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PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

**LAND OFF KNOT LANE
NEWSHOLME
CLITHEROE
LANCASHIRE**

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

LAND OFF KNOT LANE NEWSHOLME CLITHEROE LANCASHIRE

A report for

Avalon Chartered Town Planning

On behalf of

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- Map 1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey*
- Map 2: Hedgerow, Water Vole, Badger & Bat Survey*

PART 1: INTRODUCTION:

1.1 REASONS FOR SURVEY:

PENNINE *Ecological* have been commissioned by Avalon Chartered Town Planning on behalf of the site owners, Mr & Mrs Berry, to undertake an Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of land at Knot Lane, Newsholme, Clitheroe, Lancashire.

The study is required in association with a proposal to construct six timber camping pods as part of a farm diversification project.

The study includes the following elements:

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- Hedgerow Regulations Survey.
- Badger Survey.
- Bat roost search in site trees.
- Water Vole Survey of the ditch.
- Evaluation of breeding bird potential.

The study also includes a full evaluation of the ecological significance of the survey and recommendations/precautions where appropriate.

The surveys were undertaken by Ian Ryding a surveyor with over 30 years experience in a wide range of ecological survey and assessment.

1.2 SITE LOCATION:

The site is located approximately 90m south of the junction with the A682 Hellifield Road.

Central grid reference SD 8142 5134.

The location of the study area is shown on Map 1 in the Appendix.

1.3 SURVEY METHODOLOGY:

The methodologies where specific surveys were applied are outlined below.

1.3.1 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey:

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (*Nature Conservancy Council 1990*) of the survey area was undertaken on 10th October 2018. The site's habitats were fully mapped and higher vascular plant species (where present) were recorded and given abundance values according to the standard DAFOR scale where:

- D = Dominant
- A = Abundant
- F = Frequent
- O = Occasional
- R = Rare

Where appropriate the above values can be prefixed by the letter L (locally) or V (very), to provide more subtle biogeographical data.

1.3.2 Hedgerow Regulations Survey:

(Refer to Map 2 for hedgerow locations)

The hedgerows on the boundary of the site were surveyed using The Hedgerow Regulations (1997) methodology. The full survey methodology is explained at length in document *The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 – A Guide to the Law and Good Practice (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions)*, further information is provided in the 1997 Act No. 1160 The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, Schedules 1 - 3.

The survey data presented here only relates to the Wildlife and Landscape criteria as detailed in (Part II Criteria of Schedule 1) of the above act.

1.3.3 Water Vole Survey:

The water vole survey was undertaken on the 10th October 2018. following the methodology outlined in the *Water Vole Mitigation Handbook*. Strachan et al (2016).

The survey included standard searches for animals, burrows, latrines, feeding stations and runs on the ditch on the site.

The survey was undertaken during the optimum period for water vole survey.

1.3.4 Preliminary Bat Roost Evaluation:

The preliminary bat roost survey was undertaken on the 10th October 2018 following the methodology outlined in *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)* Collins, J. Bat Conservation Trust (2016)

The survey included standard non-intrusive searches for potential roosts in trees on the site boundaries.

The inspection included the following:

- Searches for holes/fissures in trees with roost potential.
- Searches for evidence of bat use including grease/urine staining around holes and bat dropping on tree bark at the base of trees.

1.3.5 Badger Survey:

The badger survey focused on land directly affected by the proposed development and land within 50m of the site where accessible but excluding the land west of Knot Lane.

The survey used standard techniques for establishing the use of the site by badger, and includes searches for evidence of badgers including:

- Setts
- Pathways
- Footprints
- Latrines
- Foraging areas
- Scratching posts

1.3.6 Other Species:

During the survey, observations relating to the potential presence of great crested newt (GCN) in the local area was also evaluated.

The site was also evaluated in respect of breeding birds.

1.3.7 Surveyor Experience:

The surveyor and author of this report, Ian Ryding, has over 30 years experience in ecological survey and evaluation. Key skills include the following.

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and National Vegetation Classification Survey.
- Highly proficient field botanist, including some difficult plant groups.
- Breeding and wintering bird survey.
- Mammal surveys including surveys for badger, water vole*, otter*, brown hare and preliminary bat roost survey.

*Over 250km of river reaches surveyed in England.

- Extensive experience in great crested newt (GCN) survey, evaluation, licensing and mitigation. Natural England Class Licence WML-CL08 held.
- Ecological Evaluation and Impact Assessments in association with large scale commercial development and civil engineering.

1.4 SURVEY CONSTRAINTS:

There were no significant constraints to survey.

PART 2 SURVEY RESULTS:

2.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- The site is located over 2.5km from the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- There are no statutory sites (SSSI/SPA/SAC) within 5km of the site
- The site fails to meet any of the habitat guidelines for selection in respect of Biological Heritage Sites (BHS).
- The area affected by the proposal is composed of low-diversity improved grassland with mature hedgerow boundaries and a ditch.
- The habitats affected by the proposal are of 'local' (i.e. Parish) value only.
- Hedgerows are a Section 41 Habitat of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006.
- One of the hedgerows meets the criteria for important hedgerows as defined in the Hedgerow Regulations (1997).
- There are no ponds capable of supporting GCN within 400m of the site.
- The bat survey of the trees and shrubs revealed 'negligible' bat roost potential only.
- Potential bat foraging areas are present along the edges of the hedgerows.
- Impacts on potential bat foraging areas can be avoided by adequate stand-off zones and appropriate lighting controls.
- Nesting bird habitat on the site is restricted to the hedgerows, and ground-nesting bird habitat is sub-optimal due to the short/grazed sward and the overbearing presence of tall boundary hedges and trees.
- Survey of the ditch revealed an absence of any feature associated with water vole.
- The survey of the site and adjacent land revealed no evidence of use of the site by badger.

2.2 DESK BASED STUDY:

It was decided in advance that the decision to obtain biological records from Lancashire Environmental Record Network (LeRN), would be based on the findings on the field survey.

In this instance it was decided that this information would reveal little about the site that couldn't be determined by the field survey. Therefore the LeRN data is not provided.

However, the Multi Agency Geographical Information Centre www.magic.gov.uk was referred to in respect of statutory sites.

Desk based studies were also undertaken to establish the presence of ponds within a 250m radius of the site, as part of a scoping study relating to great crested newt (GCN)

2.3 EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY:

2.3.1 General Description:

The site of the proposed development forms part of two improved pastures used for stock grazing.

Hedgerows form the south, west and northern boundary, while the eastern boundary has no physical defining feature.

A narrow silted ditch runs across the northern half of the site.

The site sits within an undulating pastoral landscape typical of the Bowland fringe, and is characterised by small to medium-sized fields with boundaries formed by hedgerows, stock fences and dry stone walls.

There is no public access on the site but Knots Lane runs along the western site boundary.

2.3.2 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Target Notes:

Survey locations, Target Notes and the proposed working area locations are shown on Map 1 in the Appendix. Note: All species nomenclature follows Stace, C. (1996) 'New Flora of the British Isles' - definitive English names.

Target Note 1:

A typical improved, stock-grazed pasture dominated by a mixture of perennial rye-grass and meadow-grass spp. Yorkshire-fog and creeping buttercup are frequent, white clover and dandelion locally frequent and common mouse-ear and chickweed occasional.

Crested dog's tail is present but abundance was difficult to determine due to the uniformly grazed conditions.

Target Note 2:

A triangular stock-grazed pasture dominated by a mixture of perennial rye-grass and meadow-grass spp. Yorkshire-fog, dandelion and creeping buttercup are locally abundant, white clover and crested dog's-tail locally frequent and common mouse-ear and chickweed occasional.

Cuckooflower is very occasional.

Target Note 3:

A silted-up and cattle-poached ditch with very little water present and very restricted flora.

Floating sweet-grass is locally abundant, blinks locally frequent and brooklime occasional.

The banks are improved grassland with the community consistent with the adjacent field, although common nettle is locally frequent, and soft-rush and great willowherb are very occasional

Target Note 4:

A highly fragmented/defunct hedgerow with a grazed/dry ditch.

Hawthorn predominates and there is a grazed ground flora of Yorkshire-fog, cock's-foot, tufted hair-grass and common nettle.

See Section 2.3.3 Hedgerow Regulations Survey - Hedgerow 2, for details of this hedgerow.

Target Note 5:

A short length of flail-cut hawthorn-dominated hedgerow with occasional dog rose, elder and a single mature sycamore.

There is a dry grazed ditch and the ground flora is poor and dominated by common nettle with occasional broad buckler-fern, foxglove and red campion.

See Section 2.3.3 Hedgerow Regulations Survey - Hedgerow 3, for details of this hedgerow.

Target Note 6:

A mature hedgerow that forms the western boundary of the site.

See Section 2.3.3 Hedgerow Regulations Survey – Hedgerow 1, for details of this hedgerow.

Target Note 7:

A linear stand of dense scrub that occurs between Hedgerow 1 and Knot Lane. The scrub is dominated blackthorn and goat willow with locally dominant hawthorn and occasional hazel.

Site Photographs - Habitats:



Photograph 1: The improved pasture described in Target Note 1.



Photograph 2: The improved pasture described in Target Note 2. Looking towards the roadside hedge.



Photograph 3: Typical view of the ditch described in Target Note 3.



Photograph 4: The hedgerow (H2) described in Target Note 4.



Photograph 5: Hedgerow 3 (centre) and Hedgerow 1 (right), as described in Target Notes 5 and 6 respectively.



Photograph 6: The linear stand of roadside scrub described in Target Note 7.

2.3.3 Hedgerow Regulations Survey:

Survey Details and Results:

The hedgerows on the site were surveyed on the 10th October 2018 using The Hedgerow Regulations (1997) methodology.

Each of the hedgerows are individually described in the Phase 1 Target Notes, and for the purpose of the Hedgerow Regulations Survey the hedges are referred to as Hedgerows H1, H2 and H3 and their locations are shown on Map 2 in the appendix.

Hedgerow Descriptions and Evaluation:

Hedgerow 1:

A tall, mature and defunct native hedge that forms the boundary along Knot Lane.

The hedgerow is moderately rich in woody species and is dominated by hawthorn with locally frequent blackthorn and hazel, and occasional dog rose. Trees include occasional ash and sycamore.

There is an associated dry ditch along part of the hedge and the ground flora is composed of a mixture of dog's Mercury, wood avens, hairy brome, male-fern, broad buckler-fern, ivy, meadowsweet, greater stitchwort, red campion, bramble, crossword and hedge woundwort.

This hedgerow meets the criteria as 'important' as described in the Hedgerow Regulations.

Hedgerow 2:

A highly fragmented/defunct hedgerow that has been laid in the past and has a relict species-poor ditch.

The hedge is little more than a fragmented line of hawthorn that is grazed at the base. A single ash is present but outside of the site boundary.

The ground flora of Yorkshire-fog, cock's-foot, tufted hair-grass and common nettle.

This hedgerow fails to meet the criteria as 'important' as described in the Hedgerow Regulations Survey by a wide margin.

Hedgerow 3:

A short length of hawthorn-dominated hedge with occasional dog rose, elder and a single mature sycamore.

There is a dry grazed ditch and the ground flora is poor and dominated by common nettle with occasional foxglove, broad buckler-fern and red campion.

The hedge is flail gut.

The hedgerow fails to meet the criteria as 'important' as described in the Hedgerow Regulations Survey by a wide margin.

The hedgerow survey tables for H1, H2 and H3 are presented below.

Hedgerow Regulations Survey Forms:

BASELINE DATA:					
Project: Land off Knot Lane, Newsholme.		Surveyor: Ian Ryding	Date: 10/10/18		
Hedge No: H1	Grid Ref (centre): SD 8410 5132	Local Authority: Ribbles Valley	Total Hedge Length: 217m		
WILDLIFE / LANDSCAPE:					
Scheduled Protected or RDB Species: None.					
Woody Species (Sample/s Only): (Nb. Species in brackets are not included in Schedule 3 of the regulations as 'woody species')			No. of samples = 3		
Sample 1: Hawthorn, (Sycamore), Blackthorn, Elder, Hazel. Sample 2: Hawthorn, Hazel, Dog rose, Blackthorn. Sample 3: Hawthorn, (Sycamore), Blackthorn, Elder, Hazel.					
			Average Woody Sp. = 4		
0- 30m count all	>30 - <100m count in control 30m	100 - < 200m treat as 2x 100m	>200m treat as 3x100m		
Woodland Ground Flora: Species within 1m of hedge canopy (whole hedge)					
Woodland ground flora species recorded: Dog's Mercury, Wood Avens, Hairy Brome, Male-fern, Broad Buckler-fern.					
Other species recorded; Ivy, Meadowsweet, Greater stitchwort, Red Campion, Bramble, Crosswort, Hedge Woundwort.					
			Total Woodland Ground Flora Species = 5		
ASSOCIATED FEATURES:					
Standard Trees (Whole Hedge):		Y	N	Connections \leq 10m: () = Score	Score
\leq 50m = average 1			*	Other Hedges (1 per hedge)	4
$>$ 50 \leq 100m = average \geq 2			*	Broadleaved Woodland (2 per wood)	2
$>$ 100m = average \geq 1 per 50m			*	Pond (2 per pond)	0
Other Criteria:		Y	N	Additional Information:	
Total of Gaps $<$ 10%			*	Average Height:	5m
Bank or Wall \geq $\frac{1}{2}$ Length			*	Average Width:	3m
Ditch \geq $\frac{1}{2}$ Length		*		Laid (Past or recent):	Yes
Parallel Hedge \leq 15m			*	Gaps in Bottom (Approx %):	70%
Adjacent to significant ROW			*	Additional Fencing:	Yes
OTHER COMMENTS:					
The hedge is stock-fenced on the field side and there is no obvious sign of recent management except for vertical flail trimming on the field side.					
The hedge has moderate species diversity in terms of its woody and ground flora and forms a direct connection with four hedgerows and a linear broad-leaved woodland.					
A dense stand of secondary blackthorn/willow scrub has developed between the road and the hedgerow					
The hedgerow meets the criteria to qualify as an important hedgerow on account of its floristic/woody diversity and associated features.					

BASELINE DATA:			
Project: Land off Knot Lane, Newsholme.		Surveyor: Ian Ryding	Date: 10/10/18
Hedge No: H2	Grid Ref (centre): SD 8417 5143	Local Authority: Ribble Valley	Total Hedge Length: 226m
WILDLIFE / LANDSCAPE:			
Scheduled Protected or RDB Species: None.			
Woody Species (Sample/s Only): (Nb. Species in brackets are not included in Schedule 3 of the regulations as 'woody species')			No. of samples = 3
Sample 1: Hawthorn. Sample 2: Hawthorn. Sample 3: Hawthorn, Ash.			
			Average Woody Sp. = 1.3
0- 30m count all	>30 - <100m count in control 30m	100 - < 200m treat as 2x 100m	>200m treat as 3x100m
Woodland Ground Flora: Species within 1m of hedge canopy (whole hedge)			
Woodland ground flora species recorded: None.			
Other species recorded: Common Nettle, Yorkshire-fog, Tufted hair-grass, Cock's-foot..			
			Total Woodland Ground Flora Species = 0
ASSOCIATED FEATURES:			
Standard Trees (Whole Hedge):	Y	N	Connections < 10m: () = Score
< 50m = average 1		*	Other Hedges (1 per hedge)
> 50 < 100m = average > 2		*	Broadleaved Woodland (2 per wood)
> 100m = average > 1 per 50m		*	Pond (2 per pond)
Other Criteria:	Y	N	Additional Information:
Total of Gaps < 10%		*	Average Height:
Bank or Wall > 1/2 Length		*	Average Width:
Ditch > 1/2 Length	*		Laid (Past or recent):
Parallel Hedge < 15m		*	Gaps in Bottom (Approx %):
Adjacent to significant ROW		*	Additional Fencing:
			Score
			2
			0
			0
			3m
			2m
			Yes
			>90%
			Yes
OTHER COMMENTS:			
The hedge is grazed and gappy in the base and there is a dry ditch.			
There is no obvious sign of recent management			
The hedge is species-poor in terms of its woody/ground flora and forms a connection with two hedgerows.			
The hedgerow fails to meet the criteria to qualify as an important hedgerow by a wide margin.			

BASELINE DATA:				
Project: Land off Knot Lane, Newsholme.		Surveyor: Ian Ryding	Date: 10/10/18	
Hedge No: H3	Grid Ref (centre): SD 8416 5125	Local Authority: Ribbles Valley	Total Hedge Length: 69m	
WILDLIFE / LANDSCAPE:				
Scheduled Protected or RDB Species: None.				
Woody Species (Sample/s Only): (Nb. Species in brackets are not included in Schedule 3 of the regulations as 'woody species')			No. of samples = 1	
Sample 1: Hawthorn, (Sycamore), Dog rose, Elder.				
			Average Woody Sp. = 3	
0- 30m count all	>30 - <100m count in control 30m	100 - < 200m treat as 2x 100m	>200m treat as 3x100m	
Woodland Ground Flora: Species within 1m of hedge canopy (whole hedge)				
Woodland ground flora species recorded: Broad buckler-fern.				
Other species recorded: Common Nettle, Red campion,.				
			Total Woodland Ground Flora Species = 1	
ASSOCIATED FEATURES:				
Standard Trees (Whole Hedge):	Y	N	Connections ≤ 10m: () = Score	Score
≤ 50m = average 1		*	Other Hedges (1 per hedge)	2
> 50 ≤ 100m = average ≥ 2		*	Broadleaved Woodland (2 per wood)	2
> 100m = average > 1 per 50m		*	Pond (2 per pond)	0
Other Criteria:	Y	N	Additional Information:	
Total of Gaps < 10%		*	Average Height:	3m
Bank or Wall > ½ Length		*	Average Width:	2m
Ditch > ½ Length	*		Laid (Past or recent):	No
Parallel Hedge ≤ 15m		*	Gaps in Bottom (Approx %):	80%
Adjacent to significant ROW		*	Additional Fencing:	Yes
OTHER COMMENTS:				
The hedge is stock-fenced on the field side and there is no obvious sign of recent management other than flailing.				
The hedge is species-poor in terms of its ground flora.				
The hedge forms a direct connection with two hedgerows and a linear broad-leaved woodland.				
The hedgerow fails to meet the criteria to qualify as an important hedgerow by a wide margin.				

2.4 WATER VOLE SURVEY:

2.4.1 General Description:

There is only one 'watercourse' on the site* which is a heavily silted seasonally-wet ditch.

The ditch has very shallow pools of water only and there is no flow.

The channel is cattle poached and vegetation restricted to floating sweet-grass, brooklime, blinks and creeping buttercup.

The banks are earth and have uneven profiles due to cattle poaching and range between 30°-45° and have a height of 0.5-0.8m.

The channel is approximately 0.8m wide and has a substrate of silt overlying gravel and small cobbles.

The banks are vegetated by improved grassland.

*The ditches associated with Hedgerows 1, 2 and 3 are dry relict feature only and were not surveyed.

2.4.2 Survey Results:

The ditch (Ditch 1) was surveyed by walking along both banks, and the banks and channel searched for signs of habitation, including water vole burrows, feeding stations, latrines and runs.

No sign of current/historical water vole occupation was found and the habitat is considered to be sub-optimal for the species. Photograph 7 below shows the typical prevailing conditions in the ditch surveyed.



Photograph 7: Ditch 1 showing the general conditions present.

2.5 PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST SURVEY:

2.5.1 Survey Results:

The survey included searches of all on-site trees for potential bat roosts. The surveys were undertaken from ground level using close focusing Leica Trinovid 8x32 binoculars.

Trees:

The trees surveyed were found to be largely composed of hedgerow shrubs with no holes and fissures that could possibly be used by roosting bats.

Mature trees are restricted to a single standard sycamore in Hedgerow 3, and occasional ash and sycamore in Hedgerow 1. The search revealed no holes and fissures suitable for roosting bats in any of the mature trees.

In addition, there was no ivy cover on any of the trees and shrubs surveyed that might provide suitable roost areas for bats.

Overall, the trees and shrubs on the site have 'negligible' value for roosting bats.

2.5.2 Bat Foraging:

Bat foraging on the site is restricted to the sheltered edge of Hedgerow 1, and to a much lesser degree Hedgerows 2 and 3.

Hedgerow 1 is also directly connected to a mature linear broad-leaved woodland (off-site) to the south, which also provides potentially good foraging and possibly commuting routes for bats locally.

Based on the features present on-site together with the connected areas off-site, the foraging potential is estimated to be of 'local' value.

2.6 BADGER SURVEY:

2.6.1 Survey Details and Results:

The badger survey employed standard techniques to establish if badgers are present on site or use the site for foraging/commuting. (See Section 1.3 Survey Methodology)

The following searches were undertaken.

- Searches for setts on site and within 50m of the site. (Excluding the land west of Knot Lane)
- Searches for foraging signs and pathways.
- Boundary searches for runs, pathways and latrines.

The survey results are outlined below.

Sett Search:

The survey found no setts on the site or on the surrounding land

Search for Foraging Signs:

The site was thoroughly searched for badger pathways or signs of foraging. No sign of badger foraging activity was found therefore it can be concluded that the species is not using this area for foraging.

Boundary Search:

All of the boundaries of the site were walked and examined for potential runs, pathways and latrines.

The search revealed no runs or pathways on or around the site.

The search found no evidence of badger latrines on any boundaries, therefore the absence of latrines indicates a lack of territorial activity in the near vicinity of the site.

2.6.2 Survey Conclusions:

The survey found no evidence of historic, recent or current use of the site by badgers for foraging, commuting or occupation and the site has no specific current value to badgers locally.

2.7 EVALUATION OF OTHER FEATURES:

2.7.1 Breeding Birds:

The site was assessed in relation to its potential to support ground-nesting and non-ground-nesting birds. Each are evaluated below.

Ground-nesting Birds:

The site is largely unsuitable for ground nesting birds on account of the overbearing presence of tall hedgerows and trees that species such as skylark and lapwing avoid due to the threat of predation.

In addition, the habitat is structurally poor and composed of improved grassland that is stock grazed during the nesting season.

Taking into consideration the size of the site, the spatial configuration of trees and hedges, and the habitat type and land use, the proposal site is considered to have 'negligible' value for ground-nesting birds.

Other Species:

The hedgerows that form the boundaries of the site provide the main bird nesting habitat on the site. Hedgerow 1 has the greatest value as it is tall, dense, and connected to a linear area of dense scrub.

Hedgerows 2 and 3 offer very restricted nesting opportunities on account of their poor structure and largely limited height, which reduces the cover value of the hedges overall thus increasing the vulnerability of any species nesting in those hedges.

However, some species such as crows and magpies are able to successfully exploit such habitats, although these species are serious predators of smaller song birds and all ground-nesting species.

Species recorded during the site survey include chaffinch, long-tailed tit, robin, wren, woodpigeon, carrion crow, magpie and great tit. All but great tit are capable of nesting in the hedgerows on the site albeit in low numbers only.

Collectively based on the habitat features present the site is only capable of supporting bird populations of 'local' (i.e. Parish) value, with nesting habitat restricted to the hedgerows only, and mainly Hedgerow 1 overall.

2.7.2 Great Crested Newt Evaluation:

There are no ponds on-site and the nearest ponds are located approximately 476m and 636m east of the site boundary.

The ponds were not visited as given the distance of the proposal site from the ponds, and lack of connectivity in the form of suitable habitat, the likelihood of impacts arising from the development is considered to be remote.

2.7.3 Impact Risk Zones:

Whilst there are no direct impacts on any of the statutory sites locally, Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) Guidance was also consulted in relation to this project.

The SSSI IRZs can be used by Local Planning Authorities, developers and consultants in relation to planning applications, '*The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts. The IRZs also cover the interest features and sensitivities of European sites, which are underpinned by the SSSI designation and "Compensation Sites", which have been secured as compensation for impacts on Natura 2000/Ramsar sites.*'*

*SSSI Impact Risk User Guidance - see www.magic.gov.uk

The list of development categories and associated potential risks are as follows.

GUIDANCE – How to use the Impact Risk Zones

1. DOES PLANNING PROPOSAL FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW?

2. IF YES, CHECK THE CORRESPONDING DESCRIPTION(S) BELOW. THE LPA SHOULD CONSULT NATURAL ENGLAND ON LIKELY RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:

All Planning Applications

Not applicable.

Infrastructure

Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.

Wind & Solar Energy

Not applicable.

Minerals, Oil & Gas

Not applicable.

Rural Non Residential

Not applicable.

Residential

Not applicable.

Rural Residential

Not applicable.

Air Pollution

Livestock & poultry units with floor space >500m², slurry lagoons >750m² & manure stores >3500m².

Combustion

Not applicable.

Waste

Not applicable.

Composting

Not applicable.

Discharges

Not applicable.

Water Supply

Not applicable.

Conclusions:

Using the IRZ guidance outlined above, the proposals fall well outside any category of the IRZ criteria as cited above, therefore in line with the current guidance provided, there is no requirement for the LPA to consult Natural England in respect of the potential impacts generated by the proposals.

PART 3 SUMMARY EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS:

3.1 SUMMARY EVALUATION OF FINDINGS:

The field survey and evaluation of the site revealed the following information.

- There are no statutory sites (SSSI/SPA/SAC) within 5km of the site.
- The site is located over 2.5km from the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- The site fails to meet any of the habitat guidelines for selection in respect of Biological Heritage Sites (BHS).
- The area affected by the proposal is composed of low-diversity improved grassland with mature hedgerow boundaries and a ditch.
- The habitats affected by the proposal are of 'local' (i.e. Parish) value only.
- Hedgerows are a Section 41 Habitat of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006.
- One of the hedgerows meets the criteria for important hedgerows as defined in the Hedgerow Regulations (1997).
- There are no ponds capable of supporting GCN within 400m of the site.
- The bat survey of the trees and shrubs revealed 'negligible' bat roost potential only.
- Potential bat foraging areas are present along the edges of the hedgerows.
- Impacts on potential bat foraging areas can be avoided by adequate stand-off zones and appropriate lighting controls.
- Nesting bird habitat on the site is restricted to the hedgerows, and ground-nesting bird habitat is sub-optimal due to the short/grazed sward and the overbearing presence of tall boundary hedges and trees.
- Survey of the ditch revealed an absence of any feature associated with water vole.
- The survey of the site and adjacent land revealed no evidence of use of the site by badger.

The evaluation of the survey findings are summarised further below.

3.1.1 Statutory Sites:

There are no statutory sites within 2.5km of the site and there are no direct or indirect impacts on those sites as a result of the proposals.

Natural England's IRZ guidance was consulted which returned no risk of impact.

3.1.2 Vegetation/habitats:

The proposal site is composed of common habitats only, including improved grassland, a seasonally wet ditch and hedgerows only. Hedgerows are S41 Habitats and one of the hedgerows is 'important' in respect of the hedgerow Regulations (1997).

The habitats are of 'local' (i.e. Parish) ecological value only.

3.1.3 Water Vole:

The survey found no evidence of current or historical occupation by water vole on the reach surveyed. Conditions are also considered to be sub-optimal due to the prevailing environmental conditions, mainly the lack of water and level of cattle poaching.

The site is also isolated from any other watercourse.

3.1.4 Bats:

All of the trees and shrubs on site are restricted to the hedgerows, all of which were surveyed without any significant constraint.

Bat roost potential has been evaluated as 'negligible' in all of the trees and shrubs on the site.

Bat foraging is restricted to the sheltered edges of Hedgerow 1, and to a much lesser degree Hedgerows 2 and 3.

Hedgerow 1 is also directly connected to a mature linear broad-leaved woodland (off-site) to the south, which also provides potentially good foraging and possibly commuting routes for bats locally.

Based on the features present on-site, together with the connected areas off-site, the foraging potential is estimated to be of 'local' value.

3.1.5 Badger:

The site has no badger setts and no sign of habitation, foraging or any use by badger was found on the site.

3.1.6 Birds:

The site provides potential nesting habitat for common passerines that typically use hedgerows and trees for nesting.

Based upon the features observed on the site, the site's limited size of the site and a broader evaluation of birds known use the habitats available, the site has minor nesting value for low numbers of common songbirds not exceeding 'local' (i.e. Parish) value.

In regard to ground-nesting species, there is no suitable ground-nesting bird habitat for the following reasons.

- The overbearing presence of tall hedgerows and trees that species such as skylark and lapwing avoid due to the threat of predation.
- The grassland habitat is structurally poor and composed of improved grassland that is stock-grazed during the nesting season.

Overall, given the limited size of the site, the spatial configuration of trees and hedges, and the habitat type and land use, the proposal site is considered to have 'negligible' value for ground-nesting birds.

3.1.7 Great Crested Newt:

Based on the absence of any ponds with the potential to support GCN within 470m, and the absence of suitable terrestrial habitats for GCN on the site, no impacts on GCN or its habitat are predicted.

3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following section outlines any mitigation or precautions required in respect of the survey findings.

3.2.1 Vegetation/Habitats:

No further surveys or provisions are recommended for the site, however should the extent of the proposal area change, any additional areas of land will require Extended Phase 1 Survey.

3.2.2 Water Vole:

Water vole were not found during the study, and given the prevailing conditions observed in the ditch no further surveys or precautions are required.

3.2.3 Bats:

Bat roost potential has been evaluated as 'negligible' in all of the trees and shrubs on the site. Therefore in line with the guidance provided in the BCT Guidelines, no further surveys are required.

Any changes to the site boundary will require a preliminary roost survey of any additional trees affected by the proposals.

In regard to foraging areas, it is simply advised that light spillage into the hedgerow corridors is avoided. If such light control is implemented then bats (if present) will continue to forage and commute along the hedgerows, and impacts will be 'negligible'.

3.2.4 Badger:

Badger are absent on site and no further surveys or precautions are recommended unless there are proposals that will affect additional areas of land. If such changes to the extent of the development footprint occur then full badger surveys are required.

3.2.5 Birds:

Nesting bird habitat is restricted to the hedgerows on the site.

Therefore any works affecting trees or shrubs should be done outside of the breeding season during September-February inclusive.

Works in the period March-August should not be undertaken unless the trees/shrubs have been checked by an ecologist for nesting birds and found to be absent.

3.2.6 Great Crested Newt:

No impacts on GCN or its habitat are predicted and no further surveys or precautions are recommended.

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APPENDIX:

Map 1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map
Map 2: Hedgerow, Water Vole, Badger & Bat Survey



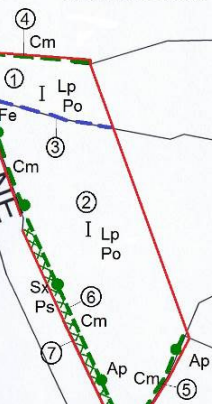
Stankes Hall Farm

Newsholme

A682

KNOT LANE

NB. The scrub described in TN 7 extends northwards for several metres but is too narrow to represent on the map.



Key:

- Dense scrub
- Improved grassland
- Seasonally wet ditch
- Native hedge with trees - defunct
- Target notes 1 - 7
- Study area boundary

Species Codes:

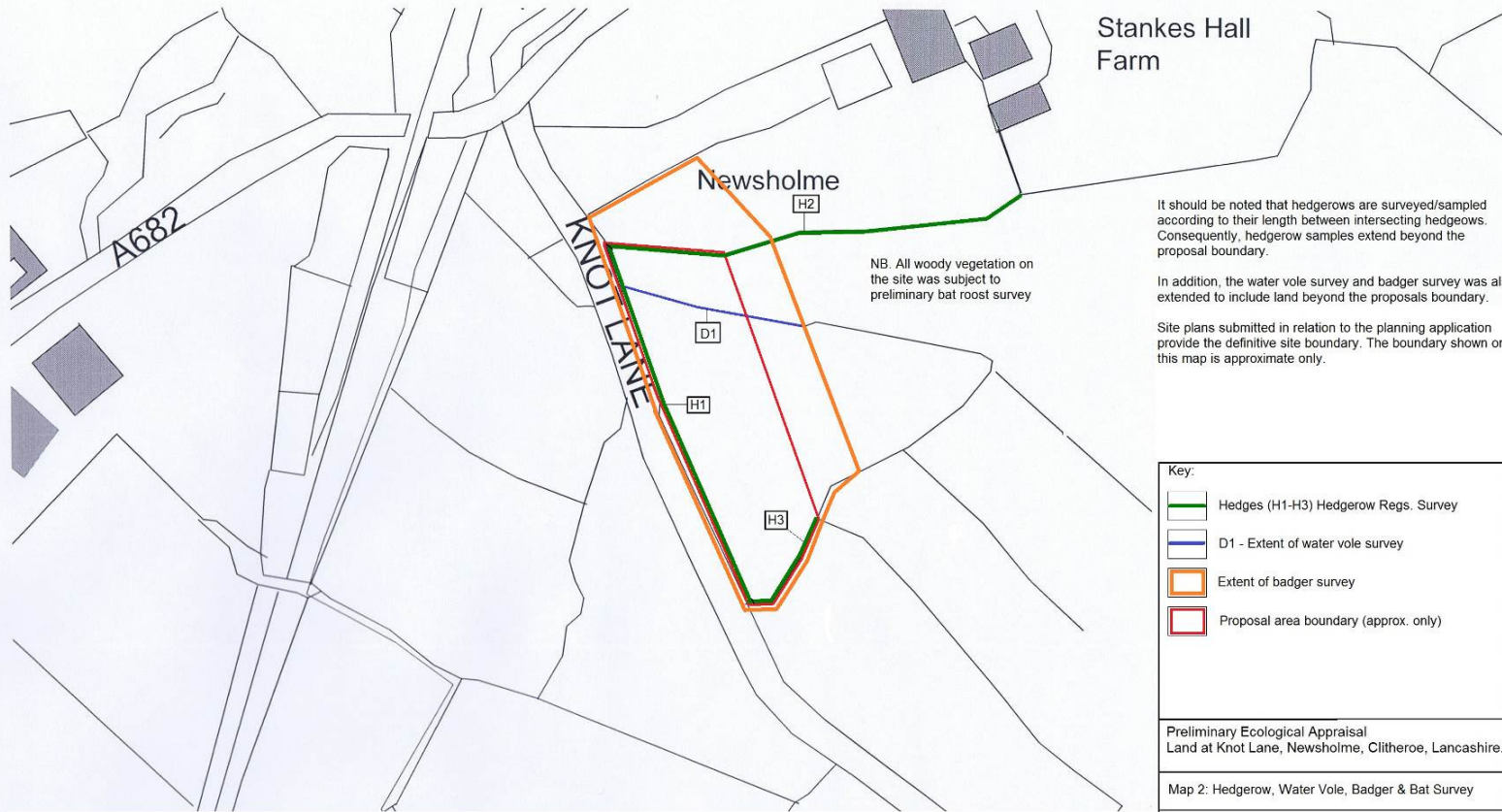
- Ap Sycamore
- Cm Hawthorn
- Fe Ash
- Lp Perennial rye-grass
- Po Meadow-grass spp.
- Ps Blackthorn
- Sx Willow spp.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Land at Knot Lane, Newsholme, Clitheroe, Lancashire.

Map 1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map

Scale: Not to scale Drawn: IR Date: 10.10.18

PENNINE 1 Moss Cottage
North Road
Bretherton
Leyland
Lancashire
PR28 9AY
01772 600441
www.pennineecological.co.uk



NB. All woody vegetation on the site was subject to preliminary bat roost survey

It should be noted that hedgerows are surveyed/sampled according to their length between intersecting hedgerows. Consequently, hedgerow samples extend beyond the proposal boundary.

In addition, the water vole survey and badger survey was also extended to include land beyond the proposals boundary.

Site plans submitted in relation to the planning application provide the definitive site boundary. The boundary shown on this map is approximate only.

Key:	
	Hedges (H1-H3) Hedgerow Regs. Survey
	D1 - Extent of water vole survey
	Extent of badger survey
	Proposal area boundary (approx. only)

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Land at Knot Lane, Newsholme, Clitheroe, Lancashire.

Map 2: Hedgerow, Water Vole, Badger & Bat Survey

Scale: Not to scale Drawn: IR Date: 10.10.18

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