescriptions for the habitats within the development sites for the lifetime of the development.

4.0 Management Specifications & Prescriptions

Habitat Enhancement

In order to meet the requirements of national and local legislation, measures will be implemented to enhance the biodiversity of the site. These will include the following:

- Installation of twelve bird boxes (two barn owl boxes (built to the Barn Owl Trust specifications), one kestrel box, three blue tit boxes (25mm opening), three great tit boxes (32mm opening) and three open fronted nest boxes);
- Installation of four bat boxes; and
- Planting of species that provide a food or shelter resource to wildlife;

The above will be spread across the site and locations and specifications will be detailed on a landscape plan. Some of the features will be included within the development sites and will be managed as follows:

- Old nesting material within the blue tit, great tit and open fronted nest boxes will be cleared out annually to encourage reuse and remove the risk of transfer of disease or parasites. This will be done between 1 November and 1 February to avoid disturbing nesting birds. If any bats are found within the boxes all works will cease and a suitably qualified bat worker will be contacted and;

4.0 Management Specifications & Prescriptions (continued)

- The bird and bat boxes will be visually monitored annually. Any that are damaged or fallen will be replaced on a like-for-like basis. Damaged bat boxes that still have the capacity to provide a bat roost will only be removed under the supervision of a suitably qualified bat worker to avoid disturbing bats.

4.2 Tree and Hedgerow Management

The following will be undertaken within the areas of the three sites:

- The planting of hedgerow species together with installation of a 25mm hole bird box will be carried out to compensate for the loss of approximately 5.5m section of hedgerow. This will be detailed within the landscaping plan;
- Trees and hedgerows within the development site will be protected during construction by protective fencing as detailed within Ascerta P.789.16.04 Arboricultural Method Statement;
- Trees will be monitored annually. Any deadwood or branches that overhang the footpath will be removed if considered a hazard to the public outside the bird nesting season (i.e. removed only between 01 September and 28 February). Diseased or dangerous trees will also be removed only within the same period unless they are an immediate hazard;
- If works are required to trees that have holes, hollows, split branches or loose bark that could provide potential bat roost, these features will be assessed, and any necessary bat surveys will be undertaken before works commence. This may include the need for nocturnal surveys or climbing inspections under the supervision of a suitably qualified bat worker; and
- The hedgerow adjacent to drive ways will be managed by annual cutting outside the bird nesting season to ensure the hedgerow and ground flora do not encroach onto driveways.

4.3 Improved Grassland and Rough Grassland Management

The following will be undertaken within the areas of improved grassland within the sites.

- The improved grassland will be mown twice a year. The first cut will be in spring, between 15 April and 15 May and the second cut will be in autumn, between 20 September and 30 October;
- The grassland will be cut to a height of between 70 and 100mm;
- The arisings will be removed immediately after the spring cut to prevent further nutrient enrichment of the grassland; and

4.0 Management Specifications & Prescriptions (continued)

- The autumn arisings will be left in situ for three days to allow seeds to repopulate the seedbank. After three days they will be removed to prevent further nutrient enrichment of the grassland.

4.4 New Fishing Lake

- The lake will be created with scalloped edges and gentle shelving with shallow edges (0-500mm deep @ 0 to 3.00m) to create shallows for colonisation by wetland and emergent plants;
- Planting of the margins with native species; As part of the landscape planting the land around the new fishing lake will be seeded with a grassland mix; and
- Installation of a lifebelt to the appropriate specification.

4.5 Habitat Compensation

There will be a small loss of hedgerow for the planned driveway to site1. The loss of the small (approximately 5.5m) section hedgerow can be compensated for by additional native hedgerow planting within the approved plans.

- Any trees and hedgerow planted within the sites will be inspected annually. If any die or are severely damaged within five years of planting, they will be replaced on a like-for-like basis.

4.6 Amphibians

Amphibians may be encountered during the works. To ensure no harm comes to Great Crested Newt (GCN) or other amphibians Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) will be used as follows:

- Work will be carried out at a suitable time of year when GCN are unlikely to be using the area (preferably between mid-March and the end of May);
- Any areas of suitable great crested newt habitat will be searched for GCN by a suitably qualified and licensed ecologist immediately prior to commencement;
- Staff will be informed by a 'toolbox talk' of the precautions to take in the unlikely event a GCN is found on site;

4.0 Management Specifications & Prescriptions (continued)

- Construction works can create suitable reptile and amphibian terrestrial habitat in the form of rubble piles and stored material. To discourage these species during construction all materials will be stored off the ground on pallets. In additions any excavations will have ramps (planks of wood) fitted overnight to provide an escape route to species that may they fall into excavations; and
- Suitable habitat enhancement for GCN and other amphibians will be included within the proposals to ensure no net loss of biodiversity.

4.7 Badger

The development sites may be used by opportunistic badgers as they forage in the surrounding area. Therefore, Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) will be employed in respect to badgers during the works as follows:

- All steep sided excavations will be covered overnight or have ramps in place to prevent mammals, including badgers, getting trapped;
- Spoil heaps will be fenced off and only made in locations where badgers are unlikely to create new setts; and
- Any exposed pipes will be capped off to prevent badgers accessing them.

4.8 Bats

There is foraging/commuting habitat for bats on the site and some of this habitat will be lost to the proposal (small section of hedgerow). There are also foraging and roosting opportunities in the wider area, surrounding the site.

- Lighting will be sensitive to the needs of bats and designed to avoid overspill onto the fishing lake, hedgerows and scattered trees present on site; and
- If works are required to trees that have holes, hollows, split branches or loose bark that could provide potential bat roost, these features will be assessed, and any necessary bat surveys will be undertaken before works commence. This may include the need for nocturnal surveys or climbing inspections under the supervision of a suitably qualified bat worker.

4.0 Management Specifications & Prescriptions (continued)

4.9 Birds

Habitat exists for nesting birds and a number of birds were recorded on site during the survey. In order to avoid harm to nesting birds, vegetation should not be cleared during the bird breeding season (between 1 March and 31 August). If vegetation needs to be cleared during this period, a nesting bird survey will be conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist, before works begin. If any active nests are observed during the survey, exclusion zones will be set up and works will not occur in these areas until nesting is complete.

A detailed timetable of the above measures, to cover the duration of the Management Plan, is presented in Appendix 2. This timetable includes scope for review and revision of the plan on a five-yearly basis.

5.0 Conclusions

If the Management Plan is followed, the sites will have the opportunity to provide a habitat for a wide variety of flora and fauna, thus increasing biodiversity of the area overall whilst enabling safe public use of the area and encouraging engagement with the natural environment.

6.0 References

Bat Conservation Trust (2009) *Bats and lighting in the UK- bats and the built environment series* [online] Available at:

http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html

CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

CIEEM (2016) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal, 2nd edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (2010) *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a Technique for Environmental Audit*. JNCC Publications, Peterborough;

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). *The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)* [online] Available at: www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155

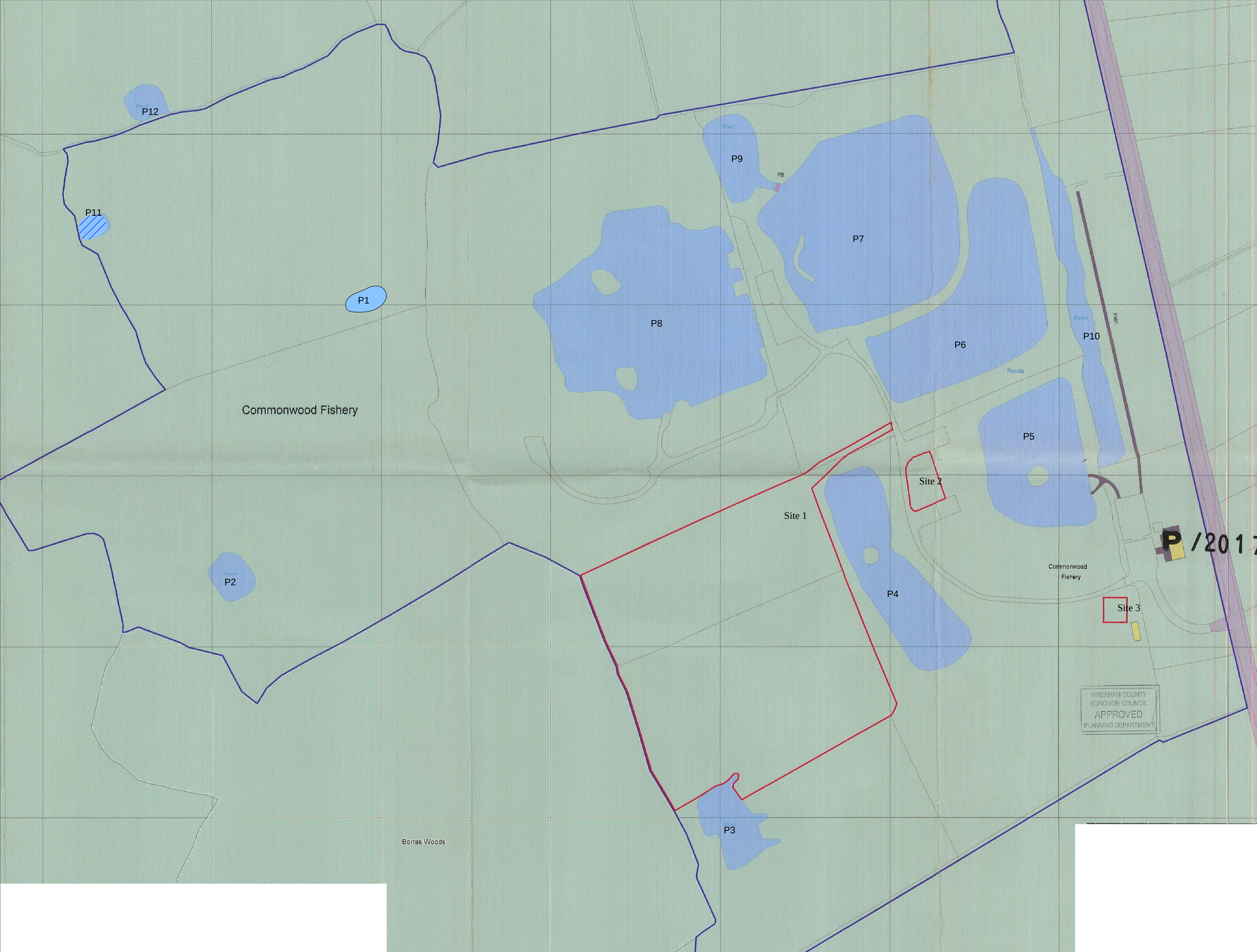
Maddock, A., (ed) (2011) *UK Biodiversity Action Plan; Priority Habitat Descriptions*, JNCC.

Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) [online] Available at: <http://www.magic.gov.uk/website/magic/> [Accessed 22.02.2017].

Rose, F. (2006). *Collins The Wild Flower Key, how to identify wild flowers trees and shrubs in Britain and Ireland*. Penguin Group: London.

Stace, C., (2010). *New Flora of the British Isles*. 3rd Edition. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Appendix 1



DO NOT SCALE

ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID LOCATED TO OS NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL, EXTRACTED FROM OS DIGITAL DATA.

© This drawing, including the design and technical information contained on it, is the property of Ascerta. The drawing may only be used for the specific purpose for which it has been intended and may not be reproduced or copied without prior permission.

KEY

Development site boundary

Site ownership boundary

P1

Pond

WREXHAM COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
APPROVED
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Ascerta

Landscape | Trees | Ecology

Mere One, Mere Grange
Elton Head Road, St Helens
Merseyside WA9 5GG
t: 0845 463 4404 f: 0845 463 4405
e: info@landscapetreeseecology.com
www.landscapetreeseecology.com

CLIENT:
Mr and Mrs Paul Dunn

PROJECT:
Commonwood Fishery, Wrexham

DRAWING TITLE:
Development Site Location Plan

SCALE:
1:1000@A1

DRAWN BY:
CP

DATE:
22/01/2018

DRAWING No:
CHKD BY:
NE

REV:
P.789.16.04

-

S:\All Jobs\789.16 Commonwood Fishery, Wrexham LL13 9TF\Drawings\P.789.16.04 Development Site Location Plan

Appendix 2

Management Timetable

Table A2.1: The management timetable to be implemented within the site from the month prior to commencement of development and continued thereafter for the lifetime of the development. The development is scheduled to commence in the February/March 2018, therefore, the first actions will be undertaken from February-April in Year 1. If there are any changes to the development commencement date the timetable will be adapted accordingly. If issues relating to bats arise, contact an ecologist at Ascerta (0845 463 4404) or the Local Bat Group (0845 1300 228). Barn Owl boxes to be checked by the local barn owl group (<https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/barn-owl-contact-directory/>) or suitably licenced ecologist.

Year	Month	Action	Responsibility
Distribution of Method Statement		Distribution of Method Statement to all contractors and relevant parties.	Client
Initial Works	Feb-April	- Implementation of measures detailed within Ascerta Biosecurity Risk Assessment Commonwood Fishery; - Great Crested Newt toolbox talk and surveillance during hedgerow removal and ground works; - Hedgerow removal for new driveway; - Install bat and bird box features within the retained trees Installation of tree protective fencing as detailed in the Ascerta Arboricultural Method Statement; - Plant the relevant species as marked on the Approved Plan where possible; - Creation of new fishing lake. - Ground works for central facilities/amenity building, access drive and lodge bases	Contractor /Client Ecologist

Year	Month	Action	Responsibility
Initial Works	May- June	• Siting of Pods (in phases) • Siting of Lodges (in phases sold off plan)	Contractor /Client
Year 1 / Year 4	April/May	• Establish grassland on areas disturbed by created pond; • Complete remaining planting as per Approved Plan.	Contractor /Client
	June/July/August	• Monitor Landscape planting monthly and water as required to ensure establishment. Water weekly during extended periods with no rainfall;	Contractor /Client
	Sept/Oct	• Bird boxes: Remove nesting material and replace any damaged boxes; • Bat boxes: Remove and replace any damaged boxes provided they have no capacity to provide bat roost habitat; • Mow areas of grassland. Leave arisings for 3 days then remove to avoid nutrient enrichment.	Contractor /Client Ecologist
	Nov-Feb	• Trees and hedgerow: Monitor trees, remove deadwood that could be of risk to public health. Remove/make safe any unsafe dead trees, provided they have no bat roost potential. Trim hedgerows to maintain shape.	Contractor /Client Ecologist

Year	Month	Action	Responsibility
Year 2 / Year 5	April/May	• Mow grassland. Remove arisings immediately.	Contractor /Client
	June/July/August	• Monitor Landscape planting and replace dead or diseased specimens;	
	Sept/Oct	• Bird boxes: Remove nesting material and replace any damaged boxes; • Bat boxes: Remove and replace any damaged boxes provided they have no capacity to provide bat roost habitat; • Mow areas of grassland. Leave arisings for 3 days for seed dispersal then remove to avoid nutrient enrichment.	Contractor /Client Ecologist
	Nov-Feb	• Trees and hedgerow: Monitor trees, remove deadwood that could be of risk to public health. Remove/make safe unsafe dead trees provided they have no bat roost potential. Trim hedgerows to maintain shape.	Contractor /Client Ecologist
Year 3 / Year 6	April/May	• Mow grassland. Remove arisings immediately.	Contractor /Client
	June/July/August	• Monitor Landscape planting and replace dead or diseased specimens;	Contractor /Client

Year	Month	Action	Responsibility
Year 3 / Year 6 (continued)	Sept/Oct	• Bird boxes: Remove nesting material and replace any damaged boxes; • Bat boxes: Remove and replace any damaged boxes provided they have no capacity to provide bat roost habitat; • Mow areas of grassland. Leave arisings for 3 days for seed dispersal then remove to avoid nutrient enrichment.	Contractor /Client Ecologist
	Nov-Feb	• Trees and hedgerow: Monitor trees, remove deadwood that could be of risk to public health. Remove/make safe unsafe dead trees provided they have no bat roost potential. Trim hedgerows to maintain shape.	Contractor /Client
Year 7 for lifetime of development	April/May	• Mow grassland. Remove arisings immediately.	Contractor /Client
	Sept/Oct	• Bird boxes: Remove nesting material and replace any damaged boxes; • Bat boxes: Remove and replace any damaged boxes provided they have no capacity to provide bat roost habitat; • Mow areas of grassland. Leave arisings for 3 days for seed dispersal then remove to avoid nutrient enrichment.	Contractor /Client