



STOCK NOOK HOUSE BARNS, HEYWOOD.

OS REF: SD 8484 0859.

BAT SURVEYS.

Ref No: 230746/BAT.

Date: 6th September 2023.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. There are plans to convert three barns off Dr Fold Lane, Heywood into residential properties. A previous Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken by Tyler Grange Group Ltd in April 2022 and assessed two of the barns as low potential for roosts bats and one of the barns as moderate potential for roosting bats. This report was reviews as part of this assessment.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd were commissioned to carry out the follow up bat surveys to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. The dusk emergence and dawn swarming surveys were carried out on 12th July, 3rd August and 5th September 2023. This report outlines the findings of these surveys, makes appropriate recommendations and includes a mitigation strategy for the proposed works.

1.4. Appendix I of this report provides additional information on bats and the protection afforded to them and is designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The buildings were thoroughly checked internally and externally for potential bat roosting sites by looking for the following signs: -

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat droppings.
- * Prey remains.
- * Staining on external walls.

2.2. Unless otherwise stated, all lofts were accessed and inspected using a high-powered torch and where necessary an endoscope.

2.3. A thorough external inspection was carried out from ground level for any gaps or openings in the roof and ridge tiles, behind soffits and fascia's and in the walls of the structure for suitable roost access points and field signs to indicate possible use by bats.

2.4. All window cills, walls and the ground around the structure were checked for signs of bat droppings or staining to indicate possible use by bats. Where necessary, ladders were utilised to gain access within the limits of health and safety. Any access constraints encountered are outlined within the following report.

2.5. All survey work was carried out in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)*, with an assessment of the buildings suitability for roosting bats made in accordance with these guidelines.

2.6. All surveyors were equipped with Batbox Duet bat detectors, or similar. The use of static recording devices such as Anabat SD2's and video cameras with infrared lights were also utilised where appropriate.

2.7. 2.16. The subsequent bat surveys were carried out by teams of surveyors lead by the following ecologists who hold Natural England class surveys licences for bats:

Survey 1: Ruth Georgiou BSc, MCIEEM. Since 2004 Ruth has had experience in a professional capacity as a Wildlife Consultant carrying out ecology surveys and phase I habitat surveys. As a full member of CIEEM Ruth is subject to peer review on an annual basis. Ruth holds Natural England survey licences in respect of bats, great crested newts and white clawed crayfish and has held her own or has been named ecologist on site specific licences for badgers, great crested newts and bats. She also

holds a degree in Environmental Science (BSc) and has successfully completed a number of courses run by CIEEM, BCT and FSC in the relative protected species, carrying out phase I habitat surveys and BNG assessments.

Survey 2: Derek Whitcher who has over twenty years' experience of surveying for wildlife and has run his own wildlife consultancy since 1998. He has extensive experience of a wide variety of survey techniques for a variety of species of protected wildlife supplemented by attendance on a wide range of training courses through CIEEM, FSC and BCT. As a member of CIEEM he is committed to continuous professional development, a continual process of learning and career development, a condition of CIEEM membership. He holds current Natural England, CCW and NRW survey licences for, bat, great crested newt and white clawed crayfish.

Survey 3: Mitchel Greenhalgh, an ecological consultant with an array of experience in conducting surveys on a variety of flora and fauna in a professional capacity. Mitchel holds a level two Natural England survey licence in respect of bats (2022-10386-CL18-BAT) and great crested newts, a NatureScot licence in respect of bats and Natural England class licences for various invertebrates. He has attended courses run by CIEEM and the FSC. Mitchel also holds a BSc in environmental science attained from the University of Leeds and he is an associate member of CIEEM.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A desktop data search was carried out with the Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC) for records of bat and bat roosts within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. There are fifteen roost records for bat sp, Common Pipistrelle and Pipistrelle sp, all located in excess of 600m from the survey area.

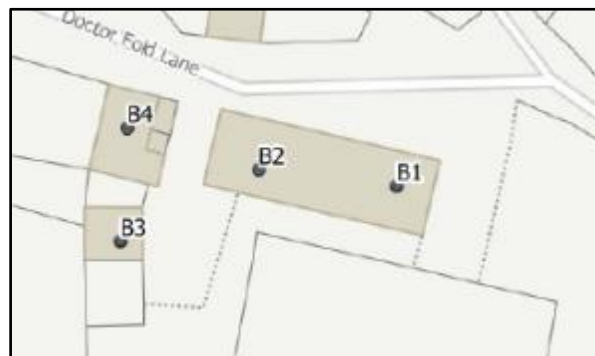
3.1.3. There are also various records of 'bats other signs', again in excess of 600m from the survey area, including Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long Eared, Whiskered, Daubentons, Noctule and myotis sp.

3.1.3. None of these records are relevant to the survey area.

3.1.4. The PRA reports a record of a Natural England EPS licence to cover works impacting on a Common Pipistrelle roost approximately 550m from the survey area.

3.2. Site Description.

3.2.1. The survey area comprises three barns of Dr Fold Lane, Heywood. The survey area is shown marked below in red. The barns have been split into four separate buildings, consistent with the initial PRA prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd. The diagram below is an extract from the PRA to show the buildings surveyed.



3.2.2. The surrounding area comprises open grazing land with fragmented hedgerows and some commercial/residential areas further afield.

3.3. Survey Results.

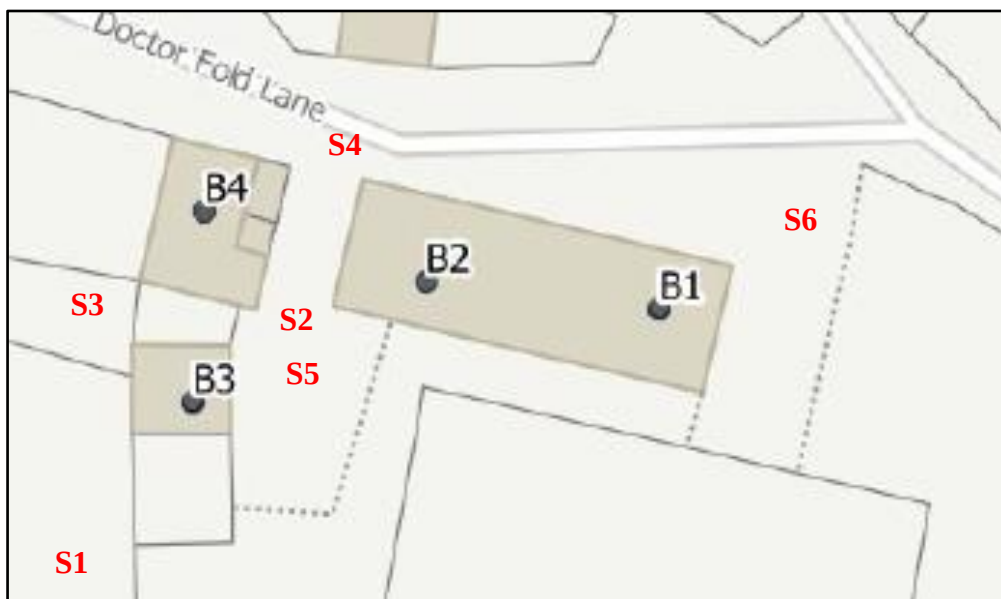
3.3.1. The daytime survey has been undertaken by Tyler Grange Group Ltd during April 2022. The status of the buildings were found to be the same during the 2023 surveys with no significant changes therefore the findings of that report still stand.

3.3.2. Buildings 1, 3 and 4 were assessed to provide low potential for roosting bats and Building 2 provide moderate potential.

3.3.3. Dusk Emergence Survey Results 12th July 2023.

3.3.3.1. Six surveyors carried out a dusk emergence survey of Buildings 1, 2 3 and 4 on the evening of 12th July 2023. The evening was fine and dry with a temperature of 15°C at 21:30. There was a slight breeze throughout the survey, that gusted at no more than 5mph. Sunset was at 21:34 and the survey commenced at 21:05.

3.3.3.2. The surveyors were positioned so that they could see all aspects of the buildings to be surveyed. The position of each surveyor (S) was as shown on the aerial photograph below. Each surveyor was equipped with a Batbox Duet detector and a two-way radio for communication and a static Anabat recorders were placed close by to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software.



3.3.3.3. Two of the surveyors hold a current Natural England bat survey licences and the other surveyors are experienced assistants.

3.3.3.4. Throughout the survey no bats were seen to emerge from either of the buildings on site. Common Pipistrelle bats were identified foraging around the buildings from 21:47 onwards. Bats occasionally flew inside Building 4 to forage but would fly back out soon after. The bat activity on the site was limited to one or two bats at any one time, but the foraging was consistent throughout the survey.

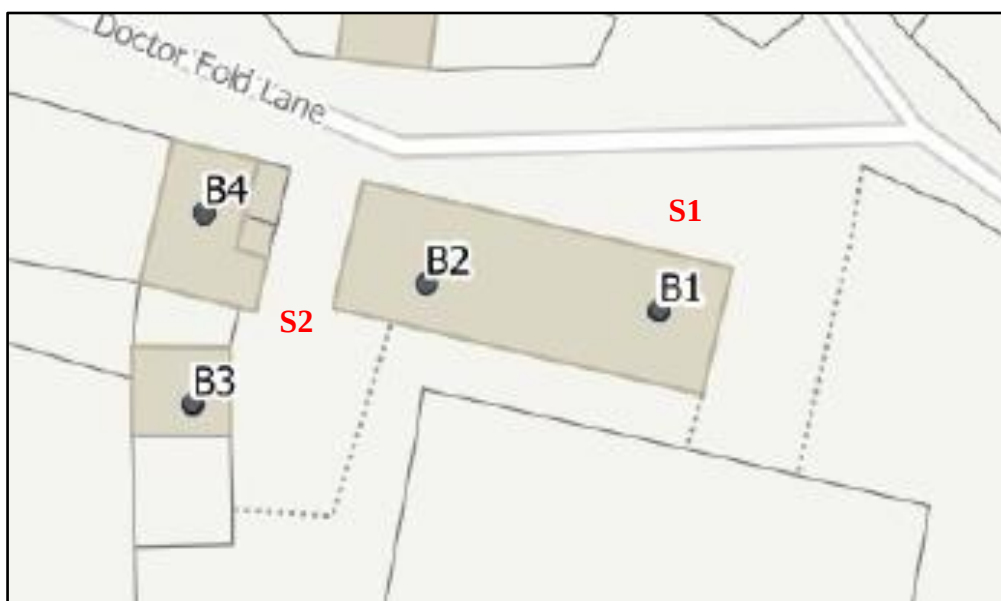
3.3.3.5. The Anabats placed next to each surveyor only recorded Common Pipistrelle bat calls. No other bat species were recorded.

3.3.3.6. At 21:57 Surveyor 3 observed a barn owl emerge from Building 4 and it proceeded to fly west away from the site.

3.3.4. Dawn Return Survey Results 3rd August 2023.

3.3.4.1. A dawn survey of Building 2 was carried out by two surveyors on the morning of 3rd August 2023. One surveyor holds a current Natural England licence for surveying bats and the other is an experienced bat surveys.

3.3.4.2. The surveyors were positioned so that they could see all aspects of the buildings to be surveyed. The position of each surveyor (S) was as shown on the aerial photograph below. Each surveyor was equipped with a Batbox Duet detector and a two-way radio for communication and a static Anabat recorder was placed close by to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software.



3.3.4.3. The morning was fine and clear with a light wind blowing at 4 mph from the northeast, 0 on the BWS. The temperature was 11°C at 04:00 and sunrise was at 05:27. The survey started at 04:00 and ended at 05:45.

3.3.4.4. Throughout the survey a low number of Common Pipistrelle bats were observed foraging or flying over the site. At 05:01 a single Common Pipistrelle bat was observed **entering a roost** in the eaves at the apex of the western end of Building 2. The location is shown in the photograph below.

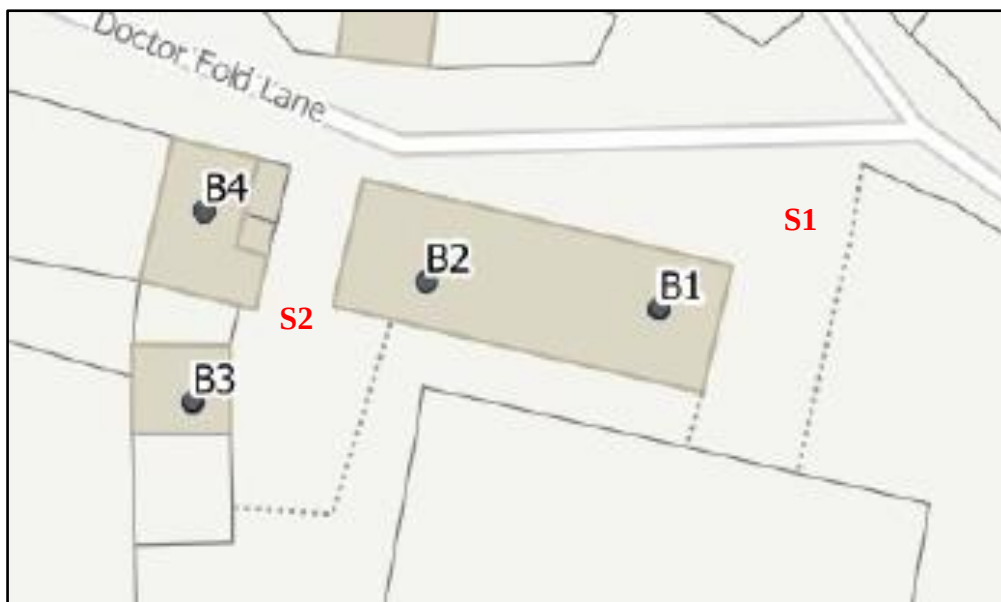


3.3.4.5. A barn owl was again seen on the site, this time flying out of Building 2. Upon further inspection inside the building, numerous barn owl pellets were found present throughout the building, confirming that barn owls use this barn for nesting.

3.3.5. Dusk Emergence Survey Results 5th September 2023.

3.3.5.1. Two surveyors carried out a dusk emergence survey of Building 2 on the evening of 5th September 2023. The evening was clear and dry with a temperature of 20°C at 19:45. There was a slight breeze throughout the survey, that gusted at no more than 7mph. Sunset was at 19:50 and the survey commenced at 19:35.

3.3.5.2. The surveyors were positioned so that they could see all aspects of the building to be surveyed. The position of each surveyor (S) was as shown on the aerial photograph below. Each surveyor was equipped with a Batbox Duet detector and a two-way radio for communication and a static Anabat recorder was placed close by to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software.



3.3.5.3. One of the surveyors holds a current Natural England bat survey licence and the other surveyor is an experienced assistant.

3.3.5.4. Throughout the survey two bats were seen to emerge from the building at 20:13 and 20:15. These emerged from the apex of the west gable end, the same location where the bat was seen to enter the roost during the previous dawn survey. One of the bats entered back into the roost at 20:17, but into a gap slightly lower from the main access point. This is shown in the photograph below.



3.3.5.5. Common Pipistrelle bats were also identified foraging around the buildings from 20:13 onwards. The bat activity on the site was limited to one or two bats at any one time, but the foraging was consistent throughout the survey.

3.3.5.6. The Anabats placed next to each surveyor only recorded Common Pipistrelle bat calls. No other bat species were recorded.

3.3.5.7. A barn owl was seen to fly over the site during the survey from west to east. It did not emerge from Building 2.

3.3.5.8. It should be noted that Himalayan balsam was also identified growing around and up to the buildings. This is an invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. During the initial PRA carried out of the buildings on the site by Tyler Grange Group Ltd, Buildings 1, 3 and 4 were assessed to provide low potential for roosting bats and Building 2 was assessed to provide moderate potential for roosting bats. Therefore, the relevant further dusk and dawn surveys were recommended.

4.2. The subsequent dusk emergence and dawn surveys carried out by Whitcher Wildlife Ltd identified a maximum of two Common Pipistrelle emerge/enter a roost in the apex of the western gable end of Building 2. Bats were found using the roost during two of the three surveys, therefore it is assessed to be a Common Pipistrelle day roost.

4.3. The proposed works to the building will have a high impact on the bat roost.

4.4. A barn owl was identified using Buildings 2 and 4 during the surveys, with evidence suggesting that they nest inside Building 2. The proposed conversion of the buildings will have a high impact on the barn owls if carried out at a time when the owls are nesting and will result in the loss of a nesting site.

4.5. Himalayan balsam was found growing around the buildings. This is an invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and it is an offence to allow or cause the plant to spread into the wild. This plant spreads via the seeds that are ejected from the seed pods during late summer/autumn. The seeds can be ejected up to 7m from the plants, therefore any soils within 7m could contain viable seeds. The works could therefore result in the spreading of the plant.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. It is recommended that the mitigation strategy provided in Section 6 of this report is adhered to, to mitigate for the loss of one occasional Common Pipistrelle day roost in Building 2.

5.2. It is recommended that the works are immediately preceded by a nesting bird survey carried out by a competent person who also holds a survey licence for barn owls. If the barn owls are found to be nesting in one of the buildings, then no works can be carried out that will cause any disturbance to the barn owl or its nest until the young have fledged. Similarly, if any other bird species are found to be nesting, the works in the vicinity of the nest will need to be restricted until the young have fledged.

5.3. It is recommended that three barn owl nest boxes are provided somewhere close by. These should be spread out as much as possible mounted on poles along the hedgerow boundaries away from the road, unless large enough trees are available to allow barn owl boxes to be fixed to them. Barn owl boxes are fairly large in size and will require substantial sized poles or trees for the boxes to be mounted on. The boxes will need to meet the Barn Owl Trust specification and will need to be installed in accordance with their guidance. These should be provided prior to works commencing.

5.4. It is recommended that above and beyond the mitigation required for the bats on the site, that an additional integrated bat box is incorporated into either Building 3 or Building 4 to provide enhancements for roosting bats on the site.

5.5. It is also recommended that enhancements for nesting birds are provided in the form of a pair of integrated swift boxes installed in the wall of either Building 3 or Building 4. Swift boxes will cater for a range of small bird species as well as swifts.

5.6. It is recommended that measures are put in place during the works to prevent the spread of Himalayan balsam. This should include the vegetation clearance being carried out at a time when there are no seed pods present on the plants and any vegetation/soils removed from the site should be disposed of as controlled waste. A wash station should also be set up to wash all footwear, equipment and machinery that come into contact with the soils, in situ before leaving site. The washed arisings should be kept confined and disposed of as controlled waste. A toolbox talk document is provided at the end of this report to aid in the identification of the plant.

6. BAT MITIGATION STRATEGY.

6.1. Once full planning consent has been issued, prior to any works being carried out in the vicinity of the roost in Building 2, a Natural England licence will be applied for to ensure that the favourable conservation status of the species will be maintained throughout.

6.2. Full details of the mitigation proposals will be included in the licence application, which are summarised below.

6.3. Before any works are carried out in the vicinity of the bat roost, a bat box that will cater for Common Pipistrelle bats, including hibernation, will be fixed onto a tree or pole along the southern boundary of the site. This will be the Large Multi Chamber WoodStone Bat Box as shown below.



6.4. Providing the Natural England licence has been issued, if timing allows the bat(s) will be excluded from the roost using the techniques specified in the most up to date edition of the 'Bat Workers Manual'. These will be in place for a minimum of five consecutive nights of suitable weather conditions to successfully exclude the bats from the roost prior to the works commencing that will impact on the roost.

6.5. If timing does not allow for the exclusion to be completed before the temperatures drop too cold, the roost will be destroyed under soft demolition under direct supervision of the licenced ecologist or agent until the ecologist is satisfied that no bats remain in the roost.

6.6. If any bats are found during the process, the licenced ecologist or agent will carefully move them into the bat box provided on the site.

6.7. To provide a long-term replacement for the roost lost, an integrated Habibat Bat Box – Custom Facing, similar to that shown below to suit the wall construction material, will be installed back into the western gable end wall of Building 2. This will be placed at least 4m above ground level, away from any artificial lighting and will not be placed above any doors or windows to avoid droppings building up on the cills.



Prepared by:	
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Checked by:	
Alexandrea White BSc(Hons) MSc ACIEEM MIEnvSc CEnv.	Date: 7 th September 2023

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Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed here. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man-made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Surveys

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window cills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

Legislation

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATS agreement. Numerous species are also listed

under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number of bat species and the habitats which support them.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

Appendix II. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES INFORMATION.

Ecology

The Government has acknowledged the problems that can be caused by non-native invasive species. In 2008 the Government launched “The Invasive Non-Native Species Framework Strategy for Great Britain”. The strategy provides a framework for a more co-ordinated approach to invasive species management. It seeks to create a stronger sense of shared responsibility across government, key organisations, land managers and the public.

The Non-Native Species Secretariat has been established to oversee the implementation of the strategy. Details of the secretariat including risk assessments and action plans for some species are available at www.nonnativespecies.org.

In general, there are four basic methods of controlling weeds: mechanical, chemical, natural and environmental.

- ***Mechanical control*** includes cultivation, hoeing, pulling, cutting, raking, dredging or other methods to uproot or cut weeds.
Where this method is used all plant material must be considered “controlled waste” and must be disposed of properly.
- ***Chemical control*** uses approved herbicides.
- ***Natural control*** uses pests and diseases of the target weed to weaken it and prevent it from becoming a nuisance.
- ***Environmental control*** works by altering the environment to make it less suitable for weed growth, for example by increasing or decreasing water velocity.

Surveys

A site will be searched for invasive plant species growing on site, from mature plants to new shoots. A site will also be searched for dead stems indicating that plants that may have seasonally died back are present.

Legislation

Invasive species listed under Schedule 9 are prohibited from release into the wild. Schedule 9, Section 14(2) prohibits ‘planting’ or ‘causing to grow’ in the wild of any plant listed in Part 2 of Schedule 9.

The following is a list of all the species of plant listed under Schedule 9 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Common Name	Scientific Name	England & Wales	Scotland
Alexanders, Perfoliate	<i>Smyrnium perfoliatum</i>	✓	
Algae, Red	<i>Grateloupia luxurians</i>	✓	
Archangel, Variegated Yellow	<i>Lamiastrum galeobdolon</i> subsp. <i>Argentatum</i>	✓	
Azalea, Yellow	<i>Rhododendron luteum</i>	✓	
Balsam, Himalayan	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	✓	
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>	✓	
Cotoneaster, Entire Leaved	<i>Cotoneaster integrifolius</i>	✓	
Cotoneaster, Himalayan	<i>Cotoneaster simonsii</i>	✓	
Cotoneaster, Hollyberry	<i>Cotoneaster bullatus</i>	✓	
Cotoneaster, Small Leaved	<i>Cotoneaster microphyllus</i>	✓	
Creeper, False Virginia	<i>Parthenocissus inserta</i>	✓	
Creeper, Virginia	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	✓	
Dewplant, Purple	<i>Disphyma crassifolium</i>	✓	
False-acacia	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>		✓
Fanwort	<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	✓	✓
Fern, Water	<i>Azolla filiculoides</i>	✓	✓
Fig, Hottentot	<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>	✓	✓
Garlic, Three-Cornered	<i>Allium triquetrum</i>	✓	
Hogweed, Giant	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	✓	✓
Hyacinth, water	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	✓	✓
Kelp, Giant	<i>Macrocystis angustifolia</i>	✓	✓
Kelp, Giant	<i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i>	✓	✓
Kelp, Giant	<i>Macrocystis laevis</i>	✓	✓
Kelp, Giant	<i>Macrocystis pyrifera</i>	✓	✓
Kelp, Japanese	<i>Laminaria japonica</i>	✓	✓

Knotweed, Giant	<i>Fallopia sachalinensis</i>	✓	
Knotweed, Hybrid	<i>Fallopia japonica</i> x <i>Fallopia sachalinensis</i>	✓	
Knotweed, Japanese	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>	✓	
Knotweed, Japanese	<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i>		✓
Leek, Few-flowered	<i>Allium paradoxum</i>	✓	✓
Lettuce, water	<i>Pistia stratiotes</i>	✓	✓
Montbretia	<i>Crocasmia</i> x <i>crocosmiiflora</i>	✓	
Parrot's-feather	<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>	✓	
Pennywort, Floating	<i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i>	✓	
Potato, Duck	<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>	✓	
Primrose, Floating Water	<i>Ludwigia peploides</i>	✓	
Primrose, Water	<i>Ludwigia grandiflora</i>	✓	
Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	✓	
Rhubarb, Giant	<i>Gunnera tinctorial</i>	✓	
Rose, Japanese	<i>Rosa rugosa</i>	✓	
Salvinia, Giant	<i>Salvinia molesta</i>	✓	✓
Seafingers, Green	<i>Codium fragile</i>	✓	
Seafingers, Green	<i>Codium fragile tomentosoides</i>		✓
Seaweed, Californian Red	<i>Pikea californica</i>	✓	✓
Seaweed, Hooked Asparagus	<i>Asparagopsis armata</i>	✓	✓
Seaweed, Japanese	<i>Sargassum muticum</i>	✓	✓
Seaweeds, Laver (except native species)	<i>Porphyra</i> sp. except - <i>P. amethystea</i> <i>P. leucosticta</i> <i>P. linearis</i> <i>P. miniata</i> <i>P. purpurea</i> <i>P. umbilicalis</i>	✓	✓
Shallon	<i>Gaultheria shallon</i>		✓
Stonecrop, Australian swamp	<i>Crassula helmsii</i>	✓	✓
Wakame	<i>Undaria pinnatifida</i>	✓	✓
Waterweed, Curly	<i>Lagarosiphon major</i>	✓	✓
Waterweeds	All species of the genus <i>Elodea</i>	✓	

Toolbox Talk: Himalayan Balsam

Himalayan Balsam was introduced into the UK in the early 19th century as an ornamental garden plant. The plant has since become established in the wild growing in a wide range of habitats, predominantly damp habitats and along watercourses. Himalayan Balsam grows in dense stands and therefore along river banks it can increase the likelihood of flooding during periods of heavy rainfall and can leave the river banks bare and exposed to erosion during the winter.

Whitcher Wildlife Ltd

Ecological Consultants



Identification.

Himalayan Balsam grows to around 2m and has a hollow, brittle stem. The plant stem is green to red early in the season and turns pink to red during the summer.



The plant has leaves up to 15cm long which are finely serrated along the edges and may have a pink mid-rib. The flowers are trumpet shaped and pink.



Habitat and Spreading.

Himalayan Balsam grows in a range of habitats but prefers damp habitats and river corridors. The plant grows in dense stands that out-compete native species. Along river corridors the plant can increase the likelihood of flooding during periods of heavy rainfall and leaves the river banks bare and exposed to erosion during the winter.



Himalayan Balsam spreads solely by seeds, which are small and easily carried by wind or water. The seed heads are approximately 2.5cm long and explode on touch when ripe.

The best form of control of the plant is to prevent it from seeding by cutting back or pulling before it can seed.

Legislation.

Under section 14 and Part II of Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is an offence for it to be planted or otherwise caused to grow in the wild. This includes spreading the species by transferring polluted ground material from one area to the other.

If Himalayan balsam is identified during works, stop all works and contact Whitcher Wildlife Ltd directly on 01226 753271 or at info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk