



THE VILLAGE BAKERY

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL:

ECOLOGICAL SITE WALKOVER

DATE	ECOLOGIST	APPROVED	VERSION	COMMENTS
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Enfys Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Village Bakery Ltd to undertake an ecological walkover of a small area of land north of The Village Bakery site on the Wrexham Industrial Estate.
- 1.2 The site consists of a small rectangle of land, mostly made up of bare ground and low growing perennial plant species. Village Bakery Ltd propose to construct a metal shed for storage on the site. The plans for the project have been seen at the time of the survey.
- 1.3 A report by Natural Resources Wales (Natural Resources Wales, 2017) states that *‘Wrexham County Borough is a stronghold of great crested newts within the UK. The lowland parts of Wrexham have a particularly high density of suitable ponds and the pondscape of northeast Wales has been identified as being of European importance’*.
- 1.4 During 2015, Enfys Ecology Ltd carried out great crested newt (GCN) surveys of three ponds located approx. 140m to the east of the site and a medium population of GCN was recorded. Newt fencing was installed and trapping carried out of the large area of semi-improved grassland adjacent to the western boundary of the former factory site during 2016 and 2017. This was in preparation for a new factory development by Village Bakery Ltd, this area has now been soil stripped with construction due to commence in autumn 2018. During the trapping period 420 GCN were translocated into the surrounding woodlands (largely into the woodland to the south), an increase on the initial survey findings and suggestive that a large population of GCN is present within the immediate area.
- 1.5 The aim of the ecological walkover survey was to gain baseline ecological data on the species and habitats present, identify any possible ecological constraints and recommend suitable mitigation and/or compensation strategies if appropriate. Particular regard was given to great crested newts and bats.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The site boundary and area surveyed is shown below in Figure 2.1.
- 2.2 The site is at the approximate OS grid reference SJ 376 499.



FIGURE 2.1. SITE BOUNDARY FOR THE PROPOSED METAL STORAGE SHED.
IMAGE © GOOGLE 2018

- 2.2 The site is located within the centre of Wrexham Industrial Estate, a large area of industrial units and open grassland with pockets of semi-natural broadleaved woodland. To the immediate north of the site is Erlas Black Wood, an area of broadleaved woodland that extend to the north and out to the east of the site. There is one pond within this woodland, however GCN have not been found to be using this pond, part of this woodland is used as a GCN mitigation area and will be managed as part of the S106 agreement with North Wales Wildlife Trust (NWWT). The woodland to the east is where the majority of the GCN were translocated and where two ponds have been enhanced and one new pond created for GCN. Along with this hibernacula and refugia have been created in this area.
- 2.3 Further to the west is Wrexham Industrial Estate, a large area of dense industrial units that extends in all directions. Much of the habitat here is areas of hard standing, amenity planting and scattered perennial herbs, characteristic of industrial estates.
- 2.3 There are no statutory or non-statutory sites within 1km of the proposed works.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 *Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey*

A survey of the site was conducted by an experienced ecologist walking over the site on 31st May 2018. A search for evidence and potential for protected species was carried out and the habitats present classified into a series of categories according to the Phase 1 habitat standard methodology (JNCC 2010).

3.2 *Limitations*

The survey was conducted during the optimal season for flowering plant species meaning an accurate representation of the floristic diversity of the site was gained.

4.0 Habitat Survey

4.1 *Habitat Types*

4.1.1 The following standard Phase 1 habitat and feature types were recorded within the site (with their alphanumeric codes):

- J3.6 – Buildings
- J4 – Bare Ground
- Hard Standing

4.2 *Habitat Descriptions*

4.2.1 Bare ground

The site is a small rectangle of bare ground with scattered low growing perennial herbs (Picture 4.1 and 4.2). Species present include tufted vetch, bramble, teasel, and bittersweet. Hedge bindweed is growing in abundance along the boundary fences. Species of particular interest on site are bristly ox-tongue and grass vetchling.

4.2.2 Evidence of succession is seen towards the edges of the site, and species typical of scrub and smaller trees are found, such as goat willow, hawthorn, and silver birch.

4.2.3 Where the ground is slightly lower, water has collected and plant species of typically wet habitats have started to grow. These include yellow flag iris and hard rush. A more detailed plant species list is given in Appendix A.

4.2.4 Metal fences line the northern boundary of the site, and temporary newt fencing is in place along the boundary of Erilas Black wood and the adjacent GCN mitigation area. To the south of the site is an area of tarmac that forms part of the existing Village Bakery site (Picture 4.3).



PICTURE 4.1 AND 4.2. EXAMPLES OF BARE GROUND HABITAT ON SITE



PICTURE 4.3. TARMAC AREA IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF THE SITE

5.0 Discussion and Evaluation

- 5.1 The proposed plans are construct a metal storage shed using slab materials in line with other industrial units on site and metal cladding.
- 5.2 *Habitats*
 - 5.2.1 There are no statutory or non-statutory habitats present on site. The proposed works will exclusively be carried out on existing hard standing and bare ground. Providing all works are carried out on existing bare ground and areas of tarmac there will be a very limited loss of biodiversity from the surrounding area.
- 5.3 *Amphibians*
 - 5.3.1 There is a known large population of GCN within the surrounding woodlands and pond areas adjacent to the east and north of the site. At present there is no suitable breeding or foraging habitat for amphibians, including GCN, on the proposed development site. The proposed works have already been mentioned in the amended GCN licence for the site (73736d:OTH:EPS:2018)
 - 5.3.2 As all works are to be carried out on existing bare ground which provides no foraging or breeding potential for GCN, and any materials which need to be stored will be stored on pallets on the tarmac area the risk to GCN is low. Due to the construction design (limited to a slab, portal frame and cladding) and the short period of construction (approx. 1 month) works can commence without the need for additional newt fences. Reasonable avoidance measures as laid out in 5.9 must be followed.

5.4 *Bats*

5.4.1 No buildings or trees are to be affected by the works therefore there will be no direct impacts on bats.

5.4.2 Bats may use the trees in Erlass Black woodland to the north as a roosting and foraging habitat. The development itself will not affect these habitats, however to reduce the impact of any light spillage on foraging and commuting bats along this boundary during the construction and post construction phases of the development, light levels should be minimised along this boundary, if lights are to be erected on the buildings this should be limited to the south side away from the northern boundary. Light spillage can be minimised through the types of light used, the orientation of the lights and use of accessories to direct the light away from the sensitive areas.

5.5 *Birds*

5.5.1 At the time of the survey one great spotted woodpecker was recorded on site, and identified as a breeding individual. However as there is no suitable habitat on site for breeding birds it is unlikely that the proposed works will affect breeding birds within the area. Additionally, no vegetation clearance is due to take place, therefore no nesting birds will be affected within these habitats.

5.5.2 If any additional works are required in Erlass Black wood or the scattered scrub to the east then this should be carried out outside of the nesting bird season (March to September inclusive). If this is not possible, a search for nesting birds should be conducted prior to works commencing, if any nests are found or the area cannot be adequately searched; all activity must stop until the birds have fledged or the nesting period has ended.

5.6 *Otter and water vole*

5.6.1 Otter are known to be present within the network of ditches and waterways within Wrexham Industrial Estate. There are no ditches or streams within the near vicinity of the site and therefore the proposed work poses no risk to otter or water vole.

5.7 *Badger*

5.7.1 There is a large known active badger sett within the near vicinity of the site boundary (over 30m away) and so it must be assumed that badgers may visit the site and surrounding area for foraging.

5.7.2 To prevent any harm to foraging badgers during the works all excavations should be covered at night or a suitable method of escape should be provided, for example a secured scaffold board to enable trapped badgers to climb out of the footings/holes.

5.8 *Other protected species*

5.8.1 There was no evidence or potential for other protected species with the site or immediate area.

5.9 *Reasonable avoidance measures*

5.9.1 To ensure that no protected species are adversely affected during the construction works, Reasonable Avoidance Measures should be in place throughout the duration of the proposed works.

- Suitable and appropriate measures or precautions should be taken to avoid any issues relating to fuel spillage. This could involve the use of spill kits (absorbent materials) on site.
- Any excavations resulting in areas of bare soil within 30m of any identified watercourse and which may drain into it should be covered with sheeting at all times when not actively being worked on, in order to prevent eroded material being carried into the watercourse
- Storage of plant or machinery should be restricted as much as practical to hardstanding areas of the site, once created, prior to this plant or machinery should be stored off site as far as is practicable.
- Any chemical and/or fuels on site must be stored within a locked, sealed and banded container, ideally at the furthest extremity away from the river corridor.
- Refuelling of machinery/vehicles should occur in one location and a drip tray should always be used.
- All excavations should be covered at night or a suitable method of escape should be provided, for example a secured scaffold board to enable trapped otters to climb out of the footings/holes.

Lighting

- Light spill should be avoided along the northern boundary at all times during the construction works. Any security lighting should be on a timer to prevent over lighting, and be faced downwards to prevent light spill onto nearby habitats.

At All Times

If at any point in the works any protected species or evidence thereof is found all works in the vicinity of the sighting and watercourse must immediately cease, and an ecologist be called. The ecologist will review the situation and advise on further action.

6.0 References and useful Information Sources

Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2006) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment*. IEEM.

JNCC (2010) *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: a technique for environmental audit*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Natural Resources Wales. 2017. *Spatial Action Plan for Great Crested Newts in Wrexham A Manual for Achieving Favourable Conservation Status* Report No77.

UK BAP 2007 Available: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=5705>

7.0 Appendices

Appendix A. Plant Species List, including Latin names. (This list is Not Exhaustive).

No protected or notably rare species were found.

Habitat	English Name	Scientific Name
Bare ground	Bristly oxtongue	<i>Picris echioides</i>
	Grass vetchling	<i>Lathyrus nissolia</i>
	Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
	Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
	Scarlet pimpernel	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>
	Meadow fescue	<i>Festuca pratensis</i>
	Hairy willowherb	<i>Epilobium hisutum</i>
	Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>
	Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
	Yellow flag iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>
	Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
	Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
	Hard rush	<i>Juncus inflexus</i>
	Yellow-wort	<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>
	Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
	Creeping cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla repens</i>
	Tufted vetch	<i>Vicia cracca</i>
	Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>
	Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>
	Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
	Bittersweet	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>
	Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
	Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>
	Hedge bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
	Birds-foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>