

Ecological Walkover Survey

Site Address: Anzio Camp, Blackshaw Moor, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8TL

Client Name: Brownshore Management

Reference: Ecological Walkover Survey

Date: 29th July 2026

Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Brownshore Management to undertake a Ecological Walkover Survey at Anzio Camp, Blackshaw Moor, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8TL (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform an Outline permission for redevelopment of the former Anzio site for residential dwellings, retail business, amenity space, internal roads, and associated hard/soft landscaping, including the principal means of vehicular access from the A53 Buxton Road (all other matters reserved) (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

An Ecological Walkover was completed by Arbtech Consulting Ltd, on 14th October 2025. This survey found the site to comprise other neutral grassland, patches of modified grassland, buildings and other broadleaved woodland.

Site Location and Landscape Context

The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference SK 0059 5705 and has an area of approximately 12ha. The site comprises 17 buildings, with surrounding woodland and unmanaged grassland, with concrete roads and pedestrian paths. The site consists of a disused military camp, which is currently used for airsoft/outdoor recreational activities. The buildings are all disused and in a state of disrepair. It is situated ~250m south of the village of Blackshaw Moor and sits adjacent to the east of the A53 road. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape consisting of grassland with hedgerow and tree lined boundaries, with several woodland swathes in close proximity to the site. Water bodies can be found nearby, such as Tittesworth Reservoir located ~1.8km to the west. Such features likely enhance the area for a variety of species, including bats, amphibians and reptiles. A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2.

Survey Methodology

The survey was undertaken in dry and sunny conditions with temperatures just over 26°C on 29th July 2026 by Consultant Ecologist Victoria Walters BSc (Hons) MSc FISC 3.

The aim of the survey was to assess the condition and species content of the habitats on site, particularly the woodland and grasslands, as the previous ecological walkover was undertaken outside of the optimal surveying season.

On-site habitat descriptionsu1b5- Buildings

There are 15 buildings on site. Full details of the buildings are found within the Ecological Walkover (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, 2025). The buildings appear to remain in the same condition as the previous visit.

u1b- Developed land, sealed surface

There is an access road and paths on site comprising tarmac and concrete.

u1e- Built linear features

There is a large wall which wraps around one of the buildings. The wall is 3m high, comprising brick and mortar.

g3c- Other neutral grassland (Subject to change pending Phase 2 Botany)

There are parcels of other neutral grassland present on site, comprising two larger areas and scattered smaller areas between the woodland parcels and buildings. The sward height within most of the grassland was varied, depending on shade cover from the adjacent woodland and proximity to the paths, from under 7cm to over 15cm. Within the larger parcels of grassland, the sward height reached 50cm, with tall fescue and false oatgrass inflorescences reaching 100cm consistently throughout the habitat type. Species include tall fescue (A), yorkshire fog (A), perennial ryegrass (A), false oatgrass (F), creeping buttercup (F), cocks' foot (F), common bent (O), meadow foxtail (O), common self-heal (O), ribwort plantain (O), horse tail (O), common knapweed (O), spear thistle (O), Common sorrel (O), tufted hairgrass (O), bramble (O), creeping buttercup (O), cow parsley (O), hogweed (R), **heath fragrant orchid (R)**, common vetch (R).

Habitat condition assessment:

- A. The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species **PASS**
- B. Sward height is varied **PASS**
- C. Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5% **PASS**
- D. Cover of bracken is less than 20% and cover of scrub is less than 5% **PASS**
- E. Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage accounts for less than 5% **PASS**
- F. There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present **FAIL**

Habitat condition score: **Moderate**

w1g- Other woodland; broadleaved

The site is dominated by other broadleaved woodland, which is currently unmanaged. Most of the woodland parcel has an understorey comprising dense bramble scrub, patches of other neutral grassland and tall herbs. Species include sycamore, beech, hazel, oak, elder, alder, hawthorn, rowan, silver birch, and cherry. There are also localised areas of willow. Rhododendron was found thorough the woodland. There is a small area comprising ~10 ash trees which has succumb to ash dieback.

Habitat condition assessment:

- A. Two age classes were present
- B. No significant browsing damage was evident
- C. Rhododendron present >10% cover
- D. Five or more native species present
- E. 50-80% of canopy and scrub species are native
- F. 21-40% of the woodland has temporary open space
- G. One or two age classes present
- H. Dieback present
- I. Recognisable NVC layer present
- J. Two storeys across survey plots
- K. No veteran trees present
- L. 50% of the plots had deadwood
- M. No nutrient enrichment of damaged ground present

Habitat condition Score: **Moderate**

h3h- Mixed scrub

Mixed scrub is present on site, within the complex of buildings and woodland. This habitat is unmanaged, and in one parcel, an invasive schedule 9 listed cotoneaster (*C. horizontalis*) is present in a large quantity. Species include bramble (A), sycamore (F), hazel (F), alder (O), rosebay willowherb (O), greater willowherb (O), spear thistle (O), common dogwood (O), grey willow (O), goat willow (O), common sorrel (O), bird cherry (R), hogweed (R), rose (R), oak (R) and broom (R).

Habitat condition assessment:

- A. The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type PASS
- B. Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature are all present PASS
- C. There is an absence of invasive non-native species FAIL (Cotoneaster)
- D. The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs PASS
- E. There are clearings, glades or rides present FAIL

Habitat condition score: Moderate

Scattered trees [g3c 32 and h3h 32]

Outside of the woodland, there are 18 scattered trees, as detailed below:

Tree ID	Species	Size (Diameter at Breast height in cm)	Criteria passed *	Habitat condition score
T1	Goat willow	80	A, B, C, D, E, F	Good
T2	Black poplar	50	A, B, C, D, E, F	Good
T3	Black poplar	50	A, B, C, D, E, F	Good
T4	Black poplar	50	A, B, C, D, E, F	Good
T5	Alder	20	A, B, D, F	Moderate
T6	Alder	20	A, B, D, F	Moderate
T7	Alder	15	A, B, D, F	Moderate

T8	Oak	15	A, B, D, F	Moderate
T9	Oak	15	A, B, D, F	Moderate
T10	Beech	150	A, B, C, D, E, F	Good
T11	Beech	100	A, B, C, D, E, F	Good
T12	Silver birch	10	A, B, C, D, E, F	Good
T13	Field maple	35	A, B, D, E, F	Good
T14	Field maple	35	A, B, D, E, F	Good
T15	Field maple	35	A, B, D, E, F	Good
T16	Field maple	35	A, B, D, E, F	Good
T17	Field maple	35	A, B, D, E, F	Good
T18	Field maple	35	A, B, D, E, F	Good

*The criteria within the Condition assessment as below:

A. The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native).

B. The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5m wide (Individual trees automatically pass this criterion).

C. The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).

D. There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities. And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.

E. Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.

F. More than 20% of the tree area is oversailing vegetation beneath.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Given that this survey recorded heath fragrant orchid during late-July drought conditions, a targeted Phase 2 botanical survey (NVC/ Detailed Botanical Assessment) with focus on the grassland and orchid species, is recommended during optimal flowering window (May -June) to accurately map the full extent of the orchid population, detect earlier flowering species and establish the overall botanical value, classification and condition of the grassland.

All other recommendations outlined within the original Ecological walkover (Arbtech 2025), in relation to protected species, habitats and surrounding habitats remain valid and should continue to be followed to mitigate potential impacts.

Author

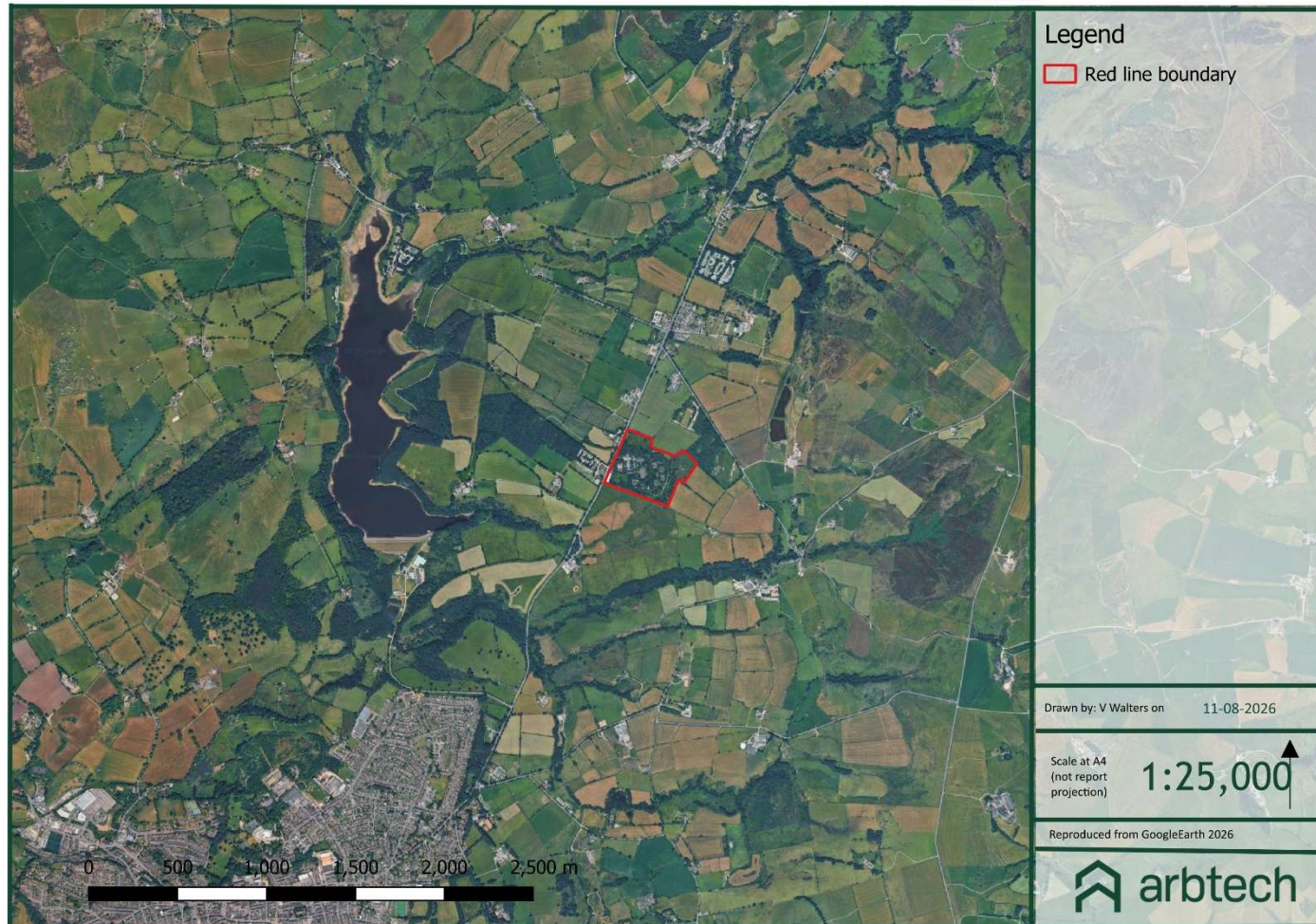
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Appendix 3 – Habitat Map

