

# EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY FORM



## 1.0 GENERAL DETAILS

Site Name	Site 63, Horsecroft Farm		
Job Number	3938	Doc. Ref	3938.001
Site Location	Land off Tittesworth Avenue, Leek		
Date(s)	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2013		
Surveyor(s)	Lee Greenhough		
Weather	Dry, overcast		
Seasonal Constraints	N/A		
Methods	JNCC Phase 1 Habitat Survey 2010		
Drawing Ref:	G3938.001 Phase 1 Habitat Survey		
Target Notes:	Within this document		

	Written	Checked	Authorised
Initial	SK	MW	MW

## 2.0 SURVEY RESULTS:

### HABITATS

Habitat Type	Target Note(s)	Description
Poor semi-improved grassland	TN1	The majority of the site is poor semi-improved grassland. The field has been heavily grazed and become nutrient rich resulting in low species diversity. The area is dominated by Yorkshire fog ( <i>Holcus lanatus</i> ) with abundant red fescue ( <i>Festuca rubra</i> ), dandelion ( <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.) and creeping buttercup ( <i>Ranunculus repens</i> ). Other species present include nettle ( <i>Urtica dioica</i> ), cleavers ( <i>Galium aparine</i> ) and cock's-foot ( <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> ).
Species-poor intact hedge	TN2	<p>Towards the northern corner of the site is a species-poor intact hedgerow dominated by hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>). Other woody species include elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>) and ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>). Ground flora species recorded include hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>), cleavers, cow parsley (<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>) and nettle.</p> <p>Along part of the eastern boundary are stretches of privet () hedgerow.</p>

Habitat Type	Target Note(s)	Description
Scattered Scrub	TN3	There is an area of scattered scrub towards the north western part of the boundary dominated by grey willow ( <i>Salix cinerea ssp. cinerea</i> ).
Scattered trees	N/A	Throughout the site, particularly in the northern corner are scattered trees including goat willow ( <i>Salix caprea</i> ), and a row of sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> ).

## FAUNA

Species	Description
Nesting birds	<p>The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird, or to take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.</p> <p>Scattered trees, scrub and hedgerows on site provide ideal habitat for breeding birds. Any removal of these habitats should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive). Where this is not possible, deterrent measures (such as netting) should be installed during the winter months prior to start of works. Alternatively an inspection by an ecologist should be undertaken immediately prior to tree/scrub removal. Any active nests found must be left undisturbed until the chicks have fledged and left the nest.</p> <p>Any loss of suitable breeding bird habitat should be reinstated within the landscape proposals.</p>
Great crested newts	<p>There is a pond located approximately 20m from the north western boundary which may have potential to support great crested newts. Aerial imagery suggests that the pond is isolated from other ponds, however, there are no barriers to amphibian migration into the site.</p> <p>A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment is recommended to determine whether the presence of great crested newts is likely.</p> <p>Following on from this, desktop information will be reviewed to determine whether further GCN surveys are required.</p> <p>Please be advised that the survey season for great crested newt surveys commences in mid-March. A minimum of 4 visits would be required, with two of the visits undertaken between mid-April and mid-May. If great crested newts are identified during the presence/absence survey a development licence from Natural England will be required. In order to apply for a licence two further surveys will be required in order to obtain a population estimate.</p>

Species	Description
Roosting bats	<p>There is a single semi-detached building located at the entrance of the site. A ground level visual assessment of the building confirms it may have the potential to support roosting bats in loft spaces, ridge beams or around ducting and cladding. It is a criminal offence to kill, injure or disturb bats, obstruct access to bat roosts, or to damage or disturb roosts (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).</p> <p>Prior to commencement of works on site, a thorough bat inspection of the building should be carried out by a licensed bat consultant to determine the presence/absence of roosting bats.</p>

### 3.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The site is located off Tittesworth Avenue, Leek with approximate central grid reference SJ 990 574. It is currently occupied by semi-improved grassland, bounded by fences and hedgerows with scattered trees and scrub. Beyond the south western boundary is a Site of Biological Importance (SBI); Ball Haye Green Disused Tip. This provides good habitat links between the site and the wider countryside. A buffer zone may be required to be incorporated into the design to maintain habitat links and prevent disturbance to the habitats and species within the SBI. An assessment of the habitats immediately adjacent to the SBI will be undertaken during a 2<sup>nd</sup> site walkover and any recommendations regarding the buffer will be assessed.

#### Site proposals

The grassland on site will be cleared to facilitate the construction of new housing, with associated hardstanding and soft landscaping.

### 4.0 SUMMARY:

#### Protected sites and habitats

Desktop information has not yet been obtained. However, Ball Haye Green Disused Tip (SBI) is located outside of the western boundary.

#### Protected species

No field signs of protected species were noted during the site visit. However, there is a pond located 20m from the north western boundary. A HSI assessment of the pond is required to determine the possibility of the presence of great crested newts. Following on from this, further surveys may be required as detailed overleaf. The single semi-detached building requires demolition to facilitate the development. A full internal inspection is required prior to works commencing to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats. The trees, scrub and hedgerows on site offer potential nesting habitat for certain species of bird. As any UK nesting bird and their nest are protected, removal or pruning of

trees and hedgerows should ideally be completed outside of the nesting bird season (March – August inclusive). If this is not possible an inspection of the trees/hedgerows by an ecologist will be required prior to removal.

Please note that full desktop records from the local record centre have not yet been obtained. Although unlikely, results may indicate the requirement for further protected species surveys.

#### **Invasive species and protected plants**

No non-native invasive species were noted on site during the site survey.

## **5.0 TARGET NOTES REPORT:**

### **Species frequency**

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

### **Target notes**

<b>TN1</b>		
Semi-improved grassland with low species diversity.		
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	D
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	A
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	A
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	Dandelion	A
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	F
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	F
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Nettle	F
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	O
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	O
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel	O
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock	O
<i>Conopodium majus</i>	Pignut	R
<i>Ficaria verna</i>	Lesser Celandine	R
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed	R
<b>TN2</b>		
Species-poor intact hedgerow.		
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	D
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow Parsley	A
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	A
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed	F
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	F
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	F
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Nettle	F
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	R
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	R
<b>TN3</b>		
Scattered scrub along the north west boundary		
<i>Salix cinerea</i> ssp. <i>cinerea</i>	Grey Willow	D
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	F



**Key**

Target notes

Scattered scrub

Scattered broad-leaved trees

Species-poor intact hedge

Fence

MG

Species-poor modified neutral grassland

SI

Poor semi-improved grassland

Private House/Garden

Hardstanding

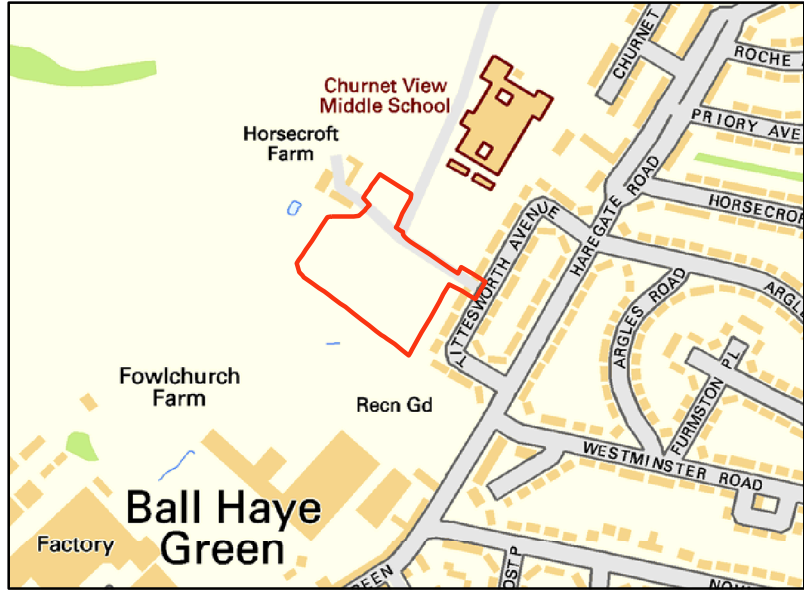
Scattered scrub

Ap

Sycamore

Sxc

Goat Willow



Base map supplied by client  
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown  
copyright and database right 2013

TEP

Genesis Centre  
Birchwood Science Park  
Warrington WA3 7BH  
Tel 01925 844004  
Fax 01925 844002  
email tep@tep.uk.com

Project:  
Site 63 - Horsecroft Farm, Leek

Title:  
Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Map No.  
G3938.001

Scale:  
1:750 @ A3

Date:  
25/06/13

Drawn:  
CM

Checked:  
KS

Approved:  
LG