

LAND WEST OF NEW STREET, LITTLEBOROUGH

CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN: BIODIVERSITY

July 2022



Report Control Sheet

Project Name: Land West of New Street, Littleborough
Project Reference: CW20-144
Report Title: Construction Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity
Report Reference: CW20-144 RPT 004
Printing Instructions: Print at A4 Portrait, Double Sided.

<i>Rev</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Prepared</i>	<i>Reviewed</i>	<i>Approved</i>
/	17/05/2022	Draft report sent to Client for comment.	KB	OC	OC
	25/07/2022	Final	OC	OC	OC

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE & PURPOSE

1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd was commissioned by Russell Homes to produce a Construction and Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity (CEMP). The plan has been produced in support of the planning application. This report has been prepared to support a planning application at the site. The proposals are for a residential development within the site. A large area of Public Open Space is proposed to the northeast of the site, to form a "Village Green" area

1.1.2. The author of this report is Katie Bird MEnvSci ACIEEEM Principal Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. Katie is highly experienced in managing complex residential schemes and has produced many Management Plans and carrying out measures outlined in Plans.

1.1. LOCATION

1.1.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the site location. The site is located on the southwest of the town of Littleborough within the metropolitan area of Rochdale. The Rochdale Canal lies less than 200m from the site boundary to the southeast and Hollingworth Lake less than a kilometre beyond that. The immediate surrounding area is urbanised as it stretches towards Littleborough and beyond that within 5km is dominated by agricultural land.

Figure 1.1 Site Location



1.2. OBJECTIVES

1.1.3. The objectives of the CEMP includes:

- Demonstrate the responsible persons and lines of communication, as detailed in Section 4.
- Demonstrate the role and responsibilities on site of Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) and details of when the ECoW is required to oversee specific works as part of the construction phase.
- Demonstrate the potential impacts on protected/notable fauna and habitats anticipated and confirmed to be on site, in relation to the proposed construction activities.
- Demonstrate the proposed retention of habitats in order to maintain the site's ecological value for local wildlife

using protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

- Describe the provision and maintenance of shelter for protected/notable species during the construction phase using protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.
- Demonstrate the locations of 'Biodiversity Protection Zones' and outline the working methods to be followed during the construction phase, regarding retained habitats and associated fauna.
- Outline monitoring procedures of ecological features within the site during the construction phase where necessary.
- The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.

2 BASELINE CONDITIONS

2.1. PREVIOUS SURVEYS AND ASSESSMENTS

2.1.1. A series of ecological surveys and assessments have been undertaken at the site in 2021 and 2022 by Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. Surveys have included:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) completed in March 2022.
- Great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys completed in June 2021.
- Badger (*Meles meles*) survey during the PEA. Please refer to Appendix for the location of badger setts.
- Breeding bird surveys completed in 2021.
- Invasive species survey completed in May 2020.
- Bat activity surveys currently being completed from May-September 2021.

2.1.2. The PEA and relevant protected species reports detail the ecology surveys completed and considers the potential impacts of the development during the construction and operational phases. This plan has been produced to demonstrate that the mitigation measures within the PEA will be adopted.

2.2. ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS

2.3.1. Please refer to Table 2.1 summarising the ecological constraints identified and anticipated to be on site, and the potential risks of the proposed development during the construction phase.

Table 2.1 Ecological Constraints and Potential Risk Summary

Ecological Constraint	Potential Risk	Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy
Designated Sites		
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The boundary of this site is located approximately 300m south of the site.	Potential for the indirect impact of designated sites during the construction phase through accidental pollution events and dust deposition.	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).
Habitats and Flora		
Notable habitats	Present on-site and adjacent including; waterbody (WB1), woodland, scattered trees and hedgerow.	N/A
Non-native invasive species	Himalayan balsam (<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>) was previously recorded on site throughout.	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) under Section 14 (2) (a) to "plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild" any species listed on Schedule 9, Part II of the Act.
Fauna		
Common Amphibians	It is anticipated they utilise the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and onsite water features for breeding purposes. The woodland, hedgerow and scrub habitats also have value for overwintering.	Common toad are listed as species of Principal Importance in England, as defined by Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006).
Bats (Roosting)	Four trees were identified as having low bat roosting potential and require removal to facilitate development. Potential damage/removal and/or disturbance to	The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and by UK law by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

	trees with bat roosting potential on site, may cause an offence, should they require removal.	
Bats (activity)	The bat activity surveys completed identified the residential gardens off Whitegate facing the horse paddocks along with the hedgerows in the centre of the site possess the highest value for bats. The water body would also be a suitable feature for foraging purposes and potentially a drinking resource though that was not identified during the surveys.	The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and by UK law by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
Breeding birds	The broadleaved woodland, waterbody, scrub and scattered trees provide nesting opportunities for passerine species.	With certain exceptions, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act receive further protection.
Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>)	Deemed likely present on site, due to the presence of unmanaged habitats present on site which may provide resources for foraging and shelter.	Listed on the UK BAP species in 2007 and is on the Biodiversity Lists for England and Wales.
Badger	Confidential details have been submitted.	Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

3 CONTROL OF WORKS

3.1. SITE OPERATIONS

- 3.1.1. All operations on site will be the overarching responsibility of the site manager. The project ecologist will consult with the site manager to ensure that all site staff are appropriately inducted to the site and are aware of their legal responsibilities regarding wildlife legislation. Updates, regarding ecology, between the project ecologist and site manager are to be completed every quarter year.
- 3.1.2. The project ecologist will ensure that the site manager is aware of all working methods relevant for each phase of works. It will be the site manager's responsibility to ensure all site contractors are aware and competent to undertake these works.
- 3.1.3. The ECoW will supervise works where necessary, as detailed in Section 5. All works will be recorded within a site diary which will be reviewed periodically by the project ecologist. Any issues will be reported immediately to the project ecologist, and where necessary works may be paused to explore alternative methods.

3.2. ECOLOGICAL CLERK OF WORKS

- 3.3.1. A suitably qualified ecologist will be employed as an official ECoW on site and will be responsible for undertaking all ecologically sensitive works on site, including undertaking any required Toolbox Talks and supervision work.
- 3.3.2. They will also be the nominated person of contact when required and responsible for the following during the construction phase of development:
- Undertaking nesting bird checks pre-vegetation clearance on site, under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
 - Providing advice to developers and contractors when desired on how best to minimise impacts on site biodiversity throughout the construction phase of development if necessary.
 - Where deemed necessary, giving Toolbox Talks on protected species and sensitive habitats to contractors carrying out works within the site. These will cover all potential protected species, invasive species and habitats relevant to the site and what to do should any such flora or fauna be discovered during the works.
 - Carry out pre-commencement and supervision works as outlined in Section 5, to minimise risk of breaching relevant legislation.
 - Being the main point of contact should any issues relating to ecology arise during site construction.
 - The ECoW will be provided with an updated programme of works to determine watching brief requirements and the associated ecological issues before commencement of any development related activities on site.
- 3.3.3. If the ECoW identifies any issues in relation to ecology or considers that the CEMP is not being adhered to at any point during construction, the developer will be contacted, and measures will be taken to resolve any issues. If the ECoW or construction team identifies any ecological issues themselves, the ECoW will be contacted for advice immediately.

4 MANAGEMENT PLAN

4.1. GENERAL POLLUTION CONTROL MEASURES

- 4.1.1. Measures will be taken throughout the construction phase to avoid pollution incidents, which may indirectly affect terrestrial, or offsite aquatic habitats and associated protected/notable fauna. Pollution prevention and control strategies will be adhered to at all times. Any accidental damage to the adjacent habitats or fuel spillages within proximity to the site and/or adjacent habitats will be reported to the site manager and the ECoW.
- 4.1.2. Net fencing will be placed along the southern aspects of the site. The fencing will minimise debris and dust from entering the Rochdale Canal SSSI.
- 4.1.3. Installation of silt control devices will be used to catch sediment/water run-off where appropriate to the south of the site. The proposed regular checks, to be completed by the site manager, will ensure the installed silt control devices are in place and are effective. The silt control devices will be replaced, or additional devices installed, if silt run-off is evident. Site management will take a key role in ensuring silt control devices are effective to minimise the potential impacts of the construction phase on Rochdale Canal SSSI.
- 4.1.4. Retained habitats are to be appropriately fenced as 'Biodiversity Protection Zones' and all staff personal undertake a site induction on their working limits in regard to protected species and habitats within the vicinity of the site, including detail of the Rochdale Canal SSSI. The fencing will also need to be in order within the appropriate Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

4.2. GENERAL LIGHTING CONTROL MEASURES

- 4.3.1. Lighting is to follow the protocols outlined in the Institute for Lighting Engineers document "Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting" (2005) and BCT's "Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK" (2018). The construction lighting may impact species on site and within the local area which are sensitive to light. Directional lighting will be achieved by angle and orientation of beam, use of a cowl, louvre or other light shield, or a combination of these.
- 4.3.2. Construction lighting is not to be directed towards retained habitats and surrounding habitats including:
- Broadleaved woodland habitats, scattered trees, hedgerows to be retained and incorporated within the landscape designs.
 - Rochdale Canal located 300m south of the site.
 - Offsite residential gardens

4.3. HABITATS

BROADLEAVED WOODLAND AND SCATTERED TREES

- 4.3.3. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) demonstrates the extent of tree removal to be completed as part of the site clearance works. Temporary protective demarcation fencing will be used to protect trees that are being retained. The fencing must extend outside the canopy of the retained trees and must remain in position until all plots have been developed to ensure protection is provided throughout the construction phase. Relevant protection measures are detailed within the AIA.
- 4.3.4. The fencing will be in accordance with BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations.
- 4.3.5. Should any trees become a safety concern, then the appointed Arboriculturist and the ECoW will be contacted immediately to advise further with respect to the future of the tree and any consideration (such as bats and birds) that need to be given.

AQUATIC HABITATS

4.3.6. The general pollution control measures detailed in Section 5.1.1 are to be implemented to minimise risk of pollution impacts of water features offsite.

4.3.7. The following working methods are to be completed during the construction phase:

- All site machinery and materials will be appropriately stored away to avoid accidental spillage.
- All operational plant will be kept well maintained.
- Turning off plant machinery when not in use.

4.3.8. WB1 will require removal to facilitate development. If the waterbody is to be found to be holding water, prior to its removal, it is to be removed under ECoW supervision. It is to be drained down via pump operated at low speed fitted with a fine mesh filter or a trench dug into the bank of the ditch, from which the water can be drawn off. A fine mesh screen is to also be fitted over the mouth of the trench to facilitate amphibian capture. Amphibians can be caught by netting as draining takes place and by hand searching through plants, debris and silt when the pond is dewatered.

4.3.9. The removal of WB1 is to be completed outside of the breeding season for amphibians (March to June, inclusive) should it be identified holding water during this season. Whilst a nesting bird check will be completed, should it be removed during the nesting bird season (March to September, inclusive).

4.4. NON-NATIVE INVASIVE FLORA

4.4.1. Himalayan balsam was present across the site. It is to be removed as part of the site construction phase. All invasive species are to be eradicated following the relevant Environment Agency guidance. The Canal and River Trust approval will be required for treatment in proximity to the canal.

4.5. FAUNA

AMPHIBIANS

4.5.1. Common amphibians are anticipated to utilise WB1 breeding purposes. The woodland, hedgerows and scrub were assessed as providing suitable hibernation resources also.

4.5.2. The removal of WB1 has considered the potential presence of amphibians and the methods of its removal will be implemented to minimise impacts of the species group, as detailed in Section 5.2.2.

4.5.3. Areas of dense scrub and hedgerows are to be removed under ECoW supervision and are to be strimmed to 300mm (considers presence of hedgehog also). The areas of scrub will be inspected for presence of amphibians prior to clearance and if found they will be removed from the construction site to suitable habitat.

4.5.4. Storage of materials/waste is best undertaken on areas of hard standing or bare ground. Waste is best stored in skips or removed off site as soon as possible to avoid creating refuges which could be utilised by amphibians. Mounds of soil are to be compacted around the base to avoid creating refuges which amphibians and reptiles could utilise.

4.5.5. Site working is to avoid the creation of temporary waterbodies which may be attractive to amphibians. For this purpose, excavations can be backfilled as soon as possible following creation, or fitted with ramps to allow a means of escape. A check for the presence of amphibians is advisable before excavations are infilled.

BATS (ROOSTING)

4.5.6. Four trees were assessed as having low bat roosting potential. They are to be removed following the soft-fell technique as outlined within Collins (2016). It includes the removal of limbs which are lowered to the ground gently, with the crevice facing upwards on the ground for a least 24 hours to allow for any potential roosting bats to escape. The removal is to be undertaken under supervision of the ECoW.

BATS (ACTIVITY)

- 4.5.7. Potential lighting impacts may occur on commuting and foraging bats. The bat activity surveys completed, identified common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) on site. The bat activity surveys completed identified the residential gardens off Whitegate facing the horse paddocks along with the hedgerows in the centre of the site possess the highest value for bats. The water body would also be a suitable feature for foraging purposes and potentially a drinking resource though that was not identified during the surveys.
- 4.5.8. Security lighting during construction is to be appropriately placed to avoid retained habitats which are of value for foraging and commuting bats.

BREEDING BIRDS

- 4.5.9. As stated within the PEA and the Breeding Bird Report, broadleaved woodland, scrub and scattered trees provide nesting opportunities for passerine species. The grassland habitats provide limited value for ground nesting birds due to disturbance of recreational use of the site. However, the presence of ground nesting birds, particularly breeding waterfowl were identified during the surveys.
- 4.5.10. Any necessary vegetation clearance required (including grassland and WB1) should be undertaken outside the breeding bird season of March to September, inclusive. If not possible, the ECoW will be present to undertake a nesting bird check of vegetation to be removed, including grassland to consider potential ground-nesting birds, within 48 hours of clearance works.
- 4.5.11. Active nests will be protected, and a buffer marked out with appropriate fencing (such as Heras fencing), until the young have fledged. The ECoW will determine the required buffer area based on species and status of breeding condition.

HEDGEHOG

- 4.5.12. During site clearance, the areas scrub is to be cleared under ECoW to ensure no sheltering hedgehogs are impacted by the works. If hedgehogs are located, they will be carefully moved by hand to the retained woodland and covered by debris. The PWMs provided in Section 5.4.1 also apply to minimising the risk to hedgehogs.

BADGER

- 4.5.13. Confidential mitigation has been submitted separately to the council regarding badger mitigation.

5 SUMMARY

5.1.1. The plan has demonstrated the following:

- The aim and objectives of the CEMP have been demonstrated.
- Information for how the ecological features within the site will be protected throughout development has been detailed throughout the CEMP.
- Timing of workings regarding vegetation clearance and topsoil removal, has considered protected/notable species which may be present within the features of interest.
- Detail the role of the ECoW have been provided and the report demonstrates when the ECoW will be required during the construction phase.
- Set out roles and responsibilities for works to ensure protected/notable fauna and habitats are not significantly impacted by the proposed construction works.
- Working measures to be completed throughout the construction phase have been detailed to minimise potential impacts on badgers, breeding birds, amphibians, common hedgehogs and bats.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Institute of Lighting Engineers (2005). Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light.
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TIMING OF WORKS			
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES	ACTION	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITIES
PRE-CONSTRUCTION/SITE CLEARANCE			
Erection of protection fencing	Installation of fencing to protected retained/adjacent habitats, Rochdale Canal SSSI where required. Installation of net fencing and pollution control fencing (silt/waffles), and appropriate signage where required to the north and south to protect nearby by SBI sites and adjacent habitats. Twice annual checks of fencing will be completed by the ECoW to ensure the works detailed in the Plan are being followed and remedial measures will be completed by the site manager where required.	Prior to Construction Phase	ECoW and Site Manager
General pollution measures	Measures will be taken throughout the construction phase to avoid pollution incidents, which may indirectly affect habitats and associated protected/notable fauna, as detailed in Section 5.1.1.	Prior and during Construction Phase	ECoW and Site Manager
General lighting control measures	Directional lighting will be achieved by angle and orientation of beam, use of a cowl, louvre or other light shield, or a combination of these, as detailed in Section 5.1.2.	Prior to Construction Phase	Site Manager
Toolbox Talk	Toolbox talk to be completed by the ECoW in relation to the 'Biodiversity Protection Zones', badgers, breeding birds, amphibians and bats.	Anytime of the year – completed when relevant.	ECoW and Site Manager
Vegetation Clearance - Nesting bird checks	Vegetation removal is to be completed outside of the breeding bird season (March to September, inclusive). If this is not possible, the area will be subject to a nesting bird check by the ECoW, within 48 hours to works commencing. If a nest (or nest in construction) is found, a suitable stand-off area will be maintained. The suitable stand-off will be decided by the ECoW and will be designated as a temporary 'Biodiversity Protection Zone'.	March to September (if required)	ECoW and Site Manager

Control of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam	Eradication of invasive species by a qualified contractor.	Anytime of the year	Specialist contractor and ECoW (if required)
Vegetation Clearance – Hedgehogs and Amphibians	PWMs for amphibians and hedgehogs (detailed in Section 5.4.1 and 5.4.6) during the removal of debris/wood piles, and removal of dense scrub.	November to April (if required).	ECoW and Site Manager
Updated badger survey	Updated badger walkover of habitats on site and within 30 m of the site boundary immediately prior to works commencing on construction phase. If a new badger sett located, relevant protection measures to be put in place by ECoW.	Anytime of the year	Contractors, supervised by ECoW (if required)
DURING CONSTRUCTION			
Removal of WB1	Removal of WB1 as detailed within Section 5.2.2, should it be identified holding water.	June to February, if holding water.	Contractors, supervised by ECoW (if required)
Vegetation Clearance - Nesting bird checks	Vegetation removal is to be completed outside of the breeding bird season (March to September, inclusive). If this is not possible, the area will be subject to a nesting bird check by the ECoW, within 24 hours to works commencing. If a nest (or nest in construction) is found, a suitable stand-off area will be maintained. The suitable stand-off will be decided by the ECoW and will be designated as a temporary 'Biodiversity Protection Zone'.	March to September (if required)	ECoW and Site Manager
Badger monitoring	Ongoing monitoring of badger activity during the construction phase by contractors/site manager. PWMs detailed in Appendix 4 are to be followed throughout the construction phase. If a badger sett is identified, a 20 m buffer is to be maintained and the ECoW contacted immediately.	Throughout construction phase	Site Manager
Retained Habitats Protection	Pollution control measures detailed in Section 5.2 are to be followed throughout the construction phase.	Throughout construction phase	Site Manager



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