

Ecological Survey Report

Job: proposed new offices and bakery at The Village Bakery, Coed Aben Road,
Wrexham Industrial Estate, LL13 9UH.

Client: The Village Bakery

Date: September 2013

Grid Ref: SJ 37651 49896

By
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BSc (hons) ACIEEM

*N.B. The contents of this report may contain information regarding a protected species.
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Executive Summary

Scope of Survey

Pearce Environment Ltd was commissioned by The Village Bakery, to conduct a survey to determine the presence or absence of protected species and potential for the damage or destruction of habitats of ecological value, prior to development of the site in accordance with the guidance given The National Planning Policy Framework.

The survey undertaken comprised a preliminary desktop survey to ascertain local species previously recorded, presence of SSSI's, and a Phase 1 environmental survey.

A phase 1 environmental survey to assess the potential impact on protected species was undertaken at the site, OS grid reference SJ 37651 49896 on 14th August 2013, by W Macken BSc(hons) ACIEEM, an experienced biologist, CCW Licence No. 35535:OTH:CSAB (bats), 35869:OTH:SA:CSAB (GCN).

Details of the survey protocol and findings are provided, supported with photographic evidence Appendix C. The area investigated is outlined in Appendices A, B and C.

No SSSI's notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 were found within the vicinity of the site, thus there would be no impact expected from this development.

A local database search revealed protected species previously recorded within 2km include Whiskered bats (*Myotis Mystacinus*). Great Crested Newt GCN (*Triturus cristatus*) records are prolific in the area. Slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) and adder (*Vipera berus*) have also been recorded within 2km of the site.

No evidence of any protected species was identified on the site.
A pond was identified approximately 174 metres to the north east of the site.
No suitable habitat for GCN was identified on the site.

No evidence of birds nesting was found within the building.

A 5 entrance badger sett was recorded at SJ 37813 49885. No evidence of current usage was found. This will not be affected by development as it is more than 150 metres away from the site.

No other protected species were recorded in the vicinity of the site.

Opinion

In the opinion of the surveyor, should this development proceed it will not affect the conservation status of any protected species.

- Nesting birds: If birds gain access to the building and start nesting during the construction phase, work must cease till young birds leave the nest.

- GCN: Although no suitable habitat for GCN was identified on the site, records of GCN are abundant in the area, and there is a pond located within 200metres of the site, reasonable avoidance measures will be followed to avoid the risk of committing an offence. In the highly unlikely event of GCN being discovered on site, all works will immediately cease, Pearce Environment will be notified and the relevant licence from NRW/WAG will be sought.

1 Instruction

Pearce Environment Ltd was commissioned by The Village Bakery, to conduct a survey to determine the presence or absence of protected species and potential for the damage or destruction of habitats of ecological value, prior to development of the site in accordance with the guidance given The National Planning Policy Framework.

A phase 1 environmental survey to assess the potential impact on protected species was undertaken at the site, OS grid reference SJ 37651 49896 on 14th August 2013, by W Macken BSc(hons) ACIEEM, an experienced biologist, CCW Licence No. 35535:OTH:CSAB (bats), 35869:OTH:SA:CSAB (GCN).

1.1 Project Background

It is understood that planning permission is sought for the construction of additional car parking/landscaping and new offices to the south of the site.

2 Objectives

The aim of this type of survey is to locate and describe, as far as reasonably practicable, evidence of use or scope for wildlife including all protected species, such as bat species, badgers (*Meles meles*), barn owls (*Tyto alba*), nesting birds and amphibians such as great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*), otters and water voles in the building and surrounding area, which may be disturbed in the event of development.

This is in accordance with:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(as amended) – as listed in:
 - Schedule 1. Birds protected by special penalties at all times
 - Schedule 5. Protected animals
 - Schedule 8. Protected plants

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 – as listed in:
 - Schedule 2. European protected species of animals
 - Schedule 4. European protected species of plants

Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

It involves inspection, as necessary, of all accessible areas, including those that are difficult to reach and a desktop study to ascertain reports of protected species in the vicinity of the site and to look for potential for habitats for species such as great crested newts.

Summary recommendations have been made outlining reasonable avoidance measures and the associated habitat creation/management required to offset any impacts associated with the proposed development.

3 Survey Type - Methodology

The building(s) and the surrounding were subject to a thorough Phase 1 survey recording evidence of use or scope for habitats and of any signs of protected species.

Mammals

Bats:

Daytime surveys for bats may only identify potential roost sites if bats are not visibly present. Bat species may leave little evidence of their presence. Daytime surveys are conducted with the aid of a borescope, torches and binoculars. Evidence for the presence of bats includes:

- Holes, cracks and rot holes used as roosts, marked by streaks of urine and faeces.
- Smoothed, darkened edges where bats have rubbed and left natural body oils when entering and exiting a space.
- Scratches on wooden beams and joints indicating where certain species of bat may have clung to the wood.
- Faeces under a roof access point, a well used feeding point or a resting spot.
- Feeding signs such as discarded insect wings under a feeding point.
- Lack of cobwebs around eaves, roof spaces, beams or ceilings where routes are kept clear by bats.
- Presence of roosting or dead bats in or behind any object.

Methodology used is in accordance with recommendations by BCT, Good Practice Guidelines (2012).

Badgers:

Daytime surveys for badgers involve looking for

- Scrapings where badgers have dug for food or used as latrines.
- Signs of a sett, including signs of use such as presence of badger hair
- Tracks and prints.

Birds

Barn owls

The use of a building or tree by Barn owls can be determined by looking for signs such as

- Highly distinctive droppings or splats under roosting points.
- Presence of owl pellets/feathers

Other birds

Evidence of other birds using a building, hedge or tree will be from looking for

- Presence of nests
- Collections of droppings and/or feathers

Amphibians and reptiles

The assessment of aquatic habitat is based on the Habitat Suitability Index (Oldham *et al* 2000).

A refugia search is conducted for amphibians and reptiles looking under any logs, large stones and other debris.

4 Site Description

4.1 Location

The Village Bakery is located within Wrexham Industrial Estate, a large industrial estate situated to the east of Wrexham.

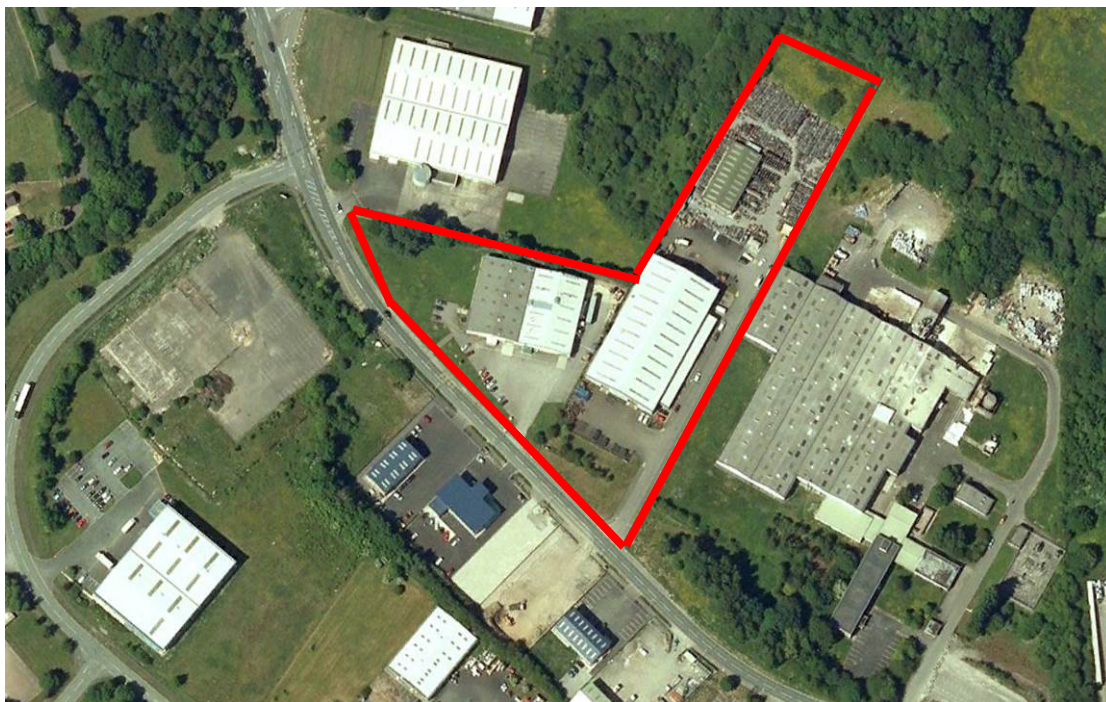


Figure 1, Aerial photograph from Google Earth, showing site.

4.2 Description / Accommodation / General Condition

The site consists of modern steel framed/brick built industrial units with metal cladding on the majority of elevations and roof. The buildings are currently used for offices/factory. The site is surrounded by a steel security fence.

The buildings are entirely surrounded by tarmac surfaced car parking and well maintained amenity lawns with scattered immature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Willow Sp (*Salix sp.*) on the northern boundary.

To the North of the site lies further hardstanding/carparking and modern steel framed industrial units. At the most northern extent of the site lies an area of bare ground which has been cleared of all vegetation.



Figure 2, showing existing office building.



Figure 3, showing amenity lawns.



Figure 4, bare ground to rear of site, surrounded by woodland.

In the wider context, further industrial units are located to the north east of the site. The site is located approximately 40metres (at the nearest point of development) to the south of Erilas Black wood. This woodland contains a small pond, approximately 174 metres to the north east of the site. The pond is neglected, over shaded and in need of management.



Figure 5, pond within woodland.

Further photographs of the survey site, including external elevations are presented in Appendix C.

4.3 Description of areas not accessed

All areas were accessible for this survey.

5 Survey Results

5.1 Desktop Study

The map from Magic.defra.gov.uk presented in Appendix B indicates that the buildings are not adjacent to an SSSI. Therefore no affect is expected from the development at this site.

Scrutiny of the OS map (Appendix A) and a walk around the locality showed there are significant areas of still water in the vicinity of the site.

A small pond was located approximately 174 metres to the north east of the site. The pond was observed to be over shaded and in need of management. A HSI was applied:

Pond	SJ 37813 49885
Location	1
Pond Area	0.4
Pond performance years	0.9
Water quality	0.67
Shade	0.6
Fowl Count	0.67
Fish population	0.33
Pond Count	0.65
Terrestrial Map	1
Macrophyte cover	0.8
HSI score	0.663914363
HSI score (rounded)	0.66
	Average

No terrestrial habitat suitable for GCN was identified on site.

No terrestrial habitat for GCN will be affected by development at the site.

As GCN records are prolific in the area, a reasonable avoidance method statement will be adhered to. If GCN are discovered at any time, all works will immediately cease, Pearce Environment will be notified and the relevant licence from NRW/WAG will be sought.



Figure 6, showing location of pond.

No further survey with respect to great crested newts is deemed necessary.

A local database search revealed protected species previously recorded within 2km include Whiskered bats (*Myotis Mystacinus*). Great Crested Newt GCN (*Triturus cristatus*) records are prolific in the area. Slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) and adder (*Vipera berus*) have also been recorded within 2km of the site.

5.2 Phase 1 Observations:

On inspection of the buildings to be affected by development, no potential for roosting bats was identified within any structure. This can be attributed to the modern construction technique employed and the construction materials used, particularly metal sheet cladding on elevations and roofs of the buildings. This is deemed unsuitable for roosting bats due to the lack of crevices and ingress points and the temperature regime associated with this type of construction.

Immature trees on site were also considered to have negligible bat roost potential due to the lack of features associated with roosting bats such as cavities, standing dead wood, ivy cladding. No evidence of bats was found in any tree on the site.

No evidence of nesting birds was found on the site. It is considered likely that more favourable nesting habitat, such as in the nearby Erlas Black woodland, would be utilised. The trees on site, although offering potential nesting habitat, were exposed and relatively isolated on the northern boundary of the site. (It is understood that they will be retained).

No habitat suitable for GCN was identified on the development site. The site consisted of tarmacadam car parking and regularly maintained amenity lawns with no diversity in sward structure/height.

On investigation of the pond to the north east of the site, it was noted that it was surrounded by favourable GCN habitat. The pond was seen to be small, over shaded and in need of management.

A 5 entrance badger sett was found in the vicinity of the pond (approximately 5 metres from the edge of the pond). No signs of current usage were identified. This will not be affected by development at the site. No evidence of badger foraging was identified within the amenity grassland on site. It is likely that the security fence provides an effective barrier for the badgers.

No habitat suitable for common herptiles such as slow worm or common lizard were identified on the site.

No habitat suitable for water vole or otter was identified on the site.

No other protected species such as water vole nor evidence of activity was recorded in the vicinity of the buildings.

5.3 Evaluation of Results for species recorded / known to be present

Consideration of Conservation status of species

Species	Justification	Impact
GCN	Records abundant in area.	No effect on any terrestrial habitat. No effect on any potential breeding ponds. No effect on individual GCN (RAM).
Badger	Inactive sett identified	Distance from site to sett would result in no disturbance even if badgers were present.

Badgers

The badger sett over 150m to the north east of the site, close to a small pool will not be affected by the potential development at the site. Nor is the expected increase in traffic using the site likely to affect the badgers (if the sett became active at any point).

Birds

If birds gain access to the building and start nesting during the construction phase, work must cease till young birds leave the nest.

Newt species

All species of amphibians receive a measure of protection under the law. However, great crested newts are covered by all elements of section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, section 9 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CroW) 2000 and Regulation 39 of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

Section 9 of Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 states:

- Section 9(1): Prohibits intentionally killing, injuring and taking;
- Section 9(2): Prohibits the "possession or control" of any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a protected animal;
- Section 9(3): Possession or control is not an offence if the animals had been taken or killed in a manner that is not prohibited by other parts of section 9, or if they had been legally acquired or purchased;
- Section 9(4): Prohibits intentionally damaging or destroying a place or structure used for shelter or protection, obstructing access to or disturbing an animal while occupying such a place;
- Section 9(5): Prohibits selling, offering for sale, possessing or transporting for the purposes of sale or publishing advertisements to buy or sell a protected species.

Great crested newts are one of the species listed in the Annexes to the Directive (Annex IV). This means they are termed "European protected species of animals" and are listed in Schedule 2 of the Directive. Regulations 38 and 39 then detail their protection:

- Regulation 39(1): Prohibits for any "European protected species": deliberately capturing or killing; deliberately taking or destroying eggs; damaging or destroying a breeding site or resting place;
- Regulation 39(2): Prohibits keeping, transporting, selling or exchanging or offering for sale, any animal or anything derived from a "European protected species";
- Regulation 39(4): Possession or control is not an offence if the animal had been taken or killed in a manner not prohibited by other parts of Regulation 39, or that had been legally acquired or purchased.

In addition to these two pieces of legislation, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 has been amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CroW) 2000. This applies to England and Wales only. The key relevant fact is:

- Section 9(4) is amended to create an additional offence of reckless damage to, destruction of, or obstruction of access to, any structure or

place used for shelter or protection; and reckless disturbance while occupying such a structure or place.

This means that any application for planning permission has to offer mitigation to the planners to alleviate any potential damage (i.e. provide reasonable avoidance).

5.4 Concluding remarks

In the opinion of the surveyor, should this development proceed it will not affect the conservation status of any protected species.

- Nesting birds: If birds gain access to the building and start nesting during the construction phase, work must cease till young birds leave the nest.
- GCN: Although no suitable habitat for GCN was identified on the site, records of GCN are abundant in the area, and there is a pond located within 200metres of the site, reasonable avoidance measures will be followed to avoid the risk of committing an offence. In the highly unlikely event of GCN being discovered on site, all works will immediately cease, Pearce Environment will be notified and the relevant licence from CCW/WAG will be sought.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement

This document will be kept on site at all times and outlined to contractors by Pearce Environment Ltd staff.

Reasonable avoidance measures will be followed to avoid the risk of committing an offence. In the highly unlikely event of GCN being discovered on site, all works will immediately cease, Pearce Environment will be notified and the relevant licence from NRW/WAG will be sought.

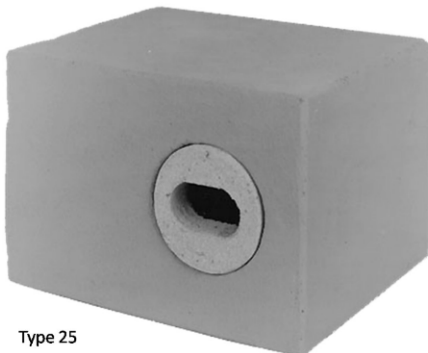
- The site will be subject to a pre commencement check prior to works commencing by a suitably experienced/licensed ecologist.
- Any excavations will be filled in on the same day or be subject to a check the following day prior to backfilling.
- Any resulting spoil from excavations will be stored in skips on areas of hardstanding.
- All construction materials will be palletised and stored on areas of hardstanding.
- The management regime for the amenity grassland on site will remain constant prior to and during works on site. I.e. the amenity grass land will remain mown at a short sward height.
- Works to occur during daylight hours

6.2 General

- If any protected species are discovered on site, such as bats, all works will cease immediately, Pearce Environment will be notified and the relevant licence from NRW/WAG will be sought.
- All trees will remain unaffected by development. Plans will show planting of native broadleaved trees around the new visitor car parking facility. Plants will be of local provenance. Advice on planting schemes will be sought from Pearce Environment Ltd.
- No less than 2x Schwegler 1FQ bat boxes will be incorporated into the design of the new development. They will be erected at a height of no less than 4 metres above ground and be orientated towards the south/south west.
- No less than 2x 3x Schwegler N25 Swift boxes and 3 x Schwegler 1SP Sparrow terraces will be incorporated into the design of the new development. Erection will be as per manufacturer's instruction.



Figure 7, Schwegler 1FQ.



Type 25

Figure 8, Schwegler N25 Swift box.



Figure 9, Schwegler 1SP Sparrow terrace.

All Schwegler products available from Schwegler.co.uk.

6.3 Birds

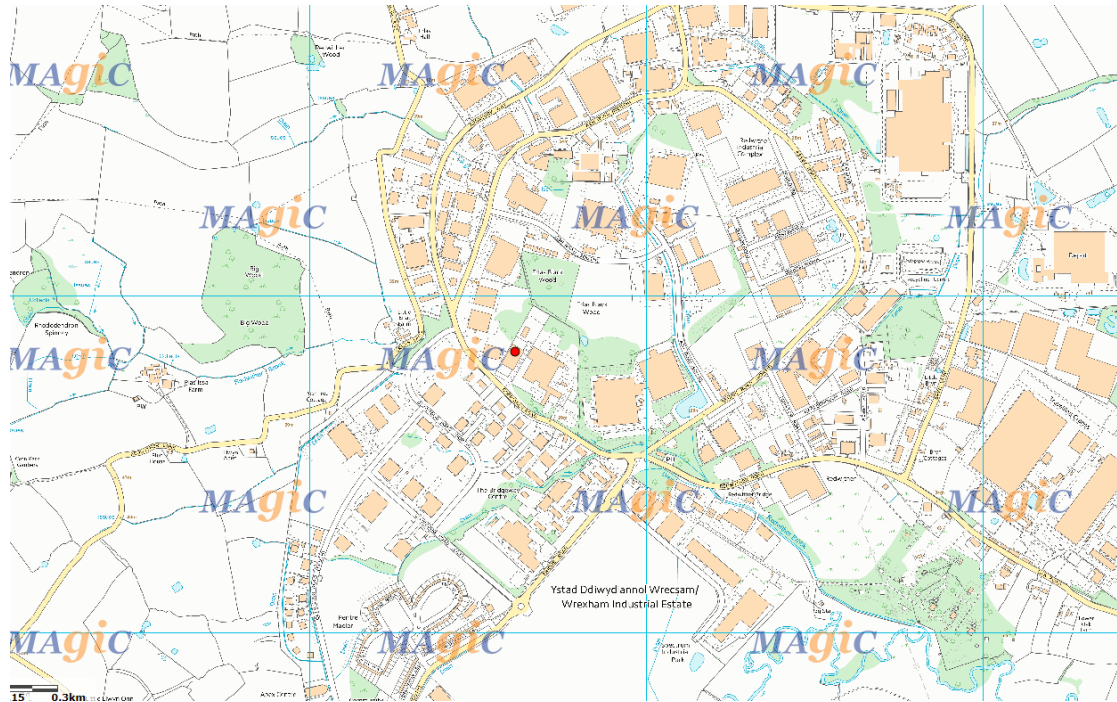
If birds gain access to the building and start nesting during the construction phase, work must cease till young birds leave the nest.

7 Other

- This report may not be reproduced other than in full. The report should be read in its entirety.
- Questions arising from the survey report should be directed to the author of this report, who will be pleased to clarify any technical issues raised.
- Whilst the surveyors make every reasonable effort, Pearce Environment cannot guarantee that all protected species have been identified and survey results are definitive.
- Surveys are valid for 1 year after which a check should be made for the change of status of protected species.
- Records of Protected/priority species will be submitted to the local records centre.

Appendices

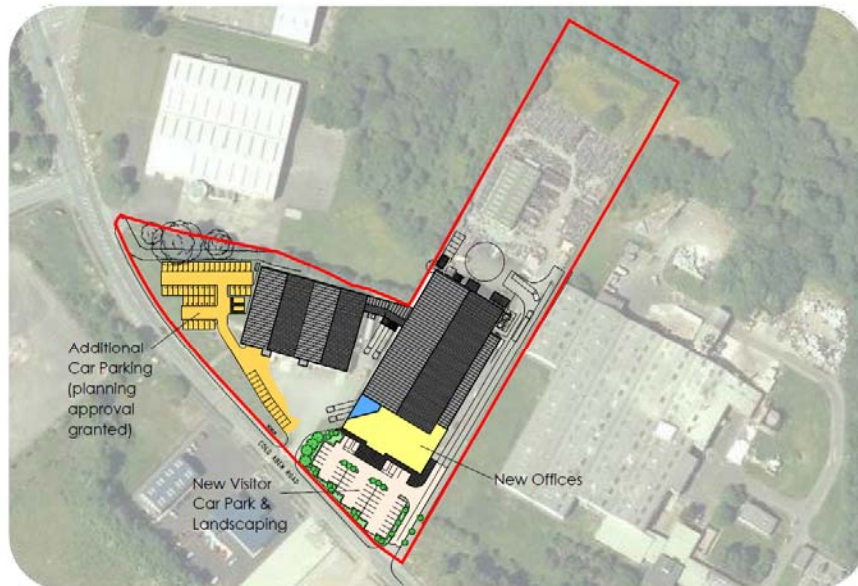
A Ordnance Survey Map Abstract / Environmental Maps



Environmental map for proposed works from "<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>".
1:10 000

This shows that the site is not in the vicinity of an SSSI as notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

B Site Plan



Artistic impression of site plan as proposed

Proposed New Offices at Village Bakery,
Wrexham

1:1250@A3



C Photographic Evidence



Existing offices/parking/amenity lawns.



To be extended to include new offices.



Site of new parking facility: maintained amenity grassland.



Scattered immature trees on boundary to remain.



New visitor parking/landscaping.



Woodland to the north of the site.



Pond within woodland.



Typical sett entrance: no signs of current use.



Ground to rear of site, will remain unaffected.



Ground to rear of site, will remain unaffected.



Car parking to the north of existing buildings.



Industrial unit to north of site.

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