



Date: 17th May 2018.

Land off Clitheroe Road, Barrow, Lancashire BB7 9AL Phase 3 Application

Introduction

Leigh Ecology Ltd has been commissioned by Reilly Developments to undertake an ecological appraisal of a site identified for the development of dwellings and associated infrastructure.

The site is a piece of land located off Clitheroe Road, Barrow, Lancashire, grid reference: SD736 378 – centre point.

A site walkover survey was carried out on the 16th May 2018, by Roy Leigh ACIEEM.

This is an interim report; a full comprehensive report will be issued following the receipt of the ecological data.

Site Survey

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

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

The site visit was undertaken in bright conditions with moderate (10-20%) cloud cover and calm.



Figure 1 Proposal Site Location and Extent



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



Plate 2 *The field is currently ungrazed, however given the makeup of the habitat and sward length it seems to have been unmanaged this spring.*



Plate 3 *The site is bounded by post and rail fences, a mature broadleaf plantation occurs outwith the southern boundary and eastern boundary.*

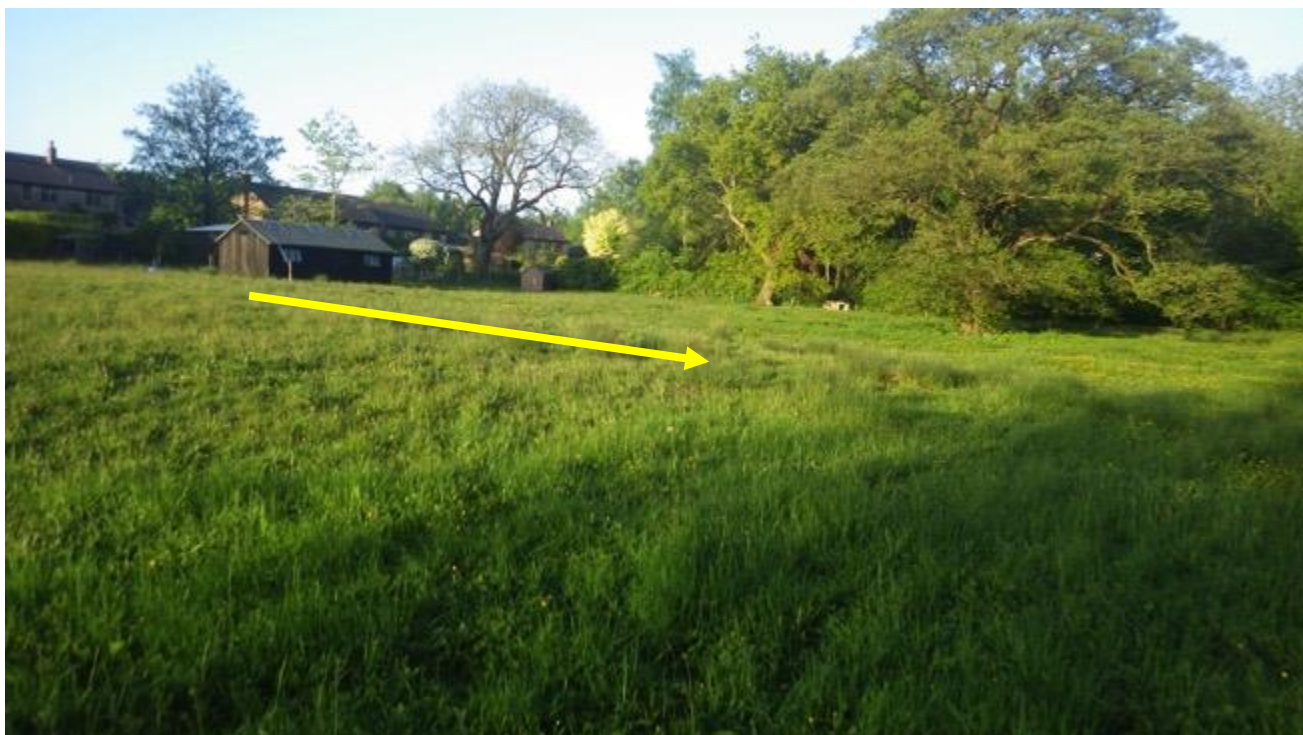


Plate 4 *A section of marshy grassland occurs on the site, comprising soft rush and marsh marigold.*



Plate 5 *A number of timber buildings occur on site these are low potential for bats, given their lack of roost habitat available.*



Plate 6 A veteran lime tree occurs within the eastern section of the site, the tree offers some bat roost potential.

Habitats

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

The site 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 site 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, these 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 TN2 and a chestnut tree, the lime tree contains some potential roost features.

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

Protected Species

The proposed development will result in the loss of approximately 1.75 acres.



No signs of badger activity were recorded during the survey, no bat roost potential occur on the site, however the adjacent woodland may offer some commuting and foraging habitat for bats, therefore, this should be considered when designing the landscape proposals for the proposed development.

Additionally, given that some potential bird-nesting habitat occurs within hedgerows within 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	
Marshy Grassland	
Woodland Plantation	
Building	
Fence	
Tree	
Target Note	

Target Notes

TN1	Marshy Grassland – Photograph 4
TN2	Mature Lime Tree – Photograph 6

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 of the bat usage of trees, 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, and if nests are confirmed a safeguarding method statement should be agreed with the developer, ecologist and the Local Planning Authority.

8 Hall Drive, Higher Marston, Northwich, Cheshire. CW9 6DT.

Office tel. 01606 892032. Mob. 07815 711678. Directors: R.S. Leigh. J.J. Leigh.