Leigh Ecology Ltd

Protected Species and Habitat Surveys

Land off Clitheroe Road,

Barrow,

Lancashire,

BB7 9AL

Ecological Walkover

On behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Hindle and Mr. Westall

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Introduction

Leigh Ecology Ltd has been commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Hindle and Mr. Westall to undertake an ecological appraisal of two sites identified for the development of dwellings and associated infrastructure.

The site comprises two parcels of land, located on Clitheroe Road, Barrow, Lancashire, grid reference: SD736 378 – centre point.

A site walkover survey was carried out on the 16th September 2020, by Roy Leigh ACIEEM and Christian Leigh.

This is a short walkover report following the full ecological appraisal issued in July 2018, the walkover covered two small parcels of land, parcel (A) and parcel (B), as shown below.

Site Location and extent

Site Survey

The objective of the walkover was to assess the current status of the proposal site and assess the nature conservation status and any potential habitat for protected species within the site.

The walkover methodology followed those proposed in JNCC Extended Phase 1 methodology. The walkover survey comprised an assessment on the full proposal site and buffer area, to ensure that all potential impacts on receptors is covered.

The building located in parcel (B) was surveyed for bat potential using BCT bat survey methodology during the site survey.

The site visit was undertaken on 16th September 2020 in bright, calm conditions with moderate (10-20%) cloud cover.

Picture 1: This vista is looking north, from the centre of the site, the field is poor semi improved grassland.

Picture 2: The field is currently ungrazed. Given the make-up of the habitat and sward length, it appears to have been unmanaged this spring.

Picture 3: The site is bounded by post and rail fences; a mature broadleaf plantation occurs outwith both the southern boundary and eastern boundary.

Picture 4: A section of marshy grassland occurs on the site, comprising soft rush and marsh marigold.

Picture 5: A number of timber buildings occur on site; the buildings offer negligible potential for bats, given their lack of roost habitat.

Picture 6: A veteran lime tree occurs within the eastern section of the Parcel (A); the tree offers some bat roost potential.

Habitats

The habitats and extent have been mapped and are shown on *figure 2* below.

The parcel (A) is a single, rectangular parcel of land that has been used for grazing animals over time, which has left the land parcel with more diverse vegetation.

The majority of the parcel (A) is improved grassland, made up of red clover (Trifolium pratense), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), cuckoo flower (*Cardamine pratensis*), bent grass (*Agrostis sp*.), perennial rye grass, cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus Lanatus*), creeping soft grass (*H. mollis*), and tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*).

A damp marshy area occurs within the centre south area, TN1, this area comprises of some previously mentioned species, in addition soft rush (*Juncus sp*.) and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*).

Along the south and eastern boundary, several trees overhang the site from the adjacent woodland.

A number of animal housing buildings occur on the site; the buildings are wooden structures with no wall cavities, roof space or any potential roost features.

Two mature trees occur in the eastern section of the proposal site, a lime tree and a chestnut tree. The lime tree contains some potential roost features.

Land Parcel (B) is a triangular parcel of land. Within the parcel occurs a small building, hard standing car park, small areas of semi improved grassland and wooded plantation overhanging the southern boundary.

The building on site was assessed for bat potential, and given its make-up and sealed condition, it can be deemed as negligible potential.

The site is bounded by post and wire fencing, also a post and rail fence cuts across the site.

Protected Species

No signs of badger activity were recorded on the sites during the survey (there is a small sett in woodland south of the sites) and no bat roost potential occurs on site or within the buildings. However, the adjacent woodland may offer some commuting and foraging habitat for bats. It is therefore recommended that this be considered when designing the landscape proposals for the proposed development.

Additionally, given that some potential bird-nesting habitat occurs within hedgerows on the site, a bird nest check and reasonable avoidance measures should be employed if the work is undertaken within the bird-breeding season, April -August.

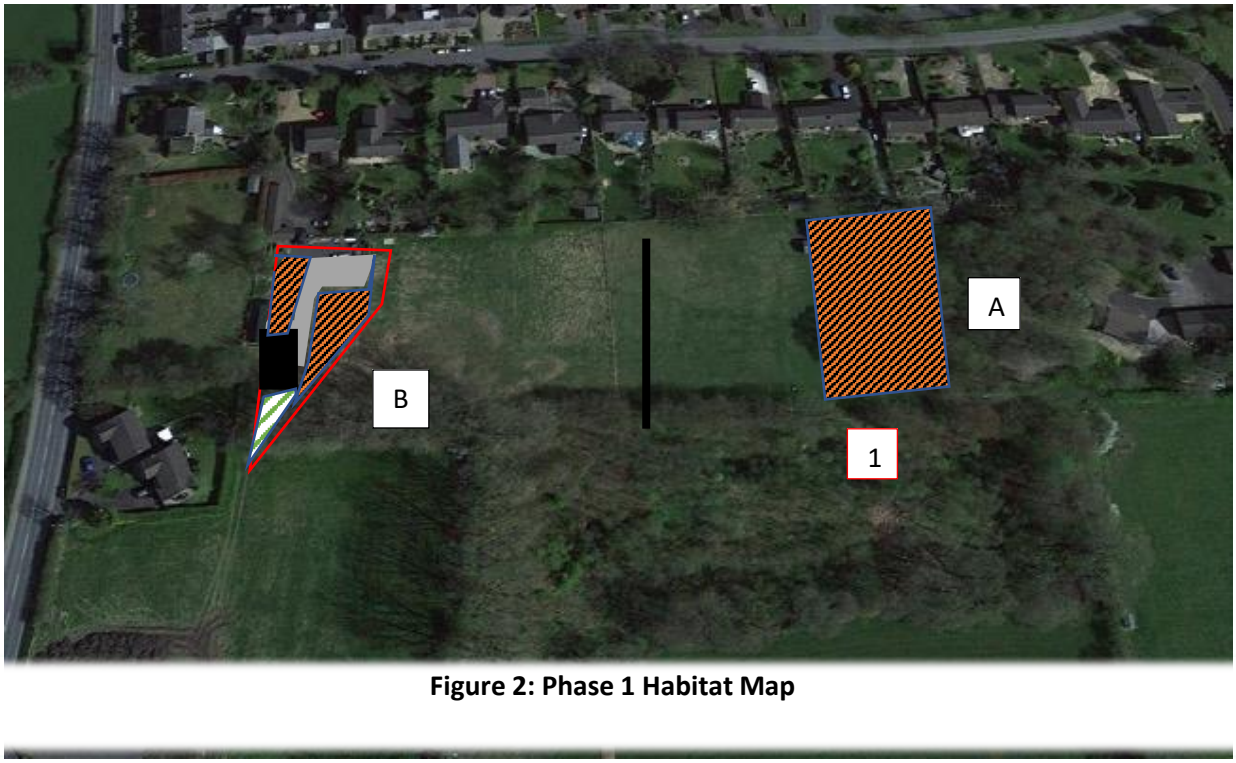

Figure 2: Phase 1 Habitat Map

Habitat Key

Poor Semi Improved Grassland	
Hard Standing	
Building	
Fence	
Tree	
Target Note	1

Conclusions

The site is a green field site situated within a phased development area; it is located east of current housing development sites. The areas east and south of the site boundary comprise of broadleaf plantation woodland, beyond this is pasture fields.

The proposal site is a poor, semi mature grassland field previously grazed. The buildings occurring on site offer no bat roost features.

The area is of low importance from a nature conservation perspective; the only constraint may be the potential for bat usage of the trees on site, in particular, the impact on foraging and roosting. It is suggested that the landscape proposals take this into account within the designs. Once the designs are finalised, the ecologist should be consulted to ensure that the loss of habitat and the increase in artificial lighting have little impact on the local bat population.

Also, as nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1982, and if works are planned during the bird nesting season, checks should be undertaken by a competent ecologist. If nests are confirmed, a safeguarding method statement should be agreed with the developer, ecologist and the Local Planning Authority.