

Amphibians, Mammals & Wild birds

Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS)

**Client: Mr C Brennan
(F125 - 4)**

FIELDODOLOGY WORKS



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REPORT CONTROL SHEET

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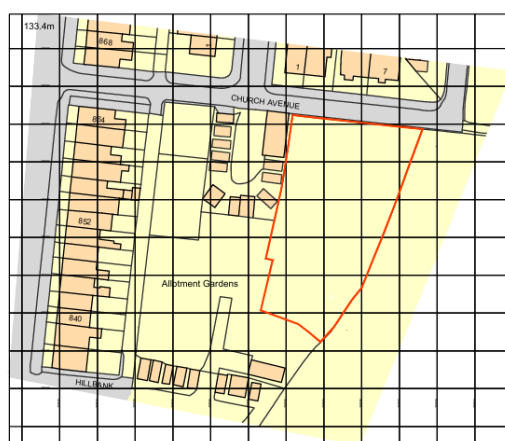
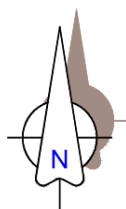
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Method Statement Objectives

A Precautionary Working Measures Statement, has been requested as part of an outline planning application valid on 22nd July 2025 for Permission in Principle application 24/00969/PIP for the erection of 5no. dwellinghouses with associated access, landscaping and car parking Rochdale Borough Council (Reference: 25/00681/TDC1) concerning Land To The South Of Church Avenue Middleton (see figure 1 below).



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NOTES

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Rev.	Date	Description
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Job/Scheme Title

ERECTION OF 5 DETACHED
HOUSES ON VACANT LAND

Drawing Title

LOCATION PLAN

Job/Scheme Number	Drawing Number
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0758/93 Drawing No 00

Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked
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1/1250 Mar 25 a.t.l-h.

Figure 1: Landholding plan illustrating proposed development red line.

Proposals are understood to involve the erection of 5no. dwellinghouses with associated access, landscaping and car parking. At this Technical Details Consent stage, it has been requested that a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMSs) is produced by a competent ecologist for nesting birds, amphibians (common toad and great crested newts), mammals (bats, badger and hedgehog) See Conditions 11 and 12 below.

The authors of the report is Julie Wickington, Qualifying Member of CIEEM, Human Ecology BSc, Countryside Management MSc and Town and Country Planning MA. Julie has several year's experience in project development and ecological consulting for a range of schemes including residential, environmental enhancements and agriculture.

Development activities such as site clearance, preparation, remediation, piling, or excavation in areas of suitable amphibian and small mammal habitat may potentially impact amphibians or mammals that may inhabit the local area. As a result, safeguards must be applied to protect these species.

The Method Statement below outlines sequential measures to be implemented to ensure these objectives are achieved, thus satisfying PWMSs.

- 11 No works to trees or shrubs shall occur between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a precautionary working method statement for nesting birds by a suitably experienced ecologist has been supplied to and agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 12 No development shall take place (including any site clearance, demolition or preparation works) until a precautionary working measures statement for mammals, including badger and amphibians has been submitted to and

approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved statement thereafter.

Reason: In order to minimise potential risk to protected species and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: site clearance poses a potential threat to mammals which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and protective measures must therefore be agreed in advance.

Before Any Works

1. Pre-commencement check – a site walkover and survey to take place by an Ecologist:
 - o to identify sensitive areas and potential wildlife impacts and,
 - o before any vegetation clearance in order to pinpoint areas in which there may be a higher chance of encountering amphibians, mammals or wild birds.
2. Before any vegetation clearance works commence at the application site, all site contractors / stakeholders will be briefed by ‘Tool-box’ talk of the potential for protected species to occur on site, what to look out for and what to do in the event that animals are found. This talk should cover identification aids and the legal ramifications of an offence.
3. Contractors and stakeholders will be asked to sign the Audit Form (see overleaf) which will be kept by the Site Manager and the project Ecologist as part of the project monitoring.
4. Following the toolbox talk in the absence of ecological supervision on site, the Site Manager will be responsible to report to the project Ecologist throughout the work schedule.
5. Photograph(s) will be displayed at the site office and / or kept by the contractor’s personal for visual reference purposes.
6. Construction works are to only take place during daylight hours as opposed to the night-time, when amphibians and terrestrial mammals are most active.

Pre Works

Timings

Amphibians and mammals

Juvenile and adult amphibians & mammals are most vulnerable to harm during their hibernation period which is considered to be November to February inclusive. Site clearance / preparation works should avoid this sensitive period. If this is not possible, works carried out during this sensitive period (between November – February) should take into account, the potential presence of hibernating wildlife.

Wild birds

Scrub and potentially the grassland, prior to clearance, could provide suitable nesting locations within the nesting bird season of March - September, inclusive.

Any works impacting upon areas of potential suitability for wild birds should be carried out outside of the breeding season (March to September, inclusive).

Demarcation or buffer zones

Demarcation zones, often using fencing, are important for protecting wildlife during construction to minimize harm and disruption. These zones help to separate construction activities from sensitive habitats and species, preventing accidental harm or habitat destruction. They also provide a visual reminder to workers and the public about the need for caution in these areas.

Purpose and Benefits

Avoidance

Demarcation zones help to avoid construction activities near sensitive areas like habitats, breeding grounds, or migration routes.

Mitigation

By keeping construction activities away from these areas, demarcation zones reduce the need for extensive mitigation measures later.

Protection

They physically separate construction from sensitive areas, protecting wildlife from direct harm, such as being struck by machinery or being disturbed.

Communication

Demarcation zones serve as a visual reminder to workers and the public about the need for caution and adherence to environmental regulations.

Species-specific protection through Demarcation Zones may need to be tailored to the specific species present and their habitat requirements. Note that a Demarcation zone may be required by local planning authorities or environmental regulations.

Should Demarcation Zones be required, regular monitoring is needed to ensure that the demarcation zones are effectively protecting wildlife and that construction activities are adhering to regulations.

Examples of Demarcation Zone Implementation:

A construction site might establish a 10-meter buffer zone around a badger sett, a field boundary with signs of otters or water voles, or a tree with moderate to high bat roosting potential.

Construction within a designated reptile interest area might require the implementation of Risk Assessment and Mitigation (RAMs) plans to protect reptiles during construction.

In areas with high concentrations of specific species, such as great crested newts, mitigation measures like creating new habitats or providing alternative breeding ponds may be necessary.

Types of Demarcation Zones

Temporary Fencing

This is a common and effective way to delineate a boundary between construction and wildlife areas. It can be simple, like a tensioned string line, or more complex, like netting or barriers.

Buffer Zones

These are areas of undisturbed habitat that are left between construction and sensitive areas to provide a buffer against disturbance.

Restricted Access Areas

Specific areas within the construction site may be designated as off-limits to construction workers and machinery.

During Works

1. During the development, no hole or pit should be left uncovered over-night, to ensure that wildlife such as amphibians, reptiles or hedgehogs are not trapped, and unable to escape. As such, all excavations should be checked first thing each morning, prior to the start of works that day. Any animals found within excavations should be allowed to escape and move off, or carefully removed and placed within suitable habitat cover before site work commences for the day. Alternatively a broad wooden plank can be placed in the excavation to allow animals to escape. A scaffolding board pitched at a maximum 45 degree angle should be ideal. Any excavated materials or soils stored overnight will be searched prior to being used as infill.
2. Habitats deemed suitable for protected species (i.e. scrub, woodland and tall ruderal habitats (including deadwood piles within the understorey) should be removed under full supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist. A fingertip search of these habitats prior to their removal to check for the presence or likely absence.
3. Once habitats are deemed free of the species, the area will be turfed with a toothed bucket, until it is deemed unsuitable for the species. This should be done under ecologist supervision. Clearance, site preparation works shall proceed from the north-east of the works area to the south-west, to allow any faster moving fauna to move out of the site into adjacent farmland and semi-natural habitats.
4. Deadwood piles should be compensated for to minimise the loss of overwintering value on the site.
5. Any animals found which are not protected species will be removed from harm's way and placed into suitable buffer zones to the west of the site, species pending and following correct protocols / biosecurity measures.
6. For the full duration, no works are to extend off site in the areas adjacent to the red line boundary. No pallets, skips or otherwise are to be placed upon areas of dense vegetation and should instead only be placed on flat, cleared ground to avoid animals getting underneath.
7. The impact of works on adjacent habitats will be avoided by the clear demarcation of the works area. All work will be carried out adopting standard pollution prevention measures.
8. Contingency / emergency plans should be drawn up to address chemical spillage, drainage, collision, etc.
9. Machinery and materials to remain on bare ground and reasonable efforts must be made to avoid creating piles, or accumulated aggregates. Materials that require piling will be stored within areas of bare ground.
10. Plastic netting, wire coils or similar hazardous features should not be left on the ground, to avoid entanglement. Aggregates/constructional materials should be stored on pallets as opposed to the storing on the ground.

Monitoring and observation of protected species

1. All site operatives will maintain a watching brief throughout the work schedule and report any issues, anomalies or discrepancies to the ecologist or Site Manager as appointed.
2. **If an amphibian or mammal is found in the absence of ecological supervision, work must stop immediately, and contact should be made with the assigned licensed or suitably qualified ecologist.**
3. Any newts, frogs, toads or small mammals (hedgehog etc.) found should be carefully caught by the Ecologist and placed (where capture is possible and humane) in a ventilated box using dampened gloved hands and released into suitable nearby vegetation that will be unaffected by the proposed works.
4. Toads should not be touched using non-gloved hands as they secrete a toxin through their skin, and they should not be handled for longer than is necessary.
5. **In the event a newt is found work must cease;** a licenced Ecologist will be made aware of the finding and will appraise the situation providing further advice. Site staff must be made aware that if GCN are found there is a correct procedure in place to follow, and **failure to halt works may result in committing an offence.**
6. At no point should any person handle a GCN or suspected GCN. Unlicensed handling is illegal and untrained handling may cause the newt unnecessary stress and injury.

Species Specific RAMs

Birds

All wild birds (with only minor exceptions) and their nests whilst being built or containing eggs or dependant young are protected from destruction, damage and disturbance under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). **It is a punishable offence to interfere in any way with an active nest.**

If this is not possible, a suitably experienced ecologist should check the habitat for breeding bird activity no more than 48 hours before clearance. If nesting activity is found, nests must be left in situ until the young have fledged. It is recommended therefore to reduce any nest disturbance that appropriate buffer zones are placed around nest sites so that no activity involving people, or equipment is carried out within a 5 - 10m radius of active nests.

Any works impacting upon areas of potential suitability should be carried out outside of the breeding season (March to September, inclusive). If this is not possible, a suitably experienced ecologist should check the habitat for breeding bird activity no more than 48 hours before clearance. If nesting activity is found, nests must be left in situ until the young have fledged. It is recommended therefore to reduce any nest disturbance that appropriate buffer zones are placed around nest sites so that no activity involving people, or equipment is carried out within a 5 - 10m radius of active nests.

Roosting bats

If any roof sheeting or boarding over walls is used in the development, these should be carefully removed by hand, as these features are the ones most likely to harbour potential for the support of roosting bats.

It was thought possible that there may be some site clearance work carried out during the planned development, but details of what this would entail were not known at the time of the RAM production. It was hoped that this will be kept to a minimum, and that any scrub, immature trees or mature trees growing close to the site boundaries, would all be mostly unaffected by the work,

Badger and hedgehog

All working hours should be limited to daylight (dawn - sunset, or dawn - 6pm in winter) to avoid disturbing any badger or hedgehog in vicinity of the development.

A pre-commencement check of the site, any stored materials and the immediate vicinity of development footprint will be carried out prior to any works each morning in order to check for the presence of badger or hedgehog.

Materials that may cause entrapment such as plastic / metal fencing, as well as those which could be potentially harmful to terrestrial mammals such as chemicals, should not be left around the site following the cessation of daytime work.

No bulky equipment / general construction aggregates should be left around the development area, instead leave them on bare ground away from the risk zone.

Stock piling of spoil material **MUST** be left un-compacted and not allowed to grass over, as if grassed over and compacted, terrestrial mammals may be encouraged to excavate new areas for refuge.

Fires must not be used as a means of the disposing of waste materials.

Any trenches or excavations must either be covered at the end of each working day, or a low angle (no more than 45°) sloping board of approximately 300mm width should be provisioned within any uncovered excavations to provide a means of escape for any terrestrial mammals.

Any temporarily exposed open pipe system **MUST** be capped in such a way as to prevent badgers gaining access, as may happen when contractors are off site.

In the event an underground void / potential sett entrance is exposed during the works, work must cease immediately; and an Ecologist must be contacted to determine if the opening forms part of a previously undiscovered tunnel network of a badger sett. If this cannot be ruled out, works will cease, and Natural England consulted for further advice.

Summary of actions

Operation	Months												Notes
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Early understanding													
Toolbox Talk	Any time prior to works												As soon as site works commence on site.
Site manager reporting	Following toolbox talk												
Pre - works													
Site walk over by ecologist	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Before work commencing & before sensitive habitat removal
Demarcation zones & signage	Zone creation												Before work commencing

Identification Aids

European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)





Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*)



Identification

- o Largest newt in the UK, up to 17cm in length, but juveniles are similar
- o Black animal with rough, warty skin.
- o Orange/yellow colouring on belly
- o Irregular black blotches on belly
- o Toes banded black/orange (yellow toe nails)
- o Male has a jagged crest on its back which sags when not in the water and a separate smoother crest along tail, white stripe on tail too.

DO

If a GCN is discovered during works **STOP ALL WORKS** in the area, inform your site manager and contact the project ecologist **IMMEDIATELY**.

DON'T

Do not touch or handle a GCN they are very delicate – and it is against the law. Penalties for breaking the law include unlimited fines, imprisonment and seizure of equipment.

DO NOT RISK BREAKING THE LAW

Toolbox Talk Record Form

Site:

Ecologist:

I confirm I have attended the formal Toolbox talk held by a named Ecological Consultant. I confirm I am aware of the legislation in relation to amphibian, mammal and wild bird species that may be in the locale. I confirm I will endeavour, to the best of my capability to follow the measures outlined in the RAMs to protect all animals from harm and I know what to do if I encounter protected species.

Name:	Signed:
Company:	Date:
Name:	Signed:
Company:	Date:
Name:	Signed:
Company:	Date:
Company:	Date:
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TERMS OF BUSINESS

This fee proposal has been produced in good faith and in line with the specified details to Provide a fair reflection of our required involvement based upon our judgment and experience.

However, due to the nature of ecological survey work, this involvement may evolve should we encounter issues at the appraisal stage, if there is a significant departure from the original brief, or should unforeseen issues arise. Should this occur, we will notify you as soon as possible and prior to the addition of any further charges.

This cost estimate will remain valid for three months following the date of its production, after which we reserve the right to amend the document to reflect current market conditions. Our fee proposal includes various ecological assessment services aimed at ensuring compliance in your development project. The specific services are detailed within the fee estimate, and adjustments are noted where applicable.

The assessment works will be invoiced after the assessment/report has been produced when paid, the final report will be released to the client. Any additional services or disbursements required beyond the scope of this fee proposal will be reported to and agreed with the client, based on an hourly charge-out rate of £___/hour plus VAT and disbursements.

By accepting this fee proposal, the client confirms: The correct ownership details for the site, including details of any adjoining land in the applicant's ownership, have been supplied.

That with respect to the Local Planning Authority/Council for the site, the applicant is not one of the following: a member of staff, an elected member, related to a member of staff, or related to an elected member.



The general term of business for Fieldology Works Ltd apply to this fee proposal. A copy of these terms is attached to this fee proposal and can also be found using the following link: [Fieldology Works Ltd Terms and Conditions](#). Fieldology Works ([google.com](#)) By accepting this fee proposal, you also accept the general terms of business for Fieldology Works Ltd.

Should you have any questions or require further clarification regarding this fee proposal, please do not hesitate to contact us

Date of production: 29.08.2024

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