

OTTER MONITORING SURVEY REPORT

NOVEMBER 2024

Standen Phase 5 and 6,
Littlemoor Road,
Clitheroe,
BB7 1HF

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G R E E N



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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Prepared By:	Jake Healy	Signature:		Qualifications:	Ecologist, MSc, ACIEEM
Checked By:	Barnaby Indio Gardner	Signature:		Qualifications:	BSc. MEnvSci, Assistant Ecologist.
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Legend: <div><div></div> Red Line Boundary</div>	0.85 <div></div> Kilometers	<div><div>N</div><div></div></div>
Client: Taylor Whippey	Issue: 01	
Project: Standen Phase 5&6	Scale @ A4 1:10,000	
Title: Site Context	Approved by: AH	Checked by: HM
Drawing Ref: UG_1451_SITE_CONTEXT	Author: CL	Date: 21/05/2024

URBANGREEN

A: Ground Floor, The Tower,
Deva City Office Park, Trinity Way,
Manchester M3 7BF

T: +44 (0) 161 312 3131
wearurbangreen.co.uk



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Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- XX

Access Denied
- Pendleton Brook
- Potential Otter Holt/ Resting place



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Client: Taylor Wimpey		
Project: Standen		
Title: Otter Monitoring Map		
Issue: 01	Figure: 02	
Drawn: CL	Checked: JH	Approved: JH
Project: UG1451	Scale @ A3: 1:2500	Date: 25/11/2024
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Figure 3. Photographs of the Site



Photograph 1: View of Pendleton Brook flowing past southern boundary of site



Photograph 2: Potential holt feature 1



Photograph 3: Cavity space under potential holt feature 1



Photograph 4: Potential holt feature 2



Photograph 5: Cavity space under potential holt feature 2



Photograph 6: Ceiling collapse of potential holt feature 2



Photograph 7: Evidence of dog within close proximity to potential holt feature 1 (regular occurrence)



Photograph 8: Evidence of dog within close proximity to potential holt feature 1 (regular occurrence)



Photograph 9: Grey squirrel activity recorded by trail camera



Photograph 10: Blackbird activity recorded by trail camera



Photograph 11: Grey heron activity recorded by trail camera

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Scheme

- 1.1.1.1 Taylor Wimpey is proposing the development of a residential estate in two phases, with associated hard and soft landscaping and areas of public open space (POS) at their site in Standen, Clitheroe.
- 1.1.1.2 Urban Green has been appointed to undertake Otter (*Lutra lutra*) Monitoring Surveys at the site, following recommendations based on previous survey work undertaken on site.

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1.1 The site is located at National Grid Reference SD 74382 40702 and comprises a total area of approximately 17.2ha (see Figure 1).
- 1.2.1.2 The site is located on the rural-urban fringe of Clitheroe town, which is present approximately 1km north of the site. An un-named tributary of Pendleton Brook (a tributary of Mearley Brook which flows into the River Ribble) is present on site running north to south-west through the centre of the site.
- 1.2.1.3 Pendleton Brook borders the south of the site running from east to west. The River Ribble is located approximately 1.5km west of the site, with Mearley Brook present approximately 350m west of the site. Residential properties are located to the north, north-west and west of the site with arable grassland present on all other aspects. Areas of woodland are present within the wider area to the south of the site. The A59 is present approximately 600m east of the site.

1.3 Purpose of Report

- 1.3.1.1 The purpose of this report was to demonstrate the survey results of the otter monitoring completed at the site. Any otter holts, couches, or slides and/or field signs are described, and their locations are represented.
- 1.3.1.2 Potential impacts of the developments are detailed, and relevant mitigation procedures are recommended to minimise potential impacts upon the species. Mitigation measures will be completed through Precautionary Workings and/or a Natural England Mitigation, if required, and associated works, prior to, during and post-construction phases of the proposed development.

2 Ecology Background

2.1 Previous Ecological Surveys

2.1.1.1 A suite of ecological surveys has been conducted on site since 2022 by Urban Green. These surveys/reports include:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Barn Owl Surveys
- Bat Surveys
- Breeding Bird Surveys
- Invertebrate Surveys
- Kingfisher Surveys
- Otter Surveys
- Reptile Surveys
- Water vole Surveys
- White-Clawed Crayfish Surveys

2.2 Otter Survey (Urban Green, 2023)

2.2.1.1 Urban Green conducted an otter survey on site in April 2023, where a ~1km section of Pendleton Brook - where access was permitted - was searched for the presence of otter such as spraints, holts, footprints, feeding remains, slides (into water) and couches (above-ground resting areas) according to best practice guidance (Chanin, 2003).

2.2.1.2 Otter spraints were identified within the search area, as were two potential otter holt features. The potential holts were present immediately adjacent to the site.

2.2.1.3 Further monitoring surveys were recommended to assess the status of these potential otter holts and inform relevant mitigation.

3 Methods

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1.1 A desk study was carried out before the surveys as part of the PEA (Urban Green, 2022) to identify waterbodies and contextual information within and adjacent to the Survey Area.
- 3.1.1.2 This included a review of aerial photographs and the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website.
- 3.1.1.3 Lancashire Environmental Records Network (LERN) was also contacted to ascertain whether any records of otters within a 1km radius of the Survey Area had been submitted.

3.2 Monitoring Survey

- 3.2.1.1 A period of monitoring was undertaken on site between 6th June 2024 and 18th July 2024, spanning a 7-week period.
- 3.2.1.2 Feature 1, which was identified as a potential otter holt during the initial otter survey carried out in 2023 (Urban Green, 2023), was selected for focused monitoring.
- 3.2.1.3 The monitoring included the deployment of a trail camera positioned on a tree neighbouring Pendleton Brook facing towards the potential holt feature. The camera was angled in a manner that targeted the feature and was set to record continuously during the deployment period.
- 3.2.1.4 The SD cards and batteries in the trail camera was replaced fortnightly and any footage recorded was reviewed.

3.3 Constraints to the Survey

- 3.3.1.1 Whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.
- 3.3.1.2 Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect species presence such as time of year, weather, migration patterns and behaviour. Otter surveys can be carried out at any time of year; however, the optimum time for surveying is between mid-April and September. As the survey and assessment were undertaken at an optimal time of year, there are no seasonal constraints to the survey results.
- 3.3.1.3 Upon returning to the site for monitoring, the second feature previously identified as a potential holt was deemed unsuitable to support otters due to the ceiling of the feature having collapsed, therefore it was not monitored as part of the survey.

4 Results

4.1 Desk Study

- 4.1.1.1 Five records of otter were received in the data search carried out by Urban Green (2022) as part of the PEA.
- 4.1.1.2 All records were located within 650m of the site and along Pendleton Brook. With the closest record located approximately 150m west of the site associated with an underpass of Whalley Road dated 2019.

4.2 Monitoring

- 4.2.1.1 The trail camera recorded no evidence of otter activity at the potential holt location throughout the monitoring period.
- 4.2.1.2 The review of footage captured activity from other species, such as grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), blackbirds (*Turdus merula*), dogs (*Canis familiaris*) and members of the public.

4.3 Assessment

- 4.3.1.1 The absence of recorded otter activity suggests that the monitored feature is unlikely to be actively used as a holt or other resting site by otters.
- 4.3.1.2 The regular activity of dog walkers and their dogs in the immediate vicinity likely significantly reduces the suitability of the feature to act as a reliable holt/resting place. The regular presence of dogs within this particular stretch of Pendleton Brook poses a level of disturbance which is unlikely to be tolerated by otters.
- 4.3.1.3 As such, following the monitoring period, coupled with the results of the previous otter survey (Urban Green 2023), breeding otters and their resting places are deemed absent from the survey area.
- 4.3.1.4 However, otters have been confirmed to utilise Pendleton Brook, through the data search and previous otter surveys (Urban Green, 2023).
- 4.3.1.5 Notwithstanding this, there is a low likelihood of impact to otter during the construction phase of the project.

4.4 Mitigation

- 4.4.1.1 To avoid indirect impacts to the species during the construction phase, it is recommended that a Precautionary Method of Works (PMoW) document (or similar) should be produced for otter. This will be used by an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) during construction works. A PMoW could be used to inform a CEMP, should the project require one.
- 4.4.1.2 This document should clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of the ECoW and site operatives during the construction works, in the context of commuting otter. In particular, it should account for open excavations and other practices that could negatively impact these species.

5 References

Chanin P (2003). Ecology of the European Otter. Conserving Natura 2000

Urban Green (2022). Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Standen Phase 5 and 6. Ref: UG_1451_ECO_PEA_o1

Urban Green, (2023). Otter Survey Report of Standen Phase 5 and 6. Ref: UG_1451_ECO_OSR_o1