

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment

Survey site:

12 Smelt Rd, Coedpoeth, Wrexham, LL11 3SH

Client:

Terfynfa Kennels

Survey date:

8th November 2024

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Wrexham County Borough Council. The proposal is described as:

Removal of existing kennels for proposed residential development

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

The site survey was undertaken by Katie Crawford BSc MRes ACIEEM (Natural England Protected Species Licence Numbers: [Bats] (2023-11335-CL18-BAT) [Great Crested Newts] (2023-11555-CL08-GCN))					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
08/11/2024	7	76	100	9	None

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposal plan in appendix 3 and photos in appendix 4).	
Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i> <i>(UKHab codes used)</i>	Site Context The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 27924 51411 and has an area of approximately 0.2ha comprising of the existing residential dwelling, working kennels, amenity grassland and hard standing. It is surrounded by residential dwellings with associated hard standing and amenity planting. A previous report was produced by Arbtech in 2022 for the site, using the same proposals. The report identified no major constraints to development. This report and survey are for the purpose of updating this baseline survey. The site is in a semi-rural area of east Wales, close to the England/Wales border. The landscape is dominated by residential dwellings and agricultural fields, with the village of Coedpoeth extending adjacent to the east. There are small, scattered woodland area and tree lines in the local area, which could be used by wildlife for shelter, foraging and commuting. Scattered irrigation ditches around the area will provide abundant insect foraging for birds and bats. No notable habitats were identified within 2km of the site. However deciduous woodland was noted along the southern boundary of the site. On-site habitat descriptions

	u1b5 – Buildings The site contains multiple buildings comprising storage outbuildings and kennels. It is noted that a residential dwelling is positioned centrally within the survey site, however, this is not to be impacted by proposals and so will not be mentioned further in this report. All buildings onsite are of negligible ecological value in their own right, their value with regards to protected species will be discussed later in the report. u1b6 – Other developed land Large amounts of hardstanding are present onsite, both within the kennels and as access/parking for the residential dwelling. These are all in good condition and are of negligible ecological value. g3c- Other neutral grassland A patch of wildflower planting was present to the south east corner of the site, this comprised species such as knapweed, false oat grass, evening primrose, cocksfoot, creeping buttercup and creeping thistle, along with a significant ingress of scrubby species such as bramble, buddleia and saplings (hazel). This patch was of high sward height at the time of survey and is well managed with annual cuts, therefore this habitat is of moderate ecological value. g4 – Modified grassland A large amount of short-sward amenity grassland is present onsite, comprising the dominant species perennial rye with occasional white clover and dandelion. This is incredibly species poor and is therefore considered to be of low ecological value. h2b – Non-native and ornamental hedgerow A California privet hedgerow is present to the south of the site. This is of low ecological value.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	On-site habitats The habitats on-site are widespread and not notable. The proposed development will likely result in the loss of grassland and hedgerow onsite. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. Notable habitats No direct impacts to any notable habitats will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, due to the proximity of the site to LMDW, indirect effects (e.g. pollution, dust, litter, surface run off, etc.) could occur during construction.

<i>Recommendations</i>	On-site habitats A biodiversity net gain (BNG) report is likely to be required for the proposal, as more than 25m² of habitat is affected by the proposal. No detailed plans were provided at the time of writing. Notable habitats Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution affecting the nearby woodland must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) may be required for this.
Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	On-site designations The site is not subject to any designation. Statutory designated sites (within 2km) There are 2 statutory sites within 2km of the site, the closest being Ruabon / Llantysilio Mountains and Minera Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located 1037m west from the site. Berwyn and South Clwyd Mountains Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is also located approximately 1170m south west of the site. The site lies within the impact risk zone for both SSSIs, however the proposed development is not listed as a possible high risk for this designation. Non-statutory designated sites The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the Local Records Centre.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	On-site designations No impacts foreseen. Statutory and non-statutory designated sites No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known) as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.
<i>Recommendations</i>	On-site designations None required.

	Statutory and non-statutory designated sites None required.
Invasive / Non-native species	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	N/A
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The habitats present on-site, including lawns, ornamental shrubs and neutral grassland, likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Ornamental shrubs and lawn will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The incorporation of bee bricks (e.g. Ibstock BeeHabitat or similar alternative brand) into the fabric of the new buildings would provide sheltering opportunities for pollinators. These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing elevation with no obscuring vegetation. The site could be further enhanced via the provision of native wildflowers or wildflower turf, which would provide foraging opportunities for invertebrates.
Bats	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	EPSL data There is currently no online database of bat mitigation licences granted by Natural Resources Wales. As the 2km search radius does not cross the Wales-England border, it is not known if there are any nearby sites with bat mitigation licences issued by Natural Resources Wales. However, it is known that Natural England Licences have been granted to the east over the border.

	The hedgerows to the north, woodland and watercourse to south are likely to provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats. Foraging and commuting habitat Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of grassland, shrubs and hedgerows. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. Roosting habitat The buildings on site and impacted by the proposed development are a collection of single storey outbuilding and existing dog kennels. All buildings have flat roofs clad in a mixture of corrugated, mixed concrete and corrugated and box profile sheeting all of which are considered to be unsuitable for roosting bats. All the individual roofs look to be in excellent condition with no gaps or areas of damage. Similarly, the soffits of the buildings are in excellent condition with no gaps or areas in which bats could roost or gain access into the buildings. All the buildings are in regular use as part of a working kennels and are disturbed on a regular basis. The majority of the buildings are also open and subject to high levels of light and temperature fluctuations further reducing their suitability for roosting bats. There are no loft spaces present within the buildings due to their flat roofed nature. No evidence of bats or nesting birds were noted during the survey.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Roosting habitat [Buildings] Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within the buildings onsite and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in this location as a result of the proposed development. Foraging and commuting habitat The proposed development will result in the loss of small areas of ornamental shrubs and lawns but given their low value and the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.. However, the proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas. Artificial lighting The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the new buildings without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Roosting habitat [Buildings]

	In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice. Foraging and commuting habitat No further surveys are required. Artificial lighting A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2 Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of three bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the new dwellings. They will be suitable for pipistrelles (which have been identified locally through EPSL data). Suitable bat boxes include Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Buildings No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within B1. B1 is deemed to provide negligible habitat value for nesting birds due to a lack of suitable nesting sites or access points. Trees and vegetation No bird nests were identified within the shrubs and hedgerows on-site, however they all offer nesting opportunities and nest-building resources for birds. Barn owls The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls. Overwintering birds

	Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Buildings/trees The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests. Barn owls None foreseen. Overwintering birds None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Buildings/trees Any building or vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged. Barn owls None required. Overwintering birds None required. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on new buildings or the retained building will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings) Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings) Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) Or a similar alternative brand.

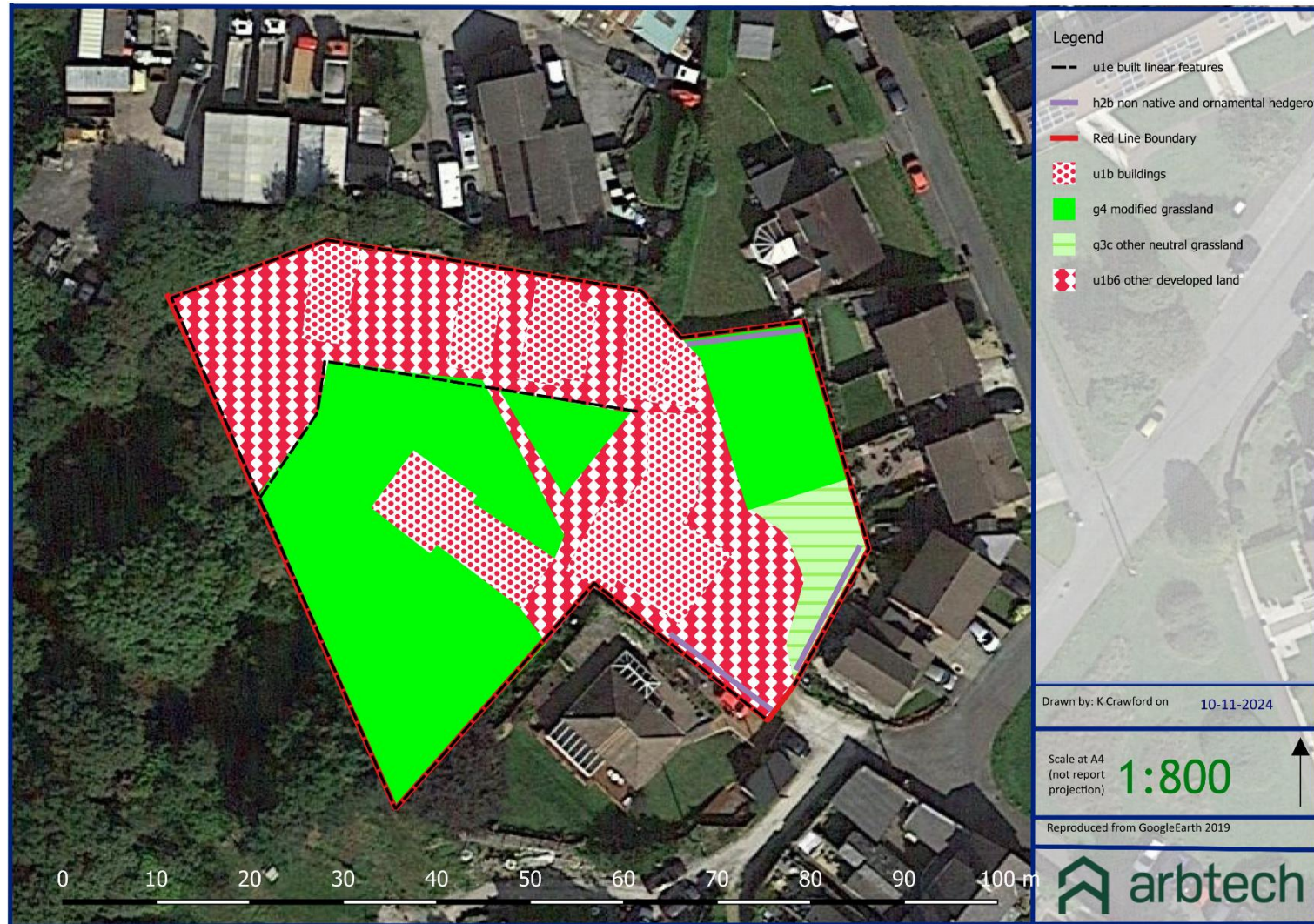
	Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	EPSL data A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site. Habitat suitability Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide suitable foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for reptiles in the form of ornamental shrubs, rank grassland and hedgerow. It is noted that due to recent management of amenity grassland on site which retained a short sward length at the time of survey, the majority of the grassland is currently suboptimal for reptiles due to an absence of refuge opportunities. Although potential connectivity to the site for reptiles is limited in extent, the presence of a small population of common reptiles cannot be fully discounted, albeit limited to peripheral vegetation.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Although a small area of suitable habitat is being removed as part of the development, there is a low risk that a low number of reptiles could be present in the vicinity of the works. These could be injured or killed without mitigation.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures: • Vegetation will be maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. • In the unlikely event that a reptile is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The site could be enhanced for reptiles post-development with the inclusion of log piles (created from felled materials) and planting of areas of native shrubs, to provide sheltering opportunities.

Amphibians	
Summary of Survey Findings	No ponds are present on site or within 500m of the site. The site provides limited suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians given the lack of optimal habitat (i.e. scrub, rank grassland). The areas of hard standing and amenity grass offer sub-optimal habitat for terrestrial amphibians. The hedgerows may offer refuge for these species, however given the urban nature of the surrounding landscape (i.e. dominated by roads and hard standing which are sub-optimal for amphibians) it is unlikely that amphibians will migrate on to site. Further, there is limited suitable terrestrial habitat across the wider landscape reducing the likelihood of amphibians being present on site and across the surrounding areas.
Foreseen Impacts	Given the lack of suitably connected breeding ponds within 500m of the site, the presence of GCN on-site is considered unlikely and therefore impacts to amphibians as a result of the proposed development are deemed to be acceptably low.
Recommendations	None required. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The site could be enhanced for amphibians post-development through creation of amphibian hibernacula using rubble and logs from site clearance. Information on how to construct a hibernaculum can be found here: https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum

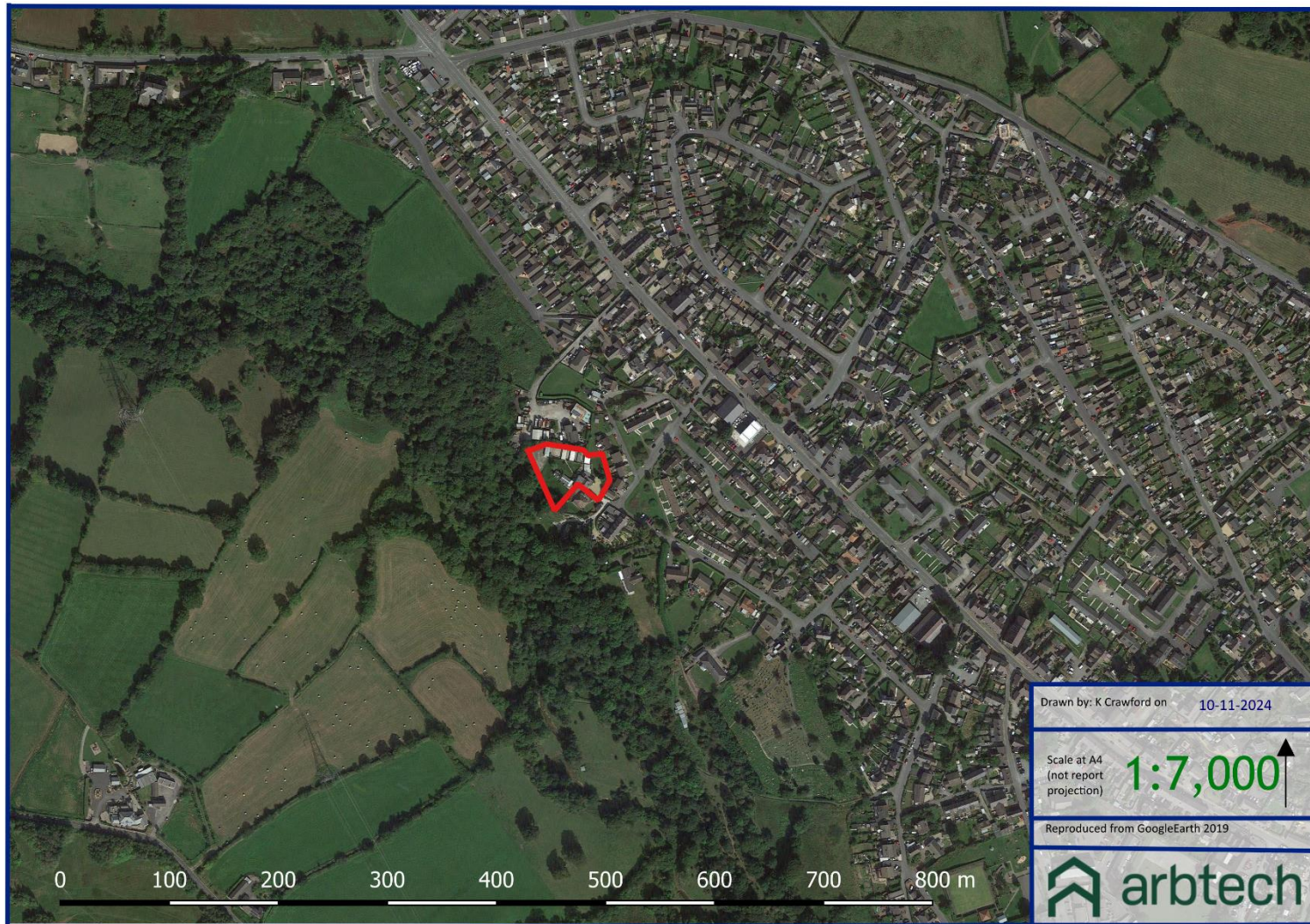
Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The River Clywedog is present approximately 105m to the west of the site. The banks of the watercourse up to the site are extremely steep and therefore it is unlikely that water vole or otter will travel up the banks to the site. In addition the boundaries of the site are fenced off reducing the likelihood of water vole being present on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Otters The proposed development will not result in the loss of any riparian habitats and no works will be undertaken within 8m of the watercourse (as per Environment Agency regulations). The watercourse is considered to be a sufficient distance from the site along with the unsuitable nature of the site and physical barriers in the form of fencing that no impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposals. Water voles No works will be undertaken within 5m of the top of the banks of the watercourse. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated on water vole as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None required.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Habitat suitability There are no suitable habitats for dormice within the development area. As such it is considered likely that hazel dormice are absent from site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None foreseen.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The ruderal herb onsite provides limited foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs, with woodland habitat nearby.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Shrubs and grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

	• Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs: • Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities. • Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas. • Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site.
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Appendix 1: Survey/Habitat map



Appendix 2: Location map



Terfynfa Kennels

12 Smelt Rd, Coedpoeth, Wrexham, LL11 3SH

Appendix 3: Proposed plan

Not available at time of writing

Appendix 4: Photos



Photograph 1- Example of kennel building and hardstanding onsite.



Photograph 2- Further example of corrugated roof and kennel building



Photograph 3- Lack of gaps under roofing



Photograph 4- Kennels



Photograph 5- amenity grassland and shrubs with buildings in background



Photograph 6- Further view of grassland



Photograph 7- Ornamental hedgerow



Photograph 8- Other neutral grassland to the south of the site



Photograph 9- View of hardstanding onsite and ornamental planting

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